The Thurgood Marshall College Fund

Recruiting Talent From HBCUs

A Groundbreaking Analysis of

How Corporations and Government
Recruit Talent From
Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Research Team:

Jungki Lee, Ph.D., Department of Management and Marketing, Alabama A&M
Sekhar Anantharaman, Ph.D., Department of Accounting, Alabama A&M
Andrea Tillman, Ph.D., Department of Management and Marketing, Alabama A&M
Emeka Dunu, Ph.D., Department of Management and Marketing, Alabama A&M

Edited by:

Dwayne Ashley, President and CEO, Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Inc.
Eve Hall, V.P. Programs, Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Inc.

The Thurgood Marshall College Fund
80 Maiden Lane, Suite 2204
New York, New York 10038

www.thurgoodmarshallfund.org

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Building a socially and ethnically
diverse workforce is both a
challenge and a reward.

PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION

We live in a world where change is a constant, globalization a reality, and diversity a way of life that every institution in American society — public or private — must address to grow and flourish in the 21st century. In this environment, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) must meet the challenges of educating African Americans and other minorities, as well as focusing on the attributes and professional skills needed to succeed in the world of work.

For this reason, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) has placed growing emphasis and resources on leadership initiatives and job-recruitment efforts to supplement its ongoing scholarship and capacity-building efforts at TMCF member schools.

This first-of-its-kind comparative study of how corporations and government agencies operate to recruit and retain students from HBCU and non-HBCU institutions is part of that effort to strengthen the linkages between education and work.

The HBCU community must continue to convey to the nation's employers — whether corporate, governmental, or volunteer — that the recruitment and retention of black and other minority employees is, as the authors of this study indicate, essential for the expanding productivity of their human capital. In other words, a "mandate for diversity."

Building a socially and ethnically diverse workforce is both a challenge and a reward: a challenge requiring clear policies and solid action plans; and a reward that pays off real and substantive dividends in both the short and long term.

In this endeavor, TMCF can be a valuable partner in connecting public and private organizations and companies to the unparalleled pool of motivated and skilled minority students at our member institutions who are eager to contribute to their company or agency's success, to a more prosperous nation, and to a better world.

Dwayne Ashley
President and CEO
Thurgood Marshall College Fund

Fortune 400 companies and government agencies used a different mix of recruitment strategies for HBCUs and non-HBCUs.

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

At a time of growing competition in the American workforce, diversity has become an imperative for any modern organization, public or private, to succeed. This study constitutes the first in-depth analysis comparing the recruitment and retention strategies of selected Fortune 400 companies and government agencies at HBCU and non-HBCU institutions.

The study was sponsored by the Thurgood Marshall College Fund and conducted by four outstanding scholars at Alabama A&M University's School of Business.

Among the study's key findings:

- Fortune 400 companies and government agencies used a different mix of recruitment strategies for HBCUs and non-HBCUs. We found four recruitment methods used more frequently at non-HBCUs than at HBCUs: contacts with career development officers, use of campus bulletin boards, recommendations from alumni, and networking.

- There appeared to be no significant difference in recruiters' expectations of student qualifications between HBCU and non-HBCU institutions.

- Our study identifies a disparity in the number of students hired from each college type. In 2006, for example, the companies and agencies in the study hired 31 college graduates. Only four (13 percent) were from HBCUs, with the majority (27, or 87 percent) from non-HBCUs.

- Recruiters perceived college graduates at both HBCUs and non-HBCUs to be "only moderately prepared" for the world of work. School development officers, by contrast, believed these same graduates to be well prepared for the work environment.

- Both the Fortune 400 companies and government agencies had policies in place to retain and promote a diverse work environment. However, there seemed to be uncertainty concerning specific methods and action plans to encourage social and ethnic diversity, such as advertising, hiring initiatives, mentoring, and incentive rewards.

- Employers increasingly recognize the high cost of excessive turnover among employees, especially heavily recruited minority workers and professionals. The most important attributes affecting retention were ability to learn on the job, positive attitude, oral communication skills, and organizational skills. Of lesser importance, at least related to employee retention, were knowledge of major field of study and work experience.

- This study is exploratory and descriptive. Along with shedding light on current recruitment and diversity efforts, its greatest value may be in serving as a benchmark for a series of future studies that identify trends in workforce diversity over time.

- One avenue for future studies would be to examine specific policies and practices that both HBCUs and corporate and government employers should undertake to strengthen the recruitment and retention of African-Americans and other minorities.

In the American workforce, diversity has become an imperative for any modern organization, public or private, to succeed.

OVERVIEW

Public and private organizations today are operating in a workforce market of unprecedented competition. According to a recent DiversityInc.com article, organizations "are engaged in a war for talent. As the workforce becomes more racially diverse...smart companies are aggressively finding ways to recruit and retain talented people of color, [and] women..." (diversityinc.com, March 2007).

Diversity has become an imperative for today's organizations. A diverse workforce increases productivity and innovation through the generation of new ideas and development of motivated minority employees. An organization that has achieved diversity across all levels of management, in turn, stands a much better chance of recruiting, motivating, and retaining talented minority employees. Experts state that multicultural diversity will be required to be able to compete effectively in the future (Taborn, 2006; Allen & Montgomery, 2001; Scott, 2002). In their effort to recruit more minorities and women, however, companies and other organizations may be using different recruitment methods at HBCUs than at non-HBCUs.

Corporate and government recruiters employ a variety of recruitment methods on college campuses. These include contacting career development officers, making on-campus visits, and announcing opportunities via campus bulletin boards, and other general announcements. The Internet has also been used effectively as a recruitment tool.

Many companies provide employment information on their websites and through other Internet recruiting websites, e.g., Monster.com (Boomer, 2005). Among other noteworthy recruitment methods: contracting with employment agencies, traveling to industry and conference career fairs, and personal referrals from colleagues and alumni (Blackman, 2006; Piotrowski & Armstrong, 2006; Anderson, Lievens, van Dam, & Ryan, 2004; Hough & Oswald, 2000; Landy, Shankster, & Kohler, 1997).

The other dimension of the diversity mandate is retention. Organizations are experiencing high employee turnover, which can cause operational difficulties and lead to strategic instability. It is estimated that separation, replacement,

and training costs can run about 1.5 to 2.5 times the employee's annual salary (Solomon, 1988). A key aspect of this high employee turnover is the departure of minorities who, once aggressively recruited, leave the organization.

Utilizing innovative ways to retain employees, especially minority employees, can be critical to a company's success, given the labor shortage situation in many professional fields. Employees need to feel valued and this appears to have an effect on their decisions to remain with an employer (Scott, 2002; Kettley, 1996, Audit Commission, 1996). Some of the ways organizations attempt to improve their retention rates include employing a properly structured orientation program, mentoring, sensitivity training classes, coaching, and encouraging internal support groups (Kaliprasad, 2006; Langan, 2000).

Utilizing innovative ways to retain employees, especially minority employees, can be critical to a company's success.

O B J E C T I V E S

There are 105 public and private Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the United States, including two- and four-year schools, many of which were founded as land-grant institutions to educate African-Americans. This report evaluates the strategies used by industry and government to recruit college graduates and to retain new hires from public and private HBCUs.

The study, sponsored by the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF), had six primary objectives:

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	
1	Analyze how students enrolled at public and private HBCUs were recruited in comparison with students from non-HBCUs.
2	Identify the strategies used by recruiters from industry and government to reveal any disparities in their programs employed at public HBCUs, private HBCUs, and non-HBCUs.
3	Explore employers' perceptions of students from each institution group.
4	Reveal any differences in the recruitment strategies used by Fortune 400 companies and government agencies.
5	Identify the retention strategies used by Fortune 400 companies and government agencies to keep new hires.
6	Assess the commitment of Fortune 400 companies and government agencies to employing a diverse workforce.

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There are 105 public and private
Historically Black Colleges and Universities
(HBCUs) in the United States.

ANALYSIS

Objective 1. Analyze how students enrolled at public and private Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were recruited in comparison with students from non-HBCUs.

We conducted a comparative analysis of the methods used to recruit students enrolled at HBCUs and non-HBCUs. Our assumption was that we would find a difference in the methods used to recruit students enrolled at HBCUs versus those enrolled at non-HBCUs.

Summary

Our survey respondents from Fortune 400 corporations and government agencies indicate that 46 percent made 1-10 visits to college campuses for recruitment purposes last year, and another 20 percent made between 11 and 25 visits. Two percent of the respondents completed more than 26 visits to college campuses, while nearly a third of the respondents (32 percent) did not visit any college campus last year. Thus, the majority of the recruiters (66 percent) used on-campus visits as a recruitment tool.

Our study indicates that there are significant differences between the recruitment methods employed at HBCUs and those used at non-HBCUs. We found four recruitment methods that were used more frequently at non-HBCUs than at HBCUs:

1) contacting career development officers
2) using on-campus bulletin boards
3) personal recommendations from alumni, and
4) networking.

In terms of recruiters' expectations, however, our study found no significant difference between how recruiters perceived student preparedness from either college type. Recruiters generally considered all students to be moderately prepared for the world of work.

Despite this finding, our study identifies a disparity in the number of students hired from each college type. On average, survey respondents hired 57 new recruits last year. Of those new recruits, 31 (54 percent) were recruited from colleges. Only

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four (13 percent) of the 31 college recruits were from HBCUs, with the majority (27, or 87 percent) recruited from non-HBCUs. In terms of the gender among college recruits, there were 18 males (58 percent) to 13 females (42 percent).

Number of campus visits
Although a majority of recruiters made several visits to college campuses last year, 32 percent did not visit any campus at all. The most frequent response (46 percent) regarding the number of campus visits was 1-10 visits.

TABLE 2 - NUMBER OF COLLEGES VISITED LAST YEAR			
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Cumulative*
Percent			
0 visits	13	31.7	31.7
1-10 visits	19	46.37	78.0
11-25 visits	8	19.5	97.6
26-50 visits	1	2.4	100.0

Number of recruits
Fortune 400 companies and government recruiters signed up 57 new recruits last year. Twenty seven of them were from non-HBCUs (16 males and 11 females) and four from HBCUs (2 males and 2 females). The remaining number is believed to be from those who were not new graduates, but rather moved to either Fortune 400 companies or government jobs last year. The recruitment numbers indicate that there is approximately an 8:1 ratio between recruits from non-HBCUs and HBCUs.

Recruitments by college type
We used cross-tabulations with Chi-square tests to investigate if there is any statistically significant difference in the recruitment patterns among Fortune 400 companies, non-Fortune 400 companies, government agencies, non-profit organizations, graduate schools, and others—with type of college (non-HBCUs, public HBCUs, and private HBCUs.

The results indicate that there is no significant difference except for one category (graduate schools, $p < 0.01$) among the three college types. Therefore, in regard to the recruitment pattern after graduation, there is no significant difference among non-HBCUs, public HBCUs, and private HBCUs.

Objective 2. Identify the strategies used by recruiters from industry and government to reveal any disparities in their programs employed at public HBCUs, private HBCUs, and non-HBCUs.

Recruitment methods reported by Fortune 400 companies and government recruiters according to the recruiters, the top three most widely used methods to recruit college graduates were company websites (5.36), on-campus visits (4.92), and career development/student placement office (4.79), where the scale had a metric of "1-never use" to "7-always use." The use of career fairs, alumni recommendations, and references from colleagues was moderate. Recruiters did not rely much on employment agencies (1.69), Internet recruiting websites (2.85), and on-campus bulletin boards (3.31).

TABLE 3 - RECRUITMENT METHODS REPORTED BY FORTUNE 400 COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCY RECRUITERS

Rank	Recruitment Strategies	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Company's website	5.36	1.940
2	On-campus visits	4.92	1.992
3	Career Development/ Placement Office	4.79	2.250
4	Career fairs	4.11	1.997
5	Alumni recommendations	3.97	1.236
6	Reference from colleagues	3.89	1.308
7	On-campus bulletin boards	3.31	1.688
8	Internet recruiting websites	2.85	2.368
9	Employment agencies	1.69	1.507

*1-Never Use, …, 7-Always Use

Recruitment strategies and college types

We used cross-tabulations with Chi-square tests to examine if recruiters employed different recruitment strategies for different college types (non-HBCUs, public HBCUs, and private HBCUs). The results of the tests are summarized in Table 4.

We included 10 recruitment strategies in the surveys: career development/student placement office, on-campus visits, on-campus bulletin boards, company websites, internet recruiting websites, employment agencies, industry/conference career fairs, personal references from colleagues, and alumni.

Out of these ten recruitment strategies, we observed differences among college types in four recruitment strategies (career development/student placement office, $p<0.1$, on-campus bulletin boards, $p<0.01$, alumni, $p<0.1$, and networking, $p<0.05$). A follow-up analysis revealed that industry recruiters used career development/student placement office, on-campus bulletin boards, alumni, and networking more frequently for recruiting at non-HBCUs than at either public HBCUs or private HBCUs. There were no significant differences between public HBCUs and private HBCUs in terms of the recruiters' recruitment strategies.

TABLE 4 - RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY FORTUNE 400 COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
Recruitment Strategies	*Pearson Chi-Square*	*p-value*
Career Development/ Placement Office	**19.35**	**0.081**
On-campus visits	**16.03**	**0.190**
On-campus bulletin boards	**35.62**	**0.000**
Company's website	16.63	0.164
Internet recruiting websites	8.11	0.776
Employment agencies	10.98	0.359
Career fairs	14.49	0.271
Alumni recommendations	19.41	0.079
Networking	23.96	0.021
*1-Never Use, …, 7-Always Use		

Recruit evaluation attributes and college types

We again used cross-tabulation with Chi-square tests to investigate if recruiters employed different evaluation attributes for different college types (non-HBCUs, public HBCUs, and private HBCUs). Ten evaluative criteria were included in the survey: oral communication skills, written communication skills, education/major field of study, GPA, work experience, personality/positive attitude, organizational skills, leadership/initiative, cooperation/teamwork, and references).

There was no significant difference in the evaluation criteria used by recruiters observed among the college types. Therefore, we concluded that the recruiters were consistent in their use of these criteria regardless of the college type of the applicant.

Objective 3. Explore employers' perceptions of students from each institution group.

The employers' perceptions regarding the preparedness of graduates from each institution group are summarized in Table 5. As the figures in the table show, the employers' perceptions of student preparedness were about medium (between 4 and 5). A follow-up correlation analysis suggests no significant differences among the college types in terms of employers' perceptions of student preparedness. Thus, both Fortune 400 companies and government agencies see college graduates, in general, as only moderately prepared for their work environment.

TABLE 5 - PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT PREPAREDNESS BY FORTUNE 400 COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Rank	College type	Mean*	Standard Deviation
1	Non-HBCUs	4.96	1.341
2	Private HBCUs	4.45	1.234
3	Public HBCUs	4.26	1.237

*1-Not Prepared, …, 7-Well Prepared.

These results are in contrast to the perspectives of school career development officers. They believed that their graduates were well prepared for the work environments of Fortune 400 companies (mean 5.34, standard deviation 1.282) and government agencies (mean 5.64, standard deviation 1.224).

Objective 4. Reveal any differences in the recruitment strategies used by Fortune 400 companies and government agencies

We performed t-tests to investigate the difference between Fortune 400 companies and government agencies on nine recruitment strategies. The results appear in Table 6.

TABLE 6 - COMPARISON OF RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES OF FORTUNE 400 COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES				
Recruitment Strategies	Group Mean*			
	Fortune 400	Government	t	
Career Dev/ Placement Office	4.26 (2.31)	6.00 (1.60)	-2.36	#
On-campus visits	4.44 (1.99)	6.00 (1.60)	-2.39	#
On-campus bulletin boards	3.67 (1.66)	2.50 (1.51)	2.07	#
Company's website	5.11 (2.12)	5.92 (1.38)	-1.20	
Internet recruiting websites	2.48 (2.29)	3.67 (2.43)	-1.46	
Employment agencies	1.26 (.813)	2.67 (2.19)	-2.95	#
Career fairs	3.70 (2.04)	5.20 (1.48)	-2.12	#
Reference from colleagues	3.78 (1.50)	4.20 (0.42)	-0.87	
Alumni recommendation	3.93 (1.39)	4.10 (0.74)	-0.38	
*1-Never Use, ….., 7-Always Use	# -the difference is significant at 0.05 level.			

Table 6 reveals that government agencies relied more on career development/ placement office, on-campus visits, employment agencies, and career fairs than Fortune 400 companies, which used on-campus bulletin boards more than government agencies. There were no significant differences between the recruiters in terms of their usage of the company websites, Internet recruiting websites, references from colleagues, and alumni recommendations.

Objective 5. Identify the retention strategies used by Fortune 400 companies and government agencies to keep new hires.

Table 7 summarizes the retention strategies employed by Fortune 400 companies and government agencies. We listed four retention strategies in the survey: training, formal mentoring programs, incentive/reward programs, and promotion/salary levels. The strategy relied on heavily was training (6.29). The remaining strategies were ranked as follows: promotion/salary levels (4.85), incentive/reward (4.47), and mentoring (3.86), where the scale's metric was from "1-never use" to "7-always use".

Rank	Recruitment Strategies	Mean	Standard Deviation
	TABLE 7 - RETENTION STRATEGIES USED BY FORTUNE 400 COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
1	Training	6.29	0.864
2	Salary levels	4.85	1.623
3	Incentive/Reward	4.47	1.782
4	Mentoring	3.86	1.758

*1-Never Use, …, 7-Always Use

The factors affecting retention decisions at Fortune 400 companies and government agencies are summarized in Table 8. The most important attributes that affect the retention decisions were a new recruit's ability to learn on the job (6.36), positive attitude (6.33), oral communication skills (6.27), and organizational skills (6.12).

The next set of important factors includes cooperation/teamwork (5.88), work ethic (5.85), leadership (5.67), written communication skills (5.64), cultural fit (5.19), and talent/strengths (5.15). There seemed to be less importance placed on knowledge of major fields (4.82), and work experience (4.55).

Rank	Attributes of New Recruits	Mean*	Standard Deviation
	TABLE 8 - FACTORS AFFECTING RETENTION DECISION AT FORTUNE 400 COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
1	Ability to learn on the job	6.36	0.783
2	Positive attitude	6.33	0.854
3	Oral communication skills	6.27	0.874
4	Organizational skills	6.12	0.893
5	Cooperation/Teamwork	5.88	1.293
6	Work ethic	5.85	1.176
7	Leadership	5.67	1.315
8	Written communication skills	5.64	1.41
9	Cultural fit	5.19	1.376
10	Talent/Strengths	5.15	1.228
11	Knowledge of major fields	4.82	1.776
12	Work experience	4.55	1.769

*1-not important, ..., 7-very important

Objective 6. **Assess the commitment of Fortune 400 companies and the government agencies to employing a diverse workforce.**

The commitment to diversity of Fortune 400 companies and government agencies was measured by asking 18 questions in the survey instrument. Table 9 summarizes the companies and agencies efforts towards workforce diversity. The results suggest that most of the Fortune 400 companies and government agencies do have some sort of policy to promote workforce diversity, but they seem to be somewhat reluctant in developing and implementing specific action plans for achieving it.

TABLE 9 - DIVERSITY EFFORTS/ACTIVITIES OF FORTUNE 400 COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Rank	Diversity efforts/activities	Mean*	Standard Deviation
1	Publicizes commitment to diversity	4.17	1.002
2	Has a work environment with no discrimination	3.97	1.067
3	Has an inclusive work environment	3.92	0.870
4	Has a diverse workforce	3.92	1.052
5	Employs a diversity coordinator	3.88	1.193
6	Has an equitable work environment	3.86	1.199
7	Has a policy of retaining diverse students	3.85	1.121
8	Has a policy of promoting diversity recruitment	3.81	0.856
9	Has a policy of tracking new minority hires	3.58	1.204
10	Advertises in minority publications	3.44	1.229
11	Has a formal mentoring program in place	3.39	1.334
12	Has a policy of a specific % for minorities	3.30	1.425
13	Has hiring initiatives for minorities	3.29	1.426
14	Has hiring initiatives for women	3.26	1.421
15	Has a training program to develop mentors	2.87	1.335
16	Updates website to attract minority students	2.82	0.983
17	Has a reward system for diversity	2.73	1.281
18	Sponsors receptions at minority campus	2.65	1.294

* 1-strongly disagree, …, 5-strongly agree

CONCLUSIONS

Our study achieved its goal of analyzing the recruitment and retention strategies — as well as the commitment to diversity — of Fortune 400 companies and government agencies to a satisfactory degree.

In terms of recruitment practices, our study found that Fortune 400 companies and government recruiters used different recruitment strategies for HBCUs and non-HBCUs, suggesting that recruiters perceive a need for different methods to be used in different college recruitment environments. Recruiters used a specific mix of strategies more frequently at non-HBCUs (i.e., career development/ student placement, office, on-campus bulletin boards, alumni, and networking). Although these recruitment strategies may be common to both HBCUs and non-HBCUs, the implication is that the students at non-HBCUs have responded more favorably to these particular strategies.

The study found that recruiters were assessing the issue of employee retention during the recruitment process. The recruiters indicated that they regarded certain attributes to be very important for retention. Thus, potential candidates were expected to have the ability to learn on the job, display positive attitudes, and possess good oral communication and organizational skills. Once hired, new employees typically were exposed to a variety of retention strategies, including training programs, defined promotion/salary levels, incentives and rewards, and mentoring programs.

In terms of commitment to diversity, recruiters for both Fortune 400 and government agencies believed that their organizations were publicly committed to diversity and had policies in place to retain and promote a diverse work environment. However, there seemed to be some uncertainty as to the specific methods used to promote diversity, such as advertising, hiring initiatives, mentoring, and diversity rewards.

This study, albeit exploratory, sheds light on understanding the prevalent practices in workforce recruitment, retention, and diversity by Fortune 400 companies and government agencies. There are a few pointers for the best use of this report.

First, the findings from this study may be used as a benchmark for a series of future studies. In the long run (e.g., five to ten years), such an endeavor would help to identify trend changes in workforce management by Fortune 400 companies and government agencies.

Second, while this study focused primarily on describing the current state of HBCU recruitment and retention, future studies may need to consider incorporating issues (i.e., what should be done to strengthen recruitment and retention by key corporate and government employers). For example, recruiters perceive college graduates to be "only moderately prepared" for their work environment. This finding suggests an immediate question: what should a college do to enhance the recruiters' perception of its graduates? Regardless of college types, a greater understanding of what recruiters want in college-educated, entry-level employees would help the universities prepare their graduates to be more competitive in the job market.

Finally, in addressing issues of workforce diversity efforts, future studies should incorporate ways to promote implementation of specific action plans for achieving true workforce diversity in Fortune 400 companies and government agencies.

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METHODOLOGY

The study used two separate surveys to gather the required information for analysis. We designed a survey for the recruiting officials in Fortune 400 companies and government agencies, and another survey for career placement directors at HBCUs and non-HBCU institutions. After a review of literature on diversity, employee recruitment, and retention, we prepared a 37-item questionnaire for Fortune 400 companies and government agencies. A slightly different survey instrument, containing 45 items, was developed for HBCU and non-HBCU institutions.

The questionnaire for the Fortune 400 survey focused on their organizations' commitment and practices related to diversity, as well as their recruiting and retention practices. The university career development officers were asked questions on what their offices did to facilitate student placements, and the student attributes they considered most important for successful placement of their students. We also asked the career development officers questions on their perceptions of how Fortune 400 companies and government agencies recruited their students, for e.g., what methods did Fortune 400 and government representatives use to recruit their students, what student attributes did these recruiters seem to consider important, and did they offer internships, scholarships, or other incentives.

Minor adjustments were made to the questionnaires following an initial pilot test with three recruiting managers and three university career placement officers. Finally, executives at TMCF reviewed the questionnaires and made recommendations that were incorporated into the survey instruments.

The Internet company Jigsaw.com furnished the names and other contact information of recruiting managers at Fortune 400 companies. We divided the company listing into four segments of 100 companies each. We then contacted the top 70 companies in each segment for a total sample of 280 companies.

All 105 HBCUs, were included in the study. We then selected non-HBCUs in the same geographic region and of similar size to an HBCU in the study. The number of non-HBCU institutions surveyed was 182. The survey questionnaires were initially distributed on-line through an Internet hosting site, Zoomerang. com. The on-line approach was considered to be faster, less expensive, and more convenient for the respondents, and we expected to generate substantially greater

responses than other approaches. However, we were disappointed by the low online response rate. Two subsequent reminders were sent via emails to all the survey participants but the response rate showed little improvement.

Finally, the questionnaires were sent to each contact through direct mail. Each packet contained a cover letter that indicated the nature and purpose of the survey, the survey instrument, and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. We offered incentives to participants for answering all the questions and completing and returning the survey instruments in a timely manner. (The incentive plan was a drawing for three iPods from all the participants who met the conditions and indicated a willingness to be entered into the drawing.)

DATA RELIABILITY

The respondents to the survey are categorized as follows:
- 27 Fortune 400 companies
- 14 Government agencies
- 38 Non-HBCU Institutions
- 7 Public HBCUs
- 5 Private HBCUs

Therefore, the sample we evaluated is large and diverse enough to make inferences about the population.

The reliability and validity of the scales were checked to assess the quality of the measuring instruments used in this study.

All the scales were found to have sufficient reliability, as evidenced by the high levels of Cronbach's alpha scores in Table 1.

We also observed a satisfactory level of convergent validity as evidenced by the high correlation coefficients of four scale scores (graduates' attributes, recruiters' recruitment methods, graduates' preparedness, and retention decision attributes) between the questionnaire for corporate/government recruiters and career development officers.

Questionnaire	Scale Name (Question no. in online survey)	Cronbach's Alpha
Corporate/	Recruitment methods (Q8)	0.87
Government	Evaluation attributes (Q10)	0.88
Recruiters	Preparedness (Q12, 13, 14)	0.91
	Retention attributes (Q15)	0.84
	Diversity characteristics (Q29)	0.92
Career	Placement success attributes (Q2)	0.95
Development	Placement assistance methods (Q4)	0.77
Officers	Graduate tracking methods (Q6)	0.70
	Recruitment methods of Fortune 400 Companies (Q15)	0.87
	Graduates attributes for Fortune 400 Companies (Q7)	0.95
	Graduates preparedness for Fortune 400 Companies (Q30)	0.88
	Recruitment methods of Government Agencies (Q32)	0.89
	Graduates attributes for Government Agencies (Q34)	0.95
	Graduates preparedness for Government Agencies (Q47)	0.80

TABLE 1 - RELIABILITY OF THE SCALES USED IN THE SURVEY

In summary, the scales possess healthy psychometric properties with high reliability and validity.

ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University is a land-grant institution that combines professional, vocational, and liberal arts instruction and pursues a three-part mandate of teaching, research, and public service.

The university, founded in 1875 as the Huntsville Normal School with 61 students and two teachers, was designated a land-grant school and moved to Normal, Alabama, in 1890. Today, Alabama A&M offers a wide range of liberal arts and professional programs to more than 6,000 students and is home to one of the largest graduate schools among the nation's HBCUs.

The university is the only HBCU land-grant school offering four doctoral programs, and is a leading producer of African American Ph.D.s in physics and plant and soil science. AAMU offers nationally accredited programs in such specialized professional fields as family and consumer sciences, rehabilitative counselor education, and speech pathology; it is one of the few HBCUs offering a baccalaureate degree in telecommunications.

Along with strong academic offerings in social work, education, and engineering, Alabama A&M's highly respected, 30-year-old MBA program offers concentrations in finance, accounting economics, logistics, information systems, and marketing.

Nearly 80 percent
of all students attending HBCUs
are enrolled at TMCF schools.

THE THURGOOD MARSHALL COLLEGE FUND

The Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) was established in 1987 to carry on Justice Marshall's legacy of equal access to higher education by supporting exceptional merit scholars attending America's Public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Today, 47 schools located in 22 states are members of the TMCF, including many of the nation's largest and most prestigious institutions of higher education.

TMCF is committed to fundamentally changing educational prospects nationwide. Our efforts are guided by the belief in social justice and equal opportunity that motivated the work of our namesake.

To date, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund has awarded in excess of $60 million in scholarships, capacity building and programmatic support. More than 5,000 Marshall Scholars have graduated and are making valuable contributions to science, technology, government, human service, business, education and various communities thanks to the support they received from TMCF.

Nearly 80 percent of all students attending HBCUs are enrolled at TMCF schools, which produce well over 200,000 graduates a year — nearly five times the number from all other HBCUs combined.

More than 2 million young people have graduated from TMCF member schools since its founding, including approximately 58 percent of the nation's African-American public school teachers and the majority of African -American engineers in the nation.

TMCF's 47 member schools provide excellent academic environments which are culturally unique and rich with history and tradition. On our campuses, TMCF men and women are transformed from students to future leaders who are provided with experiences, leadership skills, friendships and high-quality education that will last a lifetime.

TMCF is committed to fundamentally changing educational prospects nationwide. Our efforts are guided by the belief in social justice and equal opportunity that motivated the work of our namesake.

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RESEARCHER BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Jungki Lee earned his Ph.D in Marketing at the University of Alabama in 1996. He holds a Master of Science in Marketing from Georgia State University and a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Korea University. Currently, he is an associate professor of marketing at Alabama A&M University. His published work can be found in *Journal of Retailing, Journal of Services Marketing, Services Marketing Quarterly, The International Journal of Business and Public Administration* and various international and national conference proceedings.

Dr. Sekhar Anantharaman holds a Ph.D. in Accounting from the University of Central Florida, along with a Master of Business Administration from Indiana State University and a Bachelor of Commerce (with Honors) from St. Xavier's College (Calcutta University). He has taught at Alabama A&M University since 1996 and has served as acting chair of the Department of Accounting since 1997. His teaching interests span all aspects of accounting and accounting theory, while his research focuses primarily in financial accounting area and capital markets, along with managerial accounting. Dr. Anantharaman has authored and co-authored several research papers that have been published in various refereed journals. He holds membership in many professional organizations including the American Accounting Association, Institute of Management Accountants, Academy of Business Education, and Academy of Economics and Finance.

Dr. Andrea Tillman holds a Ph.D in Business Administration-Management from Jackson State University. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in Agricultural Economics from Alcorn State University. She is currently an assistant professor of Management at Alabama A&M, where she teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in strategic management and principles of management. Her research interests include cultural diversity, gender roles, interracial interactions, and African American racial identity.

Dr. Emeka Dunu earned his Ph.D. in Management Science from the University of North Texas. He also received a Master of Science in Industrial Engineering from Mississippi State University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi. He is an associate professor and acting chairman of the Department of Management and Marketing at Alabama A&M.

In 1999, he received his first award from the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, to direct the Kauffman Entrepreneurial Internship Program at Alabama. The award has been renewed several times. Dr. Dunu has written and published several articles that involving survey research, including *Quality Management in the Hospitality Industry*; *The Use of Quality Management Tools in U.S. Service Organizations*; and *Material Requirements Planning in Nigerian Manufacturing Firms: A Survey Study*. He is a member of several professional organizations.