

1-7-2026

Minority Leaders' Impact on Corporate Diversity and Organizational Change

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Nana Amponsah

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Walden University
2026

Abstract

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MPhil, Walden University, 2022

MA, Walden University, 2020

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

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February 2026

Abstract

Workplace diversity continues to face criticism due to the limited representation of minority groups, with little progress made in the corporate sector. Despite corporations' efforts to increase diversity and inclusion in the workplace, a notable lack of minority leadership persists in upper management roles. The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed-method study was to explore the factors that affect the selection of minority leaders and how corporate executives utilize diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives to foster significant organizational change, even in the face of ongoing underrepresentation in upper management. Social dominance theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social construction theory grounded this study. Qualitative data from 10 in-depth interviews, collected via the National Faculty Survey, revealed persistent obstacles such as inequitable promotion practices, insufficient mentorship, exclusion from informal networks, pipeline challenges, institutional data gaps, and perceptions of tokenism. These findings informed the quantitative phase, which analyzed survey data collected from 33 participants using the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II. Descriptive statistics, reliability testing ($\alpha = .760$), and Friedman's analysis of variance ($p < .001$) indicated significant differences in perceptions of program effectiveness. Results from both phases confirmed that DEI initiatives often fail due to a lack of leadership follow-through, entrenched structural inequities, and the absence of systematic evaluation. The implications for positive social change include the potential for leaders to implement transparent promotion systems, expanded mentorship and sponsorship opportunities, and data-driven accountability to ensure equitable access to leadership roles for minorities.

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Dedication

To future scholars to learn, grow, and perfect their craft.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank God for giving me the ability to grow, and my dedication to pursuing this degree. I want to thank my friends and family for being there for me, keeping me on track, and holding me accountable. I want to thank all the teachers and professors who have poured knowledge into me and challenged me to be the best academic scholar I could be. I want to thank my committee, Dr. Jose Perez and Dr. Raghu Korrapati, for guiding me through this dissertation journey. Last but not least, I would like to thank Dr. Linda Larkey for allowing me to use her survey, Workforce Questionnaire II, to gain new insight into the work that she started.

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Chapter 1: Background

Leung and Ann Leung (2020) contended that implementing successful diversity initiatives can give businesses a competitive edge. Diversity fosters a more positive workplace environment, which results in employees who are happier and more productive, as well as better financial results. Miaji and Saha (2021) found a significant correlation between workplace diversity and financial performance. Organizations with higher proportions of gender and racial/ethnic diversity in the top quartile are more likely to generate financial returns that are 15% and 30% higher, respectively, than the national industry median.

It is important to have a diverse workforce, but it cannot ensure higher employee engagement on its own. Another essential diversity component is inclusion, which many American businesses find difficult to implement. Leung and Ann Leung (2020) pointed out that, as a result, they cannot achieve higher levels of employee engagement and productivity. Gender plasticity, defined as gender-related attitudes and behaviors that significantly affect how people behave and think, is still a concern in today's workplace. The persistent underrepresentation of minorities in leadership roles across the American workforce serves as evidence of this.

Minorities' increased access to the labor force over the past century has significantly altered the nature of the workplace (Jaiswal et al., 2022). According to data from the U.S. Department of Labor and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women aged 16 and over make up nearly 75 million workers, or 47% of the entire American workforce (Black et al., 2017). Since women were brought into the workforce during World War II

to aid in the war effort, and they made up 32% of the labor force in 1948, this number represents a 47% increase. Even though more women are in the workforce, research shows they are still underrepresented in Fortune 500 company leadership positions (Black et al., 2017). A majority of women in senior-level positions are still Caucasian, despite some progress in this area, with a few women achieving those positions. Black et al. (2017) found that Caucasian men hold 72% of U.S. corporations' leadership positions, while women comprise 26% of senior management and 20% of executives.

Problem Statement

Workplace diversity has been criticized for having a low representation of minorities; the corporate sector has not made much progress in this area (Fine et al., 2020). A Chief Executive Women survey found that 87% of women and 69% of men thought gender parity was a critical business imperative for their company. Still, only 15% of women believed that men and women had equal opportunities for promotion to senior management and executive levels, compared to 53% of men (Fine et al., 2020). Even though there is research on the topic, little has been written about how corporate leaders manage diversity and minority leadership (Fine et al., 2020). The social problem is that despite the efforts of corporations to increase diversity and inclusion in the workplace, there is still a lack of minority leadership in upper management roles. The specific management problem is that companies have started companywide incentives to address the issue of diversity in their workforce, whether it be hiring a diversity lead or making their diversity numbers public. Notably, in the corporate atmosphere, which consistently comes under fire for having some of the lowest minority representation

statistics, companies have shown little improvement in workplace diversity (Fine et al., 2020).

According to Anderson et al. (2019), ethnic minority leaders encounter significant difficulties in performing their managerial duties, with poor follower feedback being a major problem. For women who are members of minority groups and hold positions of authority, the situation is even more challenging. The gap in this study is from Anderson et al., who explored the American workforce and concluded that America has not yet accepted minority leadership entirely, especially that of women of color. Caucasian men continue to predominate in top positions in corporate boardrooms, congress, universities, courts, philanthropic organizations, and religious institutions despite the impressive educational credentials of minorities over the past few decades (Yadav & Lata, 2018). People of all genders frequently have the same career aspirations; minorities frequently encounter workplace cultures that make the road to upper-level leadership significantly more difficult.

Organizations have used various models to pinpoint the root causes of gender and minority parity in the workplace, the majority of the center of the discussion is on men who do not fully comprehend the challenges minorities face. It is important to understand that talented and competent minorities at higher levels of leadership continue to leave the American labor force, which hurts both specific organizations and the local economy. Minority representation in upper management positions is still lacking despite corporate efforts to promote diversity and inclusion (Black et al., 2017). To address the issue of

diversity, businesses have taken various actions, including hiring diversity leads and disclosing their diversity statistics.

Workplace diversity continues to face criticism due to the limited representation of minority groups, with little progress made in the corporate sector (Fine et al., 2020). According to a Chief Executive Women survey, 87% of women and 69% of men considered gender parity to be an essential business priority. However, only 15% of women believed men and women had equal opportunities for advancement into senior and executive positions, compared to 53% of men (Fine et al., 2020). Although scholarship has addressed diversity issues broadly, there is a lack of current research examining how shifts in cultural expectations influence corporate leaders' approaches to diversity and minority leadership (Fine et al., 2020). There have been programs to support diversity in the workplace, their efficacy is still unknown (Fine et al., 2020). By examining the factors that affect the choice of minority leaders and how they use diversity to effect change in corporate settings, this study aims to fill the research gap.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed-method study was to explore the factors that affect the selection of minority leaders and how corporate executives utilize diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives to foster significant organizational change, even in the face of ongoing underrepresentation in upper management.

Fitzgerald and Cortina (2018) found that it is widely believed that there is an increase in the number of minorities in the workforce, but this did not necessarily mean equality or a decline in employment discrimination, because women held less than 0.5%

of top positions in major corporations. A significant contributing factor to workplace discrimination against minorities is the requirement for them to adapt to a corporate culture dominated by Caucasian males (Fitzgerald & Cortina, 2018).

Diversity and inclusion are still crucial for fostering workplace engagement, and the challenge of increasing minority representation in leadership positions continues to plague the corporate world. This mixed-methods study uses data from interviews conducted through the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018) and the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II (WDQ-II) from Larkey (1996) to examine how leaders implement diversity practices and their qualifications to promote employees to upper management roles. A sample of 43 professionals participated in the study, including 10 professionals who participated in the qualitative portion and 33 who participated in the quantitative portion. A smaller sample size builds stronger connections with participants and encourages more natural conversations, resulting in more accurate data (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

Research Questions

The primary goal of this present study was to carry out an explanatory sequential mixed-method investigation to enhance comprehension of the elements that play a role in the selection of minority leaders and how corporate executives implement diversity initiatives to drive meaningful organizational change, despite the persistent underrepresentation in upper management.

Qualitative Research Question

RQ1: What factors contribute to leadership's implementation of their diversity practices?

Quantitative Research Questions

RQ2: To what extent do corporations experience challenges when implementing diversity incentive programs?

*H*₁: There are no challenges between the diversity incentive programs and the number of minority leaders they employ.

*H*₀: There are challenges between diversity incentive programs and the number of minority leaders they employ.

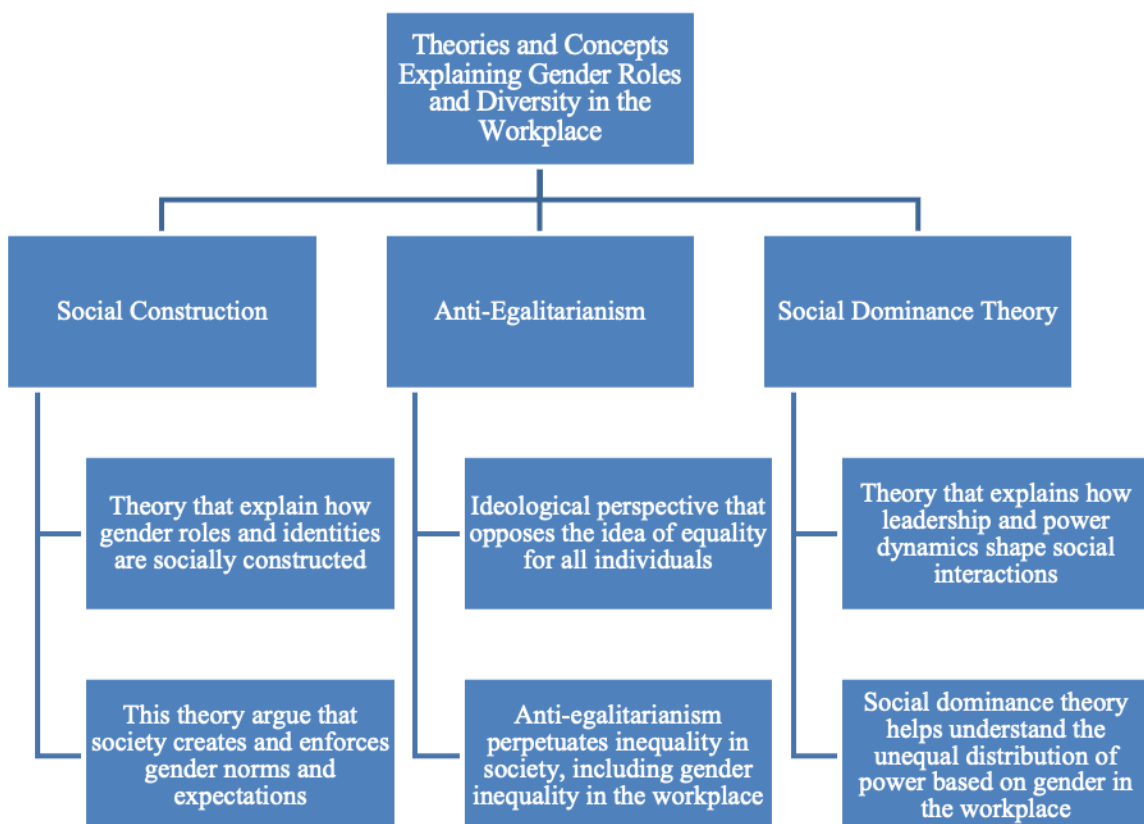
To investigate the factors influencing the choice of minority leaders and how they use diversity to drive change in organizations, I conducted a mixed-method study using a survey from the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996) and interviews from the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018) to answer these research questions. This enabled me to assess better strategies for fostering diversity and raising organizational productivity and morale. To better understand the diversity gaps in management, I conducted semistructured interviews with questions on diversity and inclusion. Qualitative data were gathered through these interviews. After the data were transcribed, I gave minorities aiming to climb the corporate ladder the WDQ-II survey. This enabled me to collect quantitative information that could either confirm or refute the conclusions regarding diversity issues in upper management.

Conceptual Framework

The framework presented in this study connects logically with the nature of this research in several ways, which is shown in Figure 1. Social dominance theory is relevant to the research question because it explains how leadership can use it to maintain, enhance, or reduce diversity incentives and minority roles in the workplace (Wilson, 2017). It offers insights into the strategic application of power dynamics in organizational settings.

Anti-egalitarianism fosters hierarchy, resulting in an environment in which individuals are evaluated and ranked based on superficial characteristics such as race and gender. This hierarchical structure has the potential to breed discrimination and exclusion, preventing marginalized groups from having equal access to opportunities as the majority. Understanding these dynamics is critical to addressing disparities and fostering inclusivity in professional environments.

The social construction theory examines human behavior and its possible influence on hiring and promotion practices (Einola & Alvesson, 2021). This viewpoint emphasizes how closely cultural influences, societal norms, and organizational practices are related. Understanding the nuances of hiring and promotion procedures requires analyzing human behavior through the prism of this theory.

Figure 1*Conceptual Framework of Theories*

When taken as a whole, theories and concepts from social construction, anti-egalitarianism, and social dominance theory greatly aid in explaining the difficulties surrounding gender roles and diversity in the workplace. They also act as helpful manuals for determining the study's methodology and creating research questions that explore the complexities of these problems.

The well-thought-out framework this study presents makes numerous meaningful and rational connections with the central idea of my research. To answer the research question, social dominance theory comes into play. This theory offers leadership

strategies for enhancing, amplifying, or decreasing minority roles and diversity incentives in the workplace (Wilson, 2017). This theory helps explain the complex interactions between power dynamics in organizational settings and gain a more nuanced understanding of the purposeful actions leaders take to shape the diverse landscape.

Through its promotion of hierarchy, anti-egalitarianism creates the conditions for a society in which people are rated and assessed according to flimsy criteria such as gender and race (Berry, 2022). Because of its potential to foster exclusion and discrimination, this hierarchical structure may create obstacles that prevent marginalized groups from taking advantage of the same opportunities as the majority. Identifying and understanding these dynamics is critical to addressing disparities and fostering a diverse workplace that values diversity in its purest form.

According to Einola and Alvesson (2021), the social construction theory offers a more profound comprehension of human behavior and its possible influence on hiring and career progression in organizations. This viewpoint reveals the complex interplay among cultural influences, organizational procedures, and societal norms. By applying this theory, we can analyze human behavior and derive insights into the intricate workings of hiring and promotion procedures and the social, economic, and cultural influences forming professional decision-making.

The ideas and theories of social construction theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social dominance theory play a crucial part in illuminating the complex issues surrounding gender roles and diversity in the workplace. These ideas are more than just theoretical frameworks; they are indispensable guides that direct the research

methodology and assist in developing research questions that explore the complex facets of these critical problems. They open the door to thoroughly investigating the nuances in organizational dynamics about gender roles and diversity.

Nature of the Study

The characteristics and features of a research project, such as its design, methodology, approaches to data collection and analysis, and the kinds of findings and recommendations it seeks to draw, are the nature of the study (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Depending on the research questions, hypotheses, and objectives, a study may be qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. According to Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016), qualitative studies typically focus on understanding complex phenomena in their natural environments and using subjective methods to collect data. Quantitative studies use measurement and analysis of numerical data to test hypotheses and draw generalizations about a population. Mixed-method studies combine qualitative and quantitative techniques to thoroughly understand a research problem or question (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016).

For this study, I used qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the research questions and use a specific research design. Semistructured interviews were conducted as part of this design using the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018), and the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996) was used for the surveys. These techniques were intended to provide insight into how to boost diversity, productivity, and morale within an organization. The semistructured interviews centered on inquiries about diversity and inclusion to fully comprehend any management disparities. Qualitative information was

gathered from the interviews. Minorities attempting to climb the corporate ladder were given the WDQ-II after the interviews were transcribed. This survey aimed to collect quantitative data that could either confirm or refute any findings of diversity issues in upper management.

Definitions

Definitions of key terms associated with the phenomenon under investigation are given in this section to ensure that the terms used in the study are understood correctly. This is crucial to avoid ambiguity or incorrect interpretation of the terms used. Laursen and Salter (2018) contended that precise definitions of key terms are essential to guaranteeing the coherence and clarity of research.

Diversity management is the intentional and continuous process of managing and valuing employee differences in the workplace. It involves establishing a work environment that values and supports diversity and effectively uses a diverse workforce's unique abilities, perspectives, and skills (Karnaukh-Broyna, 2023).

Diversity programs are official programs or actions intended to support and advance diversity. Programs like employee resource groups, diversity training, mentoring and coaching initiatives, and retention and recruitment plans for underrepresented groups are some examples of these initiatives (Zhou et al., 2021).

Diversity initiatives are comparable to diversity initiatives. These are detailed steps taken to encourage and boost diversity in a company. They could include policies to foster an inclusive work environment, targeted recruitment campaigns, and training and development programs (Tran et al., 2022).

Leadership is influencing and directing people toward a shared objective or vision. Influential leaders exhibit a variety of abilities, including strategic thinking, decision-making, and communication (Crane, 2022).

Minority leadership is the prevalence of people from underrepresented or marginalized groups in leadership positions, such as women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ people (Amutah-Onukagha et al., 2023).

Diversity refers to differences among individuals, including but not limited to differences in race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, and abilities (Shortland & Perkins, 2022).

Inclusion creates a workplace where everyone is treated with respect and feels included. Everyone's participation and contribution to the organization entail actively seeking out and embracing diversity and fostering a sense of belonging (Shortland & Perkins, 2022).

An inclusive workplace is where everyone can fully participate, feel valued, and have a sense of belonging, regardless of their background or identity. This entails fostering a climate of respect, encouraging diversity and equity, and giving every employee an equal shot at success (Palumbo et al., 2022).

Diversity and inclusion actively promote a culture of respect, inclusion, and belonging in addition to simply recognizing and valuing diversity. It entails establishing an office where each worker feels valued and respected and offers unique perspectives and abilities (Shortland & Perkins, 2022).

Assumptions

Assumptions in a study refer to the underlying beliefs or premises the researcher makes about the research topic or subject (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2019). These assumptions are based on the researcher's perspective, previous research findings, and the study's context. They are not always explicitly stated in the research report but are implied in the research questions, hypotheses, methodology, and data analysis (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2019). It is essential to acknowledge and be aware of assumptions in a study, as they can influence the research process and findings. If assumptions are not grounded in empirical evidence, they can lead to biased conclusions and limit the generalizability of the study (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2019). Therefore, researchers should strive to make explicit assumptions in their research reports, critically reflect on them throughout the research process, and seek to validate them through rigorous data analysis (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2019). For this study, I made several assumptions:

- Assumption of minority leaders in upper management positions: I assumed that there are minority leaders in upper management positions in corporations and that they impact diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Assumption of a positive relationship between minority leadership and diversity: I assumed that minority leadership positively impacts diversity initiatives and that better representation of minority leaders in upper management positions will lead to greater diversity and inclusion.

- Assumption of a willingness to participate in the study: I assumed that potential participants would be willing to participate and provide accurate and honest responses to questions.
- Assumption of the accuracy and reliability of data sources: I assumed that the data sources used were accurate and reliable and that any limitations or biases in the data could be accounted for.
- Assumption of the generalizability of findings: I assumed that the conclusions of this study can be generalized to other corporations or industries, despite potential differences in organizational culture, leadership styles, and other factors.

It is essential for researchers to be aware of their assumptions and to acknowledge them in their study, as they can impact the interpretation of results and conclusions drawn from the study.

Scope and Delimitations

According to Coker (2022), the scope of a study encompasses the breadth and depth of the research topic. This includes the range of issues and subtopics to be examined. It sets the study's parameters by identifying what will and will not be investigated. Delimitations, on the other hand, refer to the specific constraints or exclusions of the study, such as time, location, sample size, and resource availability. Delimitations set the boundaries of the research by specifying what falls beyond the scope of the study. Scope and delimitations help clarify the study's focus and boundaries,

aiding researchers in designing research questions, methods, and analyses. They also ensure the research is feasible, relevant, and manageable within the given constraints.

In the current study, I investigated how minority leaders can help corporations promote inclusion and diversity. In particular, I examined how minority leaders influence the implementation of diversity initiatives and policies within corporate settings and their effects on organizational culture, worker satisfaction, and business performance.

The first delimitation of the study is geographic: I only interviewed participants who reside in Dallas. This decision was made to facilitate more effective virtual interviews, as Dallas residents can share cultural experiences. Second, the study is limited in size, with only 43 participants involved. Finally, the study is limited to minority leaders in upper management, with only aspiring minorities receiving the survey. This mixed-methods study aims to improve understanding of the factors contributing to the selection process of minority leadership and how leaders use diversity to implement change in corporations.

Limitations

When researching the impact of minority leadership on diversity to implement change in corporations, several factors may present challenges that need to be addressed. One significant challenge is gaining access to study participants. Employees may be reluctant to participate in the study due to fear of retribution or lack of trust in the research process. Employers may also be hesitant to grant access to their employees as they may not want to expose their organization's practices to external scrutiny. These

issues may be especially pronounced in settings with a history of discrimination or where diversity and inclusion are not prioritized.

Another challenge in researching the impact of leadership on diversity and gender roles is the limited data availability. These topics are relatively new research areas, and there may be insufficient data to support a comprehensive study. Researchers may need to rely on qualitative data, such as interviews or case studies, to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the issues at hand. Additionally, researchers may need to expand their search beyond traditional academic sources and explore industry reports, social media, or government databases to gather relevant data.

Finally, individuals with mental illnesses may be less likely to reveal their conditions in the workplace, posing a challenge to researchers studying diversity and gender roles. These individuals may fear negative consequences, such as losing their jobs or being discriminated against. This creates a potential bias in research results, as the experiences of individuals with mental illness may not be fully represented.

To address these challenges, researchers may need to take several steps. These may include developing relationships with organizations to gain access to participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity in the research process, and seeking alternative data sources. Researchers may also need to consider the potential limitations of their data and methods and take steps to address any potential biases.

While there are several challenges to researching the impact of leadership on diversity and gender roles, these issues can be overcome with careful planning and thoughtful research design. By being aware of these challenges and taking steps to

address them, researchers can produce high-quality research that can inform policy and practice in organizations.

Significance of the Study

Understanding why there has not been enough minority leadership in upper management positions despite implementing numerous diversity initiatives is the goal of this study, which aims to create positive social change. The glass ceiling, which keeps minorities from achieving senior leadership positions, and glass walls, which contribute to segregation by job type and profession within an industry, have been explicitly identified by scholars (Siemiatycki, 2019). Workplace inequality has persisted for centuries, both in America and around the world. Numerous initiatives have been implemented to address this issue, including more training opportunities, safeguards against abuse, and job opportunities (Chang & Milkman, 2020). To ensure diversity at all employment levels, better strategies are needed. Despite having many white-collar jobs, very few minorities hold managerial positions. Minorities are significantly underrepresented in leadership roles, which shows that achieving gender diversity will be challenging, especially when it comes to including non-Caucasian leaders. As a result, the current study's findings will provide recommendations for resolving the global problem of diversity and minority inclusion in leadership. The research's findings will also be the foundation for future studies on increasing diversity in the American workforce.

Chapter 1 Summary

Initially, the chapter emphasized the significance of diversity in workplaces and identified the necessity for further investigation into the experiences of minority groups concerning diversity at work. Furthermore, the chapter presented research inquiries that target comprehending the experiences of minority employees in diverse workplaces, the difficulties they encounter, and the strategies they employ to navigate these challenges. The chapter also highlighted the study's importance by discussing its potential impact on organizational policies and practices, ultimately aimed at promoting diversity and effecting changes in corporate settings, especially concerning selecting minority leaders.

This chapter presented the research design and methodology, indicating that the study employed a mixed methods approach. This approach included semistructured interviews with minority employees and surveys to evaluate organizational policies and practices related to diversity and inclusion. The chapter also outlined the study's limitations and emphasizes the potential contributions it could make to the current literature on diversity in the workplace. The chapter discussed the study's significance to practice, theory, and social change before reviewing key terms, assumptions, scope, and delimitations. The focus of Chapter 2 will be the review and synthesis of pertinent literature, including the research strategy, frameworks used, and an analysis of historical and contemporary literature related to racial and ethnic minority backgrounds overcoming barriers to achieving executive leadership positions.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to explore the factors that affect the selection of minority leaders and how corporate executives utilize diversity initiatives to foster significant organizational change, even in the face of ongoing underrepresentation in upper management. The study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate various aspects, including social construction theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social dominance theory. Research instruments include interviews from the WDQ-II and the National Faculty Survey. To foster closer ties and more comprehensive data, the study centered on 43 professionals, 10 of whom are minority leaders and 33 of whom are minorities moving up the corporate ladder.

The study's main objective was to use an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach to investigate the factors that influence the selection of minority leaders and how diversity can be used to drive corporate change. The criteria governing promotions to upper management and leaders' tactics for maintaining diversity practices are the subjects of qualitative research questions. Quantitative research questions investigate relationships between incentives, selection criteria, the effectiveness of diversity programs, and the difficulties corporations encounter when implementing diversity incentive programs. The hypotheses investigate whether minority leader employment, diversity incentives, and program success are positively or negatively correlated.

In corporate settings, choosing minority leaders involves crucial elements supporting diversity and change-making. Making inclusive and transformative work

environments can significantly influence leaders' ability to use diversity and understand these components. Insufficient knowledge about the factors influencing the selection of minority leaders and how leaders use diversity to affect change in corporations is a research problem addressed in this study. The primary goal of this mixed-methods study was to improve understanding of the variables influencing the selection of minority leaders and how these leaders use diversity to affect organizational change. These considerations include social construction theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social dominance theory.

In this mixed-methods study, I investigated how leaders implement diversity practices and the criteria they consider when promoting employees to upper management. I used interviews collected through the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018) and the WDQ-II created by Larkey (1996). This study facilitates building solid and close relationships with participants, resulting in more natural conversations and improved data collection with a sample size of 40 professionals, including 10 minority leaders and 30 minorities on their path to advancement within the corporate hierarchy (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

This study's conceptual framework, based on the social dominance theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social construction theories, examines how leadership perspectives affect minorities and diversity. The following are the logical connections between the framework and the nature of this study: The social dominance theory explains how leadership can apply this theory to support, enhance, or diminish diversity initiatives and minor roles in the workplace, which is relevant to the research question (Wilson, 2017).

Anti-egalitarianism helps create hierarchies in which people are ranked and evaluated based on flimsy characteristics like race and gender (Berry, 2022). Discrimination and exclusion may make it difficult for marginalized groups to take advantage of the same opportunities as the majority. The social construction theory looks into how managerial hiring and promotion procedures are affected by human behavior (Einola & Alvesson, 2021). The study's methodology and research questions were guided by theoretical ideas from social dominance theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social construction theory, which help explain the difficulties of diversity and gender roles in the workplace.

Literature Search Strategies

The literature review plan thoroughly examined different categories and subtopics directly related to the research. It involved an ongoing analysis of the body of knowledge and peer-reviewed literature regarding the dissertation topic and revealed areas that could use more research (Mohajan, 2018). Several peer-reviewed publications provided the literature for this study's review, focusing on minority leaders and the selection procedure for leadership roles. The chosen papers are given more credibility and validity by including only peer-reviewed literature. Thus far, I have reviewed over 100 articles, of which close to 20 are seminal articles. Emerald Insight, SAGE journals, ProQuest Central, Walden University Library, and Business Source Complete were among the academic databases used to find articles. The studies that were primarily chosen dealt with concepts like *diversity management*, *diversity programs*, *diversity initiatives*, *leadership*, *minority leadership*, *diversity*, and *diversity and inclusion*. The search terms used varied throughout the investigation. The initial emphasis was on fundamental

concepts like diversity and minority leadership. To broaden the scope of the research, later searches were expanded using terms like *diversity* and *inclusion*. A different search term, *signs of diversity initiatives*, was used to understand better the various programs implemented. Previous studies have demonstrated that organizations prioritizing particular aspects of diversity create communities where underrepresented people predominate, supplying crucial resources and amplifying the voices within their communities (Leung & Ann Leung, 2020).

Theoretical Foundation

Social Dominance Theory

Social dominance theory, according to Keene (2023), provides a framework for understanding how social hierarchies emerge and endure in societies. According to the social dominance theory, developed by Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto, human societies have group-based social hierarchies. Some groups are more dominant and enjoy a higher social status. The traditional “age-based” hierarchy, in which older people dominate younger people, and the more recent “arbitrary-set” hierarchy, in which one social group dominates another based on arbitrary traits like race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or nationality, are the two main categories of group-based social hierarchies identified by social dominance theory (Wilson, 2017).

Social dominance theory provides essential insights into how social inequality persists and is maintained in societies. According to Keene (2023), social hierarchies are maintained through various mechanisms, such as intergroup dynamics, institutional practices, and myths that lend authority. Mythologies that justify and rationalize current

social hierarchies frequently present dominant groups as superior and deserving of their privileged positions. These belief systems are referred to as legitimizing myths.

Laws, regulations, and social norms all have structures that support and reinforce preexisting social hierarchies (Keene, 2023). These actions may lead to institutionalized discrimination and disadvantages for weaker groups. Intergroup rivalry and prejudice are other intergroup dynamics that support the continuation of social dominance. The principles of social dominance theory are strongly supported by empirical research. According to studies, people with higher social dominance orientation tend to have more prejudice against inferior groups and support ideologies that justify social inequality (Keene, 2023). The degree of social dominance orientation within a population can also be influenced by societal factors like economic inequality and political structures (Keene, 2023). Experimentation has also shown that people with higher social dominance orientation are more likely to act prejudiced and support laws that uphold social hierarchies (Keene, 2023). These findings clarify the psychological mechanisms that underlie the persistence of social inequality and the part played by individual attitudes in maintaining dominant-subordinate relationships.

The social dominance theory offers a comprehensive framework for comprehending how social hierarchies emerge and persist in societies. We learn important things about the mechanisms that support the upkeep of dominant-subordinate relationships by looking at their central ideas and implications for social inequality (Wilson, 2017). The theory is further supported by empirical research, which emphasizes the importance of social dominance orientation and the impact of societal elements on the

persistence of social inequality (Wilson, 2017). Understanding social dominance theory encourages discussion and raises awareness of the difficulties posed by social hierarchies, ultimately facilitating efforts to build more inclusive and equitable societies.

Anti-Egalitarianism

According to Berry (2022), Anti-egalitarianism is the opposition to or resistance to equality and the fair distribution of assets, opportunities, and privileges in society. The workforce's well-being may suffer due to its presence at work. Reduced job satisfaction, elevated stress levels, and decreased motivation can result from employees feeling that resources, rewards, and opportunities are distributed unfairly and unequally (Berry, 2022). As a result, this may contribute to lower employee morale and engagement and higher turnover rates.

Furthermore, anti-egalitarian behaviors can foster feelings of marginalization and exclusion among some groups by fostering favoritism, discrimination, and unequal treatment based on traits like gender, race, or social class (Robotham, 2021). As a result, there may be more conflicts, less cooperation, and less teamwork, all of which hurt organizational performance.

Anti-egalitarian attitudes have an impact on organizational culture as well, creating an environment that is unjust and unequal. Employee perceptions of unequal growth opportunities, restricted access to decision-making processes, and opaque policies and procedures cause trust in the company to decline (Robotham, 2021). As a result, collaboration suffers, skepticism rises, and a toxic work environment might take hold. Additionally, anti-egalitarian practices can promote a sense of rivalry and individualism,

undermining the organization's understanding of collective identity and common objectives (Berry, 2022). Collaboration, teamwork, and the capacity to utilize employees' perspectives and skills suffer, limiting innovation, creativity, and adaptability.

Anti-egalitarianism hinders employee productivity and overall organizational effectiveness. Employees may lose motivation to contribute fully and offer creative ideas in a setting where inequality and unfairness are prevalent (Robotham, 2021). This hinders creativity and problem-solving skills, which limits the organization's ability to adapt to a business environment that is changing quickly.

Additionally, when opportunities and resources are not distributed fairly, workers may feel that their upward mobility is limited, which demotivates them and prevents them from developing professionally (Berry, 2022). As a result, there may be less commitment, more absenteeism, and lower productivity levels. On the other hand, businesses that foster an egalitarian culture by guaranteeing equal access to resources, offering growth opportunities, and giving employees fair recognition typically see higher levels of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and general performance (Robotham, 2021).

Organizations should proactively promote equality and inclusion to combat anti-egalitarianism's detrimental effects. These actions entail adopting just and open policies and procedures, providing equal opportunities for growth and development, and promoting a culture that values tolerance, diversity, and cooperation. Training courses on unconscious bias, diversity, and inclusion can increase understanding and lessen discriminatory behavior. Organizations should also create channels for feedback and

communication and encourage employee involvement in decision-making processes.

These actions could help develop a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

Social Construction Theory

A valuable framework for understanding how people and groups create and interpret meaning in a social context is provided by social construction theory (Einola & Alvesson, 2021). An understanding of the forces that influence employees' experiences and interactions within organizations can be gained by investigating the central ideas of social construction theory and their applicability to the workplace. This theory emphasizes that meanings, values, and norms are not inherent but negotiated and created within particular social contexts and that individuals and groups construct their reality through shared interpretations, language, and social interactions. The social construction theory of the workplace emphasizes how employees' constant interactions and communication with one another shape their understanding of their jobs, responsibilities, and interpersonal relationships.

The social construction theory emphasizes the significance of organizational culture in influencing how employees perceive and comprehend their workplace. Shared assumptions, values, and beliefs influence behavior and decision-making (Ray, 2019). Employees construct and reinforce these cultural norms through social interactions, which affect their attitudes, motivations, and behaviors. According to social construction theory, organizational culture is continuously created and renegotiated through daily interactions and practices in the workplace rather than being a fixed entity (Ray, 2019). This emphasizes how important it is for managers and leaders to create and uphold an

inclusive organizational culture that fosters a sense of shared purpose and objectives. Organizations can create an atmosphere promoting employee well-being and engagement by cultivating a culture of cooperation, respect, and open communication.

According to social construction theory, communication is essential in creating a shared reality within organizations. Individuals negotiate and share meanings through communication, a fundamental process contributing to a shared understanding of the workplace (Einola & Alvesson, 2021). Employees participate in ongoing dialogues that affect how they perceive their roles, responsibilities, and expectations through language, symbols, and gestures.

Effective communication techniques like active listening, clear feedback, and open dialogue are crucial for fostering shared understanding and reducing misunderstandings at work (Ray, 2019). Employees should be able to express their opinions, share knowledge, and participate in the co-construction of organizational reality when their employers provide open and transparent communication channels. This promotes a sense of group identity and ownership, which improves cooperation and problem-solving skills.

Social construction theory also illuminates the formation of individual and group identities at work. Through their roles and interactions with others, people shape their sense of who they are (Einola & Alvesson, 2021). Roles are socially constructed and have symbolic meanings that impact how people behave and view themselves. Examples of these roles include job titles, responsibilities, and professional affiliations. Organizations can promote positive identity construction by allowing employees to participate in

meaningful work, contribute their unique talents and perspectives, and take pride in their individual and group accomplishments (Ray, 2019). Organizations can foster a more inclusive and empowering work environment that improves employee commitment and satisfaction by recognizing and valuing diverse identities and experiences.

The dynamics that influence the workplace environment are better understood thanks to the social construction theory. By acknowledging that meanings, values, and identities are socially constructed, organizations can actively form their culture, communication methods, and identity formation processes. Employee engagement, collaboration, and overall organizational performance are all improved by fostering an inclusive and empowering workplace culture that encourages open communication, shared understanding, and recognition of diverse identities. A more purposeful and satisfying work environment can be produced by comprehending and utilizing social construction theory.

Literature Review

Diversity Management

Diversity management is a comprehensive strategy businesses use to create inclusive workplaces that value and take advantage of their workforce's varied backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints (Yadav & Lenka, 2023). The importance of diversity management in fostering minority leadership within organizations is examined in this paper, which also explores its various ramifications for empowering and supporting minority leaders. Diversity management, according to Yadav and Lenka (2023), includes strategic initiatives, policies, and practices put in place by organizations

to promote and manage diversity in the workplace while valuing and recognizing individual differences like race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, and abilities. Practices in recruitment and hiring, diversity training and education, the development of inclusive leadership, and the creation of diverse networks and affinity groups are all crucial aspects of diversity management. (Yadav & Lenka, 2023).

Tajeddini et al. (2023) claimed that diversity management initiatives provide organizations with several advantages, including increased innovation and creativity, enhanced problem-solving skills, improved adaptability to change, and access to diverse markets and clientele. These benefits highlight the potential of diversity management in giving organizations a competitive edge. Initiatives to develop inclusive leadership abilities and behaviors are a component of effective diversity management programs (Tajeddini et al., 2023). Organizations can offer mentoring and training programs that give minority leaders the skills they need to succeed in leadership positions, assisting them in overcoming obstacles and biases and promoting their development. When evaluating and selecting leaders, diversity management strategies go against widespread prejudices and stereotypes. Organizations can reduce unconscious bias and encourage fair evaluations of minority leaders by implementing objective performance standards, diversity metrics, and open decision-making procedures.

Employee resource groups and affinity networks give minority leaders a place to connect, share experiences, and support one another. They also provide them access to helpful resources, mentorship opportunities, and venues for group advocacy, which helps further their professional advancement and visibility (Tajeddini et al., 2023). Threats

based on stereotypes are a frequent occurrence for minority leaders, and these threats can affect their performance. Through awareness and training programs, organizations should address this issue by fostering inclusive environments that promote psychological safety and reduce the impact of biases (Tajeddini et al., 2023). Accessing crucial leadership opportunities, such as high-profile projects, promotions, and assignments, may present barriers for minority leaders (Karnaukh-Broyna, 2023). The advancement of minority leaders should be facilitated by diversity management practices that prioritize granting equal access to development opportunities, mentorship, and sponsorship programs.

Organizations should acknowledge and support the particular difficulties faced by minority leaders who belong to multiple marginalized groups, integrating an intersectional lens into their diversity management strategies in light of the concept of intersectionality, which recognizes that people have multiple identities and experience intersecting forms of discrimination (Karnaukh-Broyna, 2023). Organizational leaders should sincerely commit to inclusion and diversity by setting specific objectives and monitoring performance. This dedication should be reflected in the distribution of funds, the development of metrics, and the inclusion of diversity factors in performance reviews (Karnaukh-Broyna, 2023). Organizations should use inclusive hiring procedures like diverse candidate sourcing, uniform selection standards, and interview panels. Programs for career development, mentoring, sponsorship, and open promotion procedures should all be part of retention efforts. Managing diversity should also be an ongoing process that adapts to shifting organizational requirements and societal contexts. Organizations can identify areas for improvement and fine-tune their diversity management initiatives by

conducting regular evaluations, utilizing feedback mechanisms, and benchmarking against industry best practices.

Diversity management is essential to encourage minority leadership in organizations. Organizations can support the growth and development of minority leaders by embracing diversity, fostering inclusive environments, and implementing effective diversity management strategies. It takes dedication to inclusive practices and ongoing evaluation to overcome obstacles like bias and limited access to opportunities. Finally, utilizing the full potential of diverse talent and perspectives, diversity management practices supporting minority leadership contribute to organizational success (Karnaukh-Broyna, 2023).

Diversity Programs

Diversity programs are organizational initiatives created to advance workplace inclusion, equity, and diversity (Sarkar, 2022). This essay examines the diverse aspects of diversity initiatives and looks at how they support and empower minority leaders. The phrase “diversity programs” refers to various planned initiatives and regulations to promote inclusion and diversity in the workplace (Sarkar, 2022). These initiatives seek to foster an office culture that respects and values individual differences, including abilities, age, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation. Increased representation, the advancement of equal opportunity, the reduction of prejudice and discrimination, and the improvement of organizational culture are all goals of diversity programs. Diverse elements comprise diversity programs, including diverse talent recruitment and hiring practices, mentoring and leadership development initiatives that support the emergence of

minority leaders, employee resource groups that offer networking and support, and diversity training programs that promote inclusivity among staff members (Sarkar, 2022).

Enhancing the representation of minority leaders in organizations is a key goal of diversity programs. Organizations can increase the visibility of minority leaders by actively seeking out diverse candidates and offering equal advancement opportunities, ensuring that their perspectives and experiences are valued and incorporated into decision-making processes (Majczyk, 2022). These initiatives frequently include coaching, mentoring, and leadership development initiatives designed explicitly for minority employees, giving them the knowledge, support, and tools they need to succeed in their jobs and overcome any barriers to advancement (Majczyk, 2022). Diversity initiatives seek to lessen prejudices and unfair treatment at work. Organizations can create an environment that challenges stereotypes, lessens unconscious bias, and ensures fair and equitable treatment for all employees, including minority leaders, by implementing inclusive policies, awareness campaigns, and education (Burt et al., 2023).

Minority leaders' self-confidence and career advancement may be hampered by stereotype threat and impostor syndrome (Majczyk, 2022). By offering mentorship, coaching, and resources that support the growth of a strong and resilient mindset among minority leaders, diversity programs should address these issues. These initiatives can also lessen the obstacles minority leaders face in gaining access to vital networks and opportunities for leadership. Organizations can support the development and advancement of minority leaders by providing equal access to high-profile projects, mentorship programs, sponsorship opportunities, and professional networks through

targeted initiatives (Majczyk, 2022). All employees, including leaders, must be taught cultural competence as part of diversity programs. Organizations can create an environment where minority leaders can thrive and contribute their distinct perspectives by encouraging inclusive leadership practices that value diversity, ultimately leading to improved collaboration and innovation.

Organizational leaders must sincerely commit to diversity and inclusion by establishing specific objectives, allocating funds, and monitoring their performance (Burt et al., 2023). Diversity programs must have the support and participation of the leadership. Diversity programs should include ongoing education and training initiatives that encourage employees' awareness, cultural competence, and allyship (Burt et al., 2023). These programs help to establish a welcoming, respectful workplace where diversity is valued and celebrated. It is crucial to assess and gauge the success of diversity programs regularly. Organizations can identify areas for improvement and improve their strategies to support minority leadership by gathering data, conducting surveys, and analyzing results.

Diversity initiatives significantly impact minority leadership within organizations. Organizations can create a climate that fosters the development and advancement of minority leaders by implementing robust and all-encompassing initiatives focusing on representation, skill development, bias mitigation, and inclusivity (Burt et al., 2023). Diversity programs must address issues like overcoming obstacles and giving minority leaders equal access to vital networks and resources. Ultimately, diversity programs help organizations succeed by utilizing diverse talent to its fullest potential, encouraging

innovation, and fostering an inclusive workplace where all employees can succeed (Burt et al., 2023).

Diversity Incentives

Programs promoting diversity initiatives have drawn much attention as businesses have come to understand how effective they can be at fostering innovation, enhancing decision-making, and luring top talent. Ingenious and creative solutions are produced by collaborative teams made up of diverse individuals who bring together a range of perspectives and experiences (Hwang et al., 2021). Members from various backgrounds working together foster the fusion of unique insights and allow for novel approaches to problem-solving. Diverse teams in decision-making enrich organizations with a broader range of perspectives, preventing groupthink and fostering more well-rounded and efficient outcomes. A diverse workforce enables businesses to recognize and address their clientele's various needs, leading to better product development, honed marketing tactics, and improved client relations (Hwang et al., 2021). Employee engagement and worth are fostered by inclusive environments, which also reduce turnover rates and increase job satisfaction, resulting in a more motivated and stable workforce. Companies prioritizing diversity and inclusivity stand out as desirable employers for a wider talent pool, enhancing their recruitment efforts and ensuring a steady stream of qualified workers.

Diversity initiatives cover a range of deliberate tactics, plans, and actions businesses take to promote inclusivity and diversity among their employees. These programs seek to create settings where people with various backgrounds, experiences,

and identities can work together, contribute, and succeed on an equal footing (Dalessandro & Lovell, 2023). The link between diversity initiatives and minority leadership can be traced back to encouraging an inclusive and equitable organizational environment by allowing underrepresented groups to take on leadership roles. Diversity initiatives use various strategies that consider the existing demographic, cognitive, and cultural diversity. These initiatives seek to cultivate an inclusive culture that values diversity and promotes equitable growth opportunities, going beyond simple representation (Hwang et al., 2021).

Diversity efforts are effective catalysts for advancing underrepresented people into leadership roles (Dalessandro & Lovell, 2023). The intricate interactions between diversity initiatives and the development of minority leaders within organizational contexts are examined in this study. These programs provide minority people access to mentorship opportunities, leadership development programs, and career advancement routes. These initiatives aim to create equal platforms for people from different backgrounds to rise to leadership positions by tearing down historical barriers. Underrepresented people receive specialized leadership training and development opportunities through diversity programs. This targeted skill improvement increases their confidence and ability to lead effectively (Hwang et al., 2021). For aspirant minority leaders, seeing other leaders with similar backgrounds in the public eye is a powerful source of inspiration. Organizations prioritizing diversity initiatives regardless of origin convey that leadership is attainable for everyone, fostering a sense of community and aspiration. Diversity initiatives encourage leaders' cultural competence by exposing them

to various viewpoints and experiences. By increasing their awareness of the specific needs of minority workers, leaders are better equipped to create inclusive workplaces that value diversity (Hwang et al., 2021).

Organizations that support diversity initiatives exhort leaders to adopt inclusive leadership philosophies that respect various points of view. According to Ardito et al. (2019), this shift toward inclusive leadership fosters a culture of cooperation, innovation, and engagement. Effective diversity initiatives push back against accepted norms and procedures, forcing organizations to reconsider their methods. This change in organizational culture helps to lessen prejudices and structural barriers that prevent minorities from advancing to leadership positions. Despite issues like unconscious bias, tokenism, and resistance to change, the potential advantages greatly outweigh these obstacles (Dalessandro & Lovell, 2023). Adopting diverse leadership has benefits such as improved decision-making, increased employee engagement, and enhanced innovation.

The path to minority leadership is paved in large part by diversity initiatives. These initiatives usher in a new era of inclusive leadership that benefits organizations and society by facilitating access to opportunities, skill enhancement, representation, cultural competence, inclusive leadership styles, and a change in organizational culture (Ardito et al., 2019). Organizations can create a culture that values diversity and fosters effective leadership by overcoming obstacles and taking advantage of opportunities. Diversity initiatives serve as catalysts for the advancement of minority leadership by giving underrepresented people the chances, resources, and encouragement they need to succeed in positions of authority.

According to Hwang et al. (2021), organizations that foster inclusive environments enrich their leadership teams and support an environment where innovation and equity are more prevalent. Finally, diversity initiatives are essential for organizational success. These initiatives aid in creating inclusive environments that benefit businesses and society by encouraging innovation, elevating decision-making, and enhancing talent attraction (Hwang et al., 2021). While challenges exist, the advantages of successful diversity initiatives are undeniable, positioning organizations to succeed in a world that is becoming more diverse. Organizations can create a climate that fosters innovation, fair decision-making, and long-term growth by embracing diversity and implementing comprehensive initiatives.

Leadership

In modern organizations, leadership is crucial in encouraging teamwork and cooperation among individuals and teams. Leadership fundamentally impacts organizational performance, employee engagement, and overall success in the modern workplace (Manning & Robertson, 2022). Leadership directs, inspires, and influences people or groups to achieve common goals. Leadership in the workplace goes beyond formal hierarchies to include roles that support the organization's goals in both formal and informal settings.

Leadership motivates, inspires, and guides others to achieve common objectives (Manning & Robertson, 2022). This procedure encompasses a variety of roles and actions that direct people or groups in the direction of a common goal. Significantly, leadership

goes beyond simple positional authority and can be displayed by staff members at all organizational levels.

However, being a leader at work has many difficulties that call for adept navigation. Successful leadership is built on a foundation of effective communication. According to Moreno et al. (2021), misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and information gaps can cause productivity barriers, mistrust, and project derailments. Different communication styles, organizational hierarchies, and language barriers can hamper the efficient exchange of information. While technology improves connectivity, it also raises the possibility of misunderstandings. Leaders can bridge communication gaps by using active listening techniques, straightforward communication techniques, and promoting an open-door policy. Communication channels are further improved by encouraging frequent feedback and implementing transparent procedures.

Additionally, leaders can overcome communication barriers by actively listening, speaking clearly, and creating an open-door environment (Moreno et al., 2021). Communication channels are improved by embracing transparency and promoting consistent feedback. Employee resistance to change initiatives is frequently a result of their fear of the unknown, worries about their job security, or a lack of understanding of the reasons behind the changes. Successful leaders prepare for opposition and use tactics to overcome it. Resistance can be reduced by involving staff members early in the change process, giving clear explanations, and emphasizing the benefits of the change (Manning & Robertson, 2022). Breakdowns in communication, resistance to change, and conflict

resolution frequently coexist. Unresolved conflicts can further obstruct effective communication, which can breed misunderstandings that feed resistance.

Effective workplace leadership is crucial for organizational success because it enables leaders to overcome obstacles and create a climate that fosters engagement, growth, and innovation. Recognizing, understanding, and controlling one's emotions and those of others are all aspects of emotional intelligence (EI) (Gransberry, 2022). EI improves decision-making, communication, and interpersonal relationships. Vital EI leaders inspire motivation, build trust, and promote a positive work environment. They skillfully resolve disputes empathetically and make choices considering their team's emotional health. By encouraging self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management, leaders can support EI (Gransberry, 2022). Practical tools include reflective exercises, asking for feedback, and empathy-building activities.

Vu (2020) defined empowerment as granting employees freedom, accountability, and decision-making power. Employees who have a sense of empowerment are motivated to make significant contributions. Effective delegation and empowerment are essential components of effective leadership within an organization. These ideas entail giving team members the power, responsibility, and freedom to decide for themselves, take ownership of tasks, and contribute to the organization's accomplishments (Vu, 2020). Even though they are closely related, delegation and empowerment have unique characteristics that support a pleasant and effective workplace. According to Vu (2020), empowerment gives people the authority, assurance, and responsibility to make choices and take actions that impact their work and the organization. This process provides team

members a sense of ownership and autonomy, enabling them to offer their unique talents, suggestions, and viewpoints.

Delegation, conversely, entails giving specific jobs, responsibilities, and projects to team members following their qualifications, experience, and areas of expertise (Vu, 2020). This tactical strategy allows leaders to divide workloads, foster skill development, and concentrate on higher-level duties. Delegation and empowerment go hand in hand, with empowerment serving as the emotional framework for efficient delegation. Team members who feel empowered are more likely to take responsibility for assigned tasks, make thoughtful decisions, and contribute creatively to the organization's success (Vu, 2020). Influential leaders aware of both concepts' contributions to a motivated, engaged, and high-performing team strike a deft balance between empowerment and delegation. Delegation is more effective when people are empowered because it fosters a culture of trust and cooperation (Vu, 2020). On the other hand, efficient delegation allows leaders to capitalize on the skills of empowered subordinates while ensuring that work is done quickly and with a sense of ownership.

Leaders dedicated to lifelong learning stay current on market trends, technological developments, and changing leadership styles. Curiosity and adaptability are fostered by learning, with adaptability being the capacity to change course in response to new circumstances. Leaders who embrace change and promote an agile culture give their teams the tools to solve problems quickly. A growth mindset and the capacity for composure under stress are prerequisites for leadership in uncertain times (Moreno et al., 2021). Maintaining a clear vision and open communication are essential.

The process by which people, frequently in formal or informal positions of authority, direct, motivate, and influence their coworkers or subordinates to achieve common goals and objectives is what is essentially meant by leadership in the workplace (Moreno et al., 2021). This process includes making strategic decisions, fostering collaboration, offering direction, and promoting a positive work environment. Effective workplace leadership includes managing tasks and encouraging a team environment (Gransberry, 2022).

The impact of motivation, leadership, and organizational culture on job satisfaction and employee performance was investigated at Wahana Resources Ltd in the North Seram District of Central Maluku Regency, Indonesia, as part of a study by Paais and Pattiruhu (2020). The study used empirical techniques to clarify critical human resources management (HRM) aspects. One hundred fifty-five employees were included in the study, chosen by proportionate stratified random sampling (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Data was collected using questionnaires, and Amos was used for structural equation modeling analysis.

The study's conclusions demonstrate the beneficial and noteworthy effects that organizational culture and work motivation have on workers' productivity (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). This suggests that employees generally perform better when motivated and working in an environment that supports them. Interestingly, leadership does not directly affect performance; however, work motivation directly improves employee performance. This shows that motivation, as opposed to leadership, has a more significant direct impact on raising employee performance (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020).

However, the research also shows that leadership significantly impacts employees' satisfaction with their jobs, highlighting the significance of good leadership in encouraging higher job satisfaction among staff members (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020).

Diversity

Diversity permeates every aspect of our societies, workplaces, and communities, representing an inherent and all-pervasive aspect of our contemporary world. Race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, and socioeconomic status are just a few differences shaping people and groups (Jaiswal et al., 2022). These distinctions are what diversity is all about and help to weave the intricate tapestry of human existence. At its core, diversity acts as a source of power and resiliency, uniting people from various backgrounds who each bring their perspectives, experiences, and histories to the table. Diversity emerges as a powerful catalyst for innovation within this complex web of thought and creativity (Jaiswal et al., 2022), enabling us to tackle complex problems with novel, multifaceted solutions beyond uniformity's confines.

The advancement of civil rights movements and the tearing down of societal barriers depend on diversity (Jaiswal et al., 2022). Diversity is also seen as a driving force behind societal progress. Through diversity, societies set a path toward greater fairness, justice, and equality. This complex diversity web manifests in various settings, from workplaces and educational institutions to local communities and larger societies. It encompasses perspectives, experiences, ideas, and outwardly apparent characteristics. It embodies the understanding that everyone contributes unique qualities to the group,

regardless of their upbringing or personal traits (Leung & Ann Leung, 2020). Accepting and celebrating this recognition fosters a more enriching and inclusive environment.

Promoting diversity is a goal and an essential strategy for creating more just and equitable societies. It aims to guarantee that each person has equal access to opportunities and representation. Since diversity has many advantages, including improved creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills, organizations and institutions frequently launch diversity and inclusion initiatives (Leung & Ann Leung, 2020). Despite this, navigating the varied terrain presents some difficulties. Conscious thought must be given to unconscious bias, cultural misunderstandings, and inclusive policies and practices. The path to diversity necessitates a steadfast dedication to tackling these issues and fostering an inclusive and respectful culture. Indeed, diversity is a dynamic force that shapes our societies, economies, and personal experiences in the modern world (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). It serves as a pillar of power, innovation, and development. Our shared future becomes more promising when we embrace our differences and tap into their combined power in a diverse world. Diversity continues to be a positive and valuable trait in many contexts, such as workplaces, educational institutions, and communities (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). It is a beacon, pointing us toward more original thinking, wiser choices, and a more prosperous and welcoming environment.

Making environments that welcome people from different backgrounds is at the heart of initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion. These settings ensure that everyone feels respected, valued, and at home. To do this, policies, practices, and programs must be implemented to ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of

their unique characteristics (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). Therefore, diversity fosters inclusion, equity, and understanding in various contexts, including businesses, educational institutions, communities, and society. It sparks a deep appreciation for the complexity of human experiences and viewpoints, fostering a culture where each person's distinctive qualities are highly valued.

Organizations must actively foster inclusive environments that foster a sense of belonging for all employees to fully capitalize on diversity's benefits. Due to this, policies, practices, and programs must be implemented to ensure equal opportunities for all people, regardless of their unique characteristics. Cultivating inclusive environments where these distinctions are acknowledged and celebrated is part of diversity in the workplace, which goes beyond numerical representation (de Souza & Gama, 2020). This project is grounded in morality, social responsibility, and tactical knowledge.

Organizations that firmly support diversity and inclusivity are better positioned to draw top talent, foster innovation, and prosper in a multicultural world that is constantly changing.

Tiwarim (2022) asserted that diversity has long been disregarded in many societies despite its enormous importance. Diversity can take many forms, such as differences in terms of race or ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, financial status, and physical capabilities. We must acknowledge that each difference results in unique experiences for people, and combining these diverse experiences can lead to considerably more comprehensive and inclusive knowledge.

Tiwarim (2022) stated that affirmative action and diversity programs are two of the most notable initiatives implemented to support diversity in educational institutions. These programs are based on the knowledge that diversity encourages an environment of openness in which people are willing to absorb knowledge from the experiences of others. This quality promotes exchanging ideas and viewpoints and is essential for developing creativity and innovation. Additionally, there is a correlation between diversity, increased productivity, and better team performance. Teams comprising individuals from different backgrounds can leverage this diversity of experiences to create creative solutions for challenging issues.

In the context of personal development, diversity takes on yet another crucial role. People exposed to diversity are placed in environments full of opportunities and possibilities, which helps them widen their perspectives and develop into more complete people. This aspect of diversity fits with the necessity of empowering people to succeed in a society that is becoming increasingly diverse. Diversity educates people on the opportunities and challenges a globalized world brings by exposing them to various cultural viewpoints and giving them the tools necessary to participate in a multicultural society (Tiwarim, 2022).

The importance of diversity also extends to the field of education. Diversity in education exposes students to various viewpoints and life experiences, enhancing and diversifying the learning process. In turn, this diversity provides an ideal environment for creating new knowledge. The coming together of people with different experiences and

backgrounds fosters creativity and intellectual growth while allowing for novel solutions to challenging issues (Tiwari, 2022).

Diversity becomes more than just the ideal that society strives to maintain; it becomes a driving force behind development and progress. Its benefits are numerous; it fosters creativity, improves group experiences, and gives people the tools they need to survive and prosper in a globalized society. There are many opportunities for more research and investigation in this constantly changing field as we delve deeper into the complex dimensions of diversity and examine its numerous impacts. Diversity is a topic that will always be of interest and significance because of the complex interactions between diversity in many facets of life and its varied implications. These interactions also present rich research and exploration opportunities (Tiwari, 2022).

Diversity and Inclusion

To create fair and respectful environments within organizations, communities, and societies, diversity and inclusion represent two essential interconnected yet distinct concepts (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). Diversity refers to the presence of a wide variety of people or groups with different traits, histories, and perspectives. Race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, physical prowess, socioeconomic status, and cultural heritage are just a few of these characteristics (Leung & Ann Leung, 2020). In today's society, diversity and inclusion have evolved into fundamental values that permeate all facets of our lives, including the workplace, institutions of higher learning, neighborhoods, and larger societal structures (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). These two interconnected ideas represent fundamental principles guiding humanity's journey toward

a more just, vibrant, and innovative world. They go beyond being mere catchphrases. According to Leung and Ann Leung (2020), inclusion is the proactive practice of engaging and honoring all individuals' perspectives, experiences, and contributions, regardless of their diverse attributes. On the other hand, diversity appreciates and respects the distinctiveness and disparities among individuals. Aiming to create a climate where everyone feels valued, heard, and empowered to participate fully, inclusion goes beyond simple representation and fosters a sense of belonging within groups or organizations.

Diversity essentially refers to who is present, whereas inclusion focuses on how those people are treated and integrated into opportunities, decision-making processes, and the overall culture. Diversity and inclusion work together to create environments that value and celebrate diversity. This has several positive effects, including increased creativity, better problem-solving skills, effective teamwork, and advancement in a just and fair society (Leung & Ann Leung, 2020).

As previously stated, diversity includes a wide range of individual and group differences, including traits like race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, and socioeconomic status. It is a source of strength and resilience within our communities and organizations and reflects the complex fabric of human existence. Diversity's role in advancing equity and social justice, guaranteeing that all people, regardless of their backgrounds, have equal access to opportunities and resources, is one of the main justifications for the significance of diversity (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). Diversity goes beyond simple fairness in today's interconnected and multicultural world; it

becomes a strategic imperative for promoting innovation, creativity, and efficient problem-solving.

A wide range of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds is produced by diversity. When accepted, it fosters diverse ideas that stimulate innovation and enables addressing complex problems with novel solutions. It also creates a dynamic environment where people can contribute their unique talents (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). By providing broader perspectives and methods, diverse teams consistently outperform homogeneous ones in research (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). Additionally, diversity is crucial in advancing social progress because it has historically been at the forefront of efforts to dismantle barriers, combat discriminatory behavior, and advance civil rights movements. Societies advance toward greater fairness, justice, and equality through diversity.

Diversity refers to the enormous variety of traits, origins, and qualities that make each person unique. Race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, physical prowess, socioeconomic status, and cultural background are just a few of these characteristics (Jaiswal et al., 2022). Diversity acknowledges that people come from various backgrounds and have varying perspectives, experiences, and identities. A more thorough understanding of the world can be achieved by embracing diversity, which recognizes the richness of these differences. Ensuring everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources regardless of background promotes fairness, representation, and social justice.

Regardless of their various characteristics, inclusion entails actively engaging and respecting every individual's perspectives, experiences, and contributions (Jaiswal et al., 2022). Beyond mere representation, it aims to create a space where everyone feels included, secure, and empowered to be themselves at work, school, and any other public setting. Integration and cooperation are fostered by inclusion, which ultimately produces better results.

Diversity and inclusion depend on one another. Inclusion is the proactive process of utilizing differences for the benefit of all, whereas diversity acknowledges disagreements (Jaiswal et al., 2022). Inclusion is more directly related to how those people are treated and included, while diversity is more concerned with who is present. People from different backgrounds may be present when a group or community is diverse but not inclusive. They may not feel valued or heard, which could lead to tension, conflicts, and missed opportunities for collaboration. In contrast, a homogeneous environment that is welcoming and respectful may not adequately reflect the diversity of human experiences and viewpoints, which restricts the potential for innovation and creativity that can result from different points of view.

Diversity and inclusion are essential for organizations, communities, and societies to be equitable and prosperous (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). By embracing both ideas, we can foster inclusive environments where everyone can contribute their best work and feel a sense of belonging while also appreciating the value of our differences (de Souza & Gama, 2020). Implementing policies, practices, and programs to guarantee equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their backgrounds or characteristics, is a

common component of initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion. These programs could include diversity training, inclusive hiring practices, the creation of affinity or employee resource groups, mentorship programs, and inclusive workplace cultures (Leung & Ann Leung, 2020).

Diversity and inclusion are guiding principles that have the power to improve our organizations, communities, and societies. They are not just lofty ideals. They are crucial to our shared efforts to pursue justice, fairness, and innovation (de Souza & Gama, 2020). We can create environments where everyone is valued, respected, and given the freedom to contribute their best work by embracing diversity and fostering inclusion. This dedication to diversity and inclusion is not just a moral duty; it also provides a tactical advantage that drives us toward a more promising and equitable future for everyone.

Barak's (2022) research offered valuable insights into the changing outlook of multinational corporations. These companies are becoming increasingly aware of the enormous benefits of developing and retaining a diverse workforce and encouraging an inclusive workplace culture. In this sense, diversity refers to a range of visible and invisible elements that profoundly influence a person's distinct identity. Issues on race continued to be urgent and significant even as 2021 drew near. In the United States, some White Americans frequently believe that their country has moved past racial issues. They often point to historical turning points like the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s or the historic election of the first African-American president in 2008 (Barak, 2022). However, the realities of modern society highlight the enduring racial inequalities and tensions.

People of color have always been acutely aware of an undeniable truth, which has been exposed by the watershed events of 2020 (Barak, 2022). They show that, contrary to popular belief, society has not advanced as far along the development path. These recent events have demonstrated how centuries of systemic racism still have a lasting impact on our culture, affecting not just educational institutions but also the neighborhoods we live in and the places of employment where we make our living. It is worth noting that, as of the end of 2018, a study carried out by Russell Reynolds revealed a sobering fact: fewer than half of the companies included in the esteemed S&P 500 index had appointed a Chief Diversity Officer or a role similar to it (Barak, 2022). This suggests that such positions in corporate structures are still relatively rare.

Many organizations find themselves in a challenging and risky situation due to the unstable economic environment and the significant uncertainty surrounding the future (Barak, 2022). Many people find themselves in a precarious struggle for survival after economic turbulence. Financial limitations and a deficiency of managerial resources—critical for the wide-scale execution of diversity initiatives—could exacerbate this challenge (Barak, 2022). Still, the consensus permeating modern business halls is that the dedication to diversity and inclusion programs is a clear and constant business necessity.

Barak (2022) addressed the challenges businesses frequently face when implementing inclusive policies while also attesting to the importance of diversity in the workplace. It also offers doable suggestions for creating and maintaining inclusive, equitable, and diverse work environments. The topic discussed in this article is critical in today's business environment. In concluding remarks, it emphasizes the timeless and

unquestionable value of diversity and inclusion in the business world and advocates for more investigation, study, and strategy improvement in this area (Barak, 2022).

Review of Related Methodologies

Yadav and Lenka (2020) conducted a thorough investigation focusing on diversity management. Their research involved a comprehensive and organized literature review starting in 1991. Finding essential articles in the field and charting the historical development of diversity management were the main goals of this study. By doing this, the researchers hoped to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the field's state and identify possible directions for future investigation.

The thorough review's conclusion revealed an exciting finding: diversity management as a field of study showed a significant geographic concentration, with the US emerging as the main center of research activity (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). This focus highlighted the thorough investigation of diversity management in the US, demonstrating a strong academic tradition. The literature review revealed that empirical research methodologies are widely prioritized. This observation revealed a prevalent pattern among scholars who concentrate on the methodical gathering and examination of data to arrive at significant findings. Interestingly, most of these empirical studies were published between 1996 and 2000 (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). The study highlighted a relative lack of attention to other aspects of diversity, even though age, gender, and racial diversity were consistently dominant themes in diversity management literature (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). This observation pointed to unexplored territory and suggested that many diversity dimensions were still ready for in-depth research and exploration.

The study made a substantial contribution to the field by introducing an integrated model to capture the current patterns and trends in diversity research (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). This novel model was designed to incorporate the findings from diversity studies and the contextual elements that were given more attention in previous research. Diversity management was confirmed as an essential and thoroughly researched field in this study, emphasizing racial, gender, and age diversity. It was also noteworthy that the United States had become a leader in investigating and publishing diversity management research, with a strong presence in prestigious journals (Yadav & Lenka, 2020).

The study did not specifically address debates in the field. Still, the observation of unequal attention paid to various diversity dimensions suggested future discussions about the relative importance of different diversity dimensions in research inquiries. As a result of its conclusions and scope, this study cleared the path for additional diversity management research projects. It encouraged the implementation of comparative studies across various cultural and organizational contexts and extended an invitation to investigate the less-explored spheres of underrepresented diversity dimensions (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). This systematic review highlighted its geographical and thematic concentrations, which provided a thorough overview of the diversity management literature. In addition, the study presented a prospective model with a clear recommendation for increased focus on a broader range of diversity dimensions, which could act as a compass for future research projects (Yadav & Lenka, 2020).

In their investigation of workplace diversity policies, Scarborough et al. (2019) paid close attention to how employees view these policies and the degree of support they

receive. The researchers sought to fill a significant void in the literature by directly examining people's opinions about these policies and the underlying factors that influence them, given the critical role that managers and employees play in the success of such policies.

To close this disparity, the research team assessed public opinion on workplace diversity regulations. This study's main goal was to examine the nuances of employed respondents' support for these policies while considering factors like gender, race, and the target population, whether that be to improve the representation of racial minorities or women in the workforce (Scarborough et al., 2019). Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models were used to analyze the data gathered for this research project. The results of this extensive study are complex and provide fascinating new perspectives on the dynamics of diversity policies and public attitudes toward them (Scarborough et al., 2019).

A significant study finding concerns the differences in support for diversity policies according to racial and gender categories. The study clarifies that compared to their male and white counterparts, women, Blacks, and Latinas/os tend to support these policies more substantially (Scarborough et al., 2019). Interestingly, a large percentage of these differences in support between different racial and gender groups can be attributed to the varying opinions people have about how discrimination contributes to workplace inequality. This result emphasizes how strongly people's views about the underlying causes of inequality affect their willingness to support diversity policies (Scarborough et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the study emphasizes how workplace diversity policies' framing affects how much support they receive. Remarkably, when these policies were portrayed as tools to promote workplace diversity, respondents expressed less support than when framed as essential instruments to combat discrimination (Scarborough et al., 2019). This observed disparity in support also included situations in which the policies' explicit rationale was absent.

This study shed light on the complex web of public perceptions surrounding workplace diversity policies and the complex tapestry of workplace diversity policies. It highlights the crucial role that people's perceptions of discrimination play in motivating them to support these laws (Scarborough et al., 2019). Additionally, the study emphasizes how policy framing shapes support levels, providing insightful information that can guide future research efforts, especially in creating these beliefs and improving how diversity policies are communicated effectively in organizational settings (Scarborough et al., 2019).

Davydenko et al. (2017) conducted an extensive investigation exploring the complex field of employee incentives, concentrating on bank workers in Poland. According to the study, employee motivation is crucial to an organization's overall success because it significantly impacts workforce effectiveness. However, workplace motivation systems are not guaranteed effective, and many organizations struggle to set up effective motivational frameworks (Davydenko et al., 2017). Of particular note was the study's finding that there was observable variation in motivational incentives among various banking industry employee groups.

The principal aim of this study was to investigate the division of motivation incentives within the banking industry by utilizing multiple differentiators such as bank type, gender, and job role (Davydenko et al., 2017). The journal carefully explained the crucial role that employee motivation tools play, emphasizing how important they are to a business's smooth and compelling operation.

A thorough survey of bank workers was carried out to validate the statements and theories in this article. The results of this comprehensive study draw attention to the variety of ways that Poland's banking sector uses employee incentives (Davydenko et al., 2017). Multiple important insights were found as a result of the research. In comparison to their cooperative counterparts, the study highlighted, for example, that commercial banks typically use a more comprehensive range of employee incentives (Davydenko et al., 2017). Moreover, a noticeable distinction was observed between the degree of motivation diversity encountered by female bank employees and their male colleagues. Furthermore, it was found that when compared to their non-managerial counterparts, workers in managerial roles are shown a more comprehensive range of motivation incentives (Davydenko et al., 2017).

With an emphasis on Poland, this journal provides insightful analysis of the complex world of employee incentives in the banking industry. It fervently restates the pivotal importance of employee motivation tools, recognizing their inextricable link to the success of an organization (Davydenko et al., 2017). In addition, it highlights the subtle differences in incentives for motivation depending on job position, gender, and type of bank. This study adds significantly to our understanding of motivation incentives

in the banking industry. Still, it also shows how much more can be learned and investigated, highlighting this topic's importance in organizational and management studies (Davydenko et al., 2017). This field's ongoing significance is cemented by the complex interactions between motivation incentives across different organizational and demographic dimensions, which offer a wealth of research opportunities.

The combined effects of motivation, leadership, and organizational culture have a 57.4% influence on job satisfaction, according to a study of the coefficient of determination (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). In contrast, these same factors and job satisfaction also have a 73.5% influence on employee performance (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). This emphasizes how these factors are interrelated in determining job satisfaction and output.

According to Paais and Pattiruhu (2020), improving organizational culture, motivation, and leadership can all lead to higher job satisfaction. Moreover, higher job satisfaction will translate into higher employee performance. The study confirms what is already known about the crucial roles that leadership, organizational culture, and motivation play in HRM and how they affect worker performance and job satisfaction (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Nonetheless, the conclusions about how leadership directly and indirectly affects job satisfaction may be debatable and differ depending on the situation. One could argue over the complex connection between performance and leadership (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020).

Future research could examine the contextual factors that may moderate these relationships and investigate how leadership affects job satisfaction, even though this

study offers insightful information (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). The study may also stimulate more investigation into workplace interventions to improve leadership, motivation, organizational culture, and the ensuing impacts on job satisfaction and productivity. This study improves our understanding of how motivation, leadership, organizational culture, work satisfaction, and employee performance interact (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). It emphasizes how important these HRM components are and how much more study and work must be done to maximize them.

Justification

Organizational research has recently emphasized analyzing minority leadership and the efficacy of diversity initiatives within corporations. Researchers have used various approaches and research methods to understand better how organizations foster diversity and inclusivity, develop leaders from underrepresented groups, and navigate the strengths and weaknesses in their strategies. Research efforts are still being made to better understand the implications of minority leadership in the workplace because it is a complex and constantly changing study area.

It has been seen that having minority leaders in an organization positively impacts other minority workers. The belief that career advancement is possible for everyone, regardless of their varied backgrounds, can be fostered by this representation, which can also increase motivation and foster a sense of belonging. Minority leaders bring unique life experiences and perspectives to leadership positions. This promotes diversity of thought, leading to more creative problem-solving techniques and significant work innovation. Empirical studies have repeatedly shown that diverse leadership teams,

including those with representation from underrepresented groups, tend to make better decisions. These teams frequently consider a more comprehensive range of perspectives and are less prone to the traps of groupthink. Organizations with visible minority leaders may also benefit from a more positive perception among clients, customers, and the general public, which benefits the company's brand and reputation. Minority leaders can also help organizations achieve diversity and inclusion goals, demonstrating their dedication to creating just and equitable workplaces.

The advantages of minority leadership have been well documented, but proving a direct causal link between minority leadership and particular results can be difficult. Several variables, such as organizational culture, leadership philosophies, and contexts unique to a given industry, may significantly influence the observed results. Further research is necessary to determine whether minority leaders' influence produces long-lasting positive changes by examining how they affect career advancement, organizational culture, and overall workplace diversity. While most existing research focuses on the effects of specific diversity dimensions, like race or gender, in leadership roles, there is an increasing need to investigate the impact of intersectionality, or the interaction of various diversity dimensions, and how they affect leadership dynamics.

In addition to examining the benefits of minority leadership, research must also delve into the difficulties and hindrances that minority leaders might face in their positions, such as prejudice, discrimination, and tokenism. Additionally, while studies frequently focus on Western organizational contexts, a dearth of research examines how these dynamics play out in various cultural and international contexts. Further study is

necessary to clarify how diverse leadership can benefit particular sectors because it is known that the effects of minority leadership can differ across different industries.

Despite the overwhelming evidence supporting the positive effects of minority leadership in the workplace, there are still many complexities and knowledge gaps in this area of research. To gain a deeper understanding of the precise mechanisms by which minority leadership shapes organizations and to better understand the challenges that minority leaders may face, ongoing research is imperative. Organizations can use this information as a base to create more effective diversity and inclusion strategies, which will ultimately promote fair workplaces. Academics have used diverse research methodologies in this field to study minority leadership and corporate diversity initiatives. As a result, we now better understand how organizations promote diversity, develop minority leaders, and deal with the many opportunities and challenges of creating inclusive workplaces.

Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter covers the methods and tactics used in the literature search to gather relevant studies on minority leadership, diversity management, and related ideas. It highlights the meticulous process used to assemble a comprehensive body of literature. This chapter's central theme is social dominance, explored by examining how social hierarchies and power relationships impact minority leadership and organizational structures. The chapter discusses how prevailing social groups affect leadership dynamics and reviews research on these complex social structures.

The chapter discusses anti-egalitarianism concerning social dominance by examining research results that reveal instances of prejudice, discrimination, and opposition to equality in working environments. These manifestations may impact the effectiveness of diversity initiatives and minority leadership. The social construction theory is introduced in this chapter as a framework for understanding how societal norms, beliefs, and perceptions influence how we perceive diversity, leadership, and the workplace. It examines studies that use this theory to examine how diversity is conceptualized and what it means for leadership.

The chapter devotes a sizable portion to diversity management, which examines the various methods and techniques organizations use to manage diversity successfully. This includes discussing creating and implementing diversity programs and incentives to promote fair workplaces. The chapter emphasizes research on diversity programs, evaluating their efficacy in fostering inclusive workplaces, advancing minority leadership, and achieving diversity-related goals within organizations, all within the context of diversity management. The chapter expands on the investigation of diversity programs by examining research that assesses the effect of incentives, such as recognition programs, on advancing diversity and minority leadership.

The chapter contextualizes this discussion by discussing leadership as a critical research component. It investigates the connection between leadership, diversity, and inclusion, highlighting leadership's crucial role in advancing diversity initiatives. The idea of diversity, which encompasses various dimensions, including race, gender, age, sexual orientation, and more, is at the center of the chapter's focus. Research on the

benefits of diversity, such as increased creativity and innovation, is highlighted in this chapter. Finally, it emphasizes how diversity and inclusion are intertwined and how important it is to foster inclusive environments where diversity can flourish. Everyone, including minority leaders, feels recognized and empowered.

A thorough review of the literature on minority leadership and related ideas is provided in Chapter 2. The complexities of social dominance, anti-egalitarianism, and the social construction of diversity are covered in great detail. It also emphasizes leadership's crucial role in advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives, underscoring the importance of promoting diversity to create more innovative and equitable workplaces. The research methodology used in the study is typically described in Chapter 3 of a mixed methods dissertation, connecting the research questions presented in Chapter 1 with the subsequent data collection and analysis presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to explore the factors that affect the selection of minority leaders and how corporate executives utilize diversity initiatives to foster significant organizational change, even in the face of ongoing underrepresentation in upper management. The study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate various aspects, including social construction theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social dominance theory. Research instruments include interviews from the WDQ-II and the National Faculty Survey. To foster closer ties and more comprehensive data, the study centers on 40 professionals, 10 of whom are minority leaders and 30 of whom are minorities moving up the corporate ladder.

The study's main objective is to use an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach to investigate the factors that influence the selection of minority leaders and how diversity can be used to drive corporate change. The criteria governing promotions to upper management and leaders' tactics for maintaining diversity practices are the subjects of qualitative research questions. Quantitative research questions investigate relationships between incentives, selection criteria, the effectiveness of diversity programs, and the difficulties corporations encounter when implementing diversity incentive programs. The hypotheses investigate whether minority leader employment, diversity incentives, and program success are positively or negatively correlated.

The primary objective of this mixed-methods research is to gain insights into the factors influencing the selection of minority leaders and how organizations leverage

diversity for transformative purposes. These factors encompass social dominance theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social construction theory. Through the utilization of interviews drawn from the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018) and the adoption of the WDQ-II developed by Larkey (1996) as a research tool, this study employs a mixed methods approach to investigate how leadership aligns with diversity initiatives and the criteria they use in promoting employees to senior management positions.

For methodological and ethical reasons, choosing the right sample size is essential when planning a research study to use the best available human and financial resources (Faber & Fonseca, 2014). When evaluating a research article, the reader should ensure the study underwent a sample size calculation. Be cautious when interpreting the study's findings if this calculation is missing.

A thoughtful sample size improves the research process by guaranteeing the data's validity and optimizes resource allocation while upholding ethical standards (Faber & Fonseca, 2014). The method used to determine the sample size directly affects the study's findings. Small sample sizes can jeopardize the study's internal and external validity. Large samples, on the other hand, may draw attention to statistically significant differences even when they are clinically insignificant (Faber & Fonseca, 2014). This may mislead researchers and clinicians, resulting in poor treatment choices.

The study focused on a sample group consisting of 40 professionals, comprising 10 minority leaders and 30 individuals from minority backgrounds who are in the process of advancing within corporate hierarchies, which should be adequate for the scope of this study. The selection of this sample size in the mixed methods study is strategic, aiming to

establish a robust rapport with participants, which, in turn, fosters more organic conversations and yields higher-quality data (Vasileiou et al., 2018). In this section, I cover Research Method and Design, Data Collection Instrumentation and Procedures, Data Analysis Procedures, Trustworthiness, Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Assurances

Research Method and Design

A mixed-method approach has been chosen for the study's research. According to Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016), qualitative and quantitative methods provide more thorough answers to research questions when used separately. This study aims to examine participant perceptions in great detail, and using two different methodologies enables this examination. This study's research strategy combines qualitative and quantitative methods to explore the relationship between stigma, communication problems, and the availability of support within the organization.

Qualitative and quantitative methods are equally important since they represent various points of view and perspectives within a group. To enable result comparisons, data were gathered using both techniques (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Quantitative data are beneficial for drawing general conclusions from the study because they were used for structured, statistical evidence collection. The quantitative component identified, quantified, and evaluated the variables. Stuckey's (2016) theories about stigmatizing patterns of behavior predict. On the other hand, the qualitative approach can improve minority employees' understanding and knowledge of personal stigma related to mental health. It offered a framework for gathering data about how diversity interactions with employees affect, modify, or shape their work experiences.

Mixed methods research accommodates different worldviews and paradigms, fostering a blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches, in contrast to the conventional belief that certain paradigms align with qualitative or quantitative research. Mixed methodology is frequently guided by a pragmatic philosophy that prioritizes the research topic (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). As a result, a pragmatic researcher chooses methods that are most effective in answering the research question. A pragmatic approach was used in this study to incorporate various viewpoints and provide findings that could be applied to multiple contexts. Focusing on minority leadership, this strategy offered a thorough, nuanced, and critical response to workplace diversity.

The research aimed to frame management change through research and strategic design to address the research problem adequately. It was aligned with my pursuit of a Doctor of Management degree. This research may help organizations adapt to new communication and diversity management approaches. Managers play a crucial role in preparing organizations for the changes required for improvement. This study's quantitative and qualitative research are complementary approaches that produce thorough and insightful findings (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Qualitative data helps comprehend the complexity and broader implications of the research, whereas quantitative data provides numerical support for particular research points. These two techniques are combined in a mixed-method analysis to increase rigor and strengthen the research findings. A suitable mixed-method design should be carefully chosen to enable more profound and significant insights into effectiveness and implementation (Doyle et al., 2016).

The qualitative portion of the research design for this study focused on examining personal stigma connected to the initial research question. RQ1: What factors contribute to leadership's implementation of their diversity practices? The study then entered a quantitative phase, adopting a mixed-methods strategy. Researchers using this methodology build on the insights obtained from the qualitative phase by developing tools, specifying variables, or developing testable hypotheses based on an emerging theory or framework (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016).

To gather strategies managers can use to address the personal stigma associated with workplace diversity, semistructured interviews were conducted from the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018). The effectiveness of these tactics would then be evaluated quantitatively. A survey from the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996) was used to gather information about strategies for highlighting diversity and boosting organizational productivity and morale.

The second research question was RQ2: To what extent do corporations experience challenges when implementing diversity incentive programs? This research question was explored using a non-experimental research approach. Non-experimental research designs involve outlining group preferences, looking at connections between existing groups, or looking into relationships between variables without drawing any conclusions about causation. A control group, random group assignment, and manipulating an independent variable are absent from non-experimental designs (Stuckey, 2016). Surveys were chosen as the data collection method for this study

because they are frequently used for data collection in non-experimental designs (Ellis, 2020).

Descriptive statistics will be used to present the survey results. The non-parametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used as an alternative to the paired t test due to the anticipated small sample size and data that may not follow a normal distribution, but will be scaled. Due to the small sample size, scaling, and non-normal distribution of the data, non-probability sampling was used to gather the data. The main goal was to ascertain whether any strategy produces a more positive response than doing nothing. The following are the hypotheses that were put to the test in the latest version of SPSS:

H_1 : There are no challenges between the diversity incentive programs and the number of minority leaders they employ.

H_0 : There are challenges between diversity incentive programs and the number of minority leaders they employ.

Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II

The WDQ-II was developed by Larkey (1996) to evaluate interactions among diverse workgroups. The main objective of Larkey was to increase understanding of how people from various cultural backgrounds interact in workgroup settings. The questionnaire was painstakingly designed to establish behavioral dimensions for assessing interactions among culturally diverse people within an organizational context.

The questionnaire comprises five core themes covering workplace discrimination, cultural diversity, and intergroup interactions. Convergence and divergence, inclusion and exclusion, positive and negative evaluation, understanding and misunderstanding,

and varied/conforming ideation are some of these dimensions. The understanding-misunderstanding and positive/negative evaluation dimensions concentrate on interpersonal dynamics, while the remaining three dimensions are linked to socio-structural contexts.

According to Larkey (1996), these five dimensions are closely related to discrimination, workplace interactions, and cultural diversity. The 30 questions that comprise the WDQ-II are designed to measure diversity awareness by touching on various facets of diversity management ideologies. These thoughtfully crafted questions were created to assess diversity awareness within the framework of the foundational dimensions of the questionnaire, which are related to diversity management ideas. Four demographic questions are also included in the survey to gather data on study participants.

Larkey (1996) thoroughly examined the validity and reliability of the WDQ-II. Thirty-five members of various workgroups participated in in-depth interviews that served as the basis for the validity evaluation. Component Factor Analysis was used to evaluate the construct validity with a sample of 280 respondents drawn from a population of 1083, yielding a 26% response rate (Larkey, 1996). This sample included people from a hospital, a social services organization, and a business that produces consumer goods, among other industries. Participants assessed the instrument based on clarity, significance, sensitivity, and relevance criteria. Larkey changed the questionnaire to improve internal consistency and uniformity while considering participant feedback. The revised WDQ-II was created as a result of these changes. A 5-point Likert scale is used in

the modified WDQ-II, and the scoring scale is applied separately for each dimension. The WDQ-II's reliability was assessed using alpha coefficients ranging from 69 to 80. The alpha coefficients were specifically .75 for inclusion, .64 for understanding, .74 for treatment, and .84 for detail for the three dimensions related to diversity awareness, with treatment and detail including assessments of both positive and negative evaluations.

National Faculty Survey

Carr et al. (2018) stated that the National Faculty Survey was carried out in 1995 and that a questionnaire was mailed to a sample of academic medical faculty in the continental United States. They chose 24 medical schools randomly from those with at least 200 faculty members at the time, of whom 50 were women and 10 were members of underrepresented groups. For the study, they had a sufficient number of women and minority faculty members. The schools were balanced between public and private status and the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West regions of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). Six faculty members from each school were chosen at random from each of the 24 cells, representing the following characteristics: gender, three graduation cohorts (before 1970, 1970–1980, and after 1980), and four medical specializations (primary care, medical specialties, surgical specialties, and basic science). All the women faculty who graduated before 1970 and all underrepresented minority faculty should have an adequate number of senior women and underrepresented minority faculty (since many schools did not have enough women or minority faculty for all cells). One thousand eight hundred one faculty members responded to the survey, resulting in a 60% response rate. When asked if they would agree to be contacted for upcoming studies,

74% of the faculty members said “yes.” Those who decided to participate in follow-up surveys shared crucial characteristics with the original sample, such as gender, race, specialty, and quantity of publications stratified by gender in comparable proportions (Carr et al., 2018).

According to Carr et al. (2018), a follow-up survey was conducted during 2012–2013. They used the 1995 survey’s name, the previous college attended, and academic interests. They used a web-based search to find the study participants’ current location and contact details. There were 1,275 faculty members left after 60 of the 1,335 who agreed to be contacted had passed away. A sample of 1,273 faculty members remains after two respondents failed to indicate their gender. When valid email addresses for faculty members could be found, they were contacted via email. They tried calling or mailing the faculty when there was no email address to use. An online or mail-in version of a follow-up survey was given to subjects as an invitation to participate. Faculty members were once more prompted for their gender, birth year, and race or ethnicity to ensure that the initial and follow-up surveys matched.

There were no appreciable differences in response by gender between the initial 1995 cohort and the 2012–2013 subset who consented to be contacted. The faculty who responded to the survey received a small payment. They looked through publicly accessible websites to find information about the respondents’ careers, including the academic institution or other place of employment, their academic rank, and their current leadership positions. For instance, they used Google to search for their name and then checked the websites of all academic health centers, medical schools, and other schools

they had listed as affiliations on their publications. For reporting on federal funding over the previous 2 years, use the NIH Research Portfolio Online Reporting (RePORT) tools. The follow-up survey was carried out during the academic year 2012–2013. Through a reliance agreement with Tufts Medical Center, Boston University, and Massachusetts General Hospital, all granted their respective institutional review boards approval for the study.

Population and Sample

Residents of the state of Texas make up the study's intended audience. People who are at least 18 years old, members of a minority group, and have at least 1 year of work experience are eligible to participate. The target audience for this study is people who have seen difficulties in management caused by workplace diversity. The estimated population within the study's purview is less than 3 million, according to Texas minority workforce statistics (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022).

Ten minority leaders currently employed in management positions in the Dallas, Texas, region were sought out for semistructured interviews. These interviews were intended to generate ideas for ways for minorities to lessen the stigma they experience due to the "glass ceiling," or barriers to advancement in the workplace. These strategies were evaluated quantitatively (see Siemiatycki, 2019). Using a homogeneous purposive sampling strategy, the sample for this study was chosen from the larger population of minority workers in Texas, USA. This sampling is used when the research aims to comprehend and represent a particular population fully. When studying a phenomenon or trend among "typical" or "average" members of the impacted group, homogeneous

sampling is beneficial (Jager et al., 2017). Ten people are considered an adequate sample size due to the study's qualitative nature. Small sample sizes are frequently preferred in qualitative research to allow for the in-depth, case-oriented analysis necessary for this type of investigation (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was deemed appropriate because the data were scaled and gathered using non-probability sampling. Furthermore, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test is suitable for sample sizes under 60. A small sample size is acceptable for this exploratory mixed methods research study due to the scaled nature of the data and the use of non-probability (non-random) sampling techniques.

The decision to use a small sample size for this study stems from many key factors that align with the study's objectives and the specific, methodical approach. The main goal of the qualitative portion was to look at how minority leaders navigate the corporate climate. This necessitates extensive, comprehensive data, which can be acquired with smaller sample sizes. A carefully chosen small sample size lets researchers look at participants' points of view in-depth and find details that larger samples might miss. Also, getting many people to participate in the study is hard because the target group is particularly minority leaders in specific organizational settings.

Qualitative research has limitations on resources like time and data processing needs. Focusing on a smaller sample size allowed us to make sure that the collection and analysis of data. The research's mixed methods approach eliminates the need for large qualitative samples by combining qualitative results with more detailed quantitative data. It was important to keep collecting data until there was enough on the topic. This showed

that the sample size covered many different topics without repeating them. When looked at as a whole, these parts support the idea that a small sample size is enough to meet the study's goals morally and successfully. Future research may be required to improve the qualitative conclusions or increase the quantitative portion with a larger sample size, depending on the results (LaMorte, 2017).

Potential participants were contacted for recruitment purposes via social media and word-of-mouth channels. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn provide a variety of ways to interact and share information while maintaining anonymity and physical distance. Clinical trials and other types of research can benefit from using social media to find and engage potential participants (Gearhart, 2015). Social media is advantageous because it enables researchers to target individuals based on personal information that may indicate their suitability for particular studies and reach more significant population segments. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University approved the study before data collection began.

Data Collection Instrumentation and Procedures

Using an Explanatory Sequential design, I used the National Faculty Survey and the WDQ-II as the primary data collection methods in this mixed-method study. Additionally, I unintentionally assisted in gathering qualitative data as the researcher. Designing the questions for interviews and surveys was guided by the formulation of the research questions and objectives. I used Survey Planet to build the study because it is an online tool with many benefits, including making data collection more accessible, protecting collected data, and enhancing participant anonymity. The researcher (me), a

demographics questionnaire, interview questions, an interview protocol, and the survey framework were all used as data collection tools.

As advised by Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016), I established a thorough data collection protocol to ensure that the interview questions do not influence participants' responses. This protocol covered everything from the study's primary goals to ethical issues, confidentiality agreements, and any possible physical comfort issues. The interview questions were developed based on relevant literature to delve deeper into the main research question. I have created a demographic survey to collect details about participants, such as age, minority affiliation, current job title, full- or part-time employment status, length of employment with the current employer, and any relevant experience. The National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018) was then used as the basis for interview questions designed to elicit observations and experiences and encourage participants to share their insights. Probing questions drew out new details or clarified earlier answers as required. All participants were then allowed to respond to a final question asking them to discuss any topics not previously covered in the interview.

This precaution was taken to protect the safety of the subjects, researchers, and Walden University. A suitable participant who satisfies the study's requirements was selected to conduct a pilot study to improve the semistructured interview process and its associated elements. The effectiveness of the interview protocol and the questions taken from the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018) in answering the research question and resolving the problem were assessed during this pilot phase.

After the pilot study was finished, the primary research started. All participants were informed and given an informed consent form outlining the research topic and goals before any interviews are conducted. The confidentiality and anonymity provisions are outlined in this form and were verbally reaffirmed before the interview starts. The demographics sheet, the National Faculty Survey by Kaplan et al. (2018), and adherence to the interview protocol were used for data collection to ensure consistency across interviews. There was a post-interview debriefing with each participant.

To collect data for the quantitative portion of the study, a survey design adapted from the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996) gleaned insights into tactics for promoting diversity and enhancing productivity and morale within an organization. An email address was given to participants in the quantitative study so they can submit surveys. Participants must provide informed consent before taking the survey, and participation was voluntary. The survey included the WDQ-II and demographic questions (Larkey, 1996).

Data Analysis Procedures

The initial analysis concentrated on the qualitative information obtained through interviews because of the mixed methods approach used in this study. Combining the qualitative results from the study's first phase with the quantitative information gathered during the second phase used an interpretation-level integration strategy to improve the exploration of research inquiries. The methodology's quantitative and qualitative data analysis procedures are described in this section.

Qualitative Data Analysis

I followed steps to manage, comprehend, analyze, represent, and interpret the information gathered through semistructured interviews based on Kaplan et al.'s (2018) National Faculty Survey. The data analysis used Saldana's (2016) method of descriptive coding and first- and second-cycle coding. Labeling words or phrases found in the data is described as coding. First and second-cycle coding are terms for the iterative procedure of repeatedly reviewing the data and using different coding techniques. The meanings of these codes were then consolidated by grouping them into categories. These categories were then combined to create overarching themes, which can be expressed as words or phrases that explain the underlying mechanisms derived from these categories. Age, gender, employer type, and employment type are additional demographic factors considered in this analysis.

Quantitative Data Analysis

I used feedback gathered on a Likert scale from the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996), consisting of several diversity questions. It is significant to note that all participants had to respond to all questions, so there should be no missing data. This information was then methodically arranged and entered into the SPSS program. I tested internal consistency using the Cronbach's alpha test in SPSS. Cronbach's alpha is used to calculate reliability coefficients for survey instruments that use Likert-type response sets. More excellent reliability is indicated by higher values of Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which ranges from 0 to 1.0. While the appropriate Cronbach's alpha threshold is a topic of discussion

in the literature, for a more cautious approach, any alpha coefficient below .75 raises questions (Sheposh, 2019).

The survey responses were subjected to the computation of descriptive statistics, including statistics like mean and mode. Frequent distributions for each survey question was also graphically represented to give respondents a visual representation of the responses. Finally, I evaluated each hypothesis using inferential statistical analysis. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used in this analysis, and the p -values for each test were carefully scrutinized. Conventionally, a p -value of .05 or less is regarded as statistically significant, which results in the rejection of the null hypothesis. In contrast, a p -value higher than 0.05 suggests that the null hypothesis cannot be disproved. Knowing the results of these statistical tests was crucial to answering the second research question.

Trustworthiness, Validity, and Reliability

In mixed methods research, objectively assessing qualitative and quantitative components is customary. The terms “dependability” and “validity” are typically associated with quantitative research when well-established procedures are in place to evaluate these aspects. As opposed to quantitative research, qualitative research frequently uses terms like “credibility,” “triangulation,” “transferability,” “dependability,” and “confirmability.” Given the hybrid nature of this study, I examined the components of validity, reliability, and trustworthiness as follows:

According to Stuckey (2016), credibility essentially refers to the degree of reliability given to the veracity of the study’s findings. If the findings provide a faithful interpretation of the participants’ initial thoughts and accurately reflect reliable

information derived from the original data provided by participants, the study is considered credible (Stuckey, 2016). By putting various strategies for obtaining solid and reliable data into practice, this study hopes to increase its credibility. These tactics include checking on members, keeping an extensive audit trail, and actively engaging with participants (Conelly, 2016).

Participants' data were collected directly from them to ensure their active participation. A pilot study and member checks were planned as additional steps to boost credibility. Selected interviewees were contacted if necessary to confirm the veracity of the information in their transcripts. To create an audit trail, I provided illustrative examples of the coding approach, outline the progression from individual codes to themes, and explain the grouping of codes to create the core themes. Evidence of iterative data examination, with this process being revisited and scrutinized multiple times for clarity and diverse interpretations, was presented to strengthen the credibility of the findings. The information of participants was directly obtained to ensure their active participation.

There were also plans for a pilot study and member checks as additional steps to increase credibility. If it were deemed necessary, certain interviewees would be contacted to ask them to confirm the accuracy of the data in their transcripts. I gave illustrative examples of the coding approach, outlined the progression from individual codes to themes, and provided justifications for grouping codes to create the core themes to create an audit trail. To increase the credibility of results, iterative data examination evidence will be presented. This process was revisited and examined for precision and various

interpretations. Multiple rounds of coding were also used to improve the data quality. Importantly, it should be noted that the effectiveness of reporting, which enables external evaluation of the methods used to enhance the credibility of the results, is also a determinant of the credibility of member checking.

Transferability refers to how easily readers can use the study's findings in various contexts. I meticulously recorded all study aspects to increase transferability and allow others to replicate and correctly apply the findings (see Adler, 2022). Comprehensive data analysis produced extensive and insightful categories and themes based on expected responses from upcoming interviews. To ensure clarity and make it easier to identify differences, semistructured interview questions were uniform across the board (Hollweck, 2015).

Contrarily, dependability examines how consistent a study's findings are when repeated under the same circumstances. Pilot studies, participant assurance, and an audit trail will be used to address dependability. Notably, a pilot study was carried out during the interview stage with a person who satisfied the requirements of the target population. The overall process and interview question clarity were evaluated as part of the pilot study. It is important to note that the data from the pilot study were not applied to answering the research question. A few days before the interviews, each participant had a pre-interview discussion during which clear instructions were given, and their comfort and concerns were addressed to reduce internal validity concerns. Informing participants about the interview process can help them feel more at ease and prepared, which is another tactic to improve dependability. To ensure validity, every aspect of the study

must be painstakingly documented to allow for its replication by other researchers (Adler, 2022). The data collection and analysis process were thoroughly documented in this study, and an audit trail was used to address the dependability issue. Pseudonyms enabled the audit trail to connect participants, topics, and quotes.

To protect the data analysis's integrity from biases that might compromise it, confirmability refers to the objectivity with which researchers evaluate the study's findings (Adler, 2022). This study established confirmability by meticulously reviewing and rechecking the data throughout the data collection and analysis process to enable external verification and replication of the results. A pilot study was carried out to increase the study's credibility.

Validity in quantitative research refers to how well a study addresses its research goals and hypotheses. According to Taylor (2013), the reasonableness of inferences from assessment findings based on empirical data affecting score interpretation is a critical component of validity. High validity is essential for a study to be taken seriously and to guarantee data integrity. Elements like its setting may compromise the study's internal validity, how the data were collected, and data collection tools (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Based on the findings of the qualitative interviews, the survey instrument from the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996) serves as both the construct and content validity of the study's instrument. The survey included demographic data and the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996) to test theories using tried-and-true methodologies. This survey instrument is crucial to follow the data collection and analysis methodologies described in this chapter. Criterion

validity will be addressed using scaled response measures (SÜRÜCÜ & MASLAKI, 2020).

On the other hand, reliability is determined by how free of measurement errors a test is. The test becomes less reliable and has more measurement errors (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). When several researchers can use a test in a controlled setting and consistently produce results with slight variation, it is said to be reliable. Reliability can be determined by a person's consistency and repeatability over time. The reliability of the study heavily depends on the researcher's experience and capacity to consider situations or ideas from various angles. Relying on the researcher significantly has both benefits and drawbacks. A professional researcher has extensive training and credentials, but a drawback is that the researcher's biases and quirks may impact the study's quality. The reliability and internal consistency of a group of scale or test items are evaluated statistically using Cronbach's alpha (Sheposh, 2019). In essence, the consistency of a measurement's assessment of a concept determines its reliability, and Cronbach's alpha provides a method to assess the strength of that consistency. The distribution of responses was examined using the Cronbach alpha test to confirm that participant responses were given voluntarily.

Ethical Assurances

The American Psychological Association's ethical research principles must be followed to conduct high-quality research (Joireman & Van Lange, 2015). Respect for others, compassion, and justice are the three guiding principles that the Office for Human Research Protection has established to ensure participants' safety and the ethical conduct

of research (Joireman & Van Lange, 2015). The researcher must conduct the study with a keen awareness of participants' well-being because this research entails direct interactions with human participants (Hollweck, 2015). A crucial component of this research is maintaining confidentiality; precautions were taken to reduce this risk. Each participant was given a pseudonym based on a unique number to ensure anonymity, and identities were protected by using codes to represent names and locations (Gehlert & Mozersky, 2018).

The study had a clearly defined plan, and I informed potential participants about its confidentiality and goals. I recorded participants' experiences while protecting their privacy and removing any potentially self-identifying information from the data to prevent confidentiality violations.

Participants in this study might experience anxiety when answering interview questions, which is another potential issue. According to Joireman and Lange (2015), the American Psychological Association recognizes some groups as potentially vulnerable to particular stressors, such as individuals with psychiatric diagnoses like depression, anxiety, or schizophrenia, and minority leaders (which this study intends to include as participants).

According to Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016), vulnerability is seen in this context as a state influenced by people's mental abilities and the power relationships between the researcher and the participants. The study did not specifically target people with active psychiatric diagnoses, frequently referred to as mental health conditions in the vulnerability literature (Bracken-Roche et al., 2016). This is important to understand. By

structuring the types and manner of questions asked carefully, efforts were made to ease any potential discomfort among participants. Participants had the option to skip a question or end the interview if they indicated that they were uncomfortable.

All ethical standards and guidelines established by the American Psychological Association were strictly followed throughout the research process. Before collecting data, informed consent was obtained to address the study's context. Additionally, the IRB received an application. According to the Center for Research Quality (n.d.), the IRB supervises studies involving human subjects and ensures that fundamental ethical standards for such studies are upheld. Data collection did not start until the IRB granted formal approval (IRB approval # 12-18-24-0615739), and ethical standards were always strictly upheld. Based on the participants' responses, the data will only be used for research, and their identities will remain private and anonymous.

The study's results may not immediately benefit the participants, but they will add to the body of knowledge. The study's findings may ultimately benefit the larger workforce and organizations by improving our understanding of workforce diversity and recommending tactics for leaders to promote diversity in the workplace.

Justification

To investigate the factors that influence minority leadership selection and how executives use diversity to drive change within their organizations, a mixed-methods study that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches would be incredibly effective. Using mixed methods combines the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative data to help researchers fully comprehend the research question (Edmonds et

al., 2019). When choosing minority leaders and utilizing diversity, executives' complex experiences, perspectives, and tactics can be captured through qualitative methods like focus groups, interviews, or observation. Quantitative techniques (like surveys or statistical analysis) can yield numerical data about correlations, trends, and patterns in diversity initiatives and minority leadership selection (Edmonds et al., 2019).

Mixed methods studies facilitate triangulation by comparing and validating findings from various sources against one another using multiple data sources and methodologies (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Because the advantages of another can offset the shortcomings or biases of one approach, this increases the validity and dependability of the research findings. Rich contextual information that aids in the interpretation of quantitative results is best provided by qualitative approaches (Hollweck, 2015). It is imperative to comprehend the distinct organizational settings, cultural dynamics, and industry-specific elements that impact the selection of minority leaders and diversity initiatives. Qualitative data can provide information about the particular difficulties, chances, and tactics executives face in various organizational contexts (Hollweck, 2015).

Researchers can investigate the research question in depth and breadth using mixed methods. By exploring the subtleties and complexities of diversity strategies and minority leadership selection processes, qualitative data adds depth. By examining patterns and trends over the sample size, quantitative data provide breadth and enable the generalizability of findings beyond individual cases (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016).

According to Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016), by combining qualitative investigation with quantitative validation, mixed methods help develop and test theories. Theoretical frameworks and hypotheses about the variables influencing the selection of minority leaders and diversity outcomes can be created from qualitative data. Then, quantitative data can be used to test these theories more broadly, offering empirical support and advancing the field's theory.

Mixed methods research can provide practitioners and organizational leaders helpful advice and insights. Organizations can make educated decisions and implement evidence-based practices to support diversity and inclusion, encourage minority leadership, and promote minority leadership by fusing qualitative insights into successful diversity strategies with quantitative data on their impact.

The best way to investigate the factors influencing minority leadership selection and the application of diversity to promote organizational change is through a mixed methods approach, which offers a thorough, validated, contextually rich, and practically helpful understanding of the research question. To effectively address the challenges faced by minority leaders and to obtain a deeper understanding of the complex mechanisms through which minority leadership shapes organizations, ongoing research efforts are essential. By utilizing these insights, organizations can create more equitable work environments by making diversity and inclusion strategies more successful. The application of various research methodologies in this domain has enabled a more comprehensive comprehension of how organizations foster diversity, cultivate leaders

from underrepresented groups, and traverse the complex terrain of establishing inclusive work environments.

Chapter 3 Summary

This chapter's research examines the variables that affect minority leaders' appointments within companies and how executives use diversity to create constructive changes within their teams. As businesses operate in today's dynamic and globally interconnected business environment, we recognize that fostering diversity and inclusion is both a moral obligation and a strategic advantage.

This chapter began with a thorough analysis of the complex interactions among the variables that influence the choice of minority leaders. We look into how implicit biases, leadership development initiatives, recruitment practices, and organizational culture all work together to influence the representation of minorities in leadership positions. By thoroughly examining the extant literature, we aim to identify the principal factors and challenges that impact the selection of minority leaders, illuminating the intricacies of this procedure.

We employed an Explanatory Sequential mixed-method study with a sample size of 20 people to facilitate this investigation. We used Larkey's WDQ-II (1996) and the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018), collecting data with SPSS and performing descriptive diagnostics on the resulting dataset. This study explores executives' effective use of diversity as an organizational change catalyst. We look at the tactics used by successful business leaders to promote an inclusive culture that sparks innovation and improves overall performance. My research closely examines the strategies, guidelines,

and best practices executives use to take advantage of diversity for strategic advantages while resolving potential obstacles.

Moreover, the objective is to present an elaborate account of the consequences and results of these diversity-oriented endeavors, emphasizing the constructive shifts and progress observed in institutions. Examining real-world case studies and success stories provides insights into how successfully leveraging diversity can result in higher productivity, enhanced creativity, and improved organizational performance. An essential part of this research is this chapter, which focuses on the complex dynamics of choosing minority leaders and using diversity strategically to create lasting change in organizations. By carefully examining existing research, incorporating insightful commentary, and offering real-world examples, I aimed to further my understanding of these crucial points. This will demonstrate how businesses adapt to and prosper in an increasingly competitive and diverse business environment. In the subsequent Chapter 4, I will present the data collection results.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to explore the factors that affect the selection of minority leaders and how corporate executives utilize diversity initiatives to foster significant organizational change, even in the face of ongoing underrepresentation in upper management. This study used an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach by examining essential ideas such as social construction theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social dominance theory. A thorough analysis of diversity programs and leadership selection criteria in corporate settings was made possible by data collection methods such as interviews based on the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018) and the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996).

This study focused on 43 professionals, including 33 people from minority backgrounds advancing to senior leadership positions and 10 minority leaders. The sample size was purposefully chosen because it encourages deep conversations, high participant engagement, and the richness of the data gathered (Vasileiou et al., 2018). While the study's quantitative component was used to examine relationships between selection criteria, diversity incentives, and program effectiveness, the qualitative component was used to investigate how leadership promotion criteria relate to diversity objectives. With hypotheses evaluating the possible connections between minority leadership representation, diversity programs, and their overall success, the study also assessed corporate hurdles in implementing diversity-driven initiatives.

A key methodological and ethical factor in research is choosing the right sample size, which maximizes resource allocation while guaranteeing the validity of findings (Faber & Fonseca, 2014). A carefully considered sample size upholds ethical research norms and improves data reliability. Inadequate sample sizes may weaken the study's internal and external validity. At the same time, overly large samples may reveal statistically significant differences that are not practically relevant, resulting in misunderstandings and less-than-ideal policy choices (Faber & Fonseca, 2014).

The study's findings are contextualized in Chapter 4, which presents a thorough summary of the research environment and participant demographics. Explaining the data collection and processing processes comes next to maintain transparency. Following that, the findings are arranged by the emerging main themes and a trustworthiness evaluation that considers factors like credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Pilot Study

The results of the pilot study, a preliminary part of the research on the influence of minority leadership on diversity in implementing change in corporations, are presented in this chapter. The pilot study aimed to assess the interview questions' efficacy and clarity, identify potential data collection difficulties, and improve the semistructured interview procedure. This phase's insights guided the necessary modifications to improve the study's validity and reliability.

The pilot study's primary goals were to see how well the semistructured interview questions worked, whether the data collection procedure was appropriate, whether the research technique needed to be adjusted, and how well the participants engaged and built

rapport. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to choose one participant for the pilot study. This individual was a business professional who either directly impacted minority leadership decisions on diversity programs or was a minority leader, as required by the study.

The semistructured interview lasted 10 to 20 minutes via phone conversations to guarantee accessibility and flexibility. To investigate how minority leadership contributes to diversity and organizational transformation, the interview protocol comprised questions modified from the National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018). The interview's main topics were perceived effects on corporate change, obstacles to diversity initiatives, and leadership tactics. The participant's response suggested that several questions needed to be reworded to eliminate ambiguity, even if most were considered pertinent and precise. Questions about leadership barriers required more explanation to differentiate between internal (personal) and external (organizational) barriers.

The interview method was well received by the participant, who felt at ease enough to talk about their experiences. Building rapport was crucial to getting in-depth answers early in the conversation. Concerns about confidentiality, however, caused some hesitancy to address organizational issues, underscoring the need for more robust guarantees about participant anonymity.

The pilot study also showed minor logistical issues, such as schedule conflicts, and highlighted the need to restructure specific questions to elicit more detailed responses. Overall, the pilot study identified significant areas for development and offered insightful information about the viability of the semistructured interview strategy.

The results of this stage will guide the required modifications, enhancing the overall study design and guaranteeing that data collection successfully complies with the goals of the investigation.

Setting

The personal and organizational settings in which this study was conducted were relatively constant; outside factors had no appreciable effect on participant reactions and experiences. No significant structural change would have caused participants to feel unnecessary stress or confusing elements, including changes in institutional policies, executive leadership, or financial constraints. Consequently, free from outside influence, the information acquired could be regarded as a mirror of the participants' work perspectives.

Meanwhile, some participants had advanced in their professions and assumed roles in higher management. These people greeted this change with great enthusiasm since they welcomed the opportunity to take more organizational responsibility and engage in strategic decisions. Their recent promotions may have helped them to respond more subtly to issues on leadership dynamics, organizational growth, and career advancement, thus enhancing their sense of drive, professional fulfillment, and engagement.

Although these career paths did not specifically skew the research, upwardly mobile people might have had a better view of their workplace. Their recent change has resulted in this optimism that could manifest as a more fantastic sense of professional agency, better work satisfaction, and more faith in organizational practices. These factors

should be considered while analyzing the data, particularly with participants without similar job mobility.

In conclusion, the study was conducted in a reasonably stable environment, which lessened the impact of external or personal disruptions on the results. Although some participants' positive sentiments regarding career advancements are contextual factors that should be considered, the findings' validity and reliability are unaffected. Recognizing these factors contributes to a more comprehensive and nuanced evaluation of participant experiences while preserving the integrity of the study's findings.

Demographics

Qualitative Demographics

Ten participants participated in the qualitative portion of this study. The sample comprised four female and six male individuals. Despite a gender ratio that somewhat favors male representation, incorporating female perspectives enhances the thoroughness of the study areas examined. This distribution facilitates the comparison of potential gender-based disparities in career trajectories, leadership experiences, and occupational challenges. Though the sample size is small, the gender composition of the study provides insightful analysis of the intersection of gender and professional involvement.

Participants ranged in age from 26 to 45, most of whom (80%) fell between 26 and 35 years old. The remaining 20% of participants were between 36 and 45 years old. The prevalence of younger professionals suggests that the results mostly reflect early to mid-career points of view. This age range offers a lens through which we can view events linked to careers within the research population, since the career stage shapes

professional aspirations, workplace dynamics, and leadership development. The underrepresentation of senior professionals indicates a potential subject for further research to capture a more comprehensive range of career trajectories and phases.

Ninety percent of the study's participants were African American/Black, comprising the bulk of the sample. Ten percent of the participants were categorized as Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders. Having these diverse groups helps improve the existing knowledge of diversity-related experiences in professional environments. The study's results should be interpreted considering the cultural and racial contexts that shape the participants' experiences.

The demographic composition of the research subjects (see Table 1) provides a foundational framework for analyzing qualitative findings. The gender distribution, age composition, and ethnic representation within the research influence the thematic interpretation of professional experiences and workplace dynamics. While the findings primarily reflect the perspectives of early to mid-career African American/Black professionals, they offer valuable insights on workplace diversity, inclusion, and career advancement. An expanded participant pool would facilitate future research examining the influence of demographic factors on professional experiences across a broader range of persons and organizational contexts.

Table 1*Qualitative Demographics*

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	6	60
Female	4	40
Age		
26–35	8	80
36–45	2	20
Ethnicity		
African American/Black	9	90
Asian American/Pacific Islander	1	10

Quantitative Demographics

There were 33 people in this study, each with different points of view molded by their demographic background. Understanding the distribution of gender, age, and ethnicity inside the sample helps one to evaluate how these factors affect participants' viewpoints and experiences and interpret the research results. Table 2 shows the demographics of the quantitative study.

With 17 men (51.5%) and 16 women (48.5%), the participants overall match the gender parity. This almost parity guarantees that the research reflects many points of view and lowers gender-based data bias. Having both men and women allows the study's topic framework to explore gender-related issues more deeply, including differences in leadership points of view, professional experiences, and workplace relationships. Most (78.8%) of the participants were aged between 26 and 35; their ages ranged from 18 to 55+ years. One participant (3%) fell between 18 and 25; five more (15.2%) fell between 36 and 45. Finally, 3% were 55 years of age or above.

Most people in the early-to-mid career stages say that the results capture this demographic group's experiences and points of view. Given career development, organizational involvement, and professional challenges—all of which could vary between age groups—this distribution is essential. Given the low representation of younger and older age groups, it would be appropriate to broadly generalize the results outside this sample with humility.

The ethnic makeup of the research sample consisted of African American/Black; one participant (3%) identified as Asian American/Pacific Islander. Thirty-two people—97%—identified as African Americans or Black. Given the mostly African American/Black participation, there is a unique chance to examine issues within this racial and cultural identity framework. This helps one to focus on situations in which racial elements in institutional and professional environments could be influenced. Though few, including an Asian American/Pacific Islander participant, offer a complementary perspective that, although not statistically generalizable, broadens the cultural scope of the research and acknowledges the variances of professional experiences across racial and ethnic lines.

The structure of the study sample helps one evaluate the qualitative results. The interpretive prism through which the research questions are seen shapes the near-equal gender distribution, the concentration of participants in the early-to-mid career phases, and the overwhelming presence of African American/Black people. Though the results mainly reflect the experiences of a given demographic group, they provide a perceptive

analysis that might direct more general debates on professional identity, organizational culture, and career choices inside the research framework.

Table 2

Quantitative Demographics

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	17	51.5
Female	16	48.5
Age		
18-25	1	3
26-35	26	78.8
36-45	5	15.2
55+	1	3
Ethnicity		
African American/Black	32	97
Asian American/Pacific Islander	1	3

Data Collection

Forty-three people contributed data to this explanatory sequential mixed-methods study. Part of the quantitative phase, 33 people answered the WDQ-II (Larkey, 1996) and a demographic survey. Ten people participated in semistructured interviews for the qualitative phase; next came a demographic survey. This structure helped one to understand the study topic in layers: first, in-depth interviews looked at the experiences and points of view; then, the survey identified general trends.

Qualitative data came from virtual semistructured interviews using secure online video conference tools such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Given the geographical distribution of possible volunteers, this choice was taken to increase accessibility and maintain participant comfort. Depending on the complexity of the responses and follow-

up probing questions, every interview lasted between 10 and 20 minutes. Each participant had one interview; individual schedules were created to accommodate participant availability. The two main instruments used in qualitative data collection were recording and transcription, using the audio transcription software Notta (<https://www.notta.ai>). All interviews were audio-recorded using the tool. Open coding and manual transcription verification were done using Microsoft Word during the first phase of the qualitative study. Transcripts created automatically following every interview were then automatically checked for accuracy against the audio recordings. Interviews also yielded notes to record participant emphasis and possible follow-up questions—digital recording, combined with hand note-taking, enhanced data validity and qualitative data richness.

Although the approved plan detailed in Chapter 3 was closely followed during the data-collecting process, pragmatic considerations called for small changes. Interviews were first set to be conducted electronically or in person, depending on the participant's request. However, participant schedules and travel restrictions throughout the data-collecting period finally caused all interviews to be conducted remotely. This switch to online interviews guaranteed participant comfort, maintained the data collection flow, and had no negative impact on data quality. Another minor change was using Notta for recording and transcription. Originally, the plan called for hand transcription following conventional audio recording, but Notta's abilities greatly improved transcription accuracy and efficiency, saving me time without compromising the quality of the qualitative data.

Quantitative data were gathered using an online survey housed on the secure and user-friendly Survey Planet web platform. Each qualified participant got the survey link via social media posts. Six weeks of availability for the survey allowed participants enough time to finish it. Anywhere it would be convenient for them, participants could access the survey. The WDQ-II took each participant between 15 and 25 minutes to complete, and the instrument comprised demographic questions. Automatically recorded, stored in Survey Planet, and subsequently exported into SPSS for statistical analysis, the quantitative data was the survey instrument, which included encrypted storage to ensure data security during collecting and transmission, safeguarding participant privacy.

Participant availability was one interesting occurrence that happened throughout data collection. A larger search for the qualitative phase resulted from several participants first showing interest but then withdrawing due to schedule concerns, professional responsibilities, or personal circumstances. Ten compelling interviews were conducted in line with the minimum level of qualitative saturation. Throughout the data-gathering process, all ethical policies, informed consent, confidentiality, and data protection were strictly followed. Combining quantitative and qualitative data produced a sizable dataset that allowed for a thorough investigation fit for the explanatory sequential mixed-methods framework of the study.

Data Analysis

Saldana (2016) used first- and second-level coding to analyze this qualitative data. In vivo coding, often verbatim coding, is the first-level coding approach employed (Saldana, 2016). Words or brief sentences from the participants' answers are used this

way. This enabled me to extract the precise words and phrases that were most noteworthy. I began the second-level code after finishing the first-level coding. Pattern coding, which was also done by Saldana, was the second-level coding I employed. Pattern coding is utilized to find inferential codes in the data and create a theme. Workforce Demographics, Perceived Equity, Positive DEI Efforts, Leadership Support, Barriers to Diversity, Pipeline Challenges, Institutional Data Gaps, Perceived Progress, and Tokenism were among the themes that emerged in this particular instance of the data. I compiled a list of the qualitative themes provided in Table 3, which visually depicts the data collected through this qualitative process. There were no cases in the data that were significantly discrepant.

The quantitative data analysis for this work used the 33 survey responses of participants. Although 30 respondents were the initial focus of the research, there was a higher response rate, which indicated that the final sample size exceeded expectations. Survey Planet was used as a basis for the participants to complete the surveys. Once the surveys were completed, I exported the data to SPSS for data analysis. No data were missing from the dataset, and all responses were wholly and precisely obtained. This guaranteed the integrity of the analysis. Among the demographic variables of the sample that descriptive statistics aggregated were gender, age, and ethnicity. The dispersion (standard deviation, range) and central tendency (mean, median) were calculated when needed to indicate the distribution of the responses. Friedman's analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was used instead of the Wilcoxon signed test. These findings provide a strong basis for examining the relationship between leaders' use of diversity practices and

the significant variables revealed in the studies. These findings will offer a complete mixed-methods review when combined with qualitative data.

Table 3*Qualitative Coding Data Set*

Code	Definition	Category	Frequency	Theme	Example
Work force demographics	References to the workforce's or leadership's racial, ethnic, or gender composition	Representation	10	Leadership recognizes demographic disparities but works to increase variety	"Our faculty remains predominantly homogenous, and recruiting diverse candidates has been challenging."
Perceived equity	Views on equity in pay, promotion, retention, or general workplace treatment	Workplace climate	8	Workers believe there are disparities in recognition, hiring, and promotion	"Many employees feel that promotions are not distributed fairly across different demographic groups."
Positive DEI efforts	Actions the organization does to support inclusion, equity, and diversity	Organizational efforts	15	Although good DEI programs have been carried out, still there are gaps	"Our institution has implemented mentoring programs that have been quite successful in supporting underrepresented faculty."
Leadership support	The degree of active participation of leadership in diversity projects.	Leadership influence	12	DEI initiatives cannot be successful without active leadership.	"When leadership is actively involved in DEI efforts, we see real progress."
Barriers to diversity	Lists challenges to diversity including institutional barriers, latent prejudice, or limited outreach	Challenges	9	Lack of money and opposition to change slow down advancement	"A major issue is the slow adaptation of policies to reflect the changing demographics of our workforce."
Pipeline challenges	Difficulties locating, interviewing, and keeping varied applicants	Recruitment	7	Institutional diversity is limited by a weak pipeline of diverse talent	"We struggle to attract diverse applicants due to geographic location and institutional reputation."
Institutional data gaps	Notes of lacking or inadequate institutional information about diversity data constraints	Data limitations	6	Inconsistent data tracking stops focused diversity initiatives	"Without clear institutional policies, our DEI initiatives lack accountability."
Perceived progress	Perceptions about changes or improvements over time regarding DEI	Change over time	6	Some progress is acknowledged, but skepticism remains.	"Some policies have changed, but we haven't seen substantial improvements in faculty representation."
Tokenism	References to symbolic or superficial diversity efforts, quotas, or compliance	Institutional culture	4	There is concern that diversity efforts are performative rather than meaningful.	"Sometimes, it feels like these efforts are just for show rather than real change."

Note. DEI = diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Results

The subsequent section will address the study's outcomes. This mixed-methods research study will individually present the outcomes of the research questions, followed by an analysis of how the data converges to corroborate one another.

Qualitative Data

The study question in the qualitative section was "What factors contribute to leadership's implementation of their diversity practices?" Examined in the qualitative results of the interviews were the factors influencing the leaders' acceptance of diversity practices in corporations. Data classification using codes allowed thematic analysis to identify recurring themes in participant responses. These findings, which support each other with direct participant comments, help to provide a complete picture of the possibilities and difficulties connected to DEI programs inside organizational leadership.

Workforce Demographics

Workforce demographics is the composition of an organization's staff regarding gender, color, and other diversity-related factors. Leaders understand the need for a diverse workforce but often struggle to ensure varied representation, especially in leadership roles. Participants said that despite some progress, there are still significant differences in leadership representation compared to the workforce. One participant noted, "We have made progress, but our leadership team still does not fully reflect the diversity of our workforce." This comment emphasizes the contrast between the diversity at lower organizational levels and the lack of representation in leadership positions.

Companies struggle to translate increasing awareness of the need for diverse leadership into outcomes suitable for higher levels of management.

Perceived Equity

Perceived equality refers to employee impressions of fairness in organizational processes, including recruiting, promotions, and chances for advancement. Many of the participants expressed concerns about unfairness in leadership decision-making procedures, particularly concerning promotions.

Many believed that partiality and personal ties were just as crucial as ability in terms of opportunities for development. Many participants recognized that cultural and institutional barriers hinder the effective implementation of DEI initiatives. Numerous challenges highlighted the influence of bias and interpersonal dynamics on career progression, suggesting that these factors might outweigh skill or performance. One participant shared, “It is not always about what you know, but who you know. I have seen less qualified people move up because they were close with someone higher up.” Another elaborated, “I have been here for years and consistently perform well, but I keep seeing people with personal ties to leadership being offered roles I was never even considered for.” These feelings reflect a common belief that possibilities for progress are not determined only by talent.

Several participants considered how these factors undermined confidence in DEI initiatives and deterred participation. As someone said, “Why bother applying when you already know they have someone in mind?” Similarly, another participant noted, “You feel invisible if you are not in the inner circle. It seems the outcomes are predetermined

even before the job is advertised.” These observations suggest that prejudice and informal networks undermine employee morale, confidence in organizational equity, and the integrity of promotion processes.

These narratives illuminate deeper organizational challenges, where career progression and leadership growth decisions are frequently swayed by capricious elements such as favoritism and informal connections. Despite formal diversity regulations, informal practices that benefit those already within the circle may undermine their effectiveness. One participant said, “The rules are irrelevant if they are not adhered to in the first place.”

Creating a more equitable corporate culture necessitates recognizing and addressing these mindsets. To ensure that merit-based evaluation is prioritized over favoritism, these findings suggest that organizations implement formal mentoring and sponsorship initiatives accessible to all employees, establish clearer promotion standards, and create accountability mechanisms. By aligning informal practices with official DEI goals, it is feasible to ensure that all workers, regardless of their connections, have equitable access to leadership and development opportunities

Positive DEI Efforts and Leadership Support

Effective leadership supports DEI projects to be successful. Employee responsibility and engagement usually grow when leadership is actively involved and openly supports DEI initiatives. The participants said that bias training and other DEI projects driven by leaders greatly aided effective organizational transformation. One participant noted, “Our CEO has taken the initiative to implement bias training, which

has made a difference.” This highlights how important the commitment of leaders is to reaching DEI goals. When leaders take charge of their staff and give them top attention on the organizational agenda, employees are more likely to believe that the efforts are sincere and noteworthy.

Barriers to Diversity

Many individuals said that even though leaders say they care about diversity, structural and cultural barriers still make it hard to use DEI strategies successfully. For example, many participants said the lack of clear accountability systems was a major structural problem. One explained, “There is a lack of accountability when diversity goals are unmet; it simply gets ignored.” This indicates that DEI initiatives might struggle to maintain their momentum without quantifiable benchmarks and repercussions. A further structural barrier noted was the lack of formal mentorship programs for underrepresented employees, which restricts their opportunities for leadership advancement. One participant said, “I did not know what to do next because there was no one to help me figure it out.”

Cultural barriers were also significant in the stories that participants shared. Many reports showed how implicit biases and organizational norms create workplaces where diverse employees are left out or not valued as much as they should be. One participant expressed, “It seems like an exclusive group, choices are made in secrecy, and if you do not conform to their standards, you are excluded.” Another emphasized microaggressions as a daily occurrence, stating, “People make jokes about my accent or question my qualifications, even though I have been here longer than some managers.” These remarks

suggest that cultural resistance, stereotypes, and established informal networks frequently hinder the effectiveness of formal diversity policies.

These examples demonstrate that structural and cultural barriers are theoretical ideas and real challenges that appear without transparent processes, insufficient support systems, and exclusive workplace practices. Organizations must move past superficial commitments and adopt targeted strategies to tackle these challenges. This includes establishing measurable accountability frameworks, implementing formal mentorship and sponsorship programs, and cultivating inclusive organizational cultures that actively address bias and advance equity in both policy and practice.

Pipeline Challenges

Pipeline challenges are companies' difficulty attracting and retaining diverse individuals, especially for leadership positions. Many participants were annoyed by the lack of outreach campaigns to locate different candidates for leadership roles. There seems to be a lack of deliberate recruitment, resulting in the ongoing underrepresentation of minority groups at top levels. One participant remarked, "We do not have enough outreach programs to bring in diverse talent." This comment underlines the need for targeted recruitment strategies to identify and enhance different leadership potential. Organizations have to give top importance to building pipelines that reach underrepresented groups so that future leaders reflect the variety found in the workforce.

Institutional Data Gaps

An institutional data gap is the absence of comprehensive tracking systems monitoring the effectiveness of diversity programs. Many participants noted that due to

the lack of sufficient data collection and analysis, companies could not assess the effectiveness of their diversity programs or identify areas for development. This lack of information makes it difficult to make data-driven decisions that might result in more significant advancements. “We do not track retention rates by demographic, so we do not know who is leaving and why,” one participant said. This argument highlights a significant data-collecting gap that might prevent companies from understanding critical retention issues and making reasonable changes to improve diversity outcomes. Gauging performance and identifying areas requiring more attention depend on solid data systems being built.

Perceived Progress

While participants disagreed on the general situation of the company, the development of diversity programs was much welcomed. While some workers claimed that improvements had been slow and unequal throughout the company, others felt that some departments had made notable progress toward a more inclusive workplace. One participant summarized: “Some departments have made progress, but overall, change has been slow.” Despite occasional individual successes, this mixed perspective on progress indicates that more comprehensive organizational change is necessary to achieve significant diversity outcomes across all departments and levels.

Tokenism

Tokenism helps to explain ineffective diversity initiatives devoid of notable organizational transformation. Many participants expressed concerns that some diversity initiatives focused more on strengthening the company’s reputation than on honestly

promoting diversity and inclusion. One respondent said, “Leaders prioritize appearances over actual change.” This problem shows how easily diversity initiatives could be reduced to “window dressing,” which would harm DEI programs’ reputation and force staff members who believe the initiatives are dishonest or weak to leave.

These interviews reveal several recurring issues despite leaders’ best efforts to address specific policy issues. These include representation gaps, perceived injustices, senior leadership reluctance, and data restrictions that impede progress in DEI programs. However, the results also point to areas needing improvement, especially in places like better leadership support, more thorough data collection, and improved recruiting. By tackling these issues, organizations may create more inclusive and varied work environments representing justice and equity at all leadership levels.

Quantitative Results

Diverse incentive programs are designed to encourage equitable representation in leadership roles. However, companies could have trouble carrying out these projects successfully. Through the analysis of WDQ-II data, this study investigates the existence of such difficulties. The study addresses the research question: RQ2: Is it feasible that businesses encounter difficulties when putting diversity incentive programs into place? The related theories are as follows: H_1 : The diversity incentive schemes and the number of minority leaders they hire present difficulties. H_0 : Diversity incentive programs and the proportion of minority leaders they hire do not provide any difficulties.

The quantitative survey was completed by 33 participants, with 51.5% identifying as male ($n = 17$) and 48.5% identifying as female ($n = 16$), indicating a virtually equal

gender distribution. Most participants (78.8%, $n = 26$) were between the ages of 26 and 35, indicating a skewed age distribution toward younger people. The youngest (18–25) and oldest (55+) age groups each made up just 3% ($n = 1$), while the 36–45 age group had smaller proportions (15.2%, $n = 5$). Only one participant (3%) identified as Asian American or Pacific Islander, unlike the sample's 97% ($n = 32$) African American/Black composition.

The almost equal gender representation was confirmed by descriptive analysis of key characteristics, which showed a mean gender score of 1.48 ($SD = .51$), where 1 = female and 2 = male. On a coded ordinal scale from 1 (18–25) to 5 (55+), the mean age was 2.21 ($SD = .65$), which indicated that the majority of respondents were in the younger age groups. The sample's lack of ethnic variety was confirmed by the ethnicity code, which was 1.03 ($SD = .17$), with one being African American/Black and two denoting Asian American/Pacific Islander (see Table 4).

To gauge employee opinions of DEI practices in leadership, the survey instrument had 28 Likert-scale items. A 5-point Likert scale was used to score the responses (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*). The mean of the composite DEI score was 3.08 ($SD = .59$), indicating that participants' opinions of institutional DEI initiatives were somewhat favorable. With a Cronbach's alpha of .760, the DEI scale's internal consistency was considered adequate. These descriptive statistics offer crucial background information for comprehending the quantitative patterns investigated in later inferential studies.

Table 4*Survey Item Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Gender (1 = Female, 2 = Male)	33	1.48	0.51	1	2
Age (Ordinal, 1–5 Scale)	33	2.21	0.65	1	5
Ethnicity (1 = Black, 2 = API)	33	1.03	0.17	1	2
DEI Composite Score (28 items)*	33	3.08	0.59	1.64	4.64

Note. The survey consisted of 28 Likert-scale items assessing faculty perceptions of

diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices in higher education leadership. Items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Thirty-three people were given the WDQ-II. The WDQ-II's reliability analysis yielded satisfactory internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .760 over 28 items (see Table 5). Descriptive statistics were used to examine the responses to identify distribution patterns, dispersion, and central trends.

Table 5*Reliability Statistics*

Cronbach's Alpha	<i>N</i> of items
.760	28

Friedman's ANOVA was used to evaluate variations between demographic groups and WDQ-II responses instead of Wilcoxon because, with Friedman, I could analyze multiple variables at a time. Significant differences between groups were shown by the statistically substantial outcome of the analysis, $\chi^2(30, N = 33) = 443.45, p < .001$. There were statistically significant differences between ethnicity and several WDQ-II questions, according to post hoc pairwise comparisons using Bonferroni-adjusted significance levels. WDQ26 (Test Statistic = -23.77, *SE* = 2.24, *z* = -10.62), WDQ27

(Test Statistic = -21.36, $SE = 2.24$, $z = -9.54$), WDQ1 (Test Statistic = -20.50, $SE = 2.24$, $z = -9.16$), WDQ2 (Test Statistic = -20.41, $SE = 2.24$, $z = -9.12$), WDQ25 (Test Statistic = -18.77, $SE = 2.24$, $z = -8.39$), and WDQ11 (Test Statistic = -18.13, $SE = 2.24$, $z = -8.10$) had the most significant observed differences ($p < .001$; see Table 6). The rejection of the null hypothesis occurs at a significance level of $p < .001$. The findings show that opinions of workforce diversity practices, especially the efficacy of diversity incentive schemes, are significantly influenced by ethnicity. The null hypothesis is rejected as a result of these findings, which support H_1 by indicating that difficulties do arise in the implementation of diversity programs. Compared to their non-minority colleagues, minority employees expressed more doubt regarding the efficacy of these initiatives.

Table 6

Pairwise Comparisons Between Ethnicity and WDQ Items

Sample 1 - Sample 2	Test statistic	SE	z	p	Adjusted sig.
Ethnicity - WDQ26	-23.77	2.24	-10.62	<.001	.000
Ethnicity - WDQ27	-21.36	2.24	-9.54	<.001	.000
Ethnicity - WDQ1	-20.50	2.24	-9.16	<.001	.000
Ethnicity - WDQ2	-20.41	2.24	-9.12	<.001	.000
Ethnicity - WDQ25	-18.77	2.24	-8.39	<.001	.000
Ethnicity - WDQ11	-18.13	2.24	-8.10	<.001	.000

The findings show that opinions of workforce diversity practices, especially the efficacy of diversity incentive schemes, are significantly influenced by ethnicity. The results confirm the alternative hypothesis and show difficulties in putting these programs into practice. Thus, the null hypothesis is disproved. The statistical and thematic assessments agree that companies have significant obstacles when successfully implementing diversity incentive programs. While the qualitative interviews offered

deep, contextual insights into the barriers employees encounter when attempting to participate in and reap the benefits of diversity programs, the quantitative data showed notable variances in attitudes based on ethnicity.

This mixed-methods study investigated the elements influencing the acceptance of diversity practices using quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews. Combining these two data sets lets one present a varied picture of how DEI projects are implemented and seen inside businesses. Most respondents identified DEI as a strategic goal based on the quantitative data collected from 33 completed questionnaires, demonstrating great support for the value of diversity in leadership. Still, it became evident from considering support in theory with the qualitative themes that it does not always equate to consistent behavior. For example, although many poll participants confirmed their presence, interview data revealed uncertainty about the effectiveness of DEI programs. Many participants said these initiatives were more symbolic than transformational, more “performative.”

Comparably, quantitative responses revealed great satisfaction concerning pay, career paths, and fairness assessments. However, qualitative research revealed unfairness as participants expressed worries about underrepresentation, partiality, and structural obstacles preventing different abilities from growing. This difference emphasizes the need for businesses to use deeper success indicators instead of surface-level metrics, since it increases the possibility of a discrepancy between employee lived experiences and leadership opinions.

One rather significant area where the two datasets crossed was leadership support. Participants underlined the need for leadership buy-in in both phases if DEI is to be conducted purposefully. Top executives actively supporting the company's diversity trajectory through public accountability, policy development, or mentoring helped employees feel more confident in the organization. Particularly in departments run under the direction of successful DEI advocates, participants in both data sets showed signs of improvement despite ongoing challenges. Still, this development was slow and uneven, particularly when institutional data gaps or executive opposition hampered wise decision-making.

The mixed-methods approach reaffirms that although businesses may undertake diversity initiatives, perceptions of tokenism, leadership inconsistency, and institutional data gaps frequently limit these programs' efficacy. While the qualitative findings personalize these discrepancies and offer real-world tales emphasizing the need for significant policy reforms, the quantitative findings draw attention to systemic inequities.

The study's conclusions provide credence to the theory that diversity incentive schemes struggle to produce the desired results. While qualitative insights highlighted organizational and cultural reasons for these discrepancies, the quantitative analysis found statistically significant disparities, especially along racial lines. These results point to the need for businesses to go beyond token diversity initiatives and implement structural adjustments to provide minority workers with fair opportunities for advancement to leadership positions.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

This study combined extensive processes in line with the mixed methods design described in Chapter 3 to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and reliability. Iterative coding, pilot testing, member checks, and a complete audit trail helped to guarantee credibility. Following participants actively verifying the quality of the transcripts helped to improve coding by repeated analysis, ensuring the accurate interpretation of participant responses.

Effective transferability made possible by consistent semistructured interview methods and exhaustive, in-depth explanations allowed readers to assess the fit of the results for use in different contexts. Reliability was supported by open documentation of all procedures, a pilot interview to evaluate the clarity of the questions, and consistent participant involvement before the interviews. Extended data analysis, reflexivity, and thorough audit trails supporting outside validation assured the research of confirmability. While official intercoder reliability testing was not conducted, I used several independent coding cycles to encourage intra- and intercoder consistency.

Regarding the quantitative aspect, the WDQ-II is a well-known instrument that guarantees validity by supporting construct and content validity. By contrast, Cronbach's alpha displayed consistency with a suitable internal consistency of $\alpha = .760$. With IRB approval, informed consent, pseudonym use, and participant protections, maintaining ethical standards was feasible and aligned with American Psychological Association's recommendations.

Chapter 4 Summary

This explanatory sequential mixed methods study addressed two central research questions: (RQ1) What factors contribute to leadership implementing diversity practices? (RQ2) To what extent do corporations experience challenges when implementing diversity incentive programs?

Quantitative research revealed that employee opinions of diversity practices varied significantly depending on the essential factors of the WDQ-II. Though they acknowledged their existence, the data show that many respondents were dubious of the consistency and scope of DEI policies' execution. Friedman's two-way ANOVA test confirmed statistically significant variations ($p < .001$) across the several evaluated categories, supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis and the theory that participant opinions of DEI efforts vary. With a Cronbach's alpha of .760, the instrument proved to be dependable enough.

The qualitative results helped to clarify and set the quantitative results in perspective. From interviews with minority employees, the nine most occurring themes were workforce demographics, perceived equity, positive DEI efforts, leadership support, barriers to diversity, pipeline challenges, institutional data gaps, perceived progress, and tokenism. These themes led participants to believe that, despite some leaders who actively support DEI activities, institutional efforts usually lacked follow-through, openness, and data-driven solutions. Participants underlined the importance of actual involvement with DEI values and intentional leadership going beyond simple gestures.

The data integration showed that the success or failure of DEI projects depends significantly on leadership quality. While quantitative data stressed overall perception gaps, qualitative data illuminated the underlying problems, including uneven leadership support, a lack of diversity in decision-making positions, and structural barriers to minority representation. Chapter 5 will offer a detailed examination of these findings and a link to current research on organizational transformation, diversity, and leadership. It will review the study's shortcomings, examine the effects on corporations, and provide further research and application recommendations. This last chapter will mix the two data sources to offer pragmatic strategies for supporting inclusive leadership and long-lasting diversity initiatives in academic settings.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This explanatory sequential mixed-methods study investigated the elements that affect the selection of minority leaders and how corporate executives utilize diversity initiatives to foster significant organizational change, even in the face of ongoing underrepresentation in upper management.

The objective was to look at the quantifiable frequency of initiatives related to diversity and the individual experiences and points of view of people impacted by them. Qualitative interviews revealed more underlying problems, including underrepresentation in leadership roles, unequal opportunities for advancement, and questions about performative diversity initiatives. The participants identified strengths of better data monitoring, more inclusive hiring policies, and leadership accountability. Quantitative data from 33 answered questionnaires revealed general support for DEI initiatives, particularly concerning perceived organizational fairness and leadership commitment. The results suggest that institutional support, leadership involvement, and corporate culture significantly affect the success of existing diversity policies.

Interpretation of the Findings

The study coincides with earlier studies suggesting that diversity and equality in the workforce remain goals rather than a reality. Several participants underlined the underrepresentation of minorities, especially African American professionals, in leadership roles. Past studies show that organizational inertia, unconscious prejudice, and exclusionary practices impede upward mobility (Anderson et al., 2019).

Perceived differences in promotion and pay practices reflect the issues in the research on structural inequalities that hinder fair career advancement (Yadav & Lata, 2019). Previous studies have focused on DEI programs; this study adds complexity by revealing participants' opinions on the genuineness and effectiveness of such programs. Interviewees often described DEI programs as shallow or tokenistic, free of leadership accountability or meaningful change. Recording events in many sectors helps support and enhance objections to performative diversity approaches. Many participants noted, for example, "that although DEI committees and mentoring programs exist, they usually lack measurements, follow-through, or observable outcomes, underscoring a significant discrepancy between policy and reality."

It is interesting to observe that some outcomes differ from the optimistic representations of organizational change in the literature. Still, some scholarly studies have underlined how DEI improvements are enabled by data openness and leadership pipelines (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021). This study revealed both uncertain succession planning and extensive data gaps. Participants pointed out, for example, "that no policies were in place to evaluate retention by race or ethnicity, highlighting a discrepancy between pragmatic reality and leadership objectives."

The results confirm that supporting (or hindering) the acceptance of diversity depends mainly on the leadership. They also challenge the idea that DEI rules are sufficient on their own. These initiatives could be more window decoration than fostering diversity due to a lack of culturally sensitive leadership, inclusive hiring policies, and systematic responsibility. These results underline the need for a more critical, data-

driven, cooperative approach to DEI procedures based on open assessment methods and real leadership involvement.

Interpretation of Findings of the Theoretical Framework

The factors influencing the frameworks of diversity policy were assessed in this paper; social dominance theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social construction theory are then used to examine these results. These models help to clarify how long-standing systematic inequality results from organizational perspectives and how diverse projects are affected by them.

Social dominance theory holds that laws and cultural norms that maintain social hierarchy help dominant groups (Keene, 2023). The subjects' answers exposed several cases of this operation. Most definitely, for example, shows the persistence of organizational hierarchies and inadvertent discrimination: minorities' limited opportunities for development, resistance to DEI programs, and lack of structural change in leadership roles. Declaring, "Senior executives do not see DEI as a priority," one participant expressed a more general concern over institutional inertia preventing real development. Following these protocols, social dominance theory argues that, occasionally, social systems reject ideas that distribute power in a way that influences variation (Keene, 2023). Non-minority leadership techniques help preserve status hierarchies even in companies that support diversity.

Usually silently displayed in corporate culture and leadership practices, anti-egalitarianism is opposed to projects aiming at social equality (Berry, 2022). Several participants in this study defined diversity projects as basically symbolic or performative.

Saying, “Leadership is more focused on optics than real change,” one responder voiced doubts about the authenticity of DEI programs. Such points of view suggest that anti-egalitarian ideas might be rooted in the company’s culture, facilitating acceptance of diversity projects free from significant changes in power relations. Though DEI guidelines could be followed in form, their impact is still limited unless they are supported by strong leadership dedication and responsibility systems.

Social construction theory holds that language, shared meanings, and social behaviors create social reality (Einola & Alvesson, 2021). Participants in this environment went into great detail about how various departments and leadership philosophies shaped their opinions of diversity. For example, some respondents felt DEI programs were stationary or inconsistent, while others noted improvement. One participant said, “Generally, change has been slow; some departments have made strides.” This variation supports the notion that every organizational unit develops unique strategies aligned with society. The idea is that stories, deeds, and priorities defined by corporate culture and leadership help to determine the connotations connected to diversity, inclusion, and equality. Moreover, views of meritocracy, another socially produced concept, were under question. Reflecting on the comment, “Promotions are not based on merit but on who you know,” some participants claimed that social contacts, rather than qualifications, decided promotions. These impressions show how organizational values may hide shortcomings and support accepted standards by concealing inequalities.

Using these models, one can better appreciate how firmly rooted structural norms, cultural ideas, and socially produced reality affect how leaders implement diversity practices. Performative DEI programs, ongoing representational gaps, and unfair progression policies all point to more general systemic issues. Still, intentional leadership participation, better hiring practices, and more data openness create many growth opportunities. These readings are grounded on the collected data and remain within the scope of this study. They offer a theoretically informed viewpoint on how companies could surpass surface projects aiming at major, fair transformation.

This study utilized a comprehensive framework encompassing social dominance theory (Keene, 2023), anti-egalitarianism (Berry, 2022), and social construction theory (Einola & Alvesson, 2021). Nonetheless, a more comprehensive examination of the alignment between each theory and the empirical data would enhance the theoretical contribution.

The social dominance theory asserts that myths and institutional structures sustain hierarchies based on group loyalty, privileging dominant groups. The participant's remarks regarding leadership structures that benefited majority group members exemplify this. The interviewees said they often relied on family ties and informal networks instead of following meritocratic principles to advance in their personal and professional lives. These experiences bolster the fundamental principle of social dominance theory, which asserts that structural inequality will endure. Quantitative survey data indicating disparities in respondents' perceptions of equity and happiness, particularly among minority participants, underscores the theory's applicability in organizational contexts.

The concept of anti-egalitarianism in social dominance theory arose inadvertently, especially when senior executives exhibited hesitance to actively support or advocate for DEI initiatives. The interview results showed that some people thought DEI initiatives were just for show or not real, which suggests that these efforts often put public perception ahead of fundamental systemic change. This hostility may reflect anti-egalitarian attitudes that emphasize the preservation of hierarchical authority above the promotion of equality.

Social construction theory provides an alternative framework for assessing outcomes, particularly effective in elucidating the social negotiation of differences. Some people thought that variation was important for strategy, while others thought it was important for compliance. This collection of viewpoints reinforces the idea that social construction theory asserts that communication and interaction with others are essential for creating and altering social meaning. Organizational DEI strategies must account for individuals' interpretations to reconcile the divergence between the policy's intended objectives and public perception of its implementation.

The results support and improve existing theories by showing how individual views, cultural stories, and structural hierarchies work together to affect how diversity practices are used in leadership. There are official DEI rules, but these findings show more about the long-lasting structural barriers to equality.

Effectiveness of Diversity Initiatives Across Different Organizations

This study highlights significant variations in the effectiveness of DEI initiatives, emphasizing the critical role of organizational context in shaping outcomes. The

quantitative data reveal that notable challenges continue to exist even with the implementation of diversity incentive programs. The results from Friedman's ANOVA indicated a $p < .001$, reinforcing the hypothesis that corporations encounter obstacles in implementing diversity programs. These obstacles seem to present themselves in various ways within different organizations, indicating that while certain institutions make significant strides, others find it challenging to convert their intentions into tangible results.

The qualitative data enhance this understanding by illuminating how structural and cultural barriers influence the effectiveness of DEI initiatives. Participants indicated that, even within organizations boasting formal diversity initiatives, opportunities for advancement frequently hinged more on personal connections and bias rather than on merit alone. One participant noted, "It is not solely about your knowledge or job performance; it is also about your connections." Those connections appear to hold greater significance when it comes to advancing. Another participant remarked, "You can implement all the diversity policies you desire, but if the same individuals continue to make decisions in secrecy, nothing will change." These viewpoints indicate that entities that neglect to consider informal networks and power dynamics might experience minimal effectiveness from formal DEI initiatives.

Furthermore, specific organizations seem to possess more robust accountability mechanisms and foster more inclusive cultures that aid in overcoming these obstacles. For example, individuals engaged in settings with clear promotion guidelines and mentorship initiatives reported fairer chances for progression. One interviewee shared,

“In my current company, they have established mentorships for everyone and made the promotion criteria transparent, so you understand what is required.” That creates a significant impact. Conversely, individuals in more unstructured settings noted a deficiency in follow-through and accountability. One participant articulated, “They frequently discuss diversity, yet when examining who is promoted, it is consistently the same type of individuals.”

The quantitative demographic data further demonstrate the variability of outcomes across different contexts. Even though African Americans constituted 97% of the sample and females represented 48.5%, many participants still recognized disparities in leadership opportunities, suggesting that representation alone does not guarantee equitable advancement. Similarly, the age distribution reveals that a substantial proportion (78.8%) of individuals reside within the 26–35 age range, suggesting that younger employees may be susceptible to inequities and structural barriers. This sensitivity could stem from their early career stages as they explore advancement pathways for the first time.

These findings highlight the significance of organizational elements, like leadership dedication, structural clarity, and an inclusive culture, in influencing the success of DEI initiatives. While introducing formal diversity programs is a crucial first step, their success hinges on organizations addressing deeper structural and cultural challenges. Organizations that align formal policies with accountability structures, mentorship initiatives, and transparent decision-making processes are more likely to achieve substantial progress. On the other hand, settings where DEI initiatives are only

superficial or poorly implemented might perpetuate inequities, despite the sincerest intentions. Understanding these distinctions can inform the creation of more effective strategies by identifying the conditions that contribute to the success or failure of diversity initiatives, thus offering valuable insights for organizations seeking to improve DEI outcomes.

Limitations of the Study

This explanatory sequential mixed-methods study examined the factors affecting leadership's implementation of diversity practices. Though the study was carefully designed to meet exact qualitative and quantitative standards, some issues that require careful consideration emerged. These constraints compromise the generalizability, transferability, and dependability of the results.

Although I had hoped for 30 survey responses, 33 complete answers, free of any missing data, comprised the final dataset. Ten qualitative interviews were conducted to complement the numerical findings. The total sample size is still relatively small, even if this exceeds first expectations, particularly for generalizing results over a bigger population. Though revealing in terms of the experiences of African American participants, the demographic analysis showed a clear overrepresentation of this group, which compromises the ability to portray several racial and ethnic points of view sufficiently. Therefore, the results should be carefully applied to more diverse or heterogeneous groups.

The recruitment of participants relied on voluntary responses, which generated problems with self-selection bias. Strong convictions or financial interests in DEI projects

would have made one more likely to get involved. This could skew the results in favor of people already engaged or concerned about DEI, excluding opinions of those dubious about diversity projects or apathetic. Therefore, volunteer bias could restrict the capacity to offer a fair picture of organizational DEI policies. The scope of the sectors under investigation adds still another limit. Research participants mainly came from local governments, companies, and higher education institutions. Many times, hierarchical systems and clear DEI policies define these sectors. Though insightful, the lessons gained might not be entirely relevant to sectors including nongovernmental organizations, startups, or multinational corporations with less consistent attitudes to diversity. More diverse organizational forms should be sought in future research to boost contextual variety and applicability.

The researcher is the main instrument used in qualitative research for data collection and interpretation. Even if well-established coding systems, structured interview guides, and peer debriefing techniques guarantee consistency and dependability, the researcher's positionality and points of view could have affected the view of themes. Although subjectivity cannot be avoided entirely, triangulation and audit trails were applied to encourage confirmability. Appreciating this restriction enables one to assess the validity of the qualitative component. The 15- to 25-minute average length of the qualitative interviews could limit the depth and complexity of the acquired narratives. Although participants responded satisfactorily to the fundamental questions, the limited time could have restricted their capacity to investigate more difficult or sensitive issues, including institutional opposition, systematic inequalities, or personal

experiences of tokenism. Longer or follow-up interviews could have yielded a more complete understanding.

This study tracked participant experiences only once using a cross-sectional method. This approach ignores temporal changes or longitudinal advancements in DEI projects, even if it is suitable for estimating general opinions and organizational strategies. Organizations evolve and, with them, follow their diversity strategies. Thus, in the next research projects, longitudinal designs to track development, failures, and changes in DEI application over time should be helpful.

The constraints discovered in this study are crucial rules within which the findings must be interpreted with the acknowledgment of how the study was created, including the scope of sample size, sectoral emphasis, volunteer bias, researcher subjectivity, and data depth limit generalizing. Still, these limitations also point to opportunities for development in additional research. By extending the sample to include more diverse demographics, lengthening the length and depth of interviews, and applying longitudinal approaches, subsequent research on diversity leadership might be more credible and relevant. Understanding and overcoming these limitations will help to promote a transparent and reflective research approach that significantly affects the shifting discussion on equality and inclusion in organizational leadership.

Recommendations

Building on the benefits and limitations of the present mixed-methods research, future studies should examine the factors affecting leaders' application of diversity strategies. To improve generalizability, one crucial recommendation is to repeat this

research with a larger and more geographically distributed population. Notwithstanding a small quantitative survey sample and few interviews, this study included many people from ethnic backgrounds and professions. Deeper relative insights and better external validity would come from increasing participant diversity across organizational sizes, sectors, and geographic locations.

Further research should concentrate more on the junction between leadership identity and diversity application, considering social dominance theory and anti-egalitarianism.

Longitudinal studies could show how attitudes and behaviors evolve with time, offering more proof of causation and the lifetime of diversity initiatives. By enabling academics to investigate organizational culture and power relations, social construction theory helps them better understand how meritocracy, tokenism, and representation stories are produced and spread over hierarchical levels. Future research employing case studies or ethnographic methods will eventually capture more complex organizational settings, transcending the limitations of cross-sectional data and improving the knowledge of successful DEI leadership strategies.

Implications

The necessity to examine the intricate implementation of diversity policies in leadership through comprehensive analysis and broader generalization underpins the utilization of an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach in this research. This research commenced with qualitative data collection through interviews derived from the National Faculty Survey, aiming to identify themes, perspectives, and lived experiences

pertinent to leadership-level DEI initiatives, in contrast to conventional methodologies. The subsequent quantitative phase, utilizing the WDQ-II to analyze and expand upon emerging trends within a larger participant cohort, was directly informed by these substantial qualitative findings.

The reverse-sequenced design allowed for greater contextual relevance and alignment with actual stakeholder experiences, enabling the initial qualitative data to inform the development and enhancement of the quantitative instrument. The connection between narrative-based findings and statistical evidence made the study better at explaining things. It also ensured that participants' ideas were heard and confirmed over a broader range. This approach also strengthened the overall methodological rigor by ensuring that the quantitative phase dealt with specific gaps and ambiguities found during the qualitative analysis.

This design adhered to the principles of methodological pragmatism by prioritizing qualitative inquiry over quantitative assessment, selecting methodologies that most effectively addressed the primary research question. This framework facilitated contextual depth and empirical generalizability by comprehensively understanding the variables influencing diversity implementation across different organizational tiers (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016).

The findings of this study could inspire positive social change at several levels: personal, organizational, legal, and social. By analyzing the factors influencing the way leaders apply diversity practices, this study reveals the opportunities and challenges affecting DEI projects. The research recommendations for enhancing data-driven

decision-making, eliminating systematic obstacles, and increasing leadership support could help establish an environment that supports justice for people and communities across all spheres. At the personal level, this study emphasizes the need for various approaches to improving job opportunities for underprivileged groups. Organizations may establish environments where people are empowered depending on merit and talents instead of depending on reaching targets through tokenism, inadequate mentoring, and biased decision-making practices. This could lead to upward mobility, contentment, and employment stability for underprivileged individuals. DEI programs help individuals to increase their sense of self-worth, professional development, and belonging. Moreover, when leaders back DEI projects, it encourages others to share their opinions, fostering innovation and teamwork. People are likelier to thrive in surroundings that value diversity, where their identities are acknowledged, and where fair opportunities abound. From this, one could achieve better mental and emotional health, more production, and higher retention rates.

At the level of companies, adopting comprehensive diversity policies helps to improve general organizational culture, performance, and productivity. Companies prioritizing diversity, fairness, and inclusion create work environments more suited for innovation, creativity, and teamwork qualities essential in a fast-changing worldwide market. Companies that promise to remove institutional barriers and support diverse leadership build a stronger workforce that is a better fit to satisfy the needs of many consumers and communities. Moreover, companies that lead by example in applying DEI policies could inspire other companies, promoting a ripple effect that drives them to

adopt inclusive policies. The findings of this study could enable businesses to review and modify their policies, staff development programs, and hiring practices to ensure that diversity and inclusion are rooted in their business values. The integration of these strategies might support long-term development and sustainability, improve staff morale, and strengthen the corporate reputation.

Generally, on society and policy levels, the findings of this study could influence public policy decisions on diversity and inclusion, so guiding legislative changes is meant to guarantee equal opportunities for all. This study could enable legislators to incentivize companies to prioritize diversity above all else and assign DEI activity responsibility. For example, laws requiring companies to provide diversity statistics would encourage transparency and drive more changes in recruiting and promotion policies. Furthermore, helping to reduce social inequality and advance a fairer and equal society would require more attention to diversity and inclusion at the societal level. This change can be applied as a model for other sectors, including the public sector, healthcare, and education, to use such approaches as companies accept different leadership. These historical events could help to reduce inequality, create more inclusive communities, and ensure that everyone from all backgrounds, colors, or ethnicities has equal opportunity to grow in society. This research offers excellent chances for positive societal transformation in many different spheres.

Furthermore, it is essential to recognize potential counterarguments to the conclusions drawn from the study. There are those who might contend that the emphasis on structural and cultural barriers is exaggerated, asserting instead that personal merit and

effort are the key factors driving advancement within organizations. Some might argue that the challenges highlighted in the study are not exclusive to DEI initiatives but rather indicative of wider organizational inefficiencies that impact all employees, irrespective of their backgrounds. Furthermore, some may argue that the challenges identified could be attributed to poor execution of DEI initiatives instead of fundamental issues within the concept. Although these counterarguments present different viewpoints, the uniformity of participants' experiences in this study indicates that structural and cultural factors significantly influence the outcomes for minority leaders. To overcome these limitations in future studies, employing longitudinal designs, utilizing larger and more diverse samples, and conducting comparative analyses of DEI programs would enhance our understanding of these dynamics and reinforce the evidence supporting effective diversity strategies. The implications for positive social change include the potential for leaders to implement transparent promotion systems, expanded mentorship and sponsorship opportunities, and data-driven accountability to ensure equitable access to leadership roles for minorities.

This paper offers a framework that might drive transforming change, benefiting people, businesses, and society at large by emphasizing the implementation of successful diversity policies inside companies. Dealing with structural challenges, supporting diversity, and giving top attention to inclusion would help to build a fairer society that recognizes and supports the contributions made by every one of its citizens, thus advancing more general social change.

Methodological, Theoretical, and Empirical Implications

Methodologically, the study stresses the need to acquire, using both qualitative and quantitative data, a complete awareness of organizational diversity practices. While qualitative insights help to clarify the experiences and points of view of minority employees, the integration of quantitative data, such as organizational diversity measures, allows for a more comprehensive and sophisticated study. More varied, larger samples will enable subsequent research to generalize findings better and offer more robust comparisons between sectors or fields.

Integration of several theories, including social dominance theory, anti-egalitarianism, and social construction theory, results in theoretical consequences. This study reveals how often white and male-dominant social groups affect organizational structures that are capable of excluding other groups. The persistence of challenges, including tokenism and resistance to diversity projects, highlights these theories' applicability in understanding how power relations affect business operations. The poll also confirms that diversity projects are sometimes seen as theatrical or cosmetic unless they coincide with a fundamental, methodical transformation. By relating these concepts to the real experiences of employees, the study encourages more research on how social conventions influence organizational practices.

Empirical results suggest that a more methodical assessment of diversity policies will help understand their impact on underprivileged groups. Based on the data, stronger data-tracking systems evaluating diversity need terms related to recruitment, retention, promotion, and job satisfaction across racial and ethnic groups. Future empirical research

results could track the long-term outcomes of diversity initiatives and investigate the effectiveness of particular policies meant to reduce occupational disparity.

Recommendations for Practice

The study offers different recommendations for organizational behavior. First, instead of limited application of programs, leadership commitment to diversity should be shown in all leadership activities and decisions. Organizational leaders should give diversity first attention, not as a strategic “optics” project but rather as a value fundamental to their corporate culture. Second, gathering and compiling data should be essential to assess diversity outcomes fairly. Companies should set exact standards for DEI and routinely compile data on hiring, retention, and promotion if they are to ensure responsibility. Regular DEI progress reports help businesses identify areas for improvement and assign leaders responsibility for building an inclusive environment.

This study can significantly impact the real world by helping to make new rules and activities that encourage diversity in organizations. To keep everyone in the organization interested, leaders must be held accountable by including DEI goals in executive performance reviews and incentive programs. Organizations need to fix the problems with collecting and sharing data because having accurate workforce metrics helps them find problems and make changes when needed. Companies can help workers who are not well-represented get over pipeline problems by starting specific talent development programs, like mentoring and sponsorship. They need to work with schools and community groups to find jobs for people with different skills.

People must keep pushing to make the workplace fairer and less like a tokenism to keep it open to everyone. It can happen by teaching employees about discrimination, ensuring that resources are shared fairly, supporting employee resource groups, and encouraging people to get involved and feel like they belong by integrating ideas for improving diversity programs immediately by giving people many ways to provide feedback, like staff surveys and focus groups.

When governance structures have clear lines of responsibility, staying on track and working toward DEI goals is easier. Companies could also use hiring practices that are open to everyone, like anonymous resume reviews and interview panels with people from different backgrounds, to help reduce unconscious bias. They could also be honest about how they report and make DEI one of their main goals as a company. We need stronger anti-discrimination laws with clear rules to follow so that everyone has a safe and fair workplace. Finally, helping groups that are not well represented with their leadership development programs might help make a group of leaders that is diverse and lasts. These strategies could help businesses make significant, long-lasting changes that make people happy, get them thinking, and make the business work better.

Organizations must permanently remove diversity barriers, including limited recruiting campaigns and top executive resistance. Examining recruiting policies and spreading recruitment campaigns to a range of talent pools helps to ensure that merit-based policies are applied fairly and offers mentoring programs to help minority employees grow inside the company. This study provides the means for pragmatic solutions to support more inclusive, varied, and fair workplaces, even as it offers

insightful analysis of the current scene of diversity practices in leadership. Beyond particular businesses, this study has relevance that might provide a road map for industry-wide systematic change.

Conclusions

This dissertation examined the factors motivating business leaders to carry out diversity policies. This paper sought to investigate how organizational leadership addresses DEI and the challenges in producing meaningful change, utilizing a combination of qualitative interviews and an analysis of quantitative data. The study's main result is that several issues still prevent diversity policies from being carried out correctly, even with strong attempts to raise company diversity. Among these challenges are low representation at levels of leadership, top leadership's hostility to change, and insufficient support for DEI projects. Many others also view diversity initiatives as surface-level or performative with little to no structural influence.

The survey showed that workforce dynamics greatly affect the organizational environment, even though many respondents pointed out the underrepresentation of minority groups in leadership roles. Notwithstanding these challenges, there have also been notable DEI projects, particularly when leadership actively supported programs meant to foster inclusivity. Still, these programs were sometimes deemed inadequate without suitable institutional support, data monitoring, or a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan. Tokenism, the practice of filling positions to meet diversity quotas, was a significant problem, and many participants felt that some initiatives toward diversity were more focused on appearances than real, long-lasting change.

The results also underlined the need for stronger data monitoring systems that allow businesses to properly monitor and evaluate their diversity operations, promoting more responsibility in diversity programs. Without strong data on recruitment, retention, and employee satisfaction, participants underlined that it is challenging to identify and handle issues in diversity projects. Furthermore, the need for leadership support in supporting DEI projects was underlined; many participants emphasized that a culture of diversity goes beyond basic improvements, depending on the strong buy-in of leaders.

All things considered, this dissertation highlights the challenges businesses face when implementing diversity policies. Although much has been achieved, much more has to be done to establish inclusive companies. Good diversity policies need policy implementation and a change of culture covering leadership commitment, staff involvement, and data-driven decision-making. The study suggests businesses should build a logical, sustainable approach to DEI rather than only paying attention to token diversity initiatives.

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Appendix A: The National Faculty Survey

The National Faculty Survey (Kaplan et al., 2018)

Demographic

Age

Gender

Ethnicity

How long have you worked in a position?

The National Faculty Survey

What is the climate of your institution for minority faculty/ employee? Probe for positioning of:

- Blacks
- Hispanics
- Asians
- Native Americans
- Non-US vs. US born

What are the perceptions of racial equity in satisfaction with position, compensation, opportunity for advancement and promotion, retention? (probe by racial/ethnic and immigrant group)

How has this climate changed? (between 1995 and 2010)

What, if any, program facilitates your institution's ability to recruit, retain, or promote racial/ethnic minority ?

- Probe by racial/ethnic and immigrant group
- Probe for if and how training of students and residents are used to recruit minority faculty

What, if anything, limits your institution's ability to recruit, retain, or promote racial/ethnic minority faculty?

- Probe by racial/ethnic and immigrant group
- Probe for if and how training of students and residents are used to recruit minority faculty

What, at an institutional level, could help increase racial/ethnic equality in terms of:

- Compensation;
- Retention;
- Time at rank; and
- Promotion?

Appendix B: Workforce Diversity Questionnaire (WDQ-II)

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- 1 People in some groups are disrespected because they are different.
- 2 Sometimes people who talk and act differently are treated like they aren't capable or smart.
- 3 There are people in our group who have a hard time accepting ideas when they are offered by someone who is different.
- 4 When people begin working on a problem from different cultural perspectives, they have a hard time seeing each other's point of view.
- 5 When people from different backgrounds work together in groups, some people feel hurt and upset because their ideas are not acknowledged.
- 6 People get ahead when in this organization by using connections and not based on what they know.
- 7 Diversity issues keep some work groups from performing at their maximum effectiveness.
- 8 When people have a different culture, background, or style, they take the time to explain and try to understand the other's point of view.
- 9 When people in our group take offense or miscommunication occurs, they sit down and talk about the differences until they understand each other.
- 10 Employees share their knowledge and expertise with other employees regardless of ethnicity or race.
- 11 We all seem to learn and grow from our differences.
- 12 When someone is timid or hesitant to state his/her idea, others will point it out and ask for his/her opinion.
- 13 People in our workgroup don't notice culture or ethnicity differences because they think we are all the same.
- 14 People's habits or ways of thinking may be different because of their background, but when it comes to working we're pretty much the same.
- 15 People of the same ethnicity or cultural background tend to look out for each other.
- 16 With many people from different cultural backgrounds, you don't know where you stand.
- 17 If you were having difficulties, I know members of my workgroup would try to help me.
- 18 Most of the people in my workgroup can be relied on to do what they say they'll do.
- 19 I can trust the people I work with to lend me a hand if I need it.
- 20 I feel confident that my organization will always try to treat me fairly.
- 21 My organization is honest in its attempt to understand employee's point of view.

- 22 I feel like it's up to me to adjust to others when their race or ethnicity presents differences in styles or characteristics.
- 23 Working with employees from different cultural backgrounds makes me reconsider how I approach things.
- 24 I go out of my way to learn about others' cultural backgrounds, traditions, and points of view.
- 25 Knowing more about the cultural norms and diverse groups would help me to be more effective in my job.
- 26 I think that diverse viewpoints add value to our team, workgroup, and organization.
- 27 I can enjoy being with people whose race ethnicity, or cultural background is very different from mine.
- 28 I believe employees of different cultural backgrounds should adopt the values and lifestyles of the main culture.

1. Age 18-25 _____ 26-35 _____ 36-45 _____ 46-55 _____ 55+ _____
2. Gender Male _____ Female _____
3. Ethnicity African American /Black _____ Caucasian American/White _____
Asian American/Pacific Islander _____ Latino American/Hispanic _____
Native American/ Alaskan _____