

RESEARCH

To retain BIPOC talent, creative industries must improve employee mental health support: report

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BIPOC employees are triple as likely as their white counterparts to face financial hardship due to race, according to a new report. Image credit: Hue

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

From lacking DEI initiatives to unequal pay, Black, Indigenous and People Of Color (BIPOC) employees are speaking to the sources of a gradually worsened outlook at work.

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Fielded by The Harris Poll, social impact organization Hue is out with the State of Inequity: Building a Brighter Future for BIPOC at Work [report](#), offering new statistics on the post-pandemic environment current reports are of concern, especially as compared to the trajectories of non-minorities. According to research findings, factors such as representation across ranks, advancement and promotion opportunities and mental health support are still impacting the corporate realm's ability to foster and retain professionals of color.

Conducted in conjunction with U.S. market research firm [The Harris Poll](#), partners fielded an online survey involving 2,617 U.S. adults aged 18 and over from Nov. 1, 2022, to Nov. 17, 2022, as well as from Nov. 5, 2022, to Nov. 22, 2022, among 122 Hue members by The Harris Poll on behalf of Hue. Age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income figures for Hue's 2023 study were weighted where necessary.

The gap widens

The report studies the state of American workplaces in a post-pandemic world.

Focusing on the well-being of BIPOC employees, the study looked into whether or not the workplace is a better place for them. Unfortunately, even after the perceived racial reckoning that took place in the United States after the murder of George Floyd in 2020, things have only gotten worse.

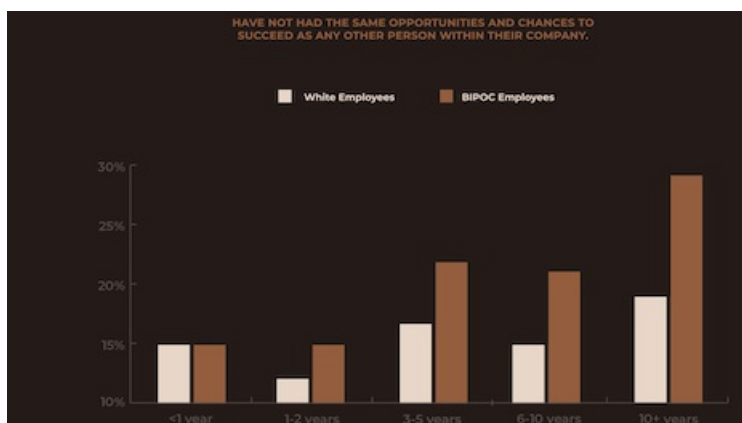


The report outlines the dramatically worse state that American workplace diversity is in compared to June 2020. Image credit: Hue

In the face of health and financial crises rocking the nation, inequity is plaguing companies across the board, with many having stopped progress since the antiracism pushes of 2020. In fact, four out of five BIPOC employees report that since June of that year, their employer has not done anything of note when it comes to diversity efforts or inclusion whether that be diversifying hiring or ensuring that the workplace is safe and supportive for BIPOC members of the company.

The demographic reports experiencing twice as much discrimination as their white coworkers, with many seeing even fewer opportunities within companies than in 2020. The longer they remain with a company, the less promotions and pay raises they are being offered, leading to many changing jobs.

Due to the distress that comes from this discrimination, BIPOC employees are twice as likely as white employees to leave their job based on "the emotional burden related to their race at work." Indigenous people are three times as likely.



More and more BIPOC employees are being forced to look elsewhere for work, as their mental health and careers suffer due to discrimination. Image credit: Hue

BIPOC women are a group that is especially facing blockades to their progress in-house.

"Compared to White men, BIPOC women report 1.5 to two times as often that their employers have not addressed fair advancement and promotion opportunities, ensuring gender diverse leadership, retaining Employees of Color, and promoting Employees of Color," the report reads.

"...Alarmingly, work environment gaps between the two groups that had narrowed last year have widened this year."

As more women leaders leave their companies due to the ceiling being lower for them as opposed to their male counterparts, brands are losing important perspectives and women are having to start over at new workplaces.

The latter issue is especially of note, critically among women of color, since half of all People of Color surveyed reported needing better connections in order to get the job that they would like to have. As BIPOC employees report more often than white people that they got their position based on a workplace connection, leaving the company means that they are leaving their valuable connections behind.



Opportunity and diversity have halted since 2020, marking a downturn in equity across workplaces. Image credit: Hue

As a result, the lack of diversity, inclusion and fair practices is pushing BIPOC employees into lower-paying, less desirable positions, as white people increasingly move into positions of power this historic trend only getting worse since the almost-progress of 2020.

These issues are especially dramatic within the media, marketing, entertainment and hospitality markets, with employees in these sectors report facing especially high levels of discrimination, career growth issues and mental health problems without support.

With 81 percent of HR professionals surveyed stating that their companies have not increased diversification efforts since June 2020, the outlook is just as bleak looking forward.

Diversity inclusion

84 percent of employees report that their workplaces have not made any moves to cushion the mental and emotional blows of increased discrimination since 2020, making diversity efforts especially vital.

Companies such as French leather goods and accessories brand Longchamp have been recently attempting to address this through diverse brand ambassadors, appealing to the inclusive nature of the rising Gen Z consumer population ([see story](#)). However, these efforts only go so far as the wealth and employment gap widens, the report stating that as of 2022, white families make on average eight times that of Black families.

As these trends continue, the consumer-facing representation will do little to bring more diverse consumers into the exclusive luxury market or allow them to continue participating in it, or address the worsening situation for BIPOC professionals.



The report reflects the huge barriers that BIPOC workers are facing, which are only set to worsen the longer diversity is ignored. Image credit: Hue

A few luxury names are keen to this knowledge however, with French luxury conglomerate Kering making moves to take on this crisis ([see story](#)). The group is extending its Black in Corporate program to provide mentoring to Black talent, aiming to supplement their careers with added support.

While more substantive action is desperately needed across industries, uplifting in-house BIPOC employees seems to be the biggest necessity right now.

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