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Diversity, equity, and inclusion post George Floyd and COVID-19: reflections from global business leaders on a changing paradigm

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DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION POST GEORGE FLOYD AND COVID-19:

REFLECTIONS FROM GLOBAL BUSINESS LEADERS ON A CHANGING PARADIGM

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Global Leadership and Change

by

Charles Edward Bray, Jr.

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This dissertation, written by

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my children and their spouses – David & Pam, Danielle & Josh, my grandson Mason David, and my future grandchildren. I hope and pray that my work will make the world they and their children live in more receptive to diversity, equity, equality, and inclusion than the world in which I grew up.

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ABSTRACT

This global study of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), encompassing the lenses of sixteen corporate executives with multi-country influence, examines efforts to address marginalization in the workplace based on identity characteristics such as race, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability. *Othering* is a global phenomenon. Corporations were awakened to the magnitude of othering, shocked into reality by the murder of George Floyd and other acts of political and social violence, including femicide, globally. The COVID-19 global pandemic further exposed the impact of marginalization seen through wide health disparities across communities. The Russian invasion of Ukraine further augmented the corporate lens, making clear that the oppression of others is a human rights violation worthy of a response. Organizations responded by creating DEI job roles and engaging in activities to foster greater inclusion and fairness in the workplace and in the nations in which they operate. Corporations are now working to create sustainable DEI and environmental social governance (ESG) programs that balance the need to respond to human rights issues with market access and profitability concerns – given the level of political polarization in communities worldwide. Through DEI and ESG initiatives, corporations have a unique opportunity to foster positive social change and economic good should they choose to. The researcher implores those with opposing viewpoints to keep an open mind – focused on finding workable solutions – not just shortcomings in approach. Through examination of the literature and review of data provided by the study's participants, the researcher concluded that a derivative of critical race theory – critical (global) othering theory – holds promise for countering marginalization within societies and organizations globally. An additional conclusion drawn is the existence of a DEI data management continuum across firms. Labeled herein as the data collection, accountability,

transparency (data CAT) continuum, companies fell along a progression of openness indicative of how assertive their DEI programs were. Consumer-oriented firms generally were more proactive in DEI implementation than tech or industrial companies. The location of the corporate headquarters also had an impact on how DEI challenges were framed. Companies wishing to benchmark against others may find this study helpful.

Keywords: Diversity, equity, inclusion, equality, diversity management, George Floyd, political violence, COVID-19, Ukraine, intersectionality, human rights, racial formation theory, open systems theory, social identity theory, realistic conflict theory, critical race theory, relational theory of workplace inequality, transformational leadership, inclusive leadership, emotional intelligence, employee engagement, human capital management, data CAT continuum, critical othering theory, global othering theory.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

Events in 30 months, from March 2020 to August 2022, notably the murder of George Floyd, the COVID-19 global pandemic, and socio-political violence in the United States, Ukraine, and around the world, impacted the nature of human interaction and the corporate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) landscape (Anderson, 2021; Johnson, 2021; Liadze et al., 2022; Mbah & Wasum, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2021; Oriola & Knight, 2020; Takahashi, 2020; van der Veer, 2021; Zarkov, 2021). As a result of these and other similar events, corporations began to modify their business and human capital management strategies to align more closely with values espousing fair, just, and humane treatment for all people (Johnson, 2021; Sonnenfeld et al., 2022). The corporate reaction to the Russian invasion of Ukraine highlights the human rights and economic considerations companies grapple with in response to geopolitical events (Sonnenfeld et al., 2022).

Chapter 1 provides an overview of this treatise that examines changes in the paradigm of global corporate leaders regarding DEI. Chapter 1 contains the problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the research questions employed. Chapter 1 also includes a section on the significance of the study, given the economic uncertainty, global protests, and socio-political strife that stemmed from concerns over historical patterns of discrimination and oppression, as well as the COVID-19 global pandemic (Anderson, 2021; P. Blake & Wadhwa, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021; Ramachandran, 2020). Key assumptions, the study's limitations, and the definition of relevant terms are also a part of this chapter. Chapter 1 concludes with the organization of the research and a summary.

Background of the Study

Amid the COVID-19 global pandemic declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was murdered at the hands of the police in Minneapolis, MN, on May 25, 2020 (Barrie, 2020; Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). In the months following his murder, thousands of protesters around the globe, in over 60 nations, despite the pandemic, took to the streets and social media to express their outrage at racism, social injustice, and police violence (Corpuz, 2021; Weine et al., 2020). There were protests in Australia, Brazil, Japan, New Zealand, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, and the United States and other countries (Barrie, 2020; Brannen & Haig, 2020; Lim & Sukumaran, 2020; Oriola & Knight, 2020).

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement helped drive this international wave of demonstrations (Barrie, 2020; Corpuz, 2021; Katti, 2020; Maqbool, 2020). BLM also affirms the rights and privileges afforded to transgender and gay citizens within the scope of its anti-hatred and anti-discrimination agenda (BLM, 2022). Some studies and surveys reveal a political, racial, and gender divide over support for the BLM agenda and the degree to which systemic racism played a role in George Floyd's murder (Beaman, 2021; Ilchi & Frank, 2021; Parker et al., 2020). Generally, however, there was a significant global outpouring of outrage over racial inequality and injustice (Beaman, 2021; Brannen & Haig, 2020; Johnson, 2021; Weine et al., 2020).

In addition to global protests over racial inequality, sexual harassment, economic oppression, rape, and violence against women also fueled worldwide demonstrations (de Silva de Alwis & Schroeder, 2021; Lahiri, 2021; Ortiz et al., 2022; Sinha Roy, 2018). The #MeToo movement, which began in the US as a protest against sexual harassment, also took hold in parts of Asia, Europe, and Latin America (Edmé, 2020; Hasunuma & Shin, 2019; Kagal et al.,

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2019; Mendes et al., 2018). In 2022, women in Mexico protested against rising femicide on International Women's Day (Martinez & Barrera, 2022). Previously, women in Mexico used International Women's Day to stage a two-day protest focused on violence against women, the gender pay gap, and other discriminatory societal elements (Manrique De Lara & De Jesús Medina Arellano, 2020; Rojas-García & Toledo Gonzalez, 2018; Seymat & Gaubert, 2020). Women in Spain went on strike for equal pay and equal rights for migrant workers and to end workplace inequality and sexual harassment (Campillo, 2019). In addition to global demonstrations, the academic community spoke out against sexual violence in warfare, characterizing "rape as a weapon of war" employed in Rwanda, Yugoslavia, by Russian troops in Ukraine, and in other conflicts around the globe (Buss, 2009, p.145; Mannell, 2022).

Also, the COVID-19 pandemic produced higher levels of gender-based violence against women and exacerbated economic disparities between men and women (Manrique De Lara & De Jesús Medina Arellano, 2020; Pitchforth & Hussein, 2021). International Women's Day in 2021 saw women worldwide protest against gender violence and for equality (Pitchforth & Hussein, 2021). Common themes across the demonstrations in 2022, 2021, and 2020 included equality for women, ending violence against women in all forms, reproductive rights, religious freedom, and the elimination of the gender pay gap and other forms of economic disparity (Manrique De Lara & De Jesús Medina Arellano, 2020; Lowery, 2022; Oviya, 2020; Pitchforth & Hussein, 2021; Tiwari et al., 2020). Noted in some of the literature was the intersectional nature of oppression, discrimination, and violence against women of color and transsexual women (de Silva de Alwis & Schroeder, 2021; Ortiz et al., 2022; Oviya, 2020).

Activism and protests against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identification also occurred globally (European Commission [EC], 2017; Jain & Rhoten, 2020; Lerner et al., 2020; Ortiz et al., 2022; Powell, 2019). Western Europe, the United States, and

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western-influenced countries are at the forefront of rights for people with non-traditional sexual orientation or gender identification (Hadler & Symons, 2018; MacCartney, 2018). Western Asia and India are among the areas with less support for the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, and Queer+ (LGBTQ+) community, with some backlash against transgender rights as a form of colonialism (Hadler & Symons, 2018; MacCartney, 2018; Thoreson, 2020). Even within countries supporting LGBTQ+ rights, there is a backlash against that community (Corrales, 2020; Hertner, 2021; Jones, 2018; Wang & Cahill, 2018).

Globally, as some forcefully advocate for equality and social change for all human identities, others hold opposing views (Ortiz et al., 2022). For example, various conservative and right-learning groups in the European Union (EU) actively oppose gender justice and other equality efforts (Cullen, 2020; Joshi & Evans, 2019). Forty-six percent of respondents in a European market Pew Research Center (PRC) study consider their culture as superior to others, with over 35% "unwilling to accept a Muslim family member" (Joshi & Evans, 2019, para. 2). According to another PRC study, anti-immigrant attitudes in Western Europe have also emerged as a political flashpoint (Diamant & Starr, 2018). To quantify the sentiment, PRC developed a ten-point scale to measure the extent of nationalist, anti-immigrant, and anti-religious minority (NIM) sentiment. Participants from the political right, adults over 35, and Christian respondents tended to be less tolerant of diversity and notions of gender equality than their counterparts from other human identities (Diamant & Starr, 2018).

Additional studies note that many White Americans and native Europeans continue to deny the existence of systemic racism and sexism and refuse to accept the negative economic impact of discrimination (Bobo, 2017; Bonam et al., 2019; Diamant & Starr, 2018; Nelson et al., 2013). A French study documents America's historically cyclical racism and the lack of sustainable solutions to overcome discrimination (Taylor & Katz, 1989). According to Taylor

and Katz (1989), after a cataclysmic event occurs, that is, assassination, riot, or social unrest, American society takes greater responsibility for racism and its impact, followed by backlash and denial.

The storming of the US Capitol in January 2021 by supporters of Republican President Donald Trump, who lost the 2020 election to former vice president and Democrat Joe Biden, is one example of violent political backlash to social change (Bond & Neville-Shepard, 2021; Fakude, 2021; Krieger, 2021; Li et al., 2022; Temple-Ralston, 2022). Phrases like "stop the steal," and "real Americans" would "not be intimidated into accepting the hoaxes and the lies that we've been forced to believe," intermingled with cultural and racial overtones, were leveraged as justification for the storming of the U.S. Capitol (Bond & Neville-Shepard, 2021, p. 11). Some Trump supporters truly believe the election was stolen. Most Americans believe that Trump lost (Betz & Henricksen, 2023; Bond & Neville-Shepard, 2021). Still, others believe racism and the discriminatory history of American society were at the root of the insurrection (Austin-Hillery & Strang, 2021; Bond & Neville-Shepard, 2021). Whatever view a person may hold, corporations must traverse this divided political environment and navigate DEI challenges within their employee base and markets (Creary et al., 2021; Zhao & Valentini, 2022). In the United States, intolerance, sexism, and racism have long shaped political and social life, even before the writing of the Constitution and the Three-Fifths Compromise of 1787 (Kendi, 2017; Wallenfeldt, 2020).

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is another example of a violent political reaction to societal change (Masters, 2022; Mbah & Wasum, 2022). It represents a microcosm of the challenges corporations face globally in navigating regional geopolitical realities and economic opportunities in the drive for global markets and profitability (Masters, 2022; Mbah & Wasum,

2022; Zhao & Valentini, 2022). Russian President Vladimir B. Putin, noting the ethnic divide between Ukrainian citizens of Russian descent in the South and East of the country, 16% of whom speak Russian as a first language, and nationalist Ukrainians in the Western part of the country, used the supposed divide, and the country's historic ties to Russia, as a justification for ordering the Russian military to invade Ukraine (Masters, 2022; Mbah & Wasum, 2022). Other observers believe the invasion was in response to Ukrainian independence, the country's affinity for a western style economy and government more closely aligned with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries, and Russia's diminished status as a global superpower (Masters, 2022; Mbah & Wasum, 2022). In either case, corporations reacted to the invasion by withdrawing business operations from Russia. Some data suggest that the withdrawal worked in the companies' economic interest (Sonnefeld et al., 2022). Whatever the case, corporations are experiencing the need to respond to geopolitical events that have social and economic implications.

In response to global protests for social and economic parity, corporations worldwide and consortiums such as the World Economic Forum have begun to speak out publicly against discrimination in various forms (Johnson, 2021; Markovitz & Sault, 2020). Corporations affirm that diversity benefits businesses (Johnson, 2021; Markovitz & Sault, 2020). In *Diversity Matters,* published by McKinsey & Company, research indicated a "statistically significant relationship between a more diverse leadership team and better financial performance" (Hunt et al., 2015, p.1). Three hundred sixty-six companies from three continents participated. The study found a positive relationship between gender, racial diversity, and above-industry-average financial returns. The rate of return by demographic category varied by country, highlighting the importance of local cultural considerations when contemplating a diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiative. The article also tied customer orientation, employee satisfaction, and effective

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decision-making to a more diverse leadership team, leading to better-than-average corporate

financial returns. The report also discussed the importance of inclusion in addition to diversity,

although the word inclusion appeared only twice in the text. The article also spoke to the desire

of corporations to have employee demographics more reflective of customer demographics. As

the Hunt et al. (2015) research discussed above indicates, some believe effective D&I programs

are important to the corporate bottom line. It is important to note that other studies dispute a

clear link between diversity and improved corporate financial performance or indicate mixed

results (Nguyen et al., 2020; Smulowitz et al., 2019).

In a follow-up study sponsored by McKinsey & Company, entitled *Delivering Through*

Diversity (Hunt et al., 2018), a broader group of participants from 12 counties and over 1,000

companies took part. Several findings from the expanded study lend credibility to the importance

of an effective DEI program. These findings include an ongoing, positive relationship between

diversity and corporate financial performance. The study also noted the importance of local

context for successful DEI execution and an appropriate local definition of diversity. *Delivering*

Through Diversity highlights a significantly greater emphasis on inclusion as an enabler of a

diverse workforce and a weapon in the war to attract and retain talent. Multiple companies in the

survey consider DEI as a source of competitive advantage. The article blends the practical and

academic aspects of the topic by incorporating several peer-reviewed articles in the discourse.

In 2008, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) sponsored a study of

546 senior executives from 47 countries across five continents to gather data regarding the

leader's perspectives on global D&I in the workplace (SHRM, 2009). Over 250 of these leaders

were C-level, and many others were vice presidents or other leaders of stature within their

organizations. The survey indicated that 55% of this group believed their company firmly or very

strongly promotes D&I in the workplace (SHRM, 2009). The article cited several imperatives

driving D&I in the global workplace, notably the need to access a broader talent pool to address

shortages of workers in essential business areas (SHRM, 2009).

Successful corporate diversity management stands upon the foundation of inclusion,

according to Mor Barak (2015). She credits academic research for "(a) recognizing the

importance of inclusion in the context of diversity; [and] (b) laying out the theoretical

foundations for understanding inclusion" (Mor Barak, 2015, p. 83). Mor Barak (2018) also notes

that effective diversity management can help foster innovation leading to economic growth. As

derived from the research cited above, global corporate leaders and academics recognize the

importance of DEI (Hunt et al., 2015, 2018, Mor Barak, 2015, 2018; SHRM, 2009). However,

researchers also note that additional investigation is necessary to uncover nuances and create

greater insight into what makes a DEI program successful (Farndale et al., 2015; Hunt et al.,

2018; SHRM, 2009).

The international research community also notes a positive relationship between

increased workplace diversity and economic growth, noting that migration and women in the

workplace can increase gross domestic product (GDP; Bove & Elia, 2017; Ostry et al., 2018).

GDP is a widely-used metric to measure economic growth on a national scale. "GDP is defined

as the value of all final goods and services produced in a country in one year" (Bates, 2009, p. 5).

GDP correlates with improved life expectancy, a better quality of life, and a higher per-capita

income (Bates, 2009). In some research studies, higher levels of diversity demonstrate a positive

impact on a nation's GDP and economic wealth through increased female labor workforce

participation or greater levels of immigration (Bove & Elia, 2017; Ostry et al., 2018).

GDP, however, is not the absolute measure of a nation's success and well-being (Bates, 2009; Ostry et al., 2018; van Norren, 2020). Global South perspectives, such as gross national happiness, Ubuntu, and Buen Vivir, represent an effort to move away from a strictly Global North colonial perspective to incorporate other value systems into global analytics (van Norren, 2020). The vast and lucrative black-market economy generated by transnational criminal networks is an additional element beyond the scope of GDP (Gilman et al., 2011; Weiss & Wilkinson, 2018). However, the influence of the criminal economy is not addressed in this treatise.

However, as part of this treatise, the researcher acknowledges the importance of a broad perspective, including a decolonial and non-traditional lens, when evaluating global metrics. However, given the $2.1 trillion in global military expenditures by nations in 2021, led by the United States ($801B) and China ($293B), and given the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it seems probable that war or the threat of violence will continue to hold sway economically (Masters, 2022; Mbah & Wasum, 2022; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2022). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the military and policing power derived from historical factors fueled by Global North colonialism, GDP, and scientific discovery, will continue to impact the world and corporate perspectives.

As a result, this study proceeded from a decidedly Global North lens, rooted in a traditional, somewhat colonial perspective. Recent events, however, notably the COVID-19 pandemic, protests stemming from the murder of George Floyd, International Women's Day demonstrations, corporate withdrawal from Russia, and other inclusion-related protests, set the stage for a shift away from colonialism and exclusion and toward inclusive change. Therefore, this study examined the theoretical and practical foundations of DEI and investigated the

modifications made by corporate practitioners to improve the inclusiveness of their programs in light of recent societal events.

The increased awareness of the impact of racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination on specific groups of people, came at a time when the COVID-19 global pandemic was causing a worldwide recession and forcing the world to change how it operated. From an economic standpoint, 18 of the 20 largest economies in the world shrank in 2020, with global GDP shrinking overall by 3.12%, to $82.04T in current US$. China and Turkey were the only top 20 economies reporting growth in 2020 of 2.348% and 1.793%, respectively (World Bank, 2020; World Bank, 2021a). Across the 20 wealthiest countries, representing 660 million workers, 38 million, or 5.7%, filed for unemployment between January and April 2020, according to the Brookings Institute (Rothwell, 2020). The United States, Canada, Israel, and Ireland saw a double-digit increase in unemployment insurance. The US led the way, with 13% of its workers receiving unemployment insurance (Rothwell, 2020). After some economic recovery in 2021 and 2022, GDP forecasts for 2023 predict slow global growth due to inflation, increasing COVID-19 infection rates, higher interest rates, and disruptions caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine (World Bank, 2023). Therefore, corporate DEI professionals continue to navigate a time of social change and global economic challenges.

Problem Statement

Amid economic challenges fueled by the COVID-19 global pandemic and social justice protests stemming from – the murder of George Floyd, the ongoing marginalization of women, the threat of invasion, and other forms of subjugation around the world – corporations began to re-examine their efforts and the effectiveness of their DEI programs within their organizations (Johnson, 2021). From reviewing the literature, it was apparent that many corporate DEI efforts

were deemed inadequate in the eyes of researchers, an increasing number of customers and prospective employees, and the corporations themselves (Brummer & Strine, 2021; Carter, 2020; Logan, 2021; Oshin-Martin, 2021; Peña et al., 2018; Sherman, 2020). Given a global shortage of skilled workers across multiple disciplines (Binvel et al., 2018), improved DEI effectiveness may help companies address the global talent shortage and improve financial performance (Binvel et al., 2018; Hunt et al., 2018).

Purpose Statement

Considering the conflux of the events mentioned above, this phenomenological study aimed to examine what impact, if any, these occurrences had on global corporate leaders' DEI perspectives and management activities. This analysis occurred within both a theoretical and praxis framework. The literature review provides readers with the research's theoretical background and conceptual framework. The interviews with corporate leaders yield insight into their viewpoints, challenges, and tactics employed to improve DEI effectiveness within their organizations during social protest and change. This study also sought to determine what linkages executives believe exist between DEI program effectiveness and corporate performance if any. This study also examines DEI metrics and other evaluative factors and highlights common themes found in the responses.

Mor Barak (2015) indicated that additional research was necessary to bolster the understanding of inclusion and to create effective and sustainable D&I programs within organizations. Ozkazanc-Pan (2019) encouraged further research to analyze the impact of immigration on DEI. Will the post-2020 DEI changes be sustainable and genuinely inclusive? This study examined the changes that happened given the events of 2020, 2021, and 2022 and highlights corporate practitioners' use of related theories or DEI tools.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it benefits both theorists and practitioners by providing insight into global corporate leaders' efforts to navigate DEI challenges at a moment in history characterized by competing social paradigms and worldwide protests during a global pandemic, a recession, and a war in Eastern Europe. Several articles note evidence of increased attacks on social rights and diversity gains at work during times of economic hardship (Mor Barak et al., 2018; Tamamović, 2015; Vassilopoulou et al., 2019). Paradoxically, according to global human resource consulting firm Korn Ferry, the global demand for skilled workers will exceed the supply by over 85 million jobs by 2030 (Binvel et al., 2018), resulting in over $8.4T in lost revenue opportunities. So, when there is a global need for more skilled workers to boost the world economy, corporations operate in a social environment containing forces supporting and opposing DEI efforts. This study gleans insight into how corporate DEI leaders navigate this tension. Therefore, this study adds to the DEI body of knowledge by capturing the thoughts of global corporate leaders from a praxis standpoint examined through a theoretical lens at a tumultuous time in history. Both theorists and practitioners may use this study to gain insight into DEI practices and strategies driven by economic and social realities.

This research attempts to use broad diversity-related definitions that could apply globally. This study also reflects on the varied meanings of human identities and diversity concepts worldwide. These variations require global corporate leaders to be aware of international and local diversity concepts (Christian, 2019; E. C. Collins, 2012). The following section contains the definition of multiple diversity-related concepts.

Definition of Key Terms

Key terms defined in this section include diversity, equity, equality, inclusion, social justice, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, non-binary, intersectionality, emotional intelligence, or emotional quotient (EQ), inclusive leadership (IL), transformational leadership (TL), employee engagement (EE), and human capital management (HCM). Diversity, equity equality, and inclusion are obvious definitions to incorporate into research on potential changes in the paradigm of corporate leaders on DEI. Race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, non-binary, and intersectionality are key terms used to characterize human identities and their overlapping nature. EE, EQ, TL, and IL appear because all four concepts have extensive research and valid and reliable tools tying an organization's human capital management approach to corporate effectiveness and profitability. See Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C for EE, EQ, and TL tool references. HCM is a broad umbrella incorporating multiple facets of an organization's recruitment, management, and development of employees.

Ability Inequity/Person with a Disability. "(a) An unjust or unfair distribution of access to and protection from abilities generated through human interventions and (b) an unjust or unfair judgment of abilities intrinsic to biological structures, such as the human body" (Wolbring & Lillywhite, 2021, p. 6). The word disabled can describe individuals with certain limits on their abilities, but the term has a negative connotation for some (Wolbring & Lillywhite, 2021). The definition of disabled or disability in this study incorporates the Wolbring & Lillywhite (2021) sensitivities and includes physical or psychological limitations experienced by individuals in a sense relative to others within a population (author-generated definition).

Emotional Intelligence. Hay Group (2011) and Goleman (1995) defined EQ with four elements – self-awareness, self-control, social awareness, and relationship management. Self-awareness involves an accurate picture of one's strengths and weaknesses. Self-control is the ability to modify behavior to help achieve personal and organizational objectives. Social awareness is an accurate assessment of how one's actions impact others. Relationship management is the ability to manage the other elements to influence individuals.

Employee Engagement. Kahn (1990) proposed a definition with three elements: psychological safety, meaningfulness, and availability. Psychological safety is the extent to which an employee feels comfortable being their authentic self in their job role. Meaningfulness implies that an employee finds the job role and associated tasks worthwhile. Availability refers to outside job factors, such as health and happiness, facilitating an employee's ability to focus and engage within an organization. Workers engage more fully when they perceive psychological safety, meaningful work, and empowerment to bring their authentic selves and ideas to work, knowing that they, as an individual, have value to the organization (Harter et al., 2016).

Equality. For this study, a working definition of equality is when all employees receive equal (the same) treatment, regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, or another human identity status. Equality does not incorporate the notion of restitution for past discrimination or special assistance for disadvantages rooted in historical, biological, or other human factors (Espinoza, 2007).

Equity. Equity incorporates the notion that individual circumstances and personal considerations should inform the distribution of resources and opportunities. An equity lens considers the impact of historical disadvantages and discrimination, physical abilities, and

particular circumstances on individuals and groups. Equity allows for additional assistance to create equal opportunities for the disadvantaged. And in an equity environment, all employees are valued equally, regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, other human identity status, or unique needs (Espinoza, 2007).

      Ethnicity. "Associated with or belonging to a particular race or group of people," but with a subculture that differs from the primary culture of the race or country of origin (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2021a).

      Gender. The nuances of a social definition of gender and the gender vs. sex debate are beyond the scope of this study. However, the baseline binary definition for this study incorporates the notion that those born with a vagina are female gender; those born with a penis are male gender (Author generated; Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2021b). The author recognizes that some individuals choose not to identify with the gender assigned at birth or the notion of a binary definition (Gibson & Fernandez, 2018). And typically, transgender persons identify with the sex opposite to the gender assigned at birth (Gibson & Fernandez, 2018). In a small percentage of cases, sex is indeterminate at birth. And for many, gender and gender identification are synonymous, not gender and sex (Gibson & Fernandez, 2018).

      Individuals with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or other non-binary sexual orientation or identification (LGBTQ+) face significant stereotypes and discrimination in the global workplace (Haider-Markel, 2021). Of note, gender identification and the associated stereotypes are broader sociological concepts that impact equity and equality in the workplace (Risman et al., 2018). In addition, psychologists have shown that stereotypes of leadership traits overlap with stereotypes of men and masculinity but not with stereotypes of women (Schein,

2001). The result is a biased view that men better fit the profile for leadership roles than women (Risman et al., 2018; Schein, 2001).

Human Capital Management (HCM). According to Gartner Inc., a global research and consulting firm, HCM is a set of practices …focused on the organizational need to provide specific competencies…in three categories: workforce acquisition, management, and optimization (Gartner Inc., 2020).

Inclusion.

"The concept of inclusion-exclusion in the workplace refers to the individual's sense of being a part of the organizational system in both the formal processes, such as access to information and decision-making channels and the informal processes, such as 'water cooler' and lunch meetings where information exchange and decisions informally take place. (Mor Barak, 2017, p. 147)"

Inclusive Leadership. Mor Barak (2017, p.227) incorporated elements from the Shore et. al (2011) definition and her definition of inclusion to propose the following description of IL: "Inclusive leadership refers to the ability to recognize and celebrate the uniqueness of the group or organizational members, and, at the same time, promote their sense of belonging along the three inclusion dimensions of decision making, information networks, and participation in groups and the organization as a whole."

Intersectionality. Intersectionality is both a theoretical and practical framework that helps to highlight how power differentials across overlapping human identities foster various forms of oppression and advantage (Runyan, 2018). At its core, intersectionality theory postulates that a complete understanding of the impact of discrimination requires consideration

of the compound effect that multiple disadvantaged identities have on individuals and groups of people (Cho et al., 2013; P. H. Collins et al., 2021).

Non-binary. Individuals who choose not to identify with either a male or female gender identity, as neither term solely meets the definition of their sexuality (Gibson & Fernandez, 2018).

Race. Racial projects are efforts by groups and individuals to influence how human beings and social structures characterize race (Omi & Winant, 2014). According to Omi & Winant (2014), race is a social construct influenced and changed by racial projects to form the concept. The definition of race incorporates skin tone, facial features, bloodlines, other physical attributes, and cultural considerations (author generated). Omi & Winant (2014) also write that historically, racial characterizations benefitted some human identities, notably whites, at the expense of others.

Religion. A personal or organizational set of beliefs, values, or ways of living that sometimes incorporates theology, practices, and stories related to life after death. In order of global population, prominent world religions are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Other religions include Sikhism and Judaism. Significant numbers of people don't claim any religious affiliation (Ferré, 1970; Maoz & Henderson, 2013).

Sexual Orientation. A person's sexual identity or self-identification as bisexual, straight, gay, pansexual, etc.**:** the state of being bisexual, straight, gay, pansexual, etc. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2021c).

Transformational Leadership. Bass and Avolio (1994) defined transformational leadership with four elements, idealized influence, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation. Idealized influence is setting a personal example

worthy of imitation. Individual consideration is valuing and leveraging the unique attributes of an individual to achieve organizational goals. Intellectual stimulation is providing challenging assignments to team members to stretch their abilities and skills. Inspirational motivation is the ability to inspire others to buy-into organizational objectives and create an environment where individuals perform at a higher level due to intrinsic alignment with corporate goals.

Workforce Diversity.

Workforce diversity refers to the division of the workforce into distinct categories that (a) have a perceived commonality within a given cultural or national context and that (b) impact potentially harmful or beneficial employment outcomes such as job opportunities, treatment in the workplace, and promotion prospects—irrespective of job-related skills and qualifications. (Mor Barak, 2017, p. 129)

Based on the literature review, the author concludes that the definitions included are relevant for examining potential changes to corporate leaders' DEI paradigms and their organization's programs. Engaged employees perform better (Harter et al., 2016; Kahn, 1990). Emotionally intelligent transformational leaders are more effective in achieving organizational objectives and outcomes than leaders lacking these skills (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Goleman, 1995; Hay Group, 2011). Equity and equality are a desirable approach and end state for society and, by inference, for corporate DEI programs (Espinoza, 2007). The following section places these terms and concepts within a conceptual framework. The author developed the framework from the literature review. The framework will guide the examination of potential changes to the DEI paradigm of corporate leaders.

Conceptual Framework

Chapter 2's literature review features research on each area mentioned in the definitions section. The research study examined the perspective of corporate leaders on DEI using the matrix of Figure 1 as a guide. Revisions to the original framework reflect comments and knowledge gleaned from data provided by the participants. The framework served as a guide to help structure the research into the changing paradigm of corporate leaders and the effectiveness of their DEI programs.

To conceptualize global corporate DEI, the researcher leveraged the framework from *Managing Diversity* (Mor Barak, 2017). The Mor Barak (2017) framework distinguished macro, mezzo, and micro factors that impact diversity management. The author delineated the breakdown across macro-mezzo-micro aspects based on the literature. The author also noted the importance of historical elements and definitions to the research frame (Mor Barak, 2017). Research in the legislative policies classification involves international, national, and local governmental and legal activities around diverse human identities. The relevant theories classification summarizes theories the author researched in support of this treatise. Contextual factors consider global trends and select environmental elements associated with a social, political, economic, legal, intercultural, technological (SPELIT) analysis (Schmieder & Mallette, 2007). Models and tools deemed relevant for the research also appear.

Figure 1

DEI Research Conceptual Framework

Global DEI Literature Review – Conceptual Framework

Global DEI

Definitions & History

Literature Classification	Macro Factors (Global/National)	Mezzo Factors (National/Organizational)	Micro Factors (Local/Group/Individual)
Legislative policies	• UN International Bill of Human Rights • G-7 regional/national equal rights laws • Additional regional/national equal rights laws • War	• National/local implementation of corporate DEI policies • Roe v. Wade • Indian Supreme Court ruling on homosexuality	• Access to opportunity and resources • Roe v. Wade • Indian Supreme Court ruling on homosexuality
Relevant theories	• (Open) Systems Theory • Intersectionality Theory • White Supremacy • Racial Formation Theory • Critical Race Theory (Critical Othering Theory) • Emotional Intelligence • Transformational Leadership • Inclusive Leadership • Hofstede's cultural dimensions • GLOBE study	• Open Systems Theory • Intersectionality Theory • Racial Formation Theory • Critical Race Theory • Relational Theory of Workplace Inequality • Emotional Intelligence • Transformational Leadership • Inclusive Leadership • Employee Engagement	• Social Identity Theory • Realistic Conflict Theory • Racial Formation Theory • Emotional Intelligence • Transformational Leadership • Inclusive Leadership • Employee Engagement
Contextual Factors	• Economic • Demographics (longevity, immigration, population) • Migration	• Economic • Demographics/Immigration • National/Regional Culture	• Demographics • Local Culture
Models & Tools	• Gallup Q12 survey	• Emotional Intelligence Tools (ESCI, etc.) • Transformational Leadership Tools (MLQ) • DEI tools (Measure of Diversity Climate, etc.) • Employee Engagement tools (Q12, etc.) • Various employee surveys	• Emotional Intelligence (ESCI, etc.) • Transformational Leadership Tools (MLQ) • Employee Engagement (Q12, etc.) • Various employee surveys

Theoretical Framework

Beyond the conceptual lens, the author included a theoretical framework, incorporating the writer's worldview, research approach and methodology, data collection methods, tools, and research goals. The theoretical framework derives from unpublished research by Dr. Martine Jago (Jago, 2022). The graphical representation in Figure 2 lays out the study's theoretical framework.

Figure 2

Theoretical Framework for DEI Research
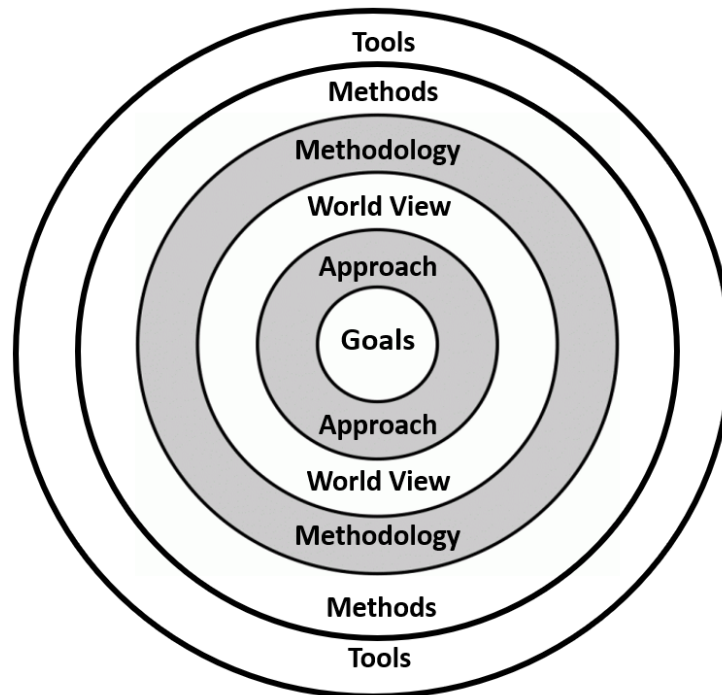
Table 1 provides additional dialogue on the theoretical framework. The goals, approach, methods, and tools are as shown. A post-positivist worldview believes that a researcher can mitigate personal bias and document reality (Guba, 1990). The constructivist paradigm notes individuals form their reality relative to their paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The researcher kept these perspectives in mind to mitigate his bias throughout the study.

Table 1

Summary Notes on the Theoretical Framework

Element	Author's Approach and Beliefs
Goals	a. Gain insight into potential changes in the paradigm and practices of global corporate DEI leaders b. Examine the impact of the changing environment on corporate DEI leaders and programs. c. Examine strategies, practices, challenges, and effectiveness of DEI programs.
Approach	Qualitative method – Analyzing executive's perspectives and behaviors in light of recent developments
World View	Constructivist – Perspective that individuals construct world views based on a personal paradigm sure to contain bias. The researcher must combat personal preference in the study and be aware of participants' potential for bias. Also, the author believes that academic rigor is essential and research should meets standards sometimes associated with a post-positivist view.
Methodology	Phenomenological – Looking for common themes from the subject's perspective
Methods	The researcher will analyze interviews with DEI leaders within a contextual and theoretical framework.
Tools	Semi-structured interview questions, coding, peer-reviewed analysis

Research Questions

Table 2 contains the research questions. This study seeks to answer the following question: What changes, if any, have executives with global responsibility in defining, measuring, evaluating, implementing, and sustaining their DEI programs made in the face of social change and evolving economic conditions? Ancillary questions include: How might an effective DEI program be designed and implemented in a global corporation evaluated post-George Floyd COVID-19 paradigm? What qualitative or quantitative measures help to determine program success? How do these metrics tie to overall corporate outcomes? What common changes in practices or approaches resulted from the social awakening post the murder of George Floyd?

The researcher believed these questions aligned with a phenomenological research methodology. Several articles, including Ozkazanc-Pan (2019), and Farndale et al. (2015), mention a phenomenological approach for future research to add depth and breadth to understanding what makes a DEI program successful. The research subjects targeted for the study were individuals responsible for DEI programs in organizations with global operations, leaders managing a multinational team of over 25 individuals, or Fortune 500 corporate board members advising CEOs on DEI. The author interviewed 16 participants. The author believed 15 interviews would yield sufficient insight into the topic to create generalizations specific to those interviewed (Saldaña, 2015). These insights may or may not be generalizable.

Table 2

Research Questions for Phenomenological Dissertation

Research Questions
RQ1: How, if at all, does your company define diversity & inclusion? (Definitions)
RQ2: How, if at all, does your company measure, track, and evaluate the success of its' D&I program? (Success Metrics)
RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any, does your company use to implement its' D&I program? (Implementation)
RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, does your company use to enhance the success of its' D&I approach over time? (Sustainability)

The questions above represent the final refinement of the initial queries after peer and committee input. The refined questions were targeted to better unearth relevant information. Ultimately, the goal was an in-depth analysis of how corporate leaders view and execute global DEI programs within international and local markets.

Limitations

The research study was qualitative in nature and descriptive. The sample size was 16. As a result, findings may not be generalizable to a larger audience. Research participants may or may not fully disclose their true feelings for many reasons. Also, all participants represented corporations headquartered in Global North countries. As a result, the research lacks perspectives from corporations birthed in developing countries. Also, most participants were US-based, limiting the global influence. No participants from Chinese-owned companies agreed to participate, although several were reached out to. Also, despite bracketing, researcher bias may nonetheless influence findings. In addition, participant paradigms may impact the results due to career stage or culture. And finally, other limitations – circumstances beyond the researcher's control – may affect the analysis.

Delimitations

Given that the research is a part of the author's Ph.D. requirements, the study's timeframe covers 2020-2022. Global circumstances for DEI are subject to change. A Global North industrialized perspective will shape the study, given the intended corporate focus. And the inclusion of followers' views is unlikely due to the emphasis on leaders' viewpoints. In addition, sample size, timeframe, and participant selection criteria also limit the generalization of the results, given its boundaries.

Assumptions

This study made the following assumptions:

1. Sixteen was a sufficient number of corporate leaders sharing their perspectives on DEI candidly enough for a meaningful phenomenological study.

2. Employee engagement, emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, inclusive leadership, and earlier supporting theories affect employee development, retention, organizational performance, and, by inference, DEI in corporations.

Positionality

As a well-educated African-American male baby boomer with over 20 years of experience in various U.S.-based organizations, the author acknowledges significant personal experience with DEI or the lack thereof in corporate settings. His experience was a factor in his interest in the topic. His lens is from a Global North perspective, framed within the existing U.S. industrial-military complex. Therefore, bracketing was a necessary tactic to help preclude bias. The author provides this disclaimer and notes a personal relationship with the study.

Organization of the Study

There are five chapters in this study. Chapter 1 incorporates a background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose, and the significance of the research. Also included are a conceptual and theoretical framework, the definition of relevant terms, the research questions, and study limitations. Chapter 2 contains a literature review on diversity, equity, inclusion, and related theories, with notes on emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, inclusive leadership, and employee engagement. Chapter 3 encompasses a discussion of the research methods of this study, including the research design study, interview protocol, and statement of personal bias. Chapter 4 includes the study's findings, information on the targeted participants, and study results. Chapter 5 contains conclusions and recommendations, including ideas for future research.

Chapter Summary

Events in 30 months, from March 2020 to August 2022, notably the murder of George Floyd, the COVID-19 global pandemic, and socio-political violence in the United States, Ukraine, and around the world, impacted the nature of human interaction and corporate DEI landscape. This chapter provides a background of this study on what changes, if any, occurred in the perspectives and activities of corporate leaders with DEI responsibility. Overall, this study sought to learn how executives with global DEI responsibility define, measure, evaluate, implement, and plan to improve their programs in the face of recent social change and evolving economic conditions. Chapter 1 also contains a problem statement, the study purpose, and the proposed research questions. This study is significant, given a global shortage of competent workers and worldwide social unrest during the early stages of a recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Corporations must navigate change and emerge with fully engaged human capital, profitability, and performance intact. Assumptions, definitions, and study limitations are also a part of this chapter. Chapter 1 concludes with the organization of the study and a summary.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

Chapter 2 contains a discourse on the conceptual framework that guided this examination of potential changes in the DEI paradigm of global corporate leaders. Multiple societal events occurred between March 2020 and August 2022 that affected corporate DEI management. Key events were: the COVID-19 global pandemic, the murder of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, MN, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and nationalistic, political violence in the United States and other countries globally. Collectively, these events resulted in a global economic downturn, international social justice demonstrations, and a review by some businesses and governments of the role corporations play in shaping a nation's diversity considerations (Brannen & Haig, 2020; Frayer & Bond, 2021; Gelles, 2021; Johnson, 2021; Lim & Sukumaran, 2020; Oriola & Knight, 2020; Ramachandran, 2020; World Bank, 2020). These events occurred as nations grappled with shifting global demographics and economic conditions (Liu & McKibbin, 2021). The storming of the US Capitol and violence against female immigrants in Greece highlight the backlash that can typify periods following social justice reform and economic upheaval (Carastathis, 2015; Mills et al., 2020; Mor Barak, 2018; Smith & Santiago, 2021; Stoll, 2008; Taylor & Katz, 1989).

The conceptual framework for this research study, derived from *Managing Diversity* (Mor Barak, 2017), organized the examination around macro, mezzo, and micro dimensions that affect corporate DEI management. Several sociological concepts, including intersectionality theory, racial formation theory, critical race theory, realistic conflict theory, open systems theory, and social identity theory, augment the lens through which the corporate leaders' DEI management paradigm was examined. Additional concepts linked to corporate management

paradigms include emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, inclusive leadership, employee engagement, and DEI-specific tools. These concepts also informed the analysis. Chapter 2 also contains the overarching research question and statement of purpose for this study.

Introduction

This phenomenological study examined what impact, if any, these occurrences had on corporate leaders' DEI perspectives and activities. This study's principal research question was: What impact, if any, did events in 2020, 2021, and 2022, notably the COVID-19 pandemic, the global social justice awakening due to the murder of George Floyd, and political violence around the world have on international corporate leaders with DEI responsibility? This research examined global corporate diversity leaders' views and experiences through a lens rooted in history and relevant theories. Through dialogue with current corporate leaders with DEI responsibility, the study identified common themes, concerns, and approaches. The examination built upon theoretical and conceptual frameworks existing in peer-reviewed literature to generate new insights. The inquiry contained herein contributes to DEI research by memorializing the leaders' experiences and perspectives at a time of social unrest in history, framed by a conceptual lens. The study also intended to capture effective practices to develop and execute corporate DEI programs.

Conceptual Framework

Mor Barak (2017) espoused a conceptual framework outlining macro, mezzo, and micro dimensions of relevant DEI influencers, models, tools, and theories. Macro dimensions include demographic trends, government policy, and global economic factors. Mezzo and micro dimensions incorporate the sociological and psychological elements of diversity and culture and

underlying theories regarding intergroup relations. Practical applications include diversity management tools and the inclusive workplace model (Mor Barak, 2017).

The notion of diversity, and the implications for corporate DEI management, vary substantially depending upon cultural, national, regional, and other contextual factors (Mor Barak, 2017; Risberg & Soderberg, 2008). Therefore, the definitions of DEI factors from Chapter 1 of this treatise represented an effort to use terms relevant to behaviors that exclude people who are considered different from receiving equal treatment in the workplace in various cultural or national settings. The attempt to employ definitions that fit a cross-cultural perspective supported this essay's international frame of reference. This research study moved back and forth between a global perspective to appropriate local application of concepts and theories.

Initially, this chapter touches upon current contextual factors, including economic, cultural, and demographic elements. Next, a brief history of global DEI legislative policies from international, regional, and national perspectives occurs. The effect of global trends and local culture on the environmental context are also given consideration. And, multiple theories relevant to DEI management receive an examination. Finally, a review of DEI-specific models, tools, and metrics occurs. Figure 3 is a graphical representation of the conceptual framework developed by the author for this study leveraging the Mor Barak (2017) model. A review of each literature classification category in Figure 3 follows.

Figure 3

DEI Research Conceptual Framework

Global DEI

Definitions & History

Literature Classification	Macro Factors (Global/National)	Mezzo Factors (National/Organizational)	Micro Factors (Local/Group/Individual)
Legislative policies	• UN International Bill of Human Rights • G-7 regional/national equal rights laws • Additional regional/national equal rights laws • War	• National/local implementation of corporate DEI policies • Roe v. Wade • Indian Supreme Court ruling on homosexuality	• Access to opportunity and resources • Roe v. Wade • Indian Supreme Court ruling on homosexuality
Relevant theories	• (Open) Systems Theory • Intersectionality Theory • White Supremacy • Racial Formation Theory • Critical Race Theory (Critical Othering Theory) • Emotional Intelligence • Transformational Leadership • Inclusive Leadership • Hofstede's cultural dimensions • GLOBE study	• Open Systems Theory • Intersectionality Theory • Racial Formation Theory • Critical Race Theory • Relational Theory of Workplace Inequality • Emotional Intelligence • Transformational Leadership • Inclusive Leadership • Employee Engagement	• Social Identity Theory • Realistic Conflict Theory • Racial Formation Theory • Emotional Intelligence • Transformational Leadership • Inclusive Leadership • Employee Engagement
Contextual Factors	• Economic • Demographics (longevity, immigration, population) • Migration	• Economic • Demographics/Immigration • National/Regional Culture	• Demographics • Local Culture
Models & Tools	• Gallup Q12 survey	• Emotional Intelligence Tools (ESCI, etc.) • Transformational Leadership Tools (MLQ) • DEI tools (Measure of Diversity Climate, etc.) • Employee Engagement tools (Q12, etc.) • Various employee surveys	• Emotional Intelligence (ESCI, etc.) • Transformational Leadership Tools (MLQ) • Employee Engagement (Q12, etc.) • Various employee surveys

Contextual Factors

To provide context for this research, the author framed the analysis from both an economic and a cultural perspective while referencing global trends. Two trends of interest were the shift in global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and world population (World Bank, 2021a, 2021b). Also of interest were national demographic shifts and the corresponding cultural impact occurring within some countries. This section also considers how variations in cultural perspective can impact the notion of human identity and discrimination. Finally, as the emphasis was on DEI within corporate settings, a brief discourse on DEI metrics and tools occurs.

Economic Context

The economic context of this study centers on corporations with multi-country operations, headquartered in Global North countries with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ranking in the top 20 for the year 2020. The 50 biggest multinational corporations globally, based on 2020 revenues or headcount, are headquartered in these countries (Fortune Magazine, 2021; Murphy et al., 2021; World Bank, 2021a). Approximately 80% of global GDP occurred within these top 20 countries (World Bank, 2021a). Therefore, considering multinational headquarters locations and GDP, the author decided to limit the analysis to countries with larger economies or a preponderance of corporations headquartered there. This study does not consider the vast and lucrative black-market economy generated by global criminal networks (Gilman et al., 2011; Weiss & Wilkinson, 2018).

National population was an additional consideration. There was some divergence between the top 20 population countries and largest GDPs. However, given this study's principal research question, the corporations' location and national GDPs were given weightier consideration than population. See Appendix D and Appendix E for a list of top GDP countries and population metrics from 1960 and 2020 (World Bank, 2021a,b). According to the World Bank (2021a), the United States alone accounted for 24.49% of global GDP in 2020. China, Japan, and India (Asia) collectively account for an additional 25.34% of 2020 GDP. The top six economies in Europe (Germany, U.K., France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland) represent 16.4% of the 2020 global GDP (World Bank, 2021a). Therefore, the author concluded that this subset of countries and regions, representing over 67% of global GDP in 2020, provided a reasonable boundary for this study.

Global Demographic Shift

Demographic shifts in the world will ultimately impact the ethnic, race, gender, and age diversity of the workplace (Liu & McKibbin, 2021). Countries worldwide, such as the United States, Japan, and several in Europe, are grappling with managing immigration and the corresponding demographic and cultural impact (Akashi, 2014; Carastathis, 2015; Christian, 2019; Ray, 2019; Srikantiah & Sinnar, 2019). Basch et al. (1995) introduced the concept of transnationalism, an examination of the dual social relations experienced by migrants who may receive racialized or ethnic benefits in their country of origin and correspondingly face discrimination in their country of settlement. Interestingly, however, some transnationals, such as the wealthy Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong to Vancouver, British Columbia, mitigated discrimination by developing social support networks that resonated with neo-liberals in their new homeland (Mitchell, 2001). In other cases, however, an increase in nationalism occurred in response to immigration and migration, fueling racism, sexism, and political violence at times (Carastathis, 2015; Dancygier & Laitin, 2014; Mor Barak, 2018; Schiller et al., 1992; Srikantiah & Sinnar, 2019).

In addition to immigration dynamics, the working-age population in the world is predicted to increase, led by Africa and Asia, with flat growth in the US and decreases in China, Japan, Korea, and parts of Europe. This demographic trend will also impact global and national GDPs and increase investment in developing countries (Liu & McKibbin, 2021). Also, life expectancy is longer globally, with the increase expected to continue, led by North America, Europe, and Oceania (Liu & McKibbin, 2021). Overall, these three factors, migration, longevity, and growth in the working-age population, will impact workplace composition, economics, national culture, and by inference, corporate DEI leaders and management.

Cultural Context

In 1980, Geert Hofstede wrote a book entitled *Culture's Consequences* outlining his cultural dimensions theory regarding national cultures and their impact in the workplace (Hofstede, 2011). His initial research looked at cultural dimensions among 88,000 IBM respondents in 70 countries worldwide (Hofstede, 2011). Subsequent studies by numerous researchers, including Costa and McCrae (1992), Hofstede (1998), House et al. (2004), Minkov (2007), and Schwartz (1994), validated much of the original research and produced similar dimensional classifications with some variations (Hofstede, 2011). The global leadership and organizational behaviour effectiveness (GLOBE) study, built upon Hofstede's original construct while modifying and expanding upon it, is another popular approach examining cultural variations in leadership approach and effectiveness (House et al., 2004).

While debate exists about which of several theories better captures the impact of cultural variation on leadership and corporate management performance, there is consensus regarding the significance of culture and its impact on organizational outcomes (Maleki & de Jong, 2014). Maleki and de Jong (2014) developed an integrated set of cultural dimensions, incorporating work from Hofstede, the GLOBE study, Minkov, Schwartz, and other researchers to synthesize insights developed over the years. The six cultural dimensions from Hofstede's modified construct appear below for illustrative purposes (Hofstede, 2011). The constructs are (a) power distance – acceptance of organizational role power differentials by lower-ranking members; high power distance indicates general acceptance of status differences afforded by role; (b) uncertainty avoidance (UA) – UA indicates how well individuals within a culture cope with an unknown future. Strong UA implies discomfort with unknowns; (c) individualism vs. collectivism – The degree to which a culture fosters individuals to view themselves as such or

more so as a part of a collective identity; (d) masculinity vs. femininity – the degree to which a culture holds a strong division of gender roles within society; (e) long-term vs. short-term orientation – the extent to which a culture encourages short-term thinking in situations vs. a longer-term societal lens; and, (f) indulgence vs. restraint – the extent to which self-gratification is viewed positively or negatively in society. In summary, economics, the global demographic shift underway, and culture provided relevant context for this study on potential changes in the paradigm of corporate leaders with DEI responsibility. The following section reviews legislative policies at the international, regional, and national levels to develop insight into how the contextual factors manifested globally, regionally, and nationally.

Legislative Policies Affecting Workplace DEI

International, regional, and national legislative policies are foundational elements that affect outgroup workplace equity and corporate DEI policies (EC, 2017; Mehrotra & Kapoor, 2009; Mor Barak, 2017; Worthington et al., 2008). This section highlights workplace equity legislation and policies from several entities, including the United Nations (international), the EU and the Council of Europe (CoE), the United States, China, Japan, and India. While important, other regions and countries, including Africa, the Caribbean, North and South America (excluding the US), Oceania, Brazil, the Russian Federation, and other parts of the world, were excluded from this study to limit the scope of the analysis . The timeframe for the legislative review is post-World War II. However, this discourse does mention select legislation and policies from earlier periods.

International (United Nations)

Following World War II's genocide in Europe, the United Nations (UN) officially began in October 1945, out of a desire by world leaders to foster peace and avoid barbarism (UN,

2021a). The founding charter received ratification from 51 original members, including France, China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States (UN, 2021a). In February 1947, a group sanctioned by the UN began drafting the International Bill of Human Rights (UN, 2021b). Several scholars regard the UN's International Bill of Human Rights as the de facto, albeit imperfect, standard to use as a benchmark for human rights globally, inclusive of the workplace (Arat, 2006; Boyle & Hughes, 2018; Mor Barak, 2017; Simmons, 2009). The term *international bill of human rights* came from a 1947 UN decision to apply the name to a series of documents that would define the agreement (UN, 2021c). Comprising the International Bill of Human Rights are the following documents: "the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR], the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [ESCR], and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [CPR] and its two Optional Protocols" (UN, 2021b, p. 2). Both the UDHR (Articles 2, 22-27) and ESCR (Articles 6, 7, 8) directly address discrimination in employment-related matters (Mor Barak, 2017; UN, 2021b).

World War II's atrocities prompted the creation of the human rights accord, with world leaders vowing that such barbarisms would never happen again (UN, 2021d). Adopted December 10, 1948, "the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR] is generally considered the foundation of international human rights law" (UN, 2021d, p. 1). The UDHR, however, is not legally binding (Parliament of Australia, 2021). Article 2 of the UDHR states in part that "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms outlined in this declaration without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or status" (UN, 2021c, p. 2). Article 23 says "everyone has the right to work," receive "equal pay for equal work," have favorable work conditions, and "to form and to join trade unions" (UN, 2021c, p. 6). At present, all member states of the UN

have signed at least one of nine international human rights treaties prompted by the UDHR, with 80% agreeing to four or more (UN, 2021c).

One of the nine treaties that support the UDHR is the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR). The ESCR was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966, with entry into force of law on January 3, 1976 (UN, 2021e). As of February 9, 2021, 171 countries have ratified the ESCR as State Parties (legally binding in those countries). Four are signatories only, who have given a preliminary endorsement to the ESCR but have not yet ratified it (not legally binding), including the United States. Twenty-two countries, including Saudi Arabia, have not agreed to the ESCR thus far (UN, 2021f).

The UDHR and ESCR, along with optional protocols, committees, and additional provisions from the International Labour Organization (ILO), form a global legislative foundation for workplace rights (ILO, 2005; UN, 2021e). Article 2 of the ESCR has a clause mirroring Article 2 of the UDHR noting that State Parties (countries) who agree will enforce the enjoyment of human rights "without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other option, national or social origin property, birth, or other status" (UN, 2021e, p. 4). Article 3 of the ESCR calls on State Parties to ensure equity between men and women with regard to economic, social and cultural rights. Articles 6, 7, and 8 of the ESCR also mirror the UDHR (Article 23) calling on State Parties to recognize and promote "the right to work," "the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work," "fair wages," equal pay for equal work, a livable wage, "safe and healthy working conditions," the right to a minimum wage, and the right to form and join trade unions" (UN, 2021e, pp.7-8). While the Committee on ESCR (CESCR) does have procedures for monitoring ESCR implementation and receiving complaints

under the Optional Protocol to the ESCR Covenant, it does not specify what remedies would be appropriate for violations (Boyle & Hughes, 2018; UN, 2021g).

The UN reiterated its commitment to workplace DEI by unanimously adopting Goal 8 of the seventeen Sustainable Development goals "in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (UN, 2021a, p. 1). Goal 8 has ten specific targets, including "decent work for all women and men," "equal pay for equal value," and protection of work rights (UN, 2021a, p. 1). The infographic for Goal 8 states, "promote sustained, inclusive and stable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all" (UN, 2021h, p. 1). However, despite the historical and clear intention of the UN and the collective member states to promote employment rights and by inference DEI in the workplace, enforcement is left up to regional and national jurisdictions. Levels of enforcement vary widely (Boyle & Hughes, 2018, UN, 2021g). Below is an examination of DEI legislation, policies, and enforcement efforts of select entities and member states at the regional or national level.

Europe (Council of Europe and the European Union)

In addition to actions by the UN to promote universal human rights, workplace rights and to preclude global conflict, countries in Europe also acted to address similar concerns. Formed by ten states (United Kingdom, Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and Italy) in May 1949 by the treaty of London, the CoE focuses on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law (CoE, 2021a). In 1961, the CoE adopted the European Social Charter, which "guarantees the enjoyment, without discrimination, of fundamental social and economic rights," including the right to work, have safe working conditions, organize, bargain collectively, and has protection for migrant workers (CoE, 2021b, c, p. 1). The charter has undergone multiple updates, including in 1996, adding additional rights

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"to protect against sexual harassment in the workplace" and ensuring gender equality (CoE, 2021d, p. 1). Today the CoE has 47 European States members, including two European governing bodies and 27 EU members. The CoE also supports and contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 8, on employment rights (CoE, 2021e).

In addition to the CoE, the EU also enacted agreements and legislation supporting a discrimination-free workplace. A precursor to the EU, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was formed by six countries (France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) in 1951 via the Treaty of Paris (EU, 2021a). The ECSC represented an early attempt to unify Europe regarding economic issues and preclude political conflict and war (EU, 2021b). In March 1957, these six countries, via the Treaty of Rome, created the European Economic Community (EEC; EU, 2021d). The EEC established a common market in Europe, inclusive of the free movement of people. Articles 117 and 118, which were early precursors to eventual EU workplace rights legislation, touched on labor law, collective bargaining, and workplace conditions, including safety.

The EEC was an evolutionary step before the formalization of the EU with the Maastricht Treaty, initially signed by 12 countries on February 7, 1992, with the force of law on November 1, 1993. In 1999, amendments known as the Treaty of Amsterdam built upon the workplace gender equality foundation of the EEC's Treaty of Rome and prior case law decisions by the European Court of Justice (ECJ; EU, 2021d; Prechal & Burri, 2009). Currently, the EU is an economic and political alliance between 27 countries in Europe spanning much of the continent, excluding the United Kingdom, which left the EU in January of 2020 (EU, 2021c). Comprising the EU are several decision-making bodies including: "the European Parliament, which represents the EU's citizens and is directly elected by them; the European Council, which

consists of the Heads of State or Government of the EU Member States; and, the EC, which represents the interests of the EU as a whole" (EU, 2021c, p. 10).

From the discussion on the CoE and the EU, it is clear that Europe has a history of legislative activity, court decisions, and policies to promote DEI in employment matters. Like the CoE, the EU also supports and contributes to the UN's sustainable development goals, including Goal 8, on employment rights. Unfortunately, however, Europe falls short of equality in the workplace. Widespread discrimination still exists (European Network Against Racism, 2018; Quillian et al., 2019; Rafferty, 2020). Multiple equality laws were adopted beginning in the 1950s, with several significant additions in the 1970s and 1990s to address gender discrimination (EC, 2008). In 2000, the EU adopted the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive (EC, 2007a, b). Collectively, these directives prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, or sexual orientation. The directives have the force of law in the EU. However, transposition of the directives into national law, interpretation, and enforcement of the statutes are up to each Member State (EC, 2007a, b). Europe has an opportunity for more progress in workplace equality matters.

United States

Like the EU, the United States has a history of enacting employee rights and anti-discrimination policies in the workplace (Aiken et al., 2013). In 1948, Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of America's 32nd President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, served on the Commission on Human Rights (Commission) as Chairperson. The Commission drafted the International Bill of Human Rights (UN, 2021h). As noted earlier, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR) contains equal opportunity in the workplace language, inclusive of gender, race, color, religion, and political affiliation (UN, 2021e). Yet, despite Eleanor

Roosevelt's early leadership role, the US is one of just four UN member states who agree with the ESCR in principle but have not yet ratified it as of May 2021 (UN, 2021f).

Early 20th-century evidence of America's evolving struggle to ensure workplace equality emerged before World War II. In 1920, Public Law No. 66-259 established the US Women's Bureau to "formulate standards and policies which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment" (US Department of Labor, 2021, para. 1). Throughout its inception period and history, the Bureau has grappled with the intersectionality of discrimination in the workplace against women, inclusive of race and age (Hendrickson, 2008).

Additionally, the passage and enforcement of the National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act in 1935 also reflect America's journey toward equality in the workplace (Klare, 1978). The Wagner Act created the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB; Klare, 1978). "Congress enacted the Wagner Act to protect the rights of employees and employers, to encourage collective bargaining, and to curtail certain private-sector labor and management practices, which can harm the general welfare of workers, businesses and the U.S. economy" (National Labor Relations Board, 2021, p. 1). The Wagner Act also authorized "affirmative action" by the NLRB to remedy labor law violations and unfair labor practices (National Labor Relations Board, 2021, Section 10c).

Other steps toward equality in the US workplace came in 1941, when African-American labor leaders, including A. Philip Randolph, persuaded President Franklin Roosevelt to issue Executive Order (EO) 8802. EO 8802 outlawed discrimination based on race, color, creed, and national origin in the federal government and defense industry. EO 9346 expanded EO 8802, making anti-discrimination in the workplace applicable to all government contractors (Aiken et

al., 2013). In 1944, the Supreme Court, with legal labor ideology shifting toward workers' rights to organize and receive fair representation from their union, sided with Negro (African American) railway workers in *Steele v. Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company* (Library of Congress, 2021). The interpretation of the Wagner Act and the Railway Labor Act by the Supreme Court represented early legal decisions supporting worker rights inclusive of collective bargaining and equal opportunity (Cornell Law School, 2020; Library of Congress, 2021; Klare, 1978).

The US sustained its evolution on workplace rights with EOs 10925/11246 in 1961 and 1965, "requiring government contractors to 'take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, …, without regard to their race, creed, color or national origin'" (US Department of Labor, 2021) Spurred on by the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act also mandated the prohibition of employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Aiken et al., 2013). Additional EO's by later US Presidents extended the prohibition of employment discrimination to sexual orientation and gender identity (US Department of Labor, 2021).

As a founding signatory to the UN' Universal Bill of Human Rights in 1948, the US has regularly agreed in principle to the ideal of equality in the workplace (UN, 2021c, p. 2). However, while the US has made progress toward equality in the workplace since 1920, it continues to fall short of these ideals into the early 21st century (Pager & Shepherd, 2008; Quillian et al., 2019). Despite legislative, executive policy, and legal precedents, inequality in the workplace is still prevalent in the US (Aiken et al., 2013; Bendick & Cohn, 2021; Hersch & Shinall, 2015; Lee et al., 2021). Other countries and regions in the world also grapple with inequality in the workplace. Given Asia's economic influence and large population base, the next

section of this document will focus on legislative, governmental, and non-governmental organizations' (NGOs) efforts to promote workplace equality within that region and the countries therein.

Asia (China, Japan, India)

In Asia, currently, there are 53 Member States and nine Associate Members in the UN's Asia-Pacific Regional Group (UN, 2021i; UN, 2021j). Collectively, the Asia-Pacific Regional group contains three of the world's five largest economies and two-thirds of the world's population in 2019 (UN, 2021j; World Bank, 2021a, b). The six economies with the highest GDP in the UN Asia-Pacific Regional group for 2019 are, in order, China (East Asia), Japan (East Asia), India (South Asia), South Korea (East Asia), Indonesia (Southeast Asia), and Saudi Arabia (Western Asia; World Bank, 2021a). The scope of this analysis focuses on DEI-related activities in China, Japan, and India, which are the three largest economies.

China. After World War II, and under the leadership of Chairman Mao Zedong from 1949-1976, the People's Republic of China (PRC) embarked upon a series of constitutional developments inclusive of national anti-discrimination legislation (ILO, 2021a; Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020). Despite the legislative efforts, however, it is generally agreed that Chairman Mao, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), were the political power base in China and not the constitution (China Labour Bulletin, 2021; Chiu, 1985). Today, some believe that China still has egregious and widespread discrimination in both government and industry enabled in part by the CCP (China Labor Bulletin, 2021; Cooke & Saini, 2012; Crotti et al., 2020; Webster, 2011). Some also consider China a significant violator of human rights nationally and a threat to individual freedoms globally (McGrath, 2020).

Although rule by law is executed in a limited fashion in China, the December 1982 draft of the Chinese constitution, nonetheless, represented a step to "provide both legal and practical guarantees that [China's] our citizens enjoy extensive and genuine freedoms and rights" (Chiu, 1985, p. 1). The 1982 Constitution also speaks of the "equality of all citizens before the law (Article 33)" (Chiu, 1985, p. 1). Since 1982, China has enacted a series of national anti-discrimination laws, with some reaffirmed by subsequent court decisions (China Labour Bulletin, 2021; Chiu, 1985; Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020). Employment-related anti-discrimination laws are at the core of China's equality efforts (Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020).

Passed in 1990, the Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities "prohibits discrimination on the grounds of disability and provides plaintiffs with legal remedies" (Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020, p. 1). The 1992 Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women guaranteed equal rights for women, inclusive of employment. In 1994, China enacted the Labor Law and the Advertising Law, which forbade discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religious belief, or gender in employment or job advertisements (Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020). Additional employment security laws enacted in China include the Employment Promotion Law (EPL) in 2007 and the Employment Service and Employment Management Regulations (ESEMR) in 2008 (ILO, 2021a; Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020).

The EPL prohibits discrimination based on ethnicity, race, gender, and religious belief. The EPL also provides some employment protections for rural workers migrating to cities. Interestingly, the EPL runs counter to the national household registration system (hukou), restricting worker migration to areas outside of their origin. While migration from rural areas to

cities partly fueled China's rapid economic expansion in the late 20th century, the generational restrictions of the hukou resulted in significant discrimination against rural workers in urban areas (ILO, 2021a; Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020). Dialect is another factor contributing to discrimination against some Chinese workers as they migrate (Gong et al., 2011).

The ESEMR provides further employment protections to women. The ESEMR also includes employment protection for citizens suffering from Hepatitis B, a malady caused by the HBV virus (ILO, 2021a; Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020). Approximately 125 million citizens in China have the HBV virus (China Labour Bulletin, 2021). Widespread employment discrimination exists in China for those affected by the HBV virus (China Labor Bulletin, 2021; Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2020; Webster, 2011).

Despite the legislative efforts, China, like India and Japan, trails western economies regarding economic parity between men and women for similar job roles (Crotti et al., 2020; World Bank, 2021c). The World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report for 2020* ranks China, India, and Japan at 106th, 112th, and 121st, respectively. These scores are out of 153 countries ranked for political empowerment, health, education, and economic participation for women (Crotti et al., 2020). In the World Bank's *Women, Business and the Law 2021 Index (WBL)*, China, India, and Japan score 81.9, 74.4, and 75.6, respectively, also trailing western economies (World Bank, 2021c). The WBL index covers 190 countries across eight dimensions, including pay and entrepreneurship (World Bank, 2021c). The following two sections will examine Japan and India's legislative, court, and NGO activities regarding workplace inclusion and equality.

Japan. After its defeat in World War II, and under the leadership of US General Douglas MacArthur, Japan developed a modern constitution espousing individual rights, remarking that

"sovereign power resides with the people" (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2021, p. 1). Notably, the concept of individual rights as sovereign posed a disconnect for a culture steeped in consensus, Confucianism, and the notion that the state is supreme (Hamano, 1999; Tamamoto, 1995, 2009, 2018). Nonetheless, the concept of the equality of members of Japanese society still began to take root in the collective psyche over time (Tamamoto, 1995). Corporate lifetime employment represented an outgrowth of the Japanese concept of equality (Tamamoto, 1995).

Yet the notions of fairness, sameness, and equality grew in a culture steeped in gender discrimination and risk aversion, with a firm separation of roles between men and women in the social order (Hofstede, 2011; Mizushima, 2017). In addition, immigrants were not among those entitled to equal rights and inclusion in the Japanese concept of social order, espoused in the constitution (Hamamoto, 1998; Tamamoto, 1995). As the world's third-largest economy, Japan began to wrestle with the need to embrace socioeconomic diversity and inclusion (Mizushima, 2017; World Bank, 2021a). The section below highlights legal and bureaucratic developments in Japan in its evolution toward a more inclusive society.

After World War II, Japan enacted laws prescribing human, employment, and social rights (Sakuraba, 2008). The foundation of the rules in the constitution was penned mainly in English by American leaders in 1946 (Hamano, 1999; Sakuraba, 2008). As of July 2021, there have been no amendments to the Japanese constitution since its inception (Council on Foreign Relations, 2021). Article 14 of the constitution mandated that "all of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin" (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2021, p. 2). Article 27 of the constitution states that "all people shall have the right and the obligation

to work" (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2021, p. 3). Article 27 also states that additional laws will set wages, hours, and working conditions.

Based on Article 27, Japan enacted the Labor Standards Act (LSA) in 1947. Article 3 of the LSA forbids discrimination "concerning wages, working hours or other working conditions because of the nationality, creed or social status of any worker" (Sakuraba, 2008, p. 182). Article 4 outlaws wage discrimination against women (Sakuraba, 2008). In addition to the LSA, Japan passed the Disabled Persons Employment Protection Act (DPEPA) in 1960 (ILO, 2021b; Sakuraba, 2008). The DPEPA prohibited discrimination against those with physical or mental limitations. The DPEPA has been updated over ten times since 1960, including enforcement provisions and penalties (ILO, 2021b).

Japan also passed the Older Personal Employment Stabilization Law (OPESL) in 1971 (Sakuraba, 2008). Amended in 2002 and again in 2004, the OPESL requires employers to extend the mandatory retirement age to a minimum of 65 years old (Sakuraba, 2008; Williamson & Higo, 2007). Additional labor law legislation in Japan includes the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL). Enacted in 1985, with subsequent revisions in 1997 and 2006, the EEOL prohibits employers from discriminating against women in dismissals, promotional opportunities, and recruitment (Mizushima, 2017). Nonetheless, the EEOL has been ineffective as a remedy to the preferential treatment of men in the Japanese workplace (Mizushima, 2017).

Japan has legislated several additional policies to foster workplace inclusion and equality, including the Child Care Leave Act of 1991, the Act Concerning the Improvement of Employment Management of Part-Time Workers of 1993, and several civil codes (Sakuaba, 2008). The Child Care Leave Act represented an effort to safeguard employment opportunities for women and, subsequently, men in the workplace who take time off to care for children.

Similarly, the Part-Time Workers Act provided protections for workers unable to devote the long-hours typical of Japanese employees. The additional municipal codes enacted locally represented an effort to bolster federal guarantees and policies prohibiting discrimination in the workplace (Sakuaba, 2008).

Yet, despite these efforts, workplace discrimination, particularly gender discrimination, remains persistent (Peillex et al., 2019). Japan has the lowest gender equality rank, inclusive of employment, of any of the world's top 10 economies (World Economic Forum, 2019). Japan has a restrictive approach to immigration, despite a population projected to decline and the need for additional workers (Akashi, 2009; Hamano, 1999; Tamamoto, 2009). Cultural and workplace bias is still prevalent against physical and mental disabilities (Takahashi, 2020). And, as of July 2021, Japan lacks national employment laws directly addressing anti-discrimination based on sexual orientation (Powell, 2019). Like China and India, Japan lags the west in anti-discrimination protection and enforcement on matters of gender and sexual identity (Crotti, 2020; World Bank, 2021c). The Gender Identity Law passed in 2003 is non-binding (Powell, 2019) and provides limited relief to the LBGTQ+ community in a country where sexual orientation is not openly discussed.

India. Similarly, India developed its modern constitution post-World War II. In 1947, after years of conflict, India received its independence from Britain (Mathew & Hooja, 2009). Full adoption of the Indian constitution occurred in January 1950, following ratification in November 1949 (Mathew & Hooja, 2009). As part of the negotiation for Indian independence, Pakistan ceded from India given the concentration of Muslims in that area vs. the predominance of Hindus in other places (van der Veer, 2021). Also, after a war for independence, Bangladesh (East Pakistan) received autonomy from West Pakistan in 1971 (van der Veer, 2021). The

historical violence and tension between Hindus and Muslims, and even within the religions themselves, color the current political debate and notions of diversity, equality, and inclusion in Indian society and the workplace (Maizland, 2020; van der Veer, 2021; Varshney, 2014). Religion is also a factor in discrimination against women in the workplace (Rao, 2012). The subsequent paragraphs highlight equality guarantees in the Indian Constitution and legislation against workplace discrimination. Examination of current challenges in the execution of national diversity initiatives also occurs.

Article one of the Indian Constitution stipulates that Bharat (India) is a Union of States. India's powers to govern are divided into legislative, administrative, and executive categories. Legislative powers are separated under Union, State, and Concurrent categories, facilitating power-sharing at the federal, state, and local levels. Articles 14 and 15 guarantee Indian citizens equality before the law and prohibit discrimination based on sex, religion, race, caste, or place of birth. Article 16 guarantees equality of public employment regardless of socioeconomic status. Article 17 expressly forbids the notion of untouchability, which is associated with the Hindu caste system. Article 25 provides for freedom of religion for all Indians. There have been about 100 amendments to the Indian constitution (Government of India, 2020).

India has citizens from multiple religions, including Hindus (79.8%), Muslims (14.2%), Christians (2.3%), Sikhs (1.7%), Buddhists (0.7%) Jains (0.37%), and others (0.66%), with a 2019 total population estimate of 1.366B (Census 2011, 2021; World Bank, 2021b). Socially, some consider Sikhs and Jains as Hindus because their religious holy ground resides within India's borders (Drèze, 2020). Spiritual homeland differentiates between India-founded religions and Jews, Buddhists, Christians, and Muslims whose holy land lies outside India. India has

approximately 200 million Muslims (Drèze, 2020). Garg (2017) opined that organizational commitment could help bridge spirituality gaps in the workplace.

India's caste system differentiates among Hindus through division into five categories. In order of social status, they are the Brahmins (teachers and priests), the Kshatriyas (rulers and soldiers), the Vaisyas (merchants and traders), the Shudras (artisans and laborers), and the Dalits (untouchables; Human Rights Watch, 2001; van der Veer, 2021). Dalits represent approximately 1/6th of the population, for over 200 million Dalits (Human Rights Watch, 2001; World Bank, 2021b). India's constitution espouses secularism and democracy as foundational elements to ensure unity across social, economic, and political lines (Census 2011, 2021; Mathew & Hooja, 2009). Yet despite progress, India still grapples with discriminatory behavior in employment, in the workplace, across multiple human identities, including gender, religion, caste, disability, and sexual orientation (Aguilera et al., 2021; Kannabiran, 2009; Keeffe & Ghosh, 2017; Khanna & Sawhney, 2020; Maizland, 2020; Tamang, 2020). A review of select legislation enacted to address historic discriminatory patterns occurs below.

In addition to foundational rights guaranteed in the constitution, India passed laws to address discrimination in society and the workplace. These laws and court decisions represent anti-discrimination legislation affecting the Indian workplace regarding gender, religion, sexual orientation, and physical disability. The Hindu Succession Act (1956, amended in 2005) guarantees women equal property, inheritance, and asset administration rights (World Bank, 2021c). The Sexual Harassment of Women in the Workplace Act (2013) outlaws sexual harassment in employment, including civil and criminal penalties (World Bank, 2021c). The Companies Act (2013) provides male and female entrepreneurs equal rights to register a business (World Bank, 2021c). The Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) and the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities Act (2016) made the government at various levels responsible for ensuring those with locomotor, visual, hearing, intellectual, mental, blood, neurological, or multiple disabilities receive equal treatment with those who not are similarly limited (World Bank, 2021c).

Additional legal or judicial actions include when the Indian Supreme Court deemed Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code unconstitutional. With its decision in 2018, the court caused the decriminalization of consensual same-sex acts. Section 377 of the Indian Penal code criminalized homosexuality as sexual behavior against the order of nature. The Indian supreme court declared the statute unconstitutional, guaranteeing homosexuals equal protection under the law (Tamang, 2020; Wijekoon et al., 2018). Also, in the court case National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India (2014) (NALSA) –India's Supreme Court wrote that transgender (Hijras) individuals are entitled to the same human rights protections as all other Indian citizens (Jain & Rhoten, 2020). Historically, Hijras were considered inherently criminal and undesirable. The Transgender Persons Protection of Rights Act (2019) prohibits discrimination against a transgender person in any form but does not provide an enforcement mechanism (Khanna & Sawhney, 2020; Tamang, 2020). Also, the Act requires transgender people to officially register and identify as such to receive a guarantee under the law. Yet despite international, regional, national, and local laws – gender, religion, caste, sexual orientation, and disability discrimination are persistent and widespread in India (Drèze, 2020). While progress has occurred, cultural and historic norms still inhibit DEI in employment in India (Cooke & Saini, 2010; 2015; Jain & Rhoten, 2020; Maizland, 2020).

Globally, legislative efforts ranging from the U.N.'s International Bill of Human Rights to *womenonmics* in Japan – an attempt to increase the number of women in corporate leadership roles (Peillex et al., 2019) – have worked to bolster DEI in the workplace. Nonetheless,

workplace discrimination remains an ongoing challenge. From a theoretical standpoint, several concepts provide perspective on the nature of challenges faced by nations, corporations, individuals, and corporate leaders grappling with the impact of discrimination on workplace DEI.

Theories providing background information for this study on potential changes to the paradigm of corporate leaders regarding DEI initiatives include intersectionality, racial formation, critical race theory, the relational theory of workplace inequality, open systems, social identity, realistic conflict, emotional intelligence, and employee engagement. From the literature, there is some overlap and linkage between these theories. While other ideas are also relevant, the concepts outlined below provided an umbrella that the researcher operated under to contribute to the collective body of knowledge.

Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality is both a theoretical and practical framework that helps to highlight how power differentials across overlapping human identities foster various forms of oppression and advantage (Runyan, 2018). As noted previously in the overview of legislative policies affecting DEI, the nature of social inequality and privilege varies across countries and regions. Human identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, accent, immigration status, and physical appearance intersect within a cultural and local context to foster advantage or disadvantage in the workplace and society (P. H. Collins, 2015). At its core, intersectionality theory postulates that a complete understanding of the impact of discrimination requires consideration of the compound effect that multiple disadvantaged identities have on individuals and groups of people (Cho et al., 2013; P. H. Collins et al., 2021). The subsequent sections highlight various intersectionality definitions, frameworks, models, critiques, and supporting theories.

Genesis

The credit for the genesis of intersectionality as a concept is typically given to Black feminist legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw (P. H. Collins, 2015; Rodriguez et al., 2016; Runyan, 2018; Śliwa et al., 2018; Steinfield et al., 2019). Crenshaw (1989) wrote an article entitled *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine; Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* (*Demarginalizing*) that appeared in the University of Chicago Legal Forum. In the article, Crenshaw (1989) focused on the unique employment challenges faced by Black women due to the intersectional nature of their experiences with discrimination stemming from their dual-axis identity of being black (race) *and* female (gender). Crenshaw (1989) analyzed employment law cases where the courts deemed black men or white females as appropriate to represent a single-axis identity, i.e., black or female. However, in other employment law court cases, black females' unique multi-axis discrimination claims were deemed inappropriate to represent either blacks or women (Crenshaw, 1989). Her treatise challenged the lens of anti-discrimination efforts as ineffective to accurately represent the intersectional nature of discrimination against black women. Crenshaw challenged the single-axis frameworks of patriarchy and racism as inadequate and contributory to the marginalization of black women. In sum, Victorian notions of white female chastity vs. racist assumptions of black female "sexual promiscuity combined to create a distinct set of issues confronting black women" experienced neither by white females nor black men (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 159).

Crenshaw (1989) notes in *Demarginalizing* that the seeds of intersectionality within feminist politics and theory stem from the early 1850s and Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?" speech at a Women's Rights Conference in Akron, OH. As a black woman, Sojourner

challenged both the notions of patriarchy (women as the weaker sex) and racism (impact of

slavery on her life) in her speech. Referencing Sojourner Truth's speech and additional historical

context, Crenshaw (1989) opined that colonialism and the lens of white privilege renders some

feminists ill-equipped to represent the interests and needs of black women adequately.

In a subsequent Stanford Law Review article entitled, *Mapping the Margins:*

Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color (Mapping), Crenshaw

(1991) expanded upon her initial conceptualization. In the treatise, Crenshaw (1991) wrote about

how single-axis identity-based analysis masked intragroup differences, obscuring the unique

challenges faced by minority women regarding rape and acts of violence. She noted that the

multiple identities of race, gender, and immigration status, combined to create a unique set of

circumstances "shaping the structural, political and representational aspects of violence against

women of color" (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1244). In broadening the intersectional lens, Crenshaw

highlighted the need to account for overlapping human identities when evaluating various forms

of discrimination in a social context (Crenshaw, 1991). She concluded that intersectionality

could help balance the need for single-axis identity politics and the unique challenges individuals

face with overlapping socioeconomic disadvantages.

Definition(s)

As the concept of intersectionality traveled the globe within feminist scholarly work,

debate arose regarding the definition of the term (Rodriguez et al., 2016; Salem, 2018). Some

Western feminists questioned the notion of race as a core intersectionality component in gender

studies, given the difference between American and European conceptualization of colorism

(Lewis, 2009). Other theorists continued to challenge the ability of Western feminism to

adequately represent the needs of minorities and other oppressed non-white women (Carastathis,

2014; Lewis, 2009; Salem, 2016). These scholars consider race and power differential as central components of intersectionality (Śliwa et al., 2018). Given the wide acceptance of the notion of intersectionality and the myriad overlapping definitions of its meaning, this dissertation will highlight a few perspectives representative of central themes of the concept with a cursory mention of opposing points of view (Carastathis, 2014; P. H. Collins et al., 2013; Runyan, 2018).

In *Mapping*, Crenshaw (1991) defined three separate forms of intersectionality: structural, political, and representational. Structural intersectionality espouses how multiple subordination impacts groups and individuals. Authored through the prism of the broader society with an inappropriate non-intersectional lens, single-axis mitigation efforts to help subordinated groups further marginalize and obscure the needs of many women of color and their experiences with subjugation (Crenshaw, 1991). According to Crenshaw (1991), an example of structural intersectionality is how poverty in minority communities renders rape crisis counseling less effective due to a funding allocation model designed for the majority community. The funding model assumes the likely prosecution of the perpetrator(s) in court. Therefore, funding is allocated for the rape crisis counselor to accompany the victim to court. Black and Brown women, however, who are more likely to be raped than their white counterparts, are less likely to report the crime. Black and Brown women are also less likely to have their cases come to trial (Crenshaw, 1991). This systemic or structural mismatch overlooks Black, Brown and poor female rape victims' unique needs in a system tailored to meet the needs of their more affluent counterparts.

Similarly, political intersectionality highlights the disconnect occurring because women of color often belong to two subordinated groups whose political goals may appear incongruent (Crenshaw, 1991). In an extensive conversation on the intersection of race and violence against

women, Crenshaw notes that a single-axis lens of gender or color marginalizes Black men and women, where an intersectional analysis would shine a light on the unique challenges faced by both. For example, Crenshaw (1991) writes that the political implications of an in-depth discussion on domestic violence in the Black community risk contributing further to the stereotype of Black men as violent. However, the lack of said discussion further marginalizes female victims of domestic violence within the Black community. An intersectional lens would facilitate meaningful dialogue on the relationship between race and domestic violence to examine the impact of racism on Black men while supporting an examination of violence against women within the community. Crenshaw (1991) implies that awareness of intersectional dynamics might improve the effectiveness of rape counseling and other similar programs in disadvantaged communities.

As an extension of her analysis, Crenshaw (1991) defined representational intersectionality as occurring when gender and race are framed as single-axis factors to exclude one another. Crenshaw (1991) states that oppressive power that marginalizes women and minorities is more substantial when representational intersectionality occurs. In her example, Crenshaw opined that the obscenity prosecution of 2LiveCrew in Florida was racially motivated. She noted that no criminal prosecution of obscene white artists like Andrew Dice Clay occurred. Yet, in the social outcry over obscenity, little consideration was given to the portrayal of black women, the group most injured by the vulgarity. According to Crenshaw (1991), an intersectional lens would have shone a light on how black people in America face unfair treatment both as men (2LiveCrew) and as women – with females facing dual oppression from bias representations inclusive of both gender and race.

Subsequently, Cho et al. (2013) elaborated on Crenshaw's (1991) earlier conception of intersectionality, noting it had become a burgeoning field of study as the concept traveled globally and into multiple academic arenas. In building on Crenshaw's (1991) definition, Cho et al. (2013) noted three areas in the field of intersectionality, including political activities leveraging the concept, application of an intersectional framework to research projects, and debate over the use of intersectionality as a theoretical construct. Cho et al. (2013) believe that intersectional political projects and their practical application inform the theoretical construct and visa-versa. Cho et al. (2013) referenced practical applications in several areas as a catalyst for change in the theoretical construct. They also note that applying an intersectional approach to examining situations in which compound discrimination exists is common. They specifically mention the workplace and reproductive rights as areas of interest in research and teaching projects. Finally, Cho et al. (2013) acknowledge the ongoing debate and controversy surrounding to what extent, if at all, intersectionality meets the formal requirements of a social theory with an acceptable research methodology.

Similarly, given the ongoing debate regarding the proper definition of intersectionality and to frame the myriad research conducted under its banner, P. H. Collins (2015) characterized intersectionality as a "broad-based knowledge project" occurring through three interdependent lenses (P. H. Collins, 2015, p. 3). She categorized these lenses as (a) an academic field of study "situated within the power relations it studies" (P. H. Collins, 2015, p. 1); (b) a critical praxis for social justice activities; and (c) an analytic strategy to examine social inequality. As an academic field of study, the debate continues regarding the proper definition of intersectionality, given its roots in analyzing social inequality and power differential facing minority women in the United States. These minority-centered roots clash with the Western, feminist, academic perspective that

is somewhat devoid of race/ethnicity and power central to the definition (P. H. Collins, 2015; Runyan, 2018; Salem 2016; Śliwa et al., 2018). P. H. Collins (2015) quotes research from Edward Said and others, noting that theories often lose their original critical perspective as they travel across continents and subject matters. The misappropriation of the ideas serves to maintain the (academic) power structure under examination (P. H. Collins, 2015). P. H. Collins (2015) notes that beyond the academy, however, practitioners are not waiting for a theoretical, agreed-upon definition of intersectionality before using it as a tool to advocate for social justice.

As a critical praxis, P. H. Collins (2015) states that social justice practitioners, such as those in the UN, use an intersectional lens to frame projects addressing inequality. According to P. H. Collins (2015), several articles from the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) allude to an intersectional perspective. P. H. Collins (2015) notes that Articles 1 & 2 of the UDHR state that everyone is entitled to enjoy freedom and rights regardless of race, color, gender, religion, language, or other forms of difference. She notes that claims for human rights violations under the UDHR banner may align well with an intersectional lens. Collins (2015) also comments that local, grassroots organizations focused on disadvantaged populations leverage intersectionality to serve their target constituents. Additionally, P. H. Collins (2015) discusses more formal organizations, such as the Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, using an intersectional framework to drive social change in Canada's health policies.

Despite the debate over a precise definition from an academic perspective, P. H. Collins (2015) underscores the plethora of researchers using intersectionality as an analytical strategy to examine power differentials between groups that stem from their multiple identities. P. H. Collins (2015) notes six categories in the burgeoning arena of intersectional analysis. One variety of intersectional analyses moves past race and gender to incorporate other potential areas of

disadvantage such as age, religion, sexuality, and national origin. P. H. Collins (2015) notes four

additional categories of intersectionality as an analytical strategy, including the impact of

violence, conceptualizations of identity, research methodologies, and epistemological concerns.

P. H. Collins's (2015) final category of intersectionality as an analytical strategy examines work,

family, and other groupings to shed light on occupational segregation and complex social

inequalities. P. H. Collins (2015) cites Tomaskovic-Devey's (2014) relational theory of

workplace inequalities (RWTI) as an example of this category.

Relational Theory of Workplace Inequality

Built upon Tilly's (1998) relational inequality model, the RTWI states that four dynamic

organizational processes – exploitation, opportunity hoarding, resource pooling, and claims-

making – foster durable discrimination within organizations stemming from relationship access

or the lack thereof (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014). The RTWI states that job role exerts a strong

influence on an individual's ability to foster relationships foundational to career progress. A

preponderance of identity groups in a job role may aid or hinder an individual's career growth,

access to organizational assets, and the credibility of their claims to those resources. According

to Tomaskovic-Devey (2014), the four processes can also create a path for greater equality

across an organization. A review of each process is below.

Exploitation is the ability of some individuals within an organization to capture value

from the contributions of others (Tilly, 1998). Tilly (1998) also said that perceptions of social

worthiness deem some categories of individuals as more worthy than others to capture

organizational value through exploitation. Power differentials between the privileged and the

subjugated result in a disproportionate distribution of resources that allows one group access at

the expense of the other. One example of exploitation is the undervaluing of female-dominated

job roles within a company (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014). A second example is the exploitation of undocumented workers as a cheap labor source. A third example of exploitation is when organizations reallocate capital to owners, executives, and investors in a manner that undervalues production workers. Labor unions and collective bargaining agreements are a response from production workers to this form of exploitation (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014).

Opportunity hoarding, from the work of Tilly (1998), is the mechanism through which the cumulative gains of exploitation are realized through preferential access to select job roles and positions of power (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014). Groups in power hoard opportunities and resources for those with similar categorical identities through relational access and social mores that deem them more worthy than dissimilar individuals (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014). The resulting "inequality order" becomes entrenched in organizational processes and dynamics as a socially acceptable means of distributing resources based partly on historical and categorical perceptions of worthiness (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014, p. 52). The inequality order becomes replicated throughout an organization as part of its culture, influenced by the broader society in which the entity exists. An example of opportunity hoarding was the monopolization of managerial and leadership roles by white males in the United States before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014).

A second example was how relationships within a homogeneous social network result in jobs for in-group members and the exclusion of outsiders. The selection process of top-tier consulting firms and investment banks who sought "good cultural matches" "from Ivy League schools" is an example (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014, pp. 59-60). Hiring managers excluded people perceived as inferior or different from these job roles. In addition to opportunity hoarding,

Tomaskovic-Devey (2014) added two additional dynamic organizational processes – resource pooling and claims-making to further elaborate on Tilly's (1998) work.

In a discussion on neoliberal notions of a free market economy, Tomaskovic-Devey (2014) describes organizations as "resource-pooling units" (p. 55) that leverage social relationships in the marketplace to manage competition under various forms of government regulation. Resource pooling involves the accumulation of profits and other forms of value by organizations for distribution to members via claims-making. He elaborates on the power differentials and how organizational value pools reflect an imperfect market influenced by social relationships and firm productivity. In summary, historical positions of power and influence by organizations within the broader social context are factors in a firm's ability to pool resources and the company's competitive prowess.

The legitimacy of claims filters through the lens of organizational dynamics. Within the organization, the distribution of pooled resources by claims-making of stakeholders happens due to power relations and other social and positional factors. Owners, employees, unions, and other stakeholders make competing claims on the organizations' resources. Profit distribution, wages, salary increases, and perceptions of job performance reflected in promotional opportunities are some of the ways stakeholders make claims (Tomaskovic-Devey, 2014). RTWI contends that the four organizational processes foster durable inequality by validating the claims-making of the in-group resulting in an unfair distribution of resources stemming from relationship access or the lack thereof.

In the continued discourse on RTWI, Thomaskovic-Devey (2014) applied an intersectional lens to examine inequality regimes in Sweden, Japan, and the US. He notes that an intersectional lens better analyzes organizational relationships in different cultural contexts by

examining overlapping categorical identities to highlight sources of both advantage and disadvantage for stakeholders. A specific example was black male professionals in fields dominated by men. Such individuals benefit from being male combined with a drawback from being black. Thomaskovic-Devey (2014) opines that an intersectional analysis holds the key to disrupting the durability of categorical inequalities through improved awareness of underlying sources of advantage and disadvantage. The improved approach provides insight into processes built upon social relationships and can reveal approaches to eroding inequality regimes.

In addition to RTWI, several other theories and frameworks support the multi-axis analytical lens of intersectionality as a knowledge project and research strategy to investigate notions of sameness, difference, power differentials, and discrimination against those who are unique. Some of these other theories include racial formation theory, systems theory, and realistic conflict theory. Smith's (2016) Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy is one framework of interest. This framework and the theories listed above appear below.

Heteropatriarchy and White Supremacy

In an article entitled *Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy* (Heteropatriarchy), Smith (2016) employs intersectionality as an analytical strategy to articulate a framework to combat inequality (P. H. Collins, 2021). In her discourse, Smith (2016) frames discriminatory politics in the US involving gender and race under an umbrella of white supremacy with three distinct yet intersecting pillars: slavery/capitalism, genocide/colonialism, and orientalism/war. Like Crenshaw (1991), Smith (2016) makes a case for a multi-identity lens when defining and examining the impact and nuances of subordination. Smith's article explicitly mentions the effect of racism and sexism on blacks, indigenous peoples, and non-white

immigrants. She urges minority groups to rethink how people of color oppose oppression. Smith (2016) says that each group (Blacks, indigenous folk, and non-White immigrants) should consider the others when formulating anti-racism and anti-sexism strategies so that the decided-upon approach does not marginalize different people of color.

Smith (2016) gave an example of US minority citizens fighting unjust wars against colored peoples in foreign lands. Black civil rights leader Stokely Carmichael expressed a similar concern in 1966 when he said: "Why should Black folks fight a war against Yellow folks so that White folks can keep a land they stole from Red folks" (Fatsis, 2016, para. 13)? Muhammad Ali pointed out a similar concern in later interviews in which he said, "I don't have no personal quarrel with those Vietcongs." He later stated, "No Vietcong ever called me Nigger!" (Fatsis, 2016, para. 1,2). Smith (2016) says that marginalized men and women of color should reject the promise of greater power to one subordinated group (benefits of military service) for participation in the oppression of another (colonial wars). She noted that recognizing the intersectional nuances of racism and sexism between different minority groups would benefit those working to identify and overcome oppression.

As an example, Smith (2016) elaborated on the slavery/capitalism frame, which sees black people as "inherently slave-able" and nothing more than property (Smith 2016, p. 67). Essentially, this frame pushes blacks to the bottom of the economic and racial hierarchy, allowing other minorities to feel superior because "at least they are not slave-able" (Smith 2016, p. 67). In a comparably oppressive manner, the genocide/colonialism frame supports eradicating indigenous peoples to justify claiming their land and resources by non-indigenous people. The lens justifies colonialism to take away the land of people who are no longer there or who oppressors claim were never there in the first place. Similarly, the orientalism/war frame renders

foreigners of color, i.e., Asians, Latinos, and Arabs, as exotic, inferior, and "posing a constant threat" to the security and sovereignty of the nation (Smith, 2016, p. 68). Therefore, the West must defend itself from the foreign invaders.

The heteropatriarchy framework encourages minorities, women, homosexuals, and other oppressed peoples not only to coalesce around "shared victimization" but also to resist complicity in the "victimization of others" (Smith, 2016, p. 69). The article does not negate race's black/white binary with multiculturalism. It does, however, encourage a multi-lens look at all forms of oppression. The report implores diverse peoples to find alternative ways to frame their racial projects in opposition to discrimination in a manner sensitive to gender, race, sexual orientation, and other differences.

Racial Formation Theory

Omi and Winant (2014) opine that an examination of race is compulsory to understand discrimination and social relations in the US. They write that race is an evolving social construct, influenced and changed by racial projects. They also say that the definition of race provided the basis for discrimination throughout American history. Historically, racial characterizations benefitted some human identities, notably whites, at the expense of others. According to Omi and Winant (2014), racial projects, such as those described by Smith (2016), are efforts by groups and individuals to influence how human beings and social structures characterize race.

Racial projects can be an individual endeavor or society-wide in scale. Racial projects reflect the prevailing thought and characterization of race within the timeframe and culture in which they occur. Examples of racial characterizations or projects include restrictive voting laws that disproportionally impact black voters, portrayals of migrant workers and immigrants, individual hate crimes, BLM protests, and conservative backlash against critical race theory.

Racial projects collectively are broad in scope, occurring on both ends of the political spectrum. Omi and Winant (2014) consider racial projects "the building blocks of the racial formation process" (p. 13).

Racial formation is "the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed" (Omi & Winant, 2014, p. 108). A simple definition is that racial formation represents the summation of racial projects within a culture. Omi and Winant (2014) note the impact that racial projects by the black community and its supporters had on the definition of race and racism in the US. The effect includes identifying colorblindness and neoliberalism as evolved forms of racism. Racial formation theory explains how the interpretation of race influences government programs and policies, individual identities, organizational dynamics, and society. Similar to Smith (2016), Omi and Winant (2014) highlight the dynamic tension between various race, gender, and sexual orientation support groups agitating for more equity and inclusion in American society. At times, these groups may take positions that marginalize one another. Feagin and Elias (2013) wrote a critique of racial formation theory, stating in essence that it did not go far enough in calling attention to the depth of systemic racism embedded in American society.

While Omi and Winant (2014) wrote initially from an American paradigm, they, and other researchers, considered global applications of racial formation theory to examine subjugation by race, gender, ethnicity, immigration status, and other intersectional identities (Basch et al., 1995; Christian, 2019; HoSang et al., 2012; Kim, 2008; Okihiro, 2016; Omi & Winant, 2012; Saperstein et al., 2013; Winant, 2006). Omi and Winant (2014) reference the "race/class/gender/nation and the intersectional" (p. 75) nature of oppression. Basch et al. (1995)

write about transnationalism, where the intersection of immigrant and minority status may create social detriments or benefits for individuals in a society.

Christian (2019) conceptualized these social benefits or detriments as a matrix of countries and groups differentiated by perceptions of their whiteness. Whiteness, or the lack thereof, results in racist inclusion or exclusion on a global scale. See Appendix F for her graphical depiction. According to Christian (2019), the foundation of these perceptions is white supremacy. In essence, the blacker a country or group's social identity, the greater the extent of racist exclusion. Christian (2019) frames this global white supremacy lens as a racial project in a colorblind, neoliberal, caste-blind age where whiteness controls the world's political and economic systems.

According to HoSang et al. (2012), Omi and Winant's (2014) application of racial formation theory to the concept of colorblindness fostered the use of the theory to a broader set of research endeavors addressing racial inequality. HoSang et al. (2012) also write that the emergence of colorblind, neoliberal, racial projects neuter discussions of racism and racial inequality. HoSang et al. (2012) cite several theorists using racial formation as part of an effort to form global conceptualisms of race and racial inequality. They further expound that racial formation theory is an underlying concept that scholars employ to frame intersectionality as a field of study by characterizing the dual-axis identities of race and gender. HoSang et al. (2012) also mention the challenges of a global race theory because definitions and conceptualizations differ across cultures and nations.

P. H. Collins (2015) drew upon racial formation theory to reinforce the legitimacy of intersectional knowledge projects inclusive of race as worthy of publication in academic journals. According to P. H. Collins (2015), the academic community regularly marginalizes the

scholarship of minority researchers, whose lens challenges the status quo. P. H. Collins (2015) highlights that intersectionality scholarship is oft a racial project situated in the social structure that it critiques. Thereby the research gets viewed as illegitimate in that it challenges current cultural mores and values. According to P. H. Collins (2015), by leveraging racial formation theory, multiple lenses may advance to create an intersectional body of knowledge deemed worthy of academic cannon. Also, according to P. H. Collins (2015), given the evolving social construction of race, racial formation theory accounts for change over time in the human identities benefitting from an intersectional analysis via its consistent focus on "power relations and social inequalities" (P. H. Collins, 2015, p. 3). As noted earlier, P. H. Collins (2015) opines that for women of color – race, class, and gender are inseparable when examining social inequality.

Critical Race Theory

Other theorists also note the intersectional nature of discrimination based on race, gender, or class. They also consider intersectionality a foundational critical race theory (CRT) component. Some seminal theorists of CRT are former Harvard Law School professor Derek Bell and Kimberlee Crenshaw, whose work on intersectionality is considered by many as a core component of CRT (Bell et al., 1995; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 1993).

Rabaka (2021) regards the intersectional, yet sometimes contradictory, writing of early authors, such as W. E. B. DuBois, as foundational to critical race theory (CRT). Ladson-Billings (2021) believes CRT's interest convergence principle reflects the intersectional nature of class and race. Weiner (2012) notes that globally, race interacts with gender, class, and sexuality to foster the dominance of majority groups over those from marginalized identities. Weiner (2012) sought to develop a framework for scholars to expand critical race theory and examine the

impact of race and racism within a national context, leveraging terminologies and tools that would translate globally.

The nature of the discrimination impacts individuals from various subjugated groups differently. In advancing his thesis on critical race theory as a useful global construct, Weiner (2012) offered ideas to scholars to document "the different processes, mechanisms, trajectories and outcomes of potentially racialized practices that essentialize, dehumanize, ''other,'' and oppress minority groups while imbuing privileged groups with power and resources in nations" (p. 332). He developed ten indicators to help researchers examine racialization in a national context, including citizenship, state control, and political discourse.

According to Ladson-Billings (2021), at its core, with roots in a Black American lens, critical race theory has six components. The components are racism as normal, interest convergence, race as a social construct, intersectionality and anti-essentialism, and voice or counter-narrative. Below is a brief definition of each component.

Racism as normal implies that bigotry is not an aberration but instead the normal state of affairs in America, a symbiosis between racism and culture woven into the fabric of most systems and institutions (Ladson-Billings, 2021). According to legal scholar Derrick Bell, the Father of Critical Race Theory, interest convergence is the notion that white people seek racial justice for marginalized groups only when it is in their interest to do so (Ladson-Billings, 2021,). Race as a social construct aligns with the work of Omi and Winant (2014), noting that there is no scientific basis on which to define race – it is a social construct. Intersectionality considers the compound impact of racism on individuals with overlapping human identities, such as race and sexual orientation (Runyan, 2018). Essentialism implies that all individuals from a given human identity think and act alike. Voice or counter-narrative is when individuals from marginalized

groups opine experiences with racism from their lens and not the perspective of the broader society. It is not a protest as much as it is the use of storytelling to create common ground with others to help them gain insight into the realities of racism and discrimination (Ladson-Billings, 2021). As a concept, CRT holds promise for examining racism and bigotry for marginalized groups navigating a global system of oppression and injustice (Christian, 2019; P. H. Collins, 2015; Meghji, 2022).

Systems Theory

In examining the global system of oppression and injustice, systems theory can provide a framework to analyze how systems in society overlap, interact and change. Von Bertalanffy (1972) and Capra (1996) advocated systems theory as a holistic approach to characterizing and understanding complex phenomena across various disciplines, including biological science, organizational behavior, sociology, and psychology. Von Bertalanffy (1972) defined a system as a complex interaction of elements describing a whole. Capra (1996) defined a system as a holistic model of phenomena beyond a summation of the individual parts. Mele et al. (2010) characterize systems theory as dynamic, interdisciplinary, and comprehensive, applicable to the analysis of all systems in nature and society.

Application of systems theory to oppression frames how individual, local, national, and regional racial projects interact to foster a dynamic global system of racialized, gendered, and difference-based discrimination (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Omi & Winant, 2014). Bonilla-Silva (1997) further opines a racialized social systems perspective, where interaction among social systems stemming from racialized definitions creates a society's racial structure. Human identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, accent, immigration status, and physical appearance intersect within a cultural and local context to foster

advantage or disadvantage in the workplace and society (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; P. H. Collins, 2015). Weber (1947) opines that practical analysis requires "relating the problems of the dynamics of the whole to the motives of individuals" (p. 24). Applying systems theory to social dynamics is appropriate for the reasons noted in this paragraph.

Given this treatise's examination of potential changes to the paradigm of corporate leaders' perspectives and behaviors regarding DEI, an organizational application of systems theory is also in order. Mele et al. (2010) characterize open systems theory as the interactive relationship between organizations and their ability to navigate change. Unlike closed systems often associated with thermodynamics or physical science, open systems are dynamic, usually biological, and characterized by continual change (Carpa, 1996). Organizations and the surrounding environment interact, causing companies to react to environmental changes (Mele et al., 2010).

Researchers such as Carpa (1996) believe that organizations evolve and interact with their environment the same way as living creatures do. Theorists such as Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) used a lens like open systems theory to examine the dynamic between complex systems and the external environment in which they operate to help organizations better manage change. Katz and Kahn (1978) also championed the open systems approach applied to the study of organizations' interaction with external environmental forces. Katz and Kahn (1978) distinguish between phenomena subject to observation and conceptualization, referring to ideas and theories. Environmental scan techniques such as social, political, economic, legal, intercultural, and technological (SPELIT; Schmieder & Mallette, 2007) and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT; Gürel & Tat, 2017), stand on the foundation of open systems theory. Change management models, such as those derived from observation by Kotter (1995) and Kübler-Ross

(1969), build upon both general leadership and open systems theories. Therefore, systems theory, specifically open systems theory, provides a backdrop for this treatise regarding organizational dynamics.

As noted earlier in this essay, the RTWI also speaks to organizational dynamics, with specific attention to relationally based in-group and out-group behaviors resulting in workplace discrimination (Thomaskovic-Devey, 2014). In-groups use marginalization tactics to deny out-group members access or claim to organizational resources (Thomaskovic-Devey, 2014), such as promotions, raises, or influential leadership roles. Two additional concepts, relational conflict theory and social identity theory, also characterize in-group and out-group dynamics in groups and organizations. An overview of each theory appears below.

Realistic Conflict Theory

Realistic conflict theory (RCT) states that opposing goals, either real or perceived, cause groups to have conflict. Conversely, goals that require cross-group collaboration tend to reduce conflict (Sherif et al., 1961). Sherif et al. (1961) developed RCT from his Robber's Cave experiment conducted on two groups of boys from the same social strata. In separating the boys into groups with competing goals over limited resources, Sherif et al. (1961) observed the intergroup conflict, hostility, and discriminatory behaviors that ensured. Conversely, when forced to work together to solve a problem impacting both groups, the boys' in-group and out-group behaviors diminished, as the superordinate goal unified them around a common challenge. Sherif et al. (1961) also noted that identity and social interests factor into in-group identification and behaviors. Subsequent research by numerous others, including R. R. Blake and Mouton (1961), Bobo (1983), R. G. Hunt and Bowser (1996), and Tyerman and Spencer (1983), validated Sherif's initial postulation of RCT.

Dovidio and Gaertner (2000) built upon Sherif's (1961) RCT through the development of the Common In-Group (CIG) model. The CIG model stresses that moving competing groups from us vs. them to we mentality involves an emphasis on scenarios in which both groups achieve positive benefits. The CIG model highlights three elements to prompt inclusionary behaviors: acknowledging and appreciating group differences, decategorizing others by focusing on their individuality, and recategorizing all parties into an inclusive group centered on commonalities (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). Subsequent research supported the CIG model and the notion that creating an inclusive group identity resulted in less bias in behaviors (McKenzie & Twose, 2017).

Building further on Sherif's work, McKenzie and Twose (2017) postulated that moral education around ethical behaviors may also help to reduce intergroup conflict. Additional factors that influenced intergroup identification and behaviors included personality, group dynamics, historical, social perspectives, and societal, environmental factors (McKenzie & Twose, 2017). Intergroup membership and behaviors, combined with societal and environmental factors, are building blocks in the conceptualization of social identity theory, discussed in the following section.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (SIT) is a framework on the impact of group membership on individual self-image and in-group favoritism, and outgroup discrimination (Turner et al., 1979). Turner et al. (1979) proposed that group membership is a component of an individual's sense of self-worth and esteem. Individuals acknowledging membership within a specific social group align with its mores, values, and behaviors (Hogg, 2018). The process of individual social alignment is known as self-categorization (Stets & Burke, 2000). Social comparison is an

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application of categorization and additional elements to determine if other individuals meet the standards for group inclusion (Stets & Burke, 2000). Unfortunately, it appears that stereotypes accompany the social classification process (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Social groups believe themselves to be members of a category that collectively shares a similar social status. Social groups tend to bestow greater or less worth on other factions, depending upon their associated status within the broader society (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). People within a given social group tend to exhibit in-group favoritism and outgroup discrimination (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). The ability to move from an outgroup to an in-group varies. SIT also incorporates the idea that groups' mere existence can lead to conflict (McKinzie & Twose, 2017).

Studies have shown that individuals may experience organizational identification when applied to corporations, which is a derivate of SIT. Such individuals derive self-esteem, worth, and a sense of organizational commitment from membership in a *particular* organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Other individuals, however, experience high levels of organizational commitment stemming from the internalization of the company's core values. These individuals may more easily align with other organizations that share the same values (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

In both cases, whether identification or internalization occurs, in-group favoritism was demonstrated by employees in company workgroups. Out-group discrimination was mitigated by an employee's overall organizational commitment level (Hennessy & West, 1999). The evidence also indicated that in-group familiarity impacted resource allocation more than out-group discrimination. Ethical considerations also appear to play a role in mitigating favoritism and outgroup marginalization. However, ethics alone was not enough to offset personnel tendencies to trust investment in more familiar opportunities (Hennessey & West, 1999).

Additional theories that impact an individual's sense of belonging in an organization include Emotional Intelligence also called the Emotional Quotient (EQ), Inclusive Leadership (IL), the transactional – transformational leadership (TL) style continuum, and Employee Engagement (EE). These additional concepts complete the theoretical lens for this study. An overview of each concept appears in the next section.

Organizational Leadership Theories

Emotional Intelligence

Following early writings by Beldoch (1964) and Gardner (1983), Salovey and Meyer (1990) postulated through research a concept that became known as Emotional Intelligence or EQ (Brackett & Salovey, 2006). They and other theorists posited that cognitive intelligence alone did not guarantee interpersonal effectiveness. Later popularized by Goleman (1995, 2018), and others (Bar-On, 2006; Byrne et al., 2017; Palmer et al., 2009). EQ includes four components – self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. A working definition of EQ appears in Table 3.

Table 3

EQ Components and Competencies

EQ Component	Emotional Competency
1. Self-awareness – Awareness of personal strengths, weaknesses, biases, and behaviors and their impact on others	* Self-awareness
2. Self-management – Ability to manage personal behaviors based on awareness of self	* Self-control * Goal orientation * Perspective and outlook * Adaptability
3. Social awareness – Self-aware and aware of the emotional state of others during interactions and social settings	* Empathy * Social awareness

4. Relationship management – Ability to manage the dynamic between self and others, leading to desirable outcomes	Influence others through:
	   * Coaching * Mentoring
	   * Conflict resolution * Inspiration
	   * Teamwork

From *Doing it Right: Developing Procurement Talent for the 21st Century* (p. 104), by C. E. Bray, 2019, (Publication No. 13904649) [Doctoral dissertation, Pepperdine University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Copyright 2019 by C. E. Bray. Reprinted with permission.

Although not unanimous in agreement, multiple studies indicate that EQ is an essential component of effective leadership and organizational performance, contributing to a sense of inclusion in subordinates (Kerr et al., 2006). In addition, other studies indicate a high level of emotional intelligence is beneficial to fostering diversity, inclusion, and positive performance outcomes in the workplace (Ali, 2021; Bray, 2019; Gardenswartz et al., 2010; Paruchuri & Asadullah, 2018; Stough et al., 2009). Given studies that highlight the importance of EQ to a leader's ability to create an inclusive workplace, EQ theory also informed this study on DEI management.

Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive Leadership (IL) theory is also associated with a principal's ability to create a sense of belonging for individuals in an organization, including those from historically marginalized groups, such as ethnic minorities, women, people with disabilities, and those from other human identities who face negative bias in their social context (Hantula, 2009; Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2020; Ryan, 2007; Shore et al., 2011; Shore & Chung, 2021; van Knippenberg & van Ginkel, 2021). Like other leadership concepts, the definition of IL evolved (Hollander, 2012). Multiple perspectives form the collective meaning of IL presently (Mor Barak et al., 2021). The following sections touch upon the evolution of IL as a concept and include several definitions to provide a broader perspective of the theory. Also, an examination of the relevance of IL to DEI occurs.

IL Conceptual Evolution. In a 1978 article entitled *What is the crisis of leadership?* Edwin Hollander opined that followers are more important to leadership research than the traditional leader-centric view indicates (Hollander, 2012). Hollander wrote about the role of followers and their perception of the leader as crucial components in a group's ability to achieve

collective goals. Hollander focused on the leader-follower relationship, emphasizing the dynamic nature as symbiotic and not confined to a traditional categorization of leadership traits, behaviors, influence, or styles. He defined leadership as more of a process between people in a social context than a characterization associated with an individual in a position of authority (Hollander, 2012).

Similarly, DeRue (2011) developed his adaptive leadership theory, noting that leadership is not an individual's traits or behaviors but an interactive, multi-directional, "socially complex and adaptive process" (p. 126) between individuals in roles in a group setting. DeRue (2011) limited his theory to group settings as he sought to characterize how team roles evolve to drive outcomes over time in response to a changing environment. DeRue (2011) further opined that leadership as a process lens generates different research questions worthy of examination. DeRue's emphasis was on leadership as a social construct and not as a static role. He described the basic unit of exchange in the leadership process as "interdependent acts of leading and following" between individuals in a social setting (DeRue, 2011, p. 132).

Within the leader-follower process, Hollander also highlighted the "fair exchange" between individuals in dynamic roles within a social context (Hollander, 2012, p.48). Hollander (2012) wrote that in exchange for the deference of individuals in the followers' role, leaders must create the perception of competence, fairness, and intentions that align with group, organizational, or collective goals. Hollander (2012) stated that interdependence with followers is a component of the leadership process. He also noted that the successful accomplishment of organizational or collective objectives affords leaders greater support and latitude from followers to implement non-traditional approaches to overcome challenges. As the leader demonstrates

competence, the followers support the leader's innovative, non-conforming approaches partly due to enhanced credibility born of success.

Hollander's (2012) approach, known as the idiosyncrasy credit model, characterizes the leader-follower dynamic (Hollander, 2012). While leaders are often responsible for team outcomes, followers also share in the results. Followers credit leaders through a perception of their competence, which results in greater deference and latitude for the leader in navigating the environment. While there is a measure of legitimacy that a leader may receive by virtue of a formal role, follower perceptions of a leader's worthiness are important in their decision to respond positively to the leader's efforts. Over time, Hollander (2012) began to further characterize the two-way dynamic of the leadership process as mutual "Respect, Recognition, Responsiveness, and Responsibility" or "the four Rs of Inclusive Leadership" (p. 3).

As the notion of IL continued to evolve, additional theorists defined the concept. Nembhard and Edmondson (2006) wrote that leader inclusiveness is "words and deeds by a leader…that indicate an *invitation* and *appreciation* for others' contributions" (p. 941). In their healthcare environment research, Nembhard and Edmonson (2006) also noted that leader inclusiveness helped to create greater levels of psychological safety and staff engagement in multidisciplinary teams where status differentials exist between team members. The improved environment facilitated process improvements and other benefits resulting in better patient outcomes.

At the individual level, Shore et al. (2011) incorporated the work of Brewer (2003) on optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT) to develop their definition of IL. ODT examines the dynamic tension experienced by individuals between their desire for belongingness within a group and the corresponding need to be valued for their uniqueness (Brewer, 2003). Within an

organizational context, Shore et al. (2011) described IL at the workgroup level as "the satisfaction of the needs of both belongingness and uniqueness" (p. 1262). Mor Barak (2017) incorporated elements from the Shore et al. (2011) definition and her definition of inclusion to propose the following description of IL:

> Inclusive leadership refers to the ability to recognize and celebrate the uniqueness of the group or organizational members, and, at the same time, promote their sense of belonging along the three inclusion dimensions of decision making, information networks, and participation in groups and the organization as a whole. (p. 227)

Shore et al. (2011) and Mor Barak et al. (2021) also incorporated the concept of inclusion climate into their theories. Shore et al. (2011) combined diversity climate and organizational fairness systems into their inclusiveness climate framework to examine antecedents and outcomes of inclusion. According to Shore et al. (2011), a strong diversity climate helps employees from marginalized backgrounds perceive a fair and just work environment where their contributions are valued and appreciated. Based on cited research, Shore et al. (2011) opined that organizational fairness systems improve employee outcomes at the group level when organizations are perceived with a positive diversity climate, with fair and safe treatment for diverse personnel (Gonzalez and DeNisi, 2009).

To frame their discussion on climate for inclusion, IL, and policy-practice decoupling, Mor Barak et al. (2021) discussed climate theory and its components of climate strength and climate level. Climate strength indicates the homogeneity of the inclusion climate perception across groups or multiple socio-demographic identities within an organization. Climate level is indicative of the perceived average inclusion climate across an organization (Mor Barak et al., 2021). "The anomaly of climate for inclusion" considers how perceptions of inclusion climate

are shaped by individual socio-demographic identity and shared group experiences (Mor Barak et al., 2021, p. 4). Individuals and groups from similar socioeconomic backgrounds may tend to view an organization's inclusion climate similarly. However, people from other socioeconomic backgrounds within the same organizational context may evaluate the inclusive climate differently. Depending on their social status as traditional in-group members (i.e., White or majority males) or as outgroup (marginalized) members (women and ethnic minorities), individuals may have vastly different views on an organization's inclusion climate (Mor Barak et al., 2021; Shore et al., 2011).

When organizational inclusion policies articulated by top leadership differ from perceived business practices at either the executive or supervisory level, policy-practice decoupling occurs. The disconnect may account for varied effectiveness across DEI programs (Mor Barak et al., 2021). If policy-practice decoupling occurs, individual demographics and traditional in-group or out-group status may shape employee perceptions of organizational inclusion efforts. While executive leadership sets the tone for the organization, individuals tend to experience inclusion climate at the group or supervisory level. Mor Barak et al. (2021) also opine that more effective inclusive leaders are likely better at minimizing policy-practice decoupling than their counterparts.

In their research on IL in organizations, Nishii and Leroy (2022) connect executive, group, and supervisory leadership processes and behaviors to inclusion climate. According to Nishii and Leroy (2022), inclusion climate impacts the psychological experience of how individuals within the organization experience and perceive inclusion. Two additional theories cited that impact employee perceptions of inclusion climate are self-determination theory (SDT) and employee engagement (EE; Nishii & Leroy, 2022).

SDT examines the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that affect employee fulfillment, perception, and behaviors in the workplace. SDT also discusses how "extrinsically motivated behaviors might become internalized and thereby intrinsic" (Bray, 2019, p.20). According to SDT, individuals are driven by intrinsic motivational factors when they feel a sense of satisfaction, self-determination, and role competence (Bray, 2019; Deci, 1975). Role competence is one of three SDT intrinsic drivers, along with autonomy and psychological relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Competence is relevant to inclusion climate and IL as diverse employees routinely face "perceptions of them…colored by assumptions of incompetence" (Nishii & Leroy, 2022, p. 687). The negative othering associated with the perceptions of incompetence may adversely impact inclusion climate leading to lessened freedom to be authentic for people perceived as different (Nishii & Leroy, 2022).

The othering of people from marginalized backgrounds harms psychological safety in the work environment (Nishii & Leroy, 2022). Psychological safety is one of the three elements of personal [employee] engagement at work, along with meaningfulness and availability (Bray, 2019; Kahn, 1990). According to Kahn, employees experience personal engagement at work and engage mentally and emotionally when they perceive a psychologically safe environment. When considering inclusion, psychological safety helps produce feelings of acceptance, belonging and competence, despite individual uniqueness. Inclusive leaders within an organization can influence the perception of employees with traditionally marginalized identities through practices that signal respect for and acceptance of cultural differences in alignment with leader-member exchange theory (LMX). LMX theory states that the quality of the exchange relationship between leaders and followers impacts employee effectiveness and job outcomes. Acceptance of the uniqueness of individuals is a consideration in both LMX and IL theories (Shore et al., 2011).

Transformational Leadership

With the publication of Leadership (Burns, 1978), the notion of a transactional –

transformational leadership continuum became well known. However, for this treatise, the theory

of TL espoused in Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational

Leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994) will suffice. Studies indicate that TL fosters enhanced

engagement of diverse personnel and alignment with organizational objectives (Bass, 1999;

Kearney & Gebert, 2009; Malik & Singh, 2017). Transformational leaders also consider

individual qualities when motivating and working with others (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Bass and

Avolio's (1994) work stands upon the foundation of work from multiple theorists and

practitioners, including Burns (1978) and Downton (1973). Outlined as the 4Is, TL's components

are individual consideration, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual

stimulation (Bass & Avolio, 1994),. Individualized consideration is the extent to which leaders

manage each employee or follower based on the individual's personal values, goals, and needs.

The definition of idealized influence is to lead by example, prioritizing team and organizational

outcomes higher than personal accolades (Bray, 2019). Inspirational motivation is the degree to

which leaders provide vision through clear goals, combined with enthusiasm and zeal (Bray,

2019). Intellectual stimulation is the degree to which leaders foster innovation, promote

cognitive challenges, foster creativity, and draw new ideas from followers.

Bass and Avolio (1994) saw the TL theory as part of a continuum of ideas ranging from

laissez-faire through transactional to transformational, codified as the full-range leadership

model. The full range model encompasses a breadth of leadership skills and theories. In part, the

model led to the development of the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ), which helps

determine where an individual may place on the TL spectrum (Bass & Avolio, 1994). After the

formal theory's initial development, many refinements occurred to validate and demonstrate TL as a concept, including models and valid and reliable tools (Bray, 2019). TL has been shown in multiple studies to be a leadership success behavior in organizational environments leading to higher levels of employee engagement, lower staff turnover, and improved financial performance (Bray, 2019). See Appendix C for a list of TL measurement tools. Given the problem statement for this study and the references cited, the author believes that leadership style is a relevant factor to frame the analysis.

Employee Engagement

Additional research indicates a positive correlation between a supportive diversity climate and improved employee engagement (Downey et al., 2015). Kahn (1990) initiated the employee engagement concept through his seminal research on architects and camp counselors (Bray, 2019). While there are multiple definitions of employee engagement, this dissertation used Kahn's original framework of meaningfulness, psychological safety, and availability to define employee engagement (Kahn, 1990). Meaningfulness is the extent to which employees find self-satisfaction within the job role itself. Do the job role and associated tasks resonate with the employee as essential and worthwhile? Psychological safety is the extent to which employees have trust and feel secure in bringing their authentic selves to work in support of organizational goals and processes. Availability is when employees have the emotional, physical, and mental ability to come to work and fully engage with the tasks at hand (Kahn, 1990).

There has been much research on employee engagement since Kahn's work in 1990 (Bray, 2019). Empirical research, supported by valid and reliable survey tools, such as the Gallup Q12 and the Utrecht work engagement scale, have indicated that engaged employees drive positive business outcomes, including profitability, improved customer satisfaction, and reduced

turnover (Bray, 2019; Robinson et al., 2004; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). See Appendix A for a sample list of employee engagement survey tools. Given the problem statement for this study and the references cited, the author believes that employee engagement is a necessary consideration.

DEI Models and Tools

In addition to the underlying theoretical frameworks discussed in the previous sections, models and tools exist to measure the effectiveness of a DEI program. Table 4 contains a summary of tools used to measure D&I effectiveness. Researchers demonstrated the tools listed in Table 4 as valid in their studies. Significant research exists on measuring diversity and inclusion effectiveness, but a gap remains in translating theory to executable action steps by practitioners. Early anti-discrimination programs and research focused primarily on diversity. Research now centers on diversity and inclusion (Mor Barak, 2015). Subsequent foci are on equity and intersectionality based on feedback from this study's participants.

Table 4

Tools to Measure the Effectiveness of Diversity and Inclusion Programs

Tool	Author(s). (Date).	Purpose/Approach	Strengths & Weaknesses
1. Measure of Diversity Climate	Mor Barak, Cherin & Berkman (1998)	It measures ethnic and gender differences in perceptions regarding diversity fairness. It includes a 16-item diversity perception scale, evaluating diversity and inclusion.	Strengths: Quantitative method measuring the impact of psychological contracts between employers and employees. Weaknesses: Ease of use by practitioners.
2. Chrobot-Mason Diversity Promise Fulfillment Scale	Chrobot-Mason (2003)	Measured the impact of a violation of the psychological contract between minority employees and employers regarding diversity.	Strengths: Quantitative method measuring the impact of psychological contracts between employers and employees. Weaknesses: Ease of use by practitioners.

	Tool	Author(s). (Date).	Purpose/Approach	Strengths & Weaknesses
3.	Work Group Inclusion	Nishii (2013)	Climate for inclusion scale approach tied to the reduction of gender bias, conflict, and turnover.	Strengths: Easy to execute questionnaire broken into logical, relevant, inclusion related dimensions. Weaknesses: Single site, may not be generalizable
4.	Inclusion framework	Shore et al. (2011)	2x2 matrix of belongingness and value in uniqueness ranging from low to high. Quadrants: Low/low – Exclusion. Low/high – Differentiation. High/low – Assimilation. High/high – inclusion.	Strengths: Simplicity, ease of use, high relevance. Weaknesses: Difficult to quantify
5.	Work Group Inclusion	Roberson (2006)	Mixed methods research supporting definition and measure of diversity and inclusion; scale developed	Strengths: Thorough, statistical analysis. Weaknesses: Not easy for practitioners to use.

In a McKinsey and Company report, Hunt et al. (2018) discuss the importance of inclusion metrics in the evaluation of D&I programs. Notably, all companies examined in their analysis developed internal methodologies deriving inclusion effectiveness through metrics. Of import was the need to develop a standardized approach to measure inclusiveness and its impact on corporate financial performance. While recommended as an area for future research in the McKinsey report, other theorists, such as Mor Barak (2015), note the availability of standardized tools to measure D&I. Research examining the awareness and use of existing tools by corporate D&I leaders should yield insight and perhaps lead to practitioners' further development and use of these tools. This research study indicates limited use of theory and or DEI tools by practitioners navigating change in the corporate DEI landscape post the events of 2020, 2021 and 2022. However, there was strong indication of use of theoretical concepts as underlying principles in formulating strategies.

Gaps and Inconsistencies in the Literature

Overall, the researcher noted multiple gaps and inconsistencies in the literature regarding DEI in the corporate workplace. Several items are under political debate, including the extent to which a need for gender and social justice exists. Some debate the degree to which the murder of George Floyd is indicative of a larger system of global racism and social injustice issue based on human identities. Academics debate over the appropriate definitions of intersectionality, diversity, and race. Others cite the need for more research to better understand the nature of inclusion. Also ongoing is the debate over the moral appropriateness of sexual orientation initiatives. And, an ongoing debate exists over the link between robust DEI programs and financial performance. There also exists the need for more research to discern how to make DEI programs more sustainable and effective, with practical application of tools and models. The aforementioned gaps and inconsistencies also informed the approach to this study.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 contains a discourse on the conceptual framework used to examine potential changes in the DEI paradigm of corporate leaders stemming from events in 2020-2022. Critical events during this time were: the COVID-19 global pandemic, the murder of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, MN, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and nationalistic, political violence in the United States other countries globally. Chapter 2 covers current contextual factors, including economic, cultural, and demographic shifts that impact DEI management. Also, Chapter 2 contains a brief history of global DEI legislative policies from international, regional, and national perspectives to provide additional context for the research. Of import, workplace discrimination persists worldwide despite legislative efforts. In addition to legislation,

policies, and court cases, multiple theories relevant to DEI management received examination. Finally, DEI-specific models, tools, and metrics receive mention.

Several areas for additional study, including phenomenological research on practical applications of theories and models, were encouraged in some literature. This study aims to contribute to the academic body of knowledge by applying relevant theories and models to analyze corporate leaders' DEI perspectives during social protest amid a pandemic and global economic challenges.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Overview

Chapter 3 discusses the research design and data handling tactics for this study, examining changes in the perspectives and activities of corporate leaders with DEI responsibility in their firms. Chapter 3 also contains a discourse on the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical framework employed for the analysis. Subsequent sections of Chapter 3 include information on the research setting, sampling approach, and human subject considerations. Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion of data collection, management and analysis procedures, and the chapter summary. The following section provides background information to help frame the context of the study.

Context

Between March 2020 and August 2022, the world experienced a global pandemic, social justice protests in over 60 countries sparked by the murder of George Floyd, ongoing protests over the treatment of women and other marginalized groups, an economic downturn, a war in Eastern Europe, and violent political backlash in several nations (Anderson, 2021; Johnson, 2021; Masters, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2021; Oriola & Knight, 2020; Takahashi, 2020; van der Veer, 2021; World Bank, 2020). As a result, several multinational companies, including Walmart, Adidas, Microsoft, and Infosys, began to re-evaluate their approach to DEI both publicly and in their internal operations (Infosys.com, 2022; Johnson, 2021). Considering the conflux of the events mentioned above, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine what impact, if any, these occurrences had on global corporate leaders' perspectives and activities in their job roles regarding DEI. The overall research question was as follows:

What impact, if any, have events in 2020, 2021, and 2022, notably the COVID-19 pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, global social justice protests, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and backlash fueled political violence around the world, had on international corporate DEI management efforts?

The following research questions, and related interview questions, guided this examination (see Table 5).

Table 5

Research and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Supporting (Interview) Questions
RQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? (Definitions)	IQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion? IQ2: How, if at all, has your definition of diversity and inclusion evolved in the last 3 years? IQ3: How does your company's top leadership (C-level, EVP, etc.) define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? IQ4: What concepts and ideals, if any, form the basis/foundation for your company's D&I program (philosophical, moral, legal, social, etc.)?
RQ2: How, if at all, do you measure, track, and evaluate D&I success at your company? (Success Metrics)	IQ5: What constitutes success in your company's D&I paradigm? Any changes in the definition of success in the last 3 yrs.? IQ6: What quantitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company? IQ7: What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?
RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company? (Implementation)	IQ8: What strategies and practices if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups? IQ9: What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach? IQ10: What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company? How do you manage them? IQ11: Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in mind. How, if all, has the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?
RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to enhance the success of the company's D&I approach over time? (Sustainability)	IQ12: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's D&I approach? IQ13: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach? IQ14: How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach? IQ15: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach in response to current events?

Given the purpose of the study and the proposed research and related interview questions, the following section contains a discourse on the research design. One goal of the research

design was to align well with the purpose of the study and to facilitate the desired outcomes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Research Design

The research design incorporated the goals, approach (qualitative or quantitative), researcher's world view, methodology, methods, and tools of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Jago, 2022). The research design for this study on potential changes in the perspectives and actions of global corporate leaders with DEI responsibility appears graphically in the theoretical framework depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Theoretical Framework for DEI Research
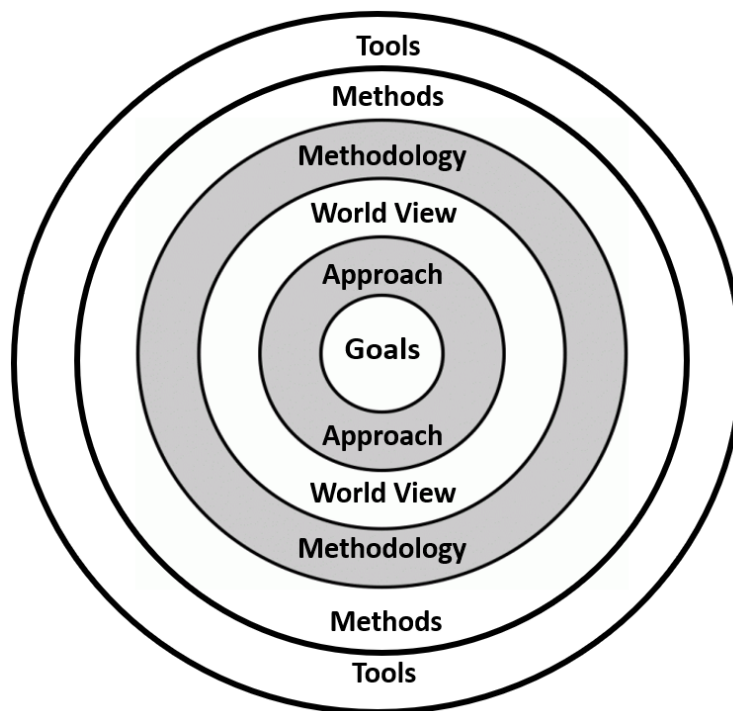
The theoretical framework utilized derives from unpublished research by Dr. Martine Jago (Jago, 2022). The framework helped to ensure proper alignment of the research design elements. The framework also helped to produce awareness of potential bias by the author given

his world view. The author took steps to mitigate the impact of his personal preference on the research, as described later in this chapter. The subsequent sections of this chapter include a discussion of theoretical framework elements, notes on the evolution of the research questions through peer and expert review, and comments on the required Institutional Review Board (IRB) protection of human subjects' plan. Also included in Chapter 3 are details on data collection techniques, including interview techniques and protocol, a statement of personal bias by the author, the data analysis approach, and the chapter summary. A discussion of each element of the theoretical framework appears below.

Goals

Amid the economic challenges fueled by the COVID-19 global pandemic — the murder of George Floyd, the annual International Women's March, the war in Ukraine, and related global protests over social justice concerns, multiple corporations began to re-examine their efforts to promote DEI both publicly and within their organizations (Infosys.com, 2022; Johnson, 2021). Considering the conflux of these events, the primary goal of this research was to examine what impact, if any, these recent events had on the perspectives and activities of global corporate leaders regarding DEI. This study sought to help readers develop insight from the literature review and interviews with corporate executives into their viewpoints, challenges faced, and tactics employed to improve DEI effectiveness within their organizations during a time of social protest and change. This study also sought to determine what linkages, if any, executives believe exist between DEI program effectiveness and corporate performance. This study also examined DEI metrics and other evaluative factors and highlights common themes found in the responses.

Approach

Given the goals of this study and related research questions, the author chose a qualitative research methodology. In seeking to understand the perspectives and activities of the research subjects, words (qualitative) provided thicker and richer data than numbers (quantitative), given the likely sample size (Busetto et al., 2020). A mixed-methods approach also received consideration. There is a vigorous academic and philosophical debate over the compatibility of mixing research approaches with one birthed in a narrowly defined experimental study environment (quantitative) and the other in a correspondingly flexible (post-positivist, constructivist, critical, etc.) paradigm (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Denzin, 2012). Nonetheless, the author believes that a mixed-methods process is a viable follow-on option for a future study combining the qualitative results with quantitative measures. Ultimately, the author chose a solely qualitative method to allow the analysis to focus on nuances in the qualitative data (Fusch et al., 2018).

Qualitative researchers use an interpretative approach to examine assumptions about the nature of reality, knowledge, values, and perspectives (Creswell et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The researcher recognizes from the literature review that some DEI concepts such as race, religion, and other diversity-related identities are social constructs, often personal and value-laden (Maoz & Henderson, 2013; Omi & Winant, 2012). While quantitative analysis can yield depth in measuring social constructs, a qualitative approach yields a richer trough of data for in-depth analysis of concepts from the perspective of the research subjects (Busetto et al., 2020; Turhan, 2019). Given the desire of the researcher to note changes in participant perspectives and activities due to social factors, a qualitative approach was appropriate for this type of endeavor (Busetto et al., 2020).

One consideration in using the qualitative approach was the researcher's inability to study participants in their natural environment as recommended due to COVID-19 considerations (Creswell et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018;). As an alternative procedure, the researcher planned to conduct the interviews via a live web conference. Several studies indicated that an online, synchronous interview was an appropriate, effective approach for qualitative research (Archibald et al., 2019; James & Busher, 2009; Janghorban et al., 2014; Weller, 2017). In consideration of the online interview approach, there were several elements the researcher considered to strengthen the quality of the data collection process.

One data collection tool was a high-speed Internet infrastructure to minimize technical challenges, such as audio delays, dropped video, and sound distortion (Janghorban et al., 2014). Other considerations requiring mitigation included a lessened ability to see and interpret non-verbal cues from the participants, the subject's level of familiarity and comfort using the online tools, attenuated personal interaction, and the potential for less rapport versus a face-to-face interview (Archibald et al., 2019; James & Busher, 2009; Weller, 2017). Privacy, confidentiality, data security and the mitigation of researcher bias were additional factors considered (Archibald et al., 2019; James & Busher, 2009; Weller, 2017). Several of these issues receive deliberation in the data collection section of this chapter.

World View

To provide transparency about potential pre-conceived notions of reality, note that the investigator is an African American male, born in the Midwest US, and part of the baby boomer generation. He was raised and socialized up to age 18 in an urban, African American community. He grew-up in a single-parent home but also lived with grandparents for several years. The author also has been married for almost 40 years in a traditional family setting and has two adult

children. Previously, he was a conservative Church of Christ minister in an urban community. He has never lived outside of the United States but has traveled to over twenty countries. The researcher is well-educated and has a household income in the top 5% for Americans. He has a post-positivist paradigm with constructivist leanings. The researcher also believes in the academic rigor of the post-positivist evidence-based approach, but also acknowledges that individuals create and interpret their reality through a personal and sometimes political lens (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Given his personal background, the researcher attempted to mitigate any bias inherent in his lens and worked to interpret the data from the perspective of the research subjects.

Methodology

According to Moustakas (1994), phenomenology focuses on how things appear, removed from biases. The researcher works to understand the perspective and lens of the participants, with limited filtering from the investigator's lens. The researcher must be self-aware and work to bracket their viewpoint. Farina (2014) opined, **"**Phenomenology is the study of phenomena that present themselves to consciousness…it is a 'philosophy based on experience'" (p. 53). Therefore, a phenomenological approach requires bracketing and epoche on the researcher's part to set aside personal biases and do their best to describe the lived experience of others (Farina, 2014). Given the research goals and questions, and the qualitative approach, the investigator believed that phenomenology represents the most suitable methodology. Also, since the subject matter under investigation involved potential changes to the perspectives of a group of individuals based on their experiences, the phenomenological approach was deemed appropriate (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Creswell et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Finlay, 2012).

Phenomenology, birthed by Edmund Husserl, is an approach that reflects on a given occurrence or conscious phenomenon experienced by groups of individuals (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Creswell et al., 2007; Finlay, 2012). The phenomenological approach seeks to understand an event or situation from the perspective or lens of those who lived through it (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Creswell et al., 2007). Over the decades, employment of the phenomenological methodology facilitated the fight for social change in the face of racism and Nazism (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016).

Phenomenology was a response, in part to Cartesianism, which employs positivist thinking built on the works of Descartes and others (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). The notion of positivism expresses that researchers can acquire and develop knowledge, devoid of human emotions and bias, achieving an entirely objective view of reality (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). Positivism fosters a lens that believes knowledge can be absolute, centered in the objective lens of the researcher (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016). Positivist researchers focus on the facts of the matter under consideration without interference from broader, human, or environmental factors.

Phenomenology embraces a different approach that requires the researcher to consider and acknowledge personal bias and perspectives that may influence research findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Phenomenology has multiple branches of thought but generally has commonalities stemming from Husserl's original postulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The postpositivist approach, aligned with Husserl, notes that people are inherently biased and must mitigate the bias using techniques such as acquisition of multiple data sources (Denzin, 2012; Guba, 1990).

Methods

In conducting a phenomenological investigation, the researcher used semi-structured, online, recorded interviews to collect data. According to Campbell et al. (2013), semi-structured interviews facilitate richer and thicker responses containing nuances requiring a more complex coding approach than structured interviews. Also, the audio recording enabled reviewing the data multiple times to ensure the identification of themes and the consistency of the coding amongst reviewers, thus improving validity and reliability (Noble & Smith, 2015). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), data collection procedures for phenomenology include a sufficient number of participants to achieve data saturation, multiple data types to help ensure adequate rigor, validity, and reliability, and the development of a personal approach to the interview process, supported by data from the literature review.

In addition to the interviews, the researcher examined each company's website that employs an interviewee to glean insight into the company's DEI policy to aid in the triangulation of the data (Denzin, 2012; Fusch et al., 2018). The researcher employed active listening and observation skills to ensure sensitivity to the participant and to improve understanding of the subject's perspective.

Tools

Tools employed in the study include recruiting letters for multiple audiences, and an informed consent form. Appendix G, Appendix H, and Appendix I contain sample templates for the recruiting letters. Appendix J contains the informed consent form template. The researcher received IRB approval for the templates, interview protocol and questions (see Appendix K). The researcher also used a web conference tools to conduct the interviews, and Otter transcription software to develop a written account of each interview. Review of the corporate

websites helped to triangulate the data derived from the interviews (Fusch et al., 2018). Table 6 summarizes the research design.

Table 6

Summary Notes on the Research Design

Design Element	Description
Goals	a. Gain insight into potential changes in the paradigm and practices of global corporate DEI leaders b. Examine the impact of changing environment on corporate DEI leaders and programs. c. Examine strategies, practices, challenges, and effectiveness of DEI programs.
Approach	Qualitative method – Analyzing potential changes to executive's perspective and behaviors in light of recent developments; seeking rich and thick data for analysis
Methodology	Phenomenological – Looking for common themes from the subject's perspective with bracketing of investigator's paradigm
Methods	Semi-structured interviews with corporate leaders analyzed within a contextual framework based on a literature review
Instrumentation /Tools	Semi-structured interview questions, coding, peer-reviewed analysis; use of online web conferencing tools
World View	The investigator is a post-positivist, African-American Baby Boomer with constructivist leanings – Believes in academic rigor *and* that individuals construct world views based on a personal paradigm that contains bias.

Setting and Sample

Analysis Unit

The unit of analysis for this study was a corporate line or staff manager with oversight inclusive of DEI responsibilities for a minimum of 25 employees in at least two countries. The researcher also targeted Fortune 500 corporate board members advising CEOs regarding DEI policies. A minimum of three years of experience in a role with DEI responsibilities was also required. 16 interviews yielded sufficient insight and data saturation to create generalizations specific to those interviewed (Saldaña, 2015). These insights may or may not be broadly generalizable.

Population

The target population was operations, staff managers, or board members with DEI responsibility from Global North corporations with operations in a minimum of two countries. The researcher sought individuals whose tenure began before COVID-19 and the murder of George Floyd. Sources for the participants were LinkedIn, Fortune Magazine 2000 companies, and referrals sought through the academic community. These sources were canvassed, culminating in the request of a meeting with individuals with job titles or roles involving DEI responsibilities.

Sample Size

Creswell recommends sampling "20 to 30 individuals" (Creswell, 2013, p. 157) but implies that as few as five are appropriate for a phenomenological study. Morse (1994) said, "At least six samples are necessary" (p. 225). Creswell (2013) noted that the sample should be large enough to reach saturation. Saldaña (2015) implied that approximately 15 instances should suffice for data saturation. The researcher incorporated the guidance above to determine data saturation occurred between 13-16 individuals.

Participation Selection

Participants came from the chosen population using a sampling frame. There were inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants, as noted below. Purposive sampling also aided the researcher in ensuring maximum variation.

Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion. Inclusion criteria were direct supervisory or advisory responsibility for a team of at least 25 personnel within the last three years with multi-country experience in a Global North corporation. Also required was a minimum of three years of experience in the leadership role with DEI responsibility. The exclusion criteria were

participants who did not meet the inclusion criteria or were otherwise qualified but for any reason were unable or deemed unwilling to participate in the study.

Human Subject Considerations

Because this study involved human subjects, Institutional Review Board (IRB) standards and protocols were essential. The researcher completed the Pepperdine University IRB application before speaking with participants. From the Pepperdine University IRB website note the following:

> It is the policy of Pepperdine University that all research involving human participants must be conducted in accordance with accepted ethical, federal, and professional standards for research and that all such research must be approved by one of the university's IRBs. In the review and conduct of research, Pepperdine University is guided by the ethical principles set forth in the Belmont Report.
>
> In addition, all human subjects research conducted by or under the auspices of Pepperdine University will be performed in accordance with the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, DHHS (CFR), Title 45 Part 46 (45 CFR 46), entitled Protection of Human Research Subjects, and Parts 160 and 164, entitled Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information and the California Protection of Human Subjects in Medical Experimentation Act. Where applicable, FDA regulations on human subjects research will be followed. (CFR Title 21 Parts 50 and 56, Protection of Human Subjects and Institutional Review Boards)

Instrumentation

Interview subjects were recruited via the Internet and phone using the IRB-approved script and support documents as shown in Appendix G, Appendix H, and Appendix I. The

researcher contacted each participant twice before the interview to build rapport and ask permission to record the interview. Next, the researcher set up a convenient time to interview the participant online and transmitted the Informed Consent form and interview questions.

To develop a reliable instrument for the interviews, the researcher developed the initial research and interview questions, with refinements made after peer and expert review, to validate the questions. The initial version of the research questions and the interview questions appears in Table 7. Next, the researcher had two peers review the questions to validate further the queries. The incorporation of peer comments appears in Table 8. Expert validity came through a review of the research questions by a Pepperdine faculty member. The instructor provided additional refinement of the research questions. The incorporation of instructor comments appears in Table 9. The final sections discuss the data collection, data management, and data analysis procedures, followed by the chapter summary.

Table 7

Research and Interview Questions (Initial Questions)

Research Questions	Supporting (Interview) Questions
RQ1: How, if at all, does your company define the success of its' DEI program? (Definitions)	IQ1: How, if at all, is your DEI program labeled (named)? IQ2: What, if at all, are the corresponding definitions for the letters in the acronym? IQ3: How do you define success in your corporate DEI program?
RQ2: How, if at all, does your firm measure, track, and evaluate the success of its' DEI program? (Success Metrics)	IQ4: What quantitative metrics, if any, does your firm use to evaluate its' DEI program? IQ5: What qualitative metrics, if any, does your firm use to evaluate its' DEI program? IQ6: What tools or models, if any, does your firm use to evaluate its' DEI program? IQ7: How, if at all, does your company measure the impact of its' DEI effectives on corporate performance (revenues and profitability)?
RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any, does your firm use to implement its' DEI program? (Implementation)	IQ8: What strategies and practices if any, does your firm use to implement its' DEI program globally? Nationally? Locally? IQ9: What are the biggest challenges in implementing a successful DEI program in your company? How do you manage them?
RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, does your company use to sustain the success of its DEI program over time? (Sustainability)	IQ10: What strategies and practices, if any, does your firm use when updating your DEI program in response to current events? IQ11: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's DEI program? IQ12: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's DEI program? IQ13: How, if at all, did political and social violence impact your company's DEI program? IQ14: What recommendations would you give to future generations of executives' navigation changes to the global, national, local DEI paradigm?

Table 8

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions (Peer Reviewed)

Research Questions	Supporting (Interview) Questions
RQ1: How, if at all, does your company define diversity? (Definitions) ~~How, if at all, does your company define the success of its' DEI program?~~	IQ1: How, if at all, is your DEI program labeled (named)? If so, why was this label chosen? IQ2: How, if at all, does your company define diversity? IQ3: How, if at all, has your definition of diversity changed in the last 3 years? ~~IQ2: What, if at all, are the corresponding definitions for the letters in the acronym?~~ ~~IQ3: How does your company define the success of its DEI program?~~
RQ2: How, if at all, does your company measure, track, and evaluate the success of its' DEI program? (Success Metrics)	IQ4: How do you define success in your corporate DEI program? IQ5: What quantitative metrics, if any, does your firm use to evaluate its' DEI program? IQ6: What qualitative metrics, if any, does your firm use to evaluate its' DEI program? IQ7: What tools or models, if any, does your firm use to evaluate its' DEI program? IQ8: How, if at all, does your company measure the impact of' DEI effectiveness on corporate performance (revenues and profitability)?
RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any, does your company use to implement its' DEI program? (Implementation)	IQ9: What strategies and practices if any, does your firm use to implement its' DEI program globally? Nationally? Locally? IQ10: What are the biggest challenges in implementing a successful DEI program in your company? How do you manage them?
RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, does your company use to sustain the success of its' DEI program over time? (Sustainability)	IQ11: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's DEI program? IQ12: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's DEI program? IQ13: How, if at all, did political and social violence impact your company's DEI program? IQ14: What strategies and practices, if any, does your firm use when updating your DEI program in response to current events? ~~IQ14: What recommendations would you give to future generations of executives'~~ ~~navigation changes to the global, national, local DEI paradigm?~~

Table 9

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions (Expert Reviewed)

Research Questions	Supporting (Interview) Questions
RQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? (Definitions)	IQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion? IQ2: How, if at all, has your definition of diversity and inclusion evolved in the last 3 years? IQ3: How does your company's top leadership (C-level, EVP, etc.) define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? IQ4: What concepts and ideals, if any, form the basis/foundation for your company's D&I program (philosophical, moral, legal, social, etc.)?
RQ2: How, if at all, do you measure, track, and evaluate D&I success at your company? (Success Metrics)	IQ5: What constitutes success in your company's D&I paradigm? Any changes in the definition of success in the last 3 yrs.? IQ6: What quantitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company? IQ7: What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?
RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company? (Implementation)	IQ8: What strategies and practices if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups? IQ9: What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach? IQ10: What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company? How do you manage them? IQ11: Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in mind. How, if all, has the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?
RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to enhance the success of the company's D&I approach over time? (Sustainability)	IQ12: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's D&I approach? IQ13: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach? IQ14: How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach? IQ15: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach in response to current events?

Data Collection

The researcher used a semi-structured, online, recorded interview to collect data. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), critical data collection procedures include a participant selection process as noted above, recruiting a sufficient number of participants to achieve data saturation, the use of multiple data types to help ensure adequate rigor, validity, and reliability, and the development of a personal approach to the interview process by the researcher, supported by data from the literature review. In addition to the interviews, the researcher examined each company's website that employs an interviewee to glean insight into the company's DEI policy to aid in the triangulation of the data (Denzin, 2012; Fusch et al., 2018). The researcher asked follow-up questions to help ensure understanding of the subject's perspective.

Data Management

Potential risks to participants included a breach of confidentiality due to data piracy, interview fatigue, and identification of them or their company. The researcher sought to maintain confidentiality and protect the participants' identities and companies. To that end, the researcher developed a handwritten code key known only to him and kept it in a locked safe at his premises. Each participant and company received a unique code known only to the researcher. The interviews were be audio-recorded and downloaded onto a separate hard drive not attached to the internet. Once the research is over, the audio files and transcripts will be digitally erased. The researcher used facilitation skills to keep the interview focused to minimize the length of the session.

Data Analysis

Coding is one method of analyzing qualitative data (Saldaña, 2015). The coding process helped to mitigate researcher bias and improve the reliability and validity of the data (Campbell et al., 2013). The researcher audio recorded the interviews and transcribed the information before coding. The researcher worked with a peer to unitize the transcripts (Campbell et al., 2013). Next, the researcher and two peers coded a robust interview separately for comparison purposes (Campbell et al., 2013). After the completion of all coding, tabulation of results will occur.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 3 discusses the study's research design, examining potential changes in the perspectives and activities of corporate leaders with DEI responsibility post 2020. Also, it discusses the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical framework employed for the analysis. In addition, information on the research setting and sampling approach, human subject considerations, and instrumentation appear. Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion of data collection, management and analysis procedures, and a summary.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Findings

Overview

Chapter 4 presents the research data – the categorization of comments and highlighting of participant quotes in response to the study's interview questions. While Chapter 4 omits specific identifying data on the participants and their corporate employers, broad demographic profiles, job roles, and industry classifications appear to add context to the study. Generally, participants are senior corporate executives responsible for advising, designing, or implementing DEI policies within their organizations. The first section of Chapter 4, provides background information to help frame the scope of the study, including the research purpose and design overview. The research questions and corresponding interview queries also appear in the introduction section. The next section of Chapter 4 is the presentation of findings, where the data categorization and appearance of participant quotes occur. Chapter 4 concludes with a chapter summary containing a condensed review of the findings that will be discussed and analyzed in Chapter 5.

Introduction

Events occurring in 30 months between March 2020 and August 2022, notably the COVID-19 global pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and socio-political violence in the U.S. and around the world, impacted the nature of human interaction and the global corporate DEI landscape. With these events as a backdrop, this phenomenological study aimed to examine what impact, if any, these occurrences had on global corporate leaders' DEI perspectives and activities. The literature review in Chapter 2 provides readers with the theoretical background and conceptual framework for this study. The interview data from corporate leaders presented in this chapter yield insight into their viewpoints,

challenges faced, and tactics to improve DEI effectiveness within their organizations during a global pandemic, social justice protest, and change. Also, some executives shared the linkages between DEI programs and corporate performance. The following research questions and related interview questions in the table below generated the data presented in this chapter.

Table 10

Research and Interview Questions

| Research Questions	Supporting (Interview) Questions
RQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? (Definitions)	IQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion? IQ2: How, if at all, has your definition of diversity and inclusion evolved in the last 3 years? IQ3: How does your company's top leadership (C-level, EVP, etc.) define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? IQ4: What concepts and ideals, if any, form the basis/foundation for your company's D&I program (philosophical, moral, legal, social, etc.)?
RQ2: How, if at all, do you measure, track, and evaluate D&I success at your company? (Success Metrics)	IQ5: What constitutes success in your company's D&I paradigm? Any changes in the definition of success in the last 3 yrs.? IQ6: What quantitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company? IQ7: What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?
RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company? (Implementation)	IQ8: What strategies and practices if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups? IQ9: What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach? IQ10: What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company? How do you manage them? IQ11: Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in mind. How, if all, has the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?
RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to enhance the success of the company's D&I approach over time? (Sustainability)	IQ12: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's D&I approach? IQ13: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach? IQ14: How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach? IQ15: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach in response to current events?

The research design should align the purpose of the study with the design elements to facilitate a successful investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). For thoroughness, an overview of the research design appears below. The theoretical framework in the next section graphically depicts the alignment of the research elements for this study.

Research Design

The research design for this study on potential changes in the perspectives and actions of global corporate leaders with DEI responsibility appears graphically in the theoretical framework in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Theoretical Framework for DEI Research
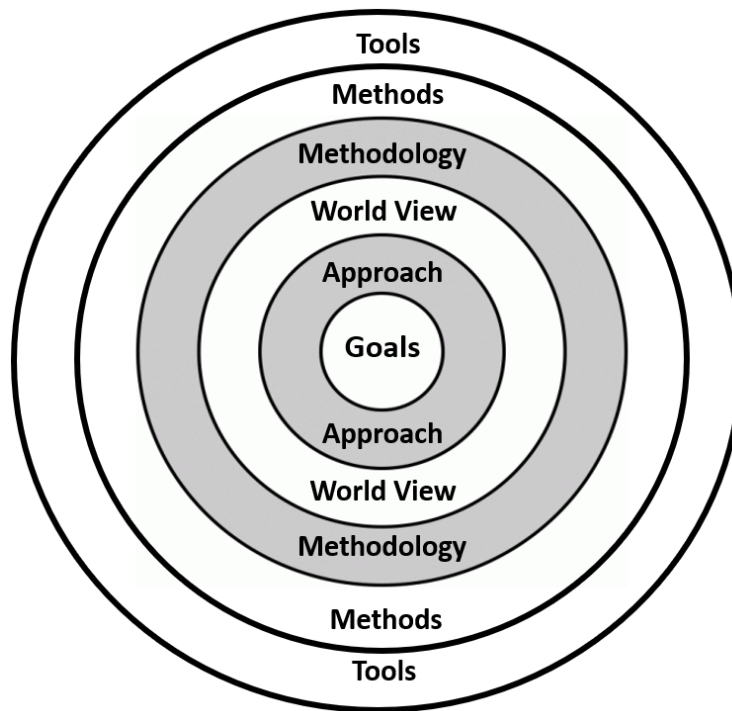
The theoretical framework derives from unpublished research by Dr. Martine Jago (Jago, 2022). Given the study's goal, as stated in the introduction section, the researcher employed a qualitative approach, using the phenomenological methodology and semi-structured interview method. The author of this study had peers review both the research questions and the initial coding of responses to minimize the impact of his worldview on the research and the findings presented in the next section.

Presentation of Findings

The presentation of findings section incorporates participant and corporate profile data, including triangulation of subject responses with statements from their respective corporate websites. The section also includes an overview of the data collection and inter-rater review process, consolidation of participant answers to the interview questions, and a sample of direct quotes from the participants. Additional quotes appear in Appendix L to add greater context to interviewee responses.

Participants

Fifteen individuals sourced through LinkedIn, Fortune Global 2000 companies, and referrals from the academic community participated in this study. An additional participant came from a chance social encounter. All participants were confirmed as meeting the profile for participation in the study. The participants represented senior levels of management – chief executive officers or managing directors, corporate board members, chief diversity officers, vice presidents of human resources or talent acquisition/development, a senior HR manager, and a senior human resource business professional. Representatives from 14 different companies participated. Participants provided gender and ethnic data. Participants were not asked about their sexual orientation.

The researcher conducted three additional interviews to ensure data saturation had occurred. After the 13th interview, participant comments seemed similar to those of previous interviewees. Variations were unique to individuals and their corporate cultures, but generally, the comments from later conversations were comparable to those of earlier interviews. After the 16th interview, the researcher determined sufficient data saturation evidence existed to conclude the investigation (Saldaña, 2015). Table 11 and Figure 6 provide additional demographic

information on the individuals who participated in the study, and the industries in which they are
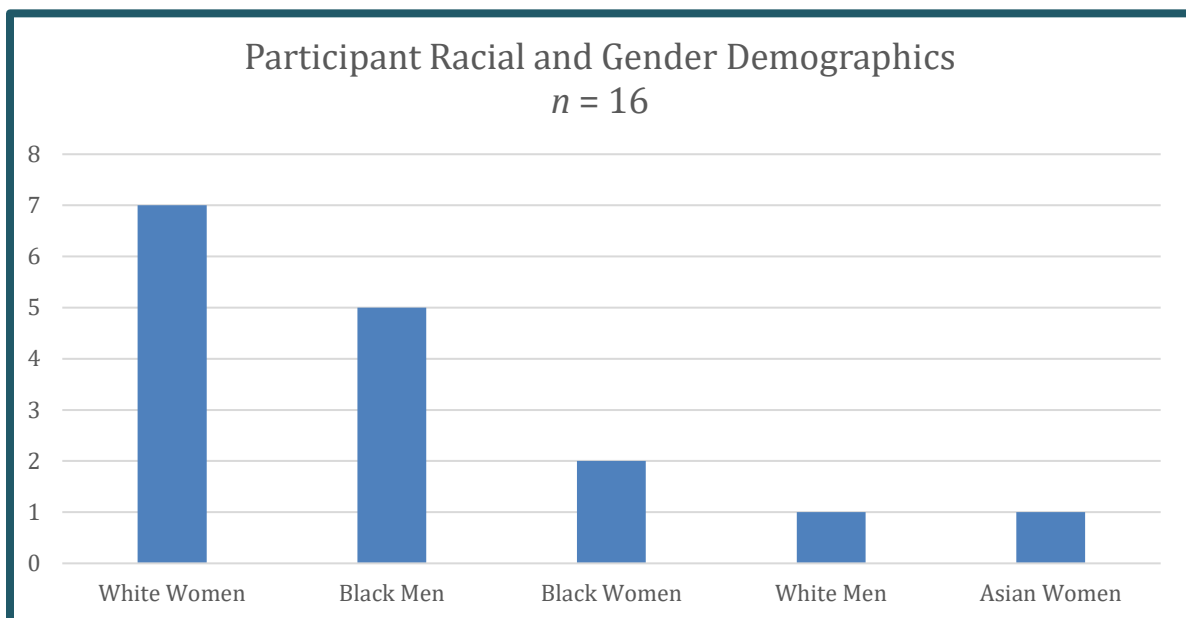
employed.

Table 11

Participant Demographics and Corporate Profile Data

Subject Racial Categories			Subject Industries	
White	8		High Tech Manufacturing	4
Black	7		Pharma	3
Asian	1		Entertainment	3
			Information Technology (IT)	2
Subject Gender			Infrastructure	1
Women	10		Banking	1
Men	6		Oil and Chemicals	1
			Healthcare	1
HQ Location			**Intersectional Demographic Data**	
Europe	1		White Women	7
US	12		Black Men	5
Japan	1		Black Women	2
India	1		White Men	1
Australia	1		Asian Women	1

Figure 6

Participant Demographics and Corporate Profile Data

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The participants were employed primarily by companies headquartered in the United States, with the EU, Japan, India, and Australia also represented. The organizations are headquartered on three continents and in four separate countries. All except two companies are either Fortune 200 global companies or wholly owned subsidiaries of such. Industries represented include high-tech manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, entertainment, information technology, and others. Additional information on the organizations represented appears in the Table 12, including notes on the triangulation of interview comments with corporate website data. The triangulation data is deliberately vague to obscure the corporate entity.

Table 12

Participant Corporate Profile, Triangulation, and Policy-Practice Decoupling Data Analysis

Subject #	# of Countries w/ Company Operations	Corporate Website DEI Themes	Is Corporate aligned w/Interviewee DEI paradigm based on interview?	Is Corporate aligned w/Interviewee DEI paradigm based on website data?	Evidence of Policy-Practice Decoupling at Executive Level?	Evidence of Policy-Practice Decoupling Between Exec. and Operational Levels?
1	150+	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	Yes	Yes	None found	Some
2	50+	DEI statement and goals tied to strategy	Somewhat	Somewhat	Yes	Yes
3	4	DEI statements	Somewhat	Somewhat	Yes	Yes
4	50+	DEI statement and goals tied to strategy	Yes	Yes	None found	Some
5	150+	DEI statement and goals tied to strategy	Yes	Yes	None found	Some
6	10+	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	Yes	Yes	None found	None found
7	100+	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	No	No	Yes	Yes
8	150+	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	Yes	Yes	None found	Yes
9	50+	DEI statement and goals tied to strategy	Yes	Somewhat	None found	Some
10	2	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
11	2	DEI statements	No	No	Yes	Yes
12	50+	DEI statement and goals tied to strategy	Yes	Yes	None found	None found
13	15+	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	Yes	Yes	None found	Yes
14	50+	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	Yes	Yes	Yes	None found
15	15+	Workforce Diversity & Inclusion tied to strategic goals	No	Somewhat	Yes	Yes
16	100+	DEI statement and goals tied to strategy	Yes	Yes	None found	Some

Thirteen of 16 companies have operations in at least ten countries. All participants were involved in relevant DEI activities in at least two countries, with ten of sixteen overseeing DEI in world regions, including North America, Asia, and Europe. In several cases, as noted in the table above, there was a difference of perspective between how the interviewee viewed the corporation's efforts versus comments on the corporate website regarding DEI policies and practices. In such cases, the researcher noted the existence of policy-practice decoupling. Also, in a few cases, the interviewee, as part of the management team, noted that the organization's top leadership sometimes exhibited behavior inconsistent with corporate policies regarding DEI. Given the sensitive nature of some of the information provided, the researcher took measures to protect the confidentiality of both the participants and their employers during the data collection process.

Data Collection

Data collection efforts began the week of June 6, 2022, after obtaining IRB approval on May 31, 2022 (see Appendix E). Initial research subject outreach audiences included academic sources, LinkedIn, and direct inquiry to personnel sourced through Fortune 2000 corporate information. Subsequent referrals led to non-profit organizations, such as SHRM and the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC). All initial outreach was via e-mail using the IRB-approved format and literature. Through referrals provided by the sources noted, participants were gathered. Forty-five inquiries resulted in 15 participants. One additional participant came through a chance social encounter.

Everyone who agreed to participate in the study received and signed the informed consent form. The research and interview questions were provided to participants before the interview. A review of the informed consent form occurred at the beginning of each interview.

Participants were asked if they had any additional questions at the beginning of the interview. The researcher responded to any inquiries. Ultimately, 16 individuals were interviewed. All participants were ensured the author would follow the research protocol to guard their privacy and the anonymity of their organizations. Table 13 shows the dates of the interviews.

Table 13

Participants and Dates of the Participant Interviews

Randomized Participant Number	Date
1	July 5, 2022
2	July 6, 2022
3	July 18, 2022
4	July 19, 2022
5	July 19, 2022
6	July 22, 2022
7	July 28, 2022
8	August 2, 2022
9	August 9,2022
10	August 10, 2022
11	August 11, 2022
12	August 15, 2022
13	August 15, 2022
14	August 30, 2022
15	August 30, 2022
16	September 7, 2022

The planned duration for each interview was 60 minutes. In practice, the duration ranged from 31 minutes to 75 minutes. The average length of the interviews was 56 minutes. The researcher began each interview with the initial interview question, which led to a broader dialogue encompassing all 15 questions. Some interviewees elaborated on certain questions while providing brief answers to others.

All interviews were recorded, and the audio portion was transcribed using Otter software into Microsoft Word format. Each transcript was edited to ensure consistency with the audio recording. Next, a coding matrix was developed in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to consolidate information from each individual transcript into a format for analysis. Quotes from each transcript and a summary of themes were incorporated into the spreadsheet. Next, each transcript was further coded to facilitate the identification of pertinent themes and concepts.

Data Analysis

"Coding labels segments of data with terms to summarize, categorize and account for these segments" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 424). "The approach to coding for this phenomenological research study involved a blend of In Vivo or 'literal' coding" (Saldaña, 2015, p. 105) and the use of descriptive terms to summarize and categorize statements from participants" (Bray, 2019, p. 98). To aid accurate reflection of the participants' experiences and views, the researcher reviewed each transcript multiple times, using an iterative process to categorize statements consistently across the data set. As common themes were identified, the comments were categorized, and the frequency was noted. Names for the themes came from participant comments and descriptive language from the researcher, informed by the literature review. The coding matrix, and a representative transcript, were reviewed by two Ph.D. graduates to facilitate an inter-rater review.

Inter-Rater Review Process

To provide greater validity and reliability for the coding process, the researcher had two peers review the coding to facilitate inter-rater reliability (Campbell et al., 2013). Both are Ph.D. graduates from Pepperdine's Global Leadership and Change program. They evaluated and provided feedback on the coding approach employed by the researcher. Both graduates were

familiar with the phenomenological methodology and the requisite coding involved from their own graduate work.

The researcher provided the research and interview questions, an edited transcript, the coding matrix, and a code key. The reviews provided their feedback in written or oral form. Based on their recommendations, the researcher refined the coding approach. A summary of the reviewer's comments and recommendations for changes appears in Table 14.

Table 14

Comments From Inter-Rater Review of Coding

Theme/Code	Inter-Rater Recommendations	Modification
General comment	Coding of terms is appropriate. Use quotes and comments to capture subtle variations to terminology.	Added additional quotes section in the appendix to provide greater context and variation.
General comment	In labeling segments, be sure to include what additional words from participants are included. For example, numerical, quantifiable, statistics if coded as "quantifiable measurable difference" should appear in the comments below the graphic.	Added additional words and quotes below each graph in the comments section
General comment	Pay attention to words used interchangeably by participants. Note these in comments.	Noted in comments below graphs where appropriate
General comment	Pay attention to individuals changing perspective as they process the questions. Did their definition shift or did they talk themselves into or out of a particular answer?	Shifting of perspectives noted in comments below graphs.
General comment	Note the presence of sub-themes like "consideration of individual needs" or "feelings" for discussion in Chapter 5.	Sub-themes will be captured in Chapter 5.
Psychological safety	Evidence of psychological safety appears in several interviews. Be sure to capture it.	Psychological safety is incorporated in employee engagement coding per the work of Kahn (1990)
Cognitive diversity	References by participants of visible and invisible diversity allow cognitive diversity as a keyword.	Will add cognitive diversity to analysis when speaking of invisible diversity
Representation	Add representation as a key word	Representation added as a key word

Data Display

Participant responses to the interview questions appear in the next section, grouped based on the research questions. The graphs represent a pictorial tabulation of the frequency of themes identified from the responses. Quotes from participants are provided both to support the categorization by theme, and to highlight additional perspectives outside of the primary viewpoint. The quotes also add additional insight into the respondent's perspectives. Additional quotes appear in Appendix L.

Comments regarding how individual words were coded into categories are added to provide additional insight. Also, at times, the participants are numbered randomly. Therefore, the number does not necessarily correlate to the same individual each time. The random numbers were assigned to protect the anonymity of the participants. The data from answers to interview questions posed under Research Question 1 appear below.

Research Question 1

The first research question (RQ1) queried, "RQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion (D&I)?" Four interview questions (IQ) were associated with RQ1 to gather the participants' perspectives. The IQs were:

- IQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion?

- IQ2: How, if at all, has your definition of diversity and inclusion evolved in the last three years?

- IQ3: How does your company's top leadership define diversity and inclusion (D&I)?

- IQ4: What concepts and ideals, if any, form the basis/foundation for your company's D&I program (philosophical, moral, legal, social, etc.)?

Of note in the responses were the variation in how everyone framed the notion of

workplace D&I. Most clearly differentiated diversity from inclusion from the concept of equity (E), while others incorporated all three notions into their definition. Some added "accessibility" or "equality" as relevant concepts to incorporate. There was some overlap in the responses to IQ1, IQ2, and IQ3, as not all participants clearly differentiated between their personal views on D&I versus the company perspective. The coding for each individual IQ appears below.

Interview Question 1. IQ1 asked, "How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ1 resulted in two summaries, one for diversity and one for inclusion. The diversity summary contained 29 comments grouped into six themes. The inclusion summary contained 42 comments grouped into nine themes. Representative quotes from participants incorporating both summaries appear next, followed by the graphs depicting each summary along with explanatory comments for the category. See Appendix L for additional quotes from participants.

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ1.

P1: "Diversity... is the quantifiable difference you have in your organization, so the numbers; Inclusion, for me would be more about the culture piece…. As an industry we're still working out what it [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion] means. And again, gender is well accepted. In some countries, disabilities is well accepted as well. Ethnicity is not a comfortable discussion to have, to the point that you can't even record it in some areas. So, in terms of what does diversity mean, that generally means small pockets of acceptable groups to talk about, rather than inclusion, which is that much broader spectrum of everything that kind of equals diverse."

P1: "I think equity now is that piece that recognizes that meritocracy is a myth. And people need different layers of support. Because if you give everybody the same programs more and treat everybody equally, it just means that those who have you know, more access, more privilege, more advocacy, get even higher, and it doesn't close the gap in any way. Whereas equity takes notes that there is unfairness and disproportionality there and we need to do action to close that gap."

P2: "Inclusion is about feeling like you can bring your authentic self so that you get to work and that you are able to engage with others socially and professionally. You feel like your voice is heard, ideas appropriately attributed to you, and that you belong…And then inclusion is how we process whatever we're doing, whether it's a conversation, or a work assignment, or a social structure around those axes of diversity…If we're truly talking about diversity and inclusion, we

want to create an environment that is tolerant and open to all those perspectives, at least in terms of allowing them to coexist…please don't try and come convert me to your point of view. I'm very willing to talk about it with you. Please do not try and convert me."

P4: "They can express a degree of authenticity and at the same time can maximize their potential in that environment without compromising their values."

P7: "We will often cover our own inherent, our own acquired diversity, in the name of consensus. And so we need that inherent diversity to unlock the power of the acquired diversity. And so there are these two components that work well together."

P15: "Something that is really interesting is, what is diversity in the US and what is diversity in our regions. And so I have a regional partner in every country that we're in, which is like 18 countries, and we work together to identify it, because for the United States, it's really demographic based, right? And for our company, it's that representation that I talked about. So, so diversity is women globally, right? And then in the US, it's underrepresented minorities, which is all ethnicities, except for white, and Asian. But outside of the US, it's only gender. Right? That's, that's, that's kind of how we look at it, which kind of limits your talent pool of people for certain programs. But anyway, there's just different lenses."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ1. The themes for the diversity summary include

(a) quantifiable visible difference (QVD), (b) invisible differences, (c) representation

demographics (d) valuing QVD, (e) invitation, and (f) other. The theme categories for the

definition of diversity appear in the figure below. Figure 7 is followed by comments regarding

each categorization.

Figure 7

Participant Definition of Diversity
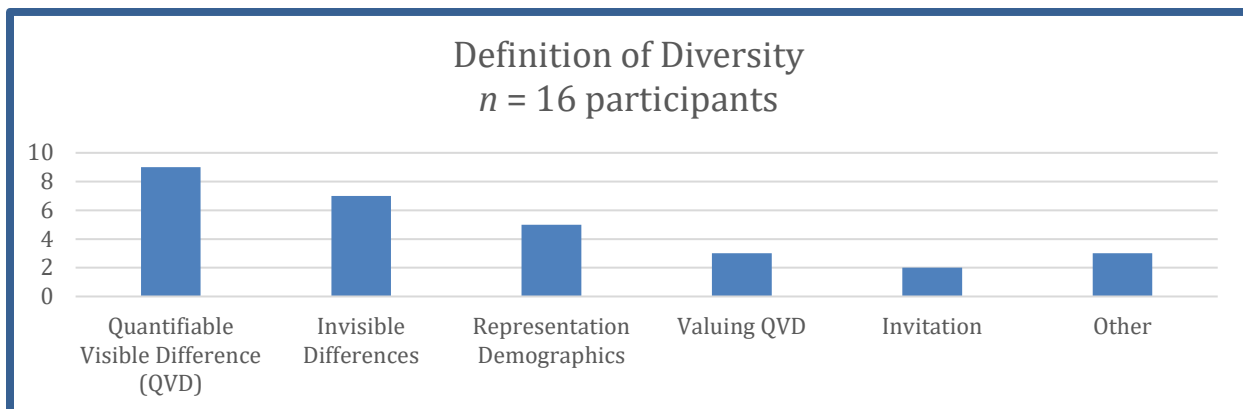
Note. The figure highlights six themes derived from answers to IQ1. The numbers are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Quantifiable Visible Difference (QVD). QVD is a summary of how the participants meshed their personal definitions with how their companies accounted for diversity metrics within their organization. P1 spoke specifically of diversity as a "quantifiable difference… the numbers." P2, P5, and P6 spoke of visible differences. P7 noted inherent differences. P8, P12, P14, and P15, spoke of differences relating either to minority headcount, workforce metrics, or identity.

Invisible Differences. Participants spoke of invisible differences as a portion of their diversity definition in addition to visible differences. P2, P5, and P6 spoke specifically of invisible differences as part of their diversity definitions. P7 called it acquired diversity. P4, P8, P10, and P15 added additional characterizations for diversity, including "whatever shape or form," educational background, creative skillsets, and any differentiating dimension.

Representation Demographics. Although quite similar, representation demographics were separated from QVD as five participants, P3, P4, P10, P11, and P13, spoke specifically of representation demographics as part of their definition of diversity. The definition also comprised efforts to reflect community demographics and increase the numbers of underrepresented groups as part of the diversity effort. Representation demographics were inclusive of either gender, race, cultural upbringing, national origin, ability, or sexual orientation based on participant comments.

Valuing QVD. Three participants, P5, P6, and P16, added a value component to QVD. They noted that their definition of diversity included valuing diversity. Valuing diversity also encompassed appreciating differences and crediting diverse individuals with the value they uniquely brought to the organization.

Invitation. P2 and P12 both incorporated the notion of being "invited to the party" as they opined their individual definition of diversity. Both elaborated on the "party" concept in their subsequent definition of inclusion. P12 further elaborated and subsequently incorporated equity into the definition.

Other. P1 incorporated the notion of diversity as a fact into their definition. P4 opined on the notion of individual diversity – personal characteristics versus group diversity – more often associated with identifiable human traits. P7 further elaborated on the notion of "inherent" versus "acquired" diversity to distinguish QVD from invisible forms of diversity.

The themes for the inclusion summary of definitions include (a) belonging, (b) feeling safe, connected, included, etc., (c) authenticity, (d) participation (involvement), (e) uniqueness, (f) equity, (g) helping togetherness, (h) fairness, (i) other. The theme categories for the definition of diversity appear in the figure below. Figure 8 is followed by comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 8

Participant Definition of Inclusion
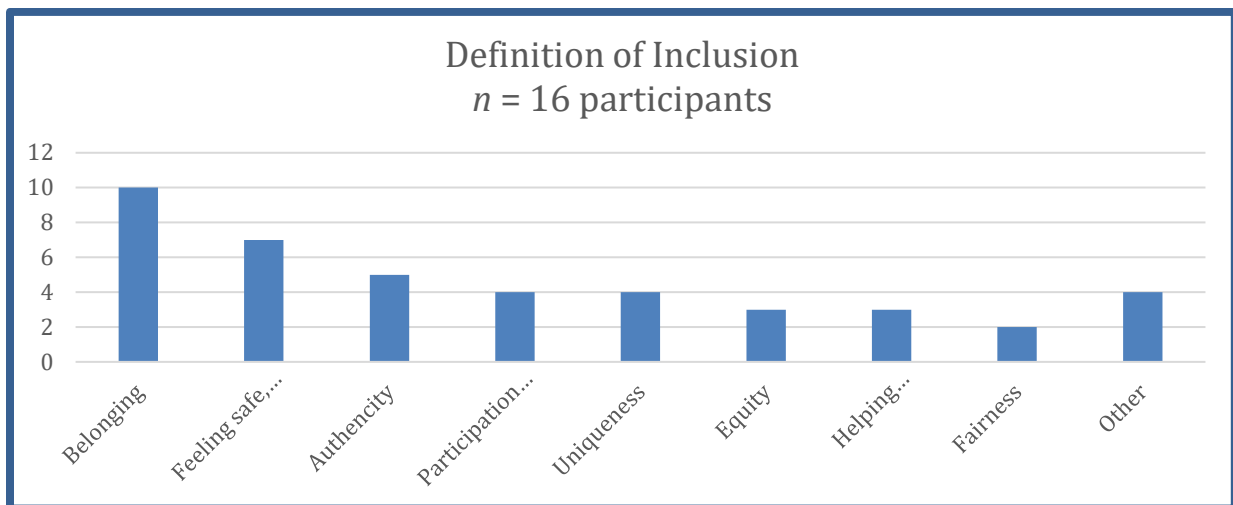
Note. The figure highlights nine themes derived from answers to IQ1. The numbers are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Belonging. The words belong or belonging were specifically mentioned by participants P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, P12, P15 and P16 as part of their definition of inclusion. P2 used the phrase "how we process" in regard to inclusion which was coded as belonging. The academic definition of inclusion incorporating both belonging and uniqueness was mentioned by two participants (P4, P15).

Feeling – Safe, Connected, Included, etc. The words feel or feelings were mentioned by P3, P4, P6, P8, P11, P14, and P15 as part of their definition of inclusion. The words feel, or feeling were oft used a verbs with other words such as feel connected, feel an affinity for an organization, feeling safe, feeling connected, feeling included, feeling like you can bring your authentic self, feel like you belong, etc. It was noted that the word feel or feeling appeared throughout multiple interviews.

Authenticity. Participants 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 used the word authentic or authenticity in their definition of inclusion. "Bringing their authentic self," "feel they can be authentic", "bring their full unhindered selves", were some of the phrases used as part of the definitions of inclusion. One participant expressed inclusion involves "people feeling safe enough to actually express fully who they are."

Participation/Involvement. Participation and involvement and the analogy of "being asked to dance" after being invited, occurred three times in the interviews, mentioned by P2, P10 and P12. P12 elaborated on the dance analogy and spoke further about participation in "choosing the decorations, and in "the selection of the music" to add additional context to their definition of inclusion. P9 said inclusion is when "everyone gets to participate in this economy."

Uniqueness. P4 considers inclusion as people feeling comfortable being themselves without compromise. P13 said inclusion incorporates acceptance of what makes people who they

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are. P13 emphasized "acceptance, acceptance, acceptance" of individual attributes. P5 and P16 spoke of inclusion as appreciating what makes people unique.

  Equity. P1, P3, and P16 all incorporated equity directly into their discussion of inclusion, noting that the murder of George Floyd and the resulting social protests contributed to the expanded definition. P1 called the concept DEI throughout the discussion.

  Helping Togetherness. P5 and P16 spoke of the notion of helping belonging or helping togetherness. P5 elaborated, adding that they had an expectation of leaders in the organization to help others to belong. P7 spoke of helping people get together as a part of inclusion.

  Fairness. P1 and P14 also spoke of fairness in their personal definition of inclusion.

  Other. P1 stated that "inclusion is an act" as in action. P6 stated inclusion is when people feel unhindered in an organization. P10 spoke of sharing of power and influence as part of inclusion.

  Interview Question 2. "How, if at all, has your definition of diversity and inclusion evolved in the last 3 years?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ2 resulted in 18 concepts grouped into four themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding changes in their D&I definition appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a graph depicting the change in perspective or lack thereof appears, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the graph. Following the comments are additional graphs depicting a demographic breakdown of responses to the question of change in the participant's D&I definition.

  Representative Participant Quotes for IQ2.

P1: "Before George Floyd, right. So I was probably in that world of inclusion completely diluting the challenges of essential groups that still suffer at the hands of injustice. So I was woken up."

P3: "[My new] definition of equity was in terms of not just representation at the entry level, but throughout the organization…and there is a path for success as well."

P5: "What I think has changed is the recognition and probably more cognizant importance placed on people's lifetime experiences…so there is a sense of experiences that informs people emotions…and the willingness to have those conversations and the amount of willingness to really understand how that affects productivity in the workplace."

P12: "How I define it? Not really. But its importance? Massively."

P13: "Not really…You know, I think the D and I issues here are really different. So the D is much more important here than the I in the sense that, like, when I came into this organization, our senior executive team just does not represent our workforce or the communities that we support."

P14: "No. Look, I am who I am. I've lived it. Not something in a book. I was a corporate executive for 40 years, and many times I was the only person of color in the room."

P15: "How it has changed for me, is in a couple of different ways. One is it has been probably the most visible demonstration of why equity and inclusion is so important. I think that George Floyd, the riots in New York, the violence against Asian people, the the COVID, and how it's affected underrepresented groups and women, to me, it has been so stark, in terms of the need for companies to really be thoughtful about fairness, and, and being really inclusive of all of the employees."

P16: "As an African American male it did not tell me anything that I didn't know. Also, when I look at George Floyd, what happened to him, those police officers basically made, in my opinion, part of it was they were telling him to some degree that he did not belong."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ2. The themes that emerged in response to the question on changes to their definition of D&I are as follows: (a) no change in the definition, (b) expansion of the equity lens, (c) added inclusion and how people feel to the definition, and (d) other changes. The theme categories for the changes to definition of D&I appear in the figure below. Following Figure 9 are comments regarding each categorization. The categorization comments are followed by additional graphs depicting a demographic breakdown on changes to the participant's D&I definition.

Figure 9

Change in D&I Definition in the Last 3 Years
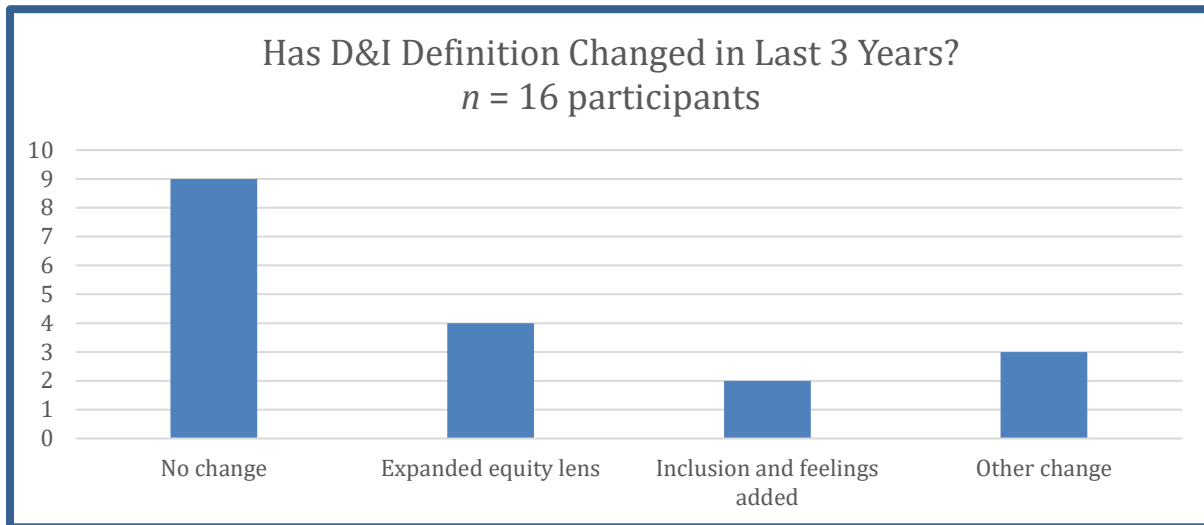
Note. The figure highlights four themes derived from answers to IQ2. The numbers are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

No Change. Nine of sixteen participants said their definition of D&I had not changed in the last three years. Several shared their personal challenges as individuals from marginalized backgrounds. They stated that events in the last three years served to reinforce what they already believed about discrimination and the lack of diversity and inclusion in corporate workplace. Others emphasized that while their definition of D&I did not change the importance of the topic did. Additional individuals expressed they were already aware of workplace discrimination and marginalization. Current events simply brought greater awareness to problems already in existence.

Expanded Equity Lens. Four of sixteen participants noted that equity became a part of their D&I perspective, notably in response to the murder of George Floyd. Two emphasized work they personally, and that their company, were conducting in the D&I space prior to the murder of George Floyd. His murder accelerated their work. Another participant remarked on the importance of equity, noting that without the addition of equity as a lens the demographic gaps in

their corporate environment would never change. An additional participant remarked on the importance of equity and fairness and that corporate environments in the past have not been fair to individuals from marginalized groups.

Inclusion and Feelings Added. Two participants spoke about the importance of seeking inclusion at greater levels. Both also noted an increased emphasis on inclusion within their corporate environment. Both also mentioned the notion of employees "feeling" a sense of inclusion.

Other Changes. One noted additional changes in their definition of D&I. Notably was an open acknowledgement of marginalization of minorities in corporate settings. Another noted they now have an increased awareness of racism. An additional change noted was a greater awareness of privilege in global corporate environments, beyond issues of race and gender.

Demographic Breakdown of Responses to IQ2. The following graphs depict a demographic breakdown of responses to IQ2. Figure 10 depicts the responses to IQ2 along racial lines. The bar graphs indicate the absolute numbers of responses in each category, while the line indicates how a percentage of respondents from a racial category answered the question of change or not change in their D&I definition. For example, six black people said their definition did not change, which represented 85.7% of responses by blacks. Figure 11 depicts the responses along gender lines. Figure 12 depicts the responses along an intersectional frame of race and gender.
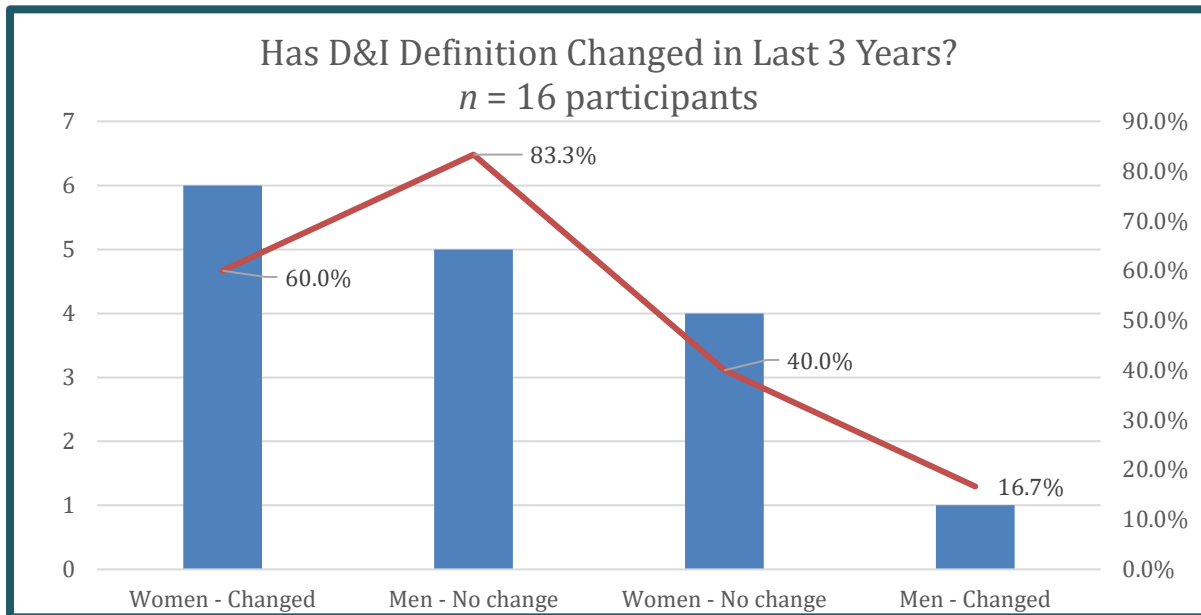
Figure 10

Racial Breakdown of Responses to IQ2

Has D&I Definition Changed in Last 3 Years?
n = 16 participants
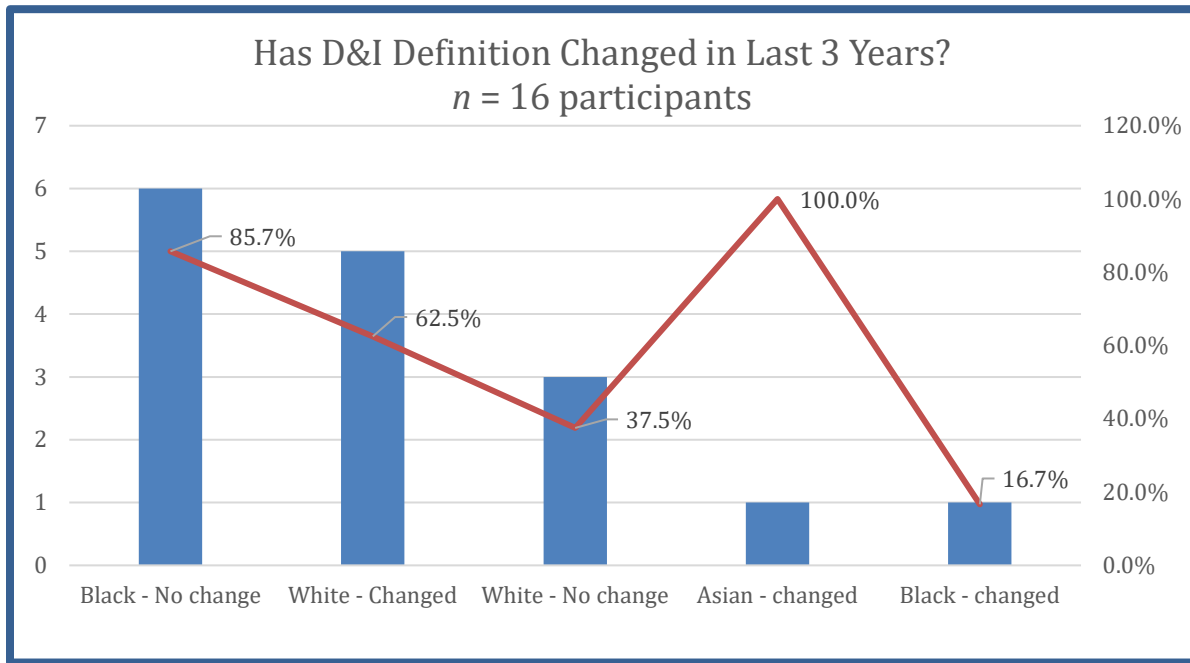
Note. The figure highlights two themes derived from answers to IQ2, broken down by race. The numbers are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Figure 11

Gender Breakdown of Responses to IQ2

Has D&I Definition Changed in Last 3 Years?
n = 16 participants

Note. The figure highlights two themes derived from answers to IQ2, broken down by gender. The numbers are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.
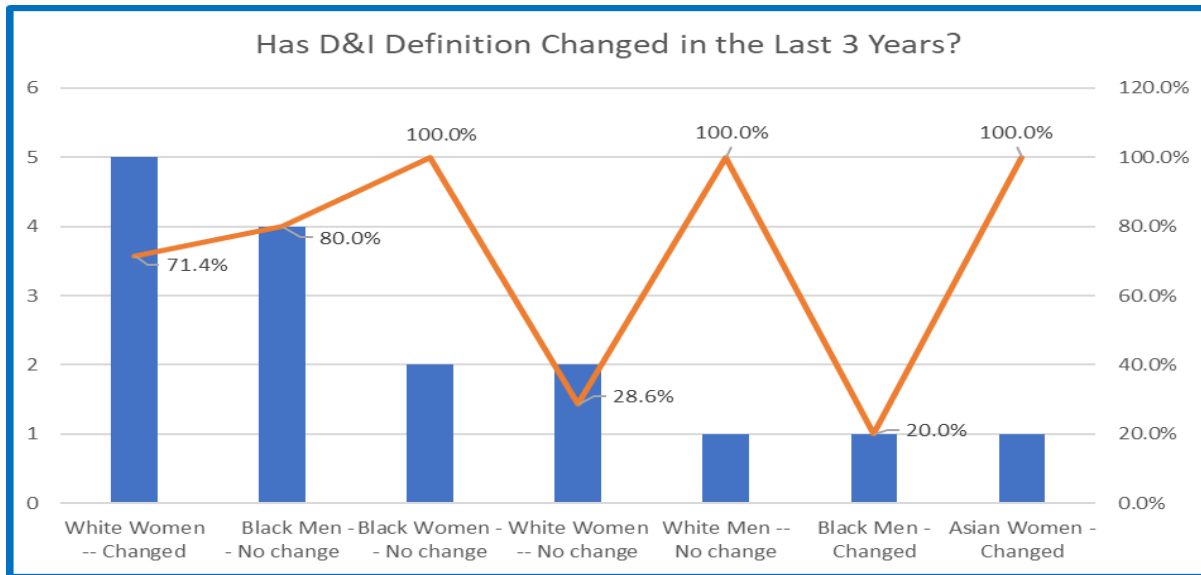
Figure 12

Race-Gender Intersectional Breakdown of Responses to IQ2

Note. The figure highlights two themes derived from answers to IQ2 broken down by race and gender. The numbers are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Interview Question 3. "How does your company's top leadership define diversity and inclusion (D&I)?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ3 resulted in 45 concepts grouped into nine themes. Most participants alluded to quantifiable, visible forms of diversity, but elaborated more on other themes they felt represented the D&I definition of their corporate leadership. Representative quotes from participants regarding how top leadership at their company defines D&I appear below (see Appendix L for additional quotes). After the quotes below, a graph depicting the data appears, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the graph.

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ3.

P1: "Our roots are not in US culture. So our view is very shaped by the native culture of our parent location."

P2: "It's about how our people [are] reaching their potential, feeling included, and therefore performing to their best ability. It is very closely is part of ... our ...strategy. So that's a wider

piece about ESG. So environmental, social, and governance. And that's one of our key priorities as an organization ... not just for our people, but for our [customers].”

P4: “I feel like some of those invisible things were used as compensating behavior for lack of progress on the more visible things…we've seen the gender, the race, those things be brought more front and center in us to really put more focus on building that level of diversity for women globally and for minorities here in the US.”

P8: “The problem is people are super comfortable with [acquired] diversity. So some leaders say diversity of thought is what matters. And I actually disagree. I think that for leaders they want what's easy, right?”

P 11: “Yeah, I think there's definitely a difference or a gleaming difference, obviously, with the racism that happens here in the United States. They in the region, in the regional areas, they are very aware of the United States stance on racism, and diversity and inclusion. And so they take that still, they take that with their country, and it feels like a mash up, right, making sure that people are feeling included making sure that they are recruiting from diverse areas, but they look at things like women, for the most part, that's the easiest one. And they also are looking at disabilities because their countries tend to fine them for it. And then the third one is sexual orientation. So they don't really look too much at that one. They're trying to like keep themselves distant from that one. But those first few women and disabilities, that's where they really lean on. And we do too here.”

P12: “India has caste system that they're not willing to say that they have. And they brought that, you know, particular thing over here in the US. There was an article I don't even remember where that article is now. But they talked about the casting is a caste caste system.”

P13: “So the, the definition at our company, has really evolved into equity and inclusion. If you have equity in your company, if you have fair practices and principles, and you have an inclusive environment, then you will get diversity. And so that's, that's sort of the model and the definition that our company has really been trying to infuse the culture and educate our employee base.”

P14: “So when you look at it from a Japanese perspective, diversity and inclusion really meant women from their vantage point. It did not include people of color because it in Japan 99.9% of people are Japanese. And so and there was always a male dominant role within that, within that segment. And so women are now being included in in diversity, equity, that's your investor. That's where they need to get to first. And so when you start mentioning people of color, they look clueless to you. I mean, they look clueless.”

P15: “I've been here for [more than five] years, and we've been talking about it, but we actually formed an inclusion and diversity function about three years ago. So it's pretty new. But I'll say that these definitions that I kind of read you are a little more, you know, mechanical, transactional, like they just feel like statements.”

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ3. The themes that emerged in response to the question how does the company's top leadership define D&I are as follows: (a) quantifiable visible difference (QVD), (b) invisible diversity, (c) evolving, (d) gender, (e) headquarters (HQ) national culture driven, (f) environmental-social-governance (ESG) strategy driven, (g) valuing QVD, (h) core values, and (i) other. The theme categories for how top leaders define D&I appear in Figure 13. Following Figure 13 are comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 13

Responses to "How Does Top Leadership Define D&I?"
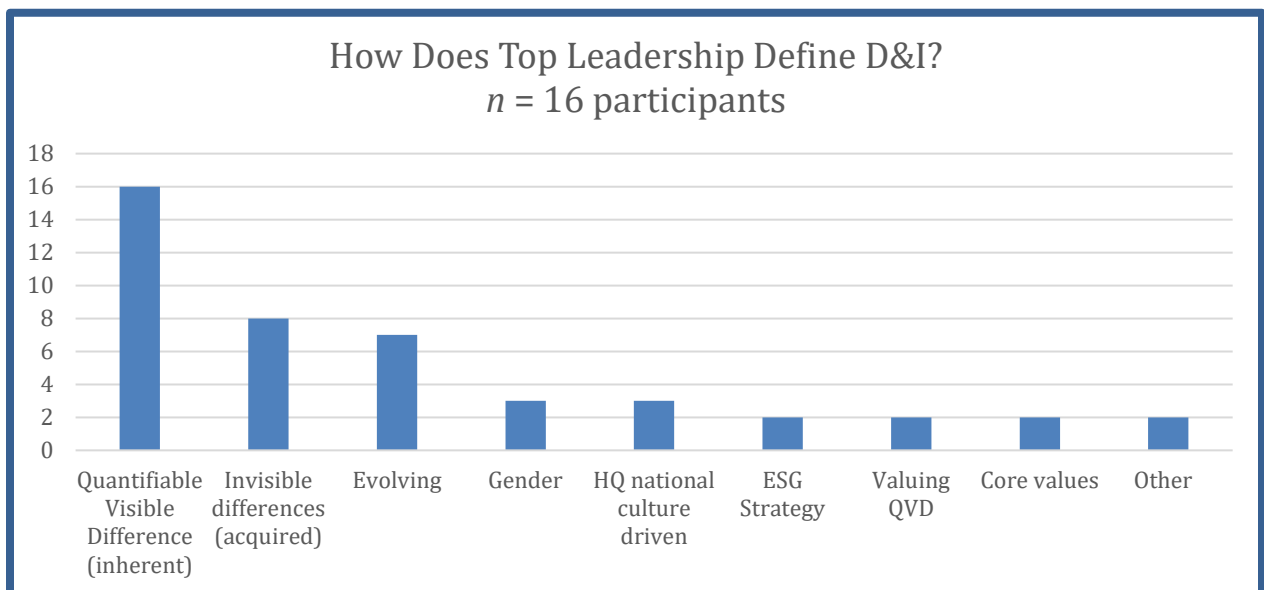
Note. The figure highlights nine themes derived from answers to IQ3. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Quantifiable Visible Difference (QVD). QVD is a summary of the participants characterized how their companies accounted for diversity and metrics within their organization. P1 spoke specifically of diversity as a "quantifiable difference… the numbers." P2, P5, P6, spoke of visible differences. P7 noted inherent differences. P8, P12, P14, P15, spoke of differences relating either to minority headcount, workforce metrics, or identity. P3, P4, P16 spoke about workplace metrics.

Invisible Differences. Participants spoke of invisible differences as a portion of their

diversity definition in addition to visible differences. P2, P5, P6 spoke specifically of invisible

differences as part of their diversity definitions. P4, P8, P10, and P15 added additional

characterizations for diversity including "whatever shape or form", educational background,

creative skillsets, and any differentiating dimension.

Evolving. A few participants used the words evolved or evolving to describe the

definition of D&I employed by top leadership (P5, P13, P16). Others noted changes such as a

new D&I function, or factors such as equity and fairness more recently incorporated into the

D&I lens of leadership (P5, P15). Several non-US headquartered companies were characterized

as evolving in their understanding of the impact of race on diversity and fairness in the US (P2,

P11, P14).

Gender and Headquarters (HQ) National Culture Driven. Several participants noted

gender was a focus for their firm's definition of D&I, particularly for companies headquartered

in Japan, India, other parts of Asia and Europe. Participants working for non-US headquartered

firms also commented on how racial factors in the US were unfamiliar to some of their top

leadership resulting at times in a "clueless" response. Caste was mentioned as unique to

companies with HQs in India, with leader's applying the caste culture lens at times in managing

diversity in the US. Participants from US headquartered companies also noted a gender and local

diversity focus for their international operations.

Environmental Social Governance (ESG) Strategy. Two participants, P1, and P2

specifically mentioned corporate D&I initiatives and definitions as stemming from their

corporate ESG strategy. ESG strategy was also mentioned regarding corporate governance and

public perception. There were a few comments on an overlap between environmental and social concerns and evaluative governance factors.

Valuing QVD and Core Values. A values perspective around top leaders' definition of D&I also emerged. Two participants, P5 and P15, opined that diversity alone is not enough but that companies need to value diverse personnel and their contributions. P1 and P2 noted that D&I are part of the "core values" of their companies and the leadership.

Other. Additional elements comprising top leaders' definition of D&I according to the participants included supply chain diversity, and invisible diversity. Supply chain diversity was mentioned as an economic imperative to help bolster marginalized communities. Invisible diversity was specifically mentioned as a convenient excuse by some corporate leaders as a reason not to focus on quantifiable visible diversity.

Interview Question 4. "What concepts and ideals, if any, form the basis/foundation for your company's D&I program (philosophical, moral, legal, social, etc.)?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ4 resulted in 40 concepts grouped into ten themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding underlying concepts and ideals that form the basis for the company's D&I appear below (see Appendix L for additional quotes). After the quotes below, a graph depicting the data appears, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 14).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ4.

P1: "And that then, has meant that the people we recruit the behaviors, you need to work for [the company], you need to be able to define what they are, and therefore equity, socio economic etcetera, et cetera, is all part of the key values we have in our people and also as part of [our business]… And social equity, equity is a key part of our [business]."

P2: "One of our corporate values is fairness."

P4: "There is an economic set of reasons, whether it is access to talent market…whether it is making sure that you're getting 100% of the people you have, or whether it is recognizing that many of your clients are becoming increasingly diverse"

P5: "I think that the ability for the organization to understand demographic shifts globally, the better we are able to understand how their customer base will shift, how their talent pool will shift, and understand some of the needs, beliefs, that those groups have and how they will evolve."

P6: "I think that working in Silicon Valley one of the shibboleths is this idea that there's a meritocracy in place…that the smartest people are the most successful. So I would say it's less about a foundation or philosophy and more about how do you get them out of these fundamental myths? Like they really want to believe that they are successful because the system is fair and they're better than everyone else."

P8: "I think the employees and the way the employees are reacted have motivated corporations, companies to, to to focus differently on this subject. I think the fact that we saw someone murdered right in front of us on TV, you couldn't miss that and something that everyone saw."

P10: "So, you know, I'd like to think that it's inherently built into our moral fiber as to all the changes that we're doing, but we are obviously putting moves in place as well and have done and are continuing to."

P11: "Well, I think so I think one of the issues that came out was, you have a lot of corporate directives being directed towards diversity inclusion, because you had a lot of pressure from investment groups. You take issues like [well known investment capital firm], for example...they made a directive. How many blacks do you have on your board of directors? How many blacks do you have in corporate executive positions, and we will make our funding decisions based on the information that we receive."

P12: "The other thing that's interesting in a corporation is, you know, the role that you know, the role that legal plays in what you can and cannot share and what you can and cannot talk about, and pushing, you know, trying to be more transparent. And, and, you know, pushing your organization for that level of transparency, that that was something that evolved over time as well."

P15: "Core values here are so important to the way that the company operates and the expectations of employees that you see it modeled from our executives, you know, all the way through the organization."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ4. The themes that emerged in response to the

question how does the company's top leadership define D&I are as follows: (a) core values, (b)

morality-wokeness, (c) ESG strategic alignment, (d) business imperative, (e) employee

engagement - sentiment, (f) social equity - justice, (g) inclusion (fairness), (h) investor pressure,

(i) legal concerns, and (j) other. The theme categories for how top leaders define D&I appear in Figure 14. Following Figure 14 are comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 14

Responses to "What concepts and Ideals Form the Basis for Your Company's D&I Paradigm?"
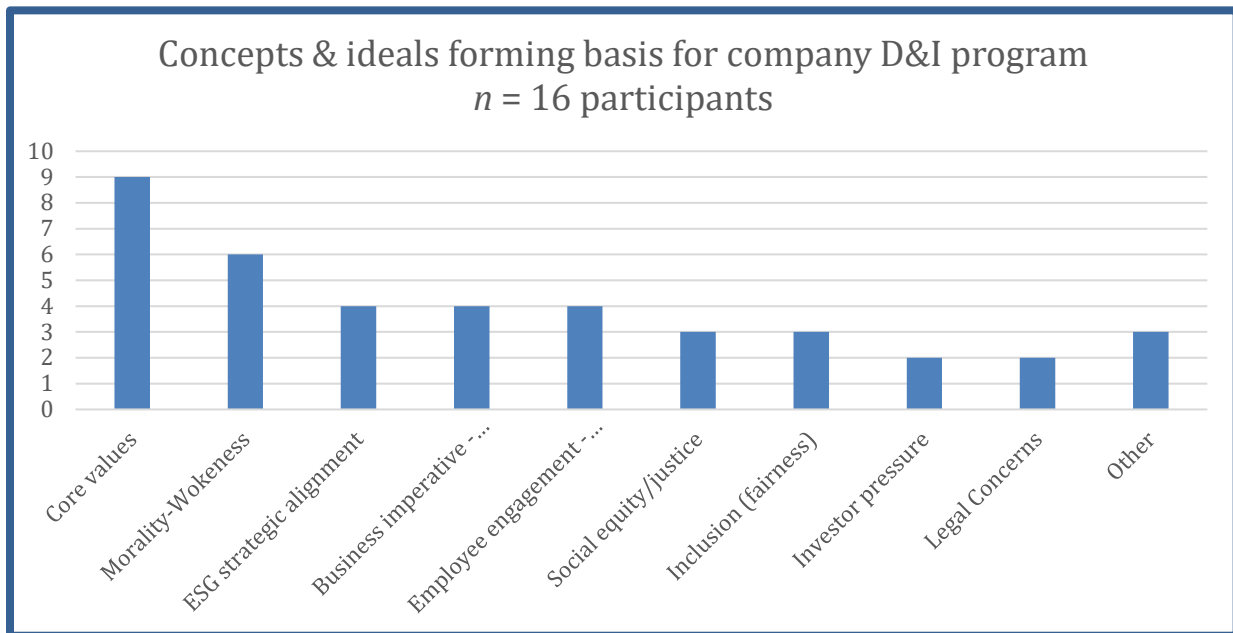
Note. The figure highlights ten themes derived from answers to IQ4. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Core Values. Nine respondents specifically mentioned core values of the organization as the underlying foundation of their corporate D&I program. Terms coded as "core" values include key, corporate, core, and our values. Participants 1-5, 12, 14 and 15 all discussed values in their responses.

Morality-Wokeness. Morality was mentioned by six participants as part of the underlying foundation for their corporate D&I program. P9 said a "moral awakening" occurred and contributed to the foundation for D&I. P10 mentioned D&I as a part of inherent moral fiber. P13 mentioned a combination of moral, legal and philosophical factors. P14 said "It's the right thing to do."

ESG Strategic Alignment. Participants 1, 9, 12 & 15 spoke of D&I as a component of the

overall corporate ESG strategy. P1 mentioned ESG and D&I both from an internal workforce

perspective, as well as from a customer focus. P9 described ESG as a corporate "movement"

with D&I incorporated into the social component. Several participants mentioned D&I as part of

the annual corporate ESG publication, aligned with the overall business strategy.

Business Imperative-Profit Motive. P2, 4, 5 & 14 spoke specifically of D&I as

foundational due to the corporate customer base. P4 and P5 tied D&I to marketplace intelligence

and talent acquisition. P2 said "there is an economic set of reasons" tied to corporate financial

performance. P14 said "were [a] very consumer driven company," with a business need to

understand the customer base.

Employee Engagement – Sentiment. P1 noted the company's effort to recruit employees

already exhibiting the requisite behaviors to foster engagement in diverse socioeconomic

markets. P2 linked customer engagement with a diverse engaged employee base. P8 noted

employee reaction to social events as driving corporate changes in the D&I approach. P9 also

opined that employee reaction to events fostered change in D&I policy in their corporation.

Social Equity, Justice. P1, P9 and P12 spoke of social justice or equity as foundational

for the corporation's D&I approach. P1 called social equity a key business component. P9 said

the recognition of social injustice was a foundational element that led to change. P12 said the

social justice emphasis for D&I was rooted in a corporate focus on communities and included all

levels of leadership including the board of directors.

Inclusion, Fairness. P4, P10 & P13 alluded to inclusion and fairness as underlying

components of the corporate D&I approach. Both P4 and P10 linked inclusion to recruiting

policies to broaden the talent pool as a foundational shift to foster greater inclusion. P13 noted a change in the corporate lens toward greater inclusion to foster fairness and opportunities for all.

Investor Pressure. P9 spoke of the impact on corporate boards as they faced greater scrutiny surrounding D&I from groups including shareholders. P11 mentioned a specific investment group holding corporate leaders accountable for employment of individuals from underrepresented groups.

Legal Concerns & Other. Both P12, and P13 spoke to the legal implications of increased D&I efforts as well as the impact on data transparency both internally and externally. Other foundational elements of D&I incorporated the notion of meritocracy, equality, and intersectionality. Meritocracy was categorized by P6 as something to be dispelled as the root cause of economic disparity among communities. Equality was mentioned as the goal by P10. P4 noted intersectional analysis was necessary as D&I continues to evolve.

Summary of RQ1. The goal of RQ1 was to gain insight and understanding as to how individual leaders and corporations define D&I. Myriad definitions exist based on the feedback from the participants. There was a general consensus that diversity involves quantifiable measurable differences between people. There was considerable belief that invisible differences are also a key component of D&I. According to the participants, both they and the organizations they represent understand there are fundamental differences between diversity and inclusion. Additional concepts, such as representative demographics, equity, fairness, belonging, how people feel, corporate and personal values, morality, and equality were voiced. In addition, there was ample evidence based on statements made, that the corporate definition of D&I is evolving, with some individuals experiencing a changing perspective. Other individuals noted that events in the last three years only served to further the perspective they already had regarding the

definition of D&I. Generally, participants noted that unfairness in the corporate environment along racial, gender, ability, and religious lines exists and needs to be addressed.

Research Question 2

The second research question (RQ2) queried, "RQ2: How, if at all, do you measure, track, and evaluate D&I success at your company?" (Success Metrics)

Three interview questions were the basis for inquiry with the participants to derive an answer to RQ2. The interview questions (IQ) tied RQ2 and were as follows:

- IQ5: What constitutes success in your company's D&I paradigm? Any changes in the definition of success in the last 3 years?

- IQ6: What quantitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?

- IQ7: What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?

Of note in the responses were that most companies experienced a shift in success paradigm, although the replies as to what constituted success varied significantly. Representation metrics were a broadly used quantitative success measure, although most companies resisted setting a clearly defined numerical goal. Surveys were used in various forms to develop qualitative data. Data collection, accountability and transparency were also noted as elements of success factors by several participants. The responses for each individual IQ appear below.

Interview Question 5. "What constitutes success in your company's D&I paradigm? Any changes in the definition of success in the last 3 years?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ5 resulted in 49 concepts grouped into six themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding success elements and changes in the definition of success

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appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting

success elements appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented

(see Figure 15).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ5.

P1: "We have a range of measures. Do they, do I think they measure our success accurately? No, I don't. But they are a way of us making sure we are holding some people to account as well."

P2: "We maintain EEO metrics…we do not publish or share them. So even as someone who was heading DEI for my unit I'm not allowed to see them."

P3: "If we're going to give that a 10-point scale where 10 is full transparency, full accountability I put my organization at a four…there is an acknowledgement that greater transparency is needed."

P4: "If you do a survey and 80% of the white people feel that they belong, that looks pretty good. But if you don't break it out to say…look at all these Asian women or African American women who do not feel they belong, or women in general don't feel that they belong…We do segment the data to see what are the nuances. If you don't segment the data, you miss the nuances."

P5: "I share every month when I get the data with the leaders I support. Here's where you are from a representation, education and awareness standpoint. Here's what your employee survey data tells you around inclusive and inclusivity in the organization. And here are action plans to continue to drive improvement, so that the transparency is linked towards the sensitivity of the data."

P9: "And then some of it has to do with the ESG movement. Right, and they asked the social part of ESG in corporate America, and that what gets measured matters, right. And so I, and interesting enough, I recently saw a letter from a group to a corporation where the corporation had defined some clear metrics around diversity, hiring and things of that nature and put it in their 10k. And this group, led by Steve Miller has filed an EEO action against the company saying it's discriminating because it has definitive metrics around diversity. Right? How ironic is that?"

P11: "I think there's a real discomfort, still with some of our senior executives, who kind of grew up with the company... the roots of the company or to be frank, [are] this like conservative [culture] who acquired [urban assets]. And so our workforce changed our population that we support change. And so while the workforce has totally changed, we've got the same leadership as when it was this conservative [company]. And so it's a real, it's a real problem, quite frankly. And so I think it hasn't been clearly defined, which is part of the problem…we're not at a point of transparency."

P14: "We created like a people and talent plan. And we had very specific goals and objectives that we were trying to achieve. And then we, what I think made the difference for us is that we had a scorecard. And we measured our work force metrics, and share that with the employee population on a quarterly basis. So it was it was it was, if one of our goals was around improving the representation of our workforce, including senior management…"

P15: "What gets measured gets done."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ5. The themes that emerged in response to the question what constituted D&I success or what changes had occurred in the success paradigm are as follows: (a) changes were made in the success paradigm, (b) representation targets, (c) data collection, accountability, or transparency, (d) intersectional progress/awareness, (e) scorecard metrics, and (f) other. The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 15. Following the figure are comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 15

Responses to "What Constitutes Success in Your Company's D&I Paradigm? Any Changes in the Definition of Success in the Last Three Years?"
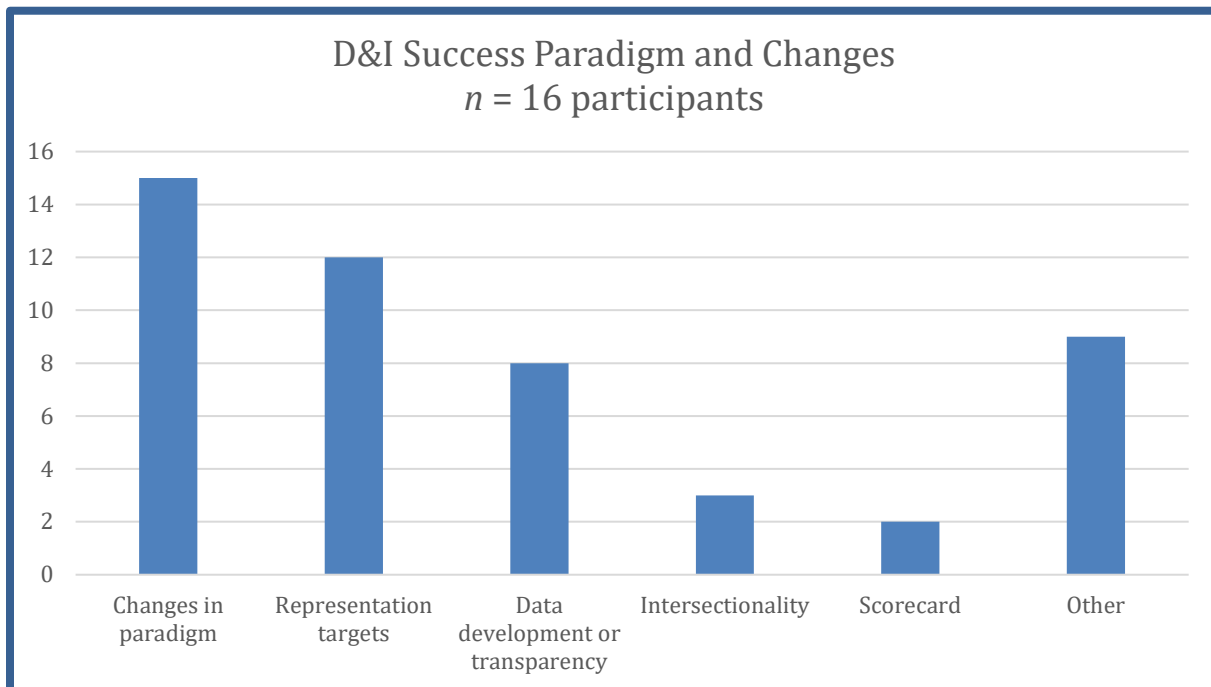
Note. The figure highlights six themes derived from answers to IQ5. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Changes in Paradigm. All but one participant noted there were changes in the success paradigm regarding D&I policies and execution. Topics mentioned included representation targets, data collection – accountability – transparency, early stages of intersectional data analysis of survey results, scorecards and other tools. Where a participant felt the paradigm did not change much they noted that the company had not yet defined success and was not at a point of transparency.

Representation Targets. Most participants mentioned representation targets of one form or another as success factors. Where one participant indicated the organization had set definitive goals, others focused more on trend analysis and not specific numerical goals. Several participants spoke of varying degrees of accountability for managers regarding representation trends. Two other participants mentioned represented targets existed, and data gathered, but with limited accountability for managers due to the newness (less than three years) of the practice.

Data Collection, Accountability, or Transparency. Participants 1, 4,5,6,8, 12, 14 and 16 all talked about expanded efforts within the firm to collect diversity data. Accountability was mixed as in some firms' data were tied to manager's evaluations and compensation. Other participants indicated the data collection process was too immature to tie trends directly to evaluation or compensation. Transparency also was mixed, ranging from managers who themselves had limited access to D&I data, to others whose companies released the data and set public goals.

Intersectionality. Three participants, P4, P6 and P14 mentioned an intersectional approach to evaluating success. All three indicated data analysis would look at "Asian women" or other specific subgroups to discern nuances in the data.

Scorecard. P4 and P14 both used the word "scorecard" to describe how their company was measuring and tracking D&I success. In one case the scorecard facilitated intersectional data analysis. The other case noted the evolution from data collection, to scorecard development leading to trend analysis and greater accountability on senior leaders as a success continuum.

Other. There were nine additional success factors mentioned. Some participants mentioned the company's willingness to set public goals, and facilitate internal or external accountability on progress as success indicators. Other participants heralded charitable donations, community involvement by employees, or active involvement of senior leaders, as measures of progress and success. One noted the emergence of an ESG movement among corporations as a success factor. Another indicated the existence of a new process focused on achieving D&I within the company as a measure of success. One person indicated their company had not clearly defined what would constitute D&I success. Another indicated that equality and elimination of the need for D&I programs was their success metric.

Interview Question 6. "What quantitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?" The examination of the participants' responses to IQ6 resulted in 42 concepts grouped into eight themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding quantitative metrics for D&I programs appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting quantitative metrics appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 16).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ6.

P1: "We are developing a range of performance indicators...which is a mixture of diversity…representation targets…and inclusion measures…how we measure our culture...what gets measured gets done."

P2: "I want quantitative data that I was not allowed to have."

P4: "Being able to see trends in the data. How do employees feel the company is around diversity? Do more people feel included?"

P5: "I share every month when I get the data with the leaders I support. Here's where you are from a representation, education and awareness standpoint. Here's what your employee survey data tells you around inclusive and inclusivity in the organization. And here are action plans to continue to drive improvement, so that the transparency is linked towards the sensitivity of the data."

P11: "The D&I team is not yet I think they're trying to kind of get buy in for the dashboard we have on the talent side. So like, on the talent side, I've worked through pipelines and presented to our CEOs of like hiring rates, comparing, you know, people of color versus white men versus females, growth and promotion rates, as well as exit rates, which obviously was very telling data for us."

P16: "We track the corporate representation data monthly in my unit."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ6. The themes that emerged in response to the question "What quantitative metrics do you use to evaluate D&I?" are as follows: (a) representation data, (b) retention rates, (c) promotion rates, (d) hiring data, (e) trend analysis, (f) training metrics, (g) milestones, and (h) pay equity (see Figure 16). The frequency of theme categories appears graphically below. Figure 16 is followed by comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 16

Responses to "What Quantitative Metrics Do You Use to Evaluate D&I at Your Company?"
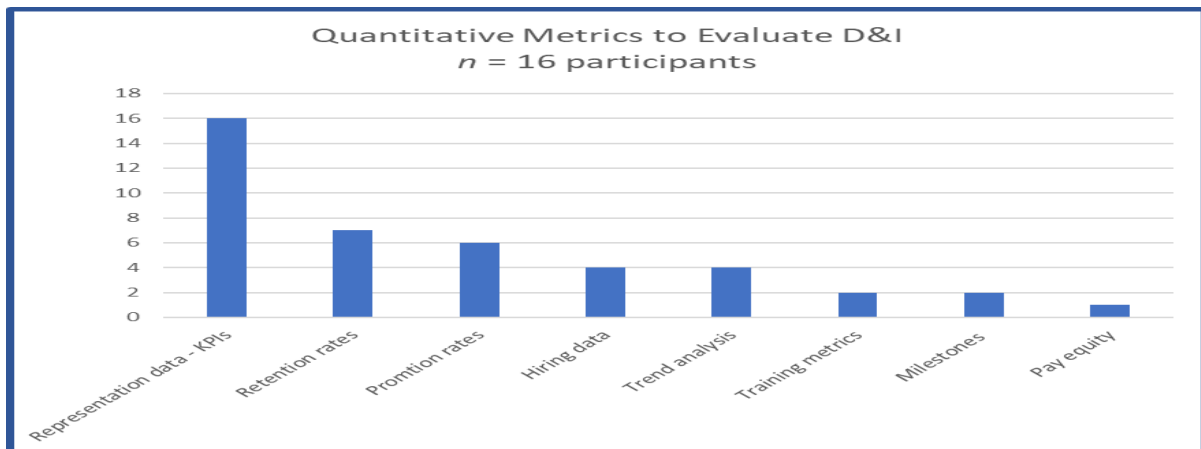
Note. The figure highlights eight themes derived from answers to IQ6. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

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Representation Data – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). All participants mentioned representation data when specifically asked about quantitative metrics. Several opined multiple numerical measures as a list of factors they took into consideration in evaluating D&I activities. Various terminologies were used to speak of representation data including retention rates, promotion rates, hiring rates, training rates, and pay equity analysis, in addition to the term representation. Some spoke of a range of performance metrics; others spoke of trend analysis.

Retention and Promotion Rates. Seven participants mentioned they monitor retention rates as part of their D&I success metrics. Six participants mentioned the monitoring of promotion rates as part of their D&I success metrics. Most mentioned the two rates together, although one person referred to retention rate as attrition rate.

Hiring Data, Trend Analysis, Training Metrics, Milestones and Pay Equity Data. Five participants specifically mentioned analysis of hiring rates as a component of their numerical D&I success evaluation criteria. Four participants specifically mentioned trend analysis, while two each mentioned education or training activities and performance milestones. One participant mentioned pay equity analysis as part of their overall evaluative approach.

Interview Question 7. "What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ7 resulted in 49 concepts grouped into six themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding success elements and changes in the definition of success appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting success elements appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 17).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ7.

P1: "We ask specific questions in our staff surveys about how people, whether people feel included."

P2: "Do people feel included?"

P3: "Do people feel like they're being heard?"

P4: "We also look at employee sentiment data and what employees are saying much more frequently as to what's happening so we can react a little bit more closer to real time."

P5: "We ask employees how they feel around belonging and safety, but also is your manager creating an inclusive environment?"

P6: "We have quarterly pulse checks on how people feel about belonging in the company, their inclusion. As a result, you know, doing those kinds of survey able to see by demographic group, how those groups are feeling."

P11: "I think just continuing to look at sentiment, whether it be an engagement surveys, exit surveys, kind of regular listening sessions, we have both inclusion councils at our sites, as well as we're restarting business resource groups. So we also get feedback from both of those those channels."

P16: "[We are] creating a sense of belonging, inspiration, and in-group sentiment."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ7. The themes that emerged in response to the

question "What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?"

are as follows: (a) survey results, (b) engagement outcomes, (c) belonging/inclusion/feelings, (d)

employee resource groups (ERG) feedback, (e) employee sentiment, (f) exit and stay interviews,

and (g) other. The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 17. Following the figure are

comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 17

Responses to "What Qualitative Measures Does Your Company Use to Evaluate D&I? at Your

Company?"
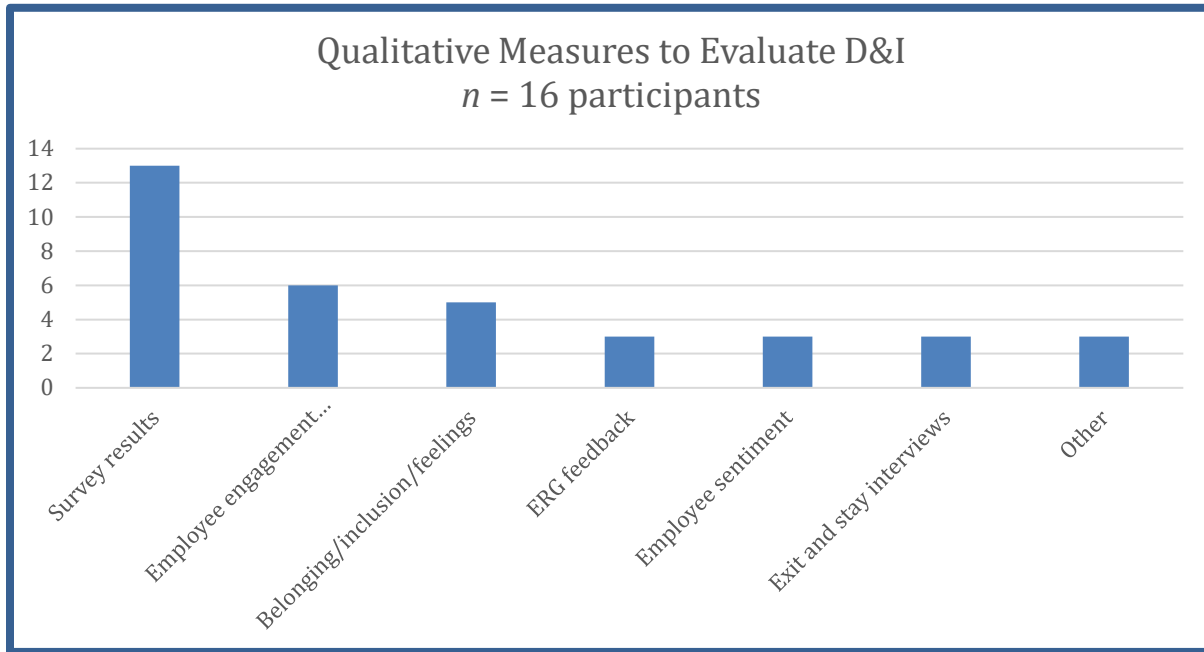
Note. The figure highlights six themes derived from answers to IQ7. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Survey Results. Thirteen of sixteen participants mentioned survey results as a qualitative success measure employed. The types of surveys varied. Seven mentioned engagement surveys. Other types of surveys mentioned included employee, pulse, climate, sentiment, exit, belonging, and inclusion. Two participants mentioned polls.

Employee Engagement Outcomes. Given the use of engagement and employee surveys, six participants spoke specifically about employee engagement outcomes as success metrics. Four participants mentioned [psychological] safety. Two participants alluded to the realm of employee engagement by creating an environment where employees feel free to bring their authentic selves to work.

Belonging/Inclusion/Feelings Data. Five participants opined that qualitative outcomes evaluation involved an assessment of employee feelings. Did employees feel like they belong? Did employees feel included? Did employees feel like they were being heard?

Employee Resource Group (ERG) Feedback. Three participants, P3, P7 & P12, mentioned they rely on feedback from ERGs as part of their qualitative evaluation process. P12 mentioned early meetings between the CEO and an African American ERG group to benchmark the current state, with consistent follow up dates to monitor progress.

Employee Sentiment; Exit and Stay Interviews; Other measures. P2, P4 & P11 specifically mentioned sentiment data from surveys as a qualitative evaluation approach. P8, P11 & P14 discussed exit and stay interviews as qualitative tools used to gauge D&I progress. Other qualitative evaluation methods employed by participants included focus groups (P8), general culture measuring techniques (P1), and leadership involvement (P2).

Summary of RQ2. The goal of RQ2 was to gain insight and understanding as to how individual leaders within corporations' measure, track and evaluate D&I success. Generally, representation data, combined with some trend analysis, is a foundational component. The human identities tracked depend upon the local culture, with race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability tracked in the US. Globally, gender was noted by most participants, with some attention to ability. Ethnicity and sexual orientation were not universally measured or tracked. Surveys were oft used to assess employee sentiment, engagement, and organizational culture. The collection, accountability, and transparency surrounding diversity data varied across participants, and across borders as well. Some firms went public with diversity data, whereas others limited distribution, even excluding some participants who believed they had a business case to see the

data. The notion of a data continuum, from collection to transparency to accountability was alluded to by several participants.

Research Question 3

The third research question (RQ3) queried, "What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company?" (Implementation)

Four interview questions (IQ) were associated with RQ3 to gather participants' perspectives. The IQs were:

- IQ8: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups?

- IQ9: What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach?

- IQ10: What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company? How do you manage them?

- IQ11: Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in mind. How, if all, has the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?

From the responses, companies employed various strategies and practices to implement D&I. All either added a senior leader to the D&I function, a consultant, or elevated their approach to align with the overall business strategy more closely. Most developed a custom approach, tailored to their corporate culture. Employee resource groups (ERGs), greater levels of accountability on managers for D&I execution, talent strategies, and leader engagement were employed as part of the evolving D&I methodologies. Surveys were used in various forms to develop qualitative data. Leader and employee engagement around D&I goals and tactics received greater emphasis. The responses for each individual IQ appear below.

Interview Question 8. "What strategies and practices if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups?" The examination of the participants' responses to IQ8 resulted in 89 concepts grouped into 13 themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding strategies and practices used to implement D&I at their company appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting the strategies and practices employed appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 18).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ8.

P1: "So what I've tried to do is bring people with me, but also I'm there to challenge when I need to. So in terms of accountability, what that means is in terms of it I spent a lot of time actually developing their individual capability to be able to do this, which has needed quite a bit of work. So for example, I coach the executive team one on one, because it's very difficult for an exec to, in front of a big group to, to become vulnerable and open themselves up. And so we do that in a one to one space so that they can build their own comfortable competence around inclusion as well."

P1: "We have our core global approach, which really is those targets at board level that we're talking about. But we have the flexibility to apply them how we want to regionally."

P2: "Recruitment was a major focus…We are engaging in a number of different diversity targeted recruitment actions."

P4: "DEI is a business strategy, just like any other. I don't need you to think differently. I don't need you to feel differently. I need you to execute the business strategy…Equity came into play to continue to advance the culture to sustain the advances of the other processes that were changing along at the same time that the culture was being nudged."

P5: "We have a specific curriculum that we require all our people leaders to go through, that helps build a competence in how to create safe spaces to have conversations around how to talk about things in the workplace, that for years and years we told people not to talk about in the workplace; how to create and build empathy and create connections with people who are similar and different from you. How to feel more comfortable having uncomfortable conversations….If we have leaders who have low inclusion scores based on those results we put targeted action plans in place for those leaders and then we re-survey their teams."

P6: "I think on a global level, it's really important for me to be in that country and ask specifically, where are they? Where are they currently on their DEI journey?"

P7: "It's about understanding what your local data tells you…you want to be able to collect the data. You want to be able to collect relevant metrics."

P9: "I think one of the tactics has been making sure everyone in their performance measurements has a diverse, right, you got to put in a goal, if you got to put it in their goals, right? And if you put within their goals, they it gets their attention. That's the most effective way. You could you can talk to you blue in the face on this subject, but driving it in the goals, and paying people for performance is what makes it work. What gets peoples, their attention."

P10: "After George Floyd, we took a big hard look at ourselves as management. But as a company as well, we included everybody in that. We did a study, and we took, you know, as to where we were as a company in terms of our ratio in terms of our breakdown. And we looked at, as I said, our hiring practices, and we and we put together a diversity team. And we put that out to anybody in the company to put their hand up to see who wanted to be involved. We limited to one person per territory, because too many, too many heads, too many cooks, all that sort of thing. But what was wonderful was to see that everybody basically did put their hand up, and everybody wanted it to be hugely important part of our culture and who we are as a company."

P11: "We restarted employee resource groups…"

P12: "But you got to think globally, but you're going to act locally...I mean, you just got to have the executives, you've got to say, this is when our top five things we're going to do. Period. That, you know, I've seen that at [top global bank's CEO]. He basically ripped everybody all his top leaders said, Look, we do everything well, except hire black people. So you're gonna hire black people, if you don't hire black people. It gets them in here, whatever. None of you are getting a bonus. Some of those guys are bonusing a million dollars a year. That makes a big difference."

P13: "We don't I don't think we have a strategy. I think we have a vision. And I think that, you know, our, our Head of Diversity is, you know, wanting to put a strategy together with numbers and quantity. But I think it's still a matter of gathering all that information. So I think that the strategy, a more robust strategy is coming. But right now we have a vision and pillars that we lean on to do the work and tell the story."

P14: "We also had a monthly leadership team meetings specifically dedicated to our diversity and inclusion efforts, like how, you know, what are we focused on? What ideas do we have? How are we making progress?"

P15: "We did a lot of listening sessions where we created open and safe spaces for people to have conversations and share what's on their mind. We used that information to inform our strategies. Gender is a common theme globally."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ8. The themes that emerged in response to the

question "What strategies and practices if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company

globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups?" were as follows: (a) added/revised DEI role, (b)

employee resource groups (ERGs), (c) accountability, (d) tied to business strategy, (e) talent

strategy (hire, pools, pay, retain, develop, promote), (f) listening/conversation sessions, (g) data

access/availability, (h) regional strategy/execution, (i) regular meetings, (j) targets/goals for

underrepresented groups, (k) learning and development courses, (l) tied to leadership

performance, (m) other. The frequency of theme categories appear in Figure 18. Following the

figure are comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 18

Responses to "What Strategies and Practices Do You Use to Implement D&I at Your Firm?"
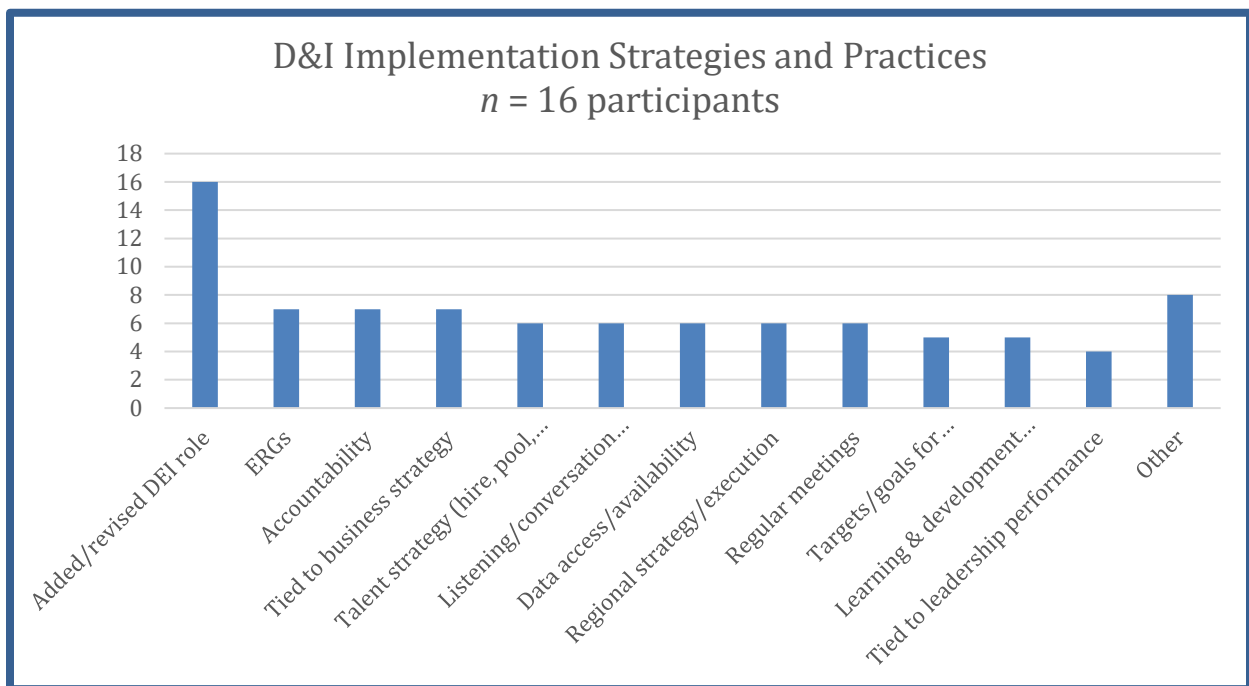
Note. The figure highlights thirteen themes derived from answers to IQ8. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Added/Revised DEI Role. Most companies added a senior leader with specific

responsibility for the corporate DEI strategy and execution. One company added a consultant

with the responsibility, while others who began with a consulting team eventually hired the team

to lead the corporate DEI effort. One firm replaced the D&I lead and upgraded the position's

grade level to improve perception and results.

Employee Resource Groups. Participants from seven firms mentioned increased the ties between their ERGs and the senior leaders of the organization. Most of these seven firms instituted listening sessions between the ERGs and the Chief Executive Officer, often beginning with the African American groups. Two participants said their firms began employing the ERGs to help craft or evaluate corporate responses to events impacting their communities, such as the violence against the Asian community in the US.

Accountability. Seven participants spoke about increased accountability for senior leaders or mid-level managers regarding survey results tied to individual manager D&I performance. Two participants said the leaders received feedback and additional coaching in cases where the D&I performance fell short of expectations. Two participants talked about DEI performance directly impacting manager bonuses. Others indicated increased visibility and conversations concerning manager's DEI performance, but not tied directly to performance goals.

Tied to Business Strategy. Seven participants also spoke of D&I activities as a component of the overall global business strategy. These seven participants talked directly about the overall global business strategy. Fourteen of sixteen participants mentioned some level of strategic tie in that is reflected in other categories to provide the reader additional insight as to the specific activities utilized.

Talent Strategy Modifications. Six participants mentioned a D&I tie in as a component of their talent strategy. Four spoke about hiring strategy, including comments about expansion of the talent pool. Other participants mentioned D&I retention efforts and pay equity. Some also talked about D&I promotion strategies and efforts to develop diverse leaders more quickly within their organizations.

Listening/Conversation Sessions. Six leaders specifically mentioned listening sessions. Others alluded to similar conversations without saying the words "listening" or "conversation." Several mentioned additional training for leaders on how to conduct listening sessions for their teams.

Data Access/Availability. Data access or availability was a challenge for some participants. Other participants had ready access to the available D&I data. For those with access, some of their companies had begun to conduct trend analysis with varying measures of accountability. Several leaders alluded to a data continuum, beginning with gathering of the D&I data and moving on to analytics and accountability.

Regional Strategy/Execution. Six leaders emphasized the importance of a regional/local strategy to execute the corporate D&I approach. Specific comments around "think globally, act locally" were made by several participants. Many participants noted the variation in what constituted diversity in one part of the world versus a different country or region. Local customization of the global plan was a consistent theme.

Regular Meetings. Six leaders spoke of participating in regular D&I meetings of various kinds. Some meetings were with corporate leaders to review D&I results and trends. Other meetings were held with staff to help foster greater levels of D&I in the organizational culture. Other meetings were with ERGs to discuss matters pertinent to that particular group.

Representation Targets. There was evidence of representation targets from multiple participant statements, but most stayed away from the mention of quotas or specific goals. Two participants did talk more openly about specific demographic targets, notably for women globally, and African Americans in the US. Five participants were deemed to specifically address the issues of targets based on answers to this question.

Learning and Development Courses. There was some overlap in answers, but certain concepts mentioned explicitly received categorization. Several participants mentioned learning and development courses. Courses ranged from unconscious bias training to facilitation skills. A few participants mentioned one-on-one training for senior leaders regarding D&I topics and skills.

Tied Outcomes to Leadership Evaluations. Four leaders talked about ties between a leader's D&I progress and their performance evaluations. One leader alluded to a tie-in directly to bonuses. Others spoke more about feedback given to leaders as necessary to increase D&I survey results.

Other. Other implementations strategies and practices receiving mention included executive coaching, and D&I events. One leader mentioned navigation by the path of least resistance as part of their execution strategy. Other leaders emphasized the difference between a focus on results versus activities. Other participants spoke about the need to tailor their approach to meet the unique needs of individual leaders.

Interview Question 9. "What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ9 resulted in 23 concepts grouped into eight themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding D&I implementation tools or models appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting D&I tools or models appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 19).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ9.

P1: "I can't think of any I'd quickly quote you I wouldn't say so I think the model I use is probably an adapted version of lots of different types of models that I've used over the years. But they have actually originated from general people strategies."

P3: "And so there is not a one size fits all strategy that can work."

P5: "A model where every single one of us feels accountable for creating an environment that values inclusion and taking active steps towards expanding or improving that rather than passively waiting for the organization to change around me."

P9: "You know, I don't know, the models that well, I think in the companies that I've seen, and been involved in everybody's culture is different. Right? And I'm sure that they've used some frameworks from some of these models, but they aren't so obvious that the that they reflect their carbon copies, right, because everybody's...I worked in five, five different companies. And I will tell you, there's five different cultures, right?"

P14: "Not to discount the models and the experts in the field or anything, it's just, you know, sometimes it's hard to implement some of the tools or models in a way that that people grasp or some of the leaders can really understand."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ9. The themes that emerged in response to the question "What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach?" are as follows: (a) custom internal mode, (b) no specific model, (c) change management principles, (d) surveys, (e) general HR models, (f) local customizations, (g) manager's tool kit, and (h) outside consulting firm model (see Figure 19). The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 19. Following the figure are comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 19

Responses to "What Tools and Models Do You Use to Implement D&I at Your Company?"
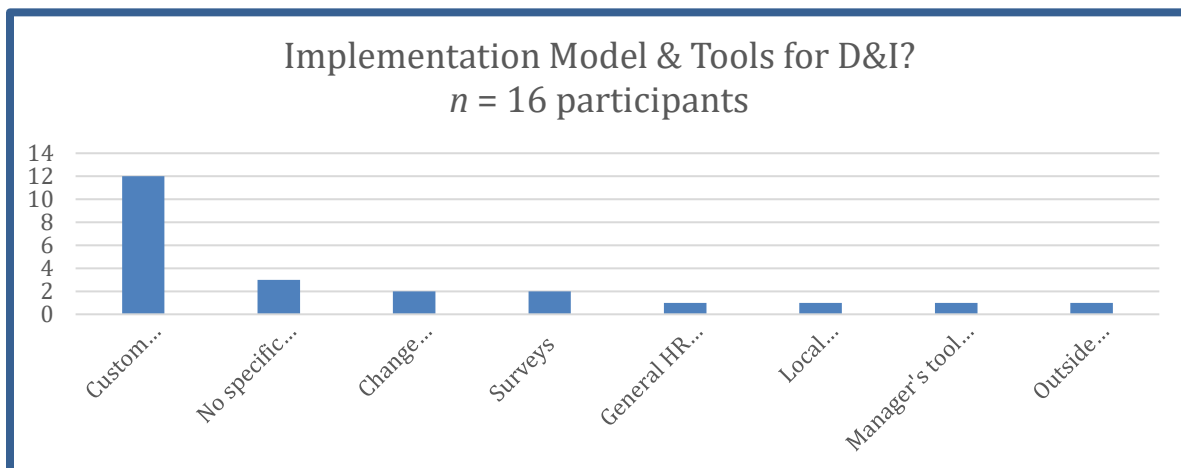
Note. The figure highlights six themes derived from answers to IQ9. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Custom Internal Model. Twelve of 16 participants said their firm uses a model customized for their corporate culture. Most alluded to a combination of several known models to meet their unique corporate needs. Several spoke of the need for flexibility to adapt to social and cultural mores.

No Specific Model. Three of 16 participants said their firm did not have a specific model or tool employed. Some noted their firms were in more of a reaction mode than having a derived plan. Several companies were in the early stages of considering how to approach D&I for their companies.

Change Management Principles and Surveys. Two participants specifically mentioned a blended D&I model based on change management principles. Two others mentioned surveys as a tool employed. From earlier questions, multiple firms mentioned surveys but did not mention them as a tool per se.

Other Tools or Models Employed. – Individual participants mentioned other tools or models employed, including general HR models, or local customizations of existing models. One participant mentioned a "Manager's toolkit" for D&I. One participant said their firm was using a D&I model from an outside consulting firm.

Interview Question 10. "What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company? How do you manage them?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ10 resulted in 55 concepts grouped into thirteen themes. Representative quotes from participants regarding the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in their company appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in their company appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 20).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ10.

P1: "It's very thorny, it you need absolute tenacity, and you don't get quick results. I think that's been a surprise for people who haven't really been involved in this work previously. And the final thing is, is getting people to engage when they're extremely busy."

P1: "I think that helps, particularly with the discussion about privilege. Because whilst the privilege is there an undeniable it can be divisive. People misunderstand the points because they don't necessarily feel privileged themselves. Whereas if you're able to explore areas of their life, which might be different, but where they've experienced pain as well, I think then, absolutely. There's a commonality there."

P2: "When I trying to get the organization to work on racial issues…management structure that just doesn't relate to it…they're not aware…There's no malice to it. It's just another hurdle to knock down."

P4: "High performing self-confident majority culture leaders don't feel threatened. Average mediocre ones do."

P5: "Finding the right metrics to tell us we're moving the needle in a way that's meaningful to people."

P7: "At every stage, there's a different set of challenges and expectations that one has to work through. And fundamentally, there's this resistance to saying something is broken in the way we're [hiring and managing people]."

P7: "I don't care what's in your heart and mind. I do not. What I care about are the behaviors and practices of individuals in your organization, that you incent behaviors and practices in your organization."

P8: "The challenges just feed off a lot of the stereotypes that from a hiring perspective you're lowering I mean dozens and dozens of conversations about lowering the bar."

P8: "And there's so much racism, and just misogyny that's the underbelly of tech."

P9: "It's hard to stay the course on something. When you're, you know, when business gets tough, like it's about to get now. Right, because of inflation, because of you know, just all the supply chain issues, you know, you got to stay focused on this, just like any other business issue. And I, I think it can get swept to the back room pretty quickly, if you don't stay intently focused on it. So I think the changing business conditions oftentimes take, you know, take the place of some initiatives, you know, over time."

P10: "The biggest challenges is generally I think it now takes us quite a bit longer to hire each time because of the added time to build out that candidate pool."

P14: "I would say most recently, I think that gay men feel very left out of the conversation. I think maybe it was probably more gay white men who felt somewhat excluded."

P14: "As I reflect upon sort of the last, you know, 20 years of my HR experience, and, and working in diversity and inclusion in different ways, and in different iterations. Throughout time, I think different groups have felt left out, more so than others. And I think it's important for the leadership of a company to make sure that they're really thoughtful about all of their employees, and what each each group needs that may be different from the other groups.... I think one of the biggest obstacles of doing this work is some continuity, you know, you, it takes a lot of time, it takes a lot of time for an organization to build trust, and credibility. And it takes a long time to see the impact of what you're investing in. And so one of the challenges and maybe this isn't what you're asking, but it's I think about companies who are trying to do this work and make enduring change in their culture. I think there has to be some continuity, because it seems like we're just every couple of years, we're just we're like starting over. And as I think back to what we did 15 years ago, you know, there hasn't been a lot of change since then. And I think it's I just and that's why I think we were unprepared. In the last two to three years for what has been happening in our society, I think companies weren't really ready to deal with that, as they could have been."

P15: "Dissonant people naysayers. So honestly, when we focused on more and more on diversity, right, we actually had only a handful …but, you know, a handful people come and say, we're swinging the pendulum too far, you know, why are we focusing only on diverse talent and not all talent."

__Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ10.__ The themes that emerged in response to the question "What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company? How do you manage them?" are as follows: (a) resistant people/backlash , (b) building the business case, (c) consistent leader engagement, (d) slow pace of change, (e) lack of data access, (f) policy practice decoupling, (g) managing competing demands, (h) frequency of leadership change (i) lack of resources, (j) managing personal expectations, (k) external factors, (l) providing support to those in need, and (m) other. The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 20. The figure is followed by comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 20

Responses to "What Are the Biggest Challenges to Implementing a D&I Paradigm at Your

Company?"
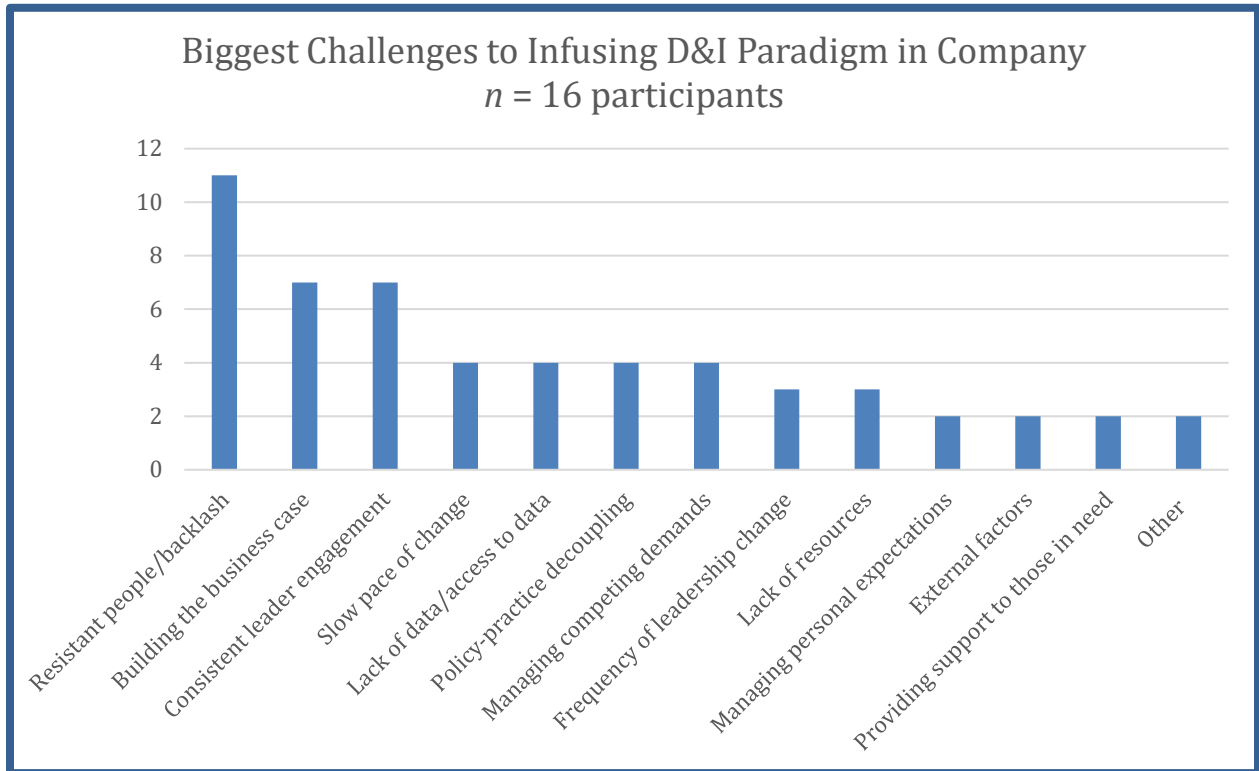
Note. The figure highlights thirteen themes derived from answers to IQ10. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Resistant People/Backlash. Eleven participants spoke about resistant people and

backlash as one of the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in their company.

Descriptive terms include naysayers, negative people, and dissonant. Other descriptor were

people who felt a change in D&I policy was not necessary, or superfluous to simply "getting the

work done."

Building the Business Case. Seven participants alluded to either managers or employees

who didn't feel D&I was relevant to the business case of the organization, even in situations

where support from the local community helped ensure the project's success. Some noted that

leaders didn't relate to diversity in other cultures or misjudged it's important to the local

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community in which the firm operated. Racial strife in America was foreign to some leaders of companies headquartered in India, East Asia, or Europe. Some firms were in the early stages of impressing upon local managers the importance of community and government relations in the developing world.

Consistent Leader Engagement. Seven leaders expressed difficulty in keeping leaders engaged with D&I activities and initiatives in light of competing business demands. Others noted directional changes in policies associated with leadership changes as impacting principal engagement. One expressed the challenge of the leader's relatability to staff members and sensitivity to cultural differences in various locales around the world.

Slow Pace of Change. Four leaders expressed the slow pace of change made it difficult to sustain D&I policy changes within their organization. The need for tenacity to overcome organizational inertia was expressed by one participant. A few others expressed doubt that their organization would be able to sustain change as it took much effort for little progress. Another, while cautiously optimistic, chose the path of least resistance as one tool to help sustain progress in the face of the slow pace of change.

Lack of Data Access. Multiple leaders expressed the lack of D&I data as a barrier to execution. Others expressed concern over the inability to easily access data that existed within their firm that would help them to sustain D&I policy changes. Several indicated their company was reluctant to deal openly with challenges to increasing diversity within their firms, citing legal concerns.

Policy Practice Decoupling. Four participants expressed challenges where their leaders did not embody the company's stated D&I policy. One felt the firm's top executive was unsupportive of D&I efforts. Another spoke of top leadership's desire to be a leader in the D&I

space, but said they were unaware of diversity challenges within the firm. Another cited a specific example where the CEO overlooked a clear opportunity to express support to a diverse employee. Still another noted that mid-level managers were not fully supportive of D&I policies stated by the CEO.

Managing Competing Demands. Multiple participants talked about competing demands as an obstacle to D&I sustainability within their firms. One spoke of multiple demands on the leader's time. Others spoke of profitability demands, or the need to execute projects as putting pressure on their ability to maintain a focus on D&I. Another alluded to the changing needs of the business over time as putting pressure on a firm's ability to maintain diversity initiatives.

Frequency of Leadership Change. A few participants talked about directional changes that occur with frequent leadership changes as an obstacle to success. One questioned D&I sustainability with leadership changes. Another cited a specific instance where one leader supported D&I and another did not. The program was less effective under the leader who didn't support it.

Lack of Resources. Three participants cited lack of resources as a big challenge to infuse a D&I paradigm in their firm. One cited the need to spend much of the first year of employment justifying the need for a small staff. Another, while noting the need to get everyone in the firm to take responsibility, still mentioned the lack of resources as a challenge. A third noted the paucity of resources for the global lead for D&I, who had a staff of two to develop policy for a global organization with over 50,000 employees.

Managing Personal Expectations, External Factors, Providing Support to Those in Need. One leader expressed a degree of frustration with the lack of progress that led them to leave the role recently. Another expressed the need to be guarded so that frustration would not

set in. Two leaders mentioned additional societal challenges that made successful D&I execution

more difficult involving religious pressures. Two others bemoaned inadequacy to provide the

desired level of support to employees for D&I given the scale of the needs and the lack of

resources.

   Other. Lack of sufficient accountability on leaders and managers for D&I progress and

challenges in expanding the talent pool were other barriers mentioned. Talent acquisition

challenges were exacerbated by the need to deliver projects in a timely manner, given the amount

of time necessary to expand the talent pool.

   Interview Question 11. "Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in

mind. How, if all, has the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?" The examination

of the participant's responses to IQ11 resulted in 35 concepts grouped into nine themes.

Representative quotes from participants describing leadership culture and its evolution appear

next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting the

leadership culture and its evolution appears next, along with explanatory comments for each

category represented in the figure (see Figure 21).

   Representative Participant Quotes for IQ11.

P2: "Serious and supportive about DEI if it doesn't cost anybody emotionally. [When] we have
to promote people other than our favorite sons [we] were a lot less serious at that point."

P3: ""Old boys club is coming to an end."

P4: "I think our leaders are trying to figure out how to culturally hold people accountable at the
lower levels while keeping them engaged and productive so that it doesn't disrupt delivering on
the financial [results]."

P5: "DEI is part of 3-year strategic priorities. This is evidence that the leadership team feels
ownership and accountability."

P6: "I have a chat called "the chat with [CEO] series" where we pick a theme and all employees
can join for the discussion…in February we had Black history month, in March it was Women's

history month, in April we had no theme so we did a chat with men from around the world. In June we had a Pride month discussion."

P8: "Several years ago someone in the C suite said the N word and did not get fired. They said it a second time with Black people in the room and did not get fired. That's where the company started."

P9: "Well, I think my observations have to do with corporations, and their the impact that George Floyd had on their employees. And the response that many of them have, you know, come back with is around more diversity in the company of focus on more diversity in the company, more open discussions, from an external standpoint, more impacting and increasing supplier diversity, because they recognize it has an economic impact on our communities."

P13: "And we are manufacturing company, which really means check the box. You want diversity, okay. We have a lot of diverse people here. But at the end of the day, we're not inclusive. So we can't keep doing this back and forth. So I think they defined diversity. I know that they defined diversity as the things that I said, which is more leadership involvement, celebrating the wins, understanding it's a journey, and just continuing to talk about it."

P14: "We worked very hard to ensure that our actions were demonstrative of those core values that we thought were important for us to be successful as a business. And so not only did we include a goal around people and fairness and inclusion in our strategic plan, which we communicated to the organization, we did an awful number of things. We held ourselves accountable for making progress on that, that goal."

P15: "Yeah, I think that a couple of things, I think one, we're more empathetic as a company. And what's interesting is, I think that we are more transparent in our communications."

   Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ11. The themes that emerged in response to the

question "Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in mind. How, if all, has

the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?" are as follows: (a) evolving, (b) DEI

goal oriented, (c) more open, more DEI conversations, (d) supportive, (e) core value, (f) mixed,

(g) more accountability (h) resistant to change, and (i) other. The frequency of theme categories

appears in Figure 21. Following the figure are comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 21

Responses to "Describe Your Company Leadership Culture with D&I in Mind"
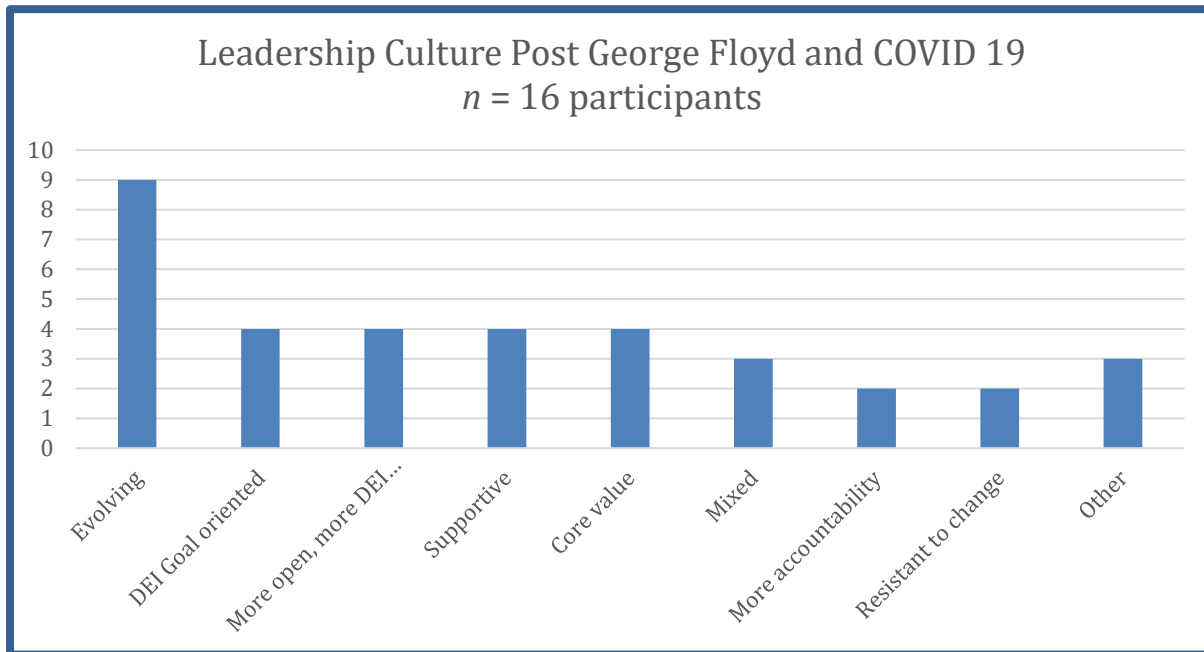
Note. The figure highlights nine themes derived from answers to IQ11. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Evolving. Nine participants spoke about the evolution of their company's leadership and D&I plan. Notably, three participants articulated the company had a global plan in place prior to the murder of George Floyd and COVID-19 that accelerated rapidly considering those two events. One of the three opined it was like pouring gasoline on embers. The events resulted in a rapid acceleration of activities already started. Others noted insensitivity in their organization to diversity issues that began to change in light of George Floyd and COVID. Most expressed evolution of various forms, including the hiring of diversity focused personnel.

DEI Goal Oriented. Four leaders described the leadership culture as DEI goal oriented, which fits due to the goal driven nature of their firm. Several spoke of metrics and stated, "What gets measured gets done." Others opined that DEI should be goaled just like any corporate initiative.

More Open; Open to DEI Conversations. Three participants mentioned that there were more open DEI conversations in their firms than before. One said that they were now encouraging leaders to have conversations that in the past they were told to avoid. Another expressed hope around the number of D&I related conversations and openness in the last three years.

Supportive. Four leaders characterized their leadership culture as supportive of DEI initiatives. Leadership sponsorship was a supportive factor. Also, board level support received mention. There was a leadership recognition of the necessity of culture change regarding D&I according to some participants.

Core Value, Mixed, More Accountability, Resistant to Change. Four leaders expressed that D&I is a core value within their leadership culture. Three others expressed that the culture was mixed – moving D&I forward in some areas, but stalled in other arenas. Two participants described their leadership culture as resistant to change, particularly when personal sacrifice was required. Two additional leaders expressed that their leaders resisted change in the D&I space. Two others opined greater accountability on managers would move the organization forward.

Other. One participant expressed excitement over their robust, low-cost governance approach. Another mentioned an enhanced focus on inclusion as a positive within the leadership culture. Also cited was the immaturity in the leadership D&I culture, although progress toward objective occurred.

Summary of RQ3. The goal of RQ3 was to identify what strategies and practices the participants used to implement D&I at their company. Identification of nine themes resulted from analysis of participant responses and grouping of the data. Several participants spoke to an evolving culture, with myriad implementation efforts, including added DEI roles, increased

accountability and dialog with ERGs, tied to business strategy, Talent strategy, listening, and data access and accountability, were also regularly cited. Notable obstacles were resistant people, leader engagement, and D&I relevance in the mind of both employees and leaders. Most firms developed custom D&I models, specific to their organizational culture.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question (RQ4) queried, "RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to enhance the success of the company's D&I approach over time?" (Sustainability)

Four interview questions (IQ) were associated with RQ4 to gather participants' perspectives. The IQs were:

- IQ12: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's D&I approach?

- IQ13: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach?

- IQ14: How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach?

- IQ15: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach in response to current events?

From the responses, companies employed various strategies to enhance the sustainability of the company's D&I approach over time. The murder of George Floyd had a significant impact on almost all the companies and their D&I approach. All either added a senior leader to the D&I function, a consultant, or elevated their D&I lead to align with the overall business strategy more closely. COVID-19 also impacted the D&I strategy for most companies, in some cases helping, in others hindering the initiatives. Social and political violence had an impact as well, given the

multitude of violent and politically polarized events occurring globally, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine, violence against women in India, violence against Asians and the overturing of Roe v. Wade in the US. The responses for each individual IQ appear below.

Interview Question 12. "How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's D&I approach?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ12 resulted in 67 concepts grouped into 10 themes. Representative quotes from participants describing how, the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impacted their company's D&I approach appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting the impact of George Floyd's murder appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 22).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ12.

P1: "I think, what the murder of George Floyd made us realize, as an organization ... made me realize that once we are looking for inclusion, that can't be at the expense of massive issues and priorities that are only affecting particular groups. I think we've gone too broad with our definition... And actually, that meant that some key challenges and key issues were almost swept under the carpet to the point where you didn't really talk about those anymore and certainly didn't feel comfortable talking about them. That murder of George Floyd forced us to have a good long, hard look in the mirror and realize that we didn't know as much as we thought we did, both from a personal perspective, and as a profession as well…We're not taking it seriously enough. And how do we know that because what immediately started what that prompt change was probably arguably the very first listening circles, group discussions about race that we meet that finally led to the creation of our first employee resource group."

P2: "There were also individuals who said I think this is a crock of shit because the guy's a criminal. Yeah, try the officers, try them convict them if they did something wrong. But let's not make a hero out of the criminal…So, it didn't only tease out one set of reactions, it teased out another set as well."

P4: "What has changed, though, is this aspect of emerging talking about more equity and fairness."

P5: "The murder of George Floyd elevated the expectations that our colleagues had of their employer to make definitive statements around what we stand for. Where do we stand on all

these topics and so the social underpinnings of things that were happening in the communities and the world around us very quickly became front and center."

P6: ""We went from talking about diversity to measuring it…we put diversity and inclusion in our strategic priorities."

P8: "So they got hired, and that's when the company started to really invest [in DEI], what they were doing, and how they were doing it."

P8: "George Floyd, woke folks up, Oh, my God, this is real."

P9: "I think it's been a bit of an awakening. for them as well, right? Because I think the pressure in the organization from the employees, I think people had a visceral reaction to George Floyd. And I think, oftentimes there, there are things that as a C suite President, you could, personally, you know, ignore it. But it, it dies down pretty quickly. This one didn't. So they had to pay attention to."

P13: "So we were all very saddened by the news, we were all in shock by the news. And our CEO. reacted very quickly. And our communications executive, they acted very quickly. In, in coordinates with the with the giving team, we had many talk circles, where we would get around and talk about the ERG is about how people are feeling, listening to employees from around the world, because people were calling. How are you? How are things? You know, if you need anything, please, you know, that was good, let me know. And I think a lot of people still remember that time. I think a lot of people were appreciative. I know, I was I've never in my history of my career, you know, 25 years in HR, have never had anyone call me and say, How are you doing? What can I do? And for someone to call me. It was just, of course, all the white ladies that call me. But it's, it's okay. I just was I was so touched by it. I was so touched. And I think that that's one thing that we can take away that we were we've been here for each other during those times."

P13: "Our CEO had a roundtable with the black employee network, where he sat with them. And he they were like, What can I What can we do for [the company] and he's like, we want you he want I want to hear from you. I don't want to be pushing my agenda on you all. I want you all to talk to me and tell me what you need. And so that that was breathtaking. That was a refreshing and also just very like you said the humanity of it all was just like overwhelming."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ12. The themes that emerged in response to the

question "How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact

your company's D&I approach?" are as follows: (a) new/upgraded DEI role, (b) public

statements, (c) increased DEI efforts, urgency, (d) listening circles, (e) discussions about race, (f)

increased awareness of discrimination, (g) creation/expansion of ERGs, (h) equity focus, (i) tied

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DEI to compensation, and (j) other. The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 22. The figure is followed by comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 22

Responses to "How Did the Murder of George Floyd Impact Your Company's D&I Efforts?"
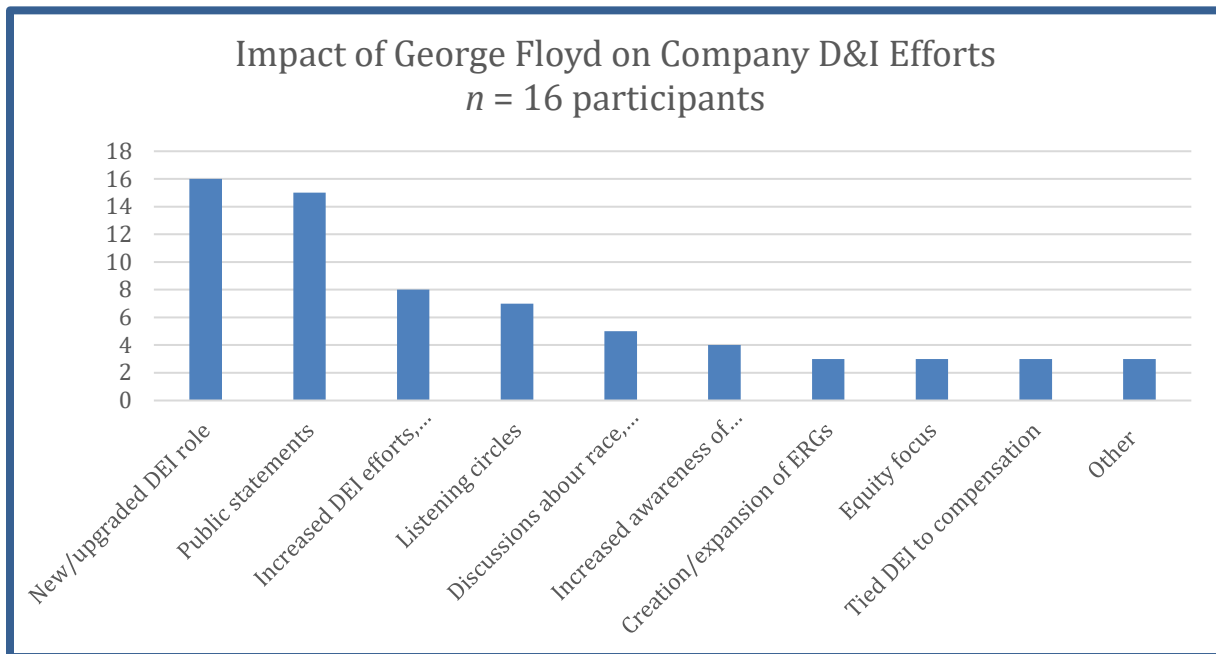
Note. The figure highlights ten themes derived from answers to IQ12. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

New/Upgraded DEI Role. Most companies added a senior leader with specific responsibility for the corporate DEI strategy and execution. One company added a consultant with the responsibility, while others who began with a consulting team eventually hired the team to lead the corporate DEI effort. One firm replaced the D&I lead and upgraded the position's grade level in an effort to improve perception and results.

Public Statements. Many, but not all, firms made public statements expressing their commitment to fair treatment for all employees according to the participants. Several mentioned increased employee expectations of the company's leaders to make statements regarding where the company stood on the murder of George Floyd and the surrounding social concerns. It was

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also stated that employees expected the firms to speak out more readily and address societal concerns in general.

Increased DEI efforts, Urgency. Participants made multiple comments on the need to increase diversity efforts as a result of the murder of George Floyd. Their companies began to invest more in DEI and measure it. There was an awakening to the real challenges that existed. One noted a visceral reaction by employees that required a prompt response. Another called it a "sea change" in recognition of the reality of the racial problems that existed. A different noted that the murder of George Floyd "made DEI a more urgent issue."

Listening Circles. Seven participants mentioned the formation of either listening or talk circles as a response to the murder of George Floyd. Three mentioned CEO interaction with the African-American employee resource group as a specific example. More than one participant mentioned their personal participation in listening groups as part of the corporate response to the murder of George Floyd.

Discussions About Race, Identity. Five participants spoke of the initiation of conversations on race and identity that did not take place before the murder of George Floyd. Several noted that such conversations were discouraged before the murder but became a corporate imperative afterwards. Others talked about the outpouring of emotion as part of the conversations, which facilitated the need for leaders to be equipped to have such conversations.

Increased Awareness of Discrimination. There were nuances to the conversations that could have been characterized in several different ways. Four participants specifically alluded to their increased awareness of discrimination as part of the discussions about race and identity. As P8 stated "George Floyd woke us up. Oh my God, this is real."

Creation/Expansion of ERGs. Three participants mentioned the creation or restart of ERGs in response to George Floyd's murder. One noted an evolution from listening circles that led to the creation of ERGs. Another said the ERGs were restarted after dismissal of a previous D&I lead who disbanded them. Another spoke of an inclusion focus at their firm vs. an equity focus, with ERGs an important component of the corporate response.

Equity Focus. Three participants, whose firm had a focus on D&I prior to the murder of George Floyd, noted a shift from inclusion to equity. P4 said the focus became equity and fairness. Both P5 and P16 also noted a much-increased corporate emphasis on equity as an appropriate response to George Floyd's murder.

Tied DEI to Compensation; Other. Three leaders intimated that D&I was tied to manager compensation more closely because of the murder of George Floyd. One mentioned a counterpart who tied hiring of African Americans to executive bonuses. Two others spoke of a component of manger compensation tied to employee D&I feedback at their firm. Other responses mentioned as a result of George Floyd's murder include an increased emphasis on inclusion, increased accountability on leaders, and other "major change[s]."

Interview Question 13. "How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ13 resulted in 24 concepts grouped into 10 themes. Representative quotes from participants describing how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted their company's D&I approach appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting the impact of COVID-19 on D&I appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 23).

P1: "You saw people's houses in a way you've never done before. You saw people's kids run in packs, etc. That was brilliant for EDI, from an authenticity point of view to to break that bit down to we're not just these machines anymore. We are individual people who are working as well, but also highlighted the challenges which was still facing now."

P2: "And so, mental health, all of a sudden makes it on to our diversity table."

P3: "I think our company could be doing a better job of acknowledging the DEI implications of remote work."

P4: "COVID gave light, I think to health disparities and inequities."

P4: "I became much more connected to my black colleagues because in the office [we're] diluted. So…being connected on Zoom in your home, which probably felt like a safer place to talk about the real stuff. The pressures of trying to assimilate were lessened by not having to be "on" 24 hours a day, or "on" the whole time you're in the office outside of meetings."

P5: ""I would say there's pros and cons of what COVID has created. And we're working through the reality of what this new environment looks like."

P7: "[News article] It was essentially saying that people of color didn't want to go back to the office, they were so much more content working from home. And why? Like all the little microaggressions that used to happen day to day…It's not surprising that people probably didn't want to go back into the office and deal with all that."

P8: "Why do people leave companies? The relationship with the manager. The pandemic exposed that with a big bright light. If forced manager who were good to invest the time to care about and talk with people on their team. Because of [remote work]and all these others issues their team members were dealing with. Parents getting COVID. Kids playing in the background, etc."

P10: "And I think it did wonders in solidifying what we were already improving but solidifying the teams and making them a really cohesive unit. And from that we improved and improved, you know, we grew from a company of actually did affect our diversity because we grew from a company of 32 to 48 people. So that allowed us the hiring practices to be implemented, to allow us to bring about that change in diversity of our team. Well, I worked my way into that."

P14:"And how it impacted our DEI strategy was that it made us aware that we needed to be more thoughtful and more mindful of all different employees and how it was impacting them. That that is in the other thing, too, is we thought about our policies, and our practices during COVID. The conversation changed. We talked we debated a lot about this is probably more than our return to work efforts."

P15: "And then, you know, COVID, kind of precludes us from being able to retain certain demographics. So that's been a challenge."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ13. The themes that emerged in response to the question "How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach?" are as follows: (a) had positive and negative impact, (b) greater manager awareness of individual needs, (c) highlighted identity based health disparities, (d) increased mental health sensitivity, (e) no or unclear impact, (f) common experience built trust, (g) created space for greater psychological safety, (h) fueled growth facilitating diversity, (i) remote work improved talent access, and (j) increased retention challenge for diversity workers. The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 23. The figure is followed by comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 23

Responses to "How Did COVID-19 Impact Your Company's D&I Approach?"
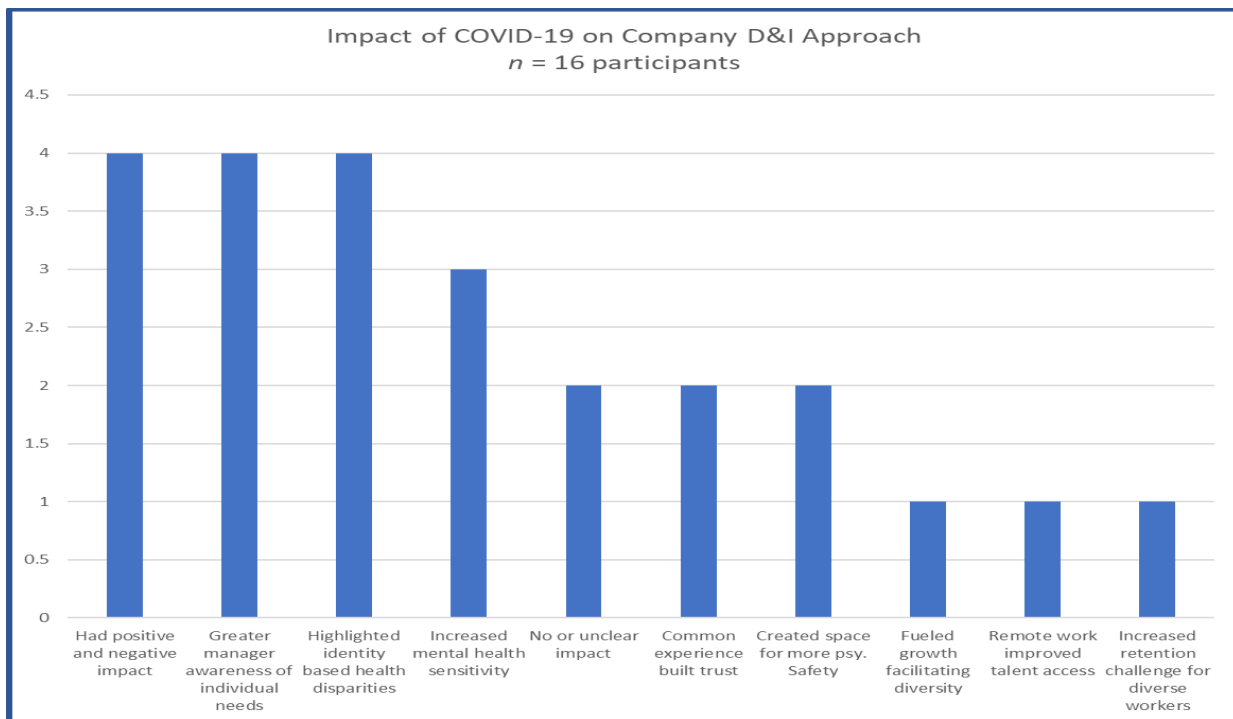
Note. The figure highlights ten themes derived from answers to IQ13. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Had Positive and Negative Impact. Multiple participants spoke about COVIDs impact on D&I. Some noted increased ability to be authentic and feel safe. Others noted increased opportunities to hire diverse staff. Others noted increased challenges in retaining particular demographics. Overall, COVID-19 had both positive and negative impact on D&I.

Greater Manager Awareness of Individual Needs. Multiple participants talked about the glimpse into employees' home life stemming from telework due to COVID-19. Examples ranged from "herd of children running around" to those caring for ill parents. One opined that COVID-19 forced managers to see employees as individuals and inquire more about their specific needs. Another noted that COVID-19 forced managers to embrace the unique needs of employees, leading to increased D&I awareness.

Highlighted Identity-Based Health Disparities. Multiple participants, particularly from the healthcare industry, spoke of increased awareness of identity-based health disparities due to COVID-19. The effects also were seen in the banking and manufacturing industries where front-line workers in Asian countries or in America were disproportionally impacted. Another mentioned the impact of COVID-19 as varied, exposing the interconnected nature of D&I, life issues, and employee engagement exposed by the pandemic.

Increased Mental Health Sensitivity. Several participants spoke about increased mental health sensitivity due to employee isolation stemming from COVID-19. Other cited increased awareness of employee mental health needs generally. One dialogue was about talking to managers on how to assess if employees need time off due to mental health considerations.

No or Unclear Impact; Common Experience Built Trust; Created Space for Psychological Safety. Two said the impact of COVID-19 was unclear, or had no effect on D&I. Two others shared how the common experiences shared by all employees due to telework

stemming from COVID-19 led to increased trust. Two others spoke on increased psychological safety space for African-American employees who didn't have to be "on" all the time in the corporate environment, with lessened microaggressions.

Fueled Growth Facilitating Diversity; Remote Work Improved Talent Access; I*ncreased Retention Challenge for Diversity Workers.* One participant cited increased business growth due to COVID-19. The growth facilitated increased opportunities for employee diversity. Two others mentioned exacerbated retention of employees from marginalized groups due to the impact of COVID-19.

Interview Question 14. "How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ14 resulted in 35 concepts grouped into eight themes. Representative quotes from participants describing how political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impacted their company's D&I approach appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting the impact of political and social violence on the D&I approach appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 24).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ14.

P1: "But I guess it's a different form of violence, but the impact of Wade versus Rowe on women in particular, and also from a practical point of view, you know, as an organization, if our women need to need to go out of state for health care, are we going to support that? These real challenging questions that on the one hand, seem to be completely out of your control, but naturally have a direct impact on your people. And their commitment and their engagement and their well-being."

P2: "How do we expect people to work when this kind of craziness is going on?"

P3: "I think there's an increasing expectation that the organization publicly acknowledges those events when they happen and create resources or space for employees to process and deal with those issues as they arise."

P6: "George Floyd was a global issue that we should and had the right to take as a global problem. Roe v. Wade? Very political topic in the US…I personally didn't address it. Our company took the stand of anyone who wants to get an abortion and your state says you can't we will fund you."

P8: "We opened space for people to make comments and express their feelings."

P10: "Outside of a just being another. I don't see how it's affected our diversity and inclusion policy. I'm not sure it has. It's another massive continuous weight of the world on all of my staff. Pretty yeah, pretty comprehensively all of my staff are affected I think in a very similar way from it. But, you know, obviously the issues with Roe versus Wade that's affected my females all my staff in the US and my team and myself in Australia, but the female staff in particular and that's something that we've taken. Obviously we've reacted to as best we can to show our support I've told all our female staff that in no way will they ever feel, should they ever feel unprotected or out of pocket because of what's been put through that we will handle any medical costs."

P11: "So the political dynamics of a purple organization are, you know, it is very, very clear there are two camps in the organization. And it creates an environment where, you know, the organization doesn't want to make any statements. But I think there's a lot of frustration around that. Because a lot of this is like, instrumental to our vision, like how do we not make a statement that affects our health care of people. But they really have chosen she has chosen that she doesn't believe that you could ever make any statement that could be controversial, which is obviously a very different approach than when I worked at [major healthcare employer where CEO] was very active and making statements. And so that's been interesting. Definitely not a willingness to do that here."

P12: "But we saw dramatic effects on this, when you talked about what happened in India, Russia, we have operations in Russia. You know, we have within Europe, we have a, we have a great business in Europe, and they shut down there. So everything and anything that touches us on this planet, our [business]is involved in it really kind of dictates how this pendulum is going to swing back and forth and how we have to respond locally to global issues."

P13: "You know, the company has stopped kind of putting out those big blanket statements when we support you know, and I think that it's just because there's a there's a trend of companies stopping doing that. You know, they're not putting the big blanket statements out. But what they are doing, and I can tell you what happened with Buffalo, New York is the black employee network put it. They put a statement out. And then the leaders kind of got on to that, that statement, this is a statement for this community. And we're supporting this community internally."

P13: "I think that the sad thing is, is people are getting used to it, you know, and, and it's up to us, as DEI folks to keep our leaders abreast of what's happening and talking to our ergs. They're an extension of who we are, and it's important to this community. I just can't assume that it's important. I know everything is important, but how do we how do we prioritize and make sure that we are helping or supporting the right causes in the right manner? And so like we said, we're

not putting up those big statements any longer. But ERG's are, you know, because, more times than none, it's their community that's being impacted."

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P14: "So I think I think it brought in a lot of emotion. And I think, again, it made us more aware of how to how to be more and how to, how to be thoughtful about the needs of your employees, and be very quick to respond. And in some cases, try to get ahead as much as you could. And I think it changed the role of leadership and management."

P14: "I my boss had to, you know, maybe check in with me about what I was dealing with, that might have been different from my Asian colleague who was fearful to go out and ride the subway, you know, so. So as a leader, you had to be really thoughtful about an empathetic and kind and give space for people to feel what they needed to feel and be okay asking for what they needed."

P15: "I would pivot back to the open letters from our CEO, to all employees about the violence that's happening in the world, and how that has no place in our company. And so discrimination, violence, bullying, etcetera, is not tolerated in the company. And when these things happen, you know, the kind of letter goes out, but it links to the expectations of the company."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ14. The themes that emerged in response to the question "How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach?" are as follows: (a) make supportive statements, (b) increased awareness of issues, (c) provide support to impacted groups, (d) little or no impact, (e) increased community support, (f) leveraged ERGs to respond, (g) created space to process emotions, and (h) expanded training. The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 24. The figure is followed by comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 24

Responses to "What Was the Impact of Political and Social Violence on Your Company's D&I Approach?"
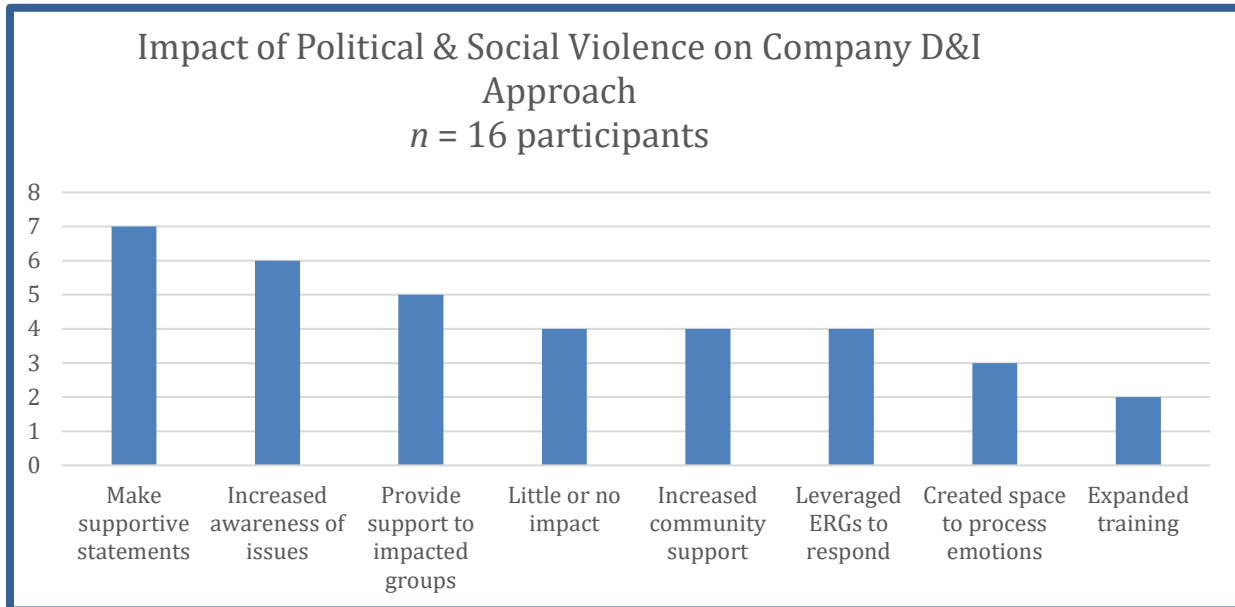
Note. The figure highlights eight themes derived from answers to IQ14. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

Make Supportive Statements. Seven respondents said their updated corporate approach included making supportive statements of various human identity groups in response to ongoing acts of political or social violence against marginalized communities. One respondent expressed the latitude to make statements as needed but expressed a desire for additional communications support. Others were more selective about when to respond, and to what types of issues. A concern was voiced that when you respond to everything, the messaging loses its effectiveness. Some spoke out on the Roe v. Wade decision publicly, while others remained silent due to concerns over political involvement given polarization over the abortion issue in the US.

Increased Awareness of Issues. Six participants implied their firms are more aware of marginalization across various communities globally as a result of political violence related issues. The Russian invasion of Ukraine was cited for the impact it had on European operations

and employees located both in eastern Europe and Russia. Several participants cited Roe v. Wade as an issue impacting female employees in the US. One participant implied that it constituted an act of political violence toward women. Asian hate in the US, and persecution faced by the homosexual community in some Asian countries were also noted.

Provide Support to Impacted Groups. Five leaders spoke directly on the importance of providing additional support to employees impacted by acts of violence against their community. One expressed dismay and concern over the difficulty faced by employees trying to work in the face of "all this craziness going on" – and the need to provide support. Other forms of support included creating space to process emotions, and more liberal time off policies.

Little or No Impact. Four participants expressed their companies pulled back from making broader statements, with one stating that we all face the same challenges. Others didn't see much impact on their firm but expressed the need for ongoing vigilance. One characterized their US headquartered company as politically "purple" – equally divided between opposing points of view, resulting in muted responses by leadership on political or social issues.

Increased Community Support. Four participants said their companies were providing additional support directly to communities in response to acts of violence. Three spoke of donations to community groups. Others spoke of increased volunteerism to support communities.

Leveraged ERGs to Respond. Four participants noted their company sought advice from the impacted ERG to develop a response to events. One cited an example where the ERG produced the company's response to an act of violence. Two others spoke of regular meetings with ERGs to stay abreast of community sentiment in response to political issues or acts of violence.

Created Space to Process Emotions; Expanded Training. Three participants mentioned creating space for employees to process emotional responses to acts of violence, whereas two others noted expanded training for managers on how to better support employees. There was a general notion of providing various forms of support to employees when violent acts occurred.

Interview Question 15. "What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach in response to current events?" The examination of the participant's responses to IQ15 resulted in 24 concepts grouped into eight themes. Representative quotes from participants describing strategies and practices used to modify their D&I approach in response to current events appear next. See Appendix L for additional quotes. After the quotes below, a figure depicting comments regarding the modified approach appears next, along with explanatory comments for each category represented in the figure (see Figure 25).

Representative Participant Quotes for IQ15.

P1: "So part of my approach is actually, I am not a political symbol. So what I mean by that is, I don't respond sometimes. And deliberately so there have for every time we've put something out, there's been a time when we haven't, because if, if you're not careful...If you do it for everything, if you respond to everything, it becomes virtual signaling. And it doesn't mean anything. And therefore, I will, we will not be in a position where we're putting immediately responding to everything out there publicly."

P1: "The fact that no organization can solve 200 years plus of systemic inequality. And we've got to be realistic here, in terms of what our expectations are about our organization. But we do need to show that if this is challenging, this is causing you trauma or angst, there is support there. And we will support you through this as an individual, not just as a collective."

P3: "Need a dedicated communications person."

P6: "We get together our senior leadership team, communications team, and we connect, to edify and focus on what we can do to address the issue of what we should do."

P7: "You were always going to be reactive. And that's what I was trying to articulate [to top leaders]. If we're just reacting to events, it's tactical, not strategic. And I think, unfortunately, that's where a lot of companies have landed."

P10: "And again, like a family, it's not sit down and change policies, it's chat. It's a community, open line of communication. Let people know, you know, I mean, we posted our disgust at the overturning of Roe v. Wade on our socials, which is the only political posts we've ever done as a company."

P11: "I think that the focus continues to come back to, you know, DNI is critical to our vision. So there is a statement there. Di is critical to our vision as an organization to improve the health and well-being of our people. And then we talked, then the immediate focus becomes health equity. But I think the workforce component is really not focused on enough. I mean, we lose great talent because of it."

P12: "Yeah, the modification, you know, to modify, we have to move or to die. We have to be nimble in our response. I mean, you had everything don't forget Roe v. Wade. Okay, so we, you know, as a bank, we had to put out a policy to say, of your, of your travel of your benefits now, travel is part of it. So if you need to travel to another state to have an abortion, that's gonna be part of it. That's so all of that is absolutely critical in how you are addressing issues around ensuring that people have their individual rights."

P13: "You know, the company has stopped kind of putting out those big blanket statements when we support you know, and I think that it's just because there's a there's a trend of companies stopping doing that. You know, they're not putting the big blanket statements out. But what they are doing, and I can tell you what happened with Buffalo, New York is the black employee network put it. They put a statement out. And then the leaders kind of got on to that, that statement, this is a statement for this community. And we're supporting this community internally."

P14: "So, trust mechanisms for two-way communication. I think were probably the biggest one and then and then being responsive to that, whether it was through communications, whether it was through bringing in experts, whether it was donating money to Have a community or an organization to show our commitment, whether it was taking a stand on certain things, whether it was giving people time off, we tried a variety of different solutions. But the biggest thing was being proactive and aware of what was going on in the environment. But also having that, again, I can't under underscore, I can't emphasize how important it is to have that trust and credibility, so that employees felt comfortable communicating to their leadership on how they were feeling."

P14: "Because I believe that, that in order to be a true, you know, to be truly a global organization, you have to think about it global, you have to think about it holistically."

P15: "I think we're behind so I don't think that we keep pace. My opinion, right? I think that just we've only formed our diversity inclusion function three years ago. I think we have a lot of catching up to do."

Themes, Comments and Graphs for IQ15. The themes that emerged in response to the

question "What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach

in response to current events?" are as follows: (a) provide support, (b) savvy, selective responsiveness, (c) none per se, (d) reactive dialogue, (e) up to my discretion, (f) make statements, (g) community engagement, and (h) other. The frequency of theme categories appears in Figure 25. Following the figure are comments regarding each categorization.

Figure 25

Responses to "How Do You Modify Your Approach to D&I in Response to Current Events?"
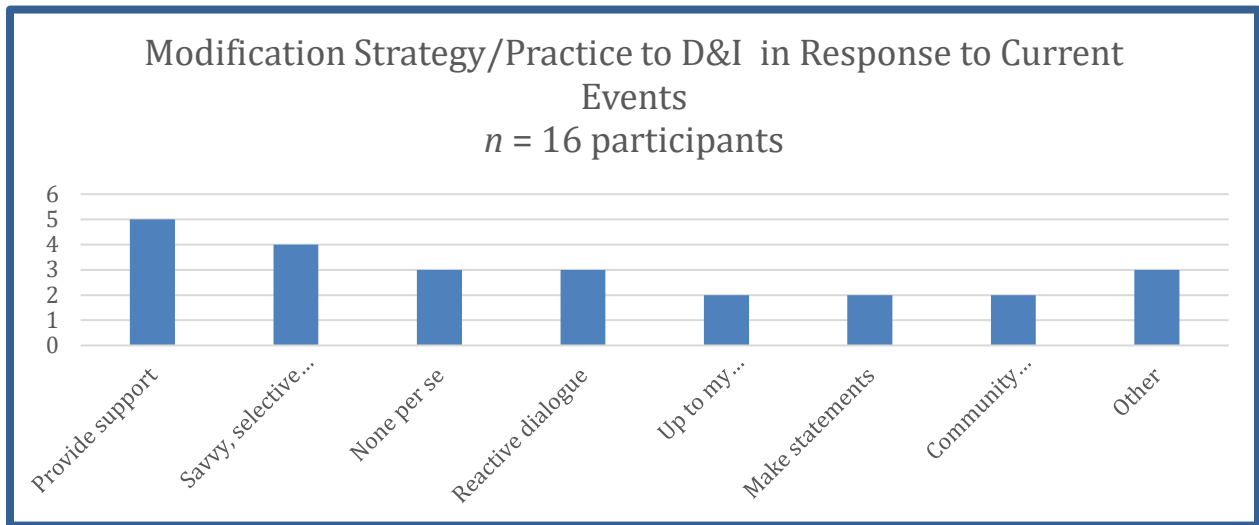
Note. The figure highlights nine themes derived from answers to IQ15. The bars are indicative of the number of comments made by participants assigned to a particular theme.

   Provide Support. Similar to the response to political violence, "provide support" was mentioned as an ongoing tactic to sustain D&I and appropriate responses to ongoing societal challenges with diversity by five participants. Forms of support included creating space to process emotions, and more liberal time off policies. Some noted the presence of a statement on their website supporting human rights for all globally.

   Savvy, Selective Responsiveness. Four participants spoke to the importance of selective responsiveness when dealing with ongoing societal D&I challenges. One stated they did not want to be held hostage by groups seeking a particular response to an event. Others alluded to the importance of balance in choosing when and how to respond to events.

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None Per Se; Reactive Dialogue; Up To My Discretion. Three respondents noted their company did not have a specific plan to address ongoing challenges. Similarly, the approach was to react to events as they come. One participant said it was up to their discretion how to respond on behalf of the firm.

Make Statements, Community Engagement, Other. Making appropriate statements is one tactic mentioned repeatedly by respondents. Ongoing community engagement is an additional portion of several plans to respond to events moving forwards. And, one respondent emphasized the importance of building trust and credibility with employees regarding their community and personal needs.

Summary of RQ4. The goal of RQ4 was to examine what strategies and practices corporate D&I leaders used to enhance or sustain the success of the company's approach over time. Beyond the addition or expansion of the leadership role and profile of DEI professionals, companies began to make public statements affirming their commitment to DEI, leverage knowledge from ERGs to refine corporate messaging and responses to current events, and to include DEI plans as an ongoing pillar of operations, both strategically and tactically. Active listening to employees' needs and concerns, and providing room for employees to process emotions in response to current events were other practices embraced. Also, increased awareness of multiple forms of discrimination against people of color, women, ethnic and religious minorities, gays, transexuals and others occurred. Companies are also beginning to tie DEI performance to executive and manager compensation to sustain and continue improvement in diversity outcomes.

Key Findings

      The key findings from Chapter 4 were the following:

      Finding 1: For leaders in corporations with multi-country operations, the definition of D&I is evolving and affected by global, regional, national, and local considerations. Inclusion and equity involve consideration of "feelings" of fair treatment and acceptance. Inclusion also incorporates job role access, as well as opportunities for development, access to resources, and career pathways.

      Finding 2: Organizations tend to rely on human identity statistics to measure diversity. These metrics are typically based on headcount concerning gender, race, and in some cases, ability. Qualitatively, organizations tend to rely on data from questionnaires, including engagement, sentiment, and inclusion surveys.

      Finding 3: All companies either added or upgraded a DEI leadership role within their firm as a response to the events queried. Some added consultants initially, several of whom became company employees over time. Most companies increased the level of accountability on managers for the successful improvement of DEI within the firm.

      Finding 4: Several of the implementation strategies were also mentioned as part of the DEI sustainability plan. These strategies include the addition or upgrade of the leadership role, ties to manager compensation, creation of safe spaces for employees, implementation of listening groups, and expansion in the role of ERGs. Other sustainability efforts include selective public responses to current events, providing additional support to affected communities, and greater sensitivity to discrimination against marginalized communities.

Chapter Summary

Events occurring in 30 months between March 2020 and August 2022, notably the COVID-19 global pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and socio-political violence in the U.S. and around the world, impacted the nature of human interaction and the global corporate DEI landscape. With these events as a backdrop, this phenomenological study aimed to examine what impact, if any, these occurrences had on global corporate leaders' DEI perspectives and activities. Sixteen corporate D&I leaders participated in interviews to help accomplish the study's purpose. The participants responded to 15 semi-structured interview questions designed to inform the following four research questions:

1. How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? (definitions)

2. How, if at all, do you measure, track, and evaluate D&I success at your company? (success metrics)

3. What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company?" (implementation)

4. What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to enhance the success of the company's D&I approach over time? (sustainability)

The researcher coded the data and validated the results with the assistance of two inter-rater Pepperdine Graduate School of Education and Psychology Ph.D. graduates. Data collection and analysis employed the phenomenological approach explained in Chapter 3. Data analysis yielded numerous themes. Table 15 provides a summary of most of the themes obtained through the data analysis process.

Table 15

Summary of Themes for Four Research Questions

RQ1 (Define D&I).	RQ2 (Measure D&I).	RQ3 (Implement D&I).	RQ4 (Sustain D&I).
Quantifiable visible difference	Representation targets	Add/upgrade D&I lead	Add/upgrade D&I lead
Invisible difference	Data collection	Leverage ERGs	Public statements
Representation demographics	Data accountability	Set D&I goals	Provide support (employee and community)
Valuing QVD	Data transparency	Accountability for leaders	Increase urgency
Gender	Trend analysis	Tie to business strategy	Listening circles
Race	Survey feedback	Talent strategy tactics	Race, gender, sexual orientation awareness
Equity	Intersectional analysis	Listening sessions	Expanded ERG role
RQ1 (Define D&I).	**RQ2 (Measure D&I).**	**RQ3 (Implement D&I).**	**RQ4 (Sustain D&I).**
Equality	Engagement scores	Data collection, analysis, transparency	Tie D&I to leader compensation
Accessibility	Inclusion feedback		Equity focus
Belonging	Employee sentiment	Regional/local execution	Inclusion focus
Feeling safe, connected, etc.	Talent analytics ■ Hiring ■ Retention ■ Promotion ■ Training	Custom models w/ ■ Change mgmt. HR underpinning	More awareness of: ■ individual needs ■ Health disparities ■ Mental health challenges
Inclusion (fairness)			Create space for psychological safety
ESG strategy		Training	Selective responsiveness to ongoing event
Varied views personal perspective change.		Manage backlash	
Evolving		Drive leader engagement	
Uniqueness			
Participation			
Business imperative			

Note: This table is a summary of most the themes derived through the data analysis process.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion and analysis of these findings. The implications of the findings, conclusions of the study, and recommendations for additional research also appear in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 concludes with a summary of the overall study.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

Overview

Chapter 5 presents the overall conclusions from the research. Chapter 5 contains a synthesis of the literature review and research data, examined through the lens of the research questions. The first section of Chapter 5 presents the study's purpose statement and research questions. The next section of Chapter 5 is the analysis of findings, which provides an assessment and details of the findings listed in Chapter 4. Following the analysis of findings are the study's conclusions, which incorporate the findings and additional thoughts from the researcher. Next, appear implications for corporate policies and practices and individuals employed within these organizations. Recommendations for additional research are presented next, followed by the evaluation section. The evaluation section contains personal thoughts from the researcher – lessons learned, personal growth, and transformation that resulted from the study. Chapter 5 concludes with a chapter summary, which sums up the overall study.

Introduction

Events occurring in 30 months between March 2020 and August 2022, notably the COVID-19 global pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and socio-political violence in the U.S. and around the world, impacted the nature of human interaction and the global corporate DEI landscape. With these events as a backdrop, this phenomenological study aimed to examine what impact, if any, these occurrences had on global corporate leaders' DEI perspectives and activities. The literature review in Chapter 2 provides readers with the theoretical background and conceptual framework for this study. Data collection and analysis employed in the phenomenological approach are explained in Chapter 3. The interview data from corporate leaders presented in Chapter 4 yields insight into their viewpoints,

challenges faced, and tactics employed to improve DEI effectiveness within their organizations during a time of a global pandemic, social justice protests, and change.

Also of note, no prospective research subject who worked for a company headquartered in China, agreed to participate in the study. All politely declined. Some participating subjects worked for firms with operations in China and made general comments regarding Asia or China. The following research questions and related interview questions in Table 16 generated the data captured through the participant interviews. The analysis of findings from the data appears in the section below.

Table 16

Research and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Supporting (Interview) Questions
RQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? (Definitions)	IQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion? IQ2: How, if at all, has your definition of diversity and inclusion evolved in the last 3 years? IQ3: How does your company's top leadership (C-level, EVP, etc.) define diversity and inclusion (D&I)? IQ4: What concepts and ideals, if any, form the basis/foundation for your company's D&I program (philosophical, moral, legal, social, etc.)?
RQ2: How, if at all, do you measure, track, and evaluate D&I success at your company? (Success Metrics)	IQ5: What constitutes success in your company's D&I paradigm? Any changes in the definition of success in the last 3 yrs.? IQ6: What quantitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company? IQ7: What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?
RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company? (Implementation)	IQ8: What strategies and practices if any, do you use to implement D&I at your company globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups? IQ9: What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach? IQ10: What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company? How do you manage them? IQ11: Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in mind. How, if all, has the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?
RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to enhance the success of the company's D&I approach over time? (Sustainability)	IQ12: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's D&I approach? IQ13: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach? IQ14: How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach? IQ15: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach in response to current events?

Analysis of Findings

Below are findings from the data grouped by research question. Answers to the interview questions are woven into the findings. Some findings are broken into subcomponents to facilitate greater detail specific to a particular concept.

Finding 1a. For leaders in corporations with multi-country operations, the definition of D&I is evolving and affected by global, regional, national, and local considerations. There is a general continuum in focus and definition, from diversity to inclusion to equity, with additional terms such as accessibility and equality receiving consideration in some organizations. Some participants indicated their companies seem to fully embrace the notion that marginalization of "the other" is firmly rooted in our national and global cultures, resulting in unfair treatment and discrimination. A lesser version of the othering that occurs is in-group out-group behavior.

Other participants indicated their firms stop short of an acknowledgment of "racism [othering] as normal," choosing instead to emphasize the importance of inclusion for all versus a focus on equity. What constitutes a diverse individual or group varies globally and is accompanied by regional-national-local implications. Gender diversity is global in scope and recognition. Other forms of diversity include race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and ability. These additional forms may or may not be acknowledged in a given locale. Beyond gender diversity, other diverse human identities, and the resulting marginalization against them, seems an uncomfortable topic to discuss within their firms, according to several participants.

Finding 1b. Inclusion and equity involve consideration of "feelings" of fair treatment and acceptance, as well as opportunities for development, access to resources, and career pathways. Does everyone in the organization have a pathway to success? Are people given developmental assistance to shore up weaknesses? Is personal background and history taken into

account for developmental opportunities? Is individual uniqueness valued and celebrated or simply tolerated? The research data indicates varied perspectives across the participants and their perceptions of their employer's approach to these questions. Most participants indicated a genuine desire on their part and within their organization to foster inclusion and fairness for all and to create an environment with clear success pathways, developmental opportunities, and targeted assistance to shore up employee deficiencies. There was also a recognition of past unfairness inherent in companies, born of discrimination against marginalized groups. However, several indicated that their corporate executives were at times clueless as to cultural factors and mores that contributed to marginalization of some groups – and how that marginalization created a barrier to success for diverse employees.

Also, a few participants indicated reluctance on the part of their organization to fully embrace the existence of discrimination and the need for targeted assistance to foster greater levels of inclusion. Still, those organizations also made some progress toward improving diversity, spurred on by pressure from employees and the marketplace. All participants indicated that their organization recognized the business imperative of D&I progress, whether driven by internal or external factors. Most worked for organizations that were driving forcefully to build a corporate environment where all stakeholders have an equal opportunity to excel, receive promotions and pay equity. Others worked at firms whose efforts were less robust, based on their comments.

Finding 2a. Organizations tend to rely on human identity statistics to measure diversity. These metrics are typically based on headcount concerning gender, race, and in some cases, ability. Ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation are uncomfortable conversations and metrics in parts of the world. Oft, corporations do not collect the "uncomfortable" data, while some firms

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consider most D&I information company confidential, providing staffers limited or no access to the statistics. Organizations are also starting to track participation metrics, including diversity training attendance and community outreach events across all employee groups.

Qualitatively, organizations rely on data from questionnaires comprising engagement, sentiment, and inclusion surveys. Employee "feelings" of belonging are sought and analyzed. Also, the intersectional experiences of some marginalized groups, such as Asian or Black women, are beginning to receive acknowledgment and investigation in a few companies in the research pool.

Finding 2b. In the early stages, companies begin to track diversity data. Gender is tracked globally. Race is tracked in the US and UK but not as much in other parts of Europe, India, or Japan. Some firms also track the numbers of employees regarding ability.

As DEI programs evolve, firms begin to track employee sentiment around inclusion factors. For the majority of firms whose employees participated in this study, inclusion data from the diversity perspective was a new addition in the last three years. In fact, for some firms, the notion of inclusion as a concept occurred in the last three years.

Finding 2c. The link between effective D&I programs and corporate financial performance is unclear. While all executives interviewed do believe in the importance of D&I, a clear correlation tying D&I programs to financial performance was not articulated. Generally, executives were still defining exactly what "success" looks like. Some peer-reviewed research touts a clear link, while other studies suggest an inconclusive correlation.

Finding 3a. All companies either added or upgraded a DEI leadership role within their firm as a response to the events queried in the interview questions. Some added consultants

initially, several of whom became company employees over time. Most senior DEI professionals reported to the CEO, while others did not.

Finding 3b. Depending on where the companies started, the DEI programs evolved differently according to study participants. Implementation tactics included talent management, listening sessions, diversity data management, and training. Firms in the earliest stages began tracking diversity data more closely and working with ERGs to uncover concerns and respond to current events. Firms already aware of inclusion with established ERGs tended to evolve toward equity-related activities, with an acknowledgment of unfairness in the company's systems regarding talent acquisition, development, promotion, and pay. These firms took active steps, including the expansion of talent pools to source greater levels of diverse candidates for both new hires and promotions and pay equity analysis studies to correct deficiencies. The smallest firm, while not aware of the concepts per se, was moving toward the notion of equity and taking overt action to improve diversity and participation in the company. Some firms, although starting later than others, embraced the whole diversity-inclusion-equity concept and sought to make progress in all areas.

Companies further along the diversity-inclusion-equity pathway, notably those embracing equity as a concept, were more likely to hold managers accountable for diversity metrics and inclusion feedback from employee survey data. Several companies increased the level of accountability on managers for successful implementation of DEI initiatives within the firm. Oft accountability was tied to the overall business strategy and became a performance indicator like other operational goals. Some companies did not embrace accountability or have clear strategic efforts around DEI.

Companies were also mixed regarding DEI data transparency. Diversity data has legal and market implications that the participants were aware of. As a result, the firms were thoughtful in how they approached the dissemination of DEI information. There appeared to be some correlation between industry and corporate headquarters location regarding data transparency. Companies in public-facing industries, such as entertainment and healthcare, tended to take a more aggressive DEI posture inclusive of transparency – companies in industrial arenas or technology less so. There were exceptions to this observation. Also, the sample size in this study is not large enough to generalize beyond simple observation. Some firms in the earlier stages of collecting diversity metrics also embraced transparency as an indicator of their commitment to making substantive changes.

Finding 3c. The lack of accountability for managers was mentioned as one obstacle to successful DEI program implementation. Participants also spoke of navigating backlash from stakeholders and maintaining manager engagement as other obstacles. Manager ignorance of related social issues creating the need to both educate and engage leader support was cited as an additional obstacle. Some participants said their managers did not relate to the challenges. It was not in the manager's world view or paradigm.

Finding 4. Several of the implementation strategies were also mentioned as part of the DEI sustainability plan, including addition or upgrade of the leadership role, ties to manager compensation, creation of safe spaces for employees, implementation of listening groups, and expansion in the role of ERGs. Other sustainability efforts include selective public responses to current events, providing additional support to affected communities, and greater sensitivity to discrimination against marginalized communities and individuals.

An evolution in the company's DEI program in response to current events was mentioned by all participants. COVID-19 led to greater awareness of health disparities and mental health issues in communities and employee groups. The greater levels of awareness served to facilitate individualized consideration by managers in working with employees. Some employees needed to care for children or sick or elderly relatives. Others faced isolation in their home alone or lived in cramped quarters with peers who had to share workspace. Others needed to address the emotional distress caused by COVID-19 and ongoing societal challenges. The belief that employees' unique needs were important and worthy of manager consideration permeated most conversations with participants. At the beginning of the pandemic, some managers were not well prepared to navigate the challenges of remote work, inclusion efforts, and the necessity of an adaptive leadership approach. Several participants spoke of coaching given both to executives and line managers to better equip them with the requisite skills. Upon review of the findings and in consideration of information contained in the literature review, the research drew the conclusion listed below.

Conclusions

Based on the literature review and the findings, the researcher drew four primary conclusions. First of all, as a concept, CRT holds promise for the examination of marginalization within societies and organizations globally when addressing subjugation and othering in communities and in the corporate environment (Christian, 2019; P. H. Collins, 2015; Meghji, 2022). Numerous countries, including Japan, India, and China, were subjugated by historical white supremacy resulting in significant and deep-rooted racism and colorism around the world (Christian, 2019). Within this framework of racism, additional forms of othering manifest, something Christian (2019) characterized as the global field of whiteness (see Appendix F).

Whether characterized as racism or othering, the researcher believes CRT provides a useful framework for analysis.

Second, there is a continuum regarding diversity data management in corporations. The researcher labeled it as the data collection, accountability, transparency (CAT) continuum. Where companies fall on the continuum yields insight into how aggressive their DEI policies are. The data CAT manifest in the overall corporate data management policy, with local implications as well.

Third, corporations have begun to influence societal culture with respect to DEI through both internal management and external marketplace policies. Companies are beginning to develop and evaluate social justice policies in an effort to strike the balance between forces advocating social change and those that oppose it.

Fourth, inclusive, transformational leadership taught from a global perspective may help equip corporate managers and executives with the requisite skills necessary to navigate worldwide systemic change in markets and cultures. Transformational leadership's 4I's – idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation provide managers and leaders a broad framework to help them navigate varied cultural contexts. Inclusive leadership's "follower" centered lens, imbued with concepts such as belonging, uniqueness, participative decision making, in-group membership, and information sharing, also has tactical implications for managers navigating worldwide dynamic markets that are rapidly changing. Comments on each conclusion appear below.

Conclusion 1. Critical othering theory (COT) (aka global othering theory), a derivative of CRT, is useful in examining oppression globally. The travel of intersectionality theory globally is indicative of the ubiquitous relevance of the African American female struggle with

racism and sexism to the study of marginalization in other communities. Given the controversy around CRT in America, corporations could design global inclusion programs leveraging CRT concepts without ever using the terminology critical race theory to steer clear of the rancor. CRT, according to Ladson-Billings (2021), at its core, has six components. An outline of each appears below, applied to the notion of COT.

1. Othering as normal. Derived from the CRT concept of racism as normal, othering as normal is a perspective that opines the marginalization of disadvantaged communities is a global phenomenon. Whether the Dalits or Muslims in India, the Uyghurs or rural folk in China, disabled persons in Japan, Ukrainians in the eyes of Russia, Catholics in Romania, Blacks, Latinos or gays in America, or women everywhere, humanity discriminates against the "other" globally. Discrimination and marginalization are not aberrations. They are the normal course of activity in global society and permeate cultures in the same way that racism is pervasive in America. Othering should be addressed systemically if humanity or corporations truly desire to uproot it from global, regional, national, and local operations. Corporations, through equity initiatives, can address injustice thoroughly through an intersectional lens applied locally under a global umbrella of DEI.

2. The power of intersectionality. Intersectionality, a component of CRT, has utility for DEI analysis, as well as social equity efforts, globally. Defined in this research study as "power differentials created by overlapping human identities," or, "intersectional power identities," the evolution of Kimberlee Crenshaw's postulation of the concept has application to any cultural analysis seeking to examine and characterize the nature of marginalization in society. In early 21st century American culture, a gay, white

male has power in two of his three identities—white and male. Conversely, a gay Latina female is at a societal disadvantage in all three of her socioeconomic identities. Similarly, in today's China, a Han, urban Chinese female has power in two identities (Han and urban) in comparison to a Uyghur Chinese rural male, who is disadvantaged in two of his three societal identities (Uyghur and rural). An intersectional analysis can aid corporations seeking to create an all-inclusive workplace in local cultures globally.

3. Interest convergence. The majority cultures tend to support inclusion when it is in their interest to do so, according to CRT. A corporation seeking to create inclusion in a local operation should analyze which societal factors can contribute to cultural transformation. For example, American society was motivated toward the inclusion of Black people when images highlighting the barbaric nature of racism were televised on the global stage. The images of the civil rights struggle and the murder of George Floyd motivated society to take greater action to ensure the rights of all through the creation of "a sense of urgency" aligned with the Kotter change model. According to Taylor and Katz (1989), there is a cyclical nature of support for and backlash against inclusion. Corporations can take advantage of this cyclical dynamic and plan long-term programs that anticipate these cycles and implement programs accordingly.

4. Voice or counter-narrative. An important concept in CRT is that to truly understand the impact and nature of discrimination, it is essential to hear the voice of the oppressed through their own perspective (like phenomenology), not through the lens of the broader society (researcher). A corporate analogy is an inclusion score that is overwhelmingly favorable until an intersectional analysis reveals that women of

color, gays, or minorities within the organization feel a sense of disenfranchisement. In a global analysis, it is important to get a sense of how the local marginalized communities feel about inclusion within the corporate environment. The sentiment of how majority communities feel is equally important. To uncover the nuances, data collection is imperative. Close consideration should be given to societal and legal perspectives within the local context regarding how to appropriately collect and analyze data, and what types of accountabilities are suitable for organizational leaders to leverage.

5. Anti-essentialism. Stereotypes that paint individuals from marginalized communities with a broad brush of "they're all alike" run counter to the inclusion construct of uniqueness. While individuals from a community may share similarities, they are not a monolith. Managers should be trained in transformational and inclusive leadership (individualized consideration and celebration of unique individual contributions). The Kotter change model and the ADKAR model both indicate organizational change initiatives take 24-36 months and sometimes longer to reach sustainability (Hiatt, 2006; Kotter, 1995). In the war for talent, greater levels of employee engagement stemming from managers with superior emotional and cultural intelligence could foster improved employee retention leading to better organizational outcomes (Bray, 2019).

6. Othering as a social construct. Some forms of othering are social constructs. Race is a social construct. Ethnicity is a social construct. Religion is a social construct. While not all human identities fit into the conceptualization, notably gender and ability, the

researcher believes that othering as a social construct is a notion worthy of additional

othering examination from an academic standpoint.

In summary, based on the research presented herein, the tenants of CRT provide a helpful

framework through which to examine DEI in locales globally. Corporate DEI professionals can

use the tools to develop and evaluate global strategic initiatives from a local context. Given the

straightforward application of CRT to a global analysis herein, it seems likely that other

academics have developed versions of CRT like COT. The researcher postulated the COT

notion here, as it aligned with the findings from the study.

Conclusion 2. There appears to be a continuum of corporate responses to DEI data

management along a collection, accountability, and transparency pathway. Taken as a whole, this

data CAT continuum (collection, accountability, transparency) provides an indication of the

degree to which firms are forcefully pursuing the notion of DEI in the workplace. Within a

global firm, there are likely regional or local variations in where a company's in-country

operations may fall on the continuum. Figure 26 represents an initial effort to characterize the

data CAT. Companies have begun to move from left to right – away from a posture of

cannot/will not discuss DEI data and toward increasing levels of information collection, manager

accountability, and internal and external transparency for DEI outcomes, sometimes tied to

compensation.

Figure 26

The Data CAT Continuum

The DEI Data CAT Continuum

High

DEI Accountability

Firm collects limited DEI data. Will not or cannot discuss data.

Collection of basic DEI data. No manager accountability. Some transparency internally.

Collection of DEI data tied to business strategy. No manager accountability. Transparent internally.

Data analytics w/action plan tied to strategy
Manager accountability, but not tied to compensation
Some transparency, internally and externally.

Intersectional analysis of data
Managers accountable for trends like other business results
(tied to business strategy and compensation)
Transparency – internally and externally

Low   Data Transparency   High

In this study, the researcher noted firms along the entire continuum. Not all companies fit neatly into one stage – there was some overlap. Some firms, however, fit neatly into one category. For example, two participants lamented the reluctance of their firm to share relevant DEI data with them, even though their job role as senior executives warranted information access. Alternatively, other participants had solid data access and manager accountability for data tied to compensation. However, their organizations were still working out what information to share more broadly.

As mentioned in the findings, most companies in public-facing industries, such as entertainment and healthcare, tended to take a more aggressive data CAT posture – companies in information technology or high-tech manufacturing less so. And some firms in the earlier stages of implementing DEI initiatives embraced aggressive implementation along the data CAT continuum as an indicator of their commitment to making substantive changes.

Conclusion 3. Corporations have a unique opportunity to positively influence societal DEI culture. While a direct link positive between DEI and corporate financial performance is in dispute, the importance of the corporate-local community relationship is not. Most participants worked for companies with active environmental, social, and governance programs.

Clashes between large companies, such as Coca-Cola, Delta Airlines, and the Walt Disney Corporation, and local governments, such as the states of Georgia and Florida, over DEI-related topics, like voting rights and Florida's "Don't say gay," bill were well covered in the news (Gelles, 2021;Nguyen, 2021; Whitten, 2022). The corporate pullout of Russia over its invasion of Ukraine is in a similar vein. Corporations found themselves caught between employee groups advocating for human rights and meaningful social change and governments advocating political viewpoints perceived as in opposition to DEI.

In their efforts to strike the proper balance, the researcher believes that the companies generally sided with human rights and DEI over politics, short-term economic considerations, and the threat of boycotts. Companies now need business strategies that foster DEI and ESG while maintaining an eye toward market access and profitability. The pressures of stock market performance in the short term seem to run counter to the long-term perspective necessary to foster change in "othering" that occurs in global markets. Firms and their shareholders may wish to give more weight to the long-term implications of both DEI and ESG considerations in their business strategy. Corporations, through their internal culture, can foster a culture of "us" instead of a culture of we versus them in the global markets in which they operate.

Conclusion 4. Internally, corporations find themselves navigating talent management challenges occurring across global markets and multiple business disciplines. Within a local context, expansion of talent pools may be necessary to uncover additional well-qualified

candidates from marginalized groups to achieve overall staffing and diversity recruiting objectives. Selection processes may require refinement to ensure diverse candidates have an equal opportunity to advance in their careers. Discernment may be required to design optimal developmental opportunities to expand candidates skill sets from a variety of backgrounds. These and other similar scenarios require leaders and managers to be sensitive to diversity and cultural nuances in addition to their own perspective. Corporations need managers and leaders equipped to elicit optimal performance from diverse individuals and teams. Globally, leaders and managers need the requisite skills to navigate systemic worldwide changes in demographics, markets, and cultures. The ability to assess the talent and skill level of individuals from a variety of backgrounds, and to motivate them toward common business goals, is important.

To meet these challenges, training and skill development in transformational and inclusive leadership can be useful. Awareness of human identity subtleties viewed through an intersectional lens with individualized consideration of an employee's unique attributes may help leaders and managers better discern personal strengths, weakness, and interests, leading to enhanced employee engagement and improved retention. Motivation factors for an individual within one context may be demotivational for a different individual in the same or a separate context. There is no universal, one size fits all approach. Leaders need the training and opportunity to develop skills to manage cross-culturally, both on a local and international level.

Inclusive leadership taught from a global perspective also may help equip corporate managers and executives with additional tools that increase their effectiveness. Inclusive leadership's "follower" centered lens, imbued with concepts such as belonging, uniqueness, participative in decision making, in-group membership, and information sharing has tactical implications for managers navigating worldwide dynamic markets that are rapidly changing.

Corporations should invest in this type of training for managers at all levels in order to expand their talent pool of well-equipped leaders to manage diversity at more senior levels in the organization.

Implications

Thinking through the implications of COT, firms may find value in an interest convergence lens when conducting analysis and developing plans to implement DEI and ESG policies to strike the proper balance between competing social viewpoints, human rights, and marketplace considerations. Fearmongering by groups opposed to and in support of social change creates increased tension between majority and marginalized communities. Typically, both communities are concerned about their economic and social well-being. A thorough examination looking for opportunities to find common ground fostering a "we" perspective aligns with concepts from realistic conflict theory (RCT), which states that real or perceived opposing goals cause groups to have conflict. Conversely, goals that require cross-group collaboration tend to reduce conflict (Sherif et al., 1961).

Also, the common in-group (CIG) model stresses that moving competing groups from us vs. them to we mentality emphasizes scenarios in which both groups achieve positive benefits. The CIG model highlights three elements to prompt inclusionary behaviors: acknowledging and appreciating group differences, decategorizing others by focusing on their individuality, and recategorizing all parties into an inclusive group centered on commonalities (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000).

Both models are supported by theory and significant peer-reviewed research. Application of these concepts to corporate policies and practices should further facilitate the development of an overarching DEI framework driving cultural change in a positive direction. Also, return on

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ESG investments could be evaluated and touted based on common benefits provided to society, in addition to subgroups within.

Applying the concept to Florida's "don't say gay" controversy with Disney, perhaps the company could emphasize the economic benefits of the theme park to the state, express support for Floridians from all walks of life, support the Florida python challenge, and make other strategic investments in activities groups on both sides of the cultural divide. A longer-term perspective may help the development of additional tactics, as large multinational corporations generally outlive political moments. Also, an intersectional analysis will likely be helpful as conservatives and liberals are not monoliths. Both groups are comprised of people with competing interests. A closer examination of the intersectional nature of groups may lead to the discernment of approaches more palatable to a broader, more inclusive group. While the ideas introduced above won't eliminate the controversy, they may help to create counter-narratives leading to broad-based support.

For companies in industries dependent on culturally diverse markets with a need to provide additional differentiation from competitors, the business imperative for social justice and corporate DEI is clear. And social justice reflected in corporate and DEI policies may help these firms attract and retain the diverse talent needed to drive business results. Implications for HR professionals are also clear: How do firms build a recruitment, development, promotion, and retention strategy to keep diverse individuals engaged in a psychologically safe environment where they perceive appreciation for the unique contributions they make to the overall organization? Also, in this increasingly diverse environment, how does that same strategy land with majority individuals who also make significant contributions?

Vision, mission, and strategic planning activities that help to create an environment in which employees feel a sense of belonging and inclusion in the corporate identity should yield greater allegiance and employee alignment with business objectives. Strategic alignment of DEI and ESG initiatives, as part of corporate goals, can help create a framework and umbrella under which regional and local efforts can operate. Tools like the balanced scorecard and corresponding strategy map represent an effective communication and guidance approach already in use by many corporations (Aryani & Setiawan, 2020; Kaplan & Norton, 2003). A more aggressive DEI approach can be incorporated into the key performance indicators and quadrants and linked to financial performance. Practitioners can develop meaningful metrics in the learning and growth, internal business process, and customer quadrants to link to drivers of financial results (Kaplan & Norton, 2003).

Highly skilled employees with career options will likely work for firms where they perceive a personal connection with the company and their manager. Managers with well-developed leadership skills form an important point of connection to the company. Front-line managers are often the primary reason employees leave a company – or stay with one. Leadership development, therefore, is paramount.

Also, diverse individuals considering a career opportunity may ask company personnel about DEI policies and practices. Companies where data is not available, without any DEI ties to compensation, may find themselves at a disadvantage. Conversely, in other industries, like information technology, diversity may not tie well at all to the bottom line. Beyond headlines in the press – does DEI in those firms really matter in talent acquisition?

Finally, the experiences of and pathways developed by Black Americans may represent a model for other groups dealing with workplace and societal marginalization globally. The civil

rights movement, the role of Black fraternities and sororities, and non-profit organizations like the National Minority Supplier Development Council, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and others, are part of centuries long-struggle for equal rights. Lessons gleaned may help groups in other countries find a path forward.

Recommendations for Additional Research

There is much need for additional research into DEI, given world events. The relatively recent occurrences of the murder of George Floyd, COVID-19, and political violence around the world lend themselves to further examination and study from a DEI perspective. The researcher has several recommendations, including examination by country, industry, and demographic group. The recommendations are outlined below.

Studies on India and DEI. Participant comments regarding religion, inclusive of the caste system and the Hindu – Muslim divide, appear in Appendix M. Additionally, data on India contained in the literature review indicated significant social division and tension within India based on caste and religion. According to the participants, there seems to be a reluctance on the part of people from India to acknowledge the divide. It should also be stated that none of this study's participants were native to India.

Studies on China and DEI. DEI in China or in Chinese-owned firms. Five individuals from Chinese-owned firms were asked to participate in this study. All declined. From research and news reports, discrimination in China is widespread and centers on gender, rural vs urban, ethnicity, party affiliation or lack thereof, and dialect.

Studies on Japan and DEI. Japanese-owned firms did participate in the research. There seemed to be a genuine concern over the DEI issue. From the literature review, beyond gender,

Japan is only recently facing the notion of racial and ethnic discrimination resulting from immigration and an aging workforce.

Industry-specific studies on DEI. Industry-specific studies on DEI execution and implementation can facilitate benchmarking. As mentioned earlier, consumer-facing industries seemed to demonstrate a greater sensitivity to diversity issues and a willingness to address concerns. High-tech firms are much less so. One participant spoke to the meritocracy perspective permeating the IT industry, limiting DEI progress. Does diversity matter in Silicon Valley? Industry-specific studies can provide insight into the current state and pathways to move forward.

The importance of the marginalized lens. From CRT, voice or counter-narrative is an important concept necessary to truly understand the impact and nature of discrimination from the perspective of the oppressed, not just the broader society. Within each of the Asian countries identified – India, China, and Japan –interviews with the marginalized community can yield valuable insight into the country's current DEI state and pathways forward. These studies should contribute significantly to understanding DEI from a global perspective.

Social DEI vs. DEI in economic and health outcomes. Organizations must address inclusion needs for all constituencies, including white heterosexual men in a Western context, people of Jewish or Asian ancestry in that same context, and other power identities within a given social context. Antisemitism and Asian hate are evils that must be eliminated. The economic and health outcomes impact on these groups, however, appear less severe than the impact on the Hispanic and African-American communities in an American context. Therefore, in eradicating the marginalization of one group, differences in the impact on other marginalized peoples from an economic and health outcomes standpoint should not be overlooked (Smith,

2019). Studies analyzing social DEI vs. DEI in economic and health outcomes may yield additional insight as to how to address DEI wholistically.

Evaluation

There is an uncomfortable truth about the history of heterosexual white male supremacy, sexism, racism, colorism, tribalism, and additional forms of "othering" in the world. Generally, there is a failure to recognize the impact of the global history of murder, kidnapping, rape, robbery, intimidation, and misogyny on today's marginalized communities. Also underestimated is the intersectional nature of power identities and the impact of marginalization on women of color and other diverse groups who historically had less power. Courageously facing our past is part of building a collective future where we can all realize our full potential.

Some struggle to care about the plight of others. From Thucydides writings in the *History of the Peloponnesian War* as cited by Crawley (2018), we see the following perspective: "The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must." I hope for better in the world and commit to being part of the positive change. Corporations have a unique role in fostering positive, substantive social change and creating economic wealth that all can enjoy.

Courageously facing our past is part of building a collective future where we can all realize our full potential or, as Maslow (1943) said, achieve self-actualization. Underestimated in many analyses are the intersectional nature and impact of marginalization on women, ladies of color, and other diverse groups of people. The author, a heterosexual Black male, has decidedly become a feminist as a result of this study. Additional growth and convictions developed through this study are outlined below,

The researcher developed a greater comfort level with his authenticity, asserting to bring his entire being to bear in all situations 24x7x365 or 24x7x366 in a leap year. Sometimes

prudence dictates one emphasizes belonging over uniqueness. However, in his efforts to belong, the researcher has sometimes hidden his abilities in order to fit in. Given his intersectional uniqueness, the researcher lives in multiple worlds, each of which communicates at some level that he does not belong. The researcher's African-American community at times labeled him a sellout because of his education, political views, or articulation of American English language. This happened even though he'd lived and served in his community all his adult life.

The broader American society historically labeled black men in his youth, and even today, as intellectually inferior, deviant, violent, angry, and incompetent. The researcher resolved to do a better job of not drinking in the poison of marginalization, no matter from which community it originated. However, the researcher also desires to maintain an open heart and mind to areas where he may need to change his perspective to continue growing and ultimately reach self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). In summary, the researcher is working on his own personal optimal distinctiveness [theory]!

Chapter Summary

This global study of DEI, encompassing the lens of sixteen corporate executives with multi-country influence, examines efforts to address marginalization in the workplace based on identity characteristics such as race, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability. "Othering" is a global phenomenon. Corporations awakened to the magnitude of othering, shocked into reality by the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, and other acts of political and social violence, including femicide globally and the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. The Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, further augmented the corporate lens, making clear that the oppression of others is a human rights issue. Organizations responded by creating additional roles and programs and by engaging in activities to foster greater levels of

inclusion and fairness in the workplace and in the communities in which they operate. The ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic further exacerbated corporate efforts to create a fairer and more inclusive workplace.

Corporations are now working to create sustainable programs that balance the need to respond to human rights issues with economic and market considerations, given the level of political polarization in local communities around the world. The researcher implores those with opposing viewpoints to keep an open mind – with an eye toward finding workable solutions – not just shortcomings in an approach. Through examination of the literature and review of data provided by the study's participants, the researcher concluded that a derivative of critical race theory – critical othering theory (aka global othering theory) – holds promise for countering marginalization within societies and organizations globally. Recognition that "othering is normal" and pervasive, accepting the intersectional nature of human identity bias, and granting that interest convergence can spur analysis to find common ground sets the stage for honest, all-inclusive efforts and dialogue to overcome communal challenges. It is important that those in power and those oppressed both tell their story in their own words with an eye toward common ground and solutions.

Additional conclusions drawn include the existence of a DEI data management continuum across firms and the unique opportunity corporations have to foster positive social change and economic good. Labeled herein as the data collection, accountability, transparency (data CAT) continuum, companies fell along a progression of openness that was indicative of how assertive their DEI programs were. Consumer-oriented firms generally were more assertive in DEI implementation than industrial companies. The location of the corporate headquarters

office also had an impact on how DEI challenges were framed. Companies wishing to benchmark against others could use the Data CAT as a starting point.

There is an uncomfortable truth about the history of heterosexual white male supremacy, sexism, racism, colorism, tribalism, and additional forms of "othering" in the world. Generally, there is a failure to recognize the impact of the global history of murder, kidnapping, rape, robbery, intimidation, and misogyny on today's marginalized communities. Also underestimated is the intersectional nature of power identities and the impact of marginalization on women of color and other diverse groups who historically had less power. Courageously facing our past is part of building a collective future where we can all realize our full potential.

Oppressed people themselves also struggle with grasping the full impact of subjugation. The murder of black motorist Tyre Nichols in Memphis, TN, by five black police officers in January 2023 raises questions concerning the organizational culture of law enforcement agencies and their view of African Americans. The researcher believes it to be an example of cop culture overriding social culture – given that the police are the same race as the victim. Placing a hopeful spin on a tragic event – Can organizational culture override local culture and foster greater societal levels of inclusion? Companies increasingly need business strategies and business leaders that foster DEI and ESG while maintaining an eye toward market access and profitability. Through DEI and ESG initiatives, corporations do wield influence that can help _us all_. Courageously facing our past is part of building a collective future where we _all_ can realize our full potential – _together_. Or, as Thucydides said: "The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must." We as human beings may choose to embrace oppression and violence as our path forward, turning a blind eye to issues that cause us pain or compel us to reexamine our

world view. Or we can choose to chart an inclusive course. The choice on how we shape the

world, and our communities, is up to us.

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APPENDIX A

A Sample of Employee Engagement Survey Tools

Survey Tool & Versions	Year Developed	Population Surveyed	Measures
1. Gallup Q^{12} (Harter, et al., 2016)	1996	7 million+	Workplace attitudes leading to job satisfaction
2. Institute of Employment Studies (IES). IES Engagement Model & tool. Robinson, Perryman & Hayday 2004	2003	Over 10,000	Ten factors leading to feeling valued and involved; job satisfaction
3. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004)	1999	Over 30,000	Work engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption) as the opposite of burnout
4. Job Engagement Scale (JES) (Rich, Lepine & Crawford, 2010)	2010	345	Cognitive, emotional and physical engagement
5. Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS-EEI) (Byrne, Hayes, Holcombe, 2017)	2002 2010	241,465	Leaders lead, supervisor, intrinsic work experience

APPENDIX B

A Sample of Emotional Intelligence Measurement Tools

Tool & Version	Year Developed	Population Examined	Measures
1. Mayer-Salovey-Caruso EI (MSCEIT) test (Brackett & Salovey, 2006)	Model - 1997 Tool - 2002	Normative sample base of 5,000 U.S. residents	MSCEIT is a set of abilities test with a similar premise as an IQ test measure cognition
2. EQ-i 2.0 (Bar-On model, Bar-On, 2006)	1997	Normative sample of 3,831 adults in North America	EQ-I measure EI as a set of social or emotional traits
3. Emotional and Social Competency Inventory (ESCI) (Goleman, 2018; Hay Group, 2011)	1998	Over 42,000 respondents, from 273 organizations	The ECI measures EI against levels expected based on role
4. Genos EI (Palmer, Stough, Harmer & Gignac, 2009)	2007	4,775	The Genos EI tool measure EI based on behaviors, vs. traits, cognition or expected levels

From *Doing it Right: Developing Procurement Talent for the 21st Century* (p. 57), by C. E. Bray, 2019, (Publication No. 13904649) [Doctoral dissertation, Pepperdine University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Copyright 2019 by C. E. Bray. Reprinted with permission.

ESCI Abilities and Competencies Map

Ability	Emotional Competency
1. Self-awareness	Self-awareness
2. Self-management	Self-control Goal orientation Perspective and outlook Adaptability
3. Social awareness	Empathy Social awareness
4. Relationship management	Influence others through: Coaching/Mentoring, Conflict resolution, Inspiration, Teamwork

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APPENDIX C

A Sample of Transformational Leadership Measurement Tools

Tool & Version	Year Developed	Measures
Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass & Avolio, 1994)	1990	Leadership characteristics and provide a guide for training
Five Factor Personality Test (Robinson Perryman & Hayday, 2004)	1984	Neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness

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APPENDIX D

Top 20 Countries Ranked by 2019 and 1960 GDP

		2019					1960			
Rank	Country	GDP (current US$)	% of Global GDP	% Cumulative GDP	Rank	Country	GDP (current US$)	% of Global GDP	% Cumulative GDP
1	United States	$21,433,226,000,000	24.43%	24.43%	1	United States	$ 543,300,000,000	39.67%	39.67%
2	China	$14,279,937,467,431	16.28%	40.71%	2	United Kingdom	$ 73,233,967,692	5.35%	45.02%
3	Japan	$ 5,081,769,542,380	5.79%	46.50%	3	France	$ 62,225,478,001	4.54%	49.56%
4	Germany	$ 3,861,123,558,039	4.40%	50.90%	4	China	$ 59,716,467,625	4.36%	53.93%
5	India	$ 2,868,929,415,617	3.27%	54.17%	5	Japan	$ 44,307,342,950	3.24%	57.16%
6	United Kingdom	$ 2,829,108,219,166	3.22%	57.39%	6	Canada	$ 40,461,721,693	2.95%	60.12%
7	France	$ 2,715,518,274,227	3.10%	60.49%	7	Italy	$ 40,385,288,344	2.95%	63.06%
8	Italy	$ 2,003,576,145,498	2.28%	62.77%	8	India	$ 37,029,883,875	2.70%	65.77%
9	Brazil	$ 1,839,758,040,766	2.10%	64.87%	9	Australia	$ 18,577,668,272	1.36%	67.12%
10	Canada	$ 1,736,425,629,520	1.98%	66.85%	10	Sweden	$ 15,822,585,034	1.16%	68.28%
11	Russian Federation	$ 1,699,876,578,871	1.94%	68.79%	11	Brazil	$ 15,165,569,913	1.11%	69.39%
12	South Korea	$ 1,646,739,219,510	1.88%	70.66%	12	Turkey	$ 13,995,067,818	1.02%	70.41%
13	Australia	$ 1,396,567,014,733	1.59%	72.25%	13	Mexico	$ 13,040,000,000	0.95%	71.36%
14	Spain	$ 1,393,490,524,518	1.59%	73.84%	14	The Netherlands	$ 12,276,734,172	0.90%	72.26%
15	Mexico	$ 1,268,870,527,160	1.45%	75.29%	15	Spain	$ 12,072,126,075	0.88%	73.14%
16	Indonesia	$ 1,119,190,780,753	1.28%	76.57%	16	Belgium	$ 11,658,722,591	0.85%	73.99%
17	The Netherlands	$ 907,050,863,145	1.03%	77.60%	17	Switzerland	$ 9,522,746,719	0.70%	74.69%
18	Saudi Arabia	$ 792,966,838,162	0.90%	78.50%	18	Venezuela	$ 7,779,090,909	0.57%	75.25%
19	Turkey	$ 761,425,499,358	0.87%	79.37%	19	South Africa	$ 7,575,396,973	0.55%	75.81%
20	Switzerland	$ 703,082,435,159	0.80%	80.17%	20	Philippines	$ 6,684,568,805	0.49%	76.30%
	Top 20 Total	$70,338,632,574,013	80.17%			Top 20 Total	$ 1,044,830,427,461	76.30%	
	Rest of the World	$17,395,941,814,060	19.83%			Rest of the World	$ 324,613,497,551	23.70%	
	World	$87,734,574,388,073	100.00%			World	$ 1,369,443,925,012	100.00%	
	Indicates new addition since 1960					indicates no longer in top 20 in 2019			

From *Data GDP (Current US$).* By World Bank, 2021a, World Bank (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?most_recent_value_desc=true). In the public domain.

APPENDIX E

Top 20 Countries Ranked by 2019 and 1960 Population

	2019					1960			
Rank	Country	Population (pop.)	% of Global pop.	Cumulative pop. %	Rank	Country	Population (pop.)	% of Global pop.	Cumulative pop. %
1	China	1,397,715,000	18.21%	18.21%	1	China	667,070,000	22.01%	22.01%
2	India	1,366,417,754	17.81%	36.02%	2	India	450,547,679	14.86%	36.87%
3	United States	328,239,523	4.28%	40.30%	3	United States	180,671,000	5.96%	42.83%
4	Indonesia	270,625,568	3.53%	43.83%	4	Japan	92,500,572	3.05%	45.88%
5	Pakistan	216,565,318	2.82%	46.65%	5	Indonesia	87,751,068	2.89%	48.77%
6	Brazil	211,049,527	2.75%	49.40%	6	Germany	72,814,900	2.40%	51.18%
7	Nigeria	200,963,599	2.62%	52.02%	7	Brazil	72,179,226	2.38%	53.56%
8	Bangladesh	163,046,161	2.12%	54.14%	8	United Kingdom	52,400,000	1.73%	55.29%
9	Russian Federation	144,373,535	1.88%	56.02%	9	Italy	50,199,700	1.66%	56.94%
10	Mexico	127,575,529	1.66%	57.69%	10	Bangladesh	48,013,504	1.58%	58.52%
11	Japan	126,264,931	1.65%	59.33%	11	France	46,621,669	1.54%	60.06%
12	Ethiopia	112,078,730	1.46%	60.79%	12	Nigeria	45,138,458	1.49%	61.55%
13	Phillippines	108,116,615	1.41%	62.20%	13	Pakistan	44,988,690	1.48%	63.04%
14	Egypt	100,388,073	1.31%	63.51%	14	Ukraine	42,664,652	1.41%	64.44%
15	Vietnam	96,462,106	1.26%	64.77%	15	Mexico	37,771,859	1.25%	65.69%
16	Congo	86,790,567	1.13%	65.90%	16	Vietnam	32,670,039	1.08%	66.77%
17	Turkey	83,429,615	1.09%	66.98%	17	Spain	30,455,000	1.00%	67.77%
18	Germany	83,132,799	1.08%	68.07%	18	Poland	29,637,450	0.98%	68.75%
19	Iran	82,913,906	1.08%	69.15%	19	Turkey	27,472,345	0.91%	69.66%
20	Thailand	69,625,582	0.91%	70.06%	20	Thailand	27,397,207	0.90%	70.56%
	Top 20 Total	5,375,774,438	70.06%			Top 20 Total	2,138,965,018	70.56%	
	Rest of the World	2,297,759,536	29.94%			Rest of the World	892,472,750	29.44%	
	World	7,673,533,974	100.00%			World	3,031,437,768	100.00%	
	Indicates new addition since 1960					indicates no longer in top 20 in 2019			

From *Data GDP (Current US$).* By World Bank, 2021a, World Bank
(https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?most_recent_value_desc=true).
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APPENDIX F

The Global Field of Whiteness

Figure 2. The global field of whiteness.

APPENDIX G

Proposal Letter to Prospective Subjects Identified from LinkedIn

Dear [Corporate Leader],

Hello! My name is Charles Bray. I am a Ph.D. candidate in Pepperdine University's Global Leadership and Change Program. As part of my research, I'm writing about how recent societal events have impacted Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) leaders and corporate initiatives.

I will share the aggregate results of my study with the participants. I will also write about the study's aggregate results in my dissertation. Personal and corporate information is confidential and will not appear in my notes or the write-up. From my literature review, several theories, tools, and concepts underpin corporate DEI activities. I hope to glean additional insight by speaking with practitioners in the field.

Respectfully, I request the opportunity to interview you online via Zoom or another online tool. The interview would last for approximately one hour. I will send the research questions and an Informed Consent form to you in advance of our appointment for your review should you agree to participate in the study.

Please let me know if you can participate in my research.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope to hear from you soon.

Respectfully,

Dr. Charles E. Bray, Jr.
Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Ph.D. Candidate

APPENDIX H

Proposal Letter to Prospective Subjects Identified from Corporation Website

Dear [Corporate Leader],

Hello! My name is Charles Bray. I am a Ph.D. candidate in Pepperdine University's Global Leadership and Change Program. As part of my research, I'm writing about how recent societal events have impacted Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) leaders and corporate initiatives. I identified you as someone I'd like to speak with from your company's website.

I will share the aggregate results of my study with the participants. I will also write about the study's aggregate results in my dissertation. Personal and corporate information is confidential and will not appear in my notes or the write-up. From my literature review, several theories, tools, and concepts underpin corporate DEI activities. I hope to glean additional insight by speaking with practitioners in the field.

Respectfully, I request the opportunity to interview you online via Zoom or another online tool. The interview would last for approximately one hour. I will send the research questions and an Informed Consent form to you in advance of our appointment for your review should you agree to participate in the study.

Please let me know if you can participate in my research.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope to hear from you soon.

Respectfully,

Dr. Charles E. Bray, Jr.
Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Ph.D. Candidate

APPENDIX I

Proposal Letter Requesting Referrals from Academic Sources

Dear [Colleague],

Hello! My name is Charles Bray. I identified you as someone who shares my research interest. I am a Ph.D. candidate in Pepperdine University's Global Leadership and Change Program. As part of my research, I'm writing about how recent societal events have impacted Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) leaders and corporate initiatives.

As part of my research, I seek referrals to individuals who may meet my inclusion criteria. If you are willing, please provide my information to corporate leaders in your network who you believe would meet the following requirements:

- Direct, corporate supervisory experience of a team of at least 25 personnel
- International (multi-country) supervisory experience
- A minimum of three years of experience in the supervisory role
- DEI responsibility as an operations manager, or in a staff role, such as Human Resource Manager

From my literature review, several theories, tools, and concepts underpin corporate DEI activities. I hope to glean additional insight by speaking with practitioners in the field. All individual and personal information are confidential. Results will be reported in aggregate form. I will share my results with you.

Respectfully, if they reach out to me, I would request the opportunity to interview your referral online via Zoom or another online tool. The interview would last for approximately one hour. I would send the research questions and an Informed Consent form to your referral before our appointment for their review.

Please let me know if you are comfortable providing my information to leaders in your network.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope to hear from you soon.

Respectfully,

Dr. Charles E. Bray, Jr.
Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Ph.D. Candidate

APPENDIX J

Informed Consent Form

IRB #: 22-04-1823

Study Title: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Management Post-2020: Reflections from Global Business Leaders on a Changing Paradigm

Principal Investigator: Dr. Charles E. Bray, Jr., Ph.D. Candidate Mobile (310) 467-3773.

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Martine Jago, Office (310) 568-5600.

Academic Program: Pepperdine Graduate School of Education and Psychology (GSEP)

Key Information:

Dear [participant]:

My name is Charles Bray. You are invited to participate in this research study. The information in this form is meant to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions please ask.

You are being asked to be in this study because you meet or exceed the participant criteria as noted below. You must be 19 years of age or older to participate:

- Direct, corporate supervisory experience of a team of at least 25 personnel
- International (multi-country) supervisory experience
- A minimum of three years of experience in the supervisory role
- DEI responsibility as an operations manager, or in a staff role, such as Human Resource Manager

The purpose of this study is to uncover what changes, if any, occurred in the perspective and activities of corporate leaders with multi-country responsibility, inclusive of DEI responsibility. Literature pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusion, along with supporting theories, will guide the study. Interviews, notes, and memos will broaden the body of knowledge and help to frame the analysis. Peer review will serve to guide the interpretation of the data to minimize researcher bias. Guided by comments from interviews, peers and relevant literature, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge by providing insight into prospective changes in activities and perspectives in light of social unrest and other societal events.

You will be asked to grant a 1-hour interview you at your convenience at your office or other mutually agreed upon location. The interview questions and an Informed Consent form will be sent to you in advance of our appointment for your review should you agree to participate in the study.
All individual and corporate information will be held confidentially. Only aggregate results will be reported in the study as the researcher will look for common themes and trends from the interviews. The researcher will redact any identifiable personal or corporate information from the data.

This research does present the potential for a risk of loss of confidentiality, emotional and/or psychological distress from the interview online from the discussion of your DEI approach. The researcher will work with you to address any issues of distress and to mitigate the potential of a confidentiality breach.

The potential benefits to you are a contribution to the body of knowledge regarding DEI practices and perspectives by leaders navigating a period of social unrest. The researcher will share the results with all interested participants. You have the right not to participate in this study. There is no cost to involvement in this study.

If at any time you are uncomfortable or wish to no longer participate in this study you have the right to end your participation. If you have a problem as a direct result of being in this study, you should immediately contact one of the people listed at the beginning of this consent form.
Reasonable steps will be taken to protect your privacy and the confidentiality of your study data. There is always the potential for theft of electronic information leading to a breach of confidentiality. The researcher will take precautions such as lock codes, firewalls, and other forms of coding to protect the subject's confidentiality. The researcher will use a code known only to himself to preclude a breach of identification. The researcher will keep the code key in a locked safe in his office. The key will be destroyed once all information has been encoded and after discussion with his committee. The other risks are those normally associated with working in an office environment. The researcher will note the office environment of the participant and actively work to mitigate any unforeseen risks that may arise

The only persons who will have access to your research records are the study personnel, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and any other person, agency, or sponsor as required by law. The information from this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as group or summarized data and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. For study related questions, please contact the investigator or dissertation chair listed at the beginning of this form. For questions concerning your rights or complaints about the research contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB):

• Phone: 1(402)xxx-xxxx
• E-mail: gpsirb@pepperdine.edu

You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study ("withdraw') at any time before, during, or after the research begins for any reason. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the investigator or with Pepperdine University (

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to be in this research study. Signing this form means that (1) you have read and understood this consent form, (2) you have had the consent form explained to you, (3) you have had your questions answered and (4) you have decided to be in the research study. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

As part of Pepperdine University's ongoing accreditation efforts, the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP) standard I-4: The Organization responds to concerns of research participants, encourages the HRPP to conduct evaluation or research participant satisfaction. In order to meet this standard, we have created an online feedback survey. All investigators are now required to include the following statement and survey link in all written informed consent information documents.

Participant Name:

_____
(Name of Participant: Please print)

Participant Signature:

_____   _____
Signature of Research Participant   Date

Investigator Signature:

      I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented

to participate. Having explained this and answered any questions, I am cosigning this form and accepting

this person's consent.

_____   _____
           Principal Investigator   Date

APPENDIX K

IRB Approval Letter

Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: May 31, 2022

Protocol Investigator Name: Charles Bray

Protocol #: 22-04-1823

Project Title: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Management Post-2020: Reflections from Global Business Leaders on a Changing Paradigm

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Charles Bray:

Thank you for submitting your application for expedited review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. As the nature of the research met the requirements for expedited review under provision Title 45 CFR 46.110 of the federal Protection of Human Subjects Act, the IRB conducted a formal, but expedited, review of your application materials.

Based upon review, your IRB application has been approved. The IRB approval begins today May 31, 2022, and expires on May 30, 2023.

The consent form included in this protocol is considered final and has been approved by the IRB. You can only use copies of the consent that have been approved by the IRB to obtain consent from your participants.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for expedited review and will require a submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB. If contact with subjects will extend beyond May 30, 2023, a continuing review must be submitted at least one month prior to the expiration date of study approval to avoid a lapse in approval.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research

Additional Participant Quotes in Response to Interview Questions

Research Question 1

The first research question (RQ1) queried, "RQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity

and inclusion (D&I)?" Four interview questions (IQ) were associated with RQ1 to gather

participants' perspectives. The IQs were:

IQ1: How, if at all, do you define diversity and inclusion?

P1: "And then I realized that ED&I, whatever you want to call it, is very different when you go outside my personal country territory...And again, gender is well accepted. In some countries, disabilities, is well accepted as well. Ethnicity is not a comfortable discussion to have, to the point that you can't even record it in some areas...[In those cases] We don't necessarily have data to support any conversations...So it's all about how much do you see it [marginalization]? And, how much you're aware of it."

P2: "One of the best kind of rubrics or examples is, and I often think of it this way, diversity is about who gets invited to the party. Inclusion is about whether you get asked to dance once you're there. So I think about diversity, very broadly, in terms of things that are both visible and invisible, I would include in that not only physical things, but also diversity of thought patterns, mental styles, life experiences...it's certainly to me is inclusive of things that we normally associate with the word, gender, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, ability, things of that nature..."

P9: "It's when everybody gets an equal chance to participate in this economy. And in particularly in business, where there are people in the seats, the board, the C suites, in the ranks, in the supply base, that come from different backgrounds."

P12: "But then, once you're there, you still find yourself moving over to the side or not feeling involved, and things like that, what you're asked to dance, you feel more involved. So that's the part of inclusion that we're trying to get to. But there's other steps beyond that. And, you know, there's, that's why they say equity. But then there's also the, what I consider belonging, you know, it's just, you know, the fact of the matter is, even if you've been asked to dance, it's still your dance, I didn't participate in the decorations, I didn't participate in the selection of the music, the venue, any of that, if I have no sense of belonging, within that organization, within it, I have made no direct impact, or any decision making, and that's where it, and then I don't have the freedom to even express that. So that's where we get to this belonging, which a lot of corporations including mine, is not there yet. We're not there."

P13: "And one of my brothers was killed by the police around 11 years ago. And it's just it's really one of those things that is a heartbreak to me to have men in this country, black men in this country, black women in this country, to be judged by the color of your skin. Just for walking around. And that happens externally, that happens internally that happens, you know, when on the job off the job, it happens everywhere you show up as your skin color, versus as who you are."

IQ2: How, if at all, has your definition of diversity and inclusion evolved in the last 3 years?

P1: I think, what the murder of George Floyd made us realize, as an organization ... made me realize that once we are looking for inclusion, that can't be at the expense of massive issues and priorities that are only affecting particular groups. I think we've we've gone too broad with our definition... And actually,that meant that some key challenges and key issues were almost swept under the carpet to the point where you didn't really talk about those anymore and certainly didn't feel comfortable talking about them. That murder of George Floyd forced us to have a

good long, hard look in the mirror and realize that we didn't know as much as we thought we did, both from a personal perspective, and as a profession as well.

P6: It's important to now acknowledge we were already doing work in this space and level that up as a result of the events over the course of the last couple of years.

P5: You know, we I we would find when we would do some surveys, and we would ask them Diversity, Equity and Inclusion questions, and they would always score really high. And you look at the actual diversity numbers and be like, Yeah, of course, everybody feels included, because you're all [from an EU country]. Right? Like, you know, in the same office, yeah, you feel great. You're all like each other. It's very easy to have a inclusion when everyone was the same.

P5: I think one of the most important things about diversity is that no individual can be diverse, right? We are all uniquely who we are. So the inclusion piece is about how people are able to get together.

P12: Has not influenced it's actually driven it deeper. It's not it's not influenced at all.

IQ3: How does your company's top leadership define diversity and inclusion (D&I)?

P1: So they define it as empowerment, they define it as employee participation, you know, making sure that everyone feels psychologically safe here at work. There are different definitely different definitions. We have a, you know, a vision, and we have pillars. One where we foster inclusion, we are working hard to increase diversity, our numbers are trending in the right area, and the right play is going up. And also we share our progress.

P2: India has caste system that they're not willing to say that they have. And they brought that, you know, particular thing over here in the US. There was an article I don't even remember where that article is now. But they talked about the casting is a caste caste system.

P7: "We do have a huge focus, you know, when we think about diversity and equity for diversity and inclusion, or DEI for us. DEI, it is different, because we don't think about it just from the workforce lens, if anything, we have more of a lens on the health equity piece. And it's a big much, we've done much better in terms of the health equity piece than we have the workforce DEI.

P13: so, the, the definition at our company, has really evolved into equity and inclusion. If you have equity in your company, if you have fair practices and principles, and you have an inclusive environment, then you will get diversity. And so that's, that's sort of the model and the definition that our company [name withheld] has really been trying to infuse the culture and educate our employee base.

IQ4: What concepts and ideals, if any, form the basis/foundation for your company's D&I

program (philosophical, moral, legal, social, etc.)?

P1: I won't say that still, there's a clear link, because there's still people who don't understand what it is. What's it got to do with their day job? As there is, quite frankly, I think we've [seen that] also in other organizations. But yeah, I think there is a for me, there's a clear link. Now, I think part of our challenge is getting the whole organization to understand that link as well.

P4: There's an aspect of it's the right thing to do, but that should not overshadow the business rationale for DEI that will last longer and help people understand this is not just a benevolent act but we're being strategic and competitive for the future.

P6: When you tell them the system is not fair, and I'm not saying you didn't work hard and that you're not smart and capable, but that [minority] out there selling non-sanctioned pharmaceuticals is probably smarter than the rest of us -- so I think that is often the challenge.

P8: Yeah, I think it's at the end of the day based on how to best collaborate and work together to yield the best performance. In doing so you treat people a certain way. And diversity is a part of that. The diversity and inclusion piece is just another leg on that chair.

P12: And now it's part of our overall doctrine, in our foundation is social justice. Communities first, then workforce at all seniority levels, including our board.

P15: So you may be like, the best and the brightest talent. But if you're super disrespectful to people, you don't belong here, right? Like, we're not going to, we're not going to allow that. So they almost our core values, kind of indicate how to behave, but also how you're measured on your behavior. And, you know, I've been hearing yours and more and more I see us holding people to that. Where before, it might be like, Oh, well, he's so smart, or he delivers so much, you know, yes, he's rough, but it's okay. And honestly, in the last probably two, three years, you know, more and more of those people are not, are not allowed to stay, you know, at the company.

Research Question 2

The second research question (RQ2) queried, "RQ2: How, if at all, do you measure,

track, and evaluate D&I success at your company? (Success Metrics)

Three interview questions (IQ) were associated with RQ2 to gather participants'

perspectives. The IQs were:

IQ5: What constitutes success in your company's D&I paradigm? Any changes in the definition

of success in the last 3 years?

P1: Any measure I come across so far is a bit tenuous, you know, that there doesn't seem to be a clear correlation between efforts in and [benefits] out.

P2: We ask each [senior leader] to have DEI metrics [for themselves]…tell us what you did.

P5: Creating a sense of belonging, inspiration, and in-group sentiment.

P7: And so they were like - Oh, black people. Then all the companies wanting to…give money to the Miss Minnesota bail project, like all these external organizations and their [employees] saying, Hello, have you looked at the experience that we have inside of these companies as black people?

P9: And so I think there is going to be more transparency for people that are not like the [largest companies], driven by this whole ESG movement with a social piece of it. Just like the environmental piece you're gonna people are Talking about, you know, the carbon footprint. And then measuring that, right? The the middle piece of these social, which includes diversity is going to be probably mapped to size more as a result of that as well. And by the way, ISS class, listen, those people that measure board performance are asking for it more specifically.

P14: Because at first, it was just being able to, to report on that information. A lot of companies don't have their or their HR is set up in such a way that you can pull the right information. And as I talked to companies, you know, a lot of companies that I've spoken to, they want, they're they're looking for HR leaders to be able to come in and help them with their information, their systems to be able to do the right reporting. So So just getting the reporting was a success, then being able to visually represent the information in a way that I can easily searchers and the employee population and happening amongst our workforce, that was a success.

IQ6: What quantitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?

P1: It can take over a generation, if not longer, for those, that bottom line shift in terms of numbers…so we also test it by do our people feel and see the change we're trying to make.

IQ7: What qualitative metrics, if any, do you use when evaluating D&I at your company?

P1: We ask specific questions in our staff surveys about how people, whether people feel included.

P2: Do people feel included?

P3: Do people feel like they're being heard?

P7: We would do surveys and ask DEI questions and they would always score really high. You'd look at the numbers and say, yes, of course everybody feels included because you're all [from the same ethnic background].

Research Question 3

The third research question (RQ3) queried, "RQ3: What strategies and practices, if any,

do you use to implement D&I at your company?   (Implementation)

Four interview questions (IQ) were associated with RQ3 to gather participants'

perspectives. The IQs were:

IQ8: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to implement D&I at your

company globally? Nationally? Locally? Workgroups?

P2: Are we moving people up in a fair and equitable way?

P4: DEI is not a side project. It's something that is a part of what, who we need to operatie every day.

P6: Although we're pushing it internally, they're also dealing with societal pressures, with [the cultural perceptions] here are how things are supposed to be.

P8: Accountability was lacking

P9: "So having a good chief diversity officer, someone who's got experience someone that understands how to execute this, because you know, in big organizations is not easy, right? Because the middle of the middle of the organization is whether, whether it's through case, whether Yes, whether they're slow to accept and adapt to change."

P10: let's take the time to expand that pool, and give people who are underrepresented, more opportunities than they have in the past. And that was something that we're able to implement instantly.

P12: "These five commitment states were done within the last 18 months. We didn't have this before. So this is this is one of the things that came out of George Floyd. The social unrest, you know, like I stated that one of our branches was burned down."

P14: "We demonstrated our commitment to improving the experience of our black employees. We were very transparent with them and so we did that over the course of two years, we also put in place very specific actions, and

share that with our employees about what we were going to do to change and to achieve our goals. So it wasn't just hey, we want to recruit more diverse people, or, or we want to increase the number of females and leadership, we actually committed to and demonstrated and communicated on a regular basis, the specific actions that we were taking."

P14: We tried to demonstrate our commitment to that priority through our actions and our behaviors, but also putting in place systems internally to hold ourselves accountable, whether that was through the workforce metric, whether that was through regular cadence of sharing that with employees, and really demonstrating progress on our specific goals.

P15: Um, you know, I think frequent communication, right, like, natural embedding DNI language right into our conversations. And so, you know, we have all employee meetings, we have all hands meetings by business unit, we have team meetings, we have one on ones. And so really developing our managers or leaders or executives to communicate these very naturally, right, like, we have conversations all the time about work health, and it should be org health, in terms of what in terms of belonging in terms of satisfaction, you know, things like that. So that's, that's kind of a strategy that we use as different communication channels.

IQ9: What tools or models, if any, do you use to implement the company's D&I approach?

P:1: But I think actually most of it is born out of general, typical HR models, where you're trying to bring transformation and trying to bring about behavioral change. So a lot of them actually borne out with things like organizational development and design and things like that rather than specifically EDI

P4: We have such a strong culture; how do we [ween off of] old systems?

P14: And we, we just kind of made up our own model, we were focused on, you know, people culture and our product. And, you know, I think, you know, and you can organize it so many different ways, what you do in each one of those buckets. And, and we just tried to keep it really simple. So no, we don't, we didn't have any tools.

IQ10: What are the biggest challenges to infusing a D&I paradigm in your company?

How do you manage them?

P4: How to you get majority groups to make changes to their behavior? Because they hold many of the positions of leadership and are kind of gatekeepers. How do you create change with that group who may feel like something is being taken away and it's not fair?

P6: I think the biggest challenge is communicating the why, making sure that people understand why we're doing it.

P6: If someone comes into this role and they're a majority, they may have gaps, and we're going to give them a shot that has never been afforded to many diverse associates. No you've got to help them [diverse associates] close their gaps, but not let that hurt the company either.

P8: It's the same old story, always having to prove yourself.

P10: That's something that where that's become an an added, I guess, difficulty, or area of concern and needing to keep keeping control of is that one when you when you when you try and improve your company, and in one area, you know, you need to ensure you don't let other areas drop away as well.

P:14 And I think we saw that in COVID. During COVID, we saw, you know, very specifically for us, we saw our, our, our parents struggling in different ways, we saw a really big swelling of our Asian community really fearful, given all of the violence, and then our black employee population feeling very, you know, feeling very, that their

experience wasn't positive. And so each one of those groups, for example, needed something very different. And so I think companies need to be very mindful of that. They need to be very thoughtful about what the needs are of their employees, and saying very specifically about how to engage with those employees based on what they need.

IQ11: Describe the leadership culture in your company with D&I in mind. How, if all, has the culture evolved post-George Floyd and COVID-19?

P:2 When you get right down to it, in that final moment where it's a or b, we keep doing what's comfortable.

P8: So, the manager makes the final call on the pay, the manager makes the final call on the hire…And so, there's a lot of entitlement, that relationship between employees that did not look like them…so, a lot of the same kind of dynamics that we've been dealing with for years.

P8: They went really far. It went far. But you have leaders in the company who are like, why are we talking about this? This has nothing to do with what we do as a business.

P12: environmental sustainability, governance. Thank you. So in that, in that framework, you're now seeing a lot of corporate social responsibility kind of things, taking root underneath the ESG umbrella. But we were we're really trying to, you know, address these things. I mean, they became what some people would call a risk tolerance level or a reputation risk issue for the bank. You know, do you want people protesting in front of your door because you're financing fracking in North Dakota? Do you really want that on your door?

P13: Hmm. I think if I'm being honest, they're working on it. I think they're working on it. I think we've got good leadership. They call it let's good bones. You learned I mean, but I think too, that there are still some things that, you know, people fall back on, and they don't realize, oh, gosh, this was an opportunity that I needed to step in and make an employee feel a certain way.

P:14: Because I believe that, that in order to be a true, you know, to be truly a global organization, you have to think about it global, you have to think about it holistically.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question (RQ4) queried, "RQ4: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use to enhance the success of the company's D&I approach over time?   (Sustainability)

Four interview questions (IQ) were associated with RQ4 to gather participants' perspectives. The IQs were:

IQ12: How, if at all, did the murder of George Floyd, and the resulting social outcry impact your company's D&I approach?

P1: So it absolutely was a sea change being made, and making the organization realize that they hadn't been doing enough.

P2: There were individuals from all walks of life and ethnicity who were profoundly affected by that and said I just can't continue things in the same way.

P4: You do have goals from your organization from a representation standpoint and if they're not met then it does impact your rating which impacts your compensation.

P9: It's gotten their attention. The question is, is this? Is this a moment or a movement? Right, and that's the thing we struggle with. And only time will tell?

P9: George Floyd, yes, it was an awakening, visual awakening for people. And I think corporations have decided, well, look, how can we help our employees? Or how can we help ourselves as companies? And what's I think the corporations have sort of skirted the responsibility a lot, there are a lot of things. And this one was hard to sort of duck. Right? I mean, if you think about all the things they can impact the schools in their communities, right? The whole economy around their plants, right, the individual people that work in the company, and that don't work in the company. Right. So I think there was a bit of an awakening from that perspective for for companies that say, you know, what we can and have to do more.

P10: the George Floyd instrument incident that was just such an unbelievably disgraceful moment in time and one that made me in particular, as a fish out of water in my role and where I was really ensure that we did started to do whatever we could and made it an absolute priority in the way that we ran our business.

P14: I think our company had been investing in DNI for many years, we were owned by [x]. X is very committed to D&I lots of great practices, policies, you know, blah, blah, blah. But I think the murder of George Floyd sort of made it a more urgent issue and put it more in the spotlight. But what I would say is, is that it brought out the emotions of employees more than any other other incident that I can think of...I don't recall in my career, there being an incident like the murder of George Floyd that caused so much emotion by employees and so much tension in the the work environment. That to me, I will never know it is very, very painful. And I think it was the catalyst for employees to demand more commitment. And it was the catalyst for I think for employees, certainly in our company to to engage with our black employees in a different way.

IQ13: How, if at all, did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your company's D&I approach?

P1: I think the impact of COVID is increasing those discussions about particularly about wellbeing, about mental health, and about just that whole diverse experience of COVID.

P4: It enabled some who were open to realize and to listen like, Oh, my colleague, who is socially, economically, educationally and intellectually or par with me, who happens to be black, experiences these things. I thought they were living just the way I was.

P9: I just think like I said, I think it's gotten people's attention. more so because all of these things are interconnected. Right. And I think corporations realize the impact they can have on the communities around them. And I think because of that, and the visceral reaction people had by and being, you know, the violence, I think, all of that is played into how corporations have responded to, to this whole the underlying issue that's been going on forever, right.

P13: . And so I think we did a really good job. In the beginning, there was tons of communication going out, like we don't know what to do. But, you know, we're keeping you informed and keep you abreast of what's happening. But now we're leaving it to the manager to either bring their, their their employees back. And I don't think that the manufacturing team is getting as much information as they could.

P14: COVID. Impact employees differently whether it was it was we saw, we saw COVID impacted employees in ways that I don't think we anticipated, but it was very, it was gradual. And during each each part of COVID. It, it became more apparent

P14: And our practices, we debated a lot about, okay, how is how is this going to impact different groups, if we say you've got to come back and oh, you've got a week to get ready. You know, how are you know, Mom's going to

adapt to that? How are people going who are caring for elderly parents? So, we you know, how, you know, we, we, I think it causes the conversation and the debate to be different.

P15: From a diversity standpoint, we have a lot of women leave the company we had some men too, but leave the company to stay home because kids were homeschooled, you know, they needed to be the caretaker.

IQ14: How, if at all, did political and social violence (US, Russia, India, globally) impact your company's D&I approach?

P1: We've had to think about that then on their mental well being and their work. So naturally, I think there is that bit about, you know, does that target particular groups in particular, I'm not sure, but it certainly gets people to just be more self-aware and think about the experiences of others.

P6: However, if it's impacting you, to the extent that it is preventing you from doing your job, we also have to understand…but we also have to be careful how far I go.

P12: it greatly impacted so I'll give you an example. A lot of people don't realize, you know, with with COVID, started, India took a very lax approach, then there was a wave of COVID deaths in India. A lot of our operational stuff was done out of India, we had to shut down. I mean, we had to pull employees that were and to be on call center. We were I had to pull some of my staff to do to set up to answer people's call about what's in their checking account. We had to it dramatically affected us globally, what happened in India affected us in the US, you know, so we have all of those situations, the violence and what we're seeing, let us know that we can't, we have to be better to each other, we have to figure out each other social ills and things are going on. Because people became extremely, I would think they became more violent.

P14 Is it was maybe it was the lack of boundaries because of COVID You know, a lot of our employees said I don't have boundaries I'm you know, I'm on zoom all day long. I you know, I can't shut off offer, you know, maybe it was the the physical lack of barriers or I don't know. But it, I think employees had a harder time separating personal and professional, I think it really blurred. And so, like the capital, you know, we were watching it as it happened as we're working. I mean, I remember that day very distinctly, and then starting to get calls from employees and e-mails about, I can't deal with that I need the afternoon off. Like, I think they just created so much stress on our employee population, and so much anxiety. And so much fear that we, we, again, we had to be just gentler, we had to be more empathetic to your employees, we had to, you know, quickly respond, give people time off if they needed it, we needed to coach our managers to be more aware of how people were feeling.

P15: So it's not something that's a top down, but it's something a lot happens through our ERGs, a lot of movement happens and change happens. But it's something that I'm hearing more and more is kind of a minimization of violent language and in business vernacular.

IQ15: What strategies and practices, if any, do you use when modifying your D&I approach in response to current events?

P14: I think the most important thing that a company can do is establish a relationship with your employees that's based on trust, transparency, and genuine commitment.

APPENDIX M

Multiple Participants Quotes on India

The things that would probably be polarizing in India, would in some cases be religion. And in some cases, caste. Now, if you talk to people from India, and they say, Oh, that's not there anymore. Don't believe that!

Okay, with sexual orientation issues want to be open and welcoming. …And you've got a choice between Joe who's like, really out, and Satish who's a, you know, conventional Indian guy, much more, you know, professional and his demeanor. Well, Satish is just more professional. Because there's only one slot. There's only one slot if I really liked Joe, and I think Joe can get there someday. But right now, right now, I think so Satish is the word professional choice. That is the discussion that I see happening a lot, not just in my organization… that when you get right down to it, in that final moment where it's a or b, we keep doing what's comfortable.

So globally, every one of the countries that we operate in meaning, it's a very different answer to the question. In a place like India, for instance, I was just there. And gender is clearly something that is something that we can go after. And I met with all women in there, and they made it pretty clear that they still live in a patriarchal society. So even though they may be getting, we may be pushing more of this internally, when they walk out of there, they may not be encouraged to apply for bigger roles, or they may not be celebrated for having a larger role than thier husband or the other men in that society, because it's a very patriarchal society. So although we're pushing it internally, they're also dealing with societal pressure, okay, with the chalkboard, here's how things are supposed to be. And so we have to be mindful that so we, in India, we said, hey, gender is the right thing, for us to continue to put an emphasis on that, what are the other

areas? And so we've asked them, you know, what are the areas that you'd like to see, and there, you know, that's where some of the things like religion comes up, you've got Hindu, you've got Muslim, you've got Christian all in India, you've got, that's kind of the other thing is rural versus urban, in terms of where you grew up. And if you are a rural, oftentimes, you you defer to the workers who are a little more urban. And so those are some of the areas that we're going to start to explore for right now, at least in India, what we heard on the ground was gender is definitely the right place to go up to there. You know, eventually we can get into religion. And maybe further down, right, you can start talking about castes. But that's not a place where we're at the norm is, some companies may be there, but we're not there yet.

So in India, there is still -- no, I don't like to say those use a phrase that there's a there behind. But when I compare our progress in Europe which still has a long way to go, I would say that India is probably a generation almost behind in terms of equity. Now, if you were, if you were a woman, and if you're a man, you might feel something different. But that's kind of in the in terms of comparison, I would say that that's kind of where they're working from.

You're something if you're going to continue to look at that caste issue. In India, one of the reasons you know the old name for that community was untouchables. Right? The Untouchables. And one of the reasons it's a chicken and egg question, but they were often people who did janitorial jobs, garbage collection, jobs, things that might be considered dirty, right. And they were the only people who would touch those things. Other castes would not touch. Now, if you think about it, think about a company like waste management in the US, suddenly, there's a lot of money in garbage. Suddenly, there's a lot of money in portions of the Dalit community, that is also standing things on its head, because you now have a caste structure, which was originally on the basis of function that relegated that population to the lowest rungs of society.

And they now are wealthier some of them than many others, which is turning things on its head also.

That's what I'm telling you. And we didn't do it. So that's, that's one of my biggest frustrations. I think one of the other barriers that is much less conscious, and it and I don't attribute malice to this at all. It's just a reality, when I'm trying to work or get the organization to work on racial issues, and I have a dominantly Indian management structure that just doesn't relate to it. How do I make that important to them? How do I end and whether whatever angle I'm trying to do it from a values or moral angle and economic angle, a legal risk angle? How do I make that important to people who have no life experience with it? They don't understand.

But you know, so So we certainly have included people from those communities and ditto in Europe, it's just not been a major focus. For us. We do track. One of the big things that's an issue for us is there's there's a primary binary, are you Indian, or non Indian? Let's try that one first. And, you know, there's been an effort to diversify around national origin. And so the numbers are kind of so overwhelming Indian, non Indian, we can lump a lot of stuff in non Indian and make progress. And I think we just aren't globally at the point of having the scale to break down non Indian, in all cases, and look at what about this? What about this? What about this? So no, it's not really hitting the table yet. So anyway, recruiting was one major focus. Some learning and development was another major focus in terms of programs we ran around inclusive leadership around unconscious bias around emotional intelligence. Those things were a primary focus area, increasing the dialogue between employees and managers was a focus area, we ran a number of focus groups. I mentioned indigenous, you also look at East Asian versus South Asian, Chinese and Indians don't always get along. Great. What's going on with that? You know,

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do we have are we are our Indian dominant population, thinking inclusively about our Chinese heritage employees?

We have mid level managers who grew up in India came from India, are now working in the US. And, you know, you will see or hear of some actions that, you know, some Joe has taken, and I'm like, Oh, my God, we're gonna be in court. And the reaction I've gotten is out of concern for the company and protecting its interests, the reaction I've gotten is, Why are you causing problems? And it's because they lack that appreciation of those things, that whatever side of the equation you're on, we all grew up aware of the issues.

India is not a very litigious society in the same way that the US is, that's less at the forefront of people's mind. I mean, I hear and see things and I think, Oh, God, we're going to be in court, you know, where you can't do that, or you can't think that way or take this set of actions, because we're going to be in court. And sometimes the the folks in India are like, What do you mean? And I'm like, so legalistic motivation is not a prime mover. I'm not telling you that the corporate counsel is not aware of that he understands. But the rank and file not nearly as much.

Much more difficult to tell that in general, the that segment of the pipe, this is this is truthful, in general, that segment of the population tends to be darker skinned, because fair skin is valued in India.

At the time, we started most companies were starkly governed by caste and community and by the way, a lot of Indian people will use the word community where we use the word caste. So you may hear people talk But he is not a member of my community, or the only people in leadership for this company were a part of this community. That's a caste issue. Most major Indian companies were overwhelmingly dominated and governed by that structure.

You know, the history of India. In 1947, the British partition to India and Pakistan tried to get as many of the Muslims as possible in Pakistan and as many of the Hindus as possible in India. So there are dominant religions, and those two areas but but Muslims and Hindus have been coexisting for years and years and years. And I mean, millennia. So among large segments of the population, no big deal. But there are segments of the population that are more radicalized, just as you might find in the US around race, or just different political points of view.

So you'll probably see gender coming forward, most commonly and link and if I don't naturally come back to it prompt me to come back to you about gender in India, you will see gender as a primary focus. The corporation has gotten very interested in sexual orientation, the corporation has gotten very interested in ability. And in in partnering with with organizations around ability, the corporation has an intellectual understanding of some of the racial components. But it just isn't like a gut level, this is relevant to us, we don't have a large population of black people or Hispanics in India, so there's not a lot of firsthand experience with that. And so it doesn't hit the table. As pointedly as some of the other things do.

Um, I assume you are aware that society in India is changing radically. And one of the major aspects of that is the traditional role of women is changing radically Women are coming into the workforce in very large numbers. They're in the workforce in very large numbers, particularly at entry levels in India. But what that has caused in India is a lot of social unrest, because men are feeling very threatened. And so when you talk about violence, that hasn't much been in the news in the last two, three years, maybe, but four or five, six years ago, there was a lot in the news about violence against women, prompted by the changing social structure.

Actually. And, you know, I'm only dealing with a certain privileged group, you know, to work in our environment. In India, you will be Brahma probably in higher caste system, I would

imagine. I'm making an assumption there. But that's so I wanted it. So it's all about how much do you see it? And how much you're aware of it?

I think we're just, we're just at the tip of the iceberg. So what often happens when I speak to my colleagues in India, they say they are very diverse. So they I think they will think they're very diverse from a religious perspective. And I think they think they get very diverse from a different ethnicity, internal, the ethnicity, perspective as well. Not so much from a gender perspective. But religion hasn't really come up. But I think that's because there is a an I don't know yet what's perception and what's reality. But the general noise I hear from India, is that they're very comfortable in terms of the representation. The only area then then, perhaps, is gender. I don't know how true that is because we don't necessarily have data to support them any conversations.

Well, I don't know the depths of Sri Lanka, I just know that my mother and my sister have just gone to India. And so they moved their flights because of it. And I looked into it, and there's a lot of political unrest, they storm, the storm, the palace.

With diversity, we'll we can talk about any includes, you know, your physical makeup, your mental makeup, your introvert extrovert that type of thing, your, your background, you know, are you someone that came from low caste system like in India or high caste system in India or lower economic scale, higher income scale, to your orientation, those kinds of things race, gender, the, you know, the more obvious things, and inclusion is really, you know, what is find out is how well do people feel like they belong in an organization as the full selves, you know, and can thrive and achieve their aspirations in their organization as their full unhindered selves.

For example, being an Asian Indian male in a high tech company is actually a position of power. Whereas people may say Asians are minorities, in a high tech company, no, but in a city where people may target Asians then Yes, right. And so the whole notion of intersectionality.

Know, we, from a corporate perspective, we've always had a had a hard time with that, especially with India, I remember being into it, because of the company I was at before and making it a safe place for people that are LGBTQ plus, to go to that country and do business. And do you exclude employees if they need to do business in, in India? And then do what like, what are you? What are the things that we need to do like? So again, it's just really, really, at the end of the day, we want to make employees safe. And that's hard to do when when we have such differences across.

India has caste system that they're not willing to say that they have. And they brought that, you know, particular thing over here in the US. There was an article I don't even remember where that article is now. But they talked about the casting is a caste system.

It greatly impacted so I'll give you an example. A lot of people don't realize, you know, with COVID, started, India took a very lax approach, then there was a wave of COVID deaths in India. A lot of our operational stuff was done out of India, we had to shut down. I mean, we had to pull employees that were and to be on call center. We had to it dramatically affected us globally, what happened in India affected us in the US, you know, so we have all of those situations, the violence and what we're seeing, let us know that we can't, we have to be better to each other, we have to figure out each other social ills and things are going on. Because people became extremely, I would think they became more violent. They took out their anger. I mean, we are a social being, we need that interaction. I mean, I'm starting to go out, you know, do these events again.