

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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**Moral perspectives of equality,
diversity, and inclusion**

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An indisputable “holy trinity”? On the moral value of equality, diversity, and inclusion

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Abstract

Purpose – There seems to exist a widespread, unquestioned and unquestionable consent, both in research and practice, that there is a moral value inherent in equality and related initiatives toward diversity and inclusion. However, this consent is primarily based on political convictions and emotional reasons, and is without any strong ethical grounding. Whilst a considerable volume of research has been carried out into different facets of the economic value of initiatives toward equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), comparatively little research has been undertaken into its moral value. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to structure the moral perspectives on EDI more precisely and more critically.

Design/methodology/approach – After discussing the interrelation of the three concepts equality, diversity and inclusion, the authors discuss the way in which initiatives toward diversity and inclusion are justified morally in literature. The authors point out the crucial position of equality, and then, subsequently, outline how different approaches to equality try to achieve moral legitimacy. Being an important group of initiatives in this debate, the authors subsequently reflect upon the moral (il)legitimacy of affirmative action (AA). The concluding section of this paper provides a brief summary of the findings.

Findings – The moral evaluation of equality, diversity and inclusion remains an under-theorized field. Within the discourse on equality, diversity and inclusion, the term “justice” is largely used in an intuitive way, rather than being rooted in a specific moral philosophy. As there are several conceivable, differing moral perspectives on EDI, one cannot expect an indisputable answer to the question as to whether a given approach toward equality, diversity and inclusion is morally praiseworthy or just. However, the widespread assumption that equality is morally praiseworthy *per se*, and that striving for equality morally justifies any initiative toward diversity and inclusion, is untenable.

Originality/value – This paper addresses the lack of theorizing on the moral value of initiatives toward equality, diversity, and inclusion, such as diversity management, AA or various equal opportunity approaches. Future research could enrich the discourse on the moral evaluation of diversity management, inclusion programs and organizational equality approaches with new philosophical facets and perspectives, perspectives that might differ from those taken in the predominantly American discourse.

Keywords Moral value, Diversity management, Morality, Equality, Affirmative action, Reverse discrimination

Paper type General review



Introduction

Equality, diversity and inclusion are three closely-related concepts. The concept of diversity builds on the fact that there are numerous categories, often referred to as dimensions of diversity, that can be used to describe humans, and that humans can utilize to describe themselves. These dimensions of diversity, such as age, sexual orientation, gender, nationality, etc., can assume different shapes or manifestations; for example, being male, female or intersex, in terms of the dimension of gender. Every human, at a given time, represents at least one manifestation of every dimension of diversity, within a given context.

The vast number of shared similarities, and prevalent differences, between humans, alongside a conceptually infinite number of dimensions, represents the diversity of, for example, a given workforce, a nation or even of humanity as a whole. Since it is often the case, in given contexts, that certain manifestations of specific dimensions are valued more highly than others, the concept of equality is concerned with the way in which an individual (or group) displaying specific manifestations (of any dimension of diversity) is related to that individual's (or group's) (un)equal achievements, status or access to resources. Figurative terms that are often used in this context, in order to describe the (un)equal positioning or standing of the representatives of differing manifestations of given dimensions of diversity, are "hierarchy"/"hierarchization" or "marginalization." In this context, the concept of inclusion refers to the way that these differing manifestations are organized alongside, for example, societal, national or organizational hierarchies; inclusion can also refer to the process of (de)hierarchizing these manifestations. Most voices in the academic and practical discourse on equality, diversity and inclusion assume that a high level of inclusion is positively related to a high level of equality amongst the representatives of the differing manifestations of the dimensions of diversity in question. For many, the state of equality seems to be a positive condition *per se*, which is therefore worth striving for. Thus, it seems to have become an imperative that diversity should be handled (or managed) in a way that promotes the highest degree of inclusion and, with it, the highest degree of equality, possible. Average group values over the specific manifestations of each dimension of diversity often serve as an indicator for this degree. However, it would seem that, within the discourse on equality, diversity and inclusion, it is equality that holds a central position. It seemingly prescribes and legitimates the way in which the inclusion of diversity should happen. The most common term for attempts toward this inclusion is "diversity management." Literature on the moral value of EDI is very scarce (Byrd, 2018; Nkomo, 2014; Oswick and Noon, 2014; Sposato *et al.*, 2015).

Organizational or business research on EDI, which stresses its moral value, seldom reflects upon the specific moral perspective taken, its underlying basic assumptions, or potential points of criticism; for the most part, an everyday understanding of what might be morally praise- and blameworthy is applied (e.g. Jones *et al.*, 2013). Questioning the moral value of EDI would seem to be taboo, which supports the view held by Nietzsche; he, through Zarathustra, compares the "preachers of equality" with secretly vengeful "tarantulas," hiding behind the word "justice," whose goal is to ensure that the "'will to equality' shall henceforth be the name for virtue" (Nietzsche, 1954, p. 100), whilst actually only serving their own "will to power." This leads him to the dictum: "Mistrust all who talk much of their justice. [...] And when they call themselves the good and the just, do not forget that they would be pharisees, if only they had—power" (Nietzsche, 1954, p. 100). Nietzsche exemplifies only one of many critical moral perspectives on EDI, which hitherto have been silent within the academic discourse on EDI. In the same way, the moral legitimacy and value of EDI is rarely expressed explicitly in this discourse, and is rarely embedded in concrete moral philosophies.

Although there seems to be a widespread and unquestioned consent, both in research and practice, that there is a moral value inherent in diversity and inclusion initiatives, there is a lack of theorizing with regard to this, as well as a lack of critically linking these initiatives and their underlying targets with specific moral philosophies. Most research in EDI implicitly values equality as something morally "good," but this is mostly borne out of a political conviction, and without any ethical grounding. While a considerable amount of research has been conducted on different facets of the economic value of equality, diversity and inclusion, very little research has been undertaken on its moral value (e.g. Köllen, 2016; van Dijk, 2017; van Dijk *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, this paper aims at structuring the moral perspectives in EDI more precisely and more critically.

The remainder of this introductory article for the special issue of EDI on "Moral Perspectives of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion" is structured as follows. First, we discuss

the way in which initiatives toward diversity and inclusion are justified morally in literature. We point out the crucial position of equality, and then, second, we outline how the different approaches to equality attempt to achieve moral legitimacy. Since it comprises an important group of initiatives in this debate, we subsequently reflect upon the moral (il)legitimacy of affirmative action (AA). The concluding section of this paper provides a brief summary of the findings of this paper; it gives an overview of the contribution of the four papers of this special issue to the discourse on moral perspectives of equality, diversity and inclusion, and it proposes streams for future research and discussions on this issue.

Equality and the moral “goodness” of Initiatives toward diversity and inclusion

Diversity management and related initiatives toward the inclusion of a diverse workforce are currently a globally widespread practice amongst organizations and territorial authorities, and the diffusion of such initiatives is still increasing (Martínez-Ariño *et al.*, 2018; Vasconcelos, 2017). Besides citing business case arguments for the implementation of these practices (Heres and Benschop, 2010; Kulik, 2014; Soltani *et al.*, 2012), organizations tend to present diversity management as some kind of morally “praiseworthy” or “good” organizational practice in their internal and external communication. They “often try to project the estimated ‘goodness’ of these actions onto the actors themselves, aiming at giving the company [or organization] a general label of ethical ‘goodness’” (Köllen, 2016, p. 216). Often without stating it explicitly, “equality” is assumed to be a crucial indicator for the degree of organizational “goodness” (or even “justice”), which therefore, for many, can be seen as the intended, morally praiseworthy outcome of diversity management initiatives or organizational programs of “inclusion” of a diverse workforce (see, e.g. Brewis, 2017).

Diversity management is, then, assumed to be “socially just and morally desirable” (Lorbiecki and Jack, 2000, p. 21). Within the discourse on EDI, the “proper” management of a diverse workforce has become something of a “moral imperative” (O’Leary and Weatherington, 2006; Vertovec, 2013). Romani *et al.* (2017) summarize this imperative as the “principle of representation, social responsibility, anti-discrimination and equal treatment [accomplished by] HRM practices that seek to blur, or somewhat minimize, the differences with which minority groups might contribute in the name of anti-discrimination and equality of treatment (the moral imperative)” (Romani *et al.*, 2017, p. 273).

The assumed moral value that is ascribed to these management practices is predominantly based on the same considerations that were, in the past, also referred to in order to legitimize equal opportunity and AA (also referred to as “positive action,” “reservation,” or “employment equity”) programs, and to load them morally. From the standpoint of this morality, diversity management should aim at the same goals that equal opportunity or AA initiatives did. One of these goals is adjusting the representation of certain manifestations of certain dimension of diversity (which, in the AA context, are mainly gender and race) on certain organizational levels, with regard to their representation in society. With diversity management, an additional business perspective has entered the discourse; however, its moral value is almost exclusively deduced from its impact (or intention) in achieving some state of group-based equality. “Though arguments based on organizational self-interest might well be the norm amongst advocates of diversity, in principle nothing prevents diversity being argued for as a way of serving the very same moral ends as equal opportunity” (Kaler, 2001, p. 59). Cox (1994) describes this phenomenon in the following way:

In most organizations the representation of culture groups in the overall work population, and especially in the most powerful positions, is highly skewed [...] which makes] equal opportunity issues prominent aspects of diversity work in organizations. [...] Thus for nations and organizations that subscribe to a creed of equal opportunity, a major motive for investing in managing-diversity initiatives is that it is morally and ethically the right thing to do. (Cox, 1994, p. 10)

Some actors even label their diversity approach, and with it their contribution toward equality and inclusion, as an element of their “responsibility” toward society or humanity, and, in doing so, bestow upon themselves the quality of moral “goodness.” Its “moral grounds seem to touch more directly upon inclusion (of individuals), and then, upon equality, [...] [being related to the] social responsibility of corporations [...] and eventually a more egalitarian society” (Romani *et al.*, 2017, p. 274). The category of “equality” itself, then, is not called into question, and it effectively turns into a moral value in itself.

Equality, therefore, is the (partial) goal of initiatives toward diversity and inclusion, which is frequently assumed to be morally desirable, and which attaches moral value to the initiatives themselves. In order to shed more light on the differing ways of attaching moral value to “equality,” the different notions of equality will be discussed in the next section,

The moral legitimization of the different approaches toward equality

Equality is mostly discussed in the form of equality of opportunity (Fleurbaey *et al.*, 2017), equality of outcome, or, less frequently, equality of treatment (Dahlerup, 2007; Klarsfeld *et al.*, 2016) for all employees, regardless of their diverse demographics or backgrounds. Organizations mostly present their attempts to work toward any of these forms of equality as something that is morally praiseworthy or morally good, although they only rarely accentuate this as being their primary incentive (Barclays, 2002; Demuijnck, 2009; Guarnieri and Kao, 2008). In some cases quite explicitly (Fujimoto *et al.*, 2013), but mostly in an implicit way, a state of equality is equated with a state of fairness and (social) justice (Brewis, 2017; Choi and Rainey, 2014). Depending on the form or type of equality in question, this perceived justice can then occur in the form of interactional justice (Bies, 2015), distributive justice (Villanueva-Flores *et al.*, 2017), or procedural justice (Kim and Siddiki, 2018). In this context, the moral value of equality seems to be non-disputable and irrevocable (Frankfurt, 1987; Westen, 1982), and the moral goodness of an organization (or at least of its values) seems to be determined by the ways in which it strives for equality, and the intensity with which it strives.

In terms of the idealization of equality, Kaler (2001) distinguishes between three dominant positions in the discourse on equality and diversity: weak equal opportunity, strong equal opportunity and equal group selection.

Equal opportunity is about the attempt to provide one’s employees with the opportunity to compete “on an equal basis for unequal rewards [...], whereby the] equal basis for competition provided by equal opportunity is selection of merit” (Kaler, 2001, p. 53). The merit in question here is one’s contribution to the organization’s objectives, although the matter of how these contributions can be valued in concrete terms remains open for discussion (Liff and Wajcman, 1996). However, it is safe to assume that mere demographics, such as race, sexual orientation or gender *per se*, cannot be considered as being meritorious. In case the unequal distribution of rewards is solely due to unequal merits, the weak equal opportunity approach backs unequal outcomes. This approach legitimizes diversity and inclusion initiatives which counteract selections or decisions that are based on social group memberships, alongside the differing dimensions of workforce diversity. However, if certain merits are inherent in certain group memberships or demographics, a group related, unequal distribution of outcome is acceptable (Kaler, 2001). Examples of meritorious characteristics are, amongst others, self-confidence, the qualifications of individuals, commitment, aplomb, ambition and experience. Going one step further than the mere possession of such characteristics, the strong equal opportunity approach also takes into account the potential of the individual to acquire them, and to develop them further. Equal opportunities for all individuals, from this perspective, would demand that every individual had the same full potential for acquiring them.

As group-specific barriers might impede the attempts of some individuals to acquire these characteristics, the strong equal opportunity approach backs diversity and inclusion initiatives which exclusively support specific groups, in order to make the members of these

groups more competitive in the struggle for unequal rewards. Such group-specific barriers are often based on, or related to, group-specific ways of being socialized, general social stereotyping, and, especially in the case of the dimension of gender, the way in which domestic responsibilities are traditionally distributed (Blaine and McClure Brenchley, 2018; McMillan-Capehart, 2005). The strong equal opportunity approach proceeds on the assumption that work, and the definition of work-related merits, are not race-, gender-, sexual orientation-, etc., neutral. Since each dimension of diversity has, from this perspective, privileged manifestations in a given context (Acker, 2006; van Dijk *et al.*, 2017), this approach allows remedial initiatives of diversity and inclusion. These initiatives, then, can exclusively address and support representatives of underprivileged manifestations of the respective dimensions of diversity; for example, black, female, foreign or homosexual employees. The strong equal opportunity approach, therefore, legitimizes the unequal treatment of employees, through practices that are often rhetorically framed as AAs or positive actions. This reverse discrimination allows the provision of certain groups of employees with resources to which others may not have access (Newton, 1973; Taylor, 1973). On an averaged group-perspective, one result of such an approach might be the equality of outcome, but this is not perforce the primary goal of this approach.

“Equality of outcome,” in the form of achieving representativeness in all working areas and on all hierarchy levels, is rather the explicit ideal/typical goal of a third approach to equality: the equal group selection approach. “Its ideal outcome is a situation in which every workforce is more or less representative of all the social groupings available to it” (Kaler, 2001, p. 53). Any measure that is legitimized by the strong equal opportunity approach is also legitimized in this approach, which additionally legitimizes quota systems. Focusing primarily on an individual’s demographics or group membership, instead of his or her merits (e.g. when making decisions pertaining to recruitment and promotions) makes this approach, strictly speaking, unrelated to “equal opportunities”; it is no longer about an equal competition for scarce resources.

Approaches to equality, which emphasize the goal of representativeness, are often labeled as “radical” approaches. Approaches to equality, which put an emphasis on the merits of the individual, are often labeled as “liberal” approaches. This distinction was coined by Jewson and Mason (1986); it is a distinction, that is often referred to as the “sameness-difference debate” (Greene, 2015). Intersectional perspectives utilizing this simplistic distinction between radical and liberal approaches partially integrate other dimensions, such as age, class and race (e.g. Acker, 2006; Berger and Guidroz, 2010), but the academic discourse on this issue revolves predominantly around the dimension of gender. The very influential and oft-cited paper from Liff and Wajcman (1996) exemplifies this issue. This is why, within this discourse, the distribution of caring responsibilities between women and men is a central issue (Leitner, 2003); this is an issue that is non-transferable to other dimensions of workforce diversity.

Drawing on Kaler’s (2001) classification of approaches to equality, it is the equal group selection approach and, with certain qualifications, the strong equal opportunity approach that provide legitimacy for direct intervention aiming at redistributing power and resources between social groups. The most widely used term for these interventions, representing some kind of positive discrimination, is AA. These actions can also include quotas for the differing manifestations of certain dimensions of workforce diversity. However, political motivations aside, the topic of how these actions are justifiable morally will now be discussed.

The moral (II-)legitimacy of AAs

One group of arguments in favor of AAs, no matter whether they are labeled as such within organizational diversity management initiatives, is related to the consequences of these actions. Besides potentially positive economic consequences, other alleged positive consequences of these actions are also pointed out in literature.

One line of argument in favor of organizational interventions toward redistributing resources and power from “over-” represented groups to “under-” represented ones sees the impact of role models for members of hitherto underrepresented groups as positive. Providing these groups with such role models might motivate them to follow in their footsteps, or, at least, it might contribute toward convincing them that their demographic *per se* is not a reason for not working in a given area, or at a given level (Securius-Carr and Rohr, 2018; Singh *et al.*, 2006). The basic assumption of this argument is related to a second line of argument.

This line of argument states that segregation (or “exclusion”) is “bad.” Segregation is any state of unrepresentativeness, on whatever hierarchy level or working area, in terms of any dimension of diversity. Overcoming it is seen as “good,” since “that integration of racial, ethnic, and other groups that mark significant lines of social inequality is a vital ideal for a democratic society, necessary for its basic institutions to function successfully” (Anderson, 2010, p. X). With reference to racial segregation in the US society, Anderson (2010) alleges that “if segregation is a fundamental cause of social inequality and undemocratic practices, then integration promotes greater equality and democracy. Hence, it is an imperative of justice. It is also a positive good. It should appeal to us as well as command us to action” (Anderson, 2010, p. 2). Therefore, for Anderson, any race-based AAs that aim at overcoming this segregation are morally legitimate; she very much connects it with her conviction that democracy is worth protecting and segregation might destabilize democracy.

“Segregation of social groups is a principal cause of group inequality. It isolates disadvantaged groups from access to public and private resources, from sources of human and cultural capital, and from the social networks that govern access to jobs, business connections, and political influence. It depresses their ability to accumulate wealth and gain access to credit. It reinforces stigmatizing stereotypes about the disadvantaged and thus causes discrimination. Segregation also undermines democracy” (Anderson, 2010, p. 2). These arguments are intuitively comprehensible; however, they lack a clear ethical grounding. Furthermore, they do not resolve the conflict between the standpoint that every individual deserves the same respect, treatment and opportunities (for whatever reason), and the fact that these practices make the individual a prisoner of her or his demographics.

Another line of argument is less concerned with the consequences of these initiatives, but legitimates AA as rectification for historical injustice. In the context of the USA, Jarvis Thomson (2013) morally justifies the systematic disadvantaging of white males through AA in two ways. First, the potential that they might have benefitted from policies that have advantaged them in the past. Second, she derives its legitimacy from the competitive advantage that, in her opinion, was available to white males through their higher level of confidence, which was a product of their higher status (Jarvis Thomson, 2013). Others take the same line by arguing that disadvantaging certain individuals because of their demographics or group membership is legitimate when this membership is related to certain competitive advantages that non-members do not receive, or have not received in the past. From this perspective, reverse discrimination seems to be justified, as being a compensation for disadvantaging that has been experienced in the past (Boxill, 1972; Sher, 1975). Since the group memberships in question (such as being female, white, transgender and heterosexual) have not been chosen by their members, Lippert-Rasmussen (2017) categorizes these arguments as “innocent beneficiary argument[s] for affirmative action” (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2017, p. 74), from which its advocates derive the “putative obligations of the innocent beneficiaries of past injustice to benefit the involuntary victims of those past injustices” (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2017, p. 73). However, what is designated “justice” from this perspective can only count for group averages, since not every individual is perforce a victim or beneficiary of historic “injustice.” Disentangling the underlying beneficiary principle (see, e.g. Butt, 2014) from the concept of luck egalitarianism, Lippert-Rasmussen

(2017) shows that “affirmative action is never required by justice because of a duty for the innocent beneficiaries of past injustice to compensate their victims” (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2017, p. 77). However, from the perspective of luck egalitarianism, striving for some kind of distributive justice, AA can be justified on the group level, but not as a duty on the individual level (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2017).

Conclusion, this special issue and future research

Conclusion

Morally evaluating equality, diversity and inclusion remains an under-theorized field. Within the discourse on equality, diversity and inclusion, the term “justice” is predominantly used in a more intuitive way, and is mostly not rooted in a specific philosophy. Just as “there is no sound general answer to the question ‘is affirmative action just?’” (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2017, p. 76), one can also not expect an indisputable answer to the question as to whether any approach toward equality, diversity and inclusion is morally praiseworthy or just. However, much more critical reflection and theorizing of the moral value (i.e. the moral “goodness” or “evilness”) of the differing approaches is required. Instead of implicitly applying prescriptive ethics, which are mostly based on intuitive reasoning, or simple political convictions, future research could enrich the discourse on the moral evaluation of diversity management, inclusion programs and organizational equality approaches, with new philosophical facets and perspectives; perspectives that might differ from those taken in the predominantly American discourse. This special issue hopes to contribute to this endeavor through the four contributions included within it.

Articles included in this special issue

The article “Ethics and intercultural communication in diversity management” by Eila Isotalus and Marja-Liisa Kakkuri-Knuuttila demonstrates the need for a radically new approach to diversity management, which shifts the focus in diversity management on meanings and communication. The central role of meanings should be obvious, with the perception that all diversity categories (such as sexual orientation, race, gender, etc.) are loaded with contextually varying cultural meanings. Furthermore, these diversity categories are neither ethically nor politically neutral, hence presenting the challenge of deconstructing value hierarchies, detrimental both from the ethical and economic perspectives. To improve the team performance and product quality, team members need to overcome stereotypical categorizations, and get to know each other’s methods of thinking and acting. For the development of the dialogical skills needed to promote healthy communication practices, the paper introduces negotiating reality dialogue developed by Ariane Berthoin Antal and Victor Friedman. Because putting such diversity management measures into practice presupposes both emotional and cognitive development, its challenges are discussed in terms of Aristotelian virtue ethics.

The article “Justice as fairness in the workplace: A trajectory for managing diversity” by Pradeepa Dahanayake, Diana Rajendran, Christopher Selvarajah and Glenda Ballantyne extends the discourse on the moral evaluation of diversity management, inclusion programs and organizational equality approaches, by introducing conceptual tools to bridge the gap between literature on organizational justice and diversity management, and by the empirical analysis of two cases highlighting the significance of this approach. The conceptual analysis consists of: first, presenting four categories of workplace justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice) and four theories of justice (equity theory, social exchange theory and John Rawl’s and Amartya Sen’s theories of social justice); and, second, discussing their relevance to diversity management. Both of the two cases consist of comparing diversity practices and consequences in two organizations in Australia with the help of the conceptualization of justice and fairness as described.

Two organizations are compared with respect to their gender pay inequity measures; the other two with respect to their means of coping with cultural diversity. Significant differences between the compared organizations yield a vivid picture of the complexity of issues linking justice and diversity management.

The article “HPWS and climate for inclusion: A moral legitimacy lens” by Jennifer Harrison, Janet Boekhorst, and Yin Yu offers a conceptual model to expand the notion of climate for inclusion (CFI) to include moral legitimacy assessments of employees on the organization’s human relations policies, specified as high-performance work systems (HPWS). The moral legitimacy assessments of inclusion-oriented HPWS are conceptualized through the application of Suchman’s (1995) four categories: structural, procedural, consequential and personal. In the model, the employee’s moral identity is offered as a factor influencing the person’s assessment of each of the four dimensions. To form a collective evaluation of CFI, the variability of climate assessments between organizational groups, such as majority and minority groups, is taken into account as a mediating factor between individual- and collective-level perceptions.

Looking at the most significant international documents on disability, the article “Remarks on Disability Rights Legislation” by John-Stewart Gordon and Felice Tavera-Salyutov reviews the history of disability rights legislation. Drawing on the concept of “human rights,” the authors identify patterns that in future could be crucial for the disability movement. They describe a fully inclusive and embracing society as a utopian goal that it is worth striving for a goal that only can be reached when people with impairments are fully included.

Future research

Future research could continue to derive the moral value, or question the value, of different approaches to EDI from the perspective of specific moral philosophies. Future research might also apply a perspective of deontological (e.g. Hegel, 1821, 1991; Kant, 1785, 2011, or others), asking whether organizations and/or individuals within these organizations do indeed have an obligation or duty (or even responsibility) toward approaching equality, diversity and inclusion in a certain way. The question might be asked, from the perspective of virtue ethics (e.g. Anscombe, 1958; Aquinas, 1570; Aristotle, 2000; Plato, 1907, or others), as to whether there is a virtuous way of approaching EDI within organizations, and, if so, what the most virtuous way might be. From a utilitarian perspective (e.g. Bentham, 1789; Mill, 1863, or others) the question might be asked as to how organizations, or individuals within organizations, should approach EDI in order to maximize categories such as welfare, happiness, autonomy, etc. From these perspectives, or from the perspective of other moral philosophies, research might question how existing organizational or individual approaches to EDI can be evaluated morally. Another research stream could focus on the role of the incentives of organizations or individuals in their efforts regarding EDI. The question might be posed as to how genuine incentives determine the moral praiseworthiness/blameworthiness of organizational approaches to EDI (e.g. applying ethics from Hume, 1751; Schopenhauer, 1860, 2010, or others). Future research could also examine more closely how the attribution of moral worth to different approaches to EDI might be unmasked and deconstructed as a mere means to other ends. Philosophical perspectives on the notional and moral worth of equality and inequality as such could be developed further. Research could examine whether (certain) organizational inequalities could be “just,” morally acceptable, or even morally praiseworthy, or even whether equality is a moral category at all. Future research could also direct its attention toward moral perspectives of quota systems and AAs, asking what kind of understanding of “equality” these measures express, and how (dis)advantaging of certain groups of employees can be evaluated morally.