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The Role of Diversity Management Policies and Practices in Advancing Inclusive Culture

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Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Christopher Emeka Babundo

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Walden University
2023

Abstract

The Roles of Diversity Management Policies and Practices in Advancing Inclusive
Culture

by

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MBA, Azusa Pacific University, 2014

MA, Azusa Pacific University, 2013

BS, University of Benin, Nigeria, 2002

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Industrial and Organizational Psychology

Walden University

August 2023

Abstract

The benefits of diversity management to organizations are well documented; however, there is nothing in the public domain that sheds light on how diversity management facilitates the development of an environment of inclusion. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to acquire relevant information from 12 individuals who have lived experiences and perceptions about the topic (e.g., HR practitioners, managers/officers responsible for diversity, diversity management and inclusion, initiatives, and current or previous participants in diversity and inclusive programs). Social identity and optimal distinctiveness theories were used to examine the relationship between the two constructs. Interviews were conducted, transcribed, and forwarded to the participants for authentication. The transcripts were manually coded in a process referred to as open coding. Results showed that in addition to hiring a diverse group of people at the outset, in-house training and seminars to develop a culture of inclusion in the sensibilities of employees are necessary. Establishing a monitoring system to assess progress was suggested, but the overwhelming and dominant factor that would actualize the realization of inclusion is support from leadership. The results of this study can promote positive social change by helping organizations rethink how diversity management and inclusion impact their workforce, emphasizing respect for differences, integration, collaboration, and equality.

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Dedication

To the glory of God Almighty, I dedicate this work to my family for their tireless support and encouragement throughout this unprecedented journey. This is an experience I will never forget because of the bitter and sweet moments I encountered along the way. Thanks to our all-sufficient God who made sure that His power and love are sufficient for me. Isioma, Ify (Beke), and Aina, I am indebted to you all for bearing with me in those difficult moments. Mary, I will never forget you because you were one in a million and the Almighty God used you wonderfully to inspire me to embark on this unplanned and unprepared adventure, see where I am today. You told me you believed in me; I hope I did not disappoint you. I am sure you will be glad how this turned out. I could not have asked for a better family. May God bless you all richly and see you through all your endeavors.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Diversity and inclusion are different concepts even though they are often used interchangeably (Brimhall et al., 2017; Moore et al., 2020). Diversity typically refers to the composition of differences among individuals, such as race, ethnicity, gender, education, job position, and tenure (Coppin, 2017; Kaur & Arora, 2020). The process of harnessing these differences to further the course of the organization is known as diversity management, which includes formal and direct actions geared toward managing the diverse workforces (Carstens & De Kock, 2017; Porcena et al., 2020). Diversity management has been connected to many aspects of organizational behavior and functioning like corporate ethics (Porcena et al., 2020), performance growth (Manoharan & Singal, 2017; Kundu & Mor, 2017), sustenance of affirmative action (AA) and equal employment opportunity (EEO; Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2014), and meeting changing demographic needs. Organizations implement diversity management policies and practices to recognize diversity and increase in innovation, greater customer satisfaction, instigate corporate participation in social activities, and acquire competitive superiority that leads to growth in performance (Manoharan & Singal, 2017). This study covered the different perspectives of diversity management and how they relate to inclusion or establishing an inclusive culture.

Inclusion goes further than diversity management in that it involves encouraging employees to actively participate in the administrative and operational aspects of the workplace (Mor Barak, 2015; Nishii, 2013). Inclusion means setting up a collaborative environment that enhances belongingness, participation, and contribution, as it provides

respect to people across varying parameter of differences (Kaur & Arora, 2020). When individuals in a diverse work environment are integrated, empowered, recognized, and respected, they feel involved in the work and administrative process (Brimhall, 2019).

Despite these expectations, research shows that scholars and practitioners exclude inclusion in the discussion and implementation of diversity management policies and practices (Moore et al., 2020; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017; Roberson, 2006) as well as gender equality. Organizations achieve success at instituting diversity programs, but not so much with inclusion (Moore et al., 2020). The lack of focus on inclusion may be due to a lack of better understanding of the concept of inclusion as espoused by academic and workplace experts (Sison, 2017). My research was about exploring the role of diversity management in promoting inclusive culture because studies have shown that diversity without inclusion is not fruitful (Sherbin & Rashid, 2017). The primary constructs in the study are diversity management and inclusive culture or inclusion. I analyzed participants' responses and applied the results toward answering the research questions.

Background of the Study

The most common reason for engaging in diversity in most organizations is the attainment of economic prosperity (Goldberg et al. 2019; Manoharan & Singal, 2017; Wondrak & Segert, 2015), hence, the phrase diversity for strategic advantage (Hunt et al., 2018; Rahman et al. 2020). But there is a need for inclusion so that the gains of diversity can be fully realized (Deloitte, 2013). Diversity covers human differences along the lines of diversity dimensions of color, race, ethnicity, gender, identity, age, physical attributes, ethical values, nationality, education, personality, experiences, and knowledge base (Kaur

& Arora, 2020). This encompasses varied viewpoints, work experiences, lifestyles, and cultures (Coppin, 2017). The aim of diversity and inclusion management is to create a climate of inclusion that works for everybody in an organization (Guillaume et al., 2014). Therefore, the absence of gender equality/equity on corporate boards and executive management positions negates the essence of diversity management and inclusion.

Gender Inequality on Boards and Top Management Teams

The unequal gender representation in corporate boards and management levels of organizations was examined to see how that impacted the relationship between diversity management and establishing a culture of inclusion. There is an absence of female representation at the top executive levels of many organizations (Barron, 2019). In 2021, it was reported that 8.1% of women held CEO positions in Fortune 500 companies (Hincheliffe, 2021). The total number of chief executives employed as of 2019 was 1,602; of this number, 27.6% were women (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2019). In 2021, the total number of chief executives increased to 1,664, but the percentage of women increased by less than 2% points to 29.1% (BLS, 2021). Even the laws and guidelines to mitigate the phenomenon of lack of equal gender representation at organizations' top executive and board levels has not helped to address this imbalance (Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017). There is still a low to no female presence at top management levels of most organizations (Bertrand et al., 2019; Rao & Tilt, 2016). Further, there are reports that women are consigned to low paying and low-quality jobs, a situation that is exacerbated when age is included in the mix (Santero-Sanchez et al., 2015).

Some of the consequences of unequal gender representation at corporate boards and top management teams (TMTs) includes the inability of the organization's management to make high-quality decisions (Larson, 2017; PwC Report, 2017), lack of investors' confidence in the company's viability (Bear et al., 2010; Horak & Cui, 2017), and low performance outcomes (Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017). It could also portray the organization as weak in governance (Furtado et al., 2021). The absence of equal gender presence at the top management levels further conflicts with diversity management and inclusion because women have been excluded from TMT (Garg & Sangwan, 2020). Diversity management is about equality at all levels of the organization; therefore, a lack of equal representation at the management or board levels could be interpreted as discrimination or segregation (Bertrand et al., 2019; Garg & Sangwan, 2020; Köllen et al., 2018). Segregation or discrimination violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting such practice (Oppenheimer, 2016; Koellen, 2019). Furthermore, the lack of women leaders in executive suites is attributed to gender stereotyping (Pew Research Center, 2015). This phenomenon is more pronounced among women of color, African American women in particular. African American women mostly experience inequality in top level positions (Barron, 2019).

Minority Absence in Top Management Teams

Regarding race, inclusion has been and still is a difficult task to overcome. The following statistics provide insight into systemic inequality issues that are prevalent in some organizations in connection with race relations. 34% African Americans reported satisfaction with their jobs compared to 48% white (Hersch & Xiao, 2016). In a study,

Talent Innovation also found that 65% of African Americans feel that they must work twice as hard to advance in their organization, while only 16% of white people feel the same way. Situations such as this, give African Americans the feeling that they must always take the second place in their quest for advancement in the organization, thus, making them to feel that they cannot genuinely be themselves in the workplace (Adejumo, 2021). Organizations are encouraged to look closely at their hiring policies or processes to ensure that people they hire, especially African Americans in primarily White organizations, are made to feel like they belong (Adejumo, 2021). Fairness in hiring practices and integration could be one way to accomplish or indicate acceptance.

Inclusiveness

Inclusion is achieved when every individual in the organization, is accepted, involved, and given a sense of recognition and participation at every level of the decision-making process (Mor Barak et al., 2016). This includes being integrated into all aspects of the company's culture and levels of leadership (Dreachslin et al., 2017). Inclusion is further defined as a collaborative environment that promotes belongingness, participation, and contribution; it encourages an environment of mutual respect across varying parameter of differences (Kaur & Arora, 2020). However, there has been an exclusion of inclusion in academic literature (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006; Sison, 2017). To achieve greater diversity, the system must make diverse groups feel supported, respected, welcomed, and willing to contribute (Moore et al., 2020). Inclusion or inclusive practices include creating equal access to decision-making, upward movement, and resource availability to all people (Shore et al., 2018).

Gap in Literature

Diversity management and inclusion literature has been mostly transactional in the sense that it has focused on performance and profit than anything else. Scholars and practitioners have always excluded inclusion in the diversity/diversity management discourse (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006). However, actively valuing people and engaging them in a constructive manner to conform with organizational norms, attitudes, behaviors, and business is what inclusion look like (Brimhall, 2019; Szymanska & Aldighieri, 2017). There is literature regarding the value and importance of diversity but not as much on inclusion. But it is crucial that organizations establish a friendly work environment that is inclusive to enhance organizational functioning that recognizes workplace diversity and demographics (Dwertmann & Boehm, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2015).

Problem Statement

Diversity management describes actions organizations take to manage their diverse workforce. These actions are always laid out in policies and practices designed to guide the implementation of diversity programs and initiatives (Manoharan & Singal, 2017). Research suggests that implementing diversity initiatives results in increase in performance (Nelson, 2014; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017), employee job satisfaction (Brimhall et al., 2017; Hauret & Williams, 2020), and reduce turnover intention (Kundu et al., 2017; 2012; Roberson, 2019). However, inclusion research is always lacking in regard to the relationship with diversity (Roberson, 2006' Moore et al., 2020). It is difficult to achieve improved organizational performance if the organization only

practices diversity management (Sabharwal, 2014). A mix of diversity with inclusion is crucial and could increase business performance by 80% (Deloitte, 2013). But integrating all people into the decision-making process is still a challenge (Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017). Unequal gender representation in corporate boards is still lacking, making it difficult to achieve inclusive culture (Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017; Santero-Sanchez et al., 2015). The question addressed in this study is whether diversity management policies and practices play a role in advancing inclusive culture in the organizations.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this qualitative study was to explore the role of diversity management policies and practices in creating and sustaining a culture of inclusion. The target population was HR practitioners, individuals who have managed diversity and inclusion programs, implementers, and participants. The intent of the study was to investigate whether diversity management can facilitate the establishment of a culture of inclusion in an organization. Studies have espoused the importance of diversity management to organizational performance and its positive influence on other facets of the organization. However, its influence on establishing an inclusive climate is not clear because the connection was always not well elucidated in literature (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006). Findings from the study could draw the attention of executive management and people charged with policy formulation and implementation to the missing piece in the diversity management process. For example, the lack of equal gender representation on corporate boards and executive management levels of organizations suggests exclusion

(Köllen et al., 2018). But diversity management is about organizational policies and practices that further the cause of the minority and majority groups, including women.

Research Questions

The main research question was “What is the roles of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture?” In exploring this relationship, the following two questions were also addressed:

RQ 1: What is the impact of gender inequality at the top management and board levels on the decisions regarding diversity management and inclusion in the organization?

RQ 2: What is the roles of management (leadership) in ensuring that diversity management policies and practices are fully and diligently implemented?

Theoretical Foundation

Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982, 2010) and optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) were the two frameworks that were used to examine whether the implementation of diversity management policies and practices played any role in advancing or promoting a culture of inclusivity. These theories describe the feelings and perceptions people have when they are recognized, respected, and their opinions are considered in the daily running of the workplace and in the decision-making process. Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982, 2010) and optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) help bring understanding to why people are or should be concerned about how they are treated and valued in the workplace (Shore et al.; 2018). Employees reciprocate to all acts of kindness and care any employer shows to them and will be willing to work for

that employer (Kundu & Mor, 2017; Moore et al., 2020). The idea behind social identity theory is the idea of people feeling liked and accepted by the group in which they belong. The acceptance removes any frictions and increases trust and collaboration among the group (Tajfel, 1982). Shore et al. (2011) wrapped this up well when he stated that as feelings of acceptance grows, so do feelings of inclusion.

Optimal distinctiveness theory emphasizes striking an equilibrium between an individual's unique attributes and group characteristics (Brewer, 1991). Inclusion is achieved by ensuring a balance between an individual's affiliation to a group and the group's appreciation and respect for the individual's unique qualities (Shore et al., 2011). The extent of the groups display of acceptance, affection and oneness affects the feeling of inclusion of members (Nishii, 2013; Shore et al., 2011).

Moreover, people socially identify with a group to meet belongingness and uniqueness needs (Adejumo, 2021) While belongingness and uniqueness are characteristics of inclusion, they are also relevant in some diversity literature that focuses on the individual within the group (Shore et al., 2011). Literature related to diversity and inclusion recognize that the minority group especially women encounter difficulties as they try to integrate into TMTs because their unique characteristics is different from that of the dominant group (e.g., Caucasian men) who occupy those positions (Adejumo, 2021). The ongoing difficulty women and minorities encounter trying to achieve success continues to inspire diversity scholars to argue for a work environment where diversity is prevalent and a part of how people think and as a strategy that is inclusive of all

employee differences (Shore et al., 2011). Also, as a place where these differences are seen as opportunities for the individual and organizational learning.

Diversity management means recognition, integration, collaboration, valuing differences, and respect for all people (Coppin, 2017). Organizations are composed of people of different races, gender, ethnicity, religion to mention a few; harnessing these differences to foster harmony enhances an organization's social and economic image because people do not want to be hindered by their unique characteristics or qualities (Shore et al., 2011; Kundu & Mor, 2017). At this point, I took a look at the different approaches that are open to a researcher and explained the reason(s) for the approach I chose.

Nature of the Study

Several approaches are available to researchers when conducting research, such as quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Zoellner & Harris, 2017); however, I used qualitative phenomenological approach in this research. The intention was to get informed and in-depth information (data) tapping on the lived experiences and perceptions of participants. Phenomenological approach helps researchers to examine the lived experiences of individuals (Korcuska & Flynn, 2018) and to recognize patterns and connections in a qualitative study (Albers, 2017). The mixed methods and quantitative approaches are considered inappropriate for this study because, in addition to other drawbacks, quantitative methods involve responding to closed-ended questions in a survey, instead of open-ended responses that the interview process provides. The lack of opportunity for follow-up questions limits the valuable information a respondent can

provide if a quantitative method is used. The Mixed methods approach is concerned with analyzing existing data to provide a richer outcome of the subject of the study. Mixed methodology is used to analyze empirical data and bolster research findings (Bester et al., 2017). My study used semi-structured interview questions to acquire data from participants to address the research question.

Researchers use other qualitative research designs such as: phenomenology, ethnography, observation, narrative, or case study in a qualitative study (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). My, is a phenomenological study and interviews was used to elicit participants responses that was used to answer the research question. The study explored participants' lived experiences and perceptions regarding the role(s) of diversity management as a vehicle to accomplish the creation of a culture or climate of inclusion. Elman et al. (2016) opined that a case study could be used to carry out an in-depth study of organizational activities, changes, and interactions of participants to acquire information about a complex phenomenon. Ethnographic designs are used to acquire a deep understanding of the shared pattern of behavior and actions of cultural or social groups in their natural setting (Canevacci, 2017; Creswell & Creswell 2018, p.13). The interview was appropriate for this study because it provided the opportunity for an in-depth information base acquired through lived experiences and perceptions of the participants.

Definitions

Climate for inclusion: A climate for inclusion refers to the shared employee perceptions of the extent to which an organization helps each member feel valued and appreciated as essential members of the group or organization (Mor Barak et al., 2016).

Diversity climate: Diversity climate refers to the extent to which employees perceive that the organization helps diverse employees to succeed, as evidenced by organizational fairness (enacting equitable policies and procedures across all levels) and inclusion (offering opportunities equitably for all employees; Dreachslin et al., 2017).

Diversity management: Diversity management is a voluntary strategic program designed to include and integrate all employees in formal and informal organizational settings. They are specific and formalized activities, programs, policies, or efforts adopted by firms to manage their diverse workforces (Carstens & De Kock, 2017). These policies and practices are designed to allow, acknowledge, and recognize diversity and leverage these differences to support an organizational goal. For example, broader customer satisfaction, increasing innovation, fulfilling corporate social responsibility, or gaining a competitive advantage resulting in higher firm performance are some of the benefits that may accrue to an organization with a sound diversity management initiative (Manoharan & Singal, 2017; Sabharwal, 2014; Wondrak & Segert, 2015).

Diversity: Scholars and practitioners have defined diversity in several ways, but the central theme remains the same. Diversity was defined by Szymanska and Aldighieri (2017) as the collective mixture of differences and similarities that includes—for example, individual and organizational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences,

backgrounds, preferences, and behaviors (Kaur & Arora, 2020; Manoharan & Singal, 2017). Coppin (2017) defined it more broadly as any aspect that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. In practice, it means respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education, and religion.

Inclusion: Inclusion means creating a safe, collaborative environment that supports mutual understanding and different perspectives (Vêlez, 2012). Inclusion is not limited to hiring a diverse, talented workforce but also engaging those workers to become active contributors to the organization (Mor Barak, 2015; Roberson, 2006; Shore et al., 2011). Inclusion also means achieving a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the organization's success (Brimhall et al., 2014; Shore et al., 2011; Szymanska & Aldighieri, 2017).

Organizational inclusion: Employees from diverse groups are seen as included in all aspects of the company's culture and levels of leadership (Dreachslin et al., 2017).

Workforce diversity: Workplace diversity may be defined as the existence of difference in the composition of employees of an organization or any department or unit of the organization upon demographic, psychological, or organizational structure domains (Szymanska & Aldighieri, 2017).

Assumptions

An assumption is a belief or idea that has not been proven (Schoenung & Dikova, 2016). The first assumption in this study was that all participants understood that their

responses and personal information will be kept confidential; therefore, they would provide the best, honest answers to the interview questions. Another assumption was that participants are knowledgeable in the subject matter. The final assumption was that the findings and recommendations of this study will sensitize practitioners, organization boards, and executive management to ensure that the implementation of diversity management does not stop at recognizing the minority and respecting differences. Integrating the minority and majority in the decision-making process and ensuring everyone has access to opportunities, information, and equal treatment is also crucial.

Scope and Delimitations

A delimitation is a self-imposed scope within which the researchers conduct their study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This study comprised of 12 participants, which was determined based on published saturation sizes (Guest et al., 2006; Hagaman & Wutich, 2017; Namey et al., 2016; Rosenthal, 2016). The participants were HR practitioners, individuals who manage and oversaw diversity management, and inclusion initiatives/programs, and participants in the program. All individuals had an in-depth knowledge of the topic. The relatively wide range of qualification criteria was to ensure that only qualified participants are selected. Even though this study is not limited or specific to any industry or sector, the participants came mainly from the United States. The same qualification standards were applied to all participants.

Limitations

The first limitation was in the number of participants. Different authors have suggested different number of participants depending on the type of research. Another

limitation was the quality of the participant's response. The credibility of a research depends on the integrity of the data collected and the interpretation of the data. The final limitation was that the result of the study cannot be generalized given the relatively small sample size.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it draws attention to the connections between diversity management and inclusion or inclusiveness that has been lacking in previous studies. Previous studies regarding the connection between diversity management initiatives and inclusive culture have mainly centered on the organization's economic benefit (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006). Though achieving and maintaining economic sustainability may be crucial for an organization's long-term survival, not recognizing and integrating minority groups fully into the system can create discontent, especially at the board and management levels (Guillaume et al. 2014; Szymanska & Aldighieri, 2017). Integrating all the groups (the minority and majority) and ensuring their involvement in the decision-making process is essential towards creating a climate of inclusion (Carstens & De Kock, 2017).

Significance to Practice

Even though many organizations experience success at initiating diversity policies and programs, their system is not designed to address inclusiveness (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006). Changing the system to accommodate diverse groups and creating a work environment where these groups feel supported, respected, welcomed, and willing to contribute is critical (Downey et al., 2015; Guillaume et al., 2014; Moore et al., 2020).

Engaging in practices that encourage equal access to resources, the decision-making process, and upward mobility for all individuals is one of the foundations of inclusion (Reshma, 2020; Shore et al., 2018). Building a diverse team and engaging in inclusive practices are crucial in making employees feel equal especially those who feel marginalized for any reason (Shore et al., 2018).

Based on the results of the study, setting up a system that encourages continuous evaluation of the level of diversity and recruiting underrepresented demographics would be a good place to start. Second, policies and practices should focus on engaging every employee and fostering a sense of belonging and valuing all people. Third, a system of continuous evaluation of the inclusion climate utilizing established metrics to capture employees' feelings, and views about diversity management and inclusion practices is encouraged. Thus, although the intent to increase diversity is an essential first step, there should be a deliberate attempt to promote inclusion, impacting the ability to retain and engage individuals (Moore et al., 2020; Shore et al. 2018). Organizations are encouraged to ensure that inclusion practices permeate every level of the organization, including at the leadership and management levels (Mor Barak et al., 2016).

Significance to Theory

Most studies on the relationship between diversity management and inclusion have lacked a focus on inclusion. Research shows that to fully realize the benefits of diversity management; inclusion is an inevitable piece that must be added (Sherbin & Rashid 2017). Gender equality or equity is also a missing piece in implementing diversity management and inclusion initiatives, especially at the decision-making levels of

organizations (Mor Barak et al., 2016; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017; Shore et al., 2018). However, numerous studies support that gender equality at the top management level of organizations is positively related to higher financial results (Horak & Cui, 2017; Hunt et al., 2018; Kaur & Arora, 2020). Equal gender representation on the boards and management levels of organizations has not only been advocated, but they have also been shown to positively affect organizational performance (Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017; Yadav & Lenka, 2020). Increase in job satisfaction, trust, staff retention, creativity, well-being, innovation, and organizational commitment was found to be the result of an inclusive workplace especially in a diverse work environment (Brimhall et al., 2014; Brimhall & Mor Barak, 2018)

Significance to Social Change

In terms of the connection of the study to positive social change, one main takeaway from this study is creating awareness and discussing the primary constructs (diversity management and inclusive culture) and their connections in making change inevitable. Exploring the connectedness between diversity management and inclusive culture would require organization leaders to find a way to fully implement diversity management policies and practices in the workplace where respect for employees' differences and experiences are not compromised. A constant discussion of the concepts of inclusion/integration will create awareness that would facilitate the acceptance and full implementation of fair diversity management policies and practices.

The study has provided information to leaders of organizations to help them manage and expand career advancement opportunities for individuals who have been

marginalized in the past such as ethnic minorities within the workforce, especially at the board and management levels. The results can also promote and establish a better decision-making process, instigating high-quality decisions due to equal gender representation (see Harjoto et al., 2015; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017; Reshma, 2020). Diversity is a value all organizations needed to implement (Cho et al., 2017).

Summary and Transition

The necessity and relevance of gender equality at the top management levels of organizations and the benefits are fully documented in the literature (Harjoto et al., 2015; Post & Byron, 2015; Reguera-Alvarado et al. 2017). However, this is not reflected in practice as women are constantly relegated to the background or segregated (Köllen et al., 2018). Notwithstanding the slight increase in the percentage of women chief executives between 2019 and 2021, women are still grossly underrepresented in chief executives' positions. How diversity management can become a pivot toward attaining a climate of inclusion is one of the missing pieces in this discourse. Many organizations do not succeed at inclusion because the system was not set up to accommodate it; therefore, change is necessary (Moore et al., 2020).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Successfully managing the diverse composition of today's work population constitutes a challenge on a global scale (Barak, 2017). Literature is mixed on the status of diversity or diversity management to bolster an organization's performance outcomes (Ohunakin, et al., 2019). Diversity management is more than increasing economic performance; it includes integration, respect, acceptance, and collaboration among all the groups in the organization across all levels (Guillaume et al., 2014; Kaur & Arora, 2020). To practicalize diversity management, respect for and the involvement of the minority groups in the decision-making process is essential (Guillaume et al., 2014; Sison, 2017). However, research shows that full implementation of diversity management process always excludes inclusion (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006). To promote and sustain performance in a diverse workforce, organizations should consider integrating all the groups in the workforce (Sherbin & Rashid, 2017). The purpose of this study was to explore the role of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture. My focus was to understand whether diversity management is a sufficient way to establish a climate of inclusion.

Literature Search Strategy

I used the following databases and search engines to source literature relevant to this study: ProQuest, EBSCOhost, ABI/INFORM Complete, Business Source Complete, ScienceDirect, SAGE Premier, Academic Search Complete, Thoreau, Google Scholar, and Walden library. I searched for keywords such as *diversity*, *diversity management*, *multiculturalism*, *inclusion*, *inclusiveness*, *inclusive culture*, *cultural diversity*, *workplace*

inclusion, gender diversity, gender equality, workplace diversity, and diversity climate. I paired some words to enhance the search results. For example, *diversity, inclusion, diversity management, equality and inclusion, inclusive culture, diversity, multiculturalism and inclusion, workplace diversity and inclusion, multiculturalism and inclusiveness, and workplace inclusion.* I applied most of my word combinations to the search engines and scanned the results to identify relevant literature. For example, I searched for combination words inclusive culture in Thoreau and got 3,196 total outcomes, but when I applied the limiters (range and peer-reviewed), the result came to less than 3,000. The same was the case with Google Scholar. I searched the combination of *diversity management, equality, and inclusion* and received over 19,000 results in total but had to narrow it down by applying limiters.

I also accumulated information from reviewing related articles acquired through literature search. In reviewing the literature, I came across quotes and information relevant to the study and cited in the articles. I pulled out the article by using the complete reference from the reference list and sourcing for the article through Google Scholar. Google Scholar was what I used when I completely referenced any article followed by Thoreau in the university library. Overall, I reviewed numerous peer-reviewed articles.

Theoretical Foundation

Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982, 2010) and optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) are the two theories that I used to examine whether the implementation of diversity management policies and practices play any role in advancing or promoting an

inclusive culture. These theories describe the feelings and perceptions people have when they are recognized, respected, and their opinions are considered in the day-to-day running and decision-making process. Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982, 2010) and optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) help bring understanding to why people are or should be concerned about how they are treated and valued in the workplace. Research shows that people are more inclined to work for organizations where employees feel recognized, respected, and valued and they react to such gestures by displaying appropriate behaviors in the workplace (Kundu & Mor, 2017).

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory was used by Tajfel (1982) to describe the awareness individuals have for belonging to a group. The theory describes the way individuals perceive themselves within the group (Tajfel, 1982). The theory states that individuals categorize themselves into social groups, which helps them to determine how they want to interact with members within their group and other groups (Stahl et al., 2010; Tajfel, 1982). The theory further states that members' perception of each other helps to determine team cohesion and how the organization is linked, leading to positive work outcomes. Furthermore, familiarity and acceptance within group members increases trust and a sense of belongingness (Tajfel, 1982).

To achieve organizational performance, managers engage in activities that foster togetherness (Cho et al., 2017). An inclusive climate is one that evolves from creating a safe and collaborative environment where there is reciprocal of knowledge and varying perspectives (Shore et al., 2011). It also means recognizing diversity in the hiring process

to ensure that talented people are hired. It means engaging all employees to become active contributors to the company (Kaur & Arora, 2020; Vêlez, 2012). An organization cannot be inclusive if people are not treated fairly and do not have equal access to resources, growth opportunities, and can contribute to the organization's success (Sherbin & Rashid, 2017; Szymanska & Aldighieri, 2017). When gender equality or equity cannot be guaranteed at the top management levels of an organization, it can affect how individuals within that gender feel, which is inconsistent with the concept of diversity management and inclusion.

Optimal Distinctiveness Theory

Optimal distinctiveness theory explains the importance of recognizing and respecting uniqueness (Brewer, 1991), which is the hallmark of inclusion. Promoters of optimal distinctiveness theory suggest that people would like to feel similar (integrated) to others to whom they are related (Cho et al., 2017; Shore et al.; 2018) and at the same time, desire acceptance of their unique characteristics (Brewer, 1991; Shore et al., 2011). Accepting the differences individuals possess is key to establishing an inclusive culture because these differences should be seen as an asset. Optimal distinctiveness theory is about recognizing and respecting the differences individual possess and not allowing those differences to impede their full participation in how the organization is run (Mor Barak, 2015; Shore et al., 2011). Consequently, balancing the feeling of belongingness alongside being valued by the group for the uniqueness in each individual's characteristics promotes the feeling of inclusion (Shore et al., 2011). In trying to build an inclusive workplace, recognizing similarities among employees is essential so that

diversity can be effectively managed (Brewer, 1991; Shore et al., 2011). Doing so facilitates the achievement of a better organizational performance that includes improvement in employees job satisfaction (Brimhall & Mor Barak, 2018; Hauret & Williams, 2020) and reduced turnover intention (Roberson, 2019). Integrating employees' opinions allows the organization to converge different opinions referred to as organizational thinking. Organizational thinking positively impacts organizational performance; meaning that workforce diversity affects organizational thinking (Cho et al., 2017).

Previous Studies on Social Identity and Optimal Distinctiveness Theories

Researchers like Cho et al. (2017) used social identity and optimal distinctiveness theories to emphasize how individuals feel when they are respected, valued, and involved in the decision-making process. Brimhall and Mor Barak (2018) similarly used social identity and optimal distinctiveness theories to reinforce the case that inclusion positively impacts inclusion, innovation, and job satisfaction. Inclusion is key to fully implement diversity management policies and practices because diversity without inclusion cannot work (Sherbin & Rashid, 2017; Sison, 2017). Diversity management has the capacity to increase workforce diversity, including gender, and organizational growth relating to creativity, productivity, and profitability (Hurt et al., 2018). Therefore, the aim of diversity management is to boost the productivity and development of a diverse workforce irrespective of their diversity dimensions (Yadav & Lenka 2020). The lack of a clear path from academics and practitioners may be partly responsible for why many organizations focus on diversity without inclusion (Sison, 2017).

Application of the Theoretical Foundation to the Study

Social identity and optimal distinctiveness theories are relevant and suitable for my study because I sought to understand the dynamics in implementing diversity management policies and instituting a culture of inclusivity. Both theories address uniqueness of the characteristics embedded in diversity. Establishing an inclusion climate includes setting up a work environment where everyone is free to belong and have access to equal opportunities (Shore et al., 2018), including opportunities for upward movement and access to relevant information (Shore et al., 2018; Szymanska & Aldighieri, 2017). Social identity theory is about identifying one's self as a member of a group and using the group platform to describe/promote self. Optimal distinctiveness refers to recognizing differences and respecting and valuing them. Studies show that increase in job satisfaction, trust, creativity, innovation, employee retention, and employee commitment, and well-being can be achieved by creating an inclusive work environment (Brimhall et al., 2014; Shore et al., 2011). To realize the most from diversity, diversity management, and inclusion, scholars and practitioners have suggested that creating a climate of diversity and inclusion would be a good signal of the intentions of the organization's management regarding both concepts.

Literature Review

This study addressed whether diversity management policies and practices could be a source to promote a culture of inclusion. In this section, I present related literature covering the primary constructs (diversity, diversity management, and inclusion or inclusive culture) of my study then apply what is learned to the research question. Most

previous studies on diversity, diversity management, and inclusion focused on discussing and dealing with both constructs separately. Scholars and practitioners have discussed, recommended, adopted, and implemented diversity or diversity management strategies without inclusion (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006). However, diversity with inclusion provides a mix of talent retention and engagement.

Diversity Management

Diversity management has its historical founding in the United States as a form of substitute for, and reframing of, the affirmative action programs of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Koellen, 2019; Oppenheimer, 2016; Szymansa & Aldighieri, 2017). Until the 1980s, affirmative action (AA) had at its core the promotion, employment, and career development of Black employees and later female employees in the United States. The concept gradually spread to other parts of the world to become one of the most essential management functions in a diverse world (Jonsen & Özbilgin, 2014).

Diversity management has become an all-encompassing management strategy that many emerging economies and industrialized countries of the West have adopted to boost their performance (Nkomo et al., 2015). Organizations implement diversity management practices for different reasons. For some it is to attain economic prosperity, for others it may be to accommodate demographic challenges, and for others to meet mandatory or statutory requirements that focuses more on gender and race (Moore et al., 2020).

Although diversity management has been defined in different ways, the focus remains the same. For instance, Manoharan and Singal (2017) defined diversity

management as voluntary strategic programs designed to include and integrate all employees in formal and informal organizational settings. It is a strategic program organization's design through policies and practices to address the issues relating to managing their diverse workforce (Carstens & De Kock, 2017). Diversity management also describes how organizations pursue and achieve organizational productivity and profit utilizing a culture that encourages diverse values and cultural backgrounds (Lim, 2010).

There is a plethora of literature related to diversity or diversity management in the business, sociocultural, and political arenas. It is common to read about the relevance and necessity of diversity as an inevitable strategy for attaining positive economic growth. Diversity is often phrased as “diversity for strategic advantage” or described as a necessary and expedient practice to achieve competitive sustainability (Kaur & Arora, 2020; Manoharan & Singal, 2017; Rahman et al., 2020). Many entities see diversity and inclusion as a tool to facilitate growth which enhances the chances for competitive superiority (Hurt et al., 2018). The spread of diversity management (DM) is being driven by current demographic changes taking place in the labor markets all over the world. This wave has caught the attention of management scholars and practitioners of DM (Tarus & Aime, 2015).

Previous Studies on Diversity Management

Diversity management is aimed at improving the performance of a diverse group or entity and inclusively developing all the employees despite the difference in their gender, social status, and ethnic and cultural dispositions (Downey et al. 2015; Yadav &

Lenka, 2020). Diversity management initiatives typically manifest in policies and practices implemented by organizations. Many organizations have made huge investments into managing diversity (Yadav & Lenka 2020). But diversity poses some challenges such as conflicts, employee turnover, and group unity (Roberson, 2019). Despite views that people who have the necessary expertise would be better at solving difficult problems than homogeneous teams, diversity and equality have remained a problem in the United States (Phillips, 2014; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017). Though diversity management can influence an organization's desired results (Manoharan & Singal., 2017; Wondrak & Segert, 2015), diversity has been described as a "double-edged sword" (Carter & Phillips, 2017; Ehrke et al., 2020; Yip, 2018). Diversity studies should be context-specific (Guillaume et al., 2017; Joshi & Roh, 2009).

The responsibility to manage and implement diversity management policies and ensure compliance rests in the hands of middle level managers who are at the forefront of the organization (Kulik, 2014; Madera et al., 2017; Rodgers, 2019). Successfully managing a diverse workforce is one of corporate leaders' global challenges (Barak, 2017). However, practitioners do not know which diversity management practices works best (Guillaume et al., 2013). Despite the unclear path, literature regarding the economic benefits of diversity management is commonplace. Diversity management programs and initiatives can increase an organization's competitive advantage by as much as 49% if the leaders are behind the effort (Nelson, 2014; Wondrak & Segert, 2015). Same is the case with performance. Organizational performance relative to productivity, and job quality could increase by as much as 53%. Thus, roughly one third of organizations have thought

about diversity management (DM) as a strategic tool toward attaining sustainable competitiveness and growth (Sabharwal, 2014; Wondrak & Segert, 2015). Furthermore, studies show that diversity management programs can impact organizational performance directly by stimulating the positive effect and reducing the adverse effects (Amstrong et al., 2010; Choi & Rainey, 2010). Different employers view diversity management as a catalyst for growth and an instrument to access new markets (Hunt et al., 2018).

According to Kundu and Mor (2017), it is now commonplace to see employees and potential employees tending towards organizations that value and respect differences. This situation therefore, has prompted organizations to begin reviewing and updating their diversity-related policies and manuals and engaging in practices that could help establish an inclusive work context that ensures justice, engagement, tolerance, and equal opportunities for all staff regardless of their differences (Aneesya et al., 2018; Kirton & Greene, 2010; Kharroubi, 2021). This move aligns with Roosevelt Thomas's (1990) position, when he stated that the primary mission of any diversity management protocol should be to develop an organizational climate that appreciates differences and respects an individual's uniqueness. Consequently, implementing an effective diversity management procedure may entail a powerful change in an organization's culture, values, and traits (Mousa 2018a; Mousa, 2018b; Shore et al., 2011).

Diversity management and organizational inclusion bear their roots from the "equal employment" program of the early 1960s in the U.S. These concepts are based on social exchange theory (Paauwe et al., 2013; Van de Voorde et al., 2012). The theory states that employees will react favorably through performance, commitment, and

positive citizenship behavior when the organization invests in them through good pay, promotions, and developmental opportunities (Guillaume et al., 2014; Paauwe et al., 2013). Though diversity management was conceptualized and promoted in the U.S., it was quickly adopted by researchers in other disciplines such as public policy, public administration, sociology, and business have reacted favorably to it (Jonsen et al. (2011). Growing changes in the demographics, business ethics, labor market, and corporate sensitivity towards globalization, and government policies in Europe towards integrating multinationals into the labor market has made adoption and implementation of diversity management programs and initiatives inevitable (Ravazzani, 2016).

Studies by Ashikali and Groenveld (2015) show that the long history of adopting and implementing affirmative action (AA) and equal employment opportunities requirements may have facilitated the practice of fair representation of minority groups across all levels of most western organizations. This effort was directed towards building and retaining diverse individuals irrespective of their differences in an attempt to advance organization's performance (Nishii, 2013;). The idea of retaining, developing, and representing minority groups is one downside of diversity management (Kirton & Greene 2010). It revives feelings of contempt and negative behaviors in members of the majority groups towards the workplace. As a result, Guillaume et al. (2014) suggested a proper design and adoption of diversity management practices to prevent a backlash from the dominant culture.

A favorable assessment of employees' perceptions about how an organization handles diversity issues and promotes diversity and inclusion makes a sound diversity

management practice (Kundu & Mor, 2017). It also means that perceptions will differ due to the differences in demographics and work experiences. In a quantitative study conducted by Mousa et al. (2020), exploring how gender may affect nurses' perception of diversity management and organizational inclusion in public hospitals in Egypt, female nurses received low assessments. They felt discriminated against by their male managers (Mousa, 2017). This outcome is attributed to the notion that women are less empowered and less represented in leadership positions than men in developing countries and masculine cultures. Therefore, their diversity perceptions differ from that of their male counterparts (Mousa et al., 2020). According to Mousa (2021), three phases of diversity management were identified (Ravazzani, 2016); they include assimilation of minorities; a process that involved selecting few individuals from the minority to give the semblance of fairness through the quota system. Integrating the minority group is a deliberate action by the organization management to establish a group of employees along diversity dimension lines (e.g., gender, race etc.). It is a move that was intended to portray the organization as meeting the sociocultural expectations of the people thus, ascribing legitimacy on the organization. The last phase involved activities planned by the organization that includes diverse staff considered to be leading players in the drive for sustained competition edge. This process involved setting up training and development opportunities for the diverse population to learn (Janssens & Zanoni, 2014).

Köllen et al. (2018) propounded a moral and ethical case for diversity management. Leading up to their study, the authors indicated that there is an increase in the discussions around diversity management and inclusion as it relates to integrating the

diverse workforce. The buzz about these concepts is generating steam and gaining grounds around the globe (Martínez-Ariño et al., 2018; Vasconcelos, 2017). The authors reiterated that the concept of diversity is built on different dimensions of diversity such as age, gender, religion, race, and sexual orientation. They acknowledged that it is the case that in a given context, the manifestations of specific dimensions of diversity are valued more highly than others. Thus, in considering diversity composition at the board and top management teams (TMTs) it is expected that the performance or achievement(s) of any individual in the team or group will be comparable to that of the group or other individuals in the group including status and access to resources (Köllen et al., 2018). In trying to describe unequal positioning or representativeness, the word hierarchy or marginalization is commonly used (Köllen et al., 2018). Contextually, inclusion in this sense meant the practice whereby the hierarchy system is either abolished or not implemented at all (Köllen et al., 2018). Some scholars and practitioners argued that a more widespread and even representation of diverse groups across all levels indicates the presence of inclusion among the representatives of that group or dimension. In a rhetorical sense accomplishing equal representation is worth fighting for. In this context, it is safe to assume that managing diversity to include inclusion, and ensure equal representation may be the reasonable way to go. The values placed on the manifestation of specific groups of each dimension of diversity serve as the yardstick to determine the extent to which it has been practiced or implemented. However, it would appear that, in discussing equality, diversity, and inclusion, equality takes a central position (Köllen et al., 2018) because it seems to prescribe and legitimize the way the inclusion of diversity

should occur. Despite scant literature relating to the moral value of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), diversity management seems to be the general term used to describe efforts at diversity and inclusion (Byrd, 2018; Sposato et al., 2015).

Many organizations see diversity management as a moral or ethical course that is worthy of admiration notwithstanding the economic value attached to the practice (Kulik, 2014). This goodness is often associated with or viewed as good management as it rubs off of, the organization as one that implements good ethical practices (Köllen, 2016). In many cases, equality is used to measure how good an organization is because it is equated with justice. Same applies to diversity management programs which some might judge to be the right way to integrate (inclusion) every employee in a diverse workforce (Brewis, 2017); thus, assigning a morally desirable and socially just statues to diversity management (Köllen et al., 2018). Managing a diverse workforce is then taken to be a moral necessity in the discussion of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) (Vertovec, 2013). Romani et al. (2017) summarize this imperative as the “principle of representation, social responsibility, anti-discrimination, and equal treatment.

Looking at the overall population of many organizations, one can see an imbalance in the representation of cultural groups; specifically, at top management levels. The deck seems to be stacked against the group which makes the provision of a level playing field ever so important in a diverse work environment. As already noted, organizations practice diversity management for different reasons including better financial results, meeting demographic necessities and more. Yet, some others see it as an avenue to create equal opportunity for everyone in the organization. For such, investing

in diversity management helps to fulfil their motive which is to engage in a moral and ethical practice (Köllen et al., 2018; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017). In this sense therefore, it would be okay to assume that equality is one of the reasons for engaging in diversity and inclusion because it is assumed to be the right thing to do. Generally, equality is thought of in terms of equal chances, equal results, and sometimes equal treatment for all irrespective of their differences (Fleurbaey et al., 2016, 2017). It is common to see people ascribe fair play or fairness to an environment where equal opportunities (Köllen et al., 2018) are afforded to everyone no matter their inherent, or social (justice) inclinations (Brewis, 2017; Choi & Rainey, 2014).

The study concluded by suggesting that more research with new logical rationale is necessary irrespective of the morality or moral value of diversity management, inclusion programs, and corporate equality approaches. The suggestion was aimed at avoiding what seems like the application of prescriptive ethics that is founded on intuition or simple political sentiment (Köllen et al., 2018).

Reddy and Jadhav (2019) discussed how nations have used the quota system to ensure that minority representation matches national considerations, laws, and legislation (Bertrand et al., 2019). For the same reason, Daya (2014) posited that managing diversity can be attained only through ensuring fair representation of minority and majority-affiliated members at different organizational levels without discrimination based on gender, age, religion, skin color, social class, and more. Other authors have demonstrated that power and its positioning have become a cornerstone in addressing diversity since the mid-1990s (Ponzoni et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the strategic nature of diversity and diversity management has transformed the concept from a governmental or legal imperative to a strategic priority. Whether global or not, companies are impacted by global diversity directly or indirectly (Kharroubi, 2021; Urbancová, et al., 2021). Diversity proponents hold the view that a diverse workforce is economically beneficial (Manoharan & Singal, 2017; Wondrak & Segert, 2015) because it helps to attain competitive advantage (Urbancová, et al., 2021) and eventually leads to better firm performance (Manoharan & Singal, 2017; Porcena et al., 2020). Despite the clarifications made by these scholars, Farrer (2004) opined that the success of diversity does not hinge on the concept alone; it includes effective management of diversity and celebrating, valuing, and actively encouraging diversity of the workforce (Manoharan et al., 2021).

Kundu and Mor (2017) provided their perspective about diversity and diversity management by stating that the main thrust of diversity is the uniqueness that a person brings to the table in terms of ethnicity, natinality, language, class, sexual orientation, religion, age, thoughts, experiences, education, gender, or generation (Wang & McLean, 2016). According to these authors, diversity management seeks to recognize and bring together the uniqueness in individuals, in the pursuit of more creative environments. Valuing and utilizing workforce diversity and overcoming the barriers of segregation and discrimination are some of the benefits of diversity management often expressed generally by scholars and practitioners (Healy et al., 2010). Changes in work attitude and behavior such as loyalty (Jauhari & Singh, 2013), job satisfaction (Hauret & Williams, 2020; Yadav & Lenka, 2020), decrease in employee's intention to quit/retention (Kundu

et al., 2017), have been determined to connect to diversity management business benefits like creativity and improved sales (Hunt et al. 2018), and increased productivity (Cho et al., 2017). Thus, organizations that invest their resources and embrace diversity by taking advantage of the opportunity diversity offers, outperform those that fail to make such investments (Mor Barak et al., 2016).

Also, whether an organization's diversity management initiatives are working depends on the perception of the employees (Rabl et al., 2020). Employees review and evaluate the organization's policies, practices, and work environment to determine how they align with their own values (Rabl et al., 2020). Employees perceptions about the organization's diversity management programs are impacted by the extent to which the program policies align with their interests. (Rabl et al., 2020).

For a diversity program to be successful, companies must create work environments where workers feel valued, respected, included, and safe. Employees do not need to pretend or overcome their personality in the workplace to belong. Well thought out plans are crucial to enable the benefits that accrue from diversity, but they do not come without challenges (Goldberg et al.,2019).

From the aforementioned, one can say with some level of certainty that successfully managing diversity leads to more committed, better satisfied, and better-performing employees, which in turn leads to better financial performance (Goldberg et al., 2019). A work environment that ignores diversity and inclusion could experience negative results that range from discrimination to intergroup conflicts, and high turnover intentions. (Garg & Sangwan., 2020). To benefit, organizations must go beyond diversity

in recruiting and hiring and invest resources to create an environment that supports a diverse workforce (Goldberg et al., 2019).

In their study, Goldberg et al. (2019) focused on how the concepts of diversity and inclusion play out in the “Accounting Workplace.” They recognized what benefits an assembly of diverse people could bring to the organization in terms of their contribution to the organization and the economy in general. The authors opined that diversity is a strategic concept in the U.S. because of the rapidly growing diverse demographics. Workplace diversity provides the assurance of excellent benefits if well managed; it also presents significant challenges. They reiterated the positive work environment created due to diversity management policies and practices. Research reports a favorable correlation between a successful diversity management program and organizational performance (Hunt et al. 2018; Porcena et al., 2020).

The following statistics from the U.S. Bureau of labor and statistics provided a picture of the difficulties women and other minority groups face as they aspire to top management positions in the public and sometimes private sectors. According to the 2020 U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics report, 88% of corporate executives were white, and 70.7% were male (<http://bit.ly/2SdSqkN>). In a February 28th, 2018 article published in Fortune.com, Grace Donnelly lamented the decline in the number of Black CEOs in Fortune 500 companies from 6 in 2012 to 3 in 2018 (<http://bit.ly/2NowkN6>). Furthermore, Pew Research published that 40% of both men and women are more likely to hire men over women (Blaze Petersen, “The State of U.S. Workplace Diversity in 14 Statistics,” ArchPoint Group, December 20th, 2016,

<http://bit.ly/32h9sTS>). These statistics, to some extent, suggest the need to encourage diversity through diversity management initiatives.

Furthermore, diversity can lead to a more vigorous exchange of ideas that improves group decision-making and performance and promotes innovation and creative problem solving (Reshma, 2020). Studies support the notion that heterogeneous teams are more creative than homogeneous teams as long as team members have similar ability levels (Goldberg et al., 2019; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017). In contrast, homogeneous groups tend towards groupthink, in which pressures to maintain group coherence discourage critical thinking resulting in poor decisions (Hannan, 2016). Furthermore, a study published in the Harvard Business Review suggests that diversity training may lead to new pressures, blame, and negative messages. The consequence increases employee bias and animosity towards minority groups (Frank Dobbin & Alexandra Kalev, “Why Diversity Programs Fail,” July-August 2016, <http://bit.ly/2Cow61Y>).

In yet another study regarding diversity management and the United States (U.S) Armed forces, Galvin and Allen (2021) stated that diversity management was established in the US military to check/control possible acts of discrimination in all areas of the military and ensure equality and opportunity for all. The US Department of Defense (DoD) is responsible for managing the affairs of the US military. The Department of Defense has policies that favor and support diversity and inclusion (US DoD, 2012) across the establishment; however, this strategic plan is adjudged to be ineffective and did not have the support of the leadership (Kidder et al., 2017) due to its superfluity (MacDonald, 2013). Despite the existence of and support for diversity and

inclusion, there were reports of abuses and neglect of certain minority groups. For example, there were reports of sexual intimidation and abuse (Wood & Toppelberg, 2017) and a lack of racial and gender diversity among senior military officers within DoD (e.g., Smith, 2010). There was also a report about the reversal of policy regarding the inclusion of transgender people (Marguiles, 2019).

In light of the aforementioned, Galvin and Allen (2021) presented a study titled “Diversity Management and the Post diversity Vision,” a study that discussed the establishment and implementation of diversity management policies and practices in the US military. The study looked at the post-diversity vision of the DoD. The authors recognized a lack of clarity on current diversity and inclusion matters, which has made the unresolved enduring discord and perceptions regarding diversity and inclusion more contentious. Their study highlighted the history of exclusion of some minority groups by the US military because of age, religion, gender, disability, and race. Even though some of these discriminatory practices have been outlawed, others remain. The US has practiced segregation for a long time, and the US military is not an exception, even though that seems to be in decline now (Collins, 2013; Kamarck, 2019). The study noted that recruitment of the minority group members into the Armed Forces at the early stage was in response to shortages in human resources during war times (Center for Military History, n.d.; Collins, 2013). The heroic and honorable performance of these minority soldiers during the wars led President Truman to issue executive orders 9980 and 9981 mandating “equality of treatment,” which effectively abolished racial discrimination in the federal government and US Armed Forces (Galvin & Allen., 2021). Although

meaningful advancement has occurred in integrating people of different races and ethnic minorities into the force, some challenges remain. The issues relating to race relations with its accompanying public opinion are familiar (Galvin & Allen., 2021). Some people support it and want the discussion to continue, while others oppose it and do not want to talk about it. In other words, there is a bias towards the issue of race relations in America, and this attitude also existed in the military and may still exist now (Galvin & Allen., 2021). The authors noted that correcting discriminatory practices against African Americans was the focus until 1960 (Bonilla-Silva, 2001). However, other ethnic minority groups have had their share at different times; for example, on Mexican migrant workers (Burns, 2017), on Asians in the entertainment industry (Lee & Gandhi, 2017), on hate crimes against Arab-Americans, (Oswald, 2006). Though there has been some improvement in the number of racial minorities holding managerial positions, the perpetuation of old racial attitudes and resistance to a new order persist. Issues like racist remarks, harassment, and other institutional racism are prevalent in society (Kandola, 2018).

Regarding the admittance of women into the military, people continue to have dual attitudes towards the traditional role of women in society. There is a general perception that the military is not for women; instead, they should remain in conventional jobs (MacDonald, 2019); therefore, women were excluded from the armed services (Isbell, 2019). It was only in the 20th century that women were allowed to serve in support roles like as nurses and auxiliary staff to free up the men for combat activities (Szayna et al., 2016).

Because of the many competing issues arising from handling the different diversity dimensions elucidated, DoD, as a governmental agency, is required to follow through with federal laws and establish a road map that is fair and equitable for all members. The procedures and arrangements that would make diversity and inclusion endure may take long to manifest, thereby creating the possibility of new problems arising either from the society, government, or the military itself (Allen, 2018).

This study discussed a post diversity future of DoD, referred to as “the vision,” which is described here as “a mental picture of the future with an overwhelming need to move beyond its past (Galvin & Allen, 2016). The authors suggested that there should be an agreed basis upon which individuals may be identified. The vision should state that individuals would be identified on bases of their ability, scope, and moral attitudes, not the traditional diversity dimensions (Galvin & Allen, 2021).

In concluding this study, the authors suggested a way forward than what obtains now. They recognize that the concept of diversity and inclusion is as sensitive as it is divisive. They further noted that the problem with diversity and inclusion is in its implementation, not the concept. The authors suggested bringing together opposing perspectives and find ways to go pass the road blocks, than paying too much attention on areas of disagreements, thereby overlooking how nature deals with issues. This type of circumstance could devolve into a situation where each side tries to impose its will on the other. In the meantime, other parties may see this as a waste of time and effort that is capable of indefinitely delaying needed progress toward diversity and inclusion goals and making any gains prone to compromise. To sustain an outcome, a project must be

adjusted towards a well-defined goal that is desirable, actionable, and achievable; in other words, a vision of a future diverse society. It looks like a high bar to attain but nothing is impossible especially when it is almost inevitable. Attaining a state where organizations can pursue and bring together opposing views regarding diversity and inclusion is the desired state.

Studies show that the presence of or establishment of a diversity climate can help to mitigate high turnover intentions among employees (Kundu & Mor, 2017). In other words, when employees are provided with the environment to express and be themselves, they stay with that employer. It is also cost-effective in that it saves the organization money that could have gone into retraining new employees, thereby contributing to financial performance.

Porcena et al. (2020), in a quantitative study, argued the role and relevance of corporate ethics (internal and external) in the implementation and practice of diversity management policies by advancing the position that organizational performance is linked to diversity management practices mediated by corporate external ethics. Corporate ethics refers to the internal and external ethical practices of an organization (Chun et al., 2013; Porcena et al., 2020). While internal ethics is about the organization's internal ethical practices, external ethics references how the organization's ethical practices affect the public and world at large (Chun et al., 2013). Even though studies show a lack of in-depth assessment of how ethics play out in the workplace and the effect it might have on a diverse workforce, the role of women in corporate governance, social and performance systems are well documented (Harjoto et al., 2015; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017).

Strategically, diversity management initiatives aim at incorporating every employee into every aspect of the organization (Carstens & De Kock, 2017). Diversity management provides the best possible way to manage and reduce any negative effect diversity may have and at the same time provide the leverage for organizations to use diversity to its own advantage (D'Netto et al., 2014). The authors referred to many studies which show that there is a positive relationship between diversity management and an organization's performance (Porcena et al. (2020); also, that when an organization can boost of a mixed composition of people, such organization have the benefit of varying expertise that is capable of driving performance to a competitive level. Access to global markets leads to increased profits associated with diversity recruitments which drive greater workforce diversity (Hunt et al. 2018). Studies show that the intention to remain in an organization is connected to the existence of a functional climate of inclusion (Kundu & Mor, 2017). Encouraging and establishing a diversity climate saves the organization money that could have been expended on retraining new employees, which adds to the organization's financial performance. Intention to quit is reduced when diversity is recognized and appreciated as well as the cost of minority turnover (McCallaghan et al., 2019). Existing literature evidence that when diversity programs are valued, they increase organizational citizenship behaviors, positively impacting performance (McCallaghan et al., 2019). The benefit of interacting with people different from you, comes with sharing information and acquiring knowledge which otherwise may not have been available. Diversity management offers the platform for such interaction which leads to greater innovation and high performance (Yadav & Lenka). Workplace diversity is known to stimulate

performance if well managed (McCallaghan et al., 2019), the same way diversity management can impact organization's performance if ethical practices are implemented (Porcena et al., 2020). Research shows that employees react positively and favorably through appropriate behavior when they perceive that the organization where they work is honest and astute about diversity initiatives. The employees will not only exhibit appropriate behavior they will ensure the organization's ethical standards are kept thereby positioning the organization well in public.

As espoused in relevant literature, external ethics refers to how the public/society perceives the organization's activities. The way organizations respond to social issues determines the intensity of their ethical programs and how the needs of society/public are met (Hetzze, 2016). Signaling theory stipulates that being responsive helps build strong relationships between groups and establish goodwill with such entities, which will respond by supporting the organization. Signaling theory helps bring understanding regarding the connection between ethics and diversity management (Porcena et al., 2020). Spence (1974) described signaling theory as a communications process involving an organization and prospective employees. Signaling theory can also be used to explain the interactions between more than two entities (Drover et al., 2018). Signaling theory depicts communications between the organization and its employees that are not written in clear words but communicated through practices and actions. It is a process whereby the organization conveys critical information to employees without direct information flows (Vasudeva et al., 2018). Despite not communicating in written words or through human channels, employees are able to understand the signals the organization is

sending. With this understanding, organizations are able to convey ethical preferences to employees and interest groups (Porcena et al., 2020). That is what happens when organizations show strong responsiveness to social activities, they communicate the strength of their ethical values to stakeholders (public interest), and the public, in turn, will respond favorably. All these processes culminate into strong financial outcomes through corporate ethics.

When an organization commits to a sincere diversity management program, employees react favorably to the gesture with a change in behavior which translates into higher organizational performance and signals to the employees the organization's good intentions about diversity (Rabl et al., 2020). It indicates a commitment to inclusion, incorporating various diverse groups in a way that exceeds surface attempts. These efforts by the organization's management signal to its employees that the organization cares about its ethics (Rabl et al., 2020). It also strengthens the fact of the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance via corporate ethics (Porcena et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the study was able to highlight the relationship between diversity management and corporate ethics (Porcena et al., 2020). It reveals that engaging in diversity management efforts create an impact that goes beyond what was purposed; therefore, should inspire managers to continue to perform practices that foster diversity, and ensure an ethical work environment that stimulates higher organizational performance.

Finally, the study was able to show that there is a connection between diversity management initiatives and promoting diversity in the organization and its relationship to corporate ethics. The study also evaluated the intermediating role of corporate ethics in the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance and acknowledges the link between diversity management and ethics. Consequently, the authors stated that many people associate fairness, equity and societal good to diversity management and these qualities align with the values in corporate ethics.

Diversity Management—An African Perspective

Akobo and Damisah (2018) presented the findings of their study on diversity management – an African perspective. The study’s approach was narrative review, aimed at exploring literature to gather information and understand of how social identities impact management approaches and national development in sub-Saharan African countries. The study extracted information from previous studies, the information was analyzed to understand how diversity was viewed in Africa. The study was based on existing information and knowledge, not including new data (Akobo & Damisah, 2018). The authors stated that Africa is composed of many diversity dimensions and that understanding these dimensions helps to manage the differences and promote effectiveness and efficiency in the workplace. The study examined diversity in Africa through social affiliations or groups people belong, to determine their social identities (Asamoah, 2012; Mengisteab, 2011; UNECA, 2014). Seeing diversity through these affiliations increases the need to understand the multiple social identities (Bereketeab,

2011). Thus, a diverse society is determined by the number of existing social identities that exist in the society (Asamoah, 2012).

The study indicated that social affiliations are delineated with two broad social groups: ascribed social identity and attained social identity. Ascribed social identities refer to permanent or inseparable attributes from the individual(s) like gender, ethnicity, race, and religion and form the culture of specific groups. On the other hand, attained social identities are attributes that are induced by or acquired from the environment, like shared values, beliefs, and experiences. Factors such as the environment and changing interests influence this group. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the unique status of social affiliations makes the recognition and practice of a parallel diversity management program difficult, if not impossible. For example, Mengisteab (2011) agreed that alongside social identities, culture plays a vital role as an identity signifier in most African countries.

The multicultural nature of African states provided the platform for individuals and families to bond; this bonding process fosters the integration of individuals with the same cultural identity rather than the assumption of belonging to a typical nation-state (Kamoche, 2002). The role of the family as the strategic resource or avenue for socializing among African states is sacrosanct (Kamoche, 2002). Culture in the African context is unique in the sense that every action and practice must take into consideration the people's culture, and that is what determines whether such action(s) or practice succeeds or not. Family connections are strong and extend to the larger family and ethnic group. The practice explained high levels of favoritism that existed along the lines of

kinship and ethnicity (Akobo & Damisah, 2018)). Culture required people to show support and care for those from the same tribe. It echoed the presence of multiple social identities in the African context (Akobo & Damisah, 2018). The inability to erect a nation-state, a homogenous state, is exacerbated by multiple social alignments, ultimately presenting Africa as weak or unable to implement diversity management initiatives (Atta-Asamoah, 2012). It further reinforced the need to understand the social dynamics at play and use that as a springboard to not only manage social identities towards development at the national level but also to manage diversity and promote equality at organizational levels, to drive productivity in the workplace (Akobo & Damisah, 2018). Research shows that African countries are enthusiastic about implementing diversity management practices by making policies that will create and foster an inclusive state (Atta-Asamoah, 2012).

According to Atta-Asamoah (2012), Africa is institutionally diverse; therefore, many African countries, like Uganda, Nigeria, and Ghana, merge their formal institutions and systems of the modern state with traditional institutions. It supports the notion that the concept of diversity in Africa, which emphasizes social identities, culture, and state formations (UNECA, 2014), will predictably position prevailing socio-cultural formations as the dominant social dimensions on the scale.

A review of the many years of Nigerian history showed that poor management of gender-related issues and other socio-cultural factors (e.g., ethnicity, religion) by the colonial government created conflicts. It posed a threat to the structure of the Nigerian state (Akobo (2016). Despite all the confusion dating back to before independence, the

Nigerian structure remained the same for the most part (Akobo, 2016). Other African countries also had their own experiences regarding the implementation of diversity management. Tanzania, for example, pursued a shared national identity policy, following independence, including adopting a universal language across the country. In addition, the government established a one-party education system that got rid of diversity processes at the nation's local and political levels. The Ghanaian government instituted policies that involved banning ethnic and religious political parties. Kenya introduced legislation against discrimination and initiatives to promote peace and coexistence, while South Africa, amongst several efforts, introduced initiatives targeted at reducing discrimination among the people (Akobo & Damisah (2018).

State institutions play a strategic role in implementing diversity management policies in Africa. Their role can be likened to the role line managers play in implementing diversity management policies in organizations. These institutions' awareness, positions them as significant players in forming and implementing diversity management policies in Africa (Akobo, 2016; Kamoche et al., 2012). These state institutions include governments, government-related policymakers, and regulatory agencies. In Africa, state institutions view multinational corporations (MNCs) as key players in state economies (Sethi, 2002) because of their large employment capacity and service delivery.

Similarly, due to the continent's sizeable human workforce and relevant resources (BBC, 2014), African states have acquired the status of a potential investment environment for various multinational corporations (MNCs) (Kamoche et al., 2012).

However, there is the argument that factors like conflicts, unstable governance, laws, and regulations still pose a significant threat and challenge to these corporations (Kamoche, 2002). Despite that, Kamoche et al. (2012) stated that, while these institutional factors could act as a resistance for attracting foreign and local investors to a state, there is still significant evidence of thriving local corporations and multinational corporations (MNCs) in these African states. It explains why these challenges may not necessarily restrict economic enhancement, competitive advantage, and globalization (Atta-Asamoah, 2012).

As is well-stated, diversity dimensions in Africa focused on dominant socio-cultural formations. As a result of these formations, comprehensive approaches (Atta-Asamoah, 2012) to managing identified diversity concerns are in place. These approaches consider both national and organizational levels at a particular scale and recognize the role of state institutions in promoting the validity and effectiveness of this concept. However, despite these procedures, diversity management in Africa has not been without challenges. Organizational and national paradigms create these challenges.

Similarly, despite the growing presence of diversity in Africa, explicit diversity management processes within organizations in the African context remain largely unknown. There have been extensive discussions on the need for effective management practices in Africa (Komache et al., 2012). Consequently, some scholars (Anakwe, 2002; Nyambegare, 2002) argued that the adoption of Western practices (Nishii & Ozbilgin, 2007) in the African region concerning management and development of human

resources may be on shaky grounds, as Africa has distinctive characteristics (Anakwe, 2002) including heterogeneous complexities.

In conclusion, the authors advised that the push towards the adoption of African management practices (Anakwe, 2002) should not instigate the total dismissal of management practices and ideologies from the global North (e.g., Europe, North America) primarily due to the effect of globalization (Akobo, 2017). Akobo (2016) reiterated the argument that the rejection of Western theories would be an impractical counter move to global processes due to industrialization and globalization. It is so because of the establishment of the third sector across various countries, the operations of private sector businesses in home and host countries, and fostering public sector partnerships with both the private and third sector organizations across the globe.

Diversity Management in the Hospitality and Tourism Sector

Globalization is a worldwide phenomenon. Its effect varies from one industry to another. The tourism and hospitality industry by nature, have to continually try to balance their labor force in terms of sociodemographic and take cognizance of cultural differences in their hiring and management processes to meet the demands of the market they serve. Globalization has created an environment where an effort to meet the differing needs of the public requires organizations to hire workers of diverse backgrounds to meet the needs of their customers (Kalargyrou & Costen, 2017; Madera, 2018). This phenomenon is fundamental in the hospitality sector, where ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity are integral to the workforce (Manoharan et al., 2019).

For all the many reasons why diversity management (DM) is being advocated and promoted as a good business strategy, its relevance to the hospitality industry is strategic due to the significant representation of minorities in that sector (Kalargyrou & Costen, 2017). García-Rodríguez et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative study that examined the effects of diversity management on hospitality employees' organizational commitment and job satisfaction. As is well known, diversity management is based on recognition, promoting inclusion, and showing respect for differences (Coppin, 2017). According to the authors, diversity management is vital in the hospitality industry because hotels worldwide serve diverse customers and employ people with various characteristics to cater for their customers (Kalargyrou & Costen, 2017; Manoharan et al., 2019; Vassou et al., 2017). Situations like this provide a reason to believe that DM will positively influence how employees perceive being treated equally despite their differences. It also shows that DM directly and positively improves employees' job satisfaction (García-Rodríguez et al., 2020) and hospitality firm performance (Song et al., 2020). This position aligns with previous studies, which suggests that DM positively impacts job satisfaction in the public sector (Vanderschuere & Birdsall, 2019), or the educational sector (Ordu, 2016), or the retail sector (Foster & Harris, 2005). It is evident from the above that the perception of hotel employees regarding DM may be positively and directly related to their job satisfaction (Armstrong et al., 2010).

Furthermore, it could be the case considering the above assertions that hotel workers who do not have the opportunity of DM will perceive that they are not being treated fairly in their decisions. Also, they are not given a platform for equal

opportunities, fair treatment, and face discrimination (Foster & Harris, 2005). Thus, the study found that hospitality employees' DM perception positively and directly affects job satisfaction.

On the relationship between employees' perception of DM and job satisfaction mediated by organizational commitment, the authors posited that the level of DM determines its influence on employees' commitment to the organization. They referred to that commitment as the sense of belonging the employees feel towards their organization, resulting in being psychologically attached to the workplace (Hofhuis et al., 2016). There is substantial research supporting the benefits of committed employees to organizations, such as improvements in workers' citizenship behavior, enhanced job performance, and reductions in employees' turnover intentions (Kim et al., 2017; Kundu et al., 2017; McCallaghan et al., 2019). The authors noted that even though some studies indicate that DM could influence workers' intention to leave their organization, there is no empirical evidence to support the claim that this effect is valid for hotel employees. Instead, available literature suggests that the key for achieving higher levels of commitment hinges on satisfying employees' basic psychological needs (Meyer & Maltin, 2010) and enhancing conditions that increase individuals' job satisfaction (Lin et al., 2018).

The study concluded by stating the effect of organizational DM on employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment by referencing studies which show a negative association between DM and low turnover intentions (Stewart et al., 2011) and a positive relationship with employee retention (Kaplan et al., 2011). It suggests that high

perceptions of organizational fairness and equality of treatment are positively related to employees' psychological sense of belonging (García-Rodríguez et al., 2020). Relying on the above statement, one can safely say that employees' perceptions of a well-managed diversity program can reduce their intentions to leave their organizations. It further increases employee's allegiance and job satisfaction with the organization. Therefore, creating a diversity climate will provide the right atmosphere for implementing diversity management policies and programs.

Diversity Climate

In light of the insight acquired from the previous sections on how and when dissimilarity affects effectiveness, innovation, and well-being, we looked into what organizations can do to manage diversity effectively. Previous reasoning suggests that the key to effectively managing diversity in organizations is creating a diversity climate that emphasizes diversity as a valuable resource (Kadam et al., 2020). Diversity climate refers to general perceptions of an employer's efforts to promote diversity and a specific component regarding the attitudes toward the likely beneficiaries of such measures in one's unit (Dreachslin et al. (2017). In a similar vein, diversity beliefs, diverse perspectives, or attitudes towards diversity have been proposed to be an effective means to harness workgroup diversity for effectiveness, innovation, and well-being (Nakui et al., 2011). These beliefs about perspectives on our attitudes towards diversity refers to an individual's generalized evaluations about the value of diversity to workgroup functioning and are often thought to be instilled, besides other factors such as stereotypes and prior experiences in a positive diversity climate (Groggins & Ryan, 2013; van

Knippenberg et al., 2007). Empirical evidence supports the idea that diversity climate positively affects work outcomes and decreases absenteeism (Holmes IV et al., 2021) and leads to higher performance (Holmes IV et al., 2021). Likewise, diversity beliefs have increased identification with a workgroup and lead to more favorable impressions of dissimilar others (Homan et al., 2010). It also improves performance (Homan et al., 2008).

Unintended Adverse Impact of Diversity Management and Inclusion

Prior research suggested that many well-intended Human Resources (HR) diversity practices do not always foster more inclusion. For example, investments in diversity training may not always produce the expected result (Homan et al., 2015). It may even have adverse impact because such activity often makes existing differences more pronounced, thereby unwillingly strengthening biases (e.g., Gebert et al., 2017; Jackson & Joshi, 2011). Research has already adopted an identity lens to study felt inclusion from the employee's perspective. For example, Shore et al. (2011) elaborated on inclusion, drawing from optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991). Inclusion, they argued, is about feeling included; individuals need to feel unique and different from others in their immediate work environment and feel like they belong to that same work environment.

Inclusion

Inclusion is defined differently by different authors and scholars just as diversity management; however, the central theme remains the same. Inclusion means achieving a work environment where all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal

access to opportunities and resources and contribute fully to the organization's success (Szymanska & Aldighieri, 2017). Inclusion also means creating a safe, collaborative environment that supports mutual understanding and different perspectives. It is an important concept that facilitates the ability of businesses to promote innovation and have an impact on the bottom line (Vêlez, 2012). For example, a study of social workers in the United States reported that increased job satisfaction was closely linked to actionable efforts of inclusion in the organizational processes. At the same time, the racial composition of the organization did not predict job satisfaction (Hauret & Williams, 2020). The focus of inclusion is integration and creating an atmosphere of harmony and acceptance of all people (Mor Barak et al., 2016; Mousa, 2021).

Literatures on the relationship between the establishment of inclusive or inclusion climate especially in a work environment that is diverse is increasing. These literatures recognize that the establishment of a climate of inclusion will positively affect innovation, organizational commitment, employees' well-being, retention, and job satisfaction. (Brimhall et al., 2014; Shore et al., 2011). It also, forestalls conflict, turnover, and stress (Nishii, 2013). Despite evidence that workplace inclusion is beneficial for channeling diversity into positive organizational outcomes, not much is known about what leaders can do to increase workplace inclusion, particularly in diverse organizational contexts (Brimhall et al., 2014; Cottrill et al., 2014).

The concept of inclusion was introduced by researchers in education in 1980 (Gilhool, 1989). The concept was adopted afterwards by socialist and used to describe the interpersonal relationships between individuals in the same entity (Babacan, 2005).

Management elites have paid attention on inclusion since 1990. Different scholars have espoused different approaches to inclusion. These scholars were nominated into two schools. The first school believed and postulated that inclusion is about the extent of integration, involvement, and equality they experience in the workplace (Mousa & Ayoubi, 2019a, b, Mousa et al. 2020a, b). Researchers in this school constantly addressed employees' sense of oneness, being part of the group, participate, and fairness. The second school, was comprised of scholars whose goal were to scrutinize the process and actions different organizations take to ensure engagement and workplace harmony (Roberson, 2006). The "workforce 2000" project was established in 1987 by the US labor department in collaboration with the Hudson institute. Since after the recommendations of the "workforce 2000" project, organizations began to pay more attention to inclusion (Tang et al., 2017). The group discovered that there was an influx (access) of diverse people into the US and other western countries labor market. The situation required careful examination which resulted in recommending for a shift from diversity management to organizational inclusion. Jansen et al. (2014), and Tang et al. (2015) supported this idea by declaring that inclusion is an inevitable strategy for any organization that wants to carve out an identity for itself because it eliminates workplace conflicts between diverse employees.

Organizational inclusion refers to individuals' effective participation or engagement in realizing their organization's goals while feeling respected and appreciated (Goswami & Goswami, 2018; Jha & Kumar, 2016). Humberd et al. (2015) opined that the key to a successful organizational inclusion policy, is in developing an

inclusive culture where diverse people can communicate openly. Numerous writers have indicated that HR systems, leadership style, and internal values strongly affect the level of corporate inclusion (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; McCallaghan et al., 2019).

According to Brimhall et al. (2017), the concept of diversity management differs from organizational inclusion, and they both vary across organizations and researchers (Moore et al., 2020). Diversity comprises of things we can see, touch, smell and so on, what one might call tangibles and things we cannot touch, smell or see (intangibles). So are the differences in individuals. Inclusion on the other hand, requires us to harness these differences to make the individuals and the organization better (Moore et al., 2020). Daya (2014) posited that diversity management is a fairly even spread of diverse people across all levels of the organization. So, while diversity management can be looked at as a collection of management actions, inclusion represents management actions that translate into personal feelings for all people in the organization (Harrison & Klein, 2007). Daya (2014) pointed out that implementing organizational inclusion may require a complete overhaul of the existing system or systems including organization's vision, strategy, culture, communication policies, HR systems, leadership style, and moral values.

Tang et al. (2015) considered organizational inclusion as a more practical approach to managing different employees in the same workplace. Tang et al. (2017) saw organizational inclusion as a set of plans, programs, and practices the organization develops and implements to secure equal membership status and a sense of belongingness for all employees. Scholars opined that despite the intention of diversity management and inclusion to ensure minority rights, organizational inclusion focuses on providing

employee involvement in decision-making, knowledge sharing across the organization, including integration of minority and majority-affiliated members. (Guillaume et al., 2014; Roberson, 2006; Shore et al., 2011).

Organizational inclusion entails recognizing and respecting the unique differences between employees (Shore et al., 2011) and being ready to utilize such differences and talents to better the organization. Organizational inclusion is a multilevel concept that works at both organizational and individual levels. On the organizational level, the organization creates the structure and implements policies that provide a feeling of sameness for its employees. On the personal level, the employee's sentiments regarding the organization's inclusive policies and practices are constantly sought and assessed (Mousa & Puhakka, 2019; Mousa et al., 2020a, b; Shore et al., 2011).

According to Biggs (2017), Frederick A. Miller was the first to realize the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Since then, that discussion has moved from diversity to inclusion (Oswick & Noon, 2014). It was a necessary transition in that while diversity focuses on employee characteristics, inclusion emphasizes the characteristics of the organization, which consists of organizational culture and organizational climate; where different individuals are accepted and equitably rewarded by the organization. Inclusion tries to provide an environment that fosters diversity. Sabharwal (2014), posited that a stand-alone diversity management policy cannot lead to improved organizational performance; instead, efforts should be made to build a more inclusive workplace for employees. The move will help promote and support the idea that diversity should go hand in hand with inclusion (Sherbin & Rashid 2017; Sposato et al., 2015).

With the presence of international companies in multiple geographies around the world, it is crucial to understand how to take advantage of business benefits of diversity and inclusion. Anti-discriminatory norms are pervasive, yet, diversity and inclusion remain a blossoming area of the near future. It further illustrates the role of policies in making diversity and inclusion practical at the workplace. They provide a level playing field for promoting equal opportunities in employment and work practices. However, it should be noted that different organizations have their own unique diversity and inclusion practices, there is no one size fits all. Therefore, it is essential for every organization to design and customize its own diversity and inclusion initiatives to meet its own need (Derven, 2014). Kossek et al. (2006) pointed out that we need more research regarding clusters of practices and how diversity and inclusion link with other critical organizational characteristics such as leadership, top management composition, culture, and more.

In addition to the increase in female participation rate in the workplace, the involvement of people of diverse backgrounds and multiple generations has shifted the attention of the corporate world to diversity and inclusion in the 21st century (Garg & Sangwan, 2020). Moreover, the inclusion of immigrants got a boost due to increasing workforce diversity (Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014). Furthermore, the discussion has moved from managing diversity to leveraging diversity (Goldberg et al., 2019) emphasizing that merely adopting the practices to address the diverse workforce will not serve the purpose; rather, organizations should take step forward and adopt initiatives that help

organizations leverage or capitalize diversity to achieve and sustain higher performance (Martínez-Ariño et al., 2018; Vasconcelos, 2017).

In their work, Cho and his friends (Cho et al. 2017) found that including organization's members in organizational activities and processes, improves their attitude towards work, creates job satisfaction, increases commitment and reduces the urge to quit (Brimhall et al., 2014; Kundu et al., 2017). Other work-related results such as retention job accomplishments are enhanced (Mor Barak, 2015; Urbancová et al., 2020). The impact of diversity management and personnel diversity on organizational performance was examined. The study further evaluated the impact of an inclusive workplace on care outcomes considering its effect on innovation and achieving job satisfaction in a diverse human services organization (HSO). The study demonstrated that innovation and job satisfaction is achievable when employees perceive that they are included, respected and valued (climate of inclusion) which in turn impacts the quality of care. The study established that climate for inclusion aligns with job satisfaction which leads to the conclusion that a feeling of workplace inclusion is connected to job satisfaction among employee. These results are in alignment with previous studies linking both constructs (Brimhall et al., 2014; Mor Barak et al., 2016; Nishii, 2013), and further strengthens the connection in a diverse health care environment. This is one of the pioneer studies that linked climate of inclusion to quality of care and the benefits that could accrue to organizations which establish a climate of inclusion in the workplace. The positive relationship between climate of inclusion and innovation suggests that favorable perceptions of workgroup inclusion are associated with increased workgroup innovation.

It indicated that creating an environment wherein people feel valued and appreciated for being their authentic selves (Nishii, 2013) is associated with individuals feeling comfortable sharing their ideas (i.e., innovation; (Brimhall et al., 2014; Li et al., 2015). Thus, in creating an inclusive work environment, it is crucial to identify similarities among employees so that diversity can be effectively managed (Brewer, 1991; Shore et al., 2011). Doing so, will help organizations achieve organizational performance. Specifically, they can improve employees' job satisfaction (Hauret & Williams, 2020; Nishii, 2013) and reduce turnover intention (Kundu et al., 2017). Integrating the opinions of employees leads to organizational thinking that positively correlate with organizational performance. Therefore, workforce diversity affects organizational thinking. However, social enterprises face some difficulties that even though the rank-and-file employees may be diverse, same cannot be said about the top management teams (TMT) and board members.

In a study, that examined the effect of leader-member exchange (LMX) on job satisfaction and employee intention to leave mediated by inclusion, Brimhall et al. (2014) found the following positive effects of diversity on performance: enhanced creativity, improved reputation, and increased revenues (Mor Barak, 2013). The study also found that workplace diversity could lead to intergroup conflict, increased turnover, and lost revenues (Mor Barak, 2013). On the relationship between leader and member, Brimhall et al. (2014) indicated that leadership is an essential organizational factor embedded in the work context. According to Buengeler et al., (2018) research supports the role of leaders in emphasizing employee inclusion in the workplace by promoting personal

values without overtly making any distinctions that could elevate exclusion (Buengeler & Den Hartog, 2015; Martins, 2020).

The study further highlighted the importance of organizational diversity climate and how it can affect employees' perception of inclusion in the workplace. The study noted the capacity of diversity management to affect employee perceptions of the work environment (Groeneveld, 2011; Rabl et al., 2020) influence personal outcomes such as well-being and job satisfaction (Choi & Rainey, 2010). Studies show that employees react favorably when they perceive that the organization's diversity climate aligns with practices, they consider to be friendly. Employers accelerate employee's commitment and reduces their turnover intentions when they engage in activities such as fair employment practices, provide a level playing field for growth, opportunity, promotion and respect for individual uniqueness (Groeneveld, 2011). The study summarized the relationship between the constructs by stating that work related factors such as leader-member exchange (LMX), climate of diversity, and overall organizational results may be connected through inclusion (Mor Barak et al., 2014). Inclusion refers to an individual's sense of being a part of the organization's informal processes, such as making- decisions and access to information, and everyday operations, such as meetings and social gatherings, during which decisions and information exchange occur (Mor Barak, 2013). Inclusion therefore, is the perception of how one fits into the organization compared to the mainstream (Mor Barak, 2013). Although the concept of inclusion has received more attention in recent years, there are suggestions that more research is needed to fully understand the nature of the construct (; Shore et al., 2011). However, studies show that

an employee's sense of inclusion is related to satisfaction with the organization (Hwang & Hopkins, 2012). When employees are integrated into the organization's web of information, the satisfaction they get from working and their well-being are boosted (Hwang & Hopkins, 2012) and possibly their career opportunities and advancement (Mor Barak, 2013).

In another study, Buengeler et al. (2018) stated that the increasingly diverse nature of the workforce has prompted organizations to invest in refining HR policies and practices to manage diversity. Despite the benefits that may accrue from these efforts, if management fails to address real or perceived differences among organizational members effectively, several adverse effects might arise. Subdued bias against certain groups, formations of cliques, status distinction, and outgroup discrimination are some the issues that may develop (Shemla et al., 2014; Van Dijk et al., 2012). However, focusing on employee inclusion as the outcome of diversity practices is strongly advised (Buengeler et al., 2018). A focus on ensuring fairness is typically the concern and objective reality of specific, often marginalized, groups (e.g., in terms of gender, race). Inclusion provides a platform for employees to showcase and express who they are, and be proud of their unique qualities, especially when deep-level differences such as values, personality, and strengths are considered ((Mor Barak, 2015; Nishii, 2013). Therefore, emphasizing inclusion as an outcome captures both minority and majority employees' reality, turning both groups into beneficiaries of the diversity practices. In addition, understanding the value of diversity practices in a diverse work context, extending the focus from

eliminating biases to fairness to the employee to inclusion was suggested (Buengeler et al., 2018).

Chung et al. (2020) provided a brief background about the state of study regarding the constructs of diversity management and inclusion or inclusiveness. They highlighted the interest of scholars and practitioners in diversity management, which spans over several years. They also stated that there had been a movement towards inclusion in recent times. The authors opined that diversity management emphasizes solving the challenges related to diversity, and “inclusion,” which focuses on and promotes the collaboration and value of differences (Nishii, 2013). Inclusion draws its appeal from the standpoint of appreciating and valuing individual differences (Ferdman & Deane, 2014), regardless of whether they are of the majority or minority status.

Furthermore, inclusion goes beyond valuing diversity, knowing that diversity might not be sufficient to harness the benefits of the concept which includes innovation, effectiveness, and well-being” (Guillaume et al., 2014). The inclusive workplace is based on a framework that respects all people’s cultural perspectives and representativeness in the workforce (Guillaume et al. (2014). It encourages support from the different groups in the organization to fully engage everyone across all levels in their natural selves (Shore et al., 2018).

Chung et al. (2020) undertook a study to validate the two themes of belongingness and uniqueness, which are the basis of the conceptual model of inclusion postulated by Shore et al. (2011). The authors stated that Shore et al. (2011), in response to the challenges created by inconsistencies in the definition of inclusion, Shore et al. (2011)

developed a conceptual framework of inclusion based on two themes (belongingness and uniqueness). The achievement of belongingness and respect for uniqueness are the bedrocks of “optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT)” (Brewer, 1991). Shore et al. (2011) define inclusion as the “degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the workgroup through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness” (p. 1265). In defining inclusion, Shore et al. (2011) focused on inclusion in the immediate workgroup because experiences within one’s immediate work environment helps an individual feel included. It means that inclusion in the workgroup is likely to have a more significant influence than inclusion at the organizational level (Chung et al., 2020).

According to Chung et al., (2020), Shore et al. (2011) used optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT) to support their work. They stated that ODT incorporates social identity, which is achieved through a balance of human validation, similarity, individuation and uniqueness (Brewer, 1991). Shore et al. (2011) refers to this as belongingness and uniqueness. The study explained that even though the concepts of belongingness and uniqueness are related, they are distinct elements of group inclusion, and satisfying both constituent parts can stimulate an employee’s perception of inclusion. One of the achievements of the study is to create the understanding that being a member of a group should not affect who you are (Chung et al., 2020). Jansen et al. (2014) stated that individuals can belong to a group and retain their uniqueness concurrently within that group.

Chung et al. (2020) study found that three organizational factors that could influence the perception of group inclusion, includes, overall justice, diversity climate, and leader inclusiveness. They noted that these factors help employees to determine whether the organization and its leadership care about them and make them feel as though they are included and treated fairly. Nevertheless, studies do not support fairness and justice as having anything to do with the perception of inclusion. However, Shore et al. (2011) contended that establishing a climate of inclusion requires adopting organizational practices consistent with fair treatment of all social groups. Building on the group engagement model of procedural justice, Ellemere et al. (2013) found a positive relationship between perceived respect (by group members) and feeling included.

The aim of Chung et al., (2020) study, was to create a reliable and valid measure of workgroup inclusion and test a model of antecedents and outcomes based on Shore et al.'s (2011) theoretical framework. The authors found validity for the relationship for two of the three precursors of inclusion (diversity climate, overall justice, and leader inclusiveness). The authors also found that workgroup inclusion is positively related to diversity climate and leader inclusiveness. Furthermore, the authors found that the three performance outcomes rated by the supervisor (i.e., helping, creativity, and job performance) are positively related to workgroup inclusion. These findings align with results from Nishii (2013) and Dwertmann and Boehm (2016) which stated, that policies and practices that create a climate for inclusion can increase perceptions of inclusion and buffer against adverse effects produced by diversity (e.g., conflict).

Climate of Inclusion

Employees belief in diversity and organization's diversity climate are essential components of an organization's diversity management portfolio. They are crucial to an organization's desire to effectively manage its workforce; however, those by themselves does not make up or substitute for inclusion, because inclusion stimulates the consciousness of innovation, efficiency, and happiness. Studies show that to effectively manage diversity, organizations must ensure that an inclusive climate exist in the workplace. Inclusion involves everyone not just value differences in the workgroups (Groggins & Ryan, 2013; Roberson, 2006; Shore et al., 2011). Inclusion is mostly defined as the extent of an employee's perceived feeling of belongingness to a group, inspired by the group, and have equal opportunities and access to resources like other members of the group (Shore et al., 2011). Believing in diversity and operating in a diverse climate reinforces diversity management; inclusion, harnesses, empowers, and values diversity. If an organization operates in a climate of inclusion, members of the organization, especially the diverse minority will be accorded respect, and giving equal opportunity like everyone else. Involving employees who different, bring about employee satisfaction and staff retention by facilitating the constructive resolution of conflict (Brimhall et al. (2014).). Some studies confirm that members of a diverse group become creative when they are recognized and sought after (Shore et al., 2018).

Building on these findings and earlier analyses of how employees respond towards diversity, one can say that a climate of inclusion holds the key to managing diversity effectively (Groggins & Ryan, 2013; Shore et al., 2018). Previous studies

regarding organizational climate suggests that group perception regarding diversity management initiatives could accelerate integration, leading to fair employment practices and promoting inclusion (Mor Barak, 2015). It may also integrate employees into the decision-making process, indicating a climate of inclusion (Shore et al., 2018).

Environment for inclusion typically manifests at the workgroup levels because that is the target where leadership executes and implements diversity management practices (Ali, 2018). Implementing diversity management policies and procedures influences employees' perceptions about how well the program is working. It also helps employees understand how the organization treats diverse individuals in their workgroups. Based on research, the expectation is that a climate of inclusion will lead to employees' well-being, be practical and foster innovation. Furthermore, it will send a message of fairness and integration, resulting in forming a dynamic workgroup where everyone's contribution matter (Groggins & Ryan, 2013). Research shows that people would like to participate and identify with a group that values and respects them knowing that their unique differences do not matter (Kundu & Mor (2017). Next, I reviewed factors that hinder the creation of a climate of inclusion.

Factors that Stall the Creation of Climate of Inclusion. Employees must align with approved organizational practices; the workgroup climate must reflect that because these practices must be reinforced throughout the organization (Hameed et al., 2020). Therefore, the most likely factors influencing the climate of inclusion are the organization's diversity management policies, procedures, and practices (Shore et al., 2018). Accordingly, hiring, appointing, or selecting top management leaders that makes

these policies and establishes procedures that facilitate policy implementation might be necessary. In addition, officials (e.g., managers, supervisors) who have the responsibility to implement and enforce these processes are necessary (Rodger, 2019). We acknowledge that certain inherent factors in the community such as local laws, socioeconomic changes, and the political climate play an important role in fashioning organizational policies that affect how diversity is managed. Notwithstanding the empirical question as to which diversity management policies and procedures facilitate the emergence of a climate of inclusion, the work by Shore et al. (2018) identified several areas that seem to be critical. There are variations on how diversity management practices affect some segments of organizational operations like employment, training, rewards, mobility, and the likes. Consequently, the extent to which an organization has policies and procedures that convey that the organization promotes integration, considers equitable employment necessary, and values everybody's input will influence how a favorable climate of inclusion emerges. Leadership has a significant role to play in ensuring that a climate of inclusion is created and sustained (Buengeler & Den Hartog, 2015).

The Role of Leadership in Creating a Climate of Inclusion. Middle management or managers occupy a strategic position in the organization hence have the responsibility for implementing and executing the organization's diversity management policies and procedures (Rodgers, 2019) and reinforcing related diversity management practices. For this reason, we expect that the effects of an organization's diversity management policies, procedures, and practices in fashioning a favorable workgroup

climate of inclusion hinges on middle management leadership. The level and strength of such climate will depend largely on the level of middle managers reinforcement of the organization's diversity management policies, processes, and activities, utilizing a mix of a transactional and a transformational leadership style diversity (Greer et al., 2012). This is so, because, transactional leaders define what is to be done and how it should be done. They supervise what is being done and how effectively the action(s) is being completed; punishes individuals who it wrong, and rewards those who do it correctly. A transformational leader is involved with policy formulation and setting procedures. He gives meaning to policies by implementing and practicing them, challenging and encouraging subordinates to enforce these practices, mentoring associates, and listening to their needs and concerns (individual consideration). Previous research on diversity management has, for the most part, neglected the role of transactional leadership, despite empirical evidence supporting the idea that most effective leaders are both transactional and transformational (Waruwu, et al., 2020). Empirical findings support the role of transformational leadership in harnessing the positive effects of diversity (Greer et al., 2012). Based on these findings, one can say that successfully translating diversity management practices into erecting an inclusive climate, depends on the leadership style of middle management (i.e., transactional and transformational).

Studies shown that an effective management of gender diversity results in positive organizational outcomes (Solakoglu & Demir (2016) even more so that equal gender representation at boards and TMTs enhances organizational performance, stimulates innovation and promotes creativity (Rao & Tilt, 2016; Reguero-Alvarado et al., 2017).

Despite these claims, related literature tells us that there is a lack of equal gender representation at the boards and TMT cadre of organizations (Bertrand et al., 2019). The lack of equal gender presence at these levels connotes bad diversity policy, practice or implementation because diversity management is about recognizing, respecting, and valuing everyone in the organization. Given this background, I now introduce and discuss the issue of lack of gender equality on corporate boards and top management teams (TMTS).

Gender Imbalance in Corporate Boards and Top Management Teams

The composition of the board of organizations is beginning to attract the attention of scholars and practitioners. Literature related to board diversity is emerging, and scholars and practitioners seems to be paying attention (Catanzariti & Lo, 2011). Ng and Rumens (2017) identified several publications according to different dimensions of diversity. The effort revealed that the most researched dimension of diversity is women.’

In a literature review effort undertaken by Gary and Sangwan (2020) regarding diversity and inclusion at the workplace covering the period between 2010 – 2017, the results show that there has been a shift from diversity to diversity and inclusion in recent years. The cause of the change is attributed to increases in the participation of women workers, the involvement of people of different backgrounds, and multiple generations in the workforce. Increases in workplace demographics make the inclusion of immigrants inevitable (Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014). Further studies support the shift in the discourse from managing diversity to leveraging diversity (Garg & Sangwan, 2020). The study

stresses that organizations must lean towards activities that helps them take and enjoy the benefits of diversity to achieve and sustain higher performance.

Furthermore, the authors recognized the benefits of gender diversity, and its effect on profit and sales; for that reason, organizations are paying attention and have become sensitive to the issue of gender diversity, hence ensuring equity in the representation of both sexes (Garg & Sangwan (2020). As published in Fortune.com 41 (8.1%) women held CEO positions in Fortune 500 companies as of 2021. That is an increase compared to previous years (33 in 2019, and 37 in 2020). Despite the increase, women are still grossly underrepresented at the chief executive levels of Fortune 500 companies. Jauhar & Lau, (2018). explained that although women workers break the ‘glass ceiling’ and advance towards top positions, they still experience discrimination (Fapohunda, 2018; Hollis, 2018). The challenges women leaders face is often termed ‘glass cliff,’ which raises the question - why do women leaders face ‘glass cliff’ despite attaining executive ranks? What factors impact ‘glass cliff’? (Sabharwal, 2013). There is a continuing discussion on the plight of women regarding glass cliffs; a thorough study that could provide insight on how to address the dilemma would significantly advance diversity and inclusion (Sabharwal, 2013).

Urbancová et al. (2020) argued that effectively managing diversity could enable the organization to attain favorable competitive status that attract high performing employees, be creative, gain popularity in the market, and attain organizational flexibility (Hunt et al., 2018; Rahman, 2020; Wondrak & Segert, 2015). Limited evidence explicitly demonstrates a relationship between managing diversity and firm-level outcomes;

however, evidence supports the adverse effect of a poorly managed diversity on the firm's desire to be competitive (Garg & Sangwan, 2020). For example, a study of male and female managers in the United States reveals a connection between ineffective (gender) diversity management and turnover (Roberson, 2019). As published in related literature, many successful organizations have attributed their success to diversity and inclusion and as a facilitator of growth in particular (Hunt et al., 2018). Furthermore, there is a world-wide affirmation as revealed in current studies of a link between financial performance and greater presence of women in the leadership of large organizations (Hunt et al., 2018). The current thinking makes it all the more crucial for a well-managed diversity program that works for everyone.

Bertrand et al. (2019) stated that women remain heavily underrepresented in high-earning, high-status occupations despite significant progress in the labor market over the last decades; a position that is supported by Rao and Tilt (2016). This is especially the case in the financial and corporate sectors of the economy (Bertrand et al., 2019). They reported that in a 2017 census of Fortune 500 companies conducted in US by Catalyst, 19.9% of corporate board seats were held by women; of the figure, 5.8% held CEO positions in their companies. In Europe, despite being 45% of the labor force, women occupied 5.1% of the CEO positions, 23.3% board membership of the largest publicly listed companies are women (EU, 2016). These numbers are even smaller in other parts of the world (Pande & Ford, 2011). Evidence of female underrepresentation at the top levels of an organization is further supported by research conducted in Bersin by Deloitte Consulting LLP. (2017) which revealed that 77% of the organizations surveyed aspire to

be inclusive. However, only 12% of the surveyed organizations have achieved the objective of diversity with inclusion. As per the study ‘Delivering through Diversity’ released by McKinsey & Co. (2018), 40% of Australian companies achieve business leadership based on gender diversity, followed by 34% of US companies and 32% UK. Available data suggests that there is a shortage of women (diversity) at the top management levels of organizations; such as, chief executive officer (CEO), chief finance officers (CFO), and chief information officers (CIO) (Barron, 2019). This situation is made worse for African American women (Barron, 2019).

African American Women in Leadership. Barron (2019) provided the following information to support the double bind women face especially African American women, in their quest for top level management positions. As already noted, there is a scant presence of women in top level management and board positions. Bad as it appears, the situation is worse when it comes to African American women. In 2019, 44% of women held board appointments in Fortune 500 companies (Fortune.com); in 2020, that number reduced to 41%. The total number of chief executives in 2021 was 1,664, of which 29.1% are women, 85.7% were white, African American women were 5.9% (BLS, 2021). Although women are participating in the labor force at an increased rate (57.4% in 2019 up from 57.1% in 2018), data suggests something different in the managerial, professional, and similar careers (28.4% in 2018, and 28.8% in 2019) (BLS, 2020). The story is the same when reviewed through the gender and race lenses or from a dual social identity (i.e., African American woman).

According to Charles Lynch (2017), notwithstanding the current noticeable presence of African American women in executive-level positions in Fortune 500 companies, more needs to be done to increase the statistics in corporate America (Catalyst, 2015; Rosette & Livingston, 2012). A study published in Catalyst (February 1st, 2020) regarding the plight of women especially women of color in leadership positions in corporate America, is grim. In 2020, women of color represented 18% of entry-level positions. Few advanced to leadership positions: managers (12%), senior managers/directors (9%), VPs (6%), SVPs (5%), and C-suite positions (3%) (Thomas et al., 2020). As of January 2021, Catalyst, published the number and percentage of women (30, 6%) holding CEO positions in S&P 500 companies in the US (<https://www.catalyst.org/research/women-ceos-of-the-sp500/#:~:text=This%20list%20names%20all%20the,at%20those%20S%20S%26P%20500%20companies>). The issue of the “glass ceiling” has been used to describe the dilemma women face in their efforts to attain high level executive positions especially African American women (Catalyst 2019). They found causes for this disparity to be similar to those that produce the glass ceiling, which generally inhibits women’s advancement to uppermost management. The existence of racial and gender inequality has hindered the aspiration of African American women to executive and CEO positions in corporate America. As of 2021, women held 26% of CEO positions worldwide, an increase of about 11% from 15% in 2019. The same is the case in Fortune 500 global which reported 23 women CEOs in 2021 including six women of color (Catalyst, 2021). The inconsistency is traceable to existing social and cultural standards and intentional

discrimination (Bertrand et al., 2019). African American women contend with stem opposition from socio-cultural anecdotes about race and gender in organizations that are mostly white (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). Though women as an entity experience barrier due to their sex, African American women encounter more stringent obstacles due to the double bind of racism and sexism (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). These stats do not paint an encouraging picture regarding admitting women, especially women of color, into top-level positions. It is segregation, plain and simple.

So, when entities that believe in equal privileges invest in diversity and inclusion, they do so not just because it is the right thing to do, but because it is an ethical and moral thing to do (Brewis, 2017). For this reason, proponents of diversity and inclusion see equality as a morally desired state that bestows goodness on the practice or action. Often times equality is viewed in the context of equal privileges, equal results, or, less often, equal treatment (Fleurbaey et al., 2017; Klarsfeld et al., 2016) to every employee, regardless of their diversity dimensions. It is also the case that people sometimes openly express their feelings or thoughts about equality as indicating fairness and justice; most other times, some nurse it inside (Brewis, 2017; Choi & Rainey, 2014).

Mandatory Increase of Women in Top Management Teams

The glass ceiling effect demonstrates a situation where women's presence in the labor market is low and the gender pay parity is substantially lower than the average. It is pervasive even in countries that have achieved the most progress in terms of gender equality. Norway is one of those countries. While the gender gap in wages in Norway was less than 14% among full-time workers in 2002, it was 20% among college

graduates. In 2000, only 5% of board members in public limited liability companies were women, and their annual earnings were more than 30% lower than those of their male counterparts on the same boards. Prime and Salib's (2014) provided the following data that revealed a grim look at the plight of women in the quest for equality. In a study that examined 1512 employees from six countries around the world (Australia, China, Germany, India, Mexico, and the United States), it was found that when employees perceive that they are integrated (included), their potentials are boosted and they become more innovative in their work. Drawing from this finding, it is in the organization's best interest to promote and practice inclusion because they can acquire the benefits that is associated with diversity and inclusion (Shore et al., 2018). Under this scenario, diversity and inclusion becomes a source or instrument of competitive sustainability to the organization (Garg & Sangwan, 2020).

In theory, quotas can be an effective tool to improve gender equality. It is particularly true if path dependence is a critical factor in under-representing women in the highest corporate echelons. Because the absence of networks might harm qualified women from ascending the corporate ladder, quotas could be the initial steps needed for women to break through the cycle. Quota could also be the path way for women to overcome the critical issue of under-representation, discrimination and prejudice (and improve efficiency) by ensuring that talented women in high positions are elevated (Bertrand et al. (2019). Reguera-Alvarado et al. (2017) stated that Spain, the second country to legally require gender quotas in boardrooms and is historically characterized by minimal female participation in the workforce, experienced an increase in board

gender diversity from 3.5% in 2006 to 98% in 2009. This was made possible because the government enacted a law in 2007 titled the “law of Equality “requiring organizations to raise the number of women on their board of directors. The essence of the law was to achieve an increase in female representation on organizations’ boards by 40% by the year 2015. One hundred twenty-five non-financial firms listed in Madrid (Spain) Stock exchange were used for this study covering the period between 2005 to 2009. The result suggested that compulsory legislation offers an efficient framework to execute the recommendation of Spanish codes of good governance judging by the increase in the number of women in firms’ boards (Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017). The study further found that attaining a high financial outcome mutually agrees with the number of females represented on company’s boards (Chakraborty & Chatterjee, 2020). Both results suggest that gender diversity in boardrooms should be increased, mandatory laws being a pivotal channel. Despite these advances, Bertrand et al. (2019) stated that female representation in boardrooms remains far from the desired levels (Reguera et al., (2017).

The conceptualization of diversity depends on every country’s unique socio-political history and current discourse (Nishii & Ozbilgin, 2007; Pringle & Ryan, 2015), especially in countries where prevailing norms discriminate against certain demographic groups. For example, Barak, (2010) stated that gender is one of the most consistent demographic dimensions that is qualified for an anti-discrimination law or affirmative action policy across many countries (Barak, 2010). Actively pursuing such enactments, have led to adopting diversity management policies and practices (Konrad et al., 2016) in developed countries. As a developing nation, India is a patriarchal society with less

stringent laws and regulations that ensure equal opportunity for women employees (Ali, 2010), which makes gender a vulnerable dimension of diversity in the Indian workplaces. Despite the seeming challenges to recognizing women and the potential they offer, organizations in India have recently started to adopt several gender diversity management policies and practices (Buddhapriya, 2013). The plight of women who aspire to top management positions in India seems to fall in line with what is happening in many countries around the world, especially those where no formal government statutes exist to mitigate the discrimination against women (Chakraborty & Chatterjee, 2020). According to Chakraborty and Chatterjee (2020), anti-discrimination laws in India are weak and inconsistent, making the implementation of protection of women's civil rights at workplaces difficult. The study, found that to establish diversity management policies and practices, in Indian I.T./ITeS industry, organizations must meet the following conditions: company size which is usually determined by the population of full-time employees, ability to be flexible, and influence of outside organizations. The I.T./ITeS is the largest employer of females in India. The study also found that Indian subsidiaries of foreign multinationals tend to adopt more gender diversity management policies and practices compared to Indian-owned organizations.

Inequality and discrimination in Indian workplaces remain unabated despite meager improvements (Singh, et al., 2019) indicating that workplace practices discriminate against women because supervisors and colleagues are more supportive of men in managing work and family responsibilities (Ramadoss & Rajadhyaksha 2012). The career path towards a higher order becomes more difficult for women, as Indian men

could not tolerate being supervised by women (Gupta, 2017). The study found that the success of gender diversity management policies and its implementation depend on established laws and are adopted because of the perceived economic benefit. McKinsey's report titled "The Power of Parity – Advancing Women's Equality in India" published in 2015 indicated that if India fully bridges the gender parity gap, it could add \$2.8 trillion to its national GDP by 2025.

The positive influence of gender diversity on organizational performance gives employers incentives to enhance and utilize gender diversity in the organization. Using or improving gender diversity in the organization requires the adoption and implementation of gender diversity management systems. If adopting gender diversity management increases performance either by lowering costs (by reducing absenteeism or turnover) or improving performance (Kundu & Mor, 2016), organizations would be motivated to respond favorably and proactively.

Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I reviewed several studies relating to the two constructs of my study. My study was an effort to understand the role of diversity management in promoting an atmosphere or climate of inclusion in the workplace. As is well known, the concept of diversity management is a derivative of diversity. The origin dates back to Affirmative Action (AA) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). Some authors describe diversity management as a concept aimed at sustaining/entrenching AA (Oppenheimer, 2016) in public and private workplaces. A review of related articles covering different aspects linked to diversity management and inclusion was conducted.

For depth of information and understanding of both constructs, both constructs were reviewed separately, I also reviewed studies that dealt with both constructs, but found that those discussions tilted more towards diversity management than inclusion in most cases.

This situation is accounted for given that studies show that inclusion, which is the other piece of diversity or diversity management, is often excluded in the discourse (Moore et al., 2020; Reguero. Alvarado et al., 2017; Roberson, 2006). Numerous studies show that diversity alone does not drive inclusion. In fact, without inclusion, there's often a diversity backlash. (Sherbin & Rashid, 2017). Diversity management is what holds diversity and inclusion together

While many studies about diversity management are fixated on its demographic and economic implications, others view diversity management as a necessary ethical concern. For example, Porcena et al. (2020) indicated that workplace diversity management practices relate to corporate ethics, and corporate ethics impacts the moral functioning of the organization. Diversity management emphasizes recognition, and respect for all people, notwithstanding inherent differences. A look into diversity management practices in the US Armed Forces indicated that even though there are policies to support diversity and inclusion (US DoD, 2012) across the establishment, the plan is ineffective and did not have the support of the leadership (Kidder et al., 2017; Mac-Donald, 2013). There were incidences of abuse and neglect of certain minority groups. For example, sexual harassment and assault (Wood & Toppelberg, 2017) and

lack of racial and gender diversity among senior military officers within DoD (Smith, 2010) exist.

Management creates policies, but middle managers do the implementation. Rodgers (2019) stated that line managers are responsible for implementing the organization's policies and practices regarding diversity management and ensuring compliance in the workplace because they are at the forefront (Kulik, 2014; Madera et al., 2017). Related studies also show a positive relationship between diversity management and increased workforce diversity, including gender, experience, and thinking about organizational growth in terms of creativity, productivity, and profitability (Hunt et al., 2018). Armstrong et al. (2010) referenced several studies which show that diversity management programs can directly contribute to raising the performance of organizations, partially by activating the positive impacts of diversity and partially by over-compensating for its adverse effects. Different employers have considered diversity management a driver for their continuity and a tool for accessing new markets (Madera et al. 2013). I reviewed studies relating to diversity - the African perspective and discovered that diversity management could not be a stand-alone strategy because of social affiliations and entities. People are associated with different social groups, and that is the basis upon which they are identified. This arrangement does not make room for establishing any other structure, which is why the concept of diversity in Africa emphasizes social identities, culture, and state formations (UNECA, 2014). This structure, in turn, presents the predominant socio-cultural formations as the primary social dimensions.

In terms of inclusion, women and other minority group members have suffered exclusion in the form of outright discrimination or tokenism. Tokenism is the practice of making a superficial or symbolic effort to perform a specific task; in this case, recruiting a small number of people from the minority groups to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce” (Snell, 2017; Guldiken et al., 2019). Discrimination against women was and still is rampant everywhere, including in the US Armed Forces. On the admittance of women into the US military, Galvin and Allen (2021) wrote: there is a somewhat general perception that the military is not for women; instead, they should be confined to other menial jobs (MacDonald, 2019); therefore, women were excluded from the armed services (Isbell, 2019). It was only in the 20th century that women were allowed to serve in support roles as nurses and auxiliary staff to free up the men for combat activities (Szayna et al., 2016, p. 10).

In all the reviews I conducted, I could not find or infer that diversity management led to creating a climate of inclusion or facilitated the establishment of an inclusive climate or culture. Throughout the study, what is prevalent is how diversity management can facilitate improved business outcomes (economic benefit) or meet statutory requirements like quotas and AA. Meeting the necessities of globalization and demographic changes are included in economic benefits. However, studies have shown, and scholars and practitioners have said that organizations that do not engage diversity and create and integrate people with different unique characteristics will be shut out of the gains of diversity and diversity management (Downey et al. 2015; Guillaume et al. 2014). According to Sabharwal (2014), diversity management alone is insufficient to help

the organization improve performance. Instead, more efforts should be made to build a more inclusive workplace for employees. Deloitte (2013) stated that combining diversity with inclusion is critical and increases business performance by 80 percent. From what is available, it is clear that connecting the link between diversity and inclusion is yet to materialize; this gap is what my study tried to address. In chapter 3, I carefully discussed how I accomplished the task outlined in this study vis-à-vis data collection and other processes.

Chapter 3: Method

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of individuals with relevant knowledge on management policies and practices in promoting an inclusive culture. Prior studies regarding diversity management and inclusion have mostly been done separately, and when done together, they tilt toward diversity and diversity management to the exclusion of inclusion (Moore et al., 2020; Roberson, 2006; Reguero et al., 2017). But diversity with inclusion provides a potent mix of talent retention and engagement (Sherbin & Rashid, 2017). In this chapter, I present and explain the research design and the rationale for the choice. The methodology, sampling and sampling procedure, procedures for recruiting participants, data collection, and data analysis are also presented.

Research Design and Rationale

This qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to examine the participants' lived experiences and perceptions regarding the relationship between diversity management and inclusion in the organization. In addition to the main research question on the roles of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture, the study also addressed the following two questions:

- RQ 1: What is the impact of gender inequality at the top management and board levels on the decisions regarding diversity management and inclusion in the organization?
- RQ 2: What is the role of management (leadership) in ensuring that diversity management policies and practices are fully and diligently implemented?

The qualitative method is appropriate because the intent was to explore and understand the meaning of the phenomenon through the participants' lived experiences and perceptions. Researchers use the qualitative research method to evaluate the research phenomenon in the natural setting (Astin & Long, 2014; Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Further, researchers use a phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences of individuals (Korcuska & Flynn, 2018). The phenomenological design provides the researcher with the opportunity to acquire an in-depth description of the phenomenon through participants' expression of their lived experiences and perceptions (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Yin, 2017). This makes the qualitative phenomenological approach the most suitable choice for my research. Other data collection sources used in qualitative research include interviews, observations, case studies, and archival data, all of which can be useful in acquiring an in-depth analysis of real-life situations related to the phenomenon under study (Cairney & St. Denny, 2015; Yin, 2017).

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is the main instrument of data collection (Maxwell, 2013). As the researcher, I used interviews as the source of data collection. The participants answered 10 semi structured questions. I analyzed and interpreted the participants' responses to answer the research questions. Often, the researcher's interpretive role and authority are put under scrutiny while acknowledging their subjectivity. However, the unique position of the researcher should not affect his/her objectivity as I did in this study. The researcher's positionality refers to their role and identity in relationship to the context and research setting (Hopkins et al., 2017). In view of these expectations, I had no type of

relationship with any participant outside the research engagement. I also did not allow any personal inclinations to influence the data collection process. I applied external objectivity based on academic research literature and exercised independence to mitigate personal bias and improve research data quality. Putting aside personal worldviews can improve data integrity, reducing research bias, prejudice, and ideologies researchers bring to their study (Garcia & Gluesing, 2013). I also related with the respondents professionally during the interview and to the extent acceptable in qualitative research. Where necessary, I used prompts to seek in-depth answers to provide a deeper understanding of the subject phenomenon from the interviewee's perspective.

Methodology

There are three research methods or approaches researchers can use to conduct research, namely, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method (Abutabenjeh, 2018; Venkatesh et al., 2016; Zoellner & Harris, 2017). The qualitative method helps the researcher comprehend and understand the fundamental issues being studied (Hammarberg et al., 2016). A researcher can identify underlying trends, patterns, and relationships through the qualitative method (Albers, 2017), which is why I chose the qualitative approach for this study. Quantitative research involves collecting data that are usually represented in numbers and are then interpreted or manipulated to test a hypothesis and foretell a trend (Babones, 2015; Daneault, 2018; Zoellner & Harris, 2017). Because quantitative researchers want to investigate relationships among variables, they employ close-ended questions (Green & Salkind, 2017; Yazan, 2015), which is not appropriate for my study because the intent was not to collect numerical data

or test hypotheses. A mixed method is a research approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analyzes collected data to support research findings (Bester et al., 2017). In the mixed method approach, researchers use the finished product (analysis and interpreted data) of the quantitative and qualitative methods to build analytical and context-related proofs (Ahn & Ettner, 2014; Venkatesh et al., 2016). The mixed-methods approach was inappropriate for this study because my plan was to explore not to analyze experimental data.

Other qualitative research designs researchers use in a qualitative study include phenomenology, case study, narrative, grounded theory, or ethnography (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2017). I utilized the qualitative phenomenological approach in this study because the intention was to gather information on the research topic from the participants' perceptions and lived experiences. The common interest these participants share is their knowledge about the research topic. Phenomenological studies are used to understand the lived experiences of individuals who share a common experience. Phenomenology describes the lived experiences of individuals who share a common purpose in relation to an identified phenomenon (Creswell, 2013); that is what the participants in this study shared. Qualitative researchers can use other data collection sources such as interviews, archival materials, observations, document sharing, and focus groups, (Salvador, 2016; Yilmaz, 2013) to collect data.

An interview is the primary data collection source for phenomenological studies because it affords the researcher the opportunity for in-depth personal interaction with participants (Creswell, 2013). Interviews are classified into three forms: structured, semi-

structured, and unstructured. A structured interview involves creating a list of questions that each participant will be asked in sequence. Structured interviews do not allow for follow-up questions, depriving the researcher of the opportunity to an in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon from the participant's perspective. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher designs the interview questions in a way that relates to the research question and opens the door to further probing into the participant's answer (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Trustworthiness and dependability are accomplished in the data collection procedure through a semi-structured approach and provide more accuracy (Jamshed, 2014). Semi-structured interviews help to ensure that the interviews stay within the topic of the research and eliminate unnecessary biases and prejudices, which saves time (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). At the same time, open-ended questions provide flexibility to the researcher to ask for clarification regarding participants' responses when and where necessary. In this research, I conducted a virtual semi-structured interview with each participant to collect data. Distance and the prevailing health conditions around the world at the time did not allow me to conduct a face-to-face interview; therefore, I opted for a virtual one. The time allocated for each interview session was 1 hour.

After the interviews, I forwarded interview transcripts to the participants for verification and authentication within 1 week from the day the interview was held. On receiving transcripts from the participants, I checked for data inconsistencies by conducting a data cleansing procedure before the analysis. Data cleansing is the process of eliminating errors and inconsistencies in data and solving the object identity problem. One example of cleansing data is reviewing data for correctness including making sure

no data is duplicated or has incomplete information. Data are cleansed to provide accuracy, consistency, accessibility, and reliability that will enable the right decision-making process. If data are incorrect, outcomes and algorithms are unreliable, even though they may look correct (Mezzanzanica et al., 2015). For the data analysis, I utilized the six steps data analysis process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. Review the transcripts for accuracy.
2. Code transcripts
3. Compile codes, and developed themes
4. Examine themes to ensure congruency with the research question and framework
5. Define/describe themes,
6. Develop and describe a narrative of research results

Participant Selection Logic

I selected 12 volunteers from a pool of 14 potential volunteers who met the selection criteria. The determination of the number of participants was based on studies indicating that sample sizes of between 10 and 20 participants are adequate for a qualitative phenomenological study (Aagaard, 2017; Vasileiou et al., 2018).

Consequently, interviews of between six to 12 participants were considered to be adequate to attain saturation (e.g., Constantinou et al., 2017; Guest et al., 2006; Namey et al., 2016). Generalizability is not the fundamental target of in-depth interviews, rather, the major aim is to build a deeper understanding of the meaning behind the behavior,

through an appreciation of the experiences, views, and perceptions of participants, thus smaller samples are more ideal (Rosenthal, 2016).

The selection process involved a combination of the purposive selection process and snowballing. The purposive selection process involved direct identification or selection of individuals from the pool who met the participation criteria while snowballing involved selecting one knowledgeable individual who is familiar with the research topic and has in-depth knowledge and perception of the same. The selected individual identified or recommended other participants who have knowledge about the subject matter. Participants were HR practitioners, individuals of the level of managers/officers responsible for diversity management and inclusion matters. The third category comprised current or previous participants in diversity/inclusion initiatives. I made the criteria for selecting participants broad to ensure that only qualified individuals were selected. The rationale for selecting participants was to ensure that the research aligns with the statement of purpose of the research. An in-depth conversation with participants with knowledge and experience on the subject facilitated the acquisition of rich information relevant to the study. For this reason, sampling participants is deemed appropriate in qualitative studies (Elo et al., 2014; Hagaman & Wutich, 2017).

The first step toward identifying and selecting potential participants was to post a free advertisement on the LinkedIn platform requesting volunteers. LinkedIn is a web-based professional platform where scholars and practitioners interact on a professional basis. The notice included the topic of my research and the qualification criteria required to participate. I selected individuals whose qualifications meet the advertised criteria.

After the selection, I contacted each individual by phone and email to express my appreciation for agreeing to participate in my research.

Instrumentation

The researcher occupies a strategic position in the research process. Maxwell (2013), stated that the researcher is the main instrument of data collection in qualitative research. The data collection sources used to collect data in qualitative research include observations, textual or visual analysis, questionnaires, note-taking, and interviews. The source of data collection for this research was an interview. My intention was to acquire in-depth knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon from participants' lived experiences. The interview protocol included administering semi-structured open-ended questions to the participants. I developed ten questions based on my knowledge of the topic for this purpose. These questions were tailored toward answering the research question. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A. The primary goal of qualitative interviews is to gain focused insight into the individual's lived experiences; understand how participants make sense of and construct reality in relation to the phenomenon, events, engagement, or experience in focus; explore how individuals' experiences and perspectives relate to other study participants and perhaps prior research on similar topics (Ravitch & Carl 2016). Semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity for the researcher to ask for in-depth information regarding the meaning of a phenomenon (Patton, 2015; Yilmaz, (2013). Also, semi-structured interviews enhance the reliability of a qualitative study (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Gentles et al. (2015) indicated

that interview questions must be framed in a way to obtain relevant insight into the participants' perceptions regarding the study's focus.

The interview protocol also included time allocated for each interview. I allocated one hour for each interview. The interview process and participants' responses were monitored to avoid deviations from the topic. I conducted virtual interviews, and participants were free to choose any convenient location in their homes, offices, or outside location that was convenient for the interview. I took responsibility for any cost relating to finding a convenient location for the interview. However, that did not happen, because participants elected to participate in the interview remotely in the comfort of their homes or offices.

I established data credibility through the member check process. Member checking is the process of providing participants with the transcript of their interview for verification and or confirmation that the transcription represented their responses (Maxwell, 2013; Yilmaz, 2013).

Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study using five (5) of my friends. The aim was to test the trustworthiness and applicability of my interview questions to answer the research question. The pilot study process followed the protocols laid out in the methodology, instrumentation, and data analysis sections of this chapter. The result of the study showed that my questions were easy to comprehend and participants' answers, addressed the questions; therefore, there was no need to change or tweak any question.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Upon receipt of the Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval # 17-13-22-0989595, I published a free invitation to participate flyer on LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a web-based professional platform where scholars and practitioners interact on a professional basis. I received fourteen (14) notifications of interest from potential participants (8 through the LinkedIn advertisement and 6 through the snowballing process). These individuals were screened to ensure that they met the qualification criteria as published on LinkedIn. At the end of the screening process, I contacted all the participants by phone or email to introduce myself and thank them for their willingness to participate in the process. After the conversations, and based on the insights I received from the interactions, I selected twelve individuals whose credentials met the requirements using the purposive and snowballing techniques as I described on page 109 under the sub-heading "Participants Selection Logic." Participants were HR practitioners and or managers/officers responsible for diversity management and inclusion initiatives in private/public service. The third category of participants was current or previous participants in Diversity/Inclusion programs. I contacted the participants by phone and emailed those I could not reach through the phone to schedule interview dates and times. Before that, I sent the consent forms to each participant to get their consent before the interview day/date. I started scheduling interviews after receiving the participants' consent through email. I gathered data from the participants by administering ten (10) predesigned interview questions to all the participants on their different interview days/times. The duration of the interviews ran from 19 to 35 minutes. After each

interview, the interview transcripts were generated and reviewed for correction alongside listening to the audio recording. After that, I forwarded the interview transcripts to each participant to review, correct where necessary, authenticate, and return to me. After the entire process, the interview recordings, the transcripts generated, and every other material related to the interview process and participants' information, were gathered and secured under lock in a location where no one except me have access.

Data Collection

My source of data collection was an interview. After receiving the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I recruited the participants as described in the previous paragraph. Prior to the interview day, I made sure that the technology (Zoom) I used for the interview was functioning properly more so as all my interviews were virtual. I also forwarded the consent form to each participant to consent to voluntarily participate in the interview. On the day of each interview, I welcomed and introduced myself to each participant. I gave a brief overview of the reason for the interview after which, I asked if there were any question(s) participants may like to ask. I answered the questions that were asked and then proceeded to administer the interview questions. In the course of the interview, I had to at times probe participants to acquire in-depth information regarding their knowledge and lived experiences about the research topic. After the interview, the participants were debriefed and thanked for participating. The interview recording was transcribed through Microsoft Word and ready for data analysis. Prior to data analysis, the transcripts were sent to each participant for verification and authentication. Participants' comments and or feedback were addressed before I began the data analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

The procedure for analyzing my data followed the six steps data analysis process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) stated in the methodology section above. They include:

1. Review transcripts carefully: I carefully reviewed the participants' transcripts individually, by reading each transcript to familiarize myself with all the data, and to identify, and recognize repetitive words, common phrases, patterns, and trends.
2. Code transcripts: I read the transcripts two times; as I read the transcripts, I listened to the audio recording from where the transcripts were generated. I started coding each transcript on the third read carefully assigning codes to similar ideas, statements, words, or phrases throughout the transcripts.
3. Compile codes into themes: I compiled all the codes into a list and reviewed the list in the context of the research questions and theoretical framework to identify similar codes. I merged similar codes from where I developed the themes.
4. Examine themes against the research questions and framework: I developed and examined the themes against the research question and framework to ensure alignment.
5. Define themes: I developed the main themes and defined them in readiness for analysis. Defining these themes meant describing them in a way that makes sense and is appropriate to answer the research question.
6. Describe/produce a narrative of the results: I compiled the themes and described each one of them in the results section that I presented in Chapter 4

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness comprises credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Patton, 2015). To validate means to ensure integrity; therefore, validity in qualitative research means to reduce errors, remove bias, and institute truthfulness, integrity, and data accuracy (Noble & Smith, 2015). The validation of the data collection tool is essential to ensure alignment with the research question and the research findings represent participants' perceptions and experiences (Leung, 2015). In this study, I achieved validity by making sure the interview questions were framed in a way that is related to the research question, and easy to comprehend so that respondents' answers directly address the research questions.

Credibility

Credibility (similar to internal validity) refers to the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. Credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and a correct interpretation of the participants' original views (Cope, 2014; Hays et al., 2016).

Qualitative researchers often use member checks or triangulation to provide credibility to a study (Abalkhail, 2018; Smith & McGannon, 2018). To further support the credibility of the research findings, I used member checking to validate data by making sure participants had the opportunity to review their transcripts to ensure correctness. Member checking is performed to decrease the possibility of research bias, explore additional perspectives, and gain a complete understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Kornbluh, 2015).

Transferability

Transferability (similar to external validity) refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to or have applicability in other settings or groups. It is the same as external validity in quantitative studies. The researcher facilitates the transferability judgment to a potential user through the thick description.

Thick description is a technique that is suitable for establishing transferability because it describes the behavior, experiences, and context of the phenomenon in a way that provides meaning to an outsider (Ravitch & Carl (2016). In this study, I adhered strictly to the steps laid out in the methodology and data analysis sections so that readers can easily comprehend, understand, and replicate the study or verify my findings. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) the credibility of a study is demonstrated by methodological and interpretive validity. Again, thick description concerns describing and interpreting observed behavior within its particular context (Ravitch and Carl (2016). The data I collected through the interview and observation(s) helped meet and strengthened this technique because of its originality.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of findings over time similar to reliability in quantitative research. The dependability factor is used to evaluate how reliable the study is and the consistency of the findings long term (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Hays et al., 2016). Dependability means that a review of research findings, interpretation, and recommendations is supported by the data received from study participants. This research involved personal identification of participants and purposive and snowball methods to

ensure that qualified individuals with related knowledge and experience were recruited. I maintained an audit trail that helped to sustain the dependability of my research. An audit trail involves a transparent description of the step-by-step process taken from the start of a research project to the development and reporting of the findings ((Korstjens & Moser 2018).

Confirmability

Confirmability is described as objectivity in qualitative research and is the degree to which other researchers can confirm the findings of the research study. The aim of every qualitative researcher should be to distance themselves from any action, intent or bias that could impair the objectivity of a research. Confirmability concerns establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not the inquirer's (researcher) imagination but clearly derived from the data (Squires & Dorsen, 2018).

I understand my role as the researcher and the implications of entertaining any bias or inclinations or any actions that will hamper the integrity of my research and I committed to making sure that my research was free from all forms of interferences or influence. I maintained an audit trial to support the confirmability of my study. Again, audit trial is the process of describing in a transparent manner, the steps taken from the start of a research project to the development and reporting of the findings (Korstjens & Moser 2018). The records of the research path were kept throughout the study

Ethical Procedures

The ethical procedure for my research followed the pattern recommended by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). A doctoral candidate must adhere to the

ethical standards outlined by IRB to proceed with the research. As far as research is concerned, IRB has the final say on ethical matters concerning the researcher and the participant. I sought IRB approval on ethical issues before commencing my research.

I provided the participants with the “Informed Consent Form” to read and consent, to show their willingness to participate in the research. One of the main actions the researcher must take includes acquiring the study participant’s consent through the completion of the informed consent form. Before that, and as part of the recruiting process, the researcher ought to communicate the details of the research and its purpose to the participants to help them decide whether they would participate or not (Walden University, n.d.). An informed consent form is essential to a researcher in that it sets the stage for a working relationship with participants (Tram et al., 2015). Part of seeking the participant’s consent included providing full disclosure and creating awareness of the purpose and scope of the study. I provided the informed consent form to all participants to read and sign before the research process began (Newington & Metcalfe, 2014). Researchers use the informed consent form to ensure adherence to ethical standards, protect participants, and respect respondents’ rights (Chiumento et al., 2016). In compliance with this expectation, I explained the contents of the informed consent form, including its relevance to the data collection process to the participants. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any time in the process. A \$25 gift card was sent to each participant as a way of acknowledging and thanking them for participating in the interview. I guaranteed the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants by making sure that every information

about their identity and their responses, were kept secret. Participants were assigned pseudo names throughout the process; only the researcher has the privilege of the names of each participant and has kept them secret and safe.

According to Pollock (2012), confidentiality is the principal obligation in qualitative research. It is the researcher's responsibility to protect participants from risks and potentially harmful situations during the research process (Gomes & Duarte, 2018; Killawi et al., 2014). Every material used in the data collection process, including recordings, electronics, or otherwise, was handled with utmost care and kept confidential by me in a safe and secure domain that I alone can access.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I introduced my research question and carefully discussed my research design and why I chose the design. My research was an effort at understanding the relationship between diversity management policies and practices, their implementation, and their ability to encourage and sustain a climate of inclusion in the organization. I provided a detailed review of the methodology, participant selection logic, instrumentation, and pilot study processes and procedures that were followed to answer the research question. Procedures for recruitment, participation, and collecting data were described. Data analysis, trustworthiness (validity), and ethical procedure issues were explained. In Chapter 4, I presented a detailed explanation of the data collection and analysis of all the processes highlighted in Chapter 3, including the interpretation of the participant's responses. In a nutshell, I discussed and explained the results of the research in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

This phenomenological study was aimed at examining the lived experiences and perceptions of HR practitioners, diversity management and inclusion managers/officers, and individuals who have participated in diversity and inclusion programs about the role of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture. The benefits of diversity management and inclusion in different facets of human endeavor (personal and corporate) are well discussed in literature; however, its impact on promoting a climate of inclusion in the workplace is vague. Thus, I explored the roles of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture, the impact of gender inequality at the top management and board levels on the decisions regarding diversity management and inclusion in the organization, and the roles of management in ensuring that diversity management policies and practices are fully and diligently implemented. In this chapter, I describe the pilot study, research setting, participant demographics, data collection, data analysis, and strategies to ensure trustworthiness. The chapter ends with a summary of the results and main findings and an introduction to Chapter 5.

Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study to ascertain the appropriateness of the interview questions through the participants' lived experiences and perceptions in answering the research questions. I invited five friends through personal contact to participate in the pilot study. I explained the purpose and title of my research to the volunteers before sending the consent form through email to them to complete. After receiving their

consent through email, I scheduled and administered the interview through Zoom, with the same questions as those I used to collect data for the study. During the pilot interview, one participant asked if, by integration, I meant inclusion, and I concurred in the affirmative. I had this clarification at the back of my mind when I conducted the full interview. However, at the end of the interview, it was clear that the participants understood the questions well to inform their responses. No modifications to the interview questions were necessary.

Research Setting

As a first step, I recruited most (8) of my research participants through LinkedIn. On receiving IRB approval, I published a free advertisement on the LinkedIn platform requesting volunteers. The notice included the topic of my research and the qualification criteria required to participate. I received 14 interest notifications in total comprised of eight volunteers from LinkedIn, and six through the snowballing process. I selected 12 individuals whose qualifications meet the advertised criteria. After the selection, I contacted each individual by phone and email to express my appreciation for agreeing to participate in my research.

I conducted a virtual interview due to Covid-19 restrictions nationwide. I contacted and scheduled interviews with each participant on a day and time agreed to by the participants and me. Consent forms were administered to the participants through email before the interview; participants were requested to reply to the email with the words "I consent" if they chose to participate. All the participants affirmed participation. On the day of the interview, I introduced myself and provided the participants with an

introduction to the purpose of the interview. Participants were once again reminded that the interview was voluntary and that the interview would be recorded. I used Zoom to conduct the interviews, and the recorded audio was uploaded into Microsoft Office 365 where the transcription was carried out through Microsoft Word. The arrangement for the interview was smooth, and many interviewees praised the topic and interview questions.

Demographics

From a pool of 14 volunteers who expressed interest in participating in the interview, I selected 12 whose qualifications uniquely matched the criteria outlined in the invitation notice. Table 1 sums up the demographic characteristics of each participant.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participants	Title/Job Role	Sector	Gender
P1	DM & I - participant	Education	F
P2	DM & I – implementer	University Admin	M
P3	HR Dir. – practitioner	District Admin	M
P4	DM & I - participant	Church Admin	M
P5	DM & I – participant	University Admin	M
P6	HR Dir – practitioner	Education	M
P7	Asst Sup – practitioner	Education	M
P8	DM & I - participant	County Admin	M
P9	DM & I - participant	Corporate Executive	M
P10	DM & I - participant	Health Service	F
P11	DM & I - participant	Civil Service	M
P12	HR - practitioner	County Executive	M

DM & I = Diversity Management & Inclusion

Asst Sup = Assistant superintendent

HR = Human resources

Data Collection

Upon receiving Walden University IRB approval to commence my study, I published my invitation seeking research interview volunteers on LinkedIn. The invitation included the qualification criteria for volunteers. In addition, I embarked on a personal search for knowledgeable individuals (snowball recruitment) who would be interested in participating in my interview. While I made progress through my LinkedIn invitation, I also made significant progress in securing personal commitments through direct invitation. Both approaches yielded some dividends: I got two more (14) than the required number (12) volunteers within 3 weeks. Upon acquiring the number of volunteers needed, I sent the consent form to all the volunteers by email to provide more details about my research and get their consent. The volunteers were only required to reply to the email and state “I consent” if they were still inclined to participate. Volunteers replied to my email with the words “I consent,” and I subsequently started to communicate with them by telephone and email to schedule a time and day for the interview.

I concluded my interviews within 3 weeks. Participants provided answers to 10 predetermined semi-structured, open-ended interview questions designed to answer the research questions. Each interview was scheduled for one hour; however, the actual time was between 19 and 45 minutes, depending on the interviewee’s responses.

Before each interview, participants were reminded that the interview would be recorded, transcribed, and forwarded to them for review and authentication. After transcription, I followed through with getting the participants’ authentication. Participants

P5, P8, P9, and P10, made some corrections to their responses and returned the corrected transcripts. The other eight participants authenticated their transcripts as is. All transcripts and audio recordings were securely kept in a flash drive in a safe place that only I can access.

Data Analysis

My data analysis followed the six steps data analysis process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). I carefully reviewed the participants' transcripts individually by reading through each transcript to familiarize myself with all the data, and to identify, and recognize repetitive words, common phrases, patterns, and trends. I read the transcripts two times; as I read the transcripts, I listened to the audio recording from where the transcripts were generated. I started coding each transcript manually on the third read in a process referred to as open coding. As the process progressed, I assigned codes to similar ideas, statements, words, or phrases throughout the transcripts. I did that with each transcript.

After the first coding, I conducted a second coding by merging similar codes; after that, I compiled a list of the final codes from where the themes were developed. In developing themes, I considered the content of the participant's responses and their relevance in answering the research questions. The following six themes emerged from the coding and categorizations: equal representation, competitive advantage, build teams, respect and value diversity, organizational policy, and culture change. I developed and examined the themes to ensure that they addressed the research questions and aligned with the research framework. I defined the themes based on the data collected from the

interviews. I used participants' words as the bases for theme naming. Defining these themes meant describing them in a way that makes sense and is appropriate for answering the research question.

Table 2 summarizes the process culminating in the development of themes from the coding stage to the themes. The codes and categories provided the words and phrases from the participant's responses to the interview questions that answer the research questions. In describing the themes, I made sure to highlight their relevance and connection to the research questions by linking each theme to the research question. I provide a narrative for each theme in the Results section.

and the remaining eight left them as is. Member checking was performed to decrease the possibility of research bias, explore additional perspectives, and gain a complete understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Kornbluh, 2015).

Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to or have applicability in other settings or groups (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). I made this study replicable by adhering strictly to the process laid out in the Methodology section of the study. The topic of my research is one that many organizations are interested in, so it attracted attention because it borders on employer/employee relationships for a healthier and more productive work environment. The data collection process and source of data collection and authentication make transferability easily possible.

Dependability

I achieved dependability in this study by ensuring that the qualifications criteria, as stated in the invitation publication, were strictly followed in the participant selection process. I also ensured that participants authenticated their transcripts as representing their answers to the interview questions. I maintained an audit trail of the different segments of the data collection process to ensure the dependability of the data.

Confirmability

Confirmability, which is described as objectivity in qualitative research, is the degree to which other researchers can confirm the findings of the research study. I understood my role as the researcher and the implications of entertaining any bias,

inclinations, or actions that would hamper the integrity of my research. With this understanding, I distanced myself from any action, intent, or bias that could impair the objectivity of my research, by relying entirely on data collected and authenticated by participants in this study. I maintained an audit trail to support the confirmability of my study.

Study Results

The central research question of this study was “What is the role of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture?” To fully explore the subject matter, the following research questions were also addressed: “What is the impact of gender inequality at the top management and board levels on the decisions regarding diversity management and inclusion in the organization?” and “What is the role of management (leadership) in ensuring that diversity management policies and practices are fully and diligently implemented?” After analyzing the data collected from the participants’ responses to the interview questions, six themes emerged: equal representation, competitive advantage, build teams, respect and value diversity, organizational policy, and culture change.

Theme 1: Equal Representation

The first theme that emerged from the participants’ responses was equal representation. Participants used different phrases and words to describe diversity management and inclusion, such as promoting fairness, equality, increased minority participation, diverse recruitment, representative of the community, and equal opportunity to mention a few. P1, for example, participated in implementing diversity

management initiatives in the organization where she worked. Two phrases were visible in the description of her experiences: policy change and diverse recruitment. She stated it this way:

I have been a part of conversations concerning the need to attract a more diverse pool of candidates. I have encouraged changes in policies and procedures to promote the implementation of diversity initiatives. In addition, I have attempted to recruit individuals from more diverse backgrounds.

P2 expressed the opinion that diversity management can be a catalyst for growth if well managed:

The goals of diversity management are to promote fairness and equality and benefit from the advantages of a diverse organization. I know this because diversity well managed has the potential of yielding greater productivity and competitive advantages. Managing and valuing diversity is a key component of effective people management, which can improve workplace productivity.

He further stated that “the impact of diversity management in the company I worked with was positive in that it helped the company perform best when it is aligned with a specific business strategy.”

P3 described diversity and diversity management as having an organization that looks like the community it serves; in other words, the composition of any organization must mimic that of the community: “I think when you have folks who can relate to the community they work in, the language, the culture, and the traditions, I think it goes a long way.”

P7 stated that diversity management was a deliberate management decision to better serve the community and increase minority representation:

I can tell you in my 30 years stint in this school district and in a former school district where I worked, oftentimes the leadership or the employment did not always reflect the clientele that it served. I think over the course of some intentionality to have leadership, teachers, principals, and directors reflect the clientele we serve. As a result of that initiative of wanting to have diversity and inclusion, we have seen an increase in the number of people of color, people of different orientations, and certainly, belief systems become a greater part of what we call our extended administrative leadership team.

P5, P6, P7, and P10, said that diversity management encouraged minority participation and representation in their organizations. P9 was of the view that equal representation starts from the hiring stage through training, and mentoring up to and including promotions. For him, the way an organization goes about its hiring process in terms of the composition of its hires, and what happens after that, says a lot about the organization's attitude or stance towards diversity management and inclusion:

As I said earlier, hiring is just the first step in the process; mentoring those that are now in the company, you know plays a big role in getting ahead in every company so, you can preach and teach all the diversity you want but actually seeing diverse employees promoted into higher ranks within the company makes a huge difference and it's really sort of the proof that this thing is working. I can remember, for example, how good it felt when a black guy was promoted to the

position of plant manager at the company where I was working and so it really does impact how the employees view the progress that is being made, so it's not only hiring but also retention and promotion is a big part of it.

P8 and P12 said that diversity management and inclusion stimulate innovation, and creativity which impact productivity and performance leading to sustained competitiveness. P2, P5, P8, P11, and P12 used words like, "increased productivity," "organizational growth," "better performance," and "competitiveness" to describe the impact of diversity management and inclusion in their organizations.

This theme directly addresses diversity management practices which is one-half of the main research question on diversity management policies and practices. The other half was addressed in the organizational policy theme. It also addressed the issue of equal gender representation at the board and management levels of organizations otherwise known as board diversity (Catanzariti & Lo, 2011). Equal gender representation provides the opportunity for diverse views leading to superior decision-making and outstanding organizational performance. Competitive advantage (Kaur & Arora, 2020; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017).

Theme 2: Competitive Advantage

Many studies recognize diversity management as a strategic business decision that could and often positively impact the organization's bottom line (profit). Because of globalization, it is now more than ever before necessary for organizations to reflect the composition of the communities where they do business. The purpose of which is to better serve the organization's clientele leading to better services, increased productivity,

and profit. Lim, (2010) described diversity management (DM) as the pursuit of organizational productivity and profitability by means of an organizational culture that encourages diverse values and cultural backgrounds. (Mor Barak, 2017) stated that globalization and the increasing rate of female economic participation, have caused an increase in workforce diversity, thus a critical issue for both profit and non-profit institutions. This is the portrait painted by researchers and the participants in this study agree with it.

Participants' responses reflect the same sentiments as those espoused in the literature. Participants were of the view that because diversity and inclusion provide a welcoming environment and encourage open discussion about the concept, individuals feel free and at home in their work environment. In such an environment, competition, innovation, and creativity are the by-product because people are satisfied, and when people are satisfied, it triggers the activities I mentioned above. It is also fair to allude that gender diversity at the board and management levels is known to support and trigger competitive advantage (Kaur & Arora, 2020; Reguera-Alvarado et al., 2017).

The following are the responses of some of the participants supporting their experiences that diversity management and inclusion encourage and sustain competitiveness. P2 stated,

The impact of diversity management in the company I worked with was a positive one. It did help the company perform best when it is aligned with a specific business strategy. For example, when they used heterogeneous management

teams that are directed by a strategy focusing on innovation, the company's productivity increased.

P5 added increased productivity to other gains mentioned regarding DM and inclusion in the organization where he worked: "Other times, it is the need to attain more productivity, the desire to gain more productivity."

P8 stated that the availability of varying perspectives and expertise led to better services and products which positively impacted performance:

The impact of diversity comes from the fact that the bottom line is enriched by the volume of ideas and the importance of experiences. Most importantly, the quality of those ideas and experiences helps the organization stay focused on its primary goals and objectives and even use those to beat its competition and stay ahead in the industry.

P12 gave his perspectives regarding competitiveness in the following words:

"Diversity management impact is demonstrated in many ways. It is more than policies, programs, or headcounts. By respecting the unique needs, perspectives, and potential of all employees and applicants, we have Increased productivity and staff retention." P12 further stated that when you attract, retain, and develop employees based on their merit, ability, and skill, you ensure that the best available person gets the job. In this way, you maximize the abilities and potential of employees as well as help to raise their morale and reduce turnover. Competitive advantage is the most publicized reason organizations gravitate towards diversity management (Kaur & Arora, 2020; Manoharan, & Singal,

2017; Wondrak & Segert, 2015) at the expense of other social, and ethical factors such as inclusion.

Theme 3: Team Building

Many authors have described team building as one-way employers can establish and nurture diversity management and inclusion (Reshma, 2020; Goldberg et al., 2019; Fredette et al., 2016). Inclusion is about integration and a sense of belongingness while DM is about effectively leading or directing all employees with their different diversity dimensions. What better way to accomplish the strategy than build teams? According to Shore et al. (2018), the implementation of inclusive practices and building inclusive teams is vital for employees to feel equal, especially the ones who feel they are being discriminated against on various grounds.

Most participants shared these views especially those who work or have worked in an organization where DM and inclusion were practiced. They used words like collaboration, trust, and team building. Trust is built over time through close interactions with other people. Trust also happens to be one critical component that is established when people are accepted or feel that they belong to a group. One of the theories used to support this study was the “optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT)” propounded by Brewer, (1991). ODT (Brewer, 1991: 477) explains tensions associated with “human needs for validation and similarity to others (on the one hand) and a countervailing need for uniqueness and individuation (on the other).” Brewer argued that individuals seek to balance these two needs through an optimal level of inclusion in groups to which they belong. To fulfill a fundamental human need for belongingness (defined as the need to

form and maintain strong, stable interpersonal relationships (Shore et al., 2011).

According to Brimhall et al. (2014), A growing literature has suggested that creating an inclusive workplace, particularly in diverse organizational settings, results in positive outcomes such as increased job satisfaction, retention, organizational commitment, trust, well-being, creativity, and innovation.

Participants expressed their perceptions about team building in the following ways. P4 described his experience with team building and support as

I had to rely on the British Army, the Japanese army, not just the United States Army and that's when your vulnerabilities kick in because you have to trust the person on the line with you, so that's where I really learned that you can't do life by yourself and despite the color of your face it's all about experiences and what you bring to the table so, I think for me I really saw how life won collectively when inclusion is involved.

P8 said, "Various approaches to diversity initiatives that I have seen implemented in the organizations that I've worked with include having diverse work teams." P9 talked about team building this way

I would just give a brief definition of how we treated it. So, inclusion in most cases was really focused on efforts at forming teams that have people, employees with different backgrounds, and these different backgrounds could include ethnicity and different technical talent.

Many authors and scholars in discussing diversity management and inclusion used the team-building narrative to practicalize the relationship between DM and inclusion and

emphasized the need for teams to be cohesive. DM is centered around team building which makes inclusion easier to realize. Equal female representation on the management and executive levels fits into this category. DM is about equal representation and having the female gender in an equitable proportion with their male counterparts at those levels must be maintained. The logic here is that if DM is well executed, establishing an inclusive climate is made easier because the culture already knows to include all people and team building is one way to achieve that.

Theme 4: Respect and Value Diversity

Diversity management and inclusion are about acceptance, respect, and valuing people irrespective of their diversity dimensions. In other words, their race or nationality, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and other diversity dimensions should not be a reason to deny them all the opportunities that are available to every other employee. Everyone should be treated equally and fairly in every respect. Porcena et al. (2020) refer to it as practicing corporate ethics; doing the right thing. Broadly, Coppin, (2017) defines diversity as any aspect that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. In practice, it means respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education, and religion. Managing diversity means leading people with all their different attributes in a fair and respectful manner. Inclusion, on the other hand, means integration, full participation, and involvement. Everyone wants to know and feel that they belong and are appreciated. Everyone should participate in the administrative and operational process. Research has suggested that employees want to work for companies that care for them

(Jones et al., 2013), and employees do respond to such caring through positive attitudes and behaviors (Shen et al., 2010).

Participants expressed the same sentiment in their responses as well, stating that DM and inclusion must incorporate these elements for it to succeed. For example, P3 described his experience in the following way:

I think it's all about how you treat each other and the respect; it's about the common decency that you listen and you appreciate differences and you learn from the differences and you have open communication and you see role models that treat each other respectfully things like that; obviously it is your coworkers, managers, your bosses I think if you have a boss who strongly believes in diversity who pushes it believes we are all equal here we're all important, I think that says a lot, I think if you have a boss who doesn't that could change the culture so, I think it influences the people you work with, the culture of the organization as a whole, do you support it or you are in favor of it I can see our company is not that it's a little tougher, but, we've got a place where we know it's a good place to work, I think, if you just go up and down this hallway right here in HR we're all just a gigantic mix of anything and everything, and it is not just this department.

P3 believed even though it might be tough in his workplace, there is physical evidence that they practice respect, acceptance, and value all people as is evident in the composition of its staff.

P4 described his experience by highlighting how they interact in the workplace. He said that discussions are normally had in circles where everyone must participate and err out their opinions/views in an atmosphere of respect and equal opportunity. He said further,

I've had the honor of working with my boss from whom I learned about multiethnic organizations. I am able to now pour into those who do not quite know what that means so, I am able to seat around them and one of my favorite lines is we don't just tolerate and celebrate all ethnicities what does that mean? You must be willing to come to the table, that is where good things happen, we don't learn in rows we learn in circles so, in those circles, I must allow myself to be offended and understand that the person is not trying to offend me maybe he or she doesn't know, so it's at that time that I begin to educate them and vice versa because I might not know I'm hurting someone mentally, or emotionally if I don't give them a space to speak truthfully so, that is what I try to do with my staff here in our organization is how we can be culturally intelligent and culturally aware of the surroundings around us.

P7stated,

it's about that inclusivity and the whole idea of really valuing all your employees and what they bring to the job and in this case, what they bring to our organization and how they help our district to grow and succeed.

P8 described his experience as follows

Working in an environment where diversity is practiced gave me a sense of worth. In the first place, I felt highly valued and appreciated as a team member because my ideas and opinions are respected and taken into consideration in the management decision-making process. That is a significant benefit of working in a diverse organization.

All of these responses speak to respecting and valuing people irrespective of their differences which is what diversity management is about. Respect and valuing all people are the core elements of DM and if you tie that to the main research question it means that if all people can be regarded as equal and important, then the road to inclusion is made easier. It means that everyone has the same opportunity as any other and so, rivalry, superiority, or ego is diminished. The same is the case with making sure that the female gender is well represented on the executive and management levels of the organization. It is all about equal opportunity. The subsequent theme I interpreted and explained is organizational policy.

Theme 5: Organizational Policy

The organizational policy is the working statement or charter that guides the operational and administrative functioning of any organization. It spells out what the organization does or is doing in terms of activities, practices, processes, and procedures. Strategic decisions that management takes are usually embedded in policy to make clear where the organization stands on different issues. Therefore, issues regarding diversity management and inclusion, for example, must be included in the policy. Porcena et al. (2020), reaffirmed this position by stating that diversity management initiatives typically

manifest in an organization's policies and practices as in recruitment, staffing, and valuing diversity and their relationship with organizational performance.

Participants in this research believed and confirmed that to be the case as reflected in their responses to the interview questions that addressed the main research question. Based on their experiences more than half of the participants believed that for any issue to be taken seriously and have fundamental bases for enforcement, it must have some legal, mandatory, or statutory force behind it. If there is any way to read the mind of management or what they think, it is through the policies that are set forth. Participants used words like organizational policy, company-driven, leadership discretion, mandate, and sincere commitment from the leadership to name a few, to describe what type of force or action needs to be taken to ensure a climate of inclusion through DM.

The following are some of the participants' perceptions expressed in their own words regarding the role of organizational policy in ensuring that the workplace is free, fair, and welcoming to all employees. P1 said, "I have been a part of conversations concerning the need to attract a more diverse pool of candidates. I have encouraged changes in policies and procedures to promote the implementation of diversity initiatives."

P3 stated,

I'm trying to think if we have any specific policies, I guess I'm trying to think board policies like that; we've got discrimination, we've got policies which I think sets the goals and sets the structure, and sets I guess the idea of what we'd

like here; how we'd like it to be from top-level up here and then all the factors that play into getting there.

P4 noted,

It has to be in black and white and that's why the federal government and states have put these in there do not discriminate against age, color, creed, and all of those various things because the organizations are not doing it. So, I believe a true organization will put it in its policies or manuals, and again, it will lead by example.

P5 said,

In an everyday organization where I have worked, you have people from different cultural backgrounds you have men and women you have young people and older people and so those by nature, require the ability to effectively manage the different values, interests, needs, expectations, and experiences of the people working together in those environments and the organizations often set out specific policies with regards to such things as treating others with respect.

P7, P8, and P12 also described how DM and inclusion were implanted in policy to give it relevance. P12 said The Office of Diversity and Inclusion was created in 2019 to lead the organization where he works in developing and implementing a strategic framework that builds diversity in the workforce, helps create respectful and inclusive work environments, and finds ways to weave diversity and inclusion practices and principles into policies, business plans, practices, performance expectations, program, and services." That is how the participants described their experiences and views about

organizational policies. Literature on this is numerous and the participants concur that policy must strengthen and reinforce the practice. However, participants P4, P5, and P7 added that policy alone may not be enough, management must model DM and inclusion.

Theme 6: Culture Change

Culture is commonly summed up as the way of life of a people or the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization (Merriam-Webster). In the context of an organization, it is the way things are done in the organization (Schein, 2010). The norms, practices, and expected attitudes and behaviors of every individual in the organization. This includes financial, business, and social entities. Since that is the case, to enforce or implement any activity or practice how things ought to be done in that entity, some changes may be necessary. Moore et al. (2020) stated that many organizations succeed at diversity initiatives but struggle with inclusion because the system cannot be inclusive without changing itself. Seeking greater diversity is only the first step—the next is to change the system to create a space where diverse groups feel supported, respected, welcomed, and willing to contribute. Most participants suggested cultural changes however, cultural changes also come with some downsides like resistance from the dominant culture. P1, P2, and P9 indicated that cultural changes almost always come with resistance. Some stated that when a culture is changed in the middle of the process, it will meet with resistance; therefore, establishing a culture from the outset would be more tolerable, and acceptable because the policy will make clear the position of management regarding every significant issue from the get-go.

The participants expressed the following perceptions regarding the place of cultural changes in the implementation of diversity management and inclusion initiatives in the organizations where they work or have worked and in general. Words and phrases such as: Create a welcoming environment, and culture change were constantly used by every participant to describe what should be and what existed in their workplaces. P1 added that organizational culture should be enhanced to accommodate other cultures. P6 talked about a change in systems. Here are some of the participants' perceptions about the need for cultural changes to be able to create a work environment that promotes DM and inclusion.

P1 stated,

I believe inclusion is necessary and beneficial. It is useful in helping people have access to opportunities that they may be initially dismissed from based on their appearance or lifestyle. It is also helpful in enhancing the culture of the organization as diversity has the potential to impact the way the organization operates.

P2 noted, "As with any facet of company culture, creating and encouraging a sense of belonging in your workplace begins at the leadership level." P4 suggested,

It starts from the top down. If there is no inclusion at the top, then it's not going to filter down to the organization if it's all white or all black or all other, you can expect the people within the organization to grasp what's going on, because the truth is whatever cultures that is dominating behind the scenes, that's what's going to dominate the coach of the organization.

Management should create an environment where people can freely discuss and interact without any form of reprisal and encourage open communication between everybody.

This is what P6 said about inclusion:

I would say it's a welcoming environment where we're all questioning each other's belief systems in a way that's respectful we're reflecting on our own biases and understanding of how we see the world, and we're putting systems in place where we can talk about those things, we can discuss those things, and we can make changes that are better for the people in our organization.

P11 said, "Diversity management in an organization really enhances the services and the culture of the organization. We learn from one another whether we are of one race or of different races."

P4, P10, and P12 added the role of leadership in effecting cultural changes. P12 described leadership's role in bringing about changes in culture in the following statements:

Leadership is an integral player in establishing the culture in which it operates. An inclusive culture that is supported by leadership, sets the foundation for employees to experience meaningful work, appreciation, and trust that contribute to their overall sense of well-being.

In a nutshell, the participants believe that for any change to be meaningful and realizable management must take the front seat. Some of the participants suggested that management has to be clear and upfront about what they want to see in the organization and turn off all the noises or voices of opposition. Literature also supports cultural

changes or modifications (Moore et al., 2020; Mousa et al. 2019a; Mousa 2018a; Mousa, 2018b; Celik et al., 2011; Shore et al., 2011) where necessary to align with policy (e.g., implementing equal gender representation on the executive and management levels).

Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand the role of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture in the organization. In finding answers to this question the following two questions were also addressed. I conducted a virtual interview because of health concerns regarding the covid-19 situation. Twelve volunteers met the criteria set forth for the study. I used ten semi-structured interview questions developed by me and approved by the committee to generate and gather data from the participants. Overall, I believe that participants responded to all the interview questions to the best of their abilities, and truthfully. Their responses were analyzed, and the results are described in the result section of this chapter. In Chapter 5, I provided the interpretation of my findings, study limitations, recommendations, and implications for social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the role of diversity management policies and practices in advancing inclusive culture. In doing so, I tapped into the lived experiences and perceptions of the research participants as reflected in their interview responses. In general terms, the characteristics of diversity management and inclusion as published in most related literature include improved organizational performance, innovation, creativity, profit, and increased productivity (Armstrong et al., 2010; Nelson, 2014; Shore et al., 2018). There is also a demographic component to it, which is to meet the demographic changes that are taking place worldwide due to globalization (Porcena et al., 2020), as it is estimated that the United States will witness a 42% increase in its racial and ethnic population by 2025 (Brimhall et al., 2014), as a result of increased workforce diversity, human service organizations recognize the need to create inclusive workplaces to improve organizational functioning (Boehm, 2016; Dwertmann & Mitchell et al., 2015).

I conducted a virtual interview using 10 semi-structured interview questions that address the research questions. I had a population sample of 12 individuals who met the participation criteria stipulated for the study. These individuals were HR practitioners, participants, and or managers of diversity management and inclusion programs. Chapter 5 focuses on an interpretation of the study, study limitations, recommendations, and implications for social change.

Interpretation of Findings

The purpose of this study was to shed light on the relationship between diversity management and establishing a climate of inclusion in the organization. It was intended to determine if diversity management could help achieve the goal of inclusivity in the workplace. Participants addressed three research questions in their responses. The main research question was “What is the role of diversity management policies and practices in promoting and establishing a climate of inclusion in the organization?” The other two research questions are: 1, how gender imbalance in the executive management impacted the quality of management’s decisions regarding diversity management and inclusion issues. Research Question 2 addressed the roles of management (leadership) in ensuring that diversity management policies and practices are fully and diligently implemented. In analyzing participants’ responses, I observed trends that aligned with previous studies on both concepts. For example, some participants agreed that diversity management and inclusion are necessary to meet the demographic changes that are taking place worldwide due to globalization (Porcena et al., 2020). Others said that diversity management is about equal representation, equal opportunities, respect, and valuing differences (Dreachslin et al., 2017; Shore et al., 2018). Inclusion refers to full integration of the minority in the administrative and operational process of the organization. All these stances correlate with studies on both concepts and elevate the necessity and relevance of diversity management and inclusion. The interpretation of the findings falls within the scope of this study (diversity management and inclusion) and the themes generated.

Finding 1: The Significance of Diversity Management and Inclusion

Most participants reflected in their responses themes that are familiar when referencing literature related to diversity management. Diversity management, according to them, is about respect and value for each other's differences, whether in age, religion, sex, ethnic group, or race. For example, participants spoke about an organization's board and management being representative of its diverse community. People, including employees at the lower levels of the organization and the public in general, should be able to see themselves at the senior levels of the organization where they work. Thus, the first theme in this study was equal representation at all levels. P1 noted that this was not the case in the organization where she worked. According to her, entry-level positions were comprised of diverse individuals, but there was limited representation in upper management and leadership positions. P9, P10, P11, and P12 also indicated that there was a time when they worked in an organization that did not see diversity and inclusion as priority and did not bother about equal representation. However, the fact that these organizations did not practice DM and inclusion did not diminish its value and importance. P9 and P11 stated that they learned that at some point after they left the organizations DM and inclusion was introduced in the organizations.

The fourth theme in this study was about value and respect for every employee. Respect and value for each other is a bedrock of diversity management and inclusion. Relevant literature posited that DM and inclusion provide an environment for innovation and creativity (Phillips, 2014). Participants expressed the same sentiment. P8 described how he felt special when his opinion was being sought in an administrative matter in the

organization where he worked. P12 also did not hold back in describing how he was discriminated against and his input ignored in the organization where he worked. P9 described how elated he was to see a Black man promoted to the position of plant manager in the organization where he worked. An atmosphere of inclusion inspires and induces high productivity, which makes the organization competitive.

If the board or management of an organization comprises only of one race or gender, they do not benefit from other perspectives in the decision-making process and the day-to-day running of the organization's business. P9, P10, P11, and P12 said that women and men see things from or with different lens and that impacts or influences how they make decisions. This fits into the equal representation, competitiveness, and build teams themes. Different perspectives lead to better decision-making and competitive advantage. Relevant literature on diversity management and inclusion also talks about the public perception of diversity. Apart from the public perception of diversity and diversity management, the employees' perception is noteworthy. For instance, participants noted that if you look at the board or management composition of any organization, you can tell how diverse they are (P6, P7, and P11). Literature is abundant in that people want to work for an organization where they are or will be valued and respected (Porcena et al., 2020). P6 specifically mentioned that a homogeneous group is redundant, boring, and single-minded. For the same reason, P7 said he would not work for any organization that is not diverse. P12 also mentioned that he experiences open discrimination when he worked in an organization that did not practice diversity, diversity management, and inclusion.

On the issue of organizations that practice diversity only at the lower levels of their organization, P9 stated that having a minority at the bottom of the ladder may not be wrong as long as it is a training ground for what is ahead. It could be rewarding because it could create a steady and necessary pool for the organization in times of promotions and advancement. These participants noted that if potential supervisors and managers are drawn from the pool of eligible and qualified employees, then it may be possible to elevate a couple of people from the minority group into the upper echelon of the organization. In other words, the bottom should not be a training ground. Participants reiterated the need for leadership buy-ins to ensure the realization of an inclusive workplace through the implementation of diversity management policies and practices.

Finding 2: Leadership Role

As one participant aptly described it “Everything rises and falls with management.” That was P11’s summary description of the role of leadership in ensuring that inclusive culture is actualized and that diversity management works for everyone in the organization. P11 continued “So whether an organization is diverse or not, whether they practice inclusion or not, without a commitment of the leadership nothing is going to get done because the nature of people is to surround themselves with people they feel they can relate with and most of what is standing in the way of diversity and inclusion really are pure ignorance because when people are ignorant of other people or other cultures rather than try to learn more about that culture and who these people are the tendency to want to create partitions and silos is heightened.

This was the sentiment that was expressed by all the participants in different ways as they responded to the question on the role of leadership in making diversity management and inclusive culture a reality or practicable. As a matter of fact, participants' views about management's role in realizing inclusion aligned with what exists in the relevant literature on both concepts. As I highlighted in the analysis section under the organization's policy, if you want to know the priorities and what an organization's management is thinking, take a look at the organization's policies. According to Porcena et al. (2020), diversity management initiatives typically manifest in an organization's policies and practices. In terms of an organization's culture, management is also responsible for setting the tone. Myers (2003) argued that it is through the support of leaders that favorable diversity management practices can be actualized. Agars and Kottke (2004) noted that in order to promote an inclusive organizational climate, human resource managers must be actively involved in managing diversity issues. In actual fact, policies are creatures of the management, and it is their responsibility to keep them alive; that is P10's summary of the role of management or leadership in actualizing inclusion through diversity management.

Participants believe that actualizing inclusion through diversity management is a major strategic goal organization's leadership should strive for because of the social and economic benefits that can be derived from it. Also, leaders have to model inclusion by ensuring they do not only speak about it but see to its full implementation. They do not have to talk the talk; they have to walk the walk as Participant P5 put it. P4 said it is all about leadership commitment. P12 "The most fundamental aspect of an organizational

climate begins with an organization's leadership, which holds the power to drive successful change and promote lasting success. Leadership is an integral player in establishing the culture in which it operates." P1 "Leadership should hold people accountable to embrace diversity. They should model diversity." P5 "Let us understand that leadership sets the agenda, and it is only the agendas they want to see through that succeed. P9 puts it this way "Leadership plays a big role in shaping and changing the organizational climate of inclusion. Without buy-in from leadership, most ideas fail because they're the ones who are going to push it, they will be the ones who measure it, and they will be held accountable for its success or otherwise." P12 "An inclusive culture supported by leadership sets the foundation for employees to experience meaningful work, appreciation, and trust that contribute to their overall sense of belongingness."

Overall, I saw similarities in diversity management and inclusion literature and participants' views reflected in their responses to the interview questions relating to the role of leadership in actualizing a climate of inclusion in the organization. Previous studies show that diversity management is desirable to achieve inclusion, and inclusion is inevitable for organizational growth and success. The finding directly answers the third research question about leadership's role in realizing an inclusive climate in their organizations.

Limitations of the Study

The sample population is always a concern in qualitative studies, and this research is no exception. Even though my population meets the recommended and tested sample population needed to get to saturation, the quality of participants' responses plays a vital

role in the research quality. I put my personal feelings and biases in check by setting them aside, especially in the interpretation of data, to ensure the integrity and credibility of my work. Finally, there was no way of knowing the participants' state of mind while the interview was going on, so I hope the interview participants responded honestly and truthfully.

Recommendations

The success of many organizations in economic, social, and ethical issues has been attributed to diversity management, especially organizations in diverse communities. Studies show that the globe is a diverse community thanks to information technology and globalization. Diversity management has brought about improvements in profit, creativity, innovation, demographics and statutory concerns, and overall organizational performance. Inclusion, on the other hand, plays a strategic role in making diversity management work. As reported in chapter two, many studies relate diversity management to inclusion; however, studies directly exploring the path to the union between diversity management and inclusion need to be made clearer. What is available is primarily suggestive, suggesting that creating a climate of inclusion may be possible because of the characteristics of diversity management.

After reviewing and analyzing data collected from the participants, several areas of concern were identified. Based on these concerns, I made recommendations regarding how to make inclusion realistic through diversity management going forward. My recommendations are two folds – one for practical purposes and the other for future research.

As a practical matter, it might be necessary to examine and understand what might be management's constraints in pursuing inclusion despite current and future factors that show its inevitability. Studies as exhaustively stated in chapter two reveal that for any organization that practices DM to fully realize the benefits associated with the concept, inclusion must be added. The characteristics of DM make adopting and institutionalizing inclusion easier but organizations still foot drag in trying to actualize the findings of those studies.

I have also recommended for future research, the following actions. An assessment of the progress that has been made, if any, by organizations to channel their efforts towards creating a climate of inclusion in the organization through diversity management. To replication this study with a larger population size (quantitative) given that qualitative studies use smaller sample sizes than quantitative and to see if the results hold firm under such circumstances. To ensure a more even gender distribution in the sample population to see how that could impact the data collection and analysis.

Implications

The revelation that is evident in this study is that despite all the talk and education on the need to move organizations beyond diversity management to inclusion, more work needs to be done to make that a reality. Participants' perceptions/responses reveal a dire need for inclusion but also recognize that they are constraints. However, one thing all the participants agree on is that leaders must be sincere about their stand on inclusion. Participants agree that diversity management is easier to implement than inclusion.

As I noted in Chapter 2, previous studies have shown that separation or segregation is antithetical to the success of diversity management and the attainment of an inclusive workplace. As Köllen et al. (2018) said, segregation or exclusion hinders access to capital (human and cultural), business links, and networks that provide job opportunities. They promote inequality and isolate the minority group from connections to private and public resources. This assertion still holds from the participant's point of view. The moral and ethical concerns are also a social change issue because engaging in such behavior not only portrays the organization as bad but reveals a level of insensitivity that most modern societies resist. Any act that seems to disregard or demean human dignity attracts condemnation because it does not elevate anyone. Social change is about lifting people and giving all people, especially the disadvantaged, a chance at getting ahead. Furthermore, studies show that employees react favorably to organizations that are concerned about their well-being (Shore et al., 2018) by expressing appropriate actions and demeanor in the workplace (Shen et al., 2010). This was true before, and it is still true now.

While organizations seek economic benefits, it is possible to do so without ignoring or causing emotional harm to any group in the organization. The inability of organizations to create and institute inclusive culture through their diversity management policies and practice negates the meaning of diversity management.

Achieving gender parity and gender participation across the broad spectrum of the organization will influence social change and economic growth. It will positively impact people's earning power and financial independence leading to a better quality of life,

improved educational attainment, and access to health care, thereby fulfilling individual objectives. Implementing diversity management policies and creating a climate of inclusion is a win-win situation for the organization because it leads to economic prosperity, which is what the organization desires the most, and the “goose that lays the golden egg is preserved and is happy.”

Lastly, the information from this study will be helpful to organizational leaders to boost career advancements and opportunities for historically marginalized individuals such as ethnic minorities within the workforce, especially at the board and management levels.

Conclusions

This study was about understanding how diversity management affects creating a climate of inclusion in an organization. Throughout the study, I examined the relationship between diversity management and inclusion by looking at what other people have said or done in the past regarding the relationship to understand better how their perspectives could help me find what I sought.

I found that diversity management is a strategic business decision that leaders have mainly used to meet specific economic, social, and statutory requirements like profit, changing demographics, and mandatory government requirements like prohibition from discriminatory practices (age, religion, sex, gender). Given these achievements, what about other social, ethical, and moral issues like inclusion? Finding answers to this question is what gave rise to this study.

In analyzing the data, I collected for this study; I observed that some hindrances to achieving a concrete state regarding diversity management and inclusion persist. I could hear the participants saying that inclusion bestows on all people in the workplace and even in the public sphere inner peace of mind and satisfaction because they are being recognized, respected, valued, and included. For all the reasons I have espoused in this study, participants described their experiences as participants, implementers, or practitioners in diversity and diversity management and inclusion efforts in their current or previous workplaces. One major takeaway is that despite all the challenges that may constrain actualizing inclusion, an organization's management holds the key to seeing inclusion through because whether a program succeeds depends on the leadership. As I suggested in my recommendations, further studies may be required to ascertain the level of success that may or may not have been achieved in this area and find out what constraints management may be experiencing that are hindering the attainment of this goal.

Overall, instituting diversity training, establishing metrics to evaluate the success and progress of any diversity management initiative, holding strategic officers responsible for implementation, and all of that is necessary; however, they do not replace management's commitment to the course. That is my summary of how participants view diversity management and inclusivity.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Describe your knowledge about diversity management? How did you learn about it?
2. Based on your experience, please tell me the impact of diversity management in the organizations where you have worked.
3. Describe your experience with the implementation approaches to diversity initiatives.
4. What was it like to work in an organization where diversity management is practiced? I would like to hear that story.
5. What is your perception about integration? From your experience do you think integration is necessary? Please explain Why or why not?
6. Can you tell me about a time when you did not work in an organization that practices inclusion?
7. In your opinion, what influences creating a climate of inclusion in an organization?
8. Does the implementation of diversity management policies play any role in creating a climate of inclusion in an organization? Please explain why or why not.
9. Based on your experience, describe advantages and/ or disadvantages of gender diversity in executive level management.
10. What is the role of leadership in shaping or changing organizational climate of inclusion?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

The interview protocol describes the interview process which will be the same for all participants and is stated hereunder:

Research Question: The Role(s) of Diversity Management Policies and Practices in
Advancing Inclusive Culture

1. Data source: Virtual Interview
2. Duration of Interview: One hour
3. Location: Interviewee's preferred site that is conducive for such interview
4. Participants and Researcher will schedule interview at a date and time agreed upon by both parties.
5. Participants will answer ten (10) predetermined questions.
6. Participants will be debriefed after the interview and thanked for participating.
7. Participants will receive the transcripts of their responses one week from the date of the interview for authentication.