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Discrimination, Organizational Commitment, and the Impact of Diversity Programs on Black Millennials

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Abstract

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by

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Abstract

There is limited research on the impact of diversity and inclusion programs on the organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials. This quantitative study, which was guided by social identity theory, examined discrimination in the corporate workplace faced by Black Millennials, born between 1977 and 2000, and how it influences their organizational commitment. The purpose was to examine whether the presence of diversity and inclusion programs moderated the relationship between perceived discrimination and organizational commitment. In line with this purpose, 3 research questions were formulated. Data were collected from143 Black Millennials using the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire and the Perceived Discrimination Against Minorities Measure. The results of the analysis, using regression analysis procedures, indicated that perceived discrimination scores significantly predicted organizational commitment, but that the presence of the presence of a diversity and inclusion program did not moderate the relationship between perceived discrimination and organizational commitment. It was also found that Black Millennials working in organizations with a diversity and inclusion program had a significantly higher mean organizational commitment score compared to Black Millennials working in organizations with no diversity and inclusion programs. The study suggests that such programs can increase Black Millennials' organizational commitment, but additional research is necessary to determine how these programs can most effectively reduce workplace discrimination and improve the workplace experiences of this population.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The United States has a substantial history of oppression of Black and Brown persons spanning from the time the first settlers came to America (Reich, 2017), and that oppression continues to the present day. Most notably, the United States was a part of the transatlantic slave trade, in which millions of Africans were stolen from Africa, brought to the Americas via the horrendous Middle Passage and forced into chattel slavery for over 400 years (Alexander, 2010). Although the United States received only a minority of that trade, it left a lasting legacy and was perhaps the primary cause of the American Civil War (Reich, 2017).

Although there is no precise definition of what constitutes a generation, the notion is broadly considered to be anywhere from 25-30 years (Pew Research Center, 2018). Thus, Africans were enslaved in the Americas for over 13 generations. Following the enslavement of Africans, which ended in 1865-1866, after a short period of rebuilding in the Black community (Alexander, 2010), the Jim Crow era began. This era involved African Americans being subjected to cruel and unusual laws and punishments, of separation, and being subject to a justice system that would ensure they would remain second class citizens in the United States (Higginbotham, 2015).

Following the Civil Rights Act of 1964, some progress was made with regard to the treatment of Blacks: discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, or other such attributes has been outlawed (Reich, 2017). Though progress has been made, it has been

slow (Reich, 2017). Some argue that discrimination is no longer a significant issue facing Blacks in the 21st Century, based on this progress and other factors, such as the election of the first Black president (McGirt, 2016a). Research, however, suggests that discrimination is still an issue for Blacks in housing, the acquisition of loans, schooling, and employment (Higginbotham, 2015). For the purposes of this study, Black will refer to any individual who is of the Black race, including African American, Afro-Caribbean, African, and Afro-Latino (U. S. Census, 2011).

Current research suggests that Black employees face more difficulty than their White counterparts in acquiring jobs, and once on the job, Blacks continue to face disparities in treatment and pay (Reich, 2017). Over the last 2 decades, organizations have begun to implement diversity and inclusion programs to mitigate perceptions of discrimination in the workplace, and to better harness the talent of their entire workplace, thus improving business results (McGirt, 2016a). These programs have also become more important with the globalization of businesses, as it is becoming increasingly critical that individuals know how to work with and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds not only in the United States, but abroad (Rowntree, Lewis, Price, & Wyckoff, 2015). It is imperative that the impact of diversity and inclusion programs on marginalized groups be assessed so as to begin to work towards a solution to workplace discrimination, to harness the utility of diversity and inclusion programs and create social change.

Statement of the Problem

Millennials now represent the most substantial portion of the workforce in the United States (Pew Research, 2018). Although Millennial representation is increasing, there is a lack of representation of Black Millennials in corporate settings, especially in leadership positions (Eaton & Difilippo, 2016). Black Millennials are often of the opinion that they are only very recently being invited to participate in real-world conversations about the workplace, and that the general public does not take them seriously (McGirt, 2016b). Black Millennials are typically valued as consumers, but valued less as employees. However, due to high percentages of interest in technology and social media, amongst Black Millennials (McGirt, 2016a), which are growing in significance across all organizations, this group will clearly be essential as employees to many types of organizations (Duffett, 2015).

This lack of representation of Black Millennials in the workplace could be attributed to their perceived lack of interest in the respective field/business, a fear on the part of the organization of *truly* being inclusive, nepotism within the organization, discrimination, and other factors (Eaton & DiFilippo, 2016). In response to these latter factors, one of the key research directions involves ways to make in-group identities more inclusive (Hogg, Abrams, & Brewer, 2017). Discrimination, specifically, has negative implications for the targeted individual as well as the organization (Hirsh & Cha, 2018). Discrimination can prove costly for the organization due to decreased

productivity due to physical illness and withdrawal behaviors and increased voluntary turnover (Triana, Jayasinghe, & Pieper, 2015).

Organizations can attempt to mitigate the effects of discrimination by implementing diversity and inclusion programs (King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2010). Although these programs have been linked with levels of job satisfaction (King et al., 2010), Black Millennials remain underrepresented across many workplaces and there is a lack of research on this group, and more specifically, little literature was found on how diversity and inclusion programs influence the relationship between perceived discrimination in the workplace and the organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials. Furthermore, based on the limited amount of literature that does exist there is a conflict as to whether or not the use of diversity and inclusion programs can foster such an environment. This study sought to fill the research gap and determine the effectiveness and utility of diversity and inclusion programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine what relationship, if any, exists between Black Millennials' perceived workplace discrimination and organizational commitment in corporate organizations in the United States. The study also examined the extent to which diversity and inclusion programs moderated this key relationship. Participants were recruited via convenience and snowball sampling, and data were collected through online survey questionnaires.

According to G*Power analysis, a minimum sample size of 128 participants was needed. Data were analyzed through regression and moderation analysis. The knowledge gained from this research could (a) help employers better understand the effects of perceived discrimination and how it influences Black Millennials' organizational commitment levels and (b) support the development and implementation of diversity and inclusion programs on a broader scale.

Significance of the Study

Diversity and inclusion programs are typically implemented to decrease or eliminate perceptions of discrimination in the workplace and to create a more inclusive work environment. Although research has shown that Millennials expect that their employer will value diversity in word and action (Griffith & Beaudan, 2017), and that organizational commitment is linked to positive perception of the diversity climate of an organization (Wolfson, Kraiger, & Finkelstein, 2011), there has been less research done on Black Millennials' expectations and commitment. Although the percentage of Millennials in the workforce is now larger than any other generation (Pew Research, 2018), and Black Millennials, particularly, have proven to be valuable employees based on their high interest levels in arenas such as social media and technology (McGirt, 2016a), there is minimal research on how organizational factors affect them in the workplace. This study also addressed the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion programs to this group by determining whether the presence of a diversity and inclusion

program influenced organizational commitment levels, and examining whether the presence of these programs moderated the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment.

The shifting in the demographics of the workplace includes increased overall Millennial representation, and it also includes the growing number of backgrounds and cultures represented in the workplace due to the increased globalization of business (Lussier & Achua, 2016). To remain competitive in the global marketplace and serve customers across markets, organizations need to address both their diversity representation and the inclusiveness of their workplace culture and climate (Lussier & Achua, 2016). Based on the underrepresentation of Black Millennials in many corporate workplaces, especially in leadership positions (Eaton & Difilippo, 2016), research that addresses factors surrounding this group in the corporate work environment is necessary, as well as examines the potential effectiveness of diversity programs could prove to be useful for many organizations.

Black Millennials tend to feel devalued as employees (McGirt, 2016a) and are often one of the most likely targets of discrimination in the workplace; therefore, it would be beneficial to understand how diversity and inclusion programs affect this group. Knowledge of their influence could show the effectiveness of these types of programs and convince more organizations to implement them. The workplace is becoming more diverse, making inclusiveness more relevant. Well-executed inclusiveness efforts can

ensure that all employees have equal opportunities to succeed and that they are not mistreated in the workplace based on their group membership. The results of this study could (a) provide insight into how diversity and inclusion programs influence the organizational commitment of Black Millennials, (b) ultimately lead to improved workplace conditions for many groups, and (c) increased organizational commitment, and thus improve the bottom line.

Nature of the Study

This study was quantitative and correlational in nature. As such, it involved a regression analysis and a moderation analysis to examine the influence of the predictor variable on the criterion variable. The study examined whether the predictor variable (perceived discrimination as measured by the Perceived Discrimination Against Minorities Measure [PDAMM]) predicted the criterion variable (organizational commitment level as measured by the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire [OCQ]), and whether the presence of a diversity and inclusion program within the organization moderated this relationship.

Participants were solicited using two sampling techniques: convenience sampling, in which the sample was drawn from the part of the population that was accessible, and snowball sampling, where an initial wave of participants completed the study, and referred others who fit the participation criteria (a Black Millennial working in a corporate environment). Once candidates agreed to participate, the SurveyMonkey (2010)

platform was used. Instruments included the PDAMM, the OCQ, and a survey that captured demographic information.

The relationship of interest was Black Millennials' organizational commitment levels and their perceptions of discrimination within organizations that do and do not have diversity and inclusion programs. Organizational commitment levels were measured with the OCQ; perceived discrimination was measured with the PDAMM. Analyses compared organizations that did and did not have diversity and inclusion programs; there was also a test for a moderating effect.

The commitment levels of Black Millennials to their organizations suggest that Tajifel's (1972) theory of social identity and will reflect their sense of belonging to an in-group or out-group. Comparison of the OCQ scores across groups (organizations with diversity and inclusion programs) indicated how these programs influenced belonging, as reflected by organizational commitment level. A multiple linear regression moderation analysis (Hayes, 2009) was used to assess whether the presence of a diversity and inclusion program moderated the relationship between perceived workplace discrimination and organizational commitment for Black Millennials.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This studied was guided by three research questions.

RQ1: Does perceived discrimination among Black Millennials significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations?

*H*01: Perceived discrimination among Black Millennials does not significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations.

*H*a1: Perceived discrimination among Black Millennials significantly predicts their organizational commitment in corporate organizations.

RQ2: Does the presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black millennials?

*H*02: The presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations does not significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials.

*H*a2: The presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderates the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials.

RQ3: Is there a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without?

*H*03: There is no significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without.

*H*a3: There is a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this study was Tajifel's (1972) social identity theory (SIT). According to this theory, the group with which an individual identifies serves as a critical source of pride, self-esteem, a sense of belonging; the individual's identity is tied to membership in the group (Tajifel, 1972). Tajifel's theoretical work has been used to study employee resource groups in the workplace (Welbourne, Rolf, & Schlachter, 2017). It explains the creation of in-groups and how, as a part of these groups, individuals seek to distinguish their groups from others; the strength of the individual's social identification with their respective in-group has also been found to influence behaviors of in-group members (Welbourne, Rolf, & Schlachter, 2017). The work of Welbourne et al. (2017) provided the framework to examine how organizational commitment levels can be (a) linked to inclusion in the workplace as well as (b) negatively associated with perceived discrimination in the workplace.

When individuals come together to form an in-group, an out-group also emerges. According to SIT, the in-group connects based on the appeal of shared values, belief in the status of the in-group, and the perceived prestige of the in-group (Towards Harmony, 2017). Although there are benefits to membership in the in-group, such as increased self-

esteem, there are drawbacks as well, including the perception of a threat caused by the existence of outsiders (Towards Harmony, 2017). The idea that the members of the out-group present a threat to members of the in-group could contribute to (a) tension between the two groups and (b) difficulties existing in the same workplace. Diversity and inclusion programs could contribute to the creation of an in-group to which all employees would have access and could be a part of. This broadened in-group would be based on pride in the organization and shared organizational values, as opposed to pride in the previously existing in-groups, such as race, ethnicity, gender, etc., which would not only contribute to lower levels of discrimination, but to a more harmonious workplace. It is likely that employee engagement and organizational commitment would also be improved by the creation of this modified in-group.

Assumptions

In research, assumptions are critical to assess as they encompass and frame the research process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). That is to say, assumptions are basic foundational elements of the study which the assumes to be true to conduct the study. In the current study, it was assumed that the participants would answer the questions on both of the instruments honestly. Further, a secondary assumption was that the participants would be honest when reporting their racial group membership and their age, in order that the researcher is able to ensure Millennial group membership as defined using the birth ranges commonly adopted in the literature. Lastly, it was assumed that the

selected instruments would accurately measure the concepts of interest as outlined by the literature.

Limitations

Study limitations are variables, such as the participant criterion, that are necessary to gather data towards the purpose of the study. As the study was interested in Black Millennials, it was necessary to intentionally select participants that are members of these groups. Convenience sampling, as well as snowball or chain referral sampling were used to recruit for the study. Both are nonprobability methods, where the researcher locates individuals from the target population that are available (convenience sampling) and then asks them to refer other members of the target population (snowball sampling; Babbie, 2017). Nonprobability methods, while most appropriate, could pose a threat to internal validity. Such specific inclusion and exclusion criteria may improve external validity, and the findings of the study may accurately and appropriately be applied to the study population. However, as convenience and snowball sampling methods were used, potentially biasing the sample, external validity may be affected. The results may not be generalizable to *all* Black Millennials, especially those who live in more rural areas and who may not be accessible to the researcher or eligible survey participants.

The bigger limitation, however, was that the OCQ and PDAMM ordinal ordinal scales as opposed to interval scales. Analyzing ordinal level data the same as interval level data is a weakness, as it presumes an equal distance between all points on the

ordinal scale. Because this is not the case, it can make it more difficult to establish measures of central tendency.

Scope and Delimitations

Delimitations are those characteristics and definitions the researcher sets as boundaries for the study, and which include specific inclusion and exclusion criteria (Mujis, 2011). To keep the sample narrow enough, it was limited to Black Millennials working in corporate organizations in the United States. Individuals that do not meet these criteria will be excluded. The generalizability of this study will be limited towards Black Millennials working in corporate organizations in the United States; however, this study may provide foundational knowledge for future researchers to extend the generalizability of the study. Following, the definition of terms are presented.

Definition of Terms

Definitions of key terms are provided to ensure understanding of certain terms used throughout the study and to provide context.

Black: For the purposes of this study, Black will refer to any individual who is of the Black race, including African American, Afro-Caribbean, African, and Afro-Latino (U. S. Census, 2011).

Discrimination: Discrimination refers to the illegal unequal treatment of individuals or groups of individuals based on their ethnicity or race (Pager & Shepherd, 2008).

Ethnicity: Ethnicity refers to distinction made on cultural indicators such as language, national origin, food, religion and other markers (Frable, 1997).

Millennials: There is no widely agreed upon or accepted range of birth years that defines this group. Generally, the term Millennials refers to individuals born between the years of 1977 and 2000 (Millennial Marketing, 2020), plus or minus a few years in either direction.

Race: Race refers to a parallel set of social and physical definitions, but broadly and refers to distinctions in physical features such as skin color, eyes/nose shape, and hair texture (Frable, 1997).

Summary

Discrimination in the workplace continues to affect the workplace climate by influencing employees, particularly those of color. The Millennial generation represents the majority of the workforce, and the demographics of the workplace continue to become more diverse. Therefore, it is important that the discrimination that Black Millennials perceive be examined in its relationship to other variables. Using the PDAMM and the OCQ, this study assessed the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion programs by determining whether or not they moderated the relationship between the discrimination that Black Millennials face in the corporate workplace and this group's organizational commitment. Should diversity and inclusion programs be found to

moderate this relationship, the knowledge gained from this study could serve as evidence for employers to begin implementing these types of programs on a broader scale.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literature related to Millennials, discrimination in the workplace and its effects, as well as diversity and inclusion programs and their potential impact for both the individual as well as the organization.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

For adults working in the United States, it is possible to spend more time in the workplace than at home or with their families (Roman, Flood, & Genadek, 2017). However, the workplace environment differs across the United States and many individuals struggle with work-life balance (Moen, 2018). It is thus essential to understand the nuances involved in the workplace. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made discrimination in employment and public accommodations illegal at the federal level, discrimination still occurs based on a variety of factors and group memberships: for example, gender, race/ethnicity, age, disability status, religion, veteran status, and some other group memberships. Although discrimination can be based on a number of factors, the most prevalent feature that is susceptible to discrimination may be race.

As Millennials are now the largest generation in the workforce (Pew Research, 2018), there has been some research done on Millennials and their values and preferences in the workplace; there has been much research done on discrimination in the workplace and the outcomes of discrimination, including the implications for the individual and the organization. However, research regarding discrimination that Black Millennials face in the workplace, specifically, and how it shapes the workplace and associated outcomes for this sub-group is understudied in academic literature.

Literature Search Strategy

For this study, computer-based information searches were used to locate past and present information on the topic of this study. The literature reviewed in this chapter, which provided the framework for the study, includes peer-reviewed journal articles and books The following databases were used: Thoreau Multi-Database, PsycINFO, SocINDEX, PsycARTICLES, Sage, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, ProQuest, and ABI.. The following keywords and concepts were used, alone and in combination: *discrimination, effects of discrimination, workplace attrition, African Americans in the workplace, Black Millennials, Millennials, values, organizational commitment, turnover intention, diversity and inclusion, intent to quit, workplace, diversity programs,* and *employee loyalty.*

Social Identity Theory

This study was based on Tajifel's (1972) social identity theory. According to SIT, the group with which an individual identifies offers a critical source of pride, self-esteem, a sense of belonging; the individual's identity is tied to membership in the group (Tajifel, 1972). However, the creation of an in-group results in the creation of an out-group. The in-group is appealing based on the notion of a shared value system, a belief in the group's status and competitiveness, and on the existence of the outsiders whose perceived "otherness" is often associated with a threat (Towards Harmony, 2017). When considered to be a part of an in-group, individuals want to distinguish this group from other groups,

and the strength of an individual's social identification with their in-group has been found to influence behaviors (Welbourne, Rolf, & Schlachter, 2017) and boost self-esteem (Towards Harmony, 2017).

SIT originated in the study of social psychology, as one might expect given its focus on social identity. However, as with many sociological and psychological theories, it did not take long for it to be applied to the business context. For example, in 1989, Ashforth and Mael (1989) were already examining the ways in which SIT could be applied as a tool to understand the organizational context. From this perspective, there are several layers of social identity at issue. On the one hand, there is the level at which the organization and all its members represent an overall in-group while those outside of it represent an out-group. However, more specific in-group identities may form within the organization at multiple levels, such as management versus line employees, splits along departmental lines, or splits along gender or racial lines (Tajifel, 1972). The extent to which each of these different subgroups comes to exist within a given organizational context depends heavily upon that specific context and its key attributes.

Another early development in the application of SIT was its connection by Stets and Burke (2000), who found that the differences between identity theory and SIT were more differences in emphasis than differences in basic substance, and that the two theories of identity can be combined to create a more complete view of the self. Others build upon the foundation of SIT to develop theories of organizational function. For

example, Hogg (2001) used the lens of SIT to develop an approach to leadership which views leadership as being a product of in-group attraction, wherein the person who seems to exhibit the strongest prototypical in-group characteristics is vested with authority and may rise to a position of influence within the group.

Such early research laid a strong foundation, ensuring the continuing relevance of SIT in the more recent literature. Within the context of corporations, one significant use of SIT in recent years has been to examine entrepreneurship, explaining how a person's group memberships may strongly determine the types of entrepreneurship they are drawn to. This may be especially important for social entrepreneurship or trying to start businesses that address social good (Pan, Gruber, & Binder, 2019). The importance of group identity in this respect may reflect the importance of group identity when it comes to retrofitting social justice into existing firms, such as through decreasing discrimination. Another key factor may be intergroup threats, however. Stephan and Stephan (2017) explained how perceived threat from outside a social group can cause reactions, and that most intergroup conflict arises from real or perceived cases of intergroup threat. Considering that, even within organizations, group identity can easily take on a racial component, it is not difficult to imagine that greater inclusivity of Black Millennials could serve to create a perceived case of intergroup threat from the existing social groups (Stephan & Stephan, 2017).

From this perspective, the inclusion of Black Millennials may pose a double intergroup threat to the managers in charge of staffing. This comes from two sources; firstly, from being Black, and secondly, from being Millennial. Although Millennials have ascended to become the most prevalent generation in the workplace, many management positions are still held by older generations (Higgs & Gilleard, 2015). Furthermore, the generational conflict between Millennials and older generations is well documented (e.g. Higgs & Gilleard, 2015). Therefore, to a White manager of an older generation, Black Millennials represent a source of intergroup threat on two levels, whereas White Millennials only represent such a threat upon one level. This may be one of the key determinants in the exclusion of Black Millennials.

This notion is supported by the social identity perspective on leadership as posited by Hogg (2001). From this perspective, those who are invested with leadership roles tend to be "prototypical" of the in-group which appoints them to power. In the corporate context, of course, formal leadership is not bestowed by fellow employees in the same way as Hogg (2001) conceptualized, and yet there is still an identity aspect in two regards. Firstly, leaders may gravitate toward what they perceive as the prototypical in-group identity so as to gain informal authority with the group even after being appointed by formal authority. Secondly, there is little reason to think that this notion of in-group prototypicality would not still apply when leaders (i.e., managers) are being appointed by a higher organizational level which still has its own in0group identity. The role of SIT in

corporate leadership is supported by more recent research as well (van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016). Indeed, the same arguments used in the previous section as to why managers might hesitate to hire Black Millennials might also explain why, even if hired, Black Millennials do not often advance through the ranks to achieve leadership positions.

That being said, this demand-side issue might not be the only application of SIT to the problem of Black Millennials' underrepresentation. Another angle may be that Black Millennials themselves perceive corporations through the lens of in-groups and out-groups as being a hostile out-group rather than an in-group. This tension may then manifest as decreased interest in applying for jobs in what they perceive as a White-dominated work environment. Indeed, even should they apply and be hired, it is possible that a lack of perceived social support from within the organization would lead to increased levels of attrition (Guan & So, 2016). In this sense, the idea of intergroup threat applies from both sides, with the conflicting in-groups resulting in Black Millennials both perceiving their coworkers (rightly or wrongly, as the case may be) as a threatening outgroup even as those coworkers perceive them as the same.

All of this s peaks to the complex and complicating role of the self in intergroup relations (Hogg, Abrams, & Brewer, 2017). SIT identifies the self as being influenced by multiple in-group identities, and the confluence of those identities has important practical implications when group friction emerges. Ideally, in the workplace context, both Black Millennials and their coworkers would draw upon the shared group identity as coworkers

to forge a more harmonious interrelationship. In reality, however, this does not always happen. On the contrary, often conflicting group identities come to the fore, and it is not always evident how best to diffuse these conflicts. The stronger a person's relationship with a particular group identity, the more likely he or she is to perceive social support from that group (Guan & So, 2016). While this has positive implications, it also means that, when a person perceives a weaker relationship with an in-group, he or she is a part of, he or she will perceive less support from that group, regardless of whether or not it is actually being offered. This has troubling implications for overcoming the divisiveness inherent in many social identity group conflicts such as those which may arise in the professional context.

That being said, it is still possible—and desirable—to foster stronger in-group identification with a specific group, such as a sense of such identity shared between all employees of a firm. Increased in-group identification offers advantages above and beyond avoiding the issues of discrimination and a lack of social support that occur in its advance. First and foremost, in this category is that improved trust and prosocial behavior. According to Whitham (2018), group identity has a powerful effect in terms of increasing people's willingness to give in general exchange. General exchange represents an important and powerful form of prosocial behavior in which people give without the expectation of concrete repayment, but rather with the expectation of somehow being repaid in kind, or even help others with only the expectation that those on the receiving

end “pay it forward.” This type of generalized exchange is risky and can easily be taken advantage of (Whitham, 2018). Accordingly, a willingness to engage in it is a powerful indicator of trust. In an experimental study, Whitham (2018) proved that group-based shared social identity is a powerful motivator of prosocial generalized exchange behavior and that, moreover, group-based shared identity has a significantly stronger effect on prosocial general exchange than does category-based shared identity.

This result is promising for the context of Black Millennials in corporations because it means that forming group-based identities, such as identity based on being employees together, likely has the power to outweigh categorical identity (belonging to a category such as being Black or being a Millennial). Therefore, the most important application of SIT to the context of boosting the presence of Black Millennials in corporate settings is likely the creation of a more inclusive in-group identity for employees that does not run along racial or generational lines. In this sense, the study aimed to test the implications of SIT by determining if this is true, as diversity and inclusion programs are intended to have the effect of fostering such an identity within a firm.

When conceptualizing the creation of a diversity and inclusion program from a social identity framework, the creation of a more diverse and inclusive workplace will benefit the individual and the organization, by creating an in-group that is accessible to everyone, and of which all employees feel a part. As a member of the in-group, the

source of pride and esteem will be the organization, as opposed to the source of pride being based on another attribute such as race, age, gender, veteran status, etc. These smaller groups differentiate the members from one another and cause for smaller in-groups to be created to which all employees do not have access. In-groups are typically seen to be superior to the out-group in respect of both the favorable and unfavorable characteristics attached to the particular group (Towards Harmony, 2017). Thus, membership in the inclusive organization-wide, department-wide, and team-wide in-groups will likely result in behaviors that are congruent with the values held by the organization, and that unite the employees as opposed to drawing attention to how they differ from one another.

Millennials

There are currently four generations in the workforce, including Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y/Millennials, and the first members of Generation Z (Lapoint & Liprie-Spence, 2017). An article by Smith and Nichols (2015) reviewed the literature about Millennials and defined this group as individuals born between the years of 1980-2000, due to their closeness to the new Millennium and being raised in a more digital age, another study done by Pew Research (2018) considers Millennials to be those born between the years of 1981-1996, and Millennial Marketing uses a broader range of 1977-2000 (the latter range was used for this study). With the changing demographics of the workplace in regards to generational/age makeup, there has been a fair amount of

research done on how the values and workplace preferences held by Millennials may differ from the values and preferences of other generations that remain present in the workplace, such as the Baby Boomers.

Considering the number of Millennials entering the workforce, as well as the distinct nature of this group, there has been much research done on this Millennials. Negative stereotypes are often applied to this generation, such as the idea that Millennials are more entitled than other groups, and that they seek to be rewarded without putting forth effort (Smith & Nichols, 2015; Towards harmony, 2017). Millennials also differ from their counterparts of other generations in that they are lifelong learners who seek fulfillment from their work, and are interested in what they are doing, as well as why they are doing it (Solis, 2017).

In a qualitative study done by Meng, Reber, and Rogers (n.d.), Millennial respondents reported the need to be interested in (Kuron, Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2014) and challenged by the work that they do in order to stay engaged, they expressed the need for work-life balance and the need to be rewarded and recognized for the work that they do (Smith & Nichols, 2015). The latter of which could potentially contribute to the development of the previously mentioned negative stereotypes that many holds about members of the Millennial generation. Along with variations in values and workplace preferences amongst this group, there are also generational differences in individual employee outcomes.

Literature has shown that the generation of which an employee is a part can play a role in certain employee outcomes. In a study done by Lapoint and Liprie-Spence (2017), it was determined that age could play a role in certain aspects of employee engagement. The role of age is potentially attributed to the varying values that each group holds, and how they may be responding to certain organizational factors. These types of differences require that these groups be researched independently of one another and that no generalizations be made across these groups.

There is an abundance of research done on the Millennial generation spanning the last 20 years. Some of this research suggests that Millennials differ significantly from their counterparts of different generational groups. Millennials have been shown to have varying preferences when searching for jobs such as formality of dress, and flexibility/work from home privileges (Panter, 2016). Studies have also shown that Millennials are reportedly better at adjusting to more fast-paced environments, better at adapting to change and more adept at multitasking than other generations (Gupta-Sunderji, 2014).

In addition to these differences, Millennials have also been found to place a higher value on diversity, and a diverse workplace is considered to be more of a "requirement" of a prospective workplace than with other generations. As Millennials tend to value the diversity of thought and opinion, they, therefore, understand the value of having this diversity in the workplace (Elis, 2016). According to Essner (2017), 47% of

Millennials reportedly consider diversity/inclusion factors before selecting a job as compared with 33% of Generation X and 37% of Baby Boomers. Millennials also reported being more comfortable discussing issues of diversity and inclusion in the workplace (64%, as compared to 57% and 54% of Generation X and Baby Boomers, respectively). Black and women college students also reportedly consider whether a company embraces diversity and inclusion when considering future employment (Essner, 2017). These statistics lend themselves to the idea that Millennials may be more aware of and sensitive to issues of diversity in the workplace than other generations.

In addition to the possession of a different system of values, Millennials also have a different set of expectations regarding their workplace. Millennials expect to work in environments where diversity is valued not only in word, but in action, and they want to work in an environment where they can be their authentic selves, and where they feel recognized and heard (Griffith & Beaudan, 2017). Although this is a desire of many Millennials, the establishment of a truly diverse and inclusive workplace has proven to be somewhat difficult. This difficulty and often this failure to achieve a diverse and inclusive workplace is largely due to the idea that managers and leaders of organizations are not able to appropriately address and handle these issues, and often, it is because the leadership of the respective organizations has not genuinely bought into the idea (Tyagi, 2016). When persons in leadership have little to no exposure to individuals who are

significantly different from them (Tyagi, 2016), there may be difficulty in conceptualizing the importance and the need for such programming.

Although Millennials do place value on the idea of diversity in the workplace, it is clear that the concept often does not exist in the workplace, and when there is a lack of diversity, the effects are prevalent. Black Millennials are frequently of the opinion that they are only very recently being invited to participate in "real world conversations" regarding the workplace, and that the general public does not take Black Millennials seriously (McGirt, 2016b). It is not surprising that these perceptions regarding the general public could translate into how Black Millennials feel regarding the organizations for which they are employed.

Generational Conflict

As alluded to above, Millennials have received a somewhat contentious reputation from other working generations. In particular, they are perceived as lacking commitment and stick-to-itiveness by older generations. The nature of generational identity is a complex construct, despite its deceptively simple appearance (Lyons, Schweitzer, Urick, & Kuron, 2019). This is for several reasons, not the least of which is the fluidity of the very notion of generations. Not only is the precise definition of a generation contested, but even the lower-end definition of 25 years leaves a significant gap between the youngest and oldest members of a given generation. Furthermore, the nature of generational differences may depend heavily on other contextual factors. Lyons et al.

(2019) posed a four-dimensional social ecological model of generational identity as follows:

> We propose that individual generational identity in the workplace is influenced by the interaction of four levels of factors: the workgroup, where generational identity is triggered; the organization, which structures the context in which work-related generational identity takes shape; the extra-organizational environment, which sets the general parameters for generational interactions with occupational and stakeholder groups; and society, where generational phenomena are manifested as historical social movements and depicted as mass media narratives (p. 1).

In this regard, the potentially conflicting identities take shape in different forms in different places, and the ecology determining the potential conflicts can vary extensively. Nonetheless, the existing literature illuminates certain key areas of conflict that tend to reoccur,

To examine these conflicts, it is valuable to adopt the perspective of stereotype threat (Burgess, 2017). Indeed, much generational conflicts arises not so much from the functional differences and incompatibilities between generations as the perception thereof and the application of resulting stereotypes. For example, Millennials may be stereotyped as being more entitled than other groups, and that they seek to be rewarded without putting forth effort (Smith & Nichols, 2015; Towards Harmony, 2017). Whether or not

these stereotypes are true, it is the application of them which causes much friction in reality. Per Burgess (2017), the application of such generational stereotypes in the workplace context leads to detrimental outcomes such as stereotype threat (a situation in which a person is at risk of falling into the behaviors attributed to a negative stereotype because of the existence of that stereotype), a decrease in work engagement, and higher levels of communications conflict. The decrease in work engagement may be especially problematic given the particular desire—or even need—of Millennials for increased engagement with their work. Worsened communications are also a natural result of stereotyping, as the application of stereotypes leads to often wrongful assumptions which lead to miscommunication. Of course, this stereotyping goes both ways, and it would be untoward to assume that it is only Millennials who face negative stereotyping from their coworkers (Burgess, 2017).

One complicating factor in avoiding untoward stereotyping is that there *are* empirically supported differences between the generations in the workplace, however (Stevanin, Palese, Bressan, Vehviläinen□Julkunen, & Kvist, 2018). These differences may manifest in significant wants that must be addressed so as to prevent conflict. Addressing generational differences and needs without giving in to the dangers of stereotyping employees from one or more generations is a difficult balance, although perhaps more easily achieved when generational traits are taken as a baseline but individual variations from them are expected.

An interesting case study in these functional differences is to examine the meaning of the colloquialism "get a real job" for different generations (O'Connor & Raile, 2015). As used by older generations, this expression is often derisively directed at Millennials, who may pursue a more diverse range of employment opportunities than prior generations. Millennials themselves were asked to characterize a "real job" in a study by O'Connor and Raile (2015), and three key characteristics emerged from the analysis. A real job was thought to offer a utilitarian salary, medical and retirement benefits, and be fulfilling, somewhat in alignment with the traditional view of the concept. However, the Millennial participants commonly rejected this notion wholesale. The results were split between those who, in alignment with the traditional view, perceived such employment as a rite of passage and a mark of distinction and those who outright rejected the notion. Amongst the latter, many suggested that a "real job" was a meaningless notion. Many also invoked relativism in the sense that a job need only be sufficiently real for the person doing it, and not by some outside objective standard. These latter responses are indicative, in many ways, of the conflict between the way in which older generations perceive work and the way in which Millennials do.

One important source of this conflict is not cultural but rather economic. Older generations, especially the Baby Boomers, came of age amidst a period of prosperity and economic stability (Higgs & Gilleard, 2015). By contrast, many Millennials came of age and entered the workforce amidst the Great Recession of 2008, the largest financial crisis

since the Great Depression (Bianchi & Melosi, 2017). This vastly different economic context has shaped the economic prospects and expectations of Millennials in many ways. For example, vis-a-vis real jobs, Millennials have experienced the rise of the so-called "gig economy," in which the kind of stability and permanence of employment that older generations have enjoyed has eroded, replaced by a succession of temporary or contracting jobs (Stewart & Stanford, 2017). Furthermore, people today are significantly less likely to spend much of their lives with the same employer (Stewart & Stanford, 2017). These have created a very different set of workplace expectations that starkly conflict with those of older generations, especially the Baby Boomers.

Returning to the subject of discrimination and inclusivity, another point of generational conflict is the expectations of social justice. Older generations may have lived through the Civil Rights Era and been educated before or only shortly thereafter (Reed, 2018). As a result, their expectations of social justice, both in general and in specific application to the workplace, may considerably differ. By contrast, Millennials have come of age in a more diverse society with greater expectations of inclusivity and social justice. Recent years have seen a surge in social justice movements, often led by Millennials, to the point that even those members of older generations who perceive themselves as socially progressive may seem regressive to Millennials (McCoy, 2019). That is to say, in essence, that the goalposts have changed significantly with respect to

social justice and inclusivity, and that differing notions thereof may represent a poignant spark of generational conflict in their application to the workplace setting.

Workplace Discrimination

Discrimination can come in many forms and can be based a number of attributes such as religion, weight, style/manner of dress, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability status, appearance and a host of others. Perhaps amongst the most common, is discrimination based on race or ethnicity. With much of adults' time being spent at work, the workplace is one of the most likely venues for discrimination to occur (Hudson, Eaton, Lewis, Grant, Sewell, & Gilbert, 2016). Although discriminatory acts tend to be more covert than they have been in the past, research supports that discrimination in the workplace still exists. Overall, research suggests that Black employees perceive more discrimination against Black employees than other groups (McElhattan, Beth Nielsen, & Weinberg, 2017). Women of color have also been found to report barriers in hiring and promotion along with a more overall negative experience in the workplace including frequent challenges to their competence and credibility (Deo, 2014; Mena, 2016). Similarly, research on female law faculty shows that women of color face barriers with hiring and promotion and that there is a tenure gap between White faculty members and their colleagues of color (Deo, 2014). These experiences are not limited to Women of Color.

When studying the representation of employees of color in certain industries, there are disparities in the number of women and employees of color represented in the industry, especially in leadership positions (Eaton & Difilippo, 2016). In the accounting profession, for example, though progress has been made, more substantial progress remains necessary to close the wage gap, to provide employees of color with equal access to mentorship opportunities (both formal and informal) and to have more persons of color in leadership positions throughout the industry (Eaton & Difilippo, 2016). The need for progressing and the closing of this wage gap necessitates further exploration of the effects and implications of workplace discrimination.

In regards to career advancement, mentoring, and promotion opportunities, Black workers overall have reported a different experience. In a study done by Khosrovani and Ward (2011), the participants reported a lack of promotion opportunities, and inadequate training (as compared to their White counterparts), and over two-thirds of the respondents reported that they never had a mentor. A lack of mentors was also found to be a common trend reported amongst Black Women in executive and C-suite positions in a study done by Beckwith, Carter, and Peters (2016). Additionally, Black men are laid off disproportionately more often than White men, and only earn 77.1% of the salaries of their White counterparts (DeSilver, 2013). Though dated, the results of a study done by Devah Pager (2003) demonstrated that White applicants with criminal records received more job call backs than Black applicants without criminal records. Prior to this

particular study, the last major employment audit/study was done eight years earlier; the earlier of the two studies showed that Blacks were 24% less likely to receive a job offer than their White counterparts, and in the 2003 study, Blacks were 20% less likely (Pager, 2003). These numbers indicate that there was not much progress made during this time period. These experiences and disparities in the workplace demonstrate the more subtle ways in which discrimination may manifest.

One way that discrimination manifests in the modern workplace is via the occurrence of micro-aggressions. Micro-aggressions are "subtle verbal and nonverbal slights, insults, and disparaging messages directed towards an individual due to their gender, age, disability, and racial group membership, often automatically and subconsciously" (Prieto, Norman, Phipps, & Chenault, 2016, p. 36). Although individuals may not consciously engage in discriminatory behaviors, these oft-subconscious acts contribute to creating an environment that is hostile, insulting and invalidating for employees of color (Prieto et al., 2016). A study done by Everett, Onge, and Mollborn (2016) demonstrated that most minority groups indicated high levels of this day-to-day discrimination and that it was linked with stress and depressive symptoms.

Consistent with these findings, in another study of Black men working in predominately White organizations by Pitcan, Park-Taylor, and Hayslett, (2018), the participants reported feeling the need to "conform to White masculine norms for self-preservation and protection" (p. 311). The participants also reported feelings of

exclusion, needing to censor themselves while at work, having to work twice to three times as hard as their White counterparts, needing to cover their emotions with good humor, and they expressed frustration with the emotional cost of both experiencing and working against discriminatory behaviors while at work (Pitcan, Park-Taylor, & Hayslett, 2018). These factors obviously affect the experience of the employee.

Although much of the discrimination that we see in the workplace is covert, overt discrimination still occurs. Underrepresented minority faculty members working at predominately White universities (PWIs) report feeling like an outsider in their workplaces, and facing blatant forms of institutional and interpersonal discrimination, including colleagues and supervisors who suggest or insinuate that their ethnicity or race make them unintelligent and unqualified (Zambrana, Wingfield, Lapeyrouse, Davila, Hoagland, & Valdez, 2017). Black and Mexican American teachers also have been found to experience particular and chronic stressors in the workplace including perceptions of their incompetence, disparities in workload, and a lack of support from administrators (Rauscher & Wilson, 2016).

According to Kang, DeCelles, Tilcsik, and Jun (2016), applicants of color may even anticipate this potential discrimination. Applicants of color have been found to engage in "résumé whitening," which involves scrubbing résumés and applications of any indicators of an individual's race or ethnicity, to conform to (perceived) expectations of potential employers (Kang et al., 2016). In a study of hiring practices done by Kushins

(2015), individuals evaluated candidates in a stereotypical manner when presented with limited information, such as the candidate's voice. Based on a 10-second voice recording, the Black candidates in the study had the lowest evaluation scores and were about eight times less likely than their White counterparts to be considered for the position (Kushins, 2015). This research would suggest that discrimination that occurs in the hiring process continues into the candidates' tenure within the organization.

Once hired, research has also shown that there are disparities in pay between White employees and employees of color, which could be caused by race's influence on salary negotiations. Hernandez, Avery, Volpane, and Kaiser (2018) found that Black applicants were expected to negotiate salaries less than their white counterparts and that when this expectation was violated lower starting salaries were awarded to the Black applicants. Black employees were also found to have lower rates of mobility and to take longer to reach management positions than white employees. Additionally, when promoted to management, the route for Blacks was also found to be more structured and formal than the more informal path experienced by many White employees (Wilson & Lagae, 2017). These disparities in starting salary at the onset of their career along with difficulty in mobility can position the Black employees to earn less money throughout their entire careers.

Research has also suggested that Black managers face increased difficulty when managing White employees. In a study done by Campione (2014), a sample of 1000

Millennials of all races demonstrated that job satisfaction was more positive with an older White supervisor. The researchers posit that this distinction is based on the assumption that "older White supervisors may be better qualified or situated within the organization to satisfy their job and career desires and goals" (Campione, 2014, p. 30). This assumption can influence the experience that Millennials in supervisory positions have in the workplace.

Another type of discrimination that exists in the workplace, but that is discussed less frequently, is ambient discrimination. Ambient discrimination refers to "the knowledge or awareness of discrimination aimed at others in the workplace (Ragins, Ehrhardt, Lyness, Murphy, & Capman, 2017, p. 212)." The researchers found the presence of ambient discrimination was associated with lower levels of organizational commitment and that employees of color reported more ambient discrimination than their White counterparts (Ragins et al., 2017). Just as ambient discrimination has negative implications, there are also implications associated with actual and perceived discrimination.

Colorblindness at Work

Since topics of race in the workplace are becoming more commonplace, it is not uncommon for individuals to claim that they "do not see color" or to describe themselves as "colorblind" (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). When an individual claim to have a colorblind attitude, they are suggesting that they view all racial groups to be equivalent, and racial

identity is claimed to be insignificant (Warikoo & de Novais, 2015). Colorblind attitudes likely begin very early on in an individual's childhood (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). In a study done by Vittrup (2018), 107 White Americans were interviewed, and of these participants, 30% were considered to have a "color-conscious" approach, meaning that they had discussions with their child(ren) about race and discrimination, while 70% were considered to have a colorblind or color-mute approach, which means that race and discrimination were not discussed, or they were discussed in the historical sense, and not as something that is still persisting. Colorblind attitudes are also shaped by highly segregated neighborhoods during childhood along with school experiences (Warikoo & de Novais, 2015).

Colorblindness, however, has been found to be a barrier to the advancement of both equality and fairness within organizations, as those holding colorblind attitudes often do not perceive workplace inequities to the same extent as those on the receiving end of the inequities (Offermann, Basford, Graebner, Jaffer, De Graaf, & Kaminsky, 2014). In order to begin the work of developing effective interventions that reduce prejudice and bias in workplaces, employees must first recognize discrimination when it occurs (Offerman et al., 2014). The perception of a colorblind attitude within an organization when coupled with low representation of employees of color can signal a threat to employees and potential employees who are Black, as they perceive that their race will be problematized (Purdie-Vaughns, et al., 2008).

Millennials have been referred to as the "colorblind generation," based on their perceived progressiveness; however, research suggests that Millennials harbor biases as frequently as other generations, but believe themselves to be colorblind, while simultaneously engaging in micro-aggressions (Allen & Harris, 2018). Colorblindness has been referred to as "symbolic racism," and has signaled a shift away from more overt forms of racism, to coded language that often produces the same outcomes as overt discrimination (Leonardo & Dixon-Román, 2018). The colorblind frame posits that there are no distinctions between racial groups, which causes individuals to ignore discussions of race, and inequities go unaddressed; thus, old patterns of discrimination and its outcomes persist (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo, & Pollock, 2017).

Implications of Workplace Discrimination

Research has shown that workplace discrimination is associated with various types of adverse outcomes, which can range from health complications and impaired social interactions to decreased work performance and psychological difficulties. Along with feelings of powerlessness to react when faced with incidences of discrimination (Hudson et al., 2016), according to Velez, Cox, Polihronakis, and Moradi (2018), discrimination was both directly and indirectly (self-esteem as the mediator) associated with higher levels of psychological distress. Although Blacks report higher levels of discrimination than Whites, there are instances where White employees do experience discrimination. There exists a tendency for White employees to police other Whites to

ensure that certain expectations and stereotypes about Whiteness are confirmed (Yona, 2018). Higher levels of discrimination were linked with lower health utility scores for both Black and White men and women (Sellers, Cherepanav, Hanmer, Fryback, & Palta, 2013). Discrimination was also found to be indirectly associated with poor work outcomes (mediated by perceived organizational support, person-organization fit, and self-esteem) (Polihronakis & Moradi, 2018). In a study of Muslim women in the workplace, Ali, Yamada, and Mahmood, (2015) found that discrimination in the workplace was negatively associated with job satisfaction, and these results were consistent with another study done on Latino women working in the Midwest (Valdivia & Flores, 2012). Additional research also suggests that discrimination in the workplace can produce stress and sensitivity regarding *future* experiences of discrimination (Wu, Lyons, & Leong, 2015). This stress has been shown to negatively impact REM sleep duration and frequency (Wu, Lyons, & Leong, 2015).

Research also posits that significant wage gaps exist between White men and their Black and Hispanic counterparts, even when controlling for education, education can accumulate over the length of their careers (Skaggs & Bridges, 2013). Moreover, research indicates that there could potentially be discrimination within the labor market, as Black men spend longer periods, and more time searching for jobs, thus accumulating less work experience, than their White counterparts (Skaggs & Bridges, 2013). Additionally, discrimination in the workplace can lead to not only reduced income and

opportunities, but it is also associated with high levels of work-life-balance conflict due to the energy exerted in the workplace contributing to a negative mood, as well as interference with after-work activities (Minnotte, 2012)

As previously discussed, discrimination can show up in various ways such as the more overt forms of discrimination that were historically more commonplace, to the more covert forms of discrimination such as microaggressions. Although the form may differ, the effect is much the same. Both everyday forms of racial/ethnic discrimination, along with major discriminatory experiences were found to be associated with shorter sleep duration and greater sleep difficulty (Slopan & Williams, 2014). Studies have also demonstrated that there is a negative relationship between racial microaggressions and job satisfaction (DeCuir-Gunby & Gunby Jr., 2016). Additionally, the impact of discrimination in the workplace extends beyond the negative effects on the individual directly experiencing discrimination.

In a different study done on Black male professionals in higher education, it was found that the respondents were constantly, strained, and suffered from burnout and stress. The withdrawal that can be associated with these outcomes results in a scenario that is detrimental not only to the Black male professionals, themselves but to many others, as there are administrators, staff, faculty, and students who could benefit from the perspective and experiences of these professionals (Turner & Grauerholz, 2017). In addition to this circle of individuals, discrimination in the workplace is detrimental to the

organization as well. Discrimination can cost the organization due to increased voluntary turnover, and the loss of productivity due to withdrawal and physical illness (Triana, Jayasinghe, & Pieper, 2015).

Likely due to the increased experiences of discrimination faced by certain groups in the workplace, race has also been found to be a predictor of how an individual may experience the workplace. Black and Hispanic nurses were found to be more likely to intend to quit than White nurses (even while controlling for job dissatisfaction) (Doede, 2017). Based on another study done by Grissom and Keiser (2011), teachers reported high levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of turnover (though not statistically significant) when working for a principal of the same race. However, the results are also indicative that race congruence in determining satisfaction is much more relevant for African American teachers than for White teachers, this is likely due to the perception of the treatment that is received. The same study also indicated that Black teachers earn less in supplemental pay when working for a White principal when compared to their White counterparts working in the same school. These incidences support the need to diversify the mix of employees as well as leadership in all work environments.

The viewpoint often exists that the presence of women and employees of color in leadership positions will help to increase the overall presence of these groups as they will serve as advocates for others in their group; however, this is not always the case. In a study done by Lloyd and Amoroso (2018) the results indicated that oftentimes women

and employees of color fear advocating for those of similar group membership, as they do not want to be seen as unfairly favoritism towards those in their group. This fear is called "favoritism threat," and is considered to be another barrier in increasing the numbers of women and employees of color, especially in the leadership ranks (Lloyd & Amoroso, 2018).

Based on the experiences of some Black Millennials (and non-Millennials), the racial makeup of many organizations, and the history of systematic racism in the United States that still permeates many facets of society, there is a need for effective diversity and inclusion programming within all organizations. According to Wolfson, Kraiger, and Finkelstein (2011), organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and individual empowerment are strongly associated with positive perceptions of the diversity climate of the organization. Research has also supported that an important outcome of diversity programs should be to address discrimination that can be/is potentially faced by employees, as discrimination is negatively associated with job satisfaction and diversity training can be beneficial by potentially reducing the likelihood that this discrimination will occur (King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2010).

In addition to directly impacting the individual on the receiving end of discriminatory acts, discrimination can undermine overall organizational effectiveness. Prejudice-based discrimination in the workplace can influence selection, as well as performance evaluation once on the job. This discrimination in the hiring process, and on

the job often presents itself in the form of organizational "fit." Fit is frequently used as part of formal selection criteria, but is typically not related to relevant work criteria, and the concept has been shown to be particularly harmful for employees/candidates of color, as they are perceived *not* to fit (Jones, Sabat, King, Ahmad, McCausland, & Chen, 2017). Not only do perceptions of fit play a role in hiring decisions, but they increase the likelihood that discrimination will occur on the job as well. As perceptions of fit are rarely based on criteria that is predictive of job performance, decisions made based upon these perceptions can cause the organization to miss out on top talent, which will affect the bottom line of the organization.

Discrimination affects the experience of the individual, but can also affect the organization as well. Discrimination complaints can lead to lawsuits, which can affect the financial health and reputation of the organization. Discrimination lawsuit settlements and verdicts can have initial negative implications, but tend to have longer-term effects on the representation of White women, and Black men and women's representation in leadership and management (Hirsh & Cha, 2018).

Diversity and Inclusion Programs

To mitigate the effects of and to decrease workplace discrimination, many employers have elected to implement diversity and inclusion programs. Research has suggested that diversity training can have positive implications for individuals and organizations by reducing the likelihood that ethnic minorities will experience

discrimination (King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2010). Inclusive workplaces have also been found to be positively associated with higher levels of employee engagement (Goswami & Goswami, 2017). When implemented, diversity and inclusion programs or diversity management initiatives demonstrate to the employee that the organization is making an effort to satisfy the diverse interests and needs of all employees; however, interestingly, some research has shown that the effectiveness of these types of programs can vary across groups. A study done by Kim, Lee, and Kim (2015) showed that female workers reported more favorable perceptions of this type of programming.

Along with male vs. female differences, diversity and inclusion programming was also found to have varying effects on amongst racial groups. In a study done by Waight and Madera (2011), organizations offering diversity training were found to have minority employees who perceived the work environments to be less discriminatory, reported higher levels of job satisfaction, and less turnover intent than minorities working for organizations with no diversity training. Further, the work attitudes of White employees in this study were unaffected by the presence of diversity training (Waight & Madera, 2011). Although this particular study found that White employees were not affected by the presence of this training, this finding was not consistent.

Yap, Holmes, Hannan, and Cukier (2010) conducted a study of over 11,000 managers, executives and professionals of varying races from 9 corporations in Canada. The results of the study differed from the previously mentioned study, and indicated that

those employees who perceived the diversity and inclusion training to be effective were more likely to report higher organizational commitment and career satisfaction scores than those who reported that the training was ineffective or non-existent (Yap, Holmes, Hannan & Cukier, 2010). Overall, inclusion strategies that are rationally and strategically designed and implemented will positively impact organizational outcomes for the diverse workforce (Panicker, Agrawal, & Khandelwal, 2017). These findings have significant implications as they provide support for and encourage organizations to look beyond the mere implementation of a diversity and inclusion program to consider the implementation strategy along with the program's effectiveness.

As mentioned previously, diversity and inclusion programs are useful in decreasing instances of discrimination; however, their utility extends beyond the minimizing of discriminatory acts in the workplace. A study by Buttner, Lowe, and Billings-Harris (2010) found that perceived unfairness in the diversity climate amongst employees of color was linked to greater intent to leave the organization. This study along with another study by the same authors suggested that in order to generate high levels of organizational commitment for employees of color, organizational leadership should pay special attention to not only the fairness of procedures, but ensure that diversity climate commitments are honored (Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2010b). These results indicate that in order to positively influence organizational commitment levels, that participation in or completion of diversity and inclusion programming is not

enough The organization would need to participate in the program and tools from the training would need to be implemented into the organizational culture in order to positively influence the organizational commitment levels of employees of color.

Additional research done by McKay, Avery, Tonidandel, Morris, Hernandez, and Hebl (2007) echoed the findings of Buttner, Lowe, and Billings-Harris (2010; 2010b) and suggested that the total effect of the diversity climate of an organization on turnover intentions was negative, and though the strength of the association varied by race, this was still found to be the case across all racial groups. Thus, the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion programming can is not only useful in addressing the outcome of turnover intent for employees of color, but they can be effective across racial groups. In addition to influencing employees' intent to leave an organization, diversity and inclusion programs have also been shown to influence other organizational outcomes. Organizational commitment will be discussed in further detail in another section.

Diversity was also found to positively influence employees' job performance (Hsiao, Auld, & Ma, 2015). Diversity and inclusion programs are typically aimed at aiding in the fostering of an inclusive workplace where all employees feel valued and respected. An inclusive environment is beneficial to organizations and individual employees alike, as feelings of isolation by race are associated with higher levels of turnover (Leonard & Levine, 2006). The presence of diversity and inclusion programs also suggests to employees that the organization is invested in the inclusion and equitable

treatment of all employees, and findings indicate that when employees perceive equal access to opportunities and fair treatment, intent to turn over decreases (Chrobot-Mason, 2013).

Programs that emphasize diversity and inclusion are critical, as diverse workplaces can face additional challenges if there is no focus on the fostering of an inclusive environment. Diversity without mitigation strategies in the form of inclusion and identity freedom can lead to a revolving door of employees and also results in lower organizational commitment levels; however, when organizations focus on the implementation of an inclusive environment, inter-group bias decreases, while organizational commitment levels increase (Gonzalez, 2014). Likewise, individuals' efforts to suppress their group identity, is positively related to perceptions of discrimination, which are predictive of levels of job satisfaction as well as turnover intentions (Madera, King, & Hebl, 2012).

In addition to the implementing of diversity and inclusion programs, it is also critical that diversity is reflected in all levels of the organization, including leadership. Inclusive leadership is critical to the successful leveraging of diverse human capital (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). Black women who have been "tokenized," in the workplace (meaning that they are the only, or one of a small number of Black women), often feel pressured to identity shift to assimilate and disprove negative stereotypes. However, the fostering of a truly inclusive environment can minimize the need to identity shift, thus

allowing these Black women to engage in authentic leadership (Dickens & Womack, 2018), and for diverse employees to see their groups represented at all levels of the organization.

Research has also shown that in addition to the benefits to the organizations and the individual employees, diversity and inclusion programs along with diversity cues on company websites help attract future employees. Walker, Field, Bemerth, and Becton (2012) found that both Black and White prospective candidates spent more time on websites and were better able to recall information from the websites of organizations whose websites included racial diversity cues. This relationship was found to be stronger for Black candidates.

Regardless of intent, workplaces tend to reflect the larger society in which they exist, and can thus present cues that signal devaluation of certain social identities. Even in the absence of overt discrimination or animus, environmental cues can present threats to marginalized groups (Emerson & Murphy, 2014). These cues can include low numbers of underrepresented minorities or persons of color, few underrepresented minorities or persons of color in leadership positions or positions of power, informal hiring practices that favor the majority group, and practices that inadvertently marginalize certain groups (Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Ditlmann, & Crosby, 2008). These are considered to be identity threats, and can undermine performance and motivation of the marginalized groups, as well as increase this group's vigilance and suspicion of the organization

(Emerson & Murphy, 2014). The reduction of such threats can serve as an effective way to improve relations between groups (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008), as well as allowing employees of color to reach their full potential without the possibility of being distracted by these threats (Emerson & Murphy, 2014). Thus, in order for organizations to achieve identity safety for all employees, it is critical that in addition to addressing discriminatory practices, the environmental cues must be tended to as well (Emerson & Murphy, 2014).

Although there has been much research to support the presence of diversity and inclusion programs and training in the workplace, not all research regarding the programming has been entirely positive. In their study involving 43 White Millennials, Smith and Mayorga-Gallo (2017) found that young Whites appreciate diversity in the workplace, although they are not necessarily able to articulate how and why this diversity is beneficial. The authors also claim that although diversity programming may appear to be beneficial for non-Whites, they ultimately perpetuate a system of Whiteness, as the programs are in place to ultimately benefit Whites, by bettering their businesses (Smith & Mayorga-Gallo, 2017). Although there may be truth to these findings, the evidence of the benefit of diversity programming to non-Whites as it relates to the workplace is difficult to dispute. Employees who feel included and empowered to bring their full selves to the workplace are more likely to continue their employment with the respective workplace. Overall, workplace discrimination is connected to relationships amongst coworkers, and

studies have shown that the effects of this perceived discrimination can in fact be mitigated by efforts on the part of the organization (Ali, Yamada, & Mahmood, 2015).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment or an individual's intentions to continue their employment with their employer can be influenced by a variety of factors. Walden, Jung, and Westerman (2017) found that when individuals are engaged in their work, organizational commitment is strengthened and turnover intentions decrease. Diversity management programs positively impacted organizational commitment, often referred to as organizational loyalty, when demographics were controlled for. This effect is likely due to the perception of organizational support that develops in response to these programs, which incites feelings of loyalty towards the organization (Jauhari & Singh, 2013). Although this current study purposes to study workers in the United States, a study done in India produced similar results. They have found that the implementation of a diversity and inclusion program can aid in enhancing motivation levels of employees while reducing turnover intentions (Kundu, Mehra, & Mor, 2017).

Along with increased value placed on diverse places of employment, which was previously discussed, Millennials have also been found to have alternative patterns regarding job turnover. When controlling for tenure and gender, Millennials' turnover intentions were found to be negatively associated with procedural and distributive justice within the organization in the public accounting sector (George & Wallio, 2017). Thus,

when employees in this sector perceived high levels of justice, and low levels of injustice, the likelihood that the employee would voluntarily turnover was decreased. In a study done by Ertas (2015), Millennials were also found to be significantly more likely to leave an employer when compared with their counterparts from older generations. This particular study was done on Millennials who were federal employees and the results also indicated that not only were Millennials more likely to leave their current job for another government job, but they were also more likely to exit the public sector all together; however, added support for work-life balance resulted in reduced intentions to quit (Ertas, 2015).

Research has shown that there are some factors that can contribute to Millennial turnover more quickly than other factors. Per Smith and Nichols (2015), Millennials desire work that is meaningful, and that they enjoy, with enjoyment being rated higher than financial gains. An influx of meaningless tasks will lead to higher levels of turnover in this group, thus, indicating decreased organizational commitment levels (Kuron, Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2014; Smith & Nichols, 2015). Due to the majority presence of Millennials in the workplace today, it is imperative that employers adjust their leadership styles and work environments accordingly, to retain members of this group.

Diversity and inclusion programs and the overall organizational climate, as it relates to diversity and inclusion, have also been shown to be associated with employee turnover. As previously mentioned, racial isolation can result in employee turnover

(Leonard & Levine, 2006), and for minorities (or persons of color), working with persons of the same race can reduce the likelihood that the employee will leave the organization, likely based on the support environment that results from members of the same race working together (Zatzick, Elvira, & Cohen, 2003). In the study by Buttner, Lowe, and Billings-Harris (2010), the results indicated that for organizational leadership to generate increased levels of organizational commitment, the fairness of both the organizational procedures, as well as the organizational diversity climate should be monitored closely.

Diversity climate, which can be influenced by the presence and magnitude of diversity and inclusion programs, as previously discussed can influence organizational commitment levels. Research by Singh and Selvarajan (2013) suggested that organizational diversity climate was positively associated with employee intent to stay for all groups, but this relationship was strongest for employees of color. These findings serve as evidence in support of the implementation of diversity and inclusion programs, and the subsequent follow through to create a diverse an inclusive climate, as it will not only affect organizational commitment for the employees of color, but for all employees.

In another study by Brown, Zablah, and Bellenger (2008), the researchers were interested in what affected organizational commitment levels of Black managers working in predominately White corporate environments. The results of the qualitative study suggested same race dyads for the Black manager and his or her mentor could be detrimental in certain circumstances, and that what was more important was a shared

racial perspective and attitudinal similarities, as this could lead to levels of both personal and professional engagement which will indirectly lend themselves to increased organizational commitment (Brown, Zablah, & Bellenger, 2008). Said another way, Black managers were interested in entering into a mentoring relationship with someone who "gets it," and it seems obvious that this type of understanding in a mentoring relationship would lead to higher levels of engagement and commitment towards the mentor and the organization.

Research Gap

As this chapter has demonstrated thus far, there exists a significant body of research addressing issues tangential to those under study from a number of perspectives. These perspectives frame the issue but do not quite fully envelope it, leaving a key research gap. This research gap is motivated by a clear practical consideration, namely that, although Millennial representation in the workforce is increasing, there remains a lack of representation of Black Millennials in corporate settings, especially in leadership positions (Eaton & Difilippo, 2016). Research has not yet directly examined this problem, despite its consideration of the closely related issues of discrimination and workplace conflict. Examining it through the lens of SIT will therefore both bolster the state of knowledge regarding Black Millennials' participation in the workplace and advance the study of SIT itself, a theoretical perspective that is well positioned to serve as the explanation for conflict between different workplace in-groups.

The research gap is further framed by calls for further research. Per Hogg et al. (2017), one of the key directions to develop SIT research in going forward is the ways in which in-group identities can be made more inclusive. This call for research directly informs the study 's consideration for whether or not the use of diversity and inclusion programs can foster such an environment. Indeed, in the existing literature, results are conflicting as to whether such programs are successful. For example, McCoy (2019) found that Black Millennial woman did not expect much from diversity and inclusion programs because of having been disappointed by them in the past and that they did not perceive such programs as fulfilling their stated objectives when they participated. By contrast, Panicker et al. (2017) found that rationally designed and implemented inclusion strategies and programs are likely to achieve their desired results. Further examining which of these conflicting perspectives is correct represented a major impetus for the present study, as such an incongruity or contradiction in the existing literature is itself indicative of a research gap.

Methodological Precedent

The quantitative, correlational design adopted for the study was introduced in Chapter 1 and will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3, which focuses on issues of methodology. However, in reviewing the literature, it would be remiss to fail to demonstrate the methodological continuity between the approach adopted for the current study and the methodological choices of researchers studying similar issues in the

existing literature. Quantitative, correlational research is a key approach in studying the relationships between variables and has been adopted by numerous existing studies in the literature.

For example, Ali et al. (2015) adopted this approach in studying the predictors of workplace discrimination for Muslim women in the U. S. . Allen and Harris (2018) also adopted a quantitative, correlational approach to examining the relationships between colorblindness and acts of functional racial discrimination, such as microaggression and implicit bias. In studying workplace bias and discrimination, Di Marco et al. (2016) also adopted a quantitative and correlational approach to demonstrate the protective effects of job satisfaction on participants' health. These are only a few of the key examples which illustrate the suitability of the quantitative, correlational approach to examining issues of discrimination as well as the antecedents and predictors thereof. Indeed, essentially any place in this chapter in which a relationship is mentioned, a regression approach lies behind it, with the exception of a few studies which adopt a more experimental approach.

Moving beyond the broad research design, it is also valuable to look at where the existing literature has used the specific survey instruments that this study adopts. Most existing research which adopts a quantitative, correlational approach to research also adopts a survey methodology for collecting data, but in quantitative research, as specific survey instrument must have been developed and validated to measure a variable. To measure perceived discrimination against minorities, the study used a three-item scale

drawn from Triana, Wagstaff, and Kim (2012). This measure in turn draws items from an older measure developed and validated by Hegarty and Dalton (1995) as well as two new items which were validated by Triana et al. (2012). Not only does this measure draw strength from that analysis, it has also been employed by another research, such as Enoksen (2016).

To measure the variable of organizational commitment, the study used the OCQ. This measure was developed and validated by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). Since its development in 1979, the original article reporting on the OCQ has been cited in other research over 10,000 times and used by many of the citing studies. It has been, as with most older instruments, updated by other researchers. Furthermore, it has been translated into a number of languages, such as Korean (Ko, Price, & Mueller, 1997), In this regard, the OCQ is not merely a strong and well-attested instrument, it is perhaps the prototypical and reigning survey for the measurement of organizational commitment.

Accordingly, it is apparent that the study is well precedented, methodologically. The quantitative, correlational approach to research it adopts underlies much—if not most—of the existing literature upon which this review was built. Such precedent, taken with the discussion in Chapter 3 below, makes a strong case for this approach to research. Moreover, the two specific instruments that will be used in the study are both strong. The measure of discrimination is less well-established but still validated and strong by virtue

of its simplicity. On the other hand, the measure of organizational commitment is a highly well-attested scale that has been used in thousands of studies.

Conclusion

The review of the sources related to the topic of the study produced a body of literature that was lacking information about the experiences of Black Millennials in the workplace. Discrimination in the workplace is still an issue in U. S. workplaces, and employees of color are severely underrepresented in many industries, especially in leadership positions. In addition to this underrepresentation, Black employees face difficulty reaching leadership positions, challenges to their ability and intellect, a lack of mentorship opportunities, and earn less in wages than their White counterparts. Moreover, when a Black employee faces discrimination at one stage in the employment process, the outcomes and opportunities at other stages will also be influenced; thus, producing disparities in hiring, pay, evaluations and promotions (Skaggs & Bridges, 2013). These factors take both a psychological toll as well as a physiological toll on those who experience them.

Black Millennials are often of the opinion that they are only being invited to participate in "real world conversations" regarding the workplace, just recently, and that the general public does not take Black Millennials seriously (McGirt, 2016b). It is not surprising that these feelings regarding the general public could translate into how Black Millennials feel regarding the organizations for which they are employed. Congruent with

the sentiments expressed by some Black Millennials, it is also reported that Black Millennials are often valued as consumers, but not valued as much as employees. However, this group is a group that will be important and valuable to organizations due to high percentages of interest in technology and social media, which are growing in importance across all organizations (McGirt, 2016a). It is therefore important to understand the experiences of this group in the workplace to increase retention and selection rates of Black Millennials.

The articles referenced in this chapter are useful in providing a foundation for the current research and also providing information regarding potential limitations and gaps in the literature. This compilation of literature linked discrimination in the workplace, the distinctions of the Millennial generation, the utility of diversity and inclusion programming in the workplace and how these factors influence organizational commitment, thus providing a thorough overview of issues related the experiences of Black Millennials while at work.

Building upon this foundation, then, Chapter 3 addresses the key methodological aspects of the study. Although this chapter has demonstrated the methodological precedent for the quantitative, correlational approach to research adopted herein, there remains to be made the case for using that approach as well as the discussion of its intricacies, such as sampling, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine what relationship, if any, exists between Black Millennials' perceived workplace discrimination and commitment in the United States. The study examined the extent to which diversity and inclusion programs moderated this key relationship if any exists. A quantitative method, as described in this chapter, was used to measure the organizational commitment of Black Millennials in corporate workplaces, as well as to observe the relationship, if any, that exists between workplace discrimination, organizational commitment, and the presence of diversity and inclusion programs. Two instruments were used in this study to assess discrimination. This chapter will address the research method and design of the study, the methodological issues such as population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, validity, and research ethics.

Research Method and Design

Research Questions

This studied was guided by three research questions.

RQ1: Does perceived discrimination among Black Millennials significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations?

*H*01: Perceived discrimination among Black Millennials does not significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations.

*H*a1: Perceived discrimination among Black Millennials significantly predicts their organizational commitment in corporate organizations.

RQ2: Does the presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black millennials?

*H*02: The presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations does not significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials.

*H*a2: The presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderates the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials.

RQ3: Is there a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without?

*H*03: There is no significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without.

*H*a3: There is a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without.

Method

The overall research methodology was quantitative. Quantitative research is empirical and relational; the quantitative scholar draws upon hard data to answer numerical questions or to study the relationships between variables (Bernard, 2017). Quantitative research must be based in theory, as the underlying theory provides the closed-ended responses favored in quantitative inquiry. This study was innately relational, with the purpose being explicitly to study the relationship between variables. It is furthermore highly theoretically based, as described in Chapter 2. The key variables for the study can be operationalized in a quantitative fashion and studied empirically, drawing upon the large sample sizes that give quantitative inquiry its strength. This made the quantitative approach ideal for the study.

By contrast, qualitative research was a poor fit. Qualitative research is, by nature, descriptive and sometimes exploratory. The qualitative scholar does not examine variables, but rather seeks to describe and/or explore a phenomenon of interest (Bernard, 2017). Qualitative research is not empirical in the same way and thus cannot provide objective evidence regarding the nature of the relationships between key variables (Bernard, 2017). Instead, qualitative research is good for exploring areas not yet well

grounded in theory and for examining the subjective perceptions of participants. It would undeniably be interesting to explore and describe the subjective perceptions and experiences of Black Millennials regarding the issues of discrimination and the value of inclusion programs, but doing so would not serve to answer the research questions or serve the purpose of the study. This made qualitative research a poor choice for the study.

Design

The design for this study was correlational. Correlational research is one of two types of quantitative research that expressly studies the predictive power of variables (Johnson, 2001), with the other being experimental research. Experimental research is stronger in the sense that it can achieve causal results. However, it also requires a significant degree of control. To carry out an experiment, a researcher must be able to both manipulate the variables and randomly assign participants to control or test groups (Johnson, 2001). This imposes significant practical constraints on how an experimental study can be carried out and often makes it practically untenable. In such circumstances, a correlational design is preferred. Correlational research cannot establish causation, but it can still identify powerful predictive linkages between variables (Johnson, 2001). Furthermore, correlational research can collect data from the world *as is,* without the researcher needing to have any functional control over the variables. This made correlational research the better choice for this study.

Correlational research can be longitudinal, cross-sectional, or historical (Johnson, 2001). Longitudinal research examines the changes in variables or relationships over time, which is not the intention of this study; thus, a longitudinal approach is not a good fit. Both historical and cross-sectional correlational designs instead conduct only a single temporal analysis. In this sense, a historical approach—which draws data from existing records and does not require data collection—is better if a large database of relevant data is available (Johnson, 2001). Since no such database exists to the researcher's knowledge, a cross sectional approach was the best fit. In a cross-sectional design, the researcher collets data from a large cross-section of the population at a single point in time.

Methodology

Population

The population of interest was Black Millennials, of both genders, in U. S. businesses with over 500 employees. Millennials was broadly be defined as persons born between 1977 and 2000 (Millennial Marketing, 2020). Black refers to persons who report their race as "Black" or "African American."

Sample

According to an a priori G*Power analysis, a minimum sample size of 128 participants (with at least 64 with and without diversity and inclusion programs) was necessary to achieve a statistical power of 80%, a medium effect size, and a significance of 0.05. The non-probability sampling techniques of convenience and snowball sampling

was used to gather a sample of at least this size from the population. Non-probability sampling strategies are those that do not use probability theory to create the sample, examples of these techniques include convenience sampling, purposive, snowball sampling, and quota sampling (Babbie, 2017). Convenience sampling involves the researcher drawing the sample from the part of the population that is close to hand, while snowball sampling involves each participant suggesting or referring additional individuals that are a part of the population of interest. Both of these sampling techniques are useful when the population is very specific, and its members may be difficult to locate (Babbie, 2017).

Snowball sampling capitalizes on "the dynamics of natural and organic social networks" (Babbie, 2017, p. 197). When used in a study done by Browne (2005), Browne reported that her own membership in the population of interest greatly helped to facilitate the sampling strategy. Not only does snowball sampling give the researcher access to potentially scarce populations, but the researchers own membership in the population can help to establish rapport and trust with the participants (Babbie, 2017), that may be harder to establish otherwise. Although this study was a quantitative study, and did not require a particular level of trust between participant and researcher, the researcher's membership in this group was useful in locating a large number of individuals willing to be a part of the study's sample group.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

Prior to taking either of the assessments, the participants completed a demographic questionnaire to capture the necessary data to ensure they are a part of the populations of interest. The demographic questionnaire was a 6-item survey that includes questions about gender, ethnicity, race, workplace environment/type, and year of birth. All of these items were measured nominally (see Appendix A).

To operationalize the variable of discrimination, the study used the PDAMM. This measure was developed by Triana, Wagstaff, Kim (2012) using one item from an older survey and two new items. Initial validation of this three-item scale resulted in a Cronbach's alpha of 0.75, which is acceptable as it falls above the 0.70 threshold for good reliability. All three items on this scale are measured on a 6-point Likert scale and form a single aggregate dimension.

Organizational commitment was measured and operationalized using the OCQ (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). The OCQ did not require additional permission for educational usage, support for this is included in Appendix C as well. This measure was developed and validated by Mowday et al. (1979) and has been cited in over 10,000 further studies. The OCQ operationalizes organizational commitment through 15 items on a 7-point Likert scale, measuring the one dimension of affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. Cronbach's alpha for the OCQ

has ranged from 0.83 to 0.96, suggesting excellent reliability. Test–retest reliability was acceptable to good, with values ranging between 0.53 to 0.75.

Recruitment and Data Collection

Prior to any data collection, the researcher obtained IRB approval through the Walden University IRB (Approval No. 01-07-20-0671889). With respect to other permissions and authorizations, permission to use the OCQ was not required as it is being used for non-commercial educational purposes (Mowday, 1979). Permission to use use the PDAMM was obtained through a letter from the author (Appendix A). Permission to do research involving human subjects was also obtained via the Institutional Research Board in accordance to the U.S. Federal Government Department of Health and Human Services (2009), regulation 45 CFR.

A first wave of potential participants was recruited via convenience sampling and were identified by the researcher through a review of publicly available websites of U. S. companies which list and picture their employees. After selecting this initial set of potential participants, the researcher sent out an e-mail invitation to participate. This e-mail included a brief description of the study, the requirements for participation, and a link to the survey upon the SurveyMonkey platform. SurveyMonkey is a private United States company that allows users to create and design surveys, to collect the survey responses, and to analyze the data collected from their surveys. Although SurveyMonkey offers a paid service for recruiting participants, the researcher does not use this service;

instead, SurveyMonkey served as the survey platform. Data were collected from Black Millennials residing and working throughout the United States who are currently working in a corporate setting. Subsequent waves of participants were recruited via a snowball sampling technique, which involves this first wave of participants referring other individuals who meet the specific selection criteria. The participants completed the surveys via SurveyMonkey anonymously, with the researcher having no knowledge of the participants' identity.

The questionnaire, which participants was presented with on SurveyMonkey is as follows. First, the cover page consisted of informed consent information and documentation (Appendix D). By clicking through this page and taking the survey, participants were considered to have accepted the informed consent documentation. Following this, the survey began with a 6-question demographic survey (Appendix A). The data from the demographic survey was used to create a profile of participants. Furthermore, this survey served to ensure that participants are from the population of interest and disqualify those who are not from completing the full survey. The OCQ and PDAMM followed this demographic survey. To incentivize participant, contact information was collected separately (with no link to the survey responses) to allow participants to enter a raffle for a small prize, such a gift card. Once the surveys were completed, the researcher downloaded the resulting data into SPSS statistical software for data analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

Once all data have been collected, the data were data were analyzed using the latest version of SPSS statistical software. The first step in the analysis was to use the demographics to conduct a descriptive analysis, in which data were compared using descriptive statistics such as mean, median, and mode, as well as examined across demographic characteristics. The results of this descriptive analysis were presented in the form of charts and graphs. Next, the analysis sought to answer the research questions through inferential hypothesis testing.

To recall, RQ1 was as follows: Does discrimination predict organizational commitment for Black Millennials in corporate organizations? To answer this research question, the researcher performed a simple linear regression (Harrell, 2015). Prior to the regression analysis, the researcher tested the assumptions of the regression model. These included normalities of data, which will be tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test, the homoscedasticity of the data which will be tested through the Breusch–Pagan test (Harrell, 2015), and the non-perfect collinearity of data which will be tested through plots. Once the assumptions were tested, the researcher proceeded with the analysis or take appropriate remedial measures (such as the use of non-parametric alternatives) if the assumptions are not satisfied. The regression was run for the organizational commitment. In the regression, the predictor was the presence of discrimination. For the dimension, a relationship was said to exist if the R-squared for the regression is significantly different

from zero and the coefficient of regression is also significantly different from zero. The overall null hypothesis was rejected if at least one dimension of organizational commitment is predicted.

RQ2 was as follows: Does the presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black millennials?

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To test this research question, a multiple linear regression was used (Harrell, 2015). Multiple linear regression with an interaction term is a typical way of studying moderation (Hayes, 2009). As for the simple linear regression, prior to the regression analysis, the researcher tested the assumptions of the regression model. These included normalities of data, which will be tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test, the homoscedasticity of the data which will be tested through the Breusch–Pagan test, and the non-perfect collinearity of data which was tested through plots. Once the assumptions were validated—or the lack is addressed appropriately—the researcher created a multiple linear regression model with three predictors: discrimination, the existence of a diversity and inclusion program (modeled through a dummy variable), and the interaction of these two terms (Hayes, 2009). The multiple linear regression model could incorporate the dimension of organizational commitment as criterion variables. For the dimension, a relationship was said to exist if the overall R-squared for the regression is significantly

different from zero, the coefficient of regression for discrimination is also significantly different from zero, and the interaction term also has a significant coefficient of regression. The overall null hypothesis was rejected if the dimension of organizational commitment is predicted.

RQ3 was as follows: Is there a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without?

To answer this research question, an independent sample *t*-test was employed to compare the means of the groups with and without diversity and inclusion programs. The assumptions of the test were only normality (tested by Shapiro-Wilk as above) and independence, which was assured through data collection. The null hypothesis was rejected if the *t* test shows the means to be significantly different from one another.

Threats to Validity

Reliability and validity are key components of any research. Reliability refers to the reproducibility of the results (Bernard, 2017). To achieve reliability, the researcher has used a G*Power sample size calculation to ensure the effects in the study should be significant enough to be reproducible. Furthermore, reliability is created through the use of Cronbach's alpha for the research instruments. As discussed individually above, the alphas for the scales range from 0.75 to 0.93, suggesting acceptable to excellent

reliability. The non-probability sampling methods (convenience and snowball sampling) did represent a potential threat to reproducibility, but it is expected that the resulting sample was relatively representative and that this will not threaten the reliability.

Validity is divided into external and internal validity. External validity refers to the extent to which the results can be generalized (Bernard, 2017). One potential threat to external validity was the aforementioned convenience and snowball sample size potentially not achieving a representative sample. However, the scarcity and general inaccessibility of the target population necessitates such an approach and there is no particular reason to think the resulting sample was not be representative. Otherwise, the use of a G*Power analysis should ensure that the sample size is large enough to allow the results to generalize well. Internal validity refers to study's internal cohesion and the alignment between its components (Bernard, 2017). This was achieved through a careful attention to alignment, in which the problem, purpose, research questions, and data collection form a clear chain. Internal validity was further assured through using existing, validated outcome measures so as to ensure that the study measures the variables described in the research questions.

Ethical Assurances

Ethical conduct is an essential part of the research process. Prior to collecting any data, the researcher obtained IRB approval for the study. Permission to use the research instruments has already been obtained or not necessary. All data collection for the study

was anonymous, limiting any harm to participants. Although contact information may be collected for incentive drawings, it was not paired with study data. The cover form of the survey included informed consent documentation to ensure participants are aware of all of the aforementioned issues. Once the study has been published, all data will be stored for three years then completely deleted. All data has been and will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer to ensure security. Overall, the anonymous nature of the study combined with the lack of sensitive data and the absence of vulnerable populations indicated that the study will be of minimal risk to participants.

Summary

This study sought to examine quantified perceptions of discrimination, as well as the organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials in corporate work settings across two groups, those working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs, and those without. The PDAMM and the OCQ were distributed to participants via SurveyMonkey. The study participants included Black Millennials working in corporate settings from various geographic locations within the United States. Perceptions of discrimination while in the workplace as well as commitment to the organization were measured using the two main study instruments. The demographic information including, race and presence of diversity and inclusion programs within the respective organizations, were gathered via SurveyMonkey as well. Data were analyzed

through simple linear regression, independent sample *t* tests, and multiple linear regression. There were no perceived risks or ethnical violations in this study.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the analyses.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis Results

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine what relationship, if any, exists between Black Millennials' perceived workplace discrimination and organizational commitment in corporate organizations in the United States. Furthermore, the study examined the extent to which diversity and inclusion programs moderate this key relationship. In line with the purpose of this study, the following research questions and hypotheses were formulated:

This studied was guided by three research questions.

RQ1: Does perceived discrimination among Black Millennials significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations?

*H*01: Perceived discrimination among Black Millennials does not significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations.

*H*a1: Perceived discrimination among Black Millennials significantly predicts their organizational commitment in corporate organizations.

RQ2: Does the presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black millennials?

*H*02: The presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations does not significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials.

*H*a2: The presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderates the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials.

RQ3: Is there a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without?

*H*03: There is no significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without.

*H*a3: There is a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without.

Descriptive Statistics

Data were collected from a sample of 143 Black Millennials working in the corporate context over a two-week period. According to the demographic data, the majority of the participants were female (108 out of 143, 75.5%). The majority of the participants identified themselves to be of African-American ethnicity (136 out of 143, 95.1%). The largest group of participants were also identified to work in an office setting

(99 out of 143, 69.2%). The greatest number of participants were born between the years of 1983 and 1988 (73 out of 143, 51%), followed by those born between 1977 and 1982 (47 out of 143, 32.9%). Out of the 143 participants in the study, 133 have been employed with their current employer for more than six months (93%). Lastly, among the 143 participants, 79 worked for an organization with a diversity and inclusion training program (55.2%), while 64 did not (44.8%).

Table 1

*Frequency Analysis Results (*N = *143)*

	N	%
Gender		
Male	35	24.5
Female	108	75.5
Ethnicity		
African-American	136	95.1
Afro-Latino	3	2.1
Afro-Caribbean	4	2.8
Workplace		
Office setting	99	69.2
School setting	24	16.8
Retail setting	2	1.4
Other office setting	18	12.6
Year of Birth		
1977-1982	47	32.9
1983-1988	73	51.0
1989-1994	18	12.6
1995-2000	5	3.5
Employed more than 6 months with current employer		
Yes	133	93.0
No	10	7.0
Employer has diversity training program		
Yes	79	55.2
No	64	44.8

Measures of central tendency were also calculated for the study variables. The results, as summarized below in Table 2, indicate that for Organizational Commitment, the average score for the sample is $M = 66.59$, with a standard deviation of $s = 19.07$. The scores ranged from a minimum of 21 to a maximum of 105. Based on the mean and standard deviation, the majority of scores are found between 47.52 and 85.66. For perceived discrimination, the scores ranged from 0 to 18, with a mean of $M = 11.50$ and a standard deviation of $s = 4.34$. Based on these data, it was determined that the majority of the scores in the sample were found between 7.16 and 15.84.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics – Study Variables

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Organizational commitment	66.59	19.07	21.00	105.00
Perceived discrimination	11.50	4.34	0.00	18.00

The measures of central tendency for the study variables were also calculated based on demographic groupings. The results are summarized below in Table 3. As shown below, for the variable of organizational commitment, male respondents were found to have a higher mean score with a higher variance compared to females. The same trend was observed for the scores for perceived discrimination. The respondents who work in other office settings had the highest mean score for organizational commitment and perceived discrimination. Respondents born between 1983 and 1988 reported the highest mean score for organizational commitment, but respondents born between 1989

and 1994 were calculated to have the highest average score for perceived discrimination. Employees who have worked for their respective organizations for more than six months had a higher mean score for both organizational commitment and perceived discrimination. Lastly, employees in organizations without a diversity training program had a higher mean score for both organizational commitment and perceived discrimination.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics – Study Variables by Demographic Group

	Organizational commitment				Perceived discrimination			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Gender								
Male	68.89	20.44	23.00	105.00	12.74	4.25	4.00	18.00
Female	65.84	18.65	21.00	100.00	11.09	4.31	0.00	18.00
Workplace								
Office setting	64.10	19.04	21.00	100.00	10.92	4.22	0.00	18.00
School setting	60.04	15.61	33.00	91.00	11.58	4.14	3.00	17.00
Retail setting	66.00	1.41	65.00	67.00	7.00	2.83	5.00	9.00
Other office setting	72.56	22.80	22.00	105.00	15.06	3.69	6.00	18.00
Year of birth								
1977-1982	70.00	13.98	41.00	105.00	11.30	4.54	0.00	18.00
1983-1988	65.63	19.83	23.00	104.00	11.59	4.22	3.00	18.00
1989-1994	63.56	24.23	21.00	100.00	12.00	4.65	3.00	18.00
1995-2000	59.40	28.97	22.00	91.00	10.20	3.96	7.00	17.00
Employed more than 6 months								
Yes	67.80	21.04	22.00	98.00	11.70	3.13	7.00	15.00
No	66.50	19.00	21.00	105.00	11.48	4.43	0.00	18.00
Diversity training program								
Yes	60.25	19.79	21.00	105.00	10.36	4.20	0.00	18.00
No	71.72	16.93	29.00	101.00	12.42	4.26	3.00	18.00

Prior to conducting the inferential tests required to address the research questions of the study, preliminary tests were conducted to ensure that the assumptions required were met by the data set. First, the data were tested for normality. As shown below in Table 4, the Shapiro-Wilk statistic for the criterion variable of the study was .984, with a *p*-value of .117. This means that the data do not significantly differ from a normally distributed data set. Hence, the assumption of normality was fulfilled.

Table 4

Assumption Testing - Normality Tests

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Organizational commitment	.054	136	.200	.984	136	.117

Note: Lilliefors Significance Correction

The second test informed testing the data for multicollinearity of the variables. Multicollinearity was determined based on the tolerance and VIF values. Values greater than 10 for these two statistics would indicate multicollinearity between variables. Given that the tolerance and VIF values shown below in Table 5 are all below 10, no multicollinearity was detected for this dataset. Hence, the assumption of no multicollinearity between variables was likewise met.

Lastly, the data were tested for homoscedasticity, which refers to the constant variance of the residuals in the model. Homoscedasticity was determined based on the results of a scatterplot generated using the residuals of the model, shown below in Figure

1. Based on the scatterplot of the data generated, the assumption of homoscedasticity required for the inferential testing was likewise met by the dataset.

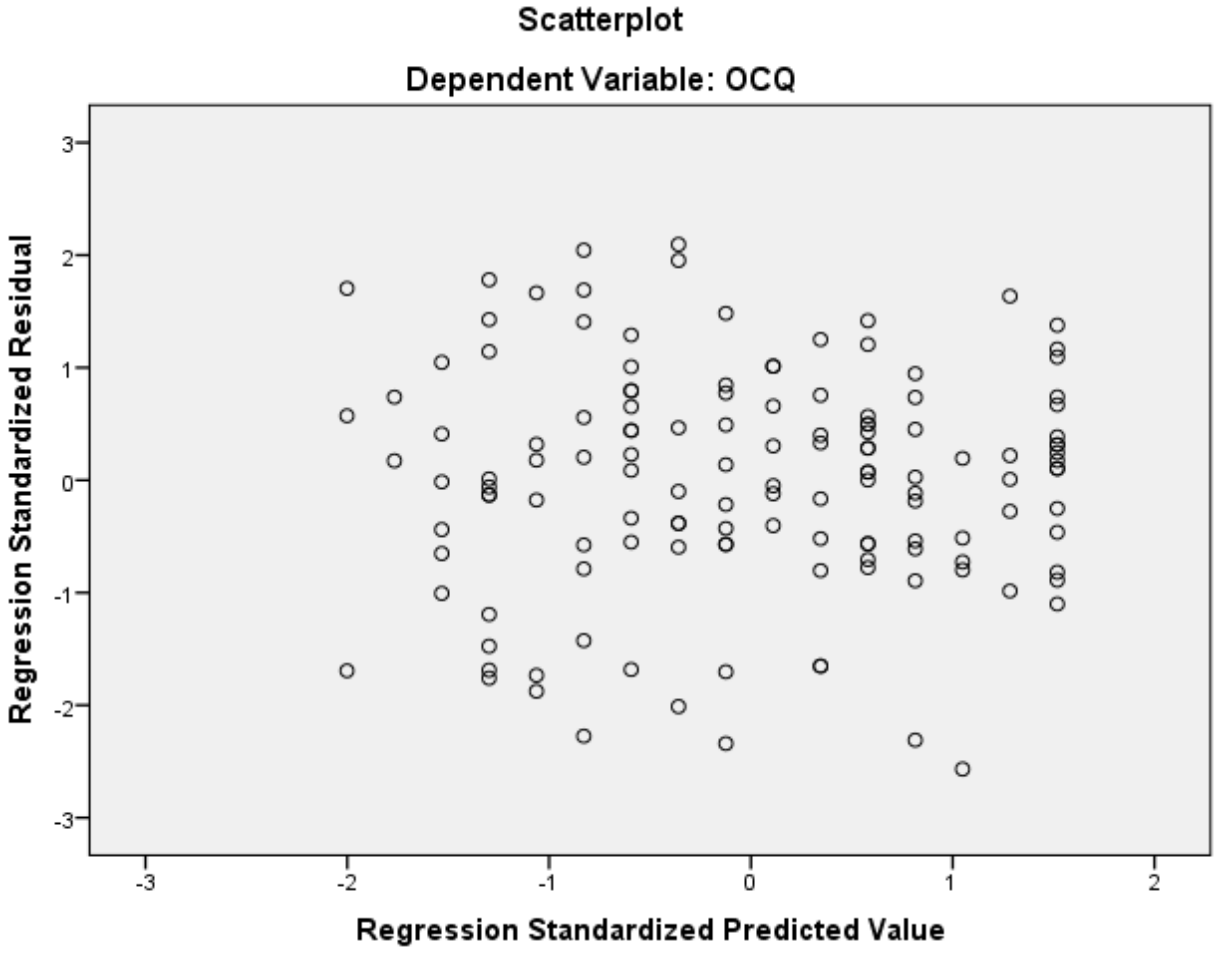

Figure 1. *Scatterplot of residuals for homoscedasticity testing.*

Inferential Analysis

Research Question 1

The first research question was formulated to determine whether perceived discrimination predicts organizational commitment for Black Millennials in corporate organizations. To address this research question, a simple linear regression was conducted to test the model where perceived discrimination, as quantified by the participants' PDAMM scores, predicted organizational commitment, as quantified by the participants' OCQ scores. As shown below in Table 6, the model was found to be statistically significant (F (1) = 85.782, $p < .001$). Likewise, PDAMM scores were determined to be a statistically significant predictor of OCQ scores ($\beta = 2.642$, $p < .001$). Based on these results, it was determined that every one-point increase in the PDAMM score was associated with a 2.642-point increase in the OCQ score. Thus, it was determined that the first null hypothesis of the study, stating that perceived discrimination among Black Millennials does not significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations, was rejected.

Table 6

Results of Linear Regression Analysis

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	36.998	3.504		10.558	.000
	PDAMM	2.642	.285	.625	9.262	.000

Note: Criterion variable: OCQ

F (1) = 85.782, $p < .001$; Adjusted R^2 = 386

Research Question 2

The second research question of the study was formulated to determine whether the presence of diversity and inclusion programs moderate the effect of discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials in the workplace. To address this research question, a hierarchical linear regression was conducted, with perceived discrimination as the predictor variable, organizational commitment as the criterion variable, and the presence of a diversity and inclusion program in their respective organizations as the moderating variable. The results of the model summary include two models. The first model tests the predictive relationship between perceived discrimination and organizational commitment, while the second model tests the aforementioned predictive model moderated by the presence of a diversity and inclusion training program in the organization. As shown below in Table 7, the first model was found to be statistically significant (F (1) = 85.782, $p < .001$). Likewise, the second model with the moderating relationship was also determined to be statistically significant. (F (2) = 43.512, $p < .001$). However, the summary of R^2 values shown in Table 8 indicated that while the amount of variance accounted for by Model 2 (R^2 = .396) is higher than the variance accounted for by Model 1 (R^2 = .390), the difference between the two was not statistically significant (R^2 change = .005, F change (1, 133) = 1.147, p = .286). Thus, these results indicate that the second hypothesis of the study, which states that the presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations does not

significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials, could not be rejected.

Table 7

Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis – Model Summary

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17110.860	1	17110.860	85.782	.000[b]
	Residual	26728.876	134	199.469		
	Total	43839.735	135			
2	Regression	17339.399	2	8669.700	43.512	.000[c]
	Residual	26500.336	133	199.251		
	Total	43839.735	135			

Note. Criterion variable: OCQ
Predictors: (Constant), PDAMM
Predictors: (Constant), PDAMM, PDxDP

Table 8

Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis – Model Summary Change in Adjusted R^2

				Std. error		Change Statistics			
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	of the estimate	R square change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	.625[a]	.390	.386	14.12336	.390	85.782	1	134	.000
2	.629[b]	.396	.386	14.11562	.005	1.147	1	133	.286

Note. Predictors: (Constant), PDAMM
Predictors: (Constant), PDAMM, PDxDP

Research Question 3

The third research question of the study was formulated to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion

programs and those without. To address this research question, an independent samples t-test was conducted, comparing the mean organizational commitment scores of participants from organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and participants from organizations without diversity and inclusion programs. As shown below in Table 9, participants from organizations with a diversity and inclusion program were reported to have higher organizational commitment scores (M = 71.38, s = 16.77) than the participants from organizations with no diversity and inclusion programs (M = 62.17, s = 18.44). The results of the independent samples t-test indicate that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant: t (134) = 3.037, p = .003. Based on these results, the third null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without, is rejected.

Table 9

Results of Independent Samples t *test – Diversity Program vs. Organizational Commitment*

	Diversity program	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean	t	df	Sig.
OCQ	Yes	78	71.38	16.77	1.90	3.037	134	.003
	No	58	62.17	18.44	2.42			

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine what relationship, if any, exists between Black Millennials' perceived workplace

discrimination and organizational commitment in corporate organizations in the United States. Furthermore, the study examined the extent to which diversity and inclusion programs moderate this key relationship. In line with this purpose, three research questions were formulated and data were collected from a sample of 143 Black Millennials working in a corporate setting. Data on the respondents' organizational commitment levels and perceived discrimination against minorities were collected using the OCQ and the PDAMM, respectively, and analyzed using regression analysis procedures.

The first research question examined whether perceived discrimination predicts organizational commitment for Black Millennials in corporate organizations, the results showed that higher scores on the PDAMM predicted higher levels of organizational commitment as measured by the OCQ. The second research question examined whether the presence of diversity and inclusion programs moderated the relationship between discrimination and organizational commitment levels, and the results that a moderation relationship could not be established. The final research question sought to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the organizational commitment levels of Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without. The results indicated that participants from organizations with diversity and inclusion programs had significantly higher mean OCQ scores than participants from those without.

The results, and implications will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

Hate crimes, prejudice behaviors, and bigotry due to race and color are still problematic throughout the world, including in the United States (Eaton & Difilippo, 2016; Reich, 2017). Even with awareness campaigns to stamp out racism, there continue to be incidents stemming from ignorance and from prejudice against race and religious preference, and even from nationalism and diversity in the U.S., evidence has shown that racial difficulties still continue in many workplaces today (Eaton & Difilippo, 2016; Riech, 2017; Williams, 2015; Moon, 2016; Galupo & Resnick, 2019). While many businesses and organizations have worked to resolve these issues, they remain problematic for marginalized populations in the workforce. One such example is microaggressions, which are generally considered the tendency for racial discrimination to be less overt than in the past, but can result in discrimination in regard to workplace opportunities (Galupo & Resnick, 2019). Diversity training and inclusion programs have provided awareness of the continued, common discrimination to reduce the occurrences of bigotry or prejudiced action against marginalized populations.

The current study's purpose was to determine if a relationship exists between Black Millennials' perceived workplace discrimination and organizational commitment in U.S. corporate organizations. The research further examined whether the existence of a diversity and inclusion program within the organization moderated, or affected the

relationship between discrimination and organizational commitment for Black Millennials.

Discussion

The current study was guided by three research questions and associated hypotheses. The first research question was: Does perceived discrimination among Black Millennials significantly predict their organizational commitment in corporate organizations? A determination of whether or not Black Millennials' perceived discrimination significantly predicts organizational commitment was sought. Support was shown for the hypothesis that perceived discrimination does predict organizational commitment. As a result, diversity and inclusion training must be implemented for all employees in order to foster positive organizational attitudes and commitment.

Additionally, the second research question was: Does the presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black millennials? Results showed that the presence of diversity and inclusion programs in corporate organizations does not significantly moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on organizational commitment levels for Black Millennials. This finding indicates that, in this sample, diversity and inclusion training may not be significantly effective by itself in improving organizational commitment or reducing perceptions of discrimination by Black Millennials. Perceptions of discrimination by Black Millennials appears to be an

underlying and consistent quality that is laden in the mindsets of this generation and may not be modifiable through diversity and inclusion training. There may be broader social factors involved and no single intervention may be sufficient in order to change this mindset in for this particular population.

Finally, the third research question was: Is there a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of Black millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs and those without? The results exhibited that there was a significant difference in organizational commitment levels between the two groups, with Black Millennials working for organizations with diversity and inclusion programs having significantly higher OCQ scores than those without. This finding appears to indicate that diversity and inclusion may help foster organizational commitment, but does not appear to significantly impact perceptions of discrimination by Black Millennials. The implementation of a diversity and inclusion training program may demonstrate to Black Millennials that the organization values them and their involvement and, therefore, positively impacts Black Millennials' perceptions of the organization, but does not specifically or sufficiently address the underlying and ingrained perceptions of discrimination that Black Millennials may hold, as a population.

Together, the results of the analysis indicated that perceived discrimination scores significantly predicted organizational commitment among the respondents, but that the presence of a diversity and inclusion program in their respective organizations did not

moderate this relationship. It was also found that Black Millennials working in organizations with a diversity and inclusion program had a significantly higher mean organizational commitment score compared to Black Millennials working in organizations with no diversity and inclusion programs.

Contributions to Literature

Despite the Civil Rights movement setting precedent to end institutional racism according to the law, organizational discrimination against Blacks still persists and Black Millennials in particular remain underrepresented in leadership roles in organizational settings (e.g. McGirt, 2016a; Eaton & Difilippo, 2016), which motivates development and testing of diversity and inclusion programs to increase the representation of Black Millennials and for fostering an environment conducive to higher levels of organizational commitment. Prior research has offered mixed results as to whether or not diversity and inclusion programs work for this objective. The present study finds that for Black Millennials, the programs were effective in predicting greater organizational commitment than those who were not part of the programs. This finding agrees with Panicker et al., 2017, but contradicts the findings of McCoy, 2019 for our sample. Overall, diversity and inclusion programs seem to be an effective way to increase organizational commitment among Black Millennials.

Findings from this study help to fill a noteworthy gap in knowledge and literature in regards to the narrowed topic of Black Millennials and the distinction of whether or

not the presence of diversity and inclusion programming in the workplace influenced organizational commitment. Findings from this study add to the literature published in the past five years, which has a large number of scholarly and peer-reviewed articles examining the topic of discrimination in the workplace. Using the lens of SIT as the framework for examining the current findings, there appears to still be a lack of thorough understanding of present issues of the Millennial generation with regard to discrimination in the workplace (Elis, 2016; Essner, 2017; Gupta-Sunderji, 2014; McGirt, 2016b; Panter, 2016). Specifically, it is evident from this study that there is still limited understanding of the factors that drive perceptions of discrimination by Black Millennials. While diversity and inclusion training may improve organizational commitment, it does little to influence perceptions of discrimination.

Findings from this study may be explained by previous evidence suggesting that there is a generational conflict driving perceptions of discrimination. These findings support research showing that the Millennial generation and many issues in the workplace are likely underpinned by generational conflicts that perpetuate feelings of discrimination (Burgess, 2017; Lyons et al., 2019; Smith & Nichols, 2015; Stevanin et al., 2018; Towards Harmony, 2017). These findings support a large number of published articles and studies relating to workplace discrimination based on such elements as skin color and race (Deo, 2014; Hudson et al., 2016; McElhattan et al., 2017; Mena, 2016). It is clear from this study that diversity and inclusion training, while successful for

improving organizational factors, does not significantly modify the underlying belief by Black Millennials that they are being discriminated against in the workplace.

These findings may be explained by literature related to the concept of micro-aggressions as well. Micro-aggressions are subtle acts of prejudice or discrimination that are generally not detectable by the perpetrator, but felt significantly by the victim (Everett et al., 2016; Prieto et al., 2016). Diversity and inclusion training may show Black Millennials that they are valued, but are insufficient to modify perceptions of discrimination, and they may ignore the fact that microaggressions/discrimination still exist. One such example is within gender, there are pay disparities based on race, which are not necessarily addressed or rectified via diversity and inclusion training (Hernandez et al., 2016; Wilson & Lagae, 2017). These failed inclusion and diversity programs have resulted in varying effects on the racial groups that they were intended to assist (Panicker et al., 2017; Waight & Madera, 2011; Yap et al., 2010). Findings from this study also support literature regarding problems with diversity climate commitments, which are vested only by those in leadership positions (Buttner et al., 2016b; Dickens & Womack, 2018; Hsiao et al., 2015; Smith & Mayorga-Gallo, 2017). The current study also helps provide a contemporary portrayal of racial microaggressions and confirms findings from older literature showing that diversity inclusion programs often fail because they address only organizational factors and ignore underlying perceptions of discrimination.

The literature currently lacks research on the effect diversity and inclusion programs have on the perceived discrimination reported by Black Millennials in the workplace. The current study investigated this relationship and found that such programs did not significantly moderate perceived discrimination in predicting organizational commitment. The present findings therefore stand at odds with current practice in using these programs to diminish perceived discrimination, and SIT does not seem to play a role in explaining the relationships investigated in our sample in that perceived discrimination interacting with diversity and inclusion programs do not interact with in/out group dynamics. Although the moderation effect was not significant, the effect of perceived discrimination on organization commitment for Black Millennials was quite substantial. For every unit increase in perceived discrimination, average organizational commitment is expected to increase by 2.642 units. A strong, positive association between these two variables seems unlikely, as discrimination should lower the willingness of Black Millennials to engage with the workplace. However, the current findings reflect the opposite. This positive association could be attributed to the idea that there was no mention of length of time that the participants were with their respective employers, longer tenure could indicate more experiences of discrimination *and* higher levels of commitment based on this longer tenure. This finding could also suggest that discrimination somehow facilitates greater engagement in the workplace in specific

domains, and future research should clarify the source of this relationship and to what extent social identity plays in facilitating this effect.

Limitations

Although the data examined in the present study had a large enough sample to address the research questions, there were limitations regarding the structure of the dataset in examining the role SIT plays in explaining the observed effects. The present study did not address the relationships between the multiple constructs (see Tajifel, 1972) that make up SIT and how they related to specific instances of perceived discrimination and organizational commitment. Therefore, SIT could not serve as a framework for the study (in a methodologically integrated sense) although the findings demonstrated the impact of perceived discrimination and diversity programs alone on organizational commitment on a more practical level. Future research should examine such constructs, operationalized as survey questions, in contributing toward understanding perceived discrimination and organizational commitment so that more specific workplace interventions can be made targeting key behaviors stemming from social identity. Doing so may also shed light as to why there was a strong, positive relationship between perceived discrimination and organizational commitment in a more precise fashion.

The second main limitation was that despite the present work reviewing the effects of demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, race, etc.) on the effectiveness of diversity initiatives and perceived discrimination, the research questions did not address

these potential factors in influencing organizational commitment in tandem with the research variables. This is important as McCoy (2019) examined Black Millennial women specifically' while Panicker et al. (2017) did not target gender in their research on the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion programs. Since McCoy's data found diversity and inclusion programs failed to increase commitment, this may be due to a gender effect moderating the diversity program variable. Had the present study included gender as both a main effect and moderator in the hierarchical regression, my findings might have agreed with McCoy instead of contrasting. My study also only addressed Black Millennials, and it could be informative to examine potential racial differences could interact with gender in explaining changes in organizational commitment and perceived discrimination. Future research should address as many demographic variables as possible as potential moderators of perceived discrimination and diversity initiatives with the constructs for SIT in a single survey methodology.

Despite these limitations, the present study revealed perceived discrimination among Black Millennials is a potent predictor of organizational commitment and that diversity and inclusion programs were found to not significantly moderate discrimination. Using a multi-survey methodology, two surveys for investigating specific constructs within organizational commitment and perceived discrimination, and the third survey for measuring the constructs for SIT applied specifically to the workplace setting could be addressed in a single study. The proposed methodology would not only advance SIT by

testing predictions from the theory directly for the workplace, but also investigate their interaction with the different subtleties of discrimination, organizational commitment, and the potential success of diversity initiatives in increasing representation among disadvantaged groups.

Implications for Future Practice

Results of this study have practical implications that may be applied to future practice in business environments. These recommendations urge specific actions be taken in regards to the practice of diversity and inclusion training in the workplace. Future practices regarding the association of diversity and inclusion training for Black Millennials due to continued occurrences of discriminatory practices in the workplace suggests a need for a closer view leading to changes in such programs and training. While current research has shown Black employees face difficulties in acquisition of jobs and once hired and continue to face disparities and prejudice treatment, there has been a movement to stop such bigoted behaviors. However, the effectiveness of programs designed to do so remains poorly understood. The examination of the current literature, combined with the results from my study provides a suggestion of practice for future implementation of diversity and inclusion programs, maintaining the critical element for success of such programs must be viewed as critical by management and leaders in business organizations. It is only with the suggestion that such programs are imperative that the impact on marginalized groups be considered so as to begin to work towards a

solution to workplace discrimination, and, as such, will change the utility of diversity and inclusion programs, creating social change.

Implications for Future Research

The implications for future research were based on the results of this current research and inclusive to the previous suggestions of those limitations found within the current study. Considerations for future examinations of the problem with diversity and inclusion training and programs in the workplace must examine a large and broad population that would provide supporting evidence of the perceptions with which Black Millennials have on current discriminatory practices occurring in their respective workplaces. Future research should also focus on how the practice of diversity and inclusion training impacts the jobs of Black Millennials, as well as if such practices counter and dispel any incidences of prejudice, bigotry, or discrimination in the workplace. The suggestion for future studies then would implore researchers to explore a more diverse sample population along with a larger participant number. This would include expanding the sample population with an equal distribution of races and occupations.

Conclusion

The present research examined the relationships between Black Millennials' perceived workplace discrimination, and organizational commitment in corporate

organizations in the United States and the role that diversity and inclusion programs play in moderating these relationships. This was done after reviewing SIT and its role in explaining in/out group dynamics, the effects of gender and race on the opportunities in the workplace, and overall organizational engagement and the success of diversity initiatives. The present study found that organizational commitment was largely predicted by perceived discrimination and the placement of diversity initiatives within the workplace, but that diversity initiatives did not have a moderating influence on perceived discrimination.

Despite minor limitations on whether the present study's data could address the constructs of SIT and their roles in organizational commitment, discrimination, and diversity initiatives, and in not addressing further demographic predictors, the present study revealed that future research should be cautious when examining moderating influences diversity programs may have on perceived discrimination. Future research should focus on a multi-survey methodology targeting the relationships between SIT, the different components of discrimination and diversity/inclusion programs, and additional demographic predictors on explaining changes in organizational commitment in one cohesive study. Though diversity and inclusion programs were shown to be useful in some regards, the work and the research necessary to better understand and more effectively implement programing in this arena remains in progress.

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Appendix A: Demographic Survey

1. What is your gender?
    1. Male
    2. Female
    3. Other
2. What is your ethnicity?
    1. African American
    2. Afro-Latino
    3. Afro-Caribbean
    4. African
    5. Caucasian
    6. Hispanic
3. What is your race?
    1. Black
    2. White
4. Which of the following best describes your workplace?
    1. Office setting
    2. School setting
    3. Retail
5. What year were you born?

    1. 1977-1982
    2. 1983-1988
    3. 1989-1994
    4. 1994-2000

6. Have you been employed with your current employer for 6 months or more?
    1. Yes
    2. No
7. Does your employer have an ongoing Diversity & Inclusion Program? (Trainings, seminars, a diversity and inclusion strategy, Employee Resource Groups, etc.)
    1. Yes
    2. No

Appendix B: Organizational Commitment Questionnaire and Permission to Use

PsycTESTS®

doi: 10.1037/t08840-000

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire
OCQ

Items

Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the company or organization for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular organization for which you are now working (company name) please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement. [a]

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.
3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization. (R)
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.

6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.

7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar. (R)

8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.

9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization. (R)

10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.

11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely. (R)

12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees. (R)

13. I really care about the fate of this organization.

14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.

15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part. (R)

---

[a] Responses to each item are measured on a 7-point scale with scale point anchors labeled: (1) *strongly disagree* ; (2) *moderately disagree* ; (3) *slightly disagree* ; (4) *neither disagree nor agree* ; (5) *slightly agree* ; (6) *moderately agree* ; (7) *strongly agree* . An "R" denotes a negatively phrased and reverse scored item.

PsycTESTS®

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire
Version Attached: Full Test

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Instrument Type:
Inventory/Questionnaire

Test Format:
Organizational Commitment Questionnaire items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale with the following anchors: Strongly agree, moderately agree, slightly agree, neither agree nor disagree, slightly disagree, moderately disagree, strongly disagree.

Source:
Mowday, Richard T., Steers, Richard M., & Porter, Lyman W. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. Journal of Vocational Behavior, Vol 14(2), 224-247. doi: 10.1016/0001-8791(79)90072-1, © 1979 by Elsevier. Reproduced by Permission of Elsevier.