

This paper contributes to knowledge on how US workforce development efforts in distributed wind (DW) can proceed in a more just and equitable manner, taking into account demographic disparities in representation, as well as scalar challenges (the rural nature of work). The creation of a replicable rubric to guide workforce development assessments and potential collaborators gives other researchers an important tool to aid in future workforce planning.

However, several areas warrant further clarification or development—especially as it relates to the different dimensions they weight. I would like to see an acknowledgement of other dimensions of justice (not just procedural and representational). The authors may choose not to include this in their rubric, but they should make a case for why they have not chosen to include it. This can be achieved by bringing in more environmental justice-oriented scholarship.

Furthermore, the different weights/scores given in the rubric require greater justification—what is it about an HBCU versus an all-girls school that gives it different weight? Perhaps the point is self-evident, but given the gender disparity in the DW workforce, further elaboration could help to clarify the different weights given. Related to this, the paper presents the scoring metrics as “objective”, but they are, indeed, normative assessments—I for one don’t have an issue with this, but the authors may wish to consider more clearly stating that because the paper is focused on equity objectives anchored in different notions of justice, this influences their scoring criteria given the rubric’s purpose (or something to that effect).

Overall, I do believe that the paper achieves its mission. It successfully introduces a rubric that can guide future workforce development efforts. Whether or not this rubric can be implemented right now (at least in the US), however, is another matter. I recommend accepting this paper with minor revisions to address the above critique, and to consider implementing a few other suggested changes to enhance the articles clarity and depth of the analysis.

Specific suggestions:

Line 29-31: *I suggest that the authors revise the language given changes to the federal landscape.*

Lines 134 to 143: *The authors should explain why they did not work with workers, those actually employed by DW, and what they understand as the rationale for the workforce gap, including its demographic makeup.*

Line 201: *The authors should elaborate on why the radius selected is 100 miles. Why not 50 or some other number? They might also consider that 100 miles “as the crow flies”; i.e., in a straight line, is not how people travel in rural communities.*

Line 213: *The authors should explicitly reference to Schlosberg’s work. A great deal has been written in response to his work, which should also be considered. They might also explain why distribution isn’t considered as part of their criteria. This especially opens the rubric up to a critique of “tokenizing” or perpetuating a “checkbox” notion of justice.*

Schlosberg, D. (2004). *Reconceiving Environmental Justice: Global Movements And Political Theories*. *Environmental Politics*, 13(3), 517–540. <https://doi-org.ezproxy2.library.colostate.edu/10.1080/0964401042000229025>.