

An Exploration of the Antecedents, Practices, and Outcomes of Inclusive Leadership

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Abstract

Survey responses from over 800 human resources (HR) professionals revealed that building and maintaining a diverse and inclusive workforce were amongst the biggest HR challenges in 2019 (Bourke, Smith, Stockton, & Wakefield, 2016; Zoller, 2019). Building inclusive companies in America requires leaders who possess cultural competence, the ability to build trusting relationships with marginalized people, and a commitment to creating equity. The absence of aligned theories and practical strategies are, in part, why companies in America grapple with understanding how to create diverse and inclusive leadership (Shore, Cleveland, & Sanchez, 2018). Much of the existing literature focuses on issues of workplace diversity and the business case for diversity and inclusion. Less has been done to understand the antecedents and practices that lead to perceptions of leaders' inclusiveness and the creation of environments where marginalized employees feel a sense of belonging while simultaneously being their authentic selves. This qualitative study employs a social constructivist worldview with multiple case study methodology to compare the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of leaders (identified as high, medium, and low in cultural competence) from a Fortune 500 American technology company. This study offers a theoretical model and a new construct to clarify antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership. It contributes to practice by informing the evolution of diversity and inclusion strategies and interventions. This research also

provides a collaborative scholar-practitioner approach that is required to address the challenges of diversity, equity, and inclusion in corporate America.

Dedication

Five times a day, I offer Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) my humble and sincere prayers. Five times a day, you enter my prayers for Allah to grant you the highest levels of Paradise. Five time a day, I thank Allah for the blessings He has bestowed upon me and my family.

Thank you for all the long lectures and never-ending stories about living as a Muslim in this fleeting life. I have studied Islam a lot lately and learned something that I'd like to teach you. Hadith says that parents are blessed by the good deeds of their children.

While you are no longer here to advise me and no longer in an earthly form to perform good deeds, you can count on me. I will water the seeds of good that you rooted deep within me. I will pray, fast, pay the poor rate, help a person in need, and honor Allah in all I do. For I know that all goods rather rendered by speech, worship, or deeds are for the praises of Allah.

May Allah continue to be pleased with you, Mommy. And may the legacy of your good deeds keep you elevated in the highest levels of Paradise. I miss you and I love you. As-Salaam Alaikum.

Acknowledgments

Thank you, Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala), for always illuminating my path to righteousness. I appreciate you for blessing me with parents who shaped my value system and mental models. I praise you for my siblings (my first babies) who have always been my foundation and biggest cheerleaders. I honor you for sending best friends who cheer on the highs and pray away the lows. I cherish you for granting me with ships who became my family. I revere you for gifting me with a loving heart that sees the beauty in all things and people. And I thank you for allowing me to build the family (Deon, Aisha, Carlos) and life that I prayed for.

And to my second set of babies, Aisha and Carlos, being a boy and girl 11 years apart, one would think there's not much to argue about. There is no landline phone to fight over, no sharing of room or clothes. But still, my Dillard babies found an argument. And for that I'm grateful. In your arguments over who had the easier childhood, you blessed me with humor. In your arguments over cleaning chores, you taught me how to delegate. With every fight being reconciled in 5 minutes or less, you taught me the power and beauty of love and forgiveness. Thank you for the lessons and thank you for choosing me.

And last but certainly not least, my soul's mate, Deon. You have been the love of my life since I was 13. You are the most authentic person I know. I admire how you sit in your skin. No gameplaying and no pretentiousness. You are decisive but yielding,

strong yet gentle. Your love is strong, and your spirit is a piece of God. I thank you for being our children's biggest advocate. Thank you for making sure our love and family was always first. You have absolutely spoiled us with love. I don't know a love or life without you, and I could not have chosen a better mate to live this life and the hereafter with. I love you. I appreciate you. I honor you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview of Introduction

This research is situated in the social constructivism interpretive framework and will be further detailed in Chapter 3. In this chapter, however, I provide a logic and rationale for my dissertation research. I show how the American federal government's attempt to advance equal opportunity as well as corporate attempts to leverage diversity have delivered some positive gains but still have fallen short of creating workplace inclusion. I argue that diverse employees are only optimized when they are led inclusively. I conclude the chapter by explaining the purpose and research design of my study: an exploration of the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplaces.

Diversity and Inclusion in America's Workplaces

The passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 created optimism about future employment opportunities for historically marginalized people (Gazzar, 2014). In 1965, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was founded to enforce civil rights law in America's workplaces (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.-a, n.d.-d). The landmark legislation introduced Title VII, which prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, or religion (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.-c). This Act advocated for fairness and equality in the workplace.

By 1978, further legislation was created to address the sustained inequalities of marginalized people in the workplace, specifically contractors and sub-contractors working with the federal government. The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (2018) created three regulations to prohibit employment discrimination. Executive Order 11246 required all employees to have equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin. This brought about affirmative action (an employer's plan to take positive proactive steps to consider diverse people in their recruiting and promoting practices) and was intended to remedy past injustices and provide equitable opportunity to marginalized people (University of California Irvine Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, n.d.). The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act forbade discrimination against veterans, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 banned discrimination against individuals with disabilities (United States Department of Labor, 2018).

Title VII regulation provided guidance and penalty to American businesses. However, fifty-five years later, people of color and women still experience inequitable opportunities and significant pay gaps (National Women's Law Center, 2019). Upon the urging of the EEOC, companies created symbolic structures (e.g., anti-harassment policies) to demonstrate their compliance with the law (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.-b). As demonstrated in the minimal representation of 24 female, 11 Latinx, 3 Black, and 2 openly gay people as CEOs of Fortune 500

companies (Zarya, 2018), this gesture had minimal impact on the actual employment outcomes for marginalized people in corporate America.

In 2017, Fortune 500 companies employed 17.5% of the America's workforce (Donnelly, 2017). While these companies publicly espoused their values and commitment to diversity and inclusion, 400 out of 500 companies refused to publicly share data about the gender or ethnicity of their employees (Donnelly, 2017).

Arguably, American corporations still struggle to equitably hire, develop, promote, and include people from marginalized groups in their decision-making processes (Diversity Best Practices, 2017; Donnelly, 2017).

According to the Glassdoor Diversity Hiring Survey, two-thirds of job seekers listed diversity initiatives as important when selecting an employer (Glassdoor Team, 2014). However, only one third of people surveyed were aware of diversity initiatives at their employer (Glassdoor Team, 2014). The lack of visibly impactful diversity and inclusion initiatives sends implicit and explicit messages that senior leaders in America's workplaces (a) do not value diversity and inclusion, (b) have deficiencies in their cultural competence, and/or (c) possess minimal commitment and strategic acumen to build diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces (Bourke, Garr, van Berkel, & Wong, 2017; Dillon & Bourke, 2016; Glassdoor Team, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

America's diversity is ever-present and will continue to grow. Millennials are projected to be America's largest living adult generation in 2019 (Cilluffo & Cohn, 2017). Women comprised 46.8% of America's workforce in 2015 (Fry & Stepler, 2017). Immigrants and their children will drive the growth of America's workforce from 2015 to 2035 (Passel & Cohn, 2017). And the Black population grew by 12% in 2010, a faster rate than the total United States population (Rastogi, Johnson, Hoeffel, & Drewery, 2010).

There are numerous theories about the value and business case for diversity in the workplace (Bourke et al., 2016; Dillon & Bourke, 2016; Hunt, Layton, & Prince, 2012; Page, 2008, 2017). McKinsey conducted a widely referenced study that showed direct correlation between racial and ethnic diversity and improved financial performance for corporations in the United States (Hunt et al., 2012). Page showed that diversity on teams increased problem solving and innovation and elicited more accurate predictions than homogenous teams (Page, 2017).

This dissertation, however, is not aimed at proving the value or business case for diversity. Instead, it acknowledges the implicit and explicit biases, defensive positioning, and power nuances latent in "building the business case" and "the value of diversity" framing. To clarify, as a diversity and inclusion practitioner and Ph.D. candidate, I have not seen researchers and corporate leaders working to prove the

value or benefits of homogeneity in the workplace because white, heterosexual, able-bodied men is the prototype—the status quo (Page, 2017). America’s workplace considers homogeneous groups as the baseline default from which we can understand the value and need for diversity (Page, 2017). These rationales are undergirded with privilege and power.

Katherine W. Phillips commented that “the logic of the business case for diversity rests on the idea that those who deviate from the norm must demonstrate that their presence in the organization will result in the company making more money” (as cited in Page, 2017, p. 244). This logic affords leaders of American corporations the option to decide if the touted diversity benefits (e.g., innovation and engagement) are valuable—and the option to decide if they should equitably hire, develop, and promote diverse people (Page, 2017). Moreover, when there is a deviation in the status quo (e.g., hiring, advancing diverse people), diverse employees are charged with continuously proving their worthiness and financial benefit to the business. The physical, psychological, neurological, and emotional burdens of this enormous exclusionary task (Eisenberger, Jarcho, Lieberman, & Naliboff, 2006; Kerr & Levine, 2008; Robinson, O’Reilly, & Wang, 2013) come at a heavy cost to the marginalized individual and corporation. Thus, diversity representation alone will not suffice. Diverse employees are only optimized when they are led inclusively (Page, 2008, 2017). The challenges of diversity and inclusion are ultimately America’s leadership challenges (Dillon & Bourke, 2016).

One place to start is for leaders in America to develop *cultural competence*—the ability to shift cultural perspectives and appropriately adapt behaviors to cultural differences and commonalities (Hammer, 2016)—and inclusive leadership skills to bridge difference (Dillon & Bourke, 2016). Cultural competence is also known in the literature as intercultural competence, intercultural effectiveness, cultural intelligence, global competence, intercultural communication competence, culture learning, cosmopolitanism, or multiculturalism (J. M. Bennett, 2013; J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Fitzsimmons, Lee, & Brannen, 2013; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984; Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003; Mendenhall et al., 2018). Though scholars use different names, there is a general consensus on meaning—a person’s ability to optimally interact across cultures (J. M. Bennett, 2013). Thus, this study referenced cultural competence to account for and encompass all its synonyms.

Survey responses from over 800 human resources (HR) professionals revealed that building and maintaining a diverse and inclusive workforce, employee retention, leadership competency, employee engagement, and adequate succession planning were amongst the biggest HR challenges in 2019 (Bourke et al., 2016; Zoller, 2019). Arguably, these HR challenges can be sufficiently addressed by hiring and developing inclusive leaders and building inclusive organizations (Bourke et al., 2017, 2016). Inclusion, however, is a construct that lacks the theoretical consensus needed to validate its practical application (Shore et al., 2011). The absence of

aligned theories and practical strategies are, in part, why American businesses struggle with understanding how to create inclusion and inclusive leadership in the workplace (Shore et al., 2018).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify and explore the antecedents (e.g., mindsets and competencies), practices (e.g., behaviors), and consequences of inclusive leadership in America's workplace. This empirical study contributes to theory by clarifying the constructs of inclusion and inclusive leadership. It will assist American companies to effectively articulate and evolve their diversity and inclusion strategies and interventions. Further, the outcomes of this research provide a collaborative scholar-practitioner approach that is required to address the challenges of diversity and inclusion in Corporate America (Shore et al., 2018).

Exploring the Research Question

This qualitative study employs a social constructivist worldview with multiple case study methodology to compare the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of leaders (identified as high, medium, and low in cultural competence) from a Fortune 500 American technology company. Thus, my study addressed the research question, "What are the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplace?"

Significance of Study

Much of the existing literature focuses on issues of workplace diversity and the business case for diversity and inclusion. Less has been done to understand the antecedents and practices that lead to perceptions of leaders' inclusiveness and the creation of environments where marginalized employees feel a sense of belonging while simultaneously being their authentic selves. This study offers a theoretical model and a new construct to clarify the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership. It contributes to practice by informing the evolution of diversity and inclusion strategies and interventions. This research also provides a collaborative scholar-practitioner approach that is required to address the challenges of diversity, equity, and inclusion in corporate America.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 is a literature review that provides key definitions, theories, and major findings related to diversity and inclusion. This provides the reader with a theoretical grounding to understand the topic. Chapter 3 is the methodology section where I introduced and explained the multicase study used to build theory. Chapter 4 includes the description and interpretation of interesting findings on the antecedents of inclusive leadership (cultural competence, confidence, trust, and proximity of work). It offers a new concept about the perceptions of inclusive leadership and takes a deeper analysis on the practices that give perceptions of inclusive leadership: (a) interactional justice practices (work and play delineation, advocacy for diversity and inclusion); (b) procedural justice practices (feedback); and (c) distributive justices

practices (fairness and surprises in annual performance reviews). Chapter 4 ends with an overview of the consequences of inclusive leadership in America's workplace (belonging and authentic self). Chapter 5 is the discussion of the results with existing literature to support the claims. And Chapter 6 provides implications for future research and practical applications of the findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview of Literature Review

To understand the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplace, I provide a review of the literature on inclusion. This starts with a deep dive into Tajfel's (1981) argument that inclusion is a matter of social identity. He claimed that people perceive themselves through their membership in identity groups and experience inclusiveness when they feel they belong in groups that are important to them. The work of Tajfel (1981) and others aids in understanding in- and out-groups, social categorization, and the distinct and salient ways people divide their social worlds into in-groups ("similar to me") and out-groups ("dissimilar to me") (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg, & Turner, 1990; Reicher, 1984; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2012).

Next, I reviewed work on optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT). I began with Brewer's (1991) work that showed how individuals have a need to satisfy and balance their desire to be validated and similar with their desire to be unique and individuate. I then explored work by Shore et al. (2011) that placed ODT into a 2x2 typology that illustrated inclusion as an employee's perception of how they experience behaviors that simultaneously satisfy their needs for belonging (sense of being an insider) and uniqueness (valuing individual characteristics of difference).

Key Definitions and Theories

Diversity and uniqueness

America is a unique tapestry of diverse groups and cultural backgrounds. Our diversity is a measurable manifestation of all the ways in which we differ. It is comprised of observable and unobservable characteristics (Kochan et al., 2003; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). This includes unique traits like race, ethnic background, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, and ability. Scholars refer to observable characteristics as identity or social category diversity and unobservable characteristics as cognitive or informational diversity (Apfelbaum, Phillips, & Richeson, 2014; Galinsky et al., 2015; Page, 2017; Phillips, 2014). Practitioners often use an iceberg image with diversity characteristics listed above the waterline (observable characteristics) and below the waterline (unobservable characteristics). The emphasis on the vast characteristics below the waterline like personality, educational background, and work style can inadvertently dilute the diversity conversation and minimize the saliency of the characteristics above the waterline, like race and gender (Page, 2017).

Diversity, in the purest sense of the word, means difference. Everyone is, in fact, different. Neuroscience proved that even identical twins have variant anatomical features of their brains (Valizadeh, Liem, Mérillat, Hänggi, & Jäncke, 2018). The framing of diversity often suggests that observable and unobservable diversity characteristics are dichotomous to each other (Page, 2017). Instead, identity diversity

with observable characteristics acts as a foundational support to provide cognitive/informational diversity that is unobservable (Page, 2017). To further demonstrate, Black skin (an observable characteristic) was the criteria applied to select, capture, and enslave over 12.5 million Africans (“Slave Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade,” n.d.). Similarly, gender (an observable characteristic) was the criteria applied to prohibit women from voting in America until 1920 (National Women’s History Museum, n.d.). In contrast, a quarter of America’s population possesses the introvert personality trait, an unobservable characteristic (Crăciun & Sofian, 2015). And while introverts self-report challenges with asserting themselves in social interactions (Harvard Health Publishing, 2018), there is not an applied diversity criterion of introversion to exclude their participation in social interactions. Thus, in this dissertation, I strictly identified “diversity” as nomenclature for disenfranchised, marginalized, and underrepresented people in America.

Mental models

Mental models are generalizations that represent a domain or situation that strengthens understanding and interpretation (Al-Diban, 2012; Genter, 2001). They are internal systems and psychological representations of actual, theoretical, or imaginary situations that contain meaningful information to help people understand specific phenomena (Craik, 1943; Johnson-Laird, Girotto, & Legrenzi, 1998). Craik (1943) proposed that the mind creates “small-scale models” of truth to explain, navigate, and anticipate future events. Human thoughts are like hard drives: They use mental models to anticipate and comprehend occurrences.

Many scholars and practitioners agree that diversity and inclusion work should equitably address America's long and sordid history of discrimination and wrongs committed against members of marginalized and underrepresented groups like Blacks, Latinxs, women, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities (Liff & Wajgman, 1996). The varied cultural backgrounds and mental models of marginalized employees offers unique perspectives and cognitive processing systems (Page, 2017). Once we accept that no two people are alike (Valizadeh et al., 2018), we can advance the conversation to equitably address prominent characteristics of diversity, such as color and gender.

Power and privilege

According to Bailey, (1998), “oppression is a structural phenomenon that devalues the work experiences, and voices of members of marginalized social groups” (p. 106). America has a long foundational history of racism, slavery, institutional inequities, and systemic injustices (“Slave Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade,” n.d.). Hundreds of years of exploitation built social structures in America that are rooted in race discrimination and *privilege*—the unearned advantages conferred systematically to members of dominant groups (Bailey, 1998). People with earned advantages, “any earned conditions, skill, asset, or talent that benefit its possessor” (Bailey, 1998, p. 109) are not considered privileged. Instead, privilege is granted automatically to those with unearned advantages (class, sex, race, sexual orientation).

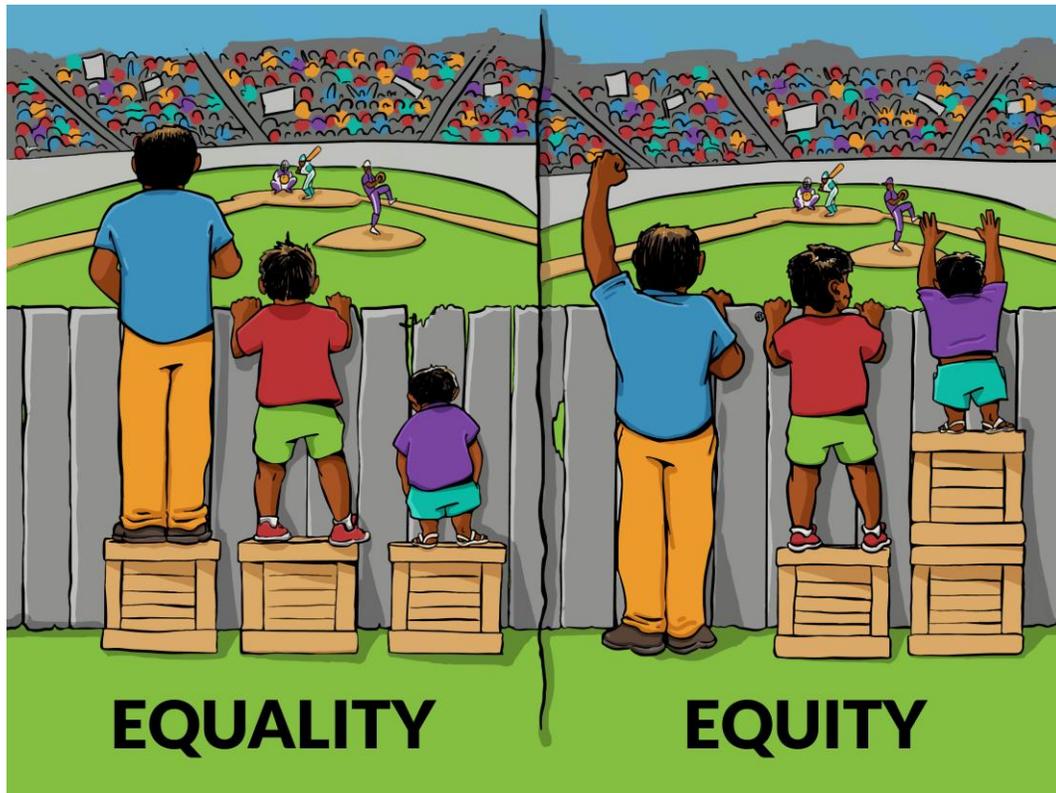
Power is often described as the ability to influence others (Wrong, 1995). Wrong (1995) defined power as “the capacity of some persons to produce intended and unforeseen effects on others” (p. 2). Power and privilege in America’s workplace are realities that are rarely acknowledged and discussed. Membership into powerful and privileged social identity groups is often granted to white, able-bodied, heterosexual males who are middle- or upper-class, Christian, middle-aged, and English-speaking (Wrong, 1995). This elite opportunity is described as whiteness, the expression of white privilege (Bailey, 1998). Now more than ever, the mere discussion of race is often unwelcomed and can evoke *white fragility*, a defensive and unfamiliar state of racial stress that is illustrated in variant forms such as anger, fear, guilt, silence, debate, retaliation, and avoidance (DiAngelo, 2011).

Equality, equity, and justice

Equality is the effect of treating people the same, without considering their measurable and different attributes (“Equality vs. Equity,” n.d.). Equality provides the same level of opportunity and assistance to all segments of society (i.e., race, gender, and sexual orientation). Equality presumes we all start from same place (Interaction Institute for Social Change, 2016; Milken Institute of Public Health, 2018; Sun, 2014). In contrast, equity refers to fairness and equality in outcomes (“Equality vs. Equity,” n.d.). Equity recognizes that we all start from a different place and it provides various levels of support and assistance (depending on specific needs or abilities) to achieve greater fairness of treatment and equal outcomes (Interaction

Institute for Social Change, 2016; Milken Institute of Public Health, 2018; Sun, 2014).

Figure 1 illustrates the differences between equality and equity (Maguire, 2020). Since the three individuals are not starting from the same place (height), giving them equal resources (one box each) is ineffective at creating equitable outcomes. Instead, considering their varied heights, the box allocation is divvied equitably to ensure they all have equal outcomes (visibility of the game). While equality aims to create fairness, it only works when people start from the same point. As America's history has demonstrated, marginalized people do not share the same advantages as white people, especially heterogeneous males ("Slave Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade," n.d.). Thus, equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful.



Source: (Maguire, 2020)

Figure 1. Equality vs. Equity

For the purposes of this research, equity, fairness, and justice are used interchangeably. Further, this research used a three-factor view of organizational justice that distinguished the justice processes that led to perceptions of fairness: (a) *interactional justice*, perceived fairness of interpersonal treatment; (b) *procedural justice*, perceived fairness of procedures; and (c) *distributive justice*, perceived fairness of outcomes (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003; Bies, 1987, 2005; Folger & Konovsky, 1989).

Social identity theory

There are no social groups in our volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world (Millar, Groth, & Mahon, 2018) that live in isolation from others (N. Bennett & Lemoine, 2014). Social identity theory postulates that we understand ourselves through comparing our relationships and memberships in groups (Tajfel, 1981). Tajfel (1981) theorized that we assess things that happen in our environment with self-meanings and react with behaviors that preserve and support our social identity and self-concept (our self-definition of personal identity and attributes) (Tajfel, 1981).

When we consider ourselves a member of a group, we inherit and identify with societal norms that inform our thoughts and behaviors (Turner & Reynolds, 2012). Belonging to social in-groups that are considered more superior than out-groups builds our pride and self-esteem, thereby creating a positive self-identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). We seek to achieve superiority over out-groups by differentiating ourselves (Tajfel, 1981). This happens when there is: (a) *cognition*, internalizing membership in group as part of identity; (b) *evaluation*, perceiving that membership in a group has significant positive or negative affects; and (c) *emotion*, being aware of the cognitive and evaluative implications of a group, and the feelings (love and hate) that membership evokes (Kearney & Gebert, 2009; Tajfel, 1981).

Group differentiation and preference to similar nationalities starts when we are young (Abrams et al., 1990; Tajfel, 1981). At an early age, we develop an emotional and critical awareness of our group identity (Abrams et al., 1990; Tajfel, 1981). When shown images of dissimilar nationalities, people largely convey a preference for their own nationality (Abrams et al., 1990; Tajfel, 1981). This embedded preference and understanding of our social identity plays an integral role in creating and resolving conflict and tension amongst people from varying cultural groups (Tajfel, 1981).

America's workplaces are socially structured systems where group norms, perceptions, and behaviors of varying cultural groups influence their environments (Tajfel, 1981). Our social identities, specifically the ones that are based on observable characteristics, create and manipulate in- and out-group dynamics in the workplace (Kearney & Gebert, 2009). Thus, the perceptions and judgements of our social identities are strongly influenced by America's history, prevailing values, and stereotypes (Tajfel, 1981).

Belonging and social exclusion constructs

Humans are social beings. We all share a basic need, to belong. We all seek to gain acceptance and avoid rejection from others (Baumeister, Brewer, Tice, & Twenge, 2007; Eckes & Trautner, 2000; Erikson, 1985; Maslow, 1954). Having a sense of belonging signifies the presence of positive, stable, and significant relationships in our lives. Our sense of belonging consists of: (a) enduring social interactions where

reciprocal care and concern are expressed; and (b) frequent social exchanges that are not negative (Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Our emotions, cognition, and behaviors are predominantly influenced by the quality of our social interactions (Baumeister, 2012; Gordon, Barnett, Cooper, Tran, & Williams, 2008). These social interactions and connections help us to maintain psychological and physical well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Kerr & Levine, 2008; Wesselmann & Williams, 2017). In the absence of quality social connections, we experience higher rates of cardiovascular disease and premature death (Baumeister, 2012; Lynch, 1978). However, brief social interactions alone cannot satisfy our desire to belong. This innate need is only satisfied with genuine bonds that create a sense of belonging (Baumeister, 2012). Our sense of belonging is essential to inclusion (Stamper & Masterson, 2002). Our social identities prompt behaviors that support stereotypical perceptions that give and rescind our sense of pride and belonging (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Still one cannot fully appreciate the tenets of belonging without considering the experiences of exclusion.

Social exclusion is being physically or emotionally left out and separated from others (Wirth, 2016). Threats of social exclusion are real—they are the primary cause of anxiety (Baumeister & Tice, 1990). People assess their environments for cues of exclusion with their *sociometer*, an internal monitor that perceives fluctuations in how they are valued in relationships (M. R. Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Social exclusion

in the workplace shows up in many forms. Kerr and Levin (2008) branded seven categories to identify exclusion: *hurting*, physically destructive acts or threats; *avoiding*, minimizing and evading interaction; *exploiting*, selfishly taking and not sharing resources; *deregulating*, disregarding social interaction norms, like not giving morning greetings upon entering the workplace; *disengaging*, not responding and connecting with others; *differentiating*, undermining a person's claim to the group, like not inviting a team member to a team meeting; and *slandering*, damaging a person's social standing with others.

Wesselmann and Williams (2017) theorized that social exclusion falls into two subgroups: rejection and ostracism. *Rejection* is explicit and direct negative attention that conveys messaging that someone is unwanted and there is no reciprocal relationship value (K. D. Williams, 2007). Experiences of rejection in the workplace could include discrimination or stigmatization (Richman & Leary, 2009); being referenced in dehumanizing language (Andrighetto, Riva, Gabbiadini, & Volpato, 2016); or experiencing *microaggressions*, everyday verbal and non-verbal, intentional and unintentional, negative and insulting slights or snubs targeted to people from marginalized groups (Sue et al., 2007). Similarly, *ostracism* is ignoring and excluding individuals or groups. It often occurs without excessive explanation or explicit negative attention (K. D. Williams, 2007). Experiences of ostracism in the workplace could include being ignored during a team meeting (in front of others); nonverbal cues like avoiding eye contact where people feel invisible; or disrupted and disfluent

conversational flow with awkward breaks of silence (Koudenburg, Postmes, & Gordijn, 2011).

Being disregarded, excluded, or ignored are shared experiences across all social contexts of exclusion (Robinson et al., 2013; K. D. Williams, 2007). Researchers attempted to delineate between social exclusion, rejection, and ostracism but there is virtually no empirical evidence to distinguish if they lead to different outcomes (Kerr & Levine, 2008; Robinson et al., 2013; K. D. Williams, Cheung, & Choi, 2000). When people experience negative social exchanges from others, it immediately threatens their need to belong (Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister et al., 2007; Baumeister & Tice, 1990; Kerr & Levine, 2008). Sometimes the social threat is explicit, like an employee being fired from a job. Other times the social threat is more implicit, like a manager who does not speak when passing their employee's desk (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Baumeister & Tice, 1990). Regardless of the name (social exclusion, ostracism, rejection, prejudice, stigmatization, avoidance, abuse, bullying, or being out of the loop), I referenced these variant forms of negative social interactions as *exclusion*.

The construct of inclusion

People expect inclusion in their social interactions (Kerr & Levine, 2008). While this expectation holds true, especially in the workplace, researchers have variant views of inclusion. Mor-Barak and Cherin (1998) posited that company culture and diversity composition, influences perceptions of workplace inclusion. Schein (1971) described

organizational inclusion or centrality as an “objective position as measured by the degree to which company secrets are entrusted to him, by ratings of others of his position, and by his actual power” (p. 408). A person’s organizational inclusion (or centrality) is determined by their power, access to sensitive information, and participation in an organizations’ decision making (Schein, 1971). Access to information in the workplace is often determined by an employee’s hierarchical position in an organization (Janssens & Zanoni, 2011). Employees who are centrally located and are included have accepted the organization’s values and culture and are committed to its perpetuity (Janssens & Zanoni, 2011). Pelled et al. (1999) explained inclusion as “the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by others in a work system” (p. 1014). Roberson (2006) defined inclusion as being collaborative work and conflict resolution procedures of diverse employees. Janssens and Zanoni (2008) proposed that inclusion is advanced by reinforcing the same treatment of others while simultaneously acknowledging difference. Nishii (2013) described three aspects of inclusive environments as being (a) fairly applied employment practices, (b) an integration of differences, and (c) inclusion in decision making.

Equally illuminating, in their review of the inclusion and leadership literature, Randel et al. (2018) defined inclusive leadership as “behaviors that collectively facilitate all group members’ perceptions of belongingness to the work group and that encourage group members contributing their uniqueness to achieving positive group outcomes”

(p. 194). They further claimed that uniqueness behavior involves (a) encouraging the contributions of diverse employees and (b) helping employees fully offer their unique talents and perspectives to enhance the work. Behaviors of belongingness were described as (a) supporting diverse employees, (b) ensuring fair and equitable experiences of employees, and (c) providing opportunities for shared decision making with an emphasis on sharing power (Randel et al., 2018).

Optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT) and inclusion

As shared earlier, Brewer's (2007) optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT) suggested that individuals have a basic need to satisfy the tension between their desires to be validated and similar (belong) with their desires to individuate (be unique). Brewer (2007) further argued that an individual's group interaction and social identity is largely influenced by their innate need for belonging and uniqueness. Shore et al. (2011) concurred that people feel included in a group when their belongingness and uniqueness needs are simultaneously satisfied. As a result, belongingness and uniqueness are thought to be foundational to the construct of inclusion.

The inclusion definition that best aligned with my research and practice originated from Shore et al. (2011), who offered inclusion as an employee's perception of being treated as a workgroup insider who belongs and is highly valued for their uniqueness (see *Source*: Shore et al. (2011)

Figure 2). Their expansion of ODT in a 2x2 inclusion framework below illustrates an employee's perception of how they experience behaviors that simultaneously satisfy

their needs for belongingness (high and low sense of being an insider) and uniqueness (high and low valuing individual characteristics of difference) (Shore et al., 2011).

	Low Belongingness	High Belongingness
Low Value in Uniqueness	<p style="text-align: center;">Exclusion</p> <p>Individual is not treated as an organizational insider with unique value in the work group but there are other employees or groups who are insiders.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Assimilation</p> <p>Individual is treated as an insider in the work group when they conform to organizational/dominant culture norms and downplay uniqueness.</p>
High Value in Uniqueness	<p style="text-align: center;">Differentiation</p> <p>Individual is not treated as an organizational insider in the work group but their unique characteristics are seen as valuable and required for group/ organization success.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Inclusion</p> <p>Individual is treated as an insider and also allowed/encouraged to retain uniqueness within the work group.</p>

Source: Shore et al. (2011)

Figure 2. Inclusion Framework

Shore et al.'s typology describes *inclusion* as an employee experiencing high belongingness and high value in uniqueness. When employees are in this quadrant, group performance is increased, and employees are treated as organizational insiders, and employees are encouraged to retain their valued uniqueness. Studies have demonstrated that employees who perceive that they are experiencing inclusiveness are highly engaged in their work, have low turnover rates, report a reduction in stress, and have increased work efficiency (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998; Nishii & Mayer, 2009; Shore et al., 2018, 2011). In the *exclusion* quadrant—low belongingness and low value in uniqueness are defined as an employee who is treated as a company

outsider with no value to the work group. Their characteristics—*uniqueness*—are not valued and are treated as insignificant (Shore et al., 2011). The *assimilation* quadrant demonstrates high belongingness and low value in uniqueness. It describes when employees are treated as organizational insiders but expected to conform to the customs of dominant culture—ignoring their uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). People who are ostracized assimilate and conform to the views of others to garner acceptance (K. D. Williams et al., 2000). The final quadrant is *differentiation*; it describes a perception of low belongingness and high uniqueness. Employees in this quadrant provide unique characteristics that are recognized, but they are treated as organizational outsiders (Shore et al., 2018, 2011).

Competency and cultural competence

McClelland (1973) introduced the competency construct (underlying and enduring personal characteristics needed to optimally perform in a specific role) as an effective measure in predicting success on a job. Unlike intelligence tests that were formerly used, competencies were considered job relevant. They provided clear criteria for success by establishing behavioral-based language and expectations (McClelland, 1973). The practical usage of the competency drove its high adoption rate in American corporations. This marked the insurgence of human resources departments creating competency models (collections of knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics) to identify behaviors that forecast success in roles as well as to hire, develop, and promote employees (Mendenhall et al., 2017).

Cultural competence is the ability to shift cultural perspectives to appropriately adapt behaviors to cultural differences and commonalities (Hammer, 2016). Cultural competence is known in literature as intercultural competence, intercultural effectiveness, cultural intelligence, global competence, intercultural communication competence, culture learning, cosmopolitanism, or multiculturalism (J. M. Bennett, 2013; J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Fitzsimmons et al., 2013; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984; Hammer et al., 2003; Mendenhall et al., 2018). Though scholars use different names for cultural competence, there is a general consensus on its meaning—a person’s ability to optimally interact across cultures (J. M. Bennett, 2013).

Today’s leaders face heightened levels of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) in our diverse world (Millar et al., 2018). All the global leadership competency research published from 1993 to 2016 was reviewed (over 42 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, or volumes) (Mendenhall et al., 2018) and scholars largely contended that leadership competencies are needed to lead diverse multidimensional teams (Mendenhall et al., 2017). Moreover, cultural competence was identified as a required skill for global leaders working with people from multiple cultures in nearly 79% of the studies (Mendenhall et al., 2018). Thus, American corporations must hire and develop leaders with cultural competence to thrive in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world.

Major Findings Related to the Topic

The leader's role in inclusion

Immediate leaders have integral roles in creating inclusion for traditionally marginalized employees. Corporate America's leaders have been empowered to make decisions on the salary, promotability, and ultimately the career growth of their employees. That is why, in part, employees judge the fairness/justice (Rawls, 1971) of their leaders' decisions so critically (Colquitt, 2001). Their actions have widespread effects on the economic, socioemotional, psychological, and professional success of their employees (Cropanzano & Schminke, 2001).

Employees' perceptions of justice climates (fairness of employment practices) are largely influenced by their direct leaders' attitudes and behaviors (Mayer, Nishii, Schneider, & Goldstein, 2007). Leaders with agreeable personalities (possessing interpersonal sensitivity, respect, and candor about decisions affecting employees) are the antecedents to creating justice climates (Mayer et al., 2007; Nishii, 2013). Thus, leaders should possess transformational leadership qualities to optimize the innovation and talent that marginalized individuals offer (Kearney & Gebert, 2009). As Bies (2005) shared, "Justice is the figural element in the analysis of leadership, not some background element embedded in consideration behaviors of leaders" (p. 104). So leaders must make decisions and act in a manner that is just and equitable.

A longitudinal study to understand how leader-member exchange (LMX) affects perceptions of inclusion found that high quality LMX increased perceptions of inclusion (Brimhall et al., 2017). The positive relational encounters between leaders and followers created perceptions of organizational inclusion (Brimhall et al., 2017). Thus, inclusive leadership bridges status differences amongst teams, resulting in higher levels of collaboration and process improvement (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006).

Cultural competence aides in facilitating inclusion (Yates & de Oliveira, 2016). Companies looking to build culturally competent leaders must understand the four stages of development (Cannon, Feinstein, & Friesen, 2010; Training Industry, n.d.). The first stage, *unconscious incompetence*, is when the learner is not aware; they lack competence in a specific domain. In the second stage, *conscious incompetence*, the learner becomes aware they lack knowledge and competence in a specific domain, and they have a desire to learn. In the next stage, *conscious competence*, the learner is aware they can complete a task when they are intentional about what they do. The final stage of development, *unconscious competence*, is present when the learner masters a task without thinking about it (Cannon et al., 2010; Training Industry, n.d.).

Adler (1975) explained that people do not need to travel outside their home country to undergo a cross-cultural experience or culture shock (a form of anxiety and emotions that results from the misunderstanding of commonly understood symbols of social

interaction). Adler contended that culture shock is a type of alienation that can be an important aspect of cultural development and personal growth. Additional studies on cultural competence (Adler, 1975; Brein & David, 1971) suggested that the ability to deal with the psychological stress of cultural adjustment and culture shock is important to building cultural competence.

Cultural competence is developed through the intentional integration of commonalities and cultural differences (Hammer, 2016; Hammer et al., 2003; Hammer, Gudykunst, & Wiseman, 1978). Hammer, Gudykunst, and Wiseman's (1978) study showed that effective communication is vital to building cultural competence. The ability to obtain data about different aspects of variant cultures increases the effective interaction with people from dissimilar cultural backgrounds. The study further identified interpersonal relationships as being important to creating cultural competence. People who can build fruitful relationships with people from the variant cultures are able to integrate themselves into the social fabric of variant cultures. Building cultural competence helps to balance and satisfy our basic needs and concerns of friendship, intimacy, and social interaction in a group (Baumeister, 2012; Brewer, 2007).

The demonstration of a domestic leader's cultural competence, however, looks different than an expatriate's demonstration of cultural competence (Shin, Morgeson, & Campion, 2007). Unlike domestic leaders, expatriates are expected to adjust their

behaviors to assimilate to the values of the local culture (Shin et al., 2007). The cultural dilemmas that domestic leaders encounter are couched in hundreds of years of emotional, racial, political, familial, economical, physical, and psychological pains (Shin et al., 2007). It is a personal journey where they are forced to relinquish power and control, bridge differences, positively affect social identities, and create a high sense of belongingness (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984). Leaders in America's workplace must display cultural and inclusive leadership competencies to bridge and optimize the differences of individuals they lead (Dillon & Bourke, 2016).

Still, many leaders are trained to be gender- and color-blind (Mor-Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998). These ineffective tactics limit innovation, increase legal and talent acquisition costs, and cause employee disengagement, amongst other things (Mor-Barak et al., 1998; Page, 2017; Shore et al., 2011). To inclusively lead a marginalized individual, leaders must first recognize the employee's membership in a marginalized group (Bailey, 1998). Color- and gender-blind approaches are not effective diversity and inclusion strategies for leaders. The most successful leaders are able to effectively identify cultural patterns, acknowledge the patterns of others, and adapt to variant cultures (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). Leaders must be skilled at connecting with and optimizing the talents of everyone, including the diverse people on their teams. Thus, I propose cultural competence as an antecedent to inclusion.

Authentic self

Our self-identity is dynamic (Markus & Wurf, 1987). The concept of self is created from our values, mental models, and social experiences (Markus & Wurf, 1987). We hold three concepts of ourselves: (a) *the actual self*, the depiction of qualities that you and others believe you possess; (b) *the ideal self*, the depiction of qualities that you wish for; and (c) *the ought self*, the depiction of qualities that you and others think you should possess (Higgins, 1987). These concepts shape our multiple identities and influence our behaviors, experiences, and perceptions. Meaningfulness, safety, and availability are three psychological conditions that influence an employee's willingness to bring their authentic selves to work and consequentially engage or disengage in their work (Kahn, 1990). So it is imperative that we understand our authentic self—values, strengths, weaknesses, and beliefs—to identify the lens that we experience the world and imprint onto others.

That is why I believe the work of self is the hardest work we are charged with doing in this lifetime. To effectively lead diverse teams on American soil, leaders must be open, self-reflective, and mindful. To bridge differences, they must address their mental models, closely held beliefs, and biases. They must acknowledge historical injustices and inequities by creating opportunities and removing barriers to inclusion. This requires leaders in America to become mindful, disrupt their biases, develop cultural competence, treat marginalized people equitably, and directly address the challenges and privileges of dominant culture.

Impression management: Covering and revealing

The inherent bias to prefer people of similar backgrounds has disparately impacted diverse and marginalized people in America's workplaces. This is best proven by the fact that more than 90% of America's Fortune 500 CEOs are white heterosexual able-bodied men (Zarya, 2018). Diverse people like Blacks, Hispanics, women, people with disabilities, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities experience negative perceptions of stigma, described by Goffman (1963) as an attribute that diminishes and discredits a person (Berube, 1990; Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005; Herek & Capitanio, 1995). Further, studies showed a high percentage of diverse people lacked the psychological safety (a shared belief that it is safe for interpersonal risk-taking in relationships) to be their authentic selves at work and that they often felt forced to assimilate (Edmondson, 1999; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006; Shore et al., 2011).

Depending on the circumstances, marginalized people consciously and unconsciously use *impression management*, techniques to influence the perceptions of others (Tetlock & Manstead, 1985). These impression management strategies include *covering*, masking a stigmatized aspect of social identity to construct the ought self (not actual self) to fit the dominant culture (1963). According to stigma and social identity theories, these strategies are used in the workplace to evade negative outcomes and manage positive perceptions (Clair et al., 2005). The act of covering includes (a) *passing*, "a cultural performance whereby one member of a defined

social group masquerades as another in order to enjoy the privileges afforded to the dominant group” (K. Leary, 1999, p. 85); (b) *concealment*, actively hiding information about an unobservable stigmatized characteristic (Herek & Capitano, 1996); and (c) *discretion*, the avoidance of questions related to the unobservable stigmatized social identity (Clair et al., 2005).

Further, individuals use different tactics to influence the perceptions of their stigmatized traits. This can be demonstrated by *differentiating*—when an individual publicly claims their difference and transforms conventionally stigmatized characteristics into resources (Clair et al., 2005). *Signaling* is navigating between sharing and being private about a stigmatized invisible social identity (Clair et al., 2005). *Normalizing* is revealing stigmatized invisible social identities and attempting to minimize their difference as commonplace and ordinary (Clair et al., 2005). These impression management tactics cause anxiety (Higgins, 1987) and have negative psychological effects on the person masking their authentic and actual self (Eisenberger et al., 2006).

The fear of social exclusion is further evidenced in Yoshino and Smith’s (2018) study of 3,129 employees from 10 industries and diverse backgrounds. This study reported 83% of lesbian, gay, and bisexuals; 79% of Blacks; 66% of women; and 63% of Hispanics covered and modulated who they were to fit in at work (Yoshino & Smith, 2018). Social exclusion distress and physical pain distress signal the same

neurocognitive processes (Eisenberger et al., 2006; Eisenberger & Muscatell, 1981). The experience of exclusion can have a negative psychological and physical effect on people (Eisenberger et al., 2006; Eisenberger, Lieberman, & Williams, 2003) and ultimately increase the employers' health-care costs to remedy ailments caused by feelings of exclusion. Thus, the high percentages of people applying impression management techniques in America's workplaces illuminates the need for inclusion and inclusive leadership.

Neuroscience of social exclusion

Social bonds are easily formed and reluctantly broken (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Scholars have yet to identify a society where most of its people desire to live in social exclusion. Instead, people desire to live within the cultural frameworks of social groups. Through these social connections we increase our chances to reproduce and survive. Thus, we do what is required to belong (Eisenberger et al., 2003; Twenge, Ciarocco, Baumeister, DeWall, & Bartels, 2007). In fact, researchers attested that our social attachment system (that keeps offspring safe and close to their caregiver) has evolved and latched onto the physical pain system as a strategy to safeguard our continued existence (Eisenberger et al., 2003).

To further explain, our brain is a social organ. Its biological and neurological responses are overwhelmingly shaped by our social interactions (Eisenberger et al., 2003). Neuroscientist Evian Gordon theorized that the brain's organizing principle is to minimize danger and maximize reward. Through conscious and non-conscious

brain processing, our highly adaptive brain perceives every interaction as a threat or reward (Gordon, 1999; Gordon et al., 2008; Rock, 2009; L. M. Williams et al., 2009). As a result, we automatically detect threats to our sense of belonging and inclusion (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). A social exclusion study using a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) machine identified that the neurocognitive activity of social pain is equivalent to physical pain (Eisenberger et al., 2003). The same neural triggers (the anterior cingulate cortex) that send us into a threat state to minimize danger is increased and activated by our perception of how others treat us (Eisenberger et al., 2003; Rock, 2009).

Being socially excluded incurs our ability to achieve our core social need—a sense of belonging. This threat ultimately undermines our ability to survive and thrive in our social world. Further, social exclusion causes strong behavioral responses such as amplified aggression, decreased prosocial behavior, decreased trust and empathy, increased anxiety and self-defeating behaviors, diminished intelligence and reasoning, and lessened self-regulation (Baumeister et al., 2007; Baumeister, Twenge, & Nuss, 2002; Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

America's employers widely regard employment as a financial transaction where people exchange services for financial compensation. However, the brain experiences the workplace as a series of social interactions. These exchanges, both exclusionary and inclusionary, alter the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of all employees.

When you layer the basic human need to belong atop the unspoken fragile past of diverse people in America and the widespread gaps in cultural competence, you produce what American workers experience today—a workplace that is challenged with diversity, inclusion, and leadership strategies.

Faultlines

Demographic dissimilarity decreases group communication and cohesion (K. Y. Williams & O'Reilly III, 1998). Faultlines (perceived and unperceived) are dividing lines that split a larger group into smaller homogenous subgroups based on one or more demographic traits (Bezrukova, Jehn, Zanutto, & Thatcher, 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto, Bezrukova, & Jehn, 2011). Group dynamics are influenced by the strength of the faultlines. Faultline strength is determined by (a) the quantity of observable characteristics apparent to group members, (b) the similarity of the observable characteristics, and (c) the number of potentially homogenous subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 1998).

Faultlines were grounded in social identity, self-categorization, and coalition theories (Lau & Murnighan, 1998). The construct of faultlines helps to describe how coalitions and social identities are formed and maintained. *Social category faultlines* are hypothetical dividing lines that divide a group into subclasses that are based on social categories like, race, gender, and age (Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). These faultlines influence perceptions and allow for stereotyping and prejudice. Bogardus (1925) shared that group members exercise

social distance, a measure where people cognitively separate members into a hierarchy based on their social categories. This further proves how our observable diversity characteristics widen social barriers and fragment the workplace.

Rabbie and Horwitz (1988) asserted that strong faultlines lead to recurring and salient subgroups that become the basis for self-identity and social categorization. Strong faultlines increase the likelihood that members within the group will share data and communicate primarily within (instead of outside) their subgroup. This exclusionary and segregated communication and information sharing drastically decreases psychological safety, group learning, performance, and satisfaction (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview of Methodology

This dissertation research was conducted to answer the research question, “What are the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America’s workplaces?” To answer this question, I used a comparative case study research design to study 10 directors and 18 direct reports in a Fortune 500 company headquartered in the United States (see Figure 3). Based on the premise that leaders with high cultural competence (i.e., high in the ability to understand, appreciate, and bridge cultural differences) will be more inclusive leaders, I administered the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a 50-item questionnaire that assesses cultural competence, to all 111 director-level leaders of this Fortune 500 company. The results of the IDI were assessed to identify and rank the directors. I selected four directors who scored high in cultural competence, two directors who were medium in cultural competence, and four directors who were low in cultural competence.

Next, using demographic HR data, I selected two direct reports of each director to be interviewed, one demographically similar to their director (race, gender, or age) and one demographically dissimilar to their director. Both direct reports were the same hierarchical rank, manager level or above. While I intended to interview 20 direct reports (2 from each director), Similar 7 (white female and direct report of Director 7) and Dissimilar 5 (white male and direct report of Director 5) declined participation at

the last minute. Still, the 28 participants (10 directors and their 18 direct reports) comprised 10 two- and three-people teams that became my 10 cases.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the directors and their direct reports using questions primarily focused on interactional, procedural, and distributive justice constructs. In addition to the formal interviews, I engaged in many informal conversations with the participants, conducted a significant amount of participant observation, and took extensive field notes (Spradley, 1980). Based on the interview data and on my field notes, I analyzed the similarities and differences among the high, medium, and low cases and developed a construct that explains empirically and theoretically the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplaces.

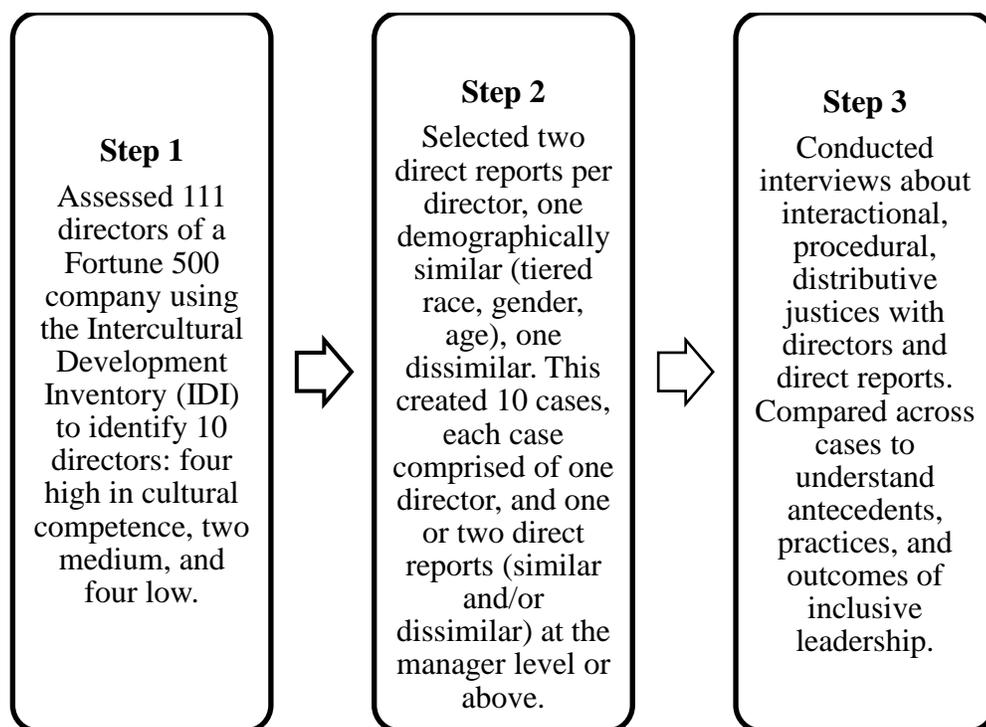


Figure 3. Comparative Case Study Research Design

Multiple Case (Multicase) Study Methodology

Case study research is an empirical method that explores a phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context (Yin, 2017). Case studies are used for four reasons: (a) relevancy to the research question, (b) accessibility, (c) ability to test opposing and potential explanations, and (d) to assist with the generalizability of findings (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). According to Eisenhardt, “case study is a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within a single setting” (1989a, p. 534). Gehman et al. (2018) also recognized case studies for their ability to focus on the undercurrents in a specific setting.

To expound, case study research aims to understand the inner workings of a contextual setting, thereby allowing researchers to study behaviors in a context that cannot be manipulated while concurrently using and triangulating multiple sources of evidence such as interviews, direct observation, extant data, artifacts, documents, and participant-observation (Eisenhardt, 1989b; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017). The triangulation (using multiple sources to look for evidence of a phenomenon) of multiple data collection methods offers stronger support of theories and concepts (Eisenhardt, 1989b; Yin, 2017). The ability to triangulate direct observation and other data allows the case study researcher to examine the present and past of a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2017). Case studies offer rich descriptions of specific instances of a phenomenon (Eisenhardt, 1989b; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017), test theory, or generate theory phenomenon (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Additionally, case study methodology allows the researcher to effectively collect, analyze, present, and combine the data findings in a compelling manner (Yin, 2017). Cases are employed to inductively develop theory, constructs, and propositions (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Researchers attempt to recognize patterns within and across cases and to identify theoretical constructs that emerge from the data (Eisenhardt, 1989b; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). However, developing theories from case studies necessitates theories to be testable, generalizable, logical, and empirically sound (Gehman et al., 2018).

Replication logic (the analysis and testing of each case on its own) is central to case study research. Theories generated by multiple cases (multicase) are highly likely to be “parsimonious, accurate, and generalizable” (Gehman et al., 2018, p. 287). Case studies are best for building theory where there is no existing or problematic theory, when building theory with constructs that are complex and not easily measured, and when there is a unique exemplar that needs contextual understanding (Gehman et al., 2018). Yin (2017) described this goal as *analytic generalizations*, generalizable findings and lessons that extend beyond the context of a specific case. Thus, the generalizability of findings allows the case study methodology to be effective in building theory (Eisenhardt, 1989b; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). So the goal of this qualitative study was to offer rich descriptions and generate theory about the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership (contemporary phenomenon) in America’s workplaces.

Interpretive Frameworks

My research is situated in the social constructivist worldview. This worldview believes that people seek to understand the world through which we live and work (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). We develop subjective meanings of things and people from our experiences (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). However, these subjective meanings are not imprinted on people; instead, they are formed through their interactions with others and negotiated

through historical and cultural norms (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

As shown in this study, the meanings and perceptions of the participants' experiences were varied. Crotty (1998) described it this way: "Meaning is not discovered but constructed. In this understanding of knowledge, it is clear that different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon" (p. 9). Thus, my research design sought to eliminate variables to best understand the varied meanings of inclusive leadership that were socially constructed by marginalized and dominant employees. From there, I sought to interpret the meanings of the interactions and processes experienced among the participants to inductively generate theory (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Charmaz (2014) articulated the importance of taking into account the researcher's position, perspectives, and interactions as an inherent part of the research. She articulated that biases are inherent to our social existence (Charmaz, 2014). She stated,

The constructivist perspective shreds notions of a neutral observer and value-free expert. Not only does that mean that researchers must examine rather than erase how their privileges and preconceptions may shape the analysis, but it also means that their values shape the very facts they can identify (Charmaz, 2014, p. 13).

Accordingly, I am a diversity and inclusion practitioner and Black Muslim woman who works in corporate America. I acknowledge how the intersectionality of my

marginalized identities and the personal, cultural, professional, and geographical contextual settings that I am positioned in influenced how I negotiated and interpreted the data.

Building Theory from Case Studies

Eisenhardt’s seminal article (1989a) provided a process framework for building theories from case study research. I iteratively followed the framework below (Table 1).

Table 1. Eisenhardt’s Building Theory from Case Study Research

Eisenhardt’s Step	Activity	Reason
Getting Started	Definition of research question Possibly a priori constructs	Focuses efforts Provides better grounding of construct measures Retains theoretical flexibility
Selecting Cases	Neither theory nor hypotheses Specified population Theoretical, not random, sampling	Constrains extraneous variation and sharpens external validity Focuses efforts on theoretically useful cases—i.e., those that replicate or extend theory by filling conceptual categories
Crafting Instruments and Protocols	Multiple data collection methods Qualitative and quantitative data combined Multiple investigators	Strengthens grounding of theory by triangulation of evidence Synergistic view of evidence Fosters divergent perspectives and strengthens grounding
Entering the Field	Overlap data collection and analysis, including field notes	Speeds analyses and reveals helpful adjustments to data collection

Eisenhardt's Step	Activity	Reason
	Flexible and opportunistic data collection methods	Allows investigators to take advantage of emergent themes and unique case features
Analyzing Data	Within-case analysis Cross-case pattern search using divergent techniques	Gains familiarity with data and preliminary theory generation Forces investigators to look beyond initial impressions and see evidence through multiple lenses
Shaping Hypotheses	Iterative tabulation of evidence for each construct Replication, not sampling, logic across cases Search evidence for "why" behind relationships	Sharpens construct definition, validity, and measurability Confirms, extends, and sharpens theory Builds internal validity
Enfolding Literature	Comparison with conflicting literature Comparison with similar literature	Builds internal validity, raises theoretical level, and sharpens construct definitions Sharpens generalizability, improves construct definition, and raises theoretical level
Reaching Closure	Theoretical saturation when possible	Ends process when marginal improvement becomes small

Getting started and selecting cases

Selecting the right participants is central to building theory from case studies because they outline the criteria from which the sample is drawn (Eisenhardt, 1989b).

Eisenhardt (1989) agreed that effective case selection identifies the parameters for generalizing the discoveries and also controls for external variables. This study used the process of *theoretical sampling*, choosing interesting cases to clearly replicate or extend an emerging theory (Eisenhardt, 1989b). According to Eisenhardt (2018),

in a multicase study, once we specify the focal phenomenon and research question, we then think carefully about where to control versus create variance in the research design... We're trying to figure out where we want the variation, how we want to handle generalizability, where we want to control for the variation that we don't care about. In designing our research, we're balancing all of them—that is, variation, control, and generalizability. (p. 295)

The IDI assesses cultural competence at the individual, team, and organizational levels. It was used to select the cases and to control the variance of cultural competence possessed by the directors of the Fortune 500 company. The specificity of selecting leaders at the director level, employed by same company, separated only by their level of cultural competence reduced irrelevant variation and clarified the domain of the findings as inclusive leadership in America's workplaces. All directors being from the same company minimized the impact of company culture and highlighted the patterns of demographical differences.

Eisenhardt recommended a maximum of ten case studies (Eisenhardt, 1989a).

Accordingly, the IDI was administered to all the director-level leaders of a Fortune 500 company—111 directors. The results of the IDI were used to identify the ten directors (cases). The ten cases were comprised of four high-IDI-scoring directors,

two medium-IDI-scoring directors, and four low-IDI-scoring directors. Archival human resources (HR) data were assessed to select two direct reports of each director. The two direct reports of each director were the same hierarchical rank, manager level or above. One of the direct reports shared a similar cultural background as their director (race, gender, or age), the other direct report was from a dissimilar cultural background than their director (race, gender, or age). While I intended to interview 20 direct reports (2 from each director), Similar 7 (white female and direct report of Director 7) and Dissimilar 5 (white male and direct report of Director 5) declined participation at the last minute. Still, there were 10 two- and three-people clusters that created my 10 cases. Each case was comprised of a director, a similar direct report, and/or a dissimilar direct report, totaling 28 participants (10 directors and 18 direct reports).

Archival HR data (race, gender, and age) was assessed to identify the strength of each teams' faultlines—perceived and unperceived dividing lines that split a larger group into smaller homogenous subgroups based on one or more demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). That is, the demographic makeup of each director's team was assessed, divided, and grouped (tiered by race, gender, and age). A similar direct report was selected from the group that shared the most similar demographic traits (tiered as race first, gender second, and age third) as their director. A dissimilar direct report was selected from the group that shared the most dissimilar (least similar) demographic traits as their director

(tiered as race first, gender second, age third). To strengthen the distinction of similar and dissimilar direct reports, additional HR archival data was assessed (company tenure, geographic work location, education, veteran status, annual performance rating).

The similar and dissimilar direct reports were interviewed about their perceptions of their director's inclusive leadership behaviors. Similarly, the directors were interviewed about their perceptions of their own inclusive leadership behaviors. The rationale for selecting direct reports from similar and dissimilar cultural backgrounds was to explore how similarity and dissimilarity of our social identities influences our perceptions and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplaces. This approach ensured the case selection criteria effectively identified direct reports with variant perspectives and experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Naming conventions

As described earlier, every case has a leader director level and above. These leaders were referenced as Director 1–10 chronologically from the highest cultural competence (Directors 1–4), medium cultural competence (Directors 5 and 6), and low cultural competence (Directors 7–10). The directors have a similar and/or dissimilar direct report(s). They were referenced as Similar 1–10 and Dissimilar 1–10. The number assigned to each director corresponds with their direct reports. To illustrate, Director 1 is the leader of Similar 1 and Dissimilar 1; Director 2 is the

leader of Similar 2 and Dissimilar 2; and so on. See Table 2 for an overview of study participants. See Appendix D for a narrative description of each of the participants.

Table 2. Overview of Study Participants

Participant	Race	Gender	Title	Generation	Years in Org	Degree	Performance Rating
Director 1	White	Male	Director	Gen X	10+	UG	Far Exceeds
Similar 1	White	Male	Manager	Millennial	5+	UG	Exceeds
Dissimilar 1	Black	Female	Senior Manager	Gen X	2	Grad	Meets
Director 2	White	Female	Director	Gen X	5+	UG	Exceeds
Similar 2	White	Female	Manager	Gen X	3+	UG	Exceeds
Dissimilar 2	Black	Female	Manager	Millennial	2+	UG	Meets
Director 3	White	Female	Director	Gen X	5+	Grad	Meets
Similar 3	White	Female	Manager	Gen X	1	UG	Too New
Dissimilar 3	Latinx	Male	Senior Manager	Gen X	10+	Grad	Exceeds
Director 4	White	Female	Director	Boomer	10+	None	Exceeds
Similar 4	White	Female	Manager	Gen X	10+	None	Meets
Dissimilar 4	Black	Female	Manager	Gen X	20+	None	Meets
Director 5	Black	Male	Director	Millennial	15+	UG	Meets
Similar 5	Latinx	Female	Senior Manager	Gen X	10+	Grad	Meets
Director 6	White	Male	Senior Director	Millennial	15+	Grad	Exceeds

Participant	Race	Gender	Title	Generation	Years in Org	Degree	Performance Rating
Similar 6	White	Male	Director	Gen X	10+	Grad	Meets
Dissimilar 6	Black	Female	Director	Millennial	2	Grad	Meets
Director 7	White	Female	Director	Gen X	15+	Grad	Meets
Dissimilar 7	White	Male	Senior Manager	Gen X	5+	UG	Exceeds
Director 8	White	Male	Director	Gen X	15+	Grad	Exceeds
Similar 8	White	Male	Senior Manager	Gen X	15+	UG	Exceeds
Dissimilar 8	White	Female	Senior Manager	Gen X	10+	None	Meets
Director 9	White	Male	Senior Director	Boomer	10+	Grad	Exceeds
Similar 9	White	Female	Senior Manager	Boomer	10+	UG	Far Exceeds
Dissimilar 9	White	Female	Senior Manager	Millennial	10+	Grad	Meets
Director 10	Asian	Female	Director	Gen X	5	Ph.D.	Exceeds
Similar 10	Asian	Female	Senior Manager	Gen X	5	Ph.D.	Meets
Dissimilar 10	White	Male	Senior Manager	Gen X	15+	UG	Exceeds

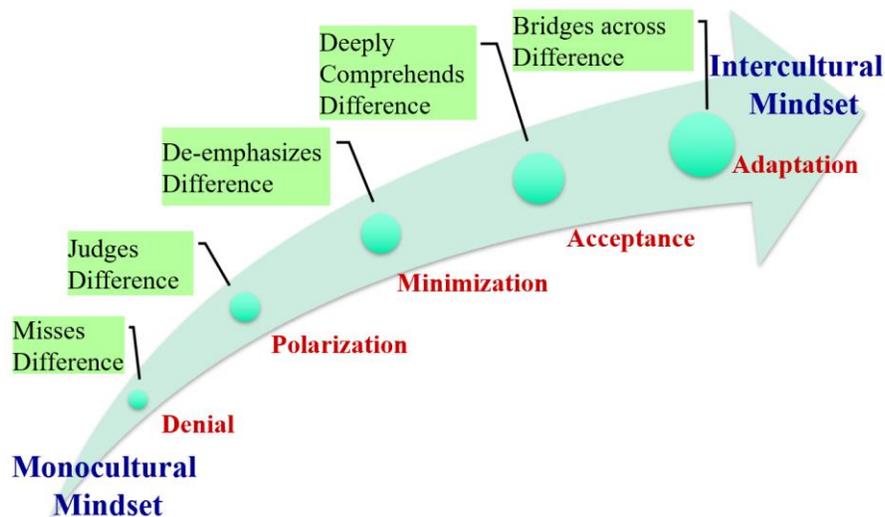
Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was tested with over 10,000 people from domestic and international cultures. It is cross-culturally validated; has no cultural bias; was tested against the Crowne-Marlowe Social Desirability Index and revealed items have no social desirability bias; and demonstrated content, construct, and predicative validity (Hammer, 2016). This measure of intercultural competence was adapted from Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) framework that identifies a progression of worldview orientations toward cultural difference (Hammer et al., 2003).

Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC)

The IDI is a developmental tool that uses the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) (see *Source*: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 4) to determine the mindset of an individual, ranging from monocultural to intercultural (Intercultural Development Inventory, LLC, 2015). The IDC is comprised of five stages: (a) *denial*, misses difference; (b) *polarization*, judges difference; (c) *minimization*, de-emphasizes difference; (d) *acceptance*, deeply comprehends difference; and (e) *adaptation*, bridges across difference (Hammer, 2012).



Source: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 4. Intercultural Development Continuum - Primary Orientations

Orientations

The IDI gives every participant a feedback/developmental report that describes how they engage cultural diversity to effectively bridge differences (Hammer, 2016).

Perceived orientation (PO) reflects where a person perceives and places themselves along the IDC. Developmental orientation (DO) reflects the primary mindset of an individual as assessed by the IDI. The DO is the actual perspective that is most often used when cultural differences and commonalities need to be bridged (Hammer, 2016). According to Hammer (2016), the difference on the IDC from your PO and DO is your Orientation gap (OG). A PO score that is seven points or more higher than an individual's DO score reflects an overestimation of their cultural competence. A DO score of seven points or higher is an underestimation of their cultural competence

(Hammer, 2016). Cultural disengagement is the degree of connection or disconnection that an individual experiences in their own culture (Hammer, 2016). Hammer (2016) created a clear framework to illustrate the core characteristics of the IDC orientations and cultural disengagement. See the corresponding Figures 5-10 for abbreviated illustrations.

Adaptation

Validity testing of Hammer's (2016) IDI revealed that only 1.55% of 10,000+ people have adaptation as their primary orientation. This orientation involves *cognitive frame-shifting* (the shifting of one's cultural perspective) and *behavioral code-shifting* (the authentic and culturally appropriate shifting of one's behavior) (Hammer, 2016).

Individuals in adaptation can effectively bridge deep cultural divides with adaptive strategies that navigate commonalities and differences. However, challenges can arise when people with adaptation mindsets express low tolerance for people with less cultural competence. This can ultimately lead to people in adaptation being marginalized in the workplace (Hammer, 2016). See *Source*: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 5 for an illustration of the orientation; core characteristics; list of things that people do, think, and feel; and organizational implications.

IDC Orientation	Core Characteristics	People Think/Feel/Do	Organizational Implications
<p>Adaptation: Able to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior to cultural context</p>	<p>Increased repertoire of cultural frameworks and behaviors available to effectively bridge cultural commonalities and differences</p> <p>Individuals define their role as demanding intercultural competence (performance in adaptation)</p> <p>Key to Understanding Adaptation: Generally flexible in cultural perspective, deep understanding of at least one other culture, comfortable bridging across culture communities</p>	<p>Cognition: Conscious reframing of cultural information and observations in various ways</p> <p>Able to make sense of cultural differences in ways similar to people from another cultural group</p> <p>Affect: Intentional interest, mindfulness around cultural issues</p> <p>High value and commitment to intercultural competence for self and others</p> <p>Behavior: Intentionally takes the perspective of alternative cultural views</p> <p>Actively attempts to increase repertoire of cultural behavior</p> <p>Exercise of Power: Ability to recognize and respond to power within a cultural context</p> <p>Some ability to exercise power in culturally appropriate ways</p>	<p>Adaptation Organization is Bridging: Organization encourages development of intercultural competence among all staff</p> <p>Domestic and international cultural differences used as a resource for multicultural teams and the organization as a whole</p> <p>Strong climate of respect for diversity</p>

Source: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 5. Adaptation Orientation

Acceptance

The acceptance orientation is a culturally competent mindset (Hammer, 2016). With an average of 14.65% of people with an acceptance mindset, this orientation can identify and appreciate examples of cultural diversity and similarity (Hammer, 2016).

According to Hammer (2016), an acceptance orientation is curious about different cultures, and self-reflective of their cultural biases and behaviors. Still people with an acceptance mindset are not completely proficient to adapt to cultural differences (Hammer, 2016). See *Source*: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 6 for an illustration of the orientation; core characteristics; list of things that people do, think, and feel; and organizational implications.

IDC Orientation	Core Characteristics	People Think/Feel/Do	Organizational Implications
<p>Acceptance: Recognizes cultural commonality and difference in own and other cultures</p>	<p>Curious and interested in cultural differences</p> <p>Committed to cultural diversity agenda (talk the talk), but not sure how to “walk the walk”</p> <p>Acknowledges relevance of cultural context but unclear how to appropriately adapt to cultural difference</p> <p>Key to Understanding Acceptance: Values both cultural commonalities and differences and sees how cultural differences are relevant</p>	<p>Cognition: Recognizes culturally different ways of making sense of and responding to cultural differences and similarities</p> <p>Uses culture-general frameworks that allow systematic understanding of contrasts of values and behavior between cultures</p> <p>Culture-specific frameworks allow understanding of values and behavior within specific cultural communities</p> <p>Affect: Non-evaluative curiosity about cultural differences and commonalities</p> <p>Cultural self-understanding about one’s own perceptions and behavior and the perceptions and behavior of other cultural groups</p> <p>Behavior: Seeks knowledge about and experiences of different cultures</p> <p>Treats own experiences in cultural terms</p> <p>Unsure how to appropriately adapt to cultural difference</p> <p>Exercise of Power: Tends to be avoided through inaction</p> <p>Some unwillingness to apply ethical principles and values across cultures</p>	<p>Acceptance Organization is Bridging: Active efforts to recruit and retain diverse workforce</p> <p>Able to talk the talk, but not walk the walk consistently</p> <p>Recognizes the local cultural context as different from one’s own—but finds difficulty in taking appropriate action</p> <p>Managers are encouraged to value cultural diversity but not trained in intercultural skills</p>

Source: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 6. Acceptance Orientation

Minimization

Minimization is a halfway point between the monocultural orientations of denial and polarization and the culturally competent views of acceptance and adaptation. An individual in minimization emphasizes commonalities of our basic human needs and universal values, ultimately minimizing the need to understand cultural differences (Hammer, 2016). Minimization can take two forms: (a) emphasizing the commonalities of people because of limited cultural knowledge (often experienced by dominant group members—white people); and (b) emphasizing the commonalities of people as a strategy to survive and navigate the dominant culture (often experienced by marginalized group members) (Hammer, 2016). More than half of the 10,000+ people who were tested (65.25%) were identified as having a minimization mindset (Hammer, 2016). For an illustration of the orientation; core characteristics; list of things that people do, think, and feel; and organizational implications, see Figure 7.

IDC Orientation	Core Characteristics	People Think/Feel/Do	Organizational Implications
<p>Minimization: Highlights cultural commonality that can mask deeper recognition of cultural differences</p>	<p>Early minimization may assume commonalities and not fully recognize cultural differences when present</p> <p>Middle/late minimization may accurately recognize cultural commonalities and differences but may not fully attend to the differences</p> <p>Overestimates own competence around cultural differences and diversity issues, views tolerance as sufficient</p> <p>Overemphasizes commonalities and underemphasizes differences</p> <p>If from a dominant culture group, may lack deeper cultural “self- awareness”</p> <p>If from a non-dominant group, may use minimization more as a “strategy” to accommodate to the dominant cultural values, and practices</p> <p>Key to Understanding Minimization: Recognizes cultural commonalities across differences and tries to behave in tolerant ways</p>	<p>Cognition: Cultural differences perceived in neutral terms—but differences are made sense of and responded to within one’s own culturally familiar categories: Bow, shake, kiss— “it’s all just showing respect”</p> <p>Affect: Expresses positive (i.e., nice) behavior in one’s own cultural form or terms</p> <p>Behavior: Actively supports more universalistic principles, values, and practices without full understanding of how those principles, values, and practices may mean something different in other cultures</p> <p>Exercise of Power: (dominant culture form): Accept, with little discomfort, institutional privilege</p> <p>Tends to disavow power yet unconsciously impose own cultural norms</p>	<p>Minimization Organization is Universalistic: Overestimates cross-cultural competence to global and domestic diversity issues</p> <p>Tolerance and “color-blind” policies may lead to poor recruitment and retention of diverse resources</p> <p>Over-emphasis on corporate culture creates strong pressure to conform</p> <p>Lacks deeper appreciation of diversity as a resource</p>

Source: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 7. Minimization Orientation

Polarization: Defense or reversal

Polarization is a judgmental mindset that perceives cultural differences as “us versus them.” It is the primary orientation for 15.55% of the 10,000+ people tested (Hammer, 2016). A polarization orientation shows up in two ways: (a) *defense*, seeing cultural differences as disruptive and threatening to an individual’s way of doing things; and (b) *reversal*, denigrating one’s own culture while valuing and idolizing another culture (Hammer, 2016). A person in reversal may support the causes of marginalized groups but possess very minimal knowledge about the meaning and impact of the cause (Hammer, 2016). To illustrate, a white person in reversal may say, “Black lives matter more than white lives;” whereas a white person in defense may say, “White lives matter more than Black lives.” See *Source*: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 8 for an illustration of the orientation; core characteristics; list of things that people do, think, and feel; and organizational implications.

IDC Orientation	Core Characteristics	People Think/Feel/Do	Organizational Implications
<p>Polarization: Judgmental orientation; “us vs. them”</p> <p>Defense: Uncritical toward own cultural practices; overly critical toward other cultural practices</p>	<p>An overly critical orientation toward cultural commonalities and differences</p> <p>Key to Understanding Defense: Willing to deal directly with difficulties around cultural differences</p> <p>Cultural difference seen as an obstacle</p>	<p>Cognition: Information categorized into evaluative categories—neutral statements of cultural difference are rare</p> <p>Affect: <u>Defense</u> The familiar is positive and the unfamiliar is negative Support of own group or of own privilege</p> <p>Behavior:</p>	<p>Polarization Organization is Assimilationist : Sense of superiority may lead to overconfidence or arrogance (“we know best”)</p> <p>Diversity recruitment, retention efforts</p>

IDC Orientation	Core Characteristics	People Think/Feel/Do	Organizational Implications
<p>Reversal: Overly critical toward own cultural practices; uncritical toward other group cultural practices</p>	<p>Feeling “under siege” from other cultures</p> <p>May exhibit a sense of “superiority” toward other cultural practices</p> <p>Overemphasizes (largely negative) differences toward other cultures and underemphasizes commonalities</p> <p>Key to Understanding Reversal: Positive evaluation of other cultures and a willingness to be self-critical</p> <p>Us vs. them where “they are the good guys and we are the bad guys”</p> <p>May take on the “cause” of the oppressed group; other cultural practices given special privilege</p> <p>Overemphasizes (largely positive) differences toward other cultures and underemphasizes commonalities</p> <p>Diversity seen as solution to ethnocentrism of own culture group only</p>	<p><u>Defense</u> Intentional avoidance of the culturally different</p> <p>Exercise of Power: <u>Defense</u> May evaluate own cultural practices in ways that exclude equal opportunity for others</p> <p>Affect: <u>Reversal</u> The culturally unfamiliar is positive and the culturally familiar (own culture) is negative Support of other cultural practices</p> <p>Behavior: <u>Reversal</u> Intentional avoidance of own culture group members</p> <p>Exercise of Power: <u>Reversal</u> May judge other cultural approaches in ways that discriminate against own cultural members</p>	<p>are half-hearted and often unsuccessful</p> <p>Evaluative stance can damage domestic and international partnerships</p>

Source: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 8. Polarization Orientation

Denial

A denial orientation reflects inadequate experience and capacity to grasp and properly react to cultural differences. Hammer (2016) conducted IDI validity testing with over 10,000 people that revealed an average of 3.05% of people have denial as their primary orientation. Denial mindset involves disinterest in variant cultures and avoidance of cultural variances. People in the denial orientation have limited experiences with different cultural groups and have a propensity to use broad stereotypes with different cultures (Hammer, 2016). For an illustration of the orientation; core characteristics; list of things that people do, think, and feel; and organizational implications, see Figure 9.

IDC Orientation	Core Characteristics	People Think/Feel/Do	Organizational Implications
Denial: Little recognition of more complex cultural differences	Disinterest in and/or avoidance of cultural difference Insular around cultural differences, e.g., “why learn more about cultural differences?” Assumes commonalities with less focus on differences Key to Understanding Denial: Commitment to one’s own cultural values and practices	Cognition: Difficulty in seeing communication and behavior as “cultural” May not see value in “knowing more about cultural differences” Affect: May express naïve attitude towards diversity May feel uncomfortable or fearful in culturally different settings Behavior: Seek familiar patterns Avoid the culturally different Exercise of Power: May unintentionally yet ethnocentrically interact with others who are culturally different	Denial Organization is Assimilationist: Generally unaware about cultural issues Susceptible to being blindsided by race, gender, cultural issues Climate of inattentiveness for cultural differences

Source: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 9. Denial Orientation

Cultural disengagement

The cultural disengagement score reflects how connected or disconnected a person feels to their own cultural group (Hammer, 2016). Scores of less than 4.00 reflect that an individual is not “resolved” and may be undergoing a degree of detachment from core aspects of their cultural community (Hammer, 2016). See *Source:* Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 10 for an illustration of cultural disengagement; core characteristics; list of things that people do, think, and feel; and organizational implications.

Cultural Disengagement (not an orientation on the IDC)	Core Characteristics	People Think/Feel/Do	Organizational Implications
Sense of disconnection from a primary cultural community	<p>A feeling of being an “outsider” in your own group</p> <p>May feel comfortable with a “contrarian” stance</p> <p>May have difficulty participating in important symbols, events, and activities shared in one’s community</p> <p>May be related to experiences of feeling rejected in your own group</p> <p>May be related to experiences where one feels “between two or more” cultural communities</p>	<p>Cognition: Sense of intellectual distance from those pursuits most important to culture group members</p> <p>Affect: Feeling of emotional disconnection or felt disinterest in the daily life of culture group members</p> <p>Behavior: Unwilling to fully participate in key activities of the culture, even when lack of participation may frustrate culture group members</p> <p>Exercise of Power: Not applicable as cultural disengagement is not an intercultural competence orientation on the IDC</p>	<p>Individual may be seen by members of his/her own cultural community within an organization as not committed or not a good “team player”</p> <p>Relationships with members from one’s own cultural community may be more distant</p>

Source: Adapted from Hammer (2016)

Figure 10. Cultural Disengagement

IDI scores of study participants and directors

Figure 11 provides the IDI scores of the 10 directors selected for this study. Directors 1–4 were high scoring relative to the total population of 111 directors; Directors 5 and 6 were medium scoring, and Directors 7–10 were low scoring. The figure shows the

directors' races, genders, developmental orientation (where the IDI places them on the Intercultural Development Continuum), perceived orientation (where they place themselves on the Intercultural Development Continuum), and orientation gap (the difference between their developmental orientation and their perceived orientation). Figure 11 also shows the cultural disengagement, the sense of disconnection or detachment (resolved or unresolved) from their cultural group. It also indicates their presumed effectiveness at bridging cultural differences as assessed by the IDI.

Figure 11 also shows the team average of all the directors in the study and the average of all the directors in the company. The total director participants' developmental orientation average was 103.9 in minimization (a mindset that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and masks recognition and appreciation of cultural differences) and their perceived orientation average was 124.9 in acceptance (identifies and appreciates examples of cultural diversity and similarity). Similarly, the company's total director population's developmental orientation average was 102.9 (minimization), and their perceived orientation average was 123.9 (acceptance). Thus, the IDI scores of the director participants were an accurate reflection and sample size of the company's larger director population. According to the IDI, the directors (participants and company's average) are ineffective at bridging cultural differences.

Dir	Race	Gender	Development Orientation (IDI-Assessment)	Perceived Orientation (Self-Assessment)	Orientation Gap	Cultural Disengaged	Bridges Difference
1	White	Male	138.5 (Adaptation)	139.2 (Adaptation)	.66 (Accurate)	2.8 (Unresolved)	Yes
2	White	Female	134.3 (Adaptation)	139.0 (Adaptation)	4.8 (Accurate)	5.0 (Resolved)	Yes
3	White	Female	133.1 (Adaptation)	136.9 (Adaptation)	3.8 (Accurate)	4.2 (Resolved)	Yes
4	White	Female	128.9 (Acceptance)	136.1 (Adaptation)	7.1 (Overestimate)	4.8 (Resolved)	Yes
5	Black	Male	105.4 (Minimization)	124.4 (Acceptance)	18.9 (Overestimate)	5.0 (Resolved)	No
6	White	Male	104.2 (Minimization)	122.5 (Acceptance)	18.4 (Overestimate)	3.4 (Unresolved)	No
7	White	Female	76.3 (Polarization)	113.0 (Minimization)	36.8 (Grossly Over)	3.8 (Unresolved)	No
8	White	Male	75.4 (Polarization)	114.5 (Minimization)	39.1 (Grossly Over)	3.0 (Unresolved)	No
9	White	Male	74.4 (Polarization)	112.5 (Minimization)	38.1 (Grossly Over)	4.80 (Resolved)	No
10	Asian	Female	68.9 (Denial)	111.9 (Minimization)	43.3 (Grossly Over)	2.20 (Unresolved)	No
Dir Avg - Participants			103.9 (Minimization)	124.9 (Acceptance)	21.0 (Grossly Over)	3.9 (Unresolved)	No
Dir Avg - Company			102.9 (Minimization)	123.9 (Acceptance)	21.0 (Grossly Over)	4.2 (Resolved)	No

Figure 11. IDI Scores

Crafting instruments and protocols

Scholars have debated and merged the organizational justice constructs (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Bies, 2005; Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1993). However, this study used a three-factor view of organizational justice that distinguishes the justice processes that lead to perceptions of fairness: (a) *interactional justice*, perceived fairness of interpersonal treatment; (b) *procedural justice*, perceived fairness of

procedures; and (c) *distributive justice*, perceived fairness of outcomes (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003; Bies, 1987, 2005; Folger & Konovsky, 1989). I crafted a semi-structured interview guide (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) to include questions that covered all three justice constructs (Mayer et al., 2007; Nishii, 2013; Nishii & Mayer, 2009).

Interactional justices

Interactional justice is fostered when leaders treat people with respect and sensitivity (cultural competence) and explain the rationale for their decisions (Bies, 1987).

Employees' perceptions of interactional justice are largely associated with trusting their direct leaders (Barling & Phillips, 1993; Bies, 1987). While all three justices were highly correlated to employees' trust in the organization, only interactional trust was related to the direct leader (Bies, 1987). Further, an employee's trust in their leader strongly influences the employee's attitude and work outcomes (Bies, 1987).

The questions I used for directors about interactional justice included the following:

- How do your direct reports perceive the transparency and candor of the decisions you make? Do you share your rationale for decisions?
- How do your direct reports perceive you treat them?
- How would you describe your relationship with your direct reports?
- Do your direct reports feel safe to share their ideas and contribute? Do they feel that you are attuned to their unique strengths and needs?

The questions I used for direct reports about interactional justice included the following:

- Do you feel your leader treats you in an equitable and consistent manner?
- Is your leader transparent and candid about the decisions they make?
- Do they share their rationale for decisions?
- How would you describe your relationship with your leader?
- Do you feel safe to share your ideas?
- Is your leader aware of your unique strengths and needs?
- Do you feel comfortable sharing and being your authentic self?
- Do you feel like you belong?

Procedural justice

Fair and just procedures can reveal that a leader respects the dignity of their team members (Rawls, 1971). Employees' perceptions of procedural justice are largely correlated with perceptions of upper management and organizational policies (Bies, 1987). Researchers showed that perceptions of procedural justice are more important to organizational outcomes (e.g., employee turnover) than distributive justice perceptions because they predict employees' attitudes towards an organization (Barling & Phillips, 1993; Bies, 1987). Thus, the perception of procedural justice is influenced by a leader's justification and perceived sincerity of a consistent fair process that is bias-free and ethically sound (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001).

Social science scholars generally judge social interactions, relationships, and institutions by their outcomes (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Justice scholars, however, differ in their opinion. Proponents of procedural justice are more concerned with the procedural fairness than the actual outcomes (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Procedural justice researchers proved that giving employees the opportunity to express “voice” in decision-making procedures improved their perceptions of fairness, regardless of the actual outcome (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003; Bies, 1987; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975).

The questions I used for directors about procedural justice included the following:

- Is there a process for your direct reports to use their voice in decision-making?
- When decisions are made, can your direct reports challenge them and offer an alternative? Do they?
- How do you determine who gets high-visibility projects and opportunities?
- How do you determine the level of information that will be shared with your direct reports?
- Share your philosophy about feedback. How do you give feedback?
- How do you give your high-potential employees extra feedback? How do you give additional feedback to employees who need more support?

The questions I used for direct reports about procedural justice included the following:

- Are you able to voice your opinion in decisions?
- Is there a consistent process and neutral approach to involve you and your peers in the decision-making process?
- When decisions are made that you are not aligned with, how can you challenge them and offer an alternative?
- Do you feel you and your peers have an equitable opportunity to make decisions?
- What is your leader's philosophy on feedback?
- How does your leader give feedback? What is the process? Do some of your peers get more feedback than others?
- Is there a process for people who need additional feedback and support?
- How does your leader determine who gets high-visibility projects and opportunities?
- How does your leader determine the information that will be shared with you and your peers?

Distributive justice

Researchers initially focused on distributive justice (Adams, 1965; Colquitt, 2001; Leung, 2005) as it refers to the perceived fairness of personal outcomes (e.g., employee compensation) (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Colquitt, 2001; Folger & Konovsky, 1989). It is fostered when outcomes are equitable with implicit norms (Colquitt, 2001). It can be described as the equity rule, "a single normative rule which dictates that rewards and resources be distributed in accordance with recipients' contributions" (Leventhal, 1976, p. 94). This construct presumes that a large amount

of fairness is demonstrated through distribution. Thus, much of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions' work is practiced with equal distribution as the guiding light.

The questions I used for directors about distributive justice included the following:

- Do you feel like your direct reports are properly acknowledged for their efforts?
Position, salary, awards, and recognition?
- Are there people on your team who you heavily rely on, more than others? Like your go-to people? What did they do to earn that reputation?
- How often do you communicate with your direct reports? What's the cadence of your 1:1?
- Do you have informal and formal interactions like lunch and after-work events with any of your direct reports?
- How do you determine who gets promoted?
- How do you determine the performance ratings of your direct reports? Do you consider individual growth over 12 months, results accomplished, efforts exerted, and/or ranking against peers when completing the performance appraisal process?

The questions I used for direct reports about distributive justice included the following:

- Do you feel like you and your peers are properly acknowledged for their efforts?
Position, salary, awards, and recognition?

- Does your leader heavily rely on some of your peer more than others? Share an example.
- How often does your leader communicate with you? And your peers? Do you have a cadence for your 1:1 meeting?
- Do you have informal and formal interactions like lunch and after-work events with your leaders? Do your peers?
- Do you feel that the performance appraisal process is consistent for you and your peers? Promotion process? Are they free from bias?

Entering the field/data collection

As shared earlier, the IDI was administered to 111 directors from a Fortune 500 company headquartered in America. The results of the IDI were assessed to identify and rank the directors' level of cultural competence. Ten directors (four directors with high in cultural competence, two directors with medium cultural competence, and four directors with low cultural competence) and 18 of their direct reports were chosen. These 28 participants comprised 10 two- and three-people clusters that became my 10 cases.

Archival HR data (race, gender, and age) were evaluated to pinpoint the strength of the teams' faultlines (perceived and unperceived dividing lines that split a larger group into smaller homogenous subgroups based on one or more demographic traits) (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). Further assessment of HR records (company tenure, geographic work location, education,

veteran status, annual performance rating) were reviewed to categorize direct reports (similar or dissimilar from their director). The direct report participants were interviewed about their perceptions of their director's level of inclusive leadership, and the directors were interviewed about their perceptions of their own leadership behaviors.

The three justice constructs—interactional, procedural, and distributive—were used to craft and edit the interview guide. Each semi-structured interview lasted approximately one hour. Every interview was recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This 360 approach relied on the perspectives of multiple sources and provided an accurate gauge of the directors' behaviors since self-perception (alone) is rarely accurate (Zenger & Folkman, 2012).

Additionally, field notes (ongoing stream-of-consciousness and observations about research) were taken during and after each interview to allow for the overlap of data analysis and data collection (Eisenhardt, 1989a; Maanen, 1979; Spradley, 1980). The field notes were used for two purposes: (a) to document and react to my initial impressions, without censorship, and (b) to push my learning and analysis by asking questions and thinking about the cases (Eisenhardt, 1989a). This was an iterative process of analyzing the field notes and case transcripts to adjust the initial interview guide; see Appendix B: Interview Guide (Eisenhardt, 1989a).

Analyzing data

According to Eisenhardt (1989a), “Analyzing data is the heart of building theory from case studies, but it is both the most difficult and the least codified part of the process” (p. 539). I created Figure 11 to create a separate identity for each case and provide an effective summation of a lot of data (Eisenhardt, 1989a). Due to the large amount of data collected, an additional write-up overview was inserted in Appendix D: Study Participants. This provides an overview of the perceptions and cultural competence of each director and HR data about their direct reports. As a result, these findings were not written as a narrative story. Instead the findings of this multicase research were written in terms of themes and concepts about inclusive leadership with case examples to support the theory (Gehman et al., 2018).

The information-processing biases of the researcher can lead to premature and false conclusions (Eisenhardt, 1989a). To decrease this phenomenon, I did a cross-case analysis to identify themes and patterns common to most (or all) of the ten cases. This approach allowed me to look at the data in different ways, identify unique patterns, and discover more generalizable results (Eisenhardt, 1989a; Gehman et al., 2018). Further, this approach allowed me to go beyond my initial impressions (from the field notes) to improve the reliability of the theory and create “a theory with a close fit with the data” (Eisenhardt, 1989a, p. 541). However, my cross-case analysis that identified themes and concepts exceeded Eisenhardt’s 40-page limit recommendation (Gehman et al., 2018).

To capture the needed qualitative rigor that scholars recommend for inductive research, I initially approached the data with the goal of creating a *data structure* (Gehman et al., 2018; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013). Gioia described the data structure as a “sensible visual aid [that] also provides a graphic representation of how we progressed from raw data to terms and themes” (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 6). He is also known for saying, “You got no data structure, you got nothing” (Gehman et al., 2018, p. 286). However, building a data structure was a strict process. It required the identification and analysis of 1st order concepts (adhering to informant terms with little distillation of categories), 2nd order themes (researcher or fieldworkers understanding of themes and concepts), and aggregate dimensions (Gehman et al., 2018; Gioia et al., 2013; Maanen, 1979). I found the process of building the data structure limiting. I mistakenly thought a diagram would bring all the data together in an organized fashion. The process of creating a data structure began to supersede the findings, as it became a tactical approach that was primarily focused on categorizing data into buckets for presentation. As I analyzed the data, I found my perspective more closely aligned with Eisenhardt, who shared that multiple-case study writing requires an openness in how data are coded and displayed (Gehman et al., 2018).

Eisenhardt further stated that multicase analyses are “written in terms of theory with case examples and not as a single-case narrative story” (Gehman et al., 2018, p. 292). Simply put, data structures do not work well with multicase research because the

large amount of data and the cross-case analysis is a creative and iterative process (Gehman et al., 2018). Data analyses should not be “turned into a linear, mindless, step-by-step description” (Gehman et al., 2018, p. 293). Surprisingly, Gioia shared concern that his data structure method is being used by many scholars as “presentational tactic” (Gehman et al., 2018, p. 293).

Further, data tables do not work for multicase analyses because they are unable to show the grounding of each construct in each case (Gehman et al., 2018). The data structure obscures the replication logic across cases (Gehman et al., 2018). With this in mind, I kept 1st order coding to capture the essence of the informant terms. I analyzed the field notes and interview narratives to take advantage of the uniqueness of each case and cultivated new themes to improve the generalizability of findings (Eisenhardt, 1989a).

Shaping hypotheses/conclusions and enfolding the literature

Continuing with Eisenhardt’s process of within-case, cross-case, and field impressions analyses, I created tentative themes and concepts (Eisenhardt, 1989a). During this iterative process I repeatedly compared the data and theory to create a theory that closely fit the data (Eisenhardt, 1989a). Gioia et al. (2013) define *constructs* as abstract theoretical interpretations of a phenomena and *concepts* as broader, more general, and having less specificity in how the phenomena is explained: “Concepts are precursors to constructs in making sense of organizational worlds” (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 2). Thus, I identified relevant concepts to build, create,

and validate constructs needed to build strong theory (Eisenhardt, 1989a; Gioia et al., 2013).

As I shaped the hypothesis, I verified the relationships between the emerging constructs and with the data from each case (Eisenhardt, 1989a). The strength and consistency of the emerging constructs were investigated to identify why a relationship exists and to establish internal validity (Eisenhardt, 1989a). Lastly, I tied-in extant literature with emerging themes and constructs to create internal validity (Eisenhardt, 1989a) in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents the findings from my interviews, participant observation, and human resources data to answer my research question: What are the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplaces? The first section of the chapter explores the antecedents of inclusive leadership, which include both individual and contextual factors. The individual antecedents characterize both the leaders and their direct reports and include their mental models, demographic background, personality traits such as confidence, trust, biases, and level of cultural competence. I demonstrate how these antecedents influence the interactions among the leaders and their direct reports in such a way that they co-create their perceptions of inclusive leadership. The second section of the chapter examines five important leadership practices that influence perceptions of inclusive leadership. They include the interactional justice practices of work and play delineation and advocacy for diversity and inclusion, the distributive justice practice of feedback, and the procedural justice practices of fairness and annual performance reviews. The final section of the chapter discusses three essential outcomes of inclusive leadership: (a) feeling valued, (b) feeling a sense of belonging, and (c) authenticity.

Co-Creating Perceptions of Inclusive Leadership

My data showed that perceptions of inclusive leadership were co-created by leaders and employees. Inclusive leadership was perceived by employees when directors and employees co-created positive experiences where employees felt a sense of belonging

as their authentic self. Employees' perceptions of inclusion were heavily influenced by antecedents held by both the leaders and the employees, including demographic background, personality traits such as confidence, trust, biases, level of cultural competence, and mental models.

During the interviews and discussions, all the participants (directors and direct reports) shared "personalized leadership stories" that illuminated significant aspects of their authentic selves. These were stories where participants offered their perspectives, biases, philosophies on life and leadership, and leadership stories about past experiences that influenced their mindsets and leadership philosophies. Some participants pulled back their corporate armor (uncovering) and described a memorable childhood story or a well-earned lesson. And some were vulnerable and detailed their tumultuous journey through corporate America.

As an example, Director 1 (white male with high cultural competence) discussed his personal choice to defy his parents' wishes for him to go straight to college after high school. Instead of college, he got a job where he faced challenging leadership and life lessons. He detailed,

Um, by the time I was 22, I had 14 stores. And so, I like grew into this leadership place right at a young age. And I had stores that were in urban areas where prostitutes were getting stabbed in the back alley in my stores. All the way to the, the like suburban mom and pop type. Like it, it's just, I had the mix and, and so, um, I remember I went into one of my stores and these group of kids came in, um, and stacked video games up in their arms and just looked at me and said thank you.

And walked out the store, and I was like, I'm not, I'll be shot. And so that store had been robbed multiple times, where associates had been tied up in the back of the store. Like just all this stuff that as a very young person I was learning, most of them were older than me, you know. And so, I was learning how to, how to lead people.

This story illustrates how events and experiences can influence a person's understanding of inclusion and leadership and create antecedents (e.g., mental models, personality traits, levels of trust, biases, levels of cultural competence) that later shape a person's perceptions of inclusive leadership in the workplace.

In another example, Dissimilar 2 (Black female) shared her personalized leadership story about being a competitive college athlete who had blind trust in her leaders and steadfast commitment to the decisions they made. She explained, after a grueling team practice, she went home crying and wanting to quit. Her mom told her,

Never let them see your tears. You made the decision to play competitively; stand behind it. If you need to cry, you go to the bathroom and cry. And if you have a problem, you go to the coach, you don't talk to your teammates about it. And whatever the coach says you do, and you support it.

These experiences formed Dissimilar 2's mental models about leadership and followership as she "firmly believed in following the leader." She admitted to being a committed team player who believes the success of a team is dependent on the ability to trust and follow the charge of the leader, even if you do not understand the rationale. These mental models served as individual antecedents and highly influenced how she co-created experiences of inclusive leadership with her director.

Table 3 shows how the high, medium, and low culturally competent directors and their direct reports revealed personalized leadership stories that shed light on how their individual antecedents affected the creation of their interactions, experiences, connections, and perceptions of inclusive leadership. In the “culturally competent” column, “NA” (not applicable) is indicated for most of the direct reports because most of them did not take the IDI; therefore, their cultural competence was not measured. The “personalized leadership stories” column shows that all 28 participants shared personalized leadership stories.

Table 3. Personalized Leadership Stories

Participant	Race	Gender	Culturally Competent	Personalized Leadership Stories
Director 1	White	Male	Yes	Yes
Similar 1	White	Male	NA	Yes
Dissimilar 1	Black	Female	NA	Yes
Director 2	White	Female	Yes	Yes
Similar 2	White	Female	NA	Yes
Dissimilar 2	Black	Female	NA	Yes
Director 3	White	Female	Yes	Yes
Similar 3	White	Female	NA	Yes
Dissimilar 3	Latinx	Male	NA	Yes
Director 4	White	Female	Yes	Yes
Similar 4	White	Female	NA	Yes
Dissimilar 4	Black	Female	NA	Yes

Participant	Race	Gender	Culturally Competent	Personalized Leadership Stories
Director 5	Black	Male	No	Yes
Similar 5	Latinx	Female	NA	Yes
Director 6	White	Male	No	Yes
Similar 6	White	Male	Yes	Yes
Dissimilar 6	Black	Female	Yes	Yes
Director 7	White	Female	No	Yes
Dissimilar 7	White	Male	NA	Yes
Director 8	White	Male	No	Yes
Similar 8	White	Male	NA	Yes
Dissimilar 8	White	Female	NA	Yes
Director 9	White	Male	No	Yes
Similar 9	White	Female	NA	Yes
Dissimilar 9	White	Female	NA	Yes
Director 10	Asian	Female	No	Yes
Similar 10	Asian	Female	NA	Yes
Dissimilar 10	White	Male	NA	Yes

Model of co-creating perceptions of inclusive leadership

Figure 12 illustrates my proposed model of how perceptions of inclusive leadership were co-created by the leaders and their direct reports. It suggests that contextual antecedents (country history, organizational culture, geographic setting, and proximity to the leader) had both a direct and an indirect effect on inclusive leadership practices (acknowledging and valuing authenticity of uniqueness and facilitating positive interactions that promoted equity, authenticity, and belonging).

In the case of the indirect effects, the contextual antecedents were moderated by the individual antecedents of the leaders and followers (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, biases, and cultural competence). In turn, the inclusive leadership practices had both a direct and an indirect effect on the followers' sense of inclusion (feeling valued, ability to be authentic self, and a strong sense of belonging). In the case of the indirect effects, the inclusive leadership behaviors were moderated by the individual antecedents of the followers. This is illustrated on the following page in Figure 12.

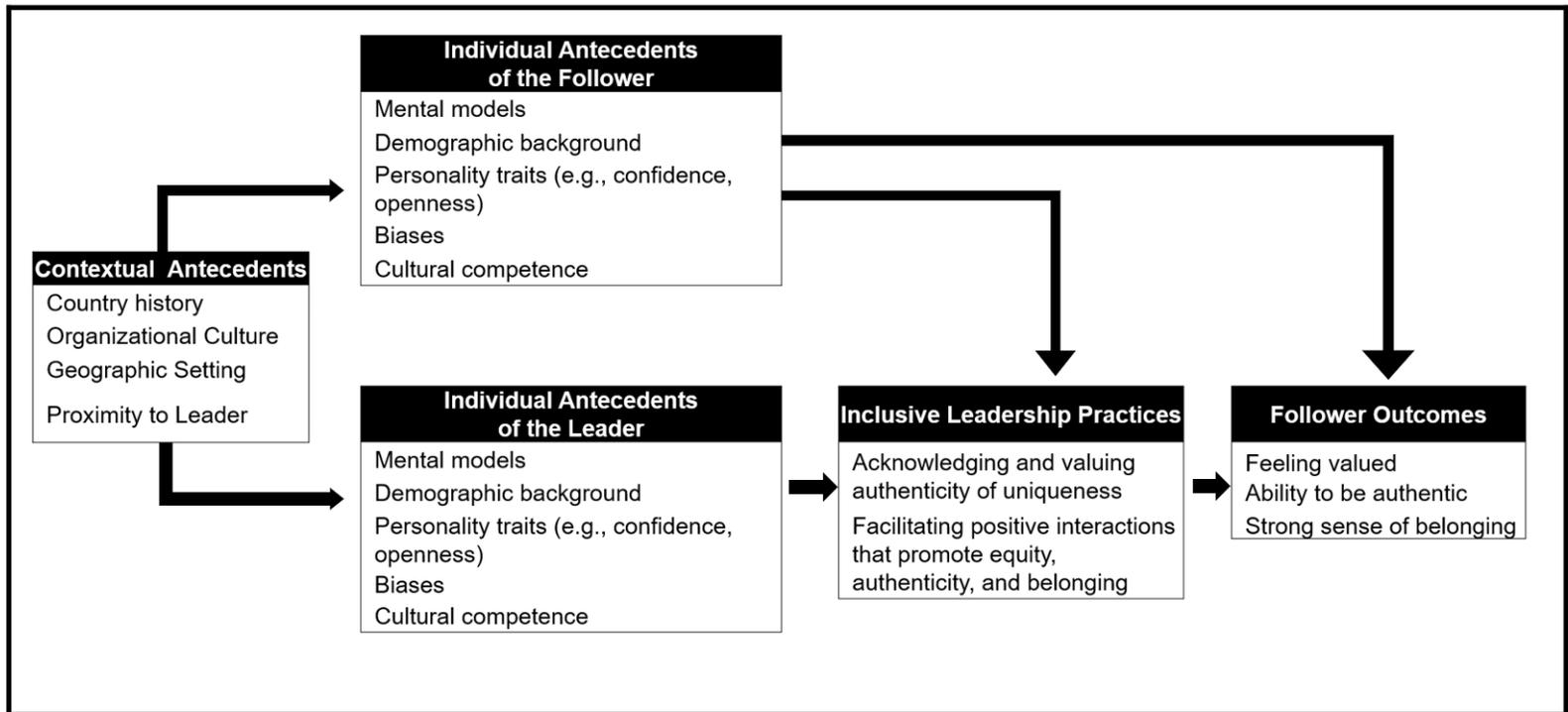


Figure 12. Model of Co-Creating Perceptions of Inclusive Leadership

The co-creation process uniquely created different experiences and perceptions from employees who shared the same director. To detail, Director 1 attested to treating all his employees the same, with no preferential treatment (see Table 4, the column titled “Directors’ Claim of Practices”). However, Similar 1 perceived positive outcomes where he felt valued by Director 1, had a sense of belonging, and was able to be his authentic self. And Dissimilar 1 perceived negative outcomes where she did not feel valued, admitted to only sharing a portion of her authentic self, and exhibited impression management tactics to mask her true feelings of not belonging (see Table 4, the column titled “Perceptions of Outcomes”). The disparity of their outcomes implied (a) their individual antecedents were uniquely different and played a significant role in the co-creation of interactions and perceptions of Director 1’s behaviors and (b) the contextual antecedents in which they were situated differed greatly.

Given the contextual setting of how these three players were situated and their individualized antecedents, it was virtually impossible for Director 1 (or any director) to treat everyone the same. Instead, the directors’ behaviors were influenced by their internal motivators, contextual influences, and the employees’ responses and interactions. Thus, directors and their direct reports co-created experiences that the direct reports perceived as inclusive or exclusionary leadership (positive or negative outcomes). See Table 4 for side-by-side comparison of the individual antecedents of

the directors and direct reports, contextual antecedents, inclusive leadership practices of directors, and perceptions of inclusive leadership on the part of the direct reports.

This study suggests that cultural competence, one of the individual antecedents, heavily influenced the directors' behaviors. Directors with high cultural competence co-created positive interactions and outcomes with 75% of their direct reports. At the other end of the spectrum, directors with medium and low cultural competence co-created negative interactions and outcomes with 100% of their direct reports of color. The lack of cultural competence was attenuated with dominant similarity (being white). As shown, 100% of white male directors (high, medium, and low cultural competence directors) practiced behaviors that yielded positive outcomes for their white male direct reports; and 100% of white female directors (high, medium, and low in cultural competence) practiced behaviors that yielded their white female direct reports positive outcomes.

There were, however, cases where low cultural competence white male to female (directors and direct report) relationships yielded negative outcomes. These instances reinforced how low cultural competence directors behaved in manners that created negative outcomes for their dissimilar direct reports, regardless of race. In summary, high cultural competence was primarily needed when leading employees of color, and the contextual and individual antecedents of the directors and the direct reports had a

significant impact on the directors' behaviors and the direct reports' perceptions of inclusive outcomes.

Table 4. Co-creating Different Outcomes

Participant	Race	Gender	Individual Antecedents of Director	Individual Antecedents of Direct Report	Contextual Antecedents	Directors' Claim of Practices	Perceptions of Outcomes
Director 1	White	Male					
Similar 1	White	Male	Director 1's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Dissimilar 1	Black	Female	Director 1's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Negative
Director 2	White	Female					
Similar 2	White	Female	Director 2's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Dissimilar 2	Black	Female	Director 2's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Director 3	White	Female					
Similar 3	White	Female	Director 3's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Dissimilar 3	Latinx	Male	Director 3's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Negative
Director 4	White	Female					
Similar 4	White	Female	Director 4's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Dissimilar 4	Black	Female	Director 4's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive

Participant	Race	Gender	Individual Antecedents of Director	Individual Antecedents of Direct Report	Contextual Antecedents	Directors' Claim of Practices	Perceptions of Outcomes
Director 5	Black	Male					
Similar 5	Latinx	Female	Director 5's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Negative
Director 6	White	Male					
Similar 6	White	Male	Director 6's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Dissimilar 6	Black	Female	Director 6's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Negative
Director 7	White	Female					
Dissimilar 7	White	Male	Director 7's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Negative
Director 8	White	Male					
Similar 8	White	Male	Director 8's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Dissimilar 8	White	Female	Director 8's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive
Director 9	White	Male					
Similar 9	White	Female	Director 9's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Negative
Dissimilar 9	White	Female	Director 9's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive

Participant	Race	Gender	Individual Antecedents of Director	Individual Antecedents of Direct Report	Contextual Antecedents	Directors' Claim of Practices	Perceptions of Outcomes
Director 10	Asian	Female					
Similar 10	Asian	Female	Director 10's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Negative
Dissimilar 10	White	Male	Director 10's	Unique	Unique	Same as Peers	Positive

The co-creation of confidence

When asked about their relationship with their director, 89% of the direct reports voluntarily expressed their abundance or lack of confidence as an integral factor.

Given the frequent mention of this personality trait, I took a deeper dive to understand its relationship to cultural competence and perceptions of inclusive leadership. I define confidence as certainty, belief, and expectancy about someone and/or something. Cultural competence is the ability to shift cultural perspectives and appropriately adapt behaviors to cultural differences and commonalities (Hammer, 2016). In my data, both confidence and cultural competence appeared to be antecedents that influenced directors' behaviors and ultimately the direct reports' perceptions of inclusive leadership. Many of the direct reports claimed that they garnered their abundance or lack of confidence from their directors.

Fifty six percent of all the direct reports had low confidence. This data alone suggested that low confidence of employees was a widespread issue. However, a deeper dive revealed 78% of all the direct reports with low confidence were from marginalized groups (race and gender). The low confidence of white men only represented 22% of the total. Figure 13 charts the disparity of marginalized and white male direct reports who expressed having low confidence.



Figure 13. Low Confidence Direct Reports

Equally revealing, 78% of the direct reports (from medium and low cultural competence directors) had low confidence, while only 22% of the direct reports from high cultural competence directors had low confidence Figure 14. The exact nature of the relationship between cultural competence and its effects on marginalized employees' confidence is not clear. However, these findings suggest that (a) marginalized employees had less confidence than their white male peers and (b) there was a significant relationship between the employees' confidence and the directors' cultural competence.

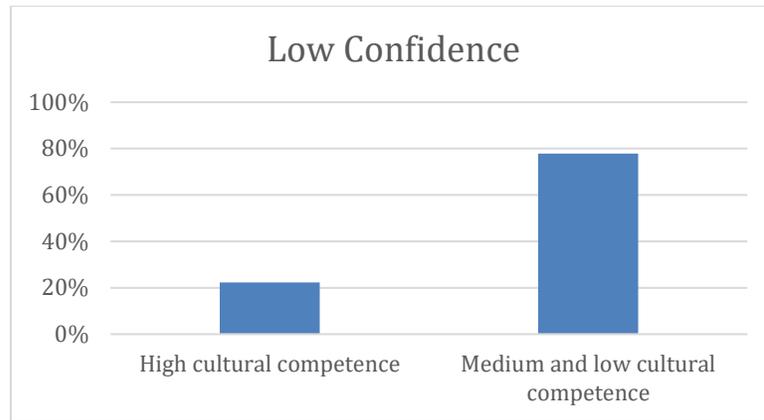


Figure 14. Low Confidence and Cultural Competence

High culturally competent directors had the ability to effectively bridge differences by acknowledging and valuing authenticity of uniqueness. They practiced positive relational gestures (promoting equity, authenticity, and belonging) that their direct reports perceived as appreciation and value. These perceptions of appreciation and value contributed to the positive interpersonal interactions that co-created experiences to increase an employee’s confidence (their certainty, belief, and expectancy about themselves and their value). Thus, the antecedents of cultural competence influenced the directors’ behaviors, the co-creation of experiences, and ultimately the direct reports’ confidence.

While having high cultural competence influenced the practices of directors and increased the likelihood that they would successfully bridge differences with their dissimilar direct report, the individual antecedents of the direct reports played an integral part in how they perceived the directors’ behaviors. As with other cases,

Director 3 (white female with high cultural competence) and Director 4 (white female with high cultural competence) reported treating all their direct reports the same.

However, their similar direct reports had high confidence and felt a sense of belonging, while their dissimilar direct reports, Dissimilar 3 (Latinx male) and Dissimilar 4 (Black female), exhibited low confidence, did not feel empowered to bring their full authentic selves to work, and only felt a partial sense of belonging.

These varied outcomes and perceptions of the director's practices illustrate the substantial impact that individual and contextual antecedents had on the co-creation of relationships, experiences, and perceptions of directors' behaviors.

The medium and low cultural competence directors lacked the ability to bridge differences with their direct reports. This study illuminated the importance of understanding that employees and directors viewed and perceived the world through their unique lenses. The contexts of situations and the background of the people gave behaviors different meanings. Thus, nothing is ever created in isolation. We ultimately co-create interactions that we perceive.

The co-creation of trust

Cultural competence and trust

I define trust as the strong belief in the dependability of someone or something. The data showed only 61% of all direct reports trusted their director. These isolated data initially suggested widespread distrust of leadership at this organization. However, a deeper dive revealed that 80% of the white male trusted their directors, while only

54% of marginalized employees trusted their directors, and a mere 29% of employees of color trusted their directors. Figure 15 offers a look at this data and illustrates that 86% of employees who did not trust their director were from marginalized communities (race, gender).

During the interviews, 100% of the participants (directors and direct reports) mentioned trust as an important factor in their relationships with one another.

Compare Figure 15 and Figure 16 for a wholistic overview of the findings that show (a) marginalized employees (race and gender) had less trust in their directors than their white male peers; (b) there was a strong relationship between distrust of directors and employees of color; and (c) there was a strong inverse relationship between trust and the cultural competence of the directors of white men. These findings also suggest that the directors of white men do not need high cultural competence to gain trust from their white male employees. Even when the white male reported to a woman of a different race, he trusted the director.

These findings highlight the strong influence that individual and contextual antecedents have on leaders' behaviors and followers' perceptions. Marginalized employees who trusted their director believed in the director's ability to lead inclusively. However, the culture of corporate America was created by white men, so their contextual positioning is one of familiarity, privilege, and power. They did not need to be included. They are the foundation of the socially structured systems and

status quo (Page, 2017). Their distrust of directors was not experienced as widely as employees of color. In contrast, they experienced more positive outcomes in their annual performance ratings (Figure 32. APRs for Participants). This population leads over 92% of Fortune 500 companies (Zarya, 2018).

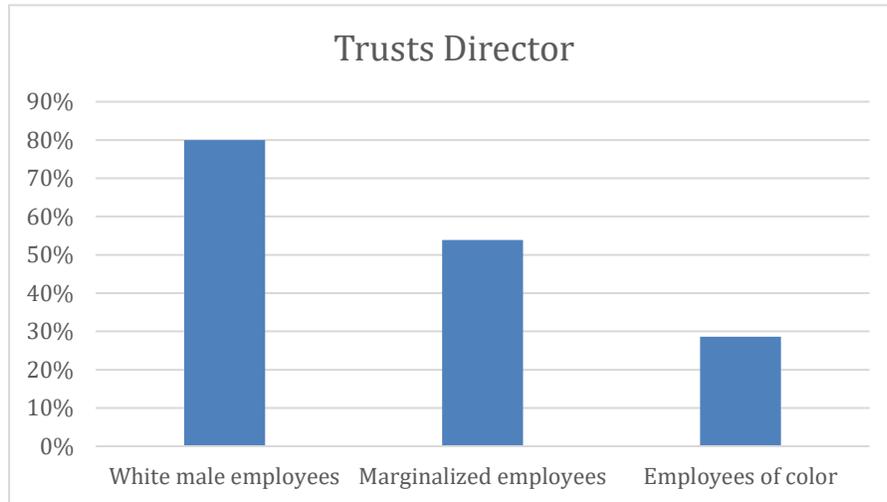


Figure 15. Employee Trust of Director

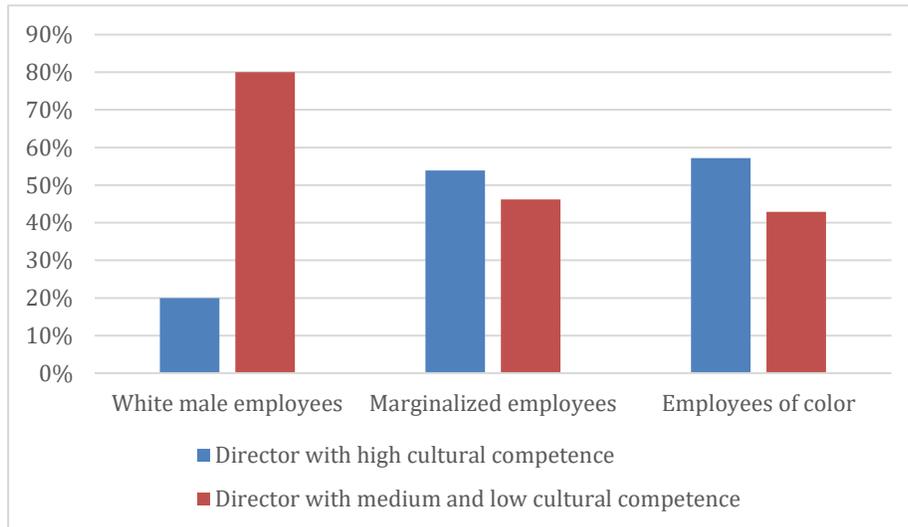


Figure 16. Team Demographics and Director Cultural Competence

The data also revealed that 75% of the employees with high cultural competence directors trusted their leaders. In contrast, only 50% of the employees with medium and low cultural competence directors trusted their leaders (Figure 17). These numbers suggest that culturally competent directors are better skilled at co-creating positive interactions that create trusting relationships.

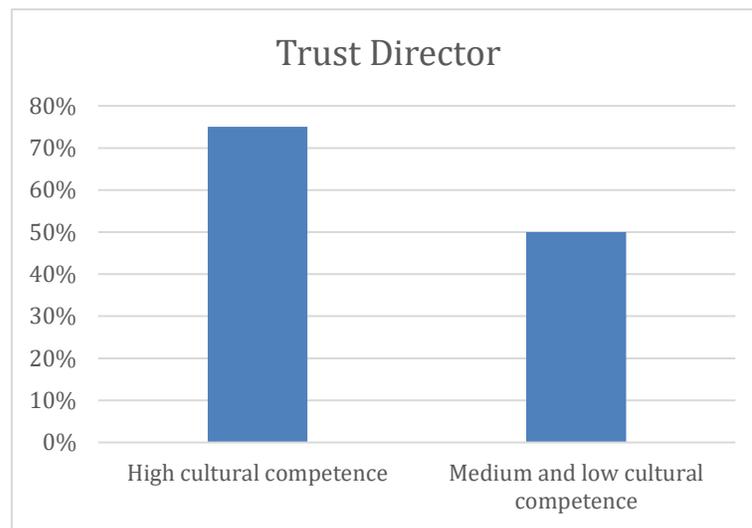


Figure 17. Director Trust and Cultural Competence

The data also showed that trust was a reciprocal relationship between the directors and their direct reports. As shown, 75% of the high cultural competence directors' direct reports shared sentiments of trusting their director. The trust of high cultural competence directors was reciprocated, with 75% of high cultural competence directors trusting their direct reports; see Figure 18 for an illustrated chart. To further support the premise of trust being a reciprocal and mutual co-creation of experiences between directors and their direct reports, 50% of the medium and low culturally

competent directors shared sentiments of trusting their direct reports, and 50% of the medium and low cultural competence directors' direct reports trusted their director; see Figure 18.

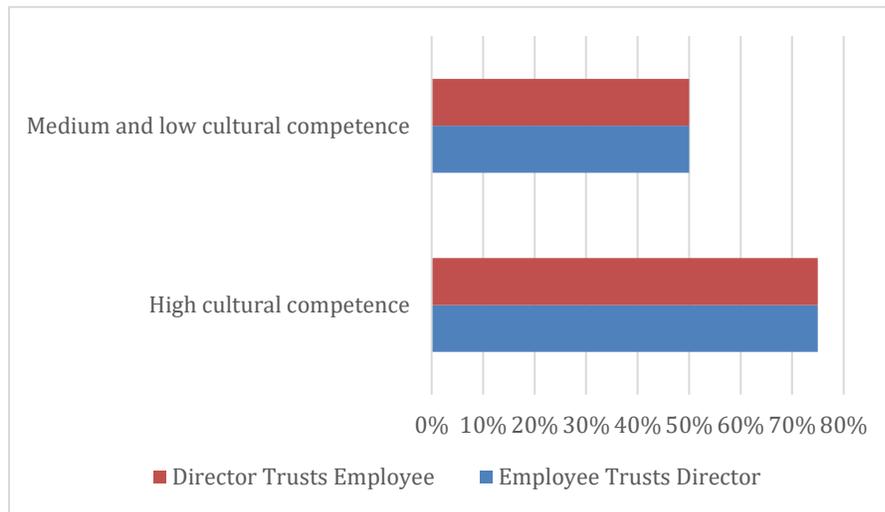


Figure 18. Reciprocal Trust

The reciprocal co-creation of trusting relationships was articulated when Dissimilar 2 (competitive college athlete) shared that when Director 2 (high cultural competence) makes decisions, “I stand behind it 100% because I’m on the team.” Similarly, Director 4 (white female with high cultural competence) and her direct reports have a high level of reciprocal trust for each other. One of her direct reports said, “She is the person I’d call if I had a dead body to hide.” Director 4’s high cultural competence helped facilitate positive interactions with her team that co-created and maintained feelings of trust among them.

Cultural competence highly swayed the directors' behaviors and increased employees' perceptions of trust. The most culturally competent directors had more positive interactions that imbued trust from their direct reports. Moreover, directors with high cultural competence (Directors 1–4) had an advantage over medium and low cultural competence directors. They possessed the ability to bridge cultural differences that created positive interactions with their direct reports. However, having the ability to bridge differences and actually exerting efforts to apply cultural competence were two distinctly different actions, as demonstrated in Director 3's case.

To explain, Director 3 (white female, high cultural competence) had low trust of her direct reports. Dissimilar 3 (Latinx male) perceived that Director 3 did not trust her direct reports, and in turn he did not trust her to make fair and sound decisions. Dissimilar 3 also felt Director 3 was a toxic leader who did little to build and mend broken relationships with her direct reports. Although Director 3 had the third highest IDI score, from Dissimilar 3's perspective, she did not apply her high cultural competence to bridge their differences and make positive relationships. In this study, individual antecedents largely dictated how directors would behave. The power of cultural competence was diminished when other biases prevented the leader from applying the skill. However, when cultural competence was applied, the directors' behaviors were perceived as positive, and it created mutual feelings of trust between the directors and their direct reports.

Trust and marginalization antecedents

As shared earlier, only 29% of employees of color trusted their director. Drawing on the model of co-creating perceptions of inclusive leadership (Figure 12), I propose that, as a contextual antecedent, America's history of racial discrimination has created many deep-seated perceptions and feelings (mental models) about marginalized people (demographic background). Thus, the contextual antecedents of country history, mental models, and demographic background may have influenced how directors and direct reports perceived and co-created experiences. This was illustrated when Director 1 (white male) described himself as a "blind trust person" who gives the "gift of trust out-the-gate." His direct reports, however, had polarizing feelings about his trustworthiness. Similar 1 (white male) acknowledged Director 1 as sincere and trustworthy, but Dissimilar 1 (Black female) disclosed her nervousness about the future of her job. After the interview recording stopped, she revealed that she did not trust Director 1 and accused him of lying and misrepresenting the circumstances around an HR investigation of her direct report.

This study showed a strong relationship between marginalized people and distrust of their director. This highlighted the importance of understanding how contextual antecedents (e.g., America's longstanding history of discrimination and racial tensions) influenced the behaviors and perceptions of inclusive leadership. However, high cultural competence on the part of directors as well as attenuated biases and negative experiences strengthened inclusive leader-follower relationships. Thus, I

suggest that individual and contextual antecedents beyond cultural competence influenced the practices and perceptions of inclusive leadership.

Proximity to the leader and the co-creation of inclusion and exclusion

Another contextual antecedent that influenced the behaviors of directors and their direct reports was proximity to the leader. Specifically, employees who worked in close proximity to their directors felt their directors' behaviors, both inclusive and exclusive, were magnified. Through their close proximity, employees experienced increased informal and unplanned exchanges and encounters that amplified their feelings and perceptions of their directors. These interactions of the directors and employees were polarized; some were perceived as unbelievably bad, and distrust was created, while others were perceived as good, and trust was created.

To elaborate, the frequent interfaces (e.g., walks to Starbucks, lunch dates, water cooler talks, casual walks) when nurtured, became positive and allowed employees and their directors numerous opportunities to get positively acquainted with each other. Their frequent exchanges imbued a sense of trust and familiarity that cultivated positive working relationships and a sense of belonging and inclusion. However, when the exchanges were not positive, the frequent interactions eroded trust, augmented negative feelings, and created a sense of rejection and exclusion.

Proximity and its good and bad outcomes

The data showed that 39% of all employees experienced exclusion from their directors. An astonishing 86% of employees who experienced exclusion were from

marginalized groups (race and gender), and only 14% who experienced exclusion were white male employees (Figure 19). These numbers show a large disparity of exclusion felt by marginalized employees in comparison to their white male peers.

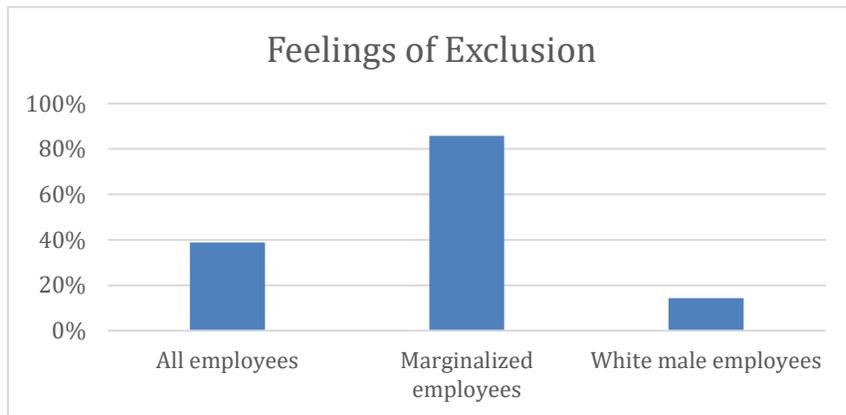


Figure 19. Feelings of Exclusion

Equally illuminating, 86% of employees who experienced exclusionary behaviors worked at the same location as their director. Being in close proximity to the leader had a magnifying effect. Additional negative outcomes showed that 92% of employees who were not able to be authentic at work worked at the same location as their director; and 85% of employees who applied impression management tactics to gain a sense of belonging worked at the same location as their director (Figure 20). Working at the same location as their directors magnified negative behaviors and increased feelings of exclusion for employees from marginalized groups.

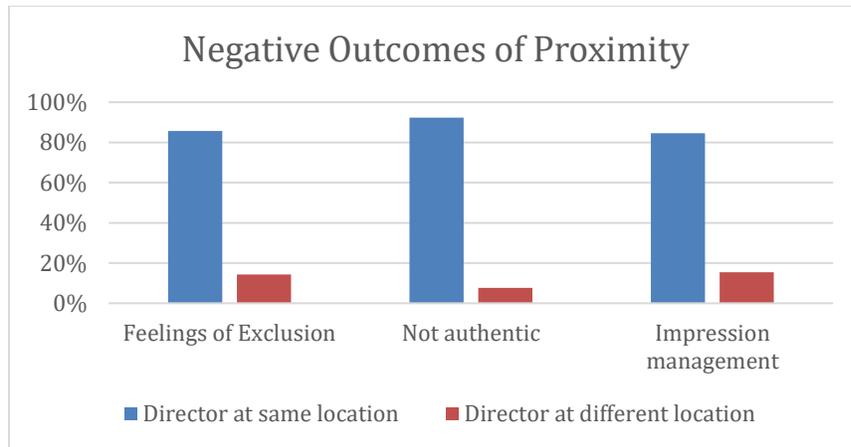


Figure 20. Negative Outcomes of Proximity

This study showed that employees had polarizing perspectives and outcomes from working in close proximity to their directors. There were also good outcomes for employees working in close proximity to their directors. Data showed 86% of employees who had high confidence, 73% of employees who felt valued, and 73% of employees who trusted their director worked at the same location as their director (Figure 21).

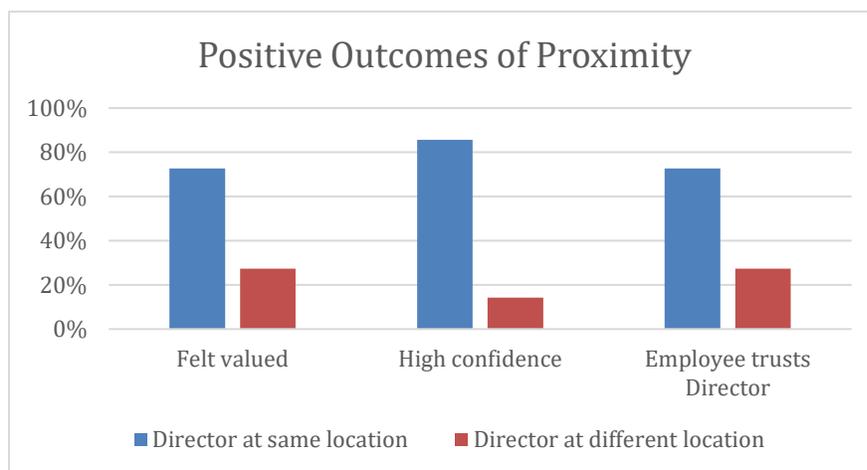


Figure 21. Positive Outcomes of Proximity

Self-fulfilling perceptions about proximity

The employees’ polarized outcomes and feelings on how proximity influenced the relationships with their directors highlights the importance of individual and contextual antecedents in the co-creation of perceptions. Figure 22 is a side-by-side comparison of the good and bad outcomes employees experienced while working at the same location as their director. To explain, 88% of the medium and low cultural competence directors and their direct reports believed that working in close proximity to each other heavily influenced their relationships. They perceived that working in close proximity influenced the quality of their relationships. This ultimately had a self-fulfilling effect—negative and positive perceptions of behaviors were validated and intensified.

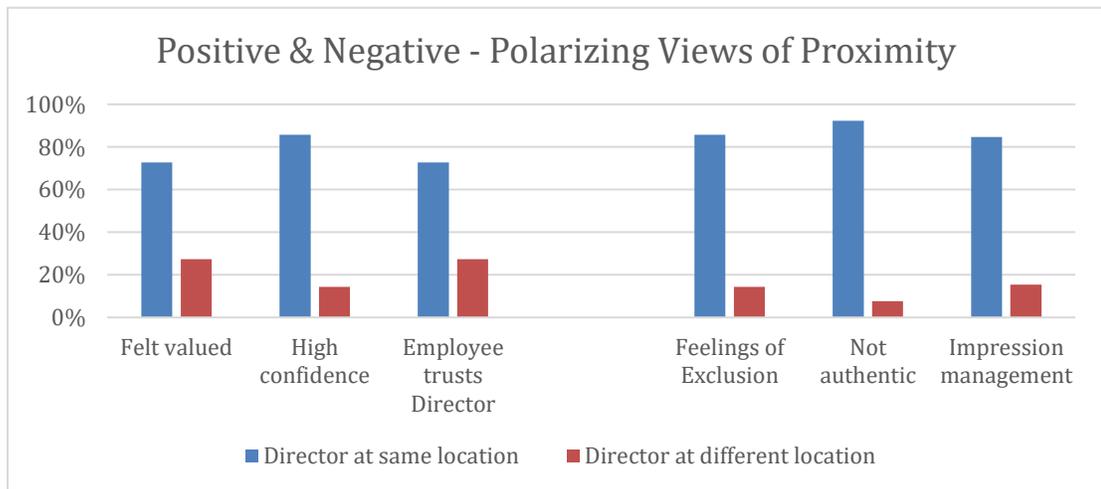


Figure 22. Positive and Negative—Polarizing Views of Proximity

In one case, Dissimilar 6 (Black female) felt that she and her leader Director 6 (white male with medium cultural competence) struggled to effectively communicate via

phone, and the infrequency of their face-to-face meetings did not afford them the opportunity to bond. She sensed that her peer who shared the same demographic background (race and gender) and worked at the same location as Director 6 encountered countless positive experiences that positively affected his career. As a result, Dissimilar 6 felt her peers were more involved in decision-making opportunities while she experienced inequitable treatment and exclusion. Given the demographic differences with her director, the vast geographic distance between them, the distinct cultural and contextual backgrounds they were situated in, and the director's relatively low cultural competence, neither she nor the director was able to bridge the differences and build a trusting relationship. Instead, the director's communication became increasingly short and infrequent, and Dissimilar 6's perceptions and feelings of exclusion were heightened.

However, geographic proximity problems were lessened when there was demographic similarity. As shown, Dissimilar 6's peer, Similar 6 (white male), worked the farthest from corporate headquarters. While proximity could have negatively influenced his relationship with Director 6, it did not. Instead, Director 6 intentionally created unique opportunities to include Similar 6 and attenuated the negative impacts of geographic distance. Similar 6 claimed that he felt very included and supported by Director 6. He declared, "[Director 6] gives me some of those opportunities for development, um, that maybe come more naturally or organically to somebody who might sit closer."

The study also identified that 100% of the high culturally competent directors sat at the same location as their direct reports. At the time, the company had over 40% of its employees dispersed across 250 locations throughout the United States. The strong relationship between cultural competence, marginalized employees, and working in close proximity to the director could be partially attributed to the company's footprint. The company was headquartered in a major metropolitan city and their smaller locations were in rural areas of the country. Thus, the diversity of the contextual antecedent of geographic location was largely reflected in their employee population. Major metropolitan cities hired a larger percentage of people from marginalized communities, and the directors had increased opportunities to interact with people from marginalized cultural backgrounds. These frequent interactions and experiences helped build and maintain their cultural competence. Thus, the contextual antecedents of country history, organizational culture, geographic setting, and proximity to the leader were pronounced and undoubtedly influenced the development of the directors' cultural competence.

Proximity testimonies influenced leadership

Many other employees and directors attested to their conviction that proximity influenced their relationships. Similar 1 declared that being logistically close to Director 1 was beneficial because "you are positioned to be on same page... Peers at locations different from their leader are at a disadvantage." Similar 6 attributed proximity for "blurring the lines" of leadership. He admitted to having the closest

relationships with two of his direct reports who sat at his office location. He articulated that being in the same office allowed him to see and connect with these direct reports frequently and said people at his location can “sit down in the same room and have a conversation. And maybe there’s a, you know, you walk to the kitchen afterwards and get a coffee with that person.” He said, “It just is different, I guess. Proximity does make it different.”

To further validate the amplifying effects of working in close proximity to leadership, Director 8 (white male) admitted that working in close proximity to his direct reports was beneficial because “You can go deeper and more in depth with the teams because you can see them more frequently.” Similarly, Director 9 (white male) admitted it was easier to cultivate relationships, see the talents, and coach people who are in close proximity. He shared, “I think it’s easier when there’s close proximity. No doubt about that. It’s easy to do because, you know, nothing negative or anything, but just the ‘out of sight, out of mind’ kind of thing.”

Proximity improved positive perceptions

In another example, proximity’s indelible influence on perceptions of inclusion was further demonstrated when Similar 2 described how she and her “work BFF” (who also reports to Director 2) navigated leadership and communication complications with Director 2 through a picture they drew on Director 2’s whiteboard. As a tongue-in-cheek gesture, they drew a picture of Dante’s Circles of Hell on Director 2’s office whiteboard. Every day they would go in Director 2’s office and point to a ring in a

circle to communicate their feelings. Director 2 kept the picture as a tool to effectively communicate and this tactic strengthened their perceptions of inclusion.

Being in close proximity heavily influenced Dissimilar 7's sense of belonging. His leader, Director 7, relocated their team to three different locations and negatively affected team morale and perceptions of inclusion. The relocated employees felt excluded from their larger team and lost their sense of belonging to their department. Dissimilar 7 (white male) considered leaving the company. However, a couple of years later, the team was consolidated to one office. They noticed a drastic positive shift in the team culture. They felt united, connected, and a sense of belonging. Dissimilar 7 shared that he again felt part of a team where he belonged “instead of going in between buildings, or being on the phone, or feeling like I was a visitor coming over to headquarters.”

As shared multiple times, this study shows how proximity acts as a magnifier of behaviors. Working in close proximity to the directors increased the likelihood and frequency of personal interactions—increasing or decreasing the employees' perceptions of inclusions and exclusion. When these frequent encounters were good, feelings of confidence, trust, and belonging were increased. The close positive encounters provided repeated opportunities to connect, identify similarities, and develop affinity for a person. However, when those frequent encounters were bad, it created feelings of distrust, not belonging, and perceptions of exclusionary leadership.

Moreover, dominant similarity to the director and/or high cultural competence both attenuated the negative effects that proximity caused. When directors were not culturally competent and worked in close proximity to their marginalized direct report, it intensified the bad experience for the employee. When directors were culturally competent and worked at the same location as their employee, it improved their relationship and increased perceptions. These cases highlight the importance of directors applying cultural competence to decrease biased and culturally excluding behaviors that created negative outcomes for marginalized employees.

Practices

The previous section of this chapter examined the individual antecedents (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, trust, biases, cultural competence) and the contextual antecedents (country history, organizational culture, geographic setting, proximity to the leader) that influence perceptions of inclusive leadership. In this section, I explore five key practices that influenced perceptions of inclusive leadership in my study. I analyze them through the lens of three justice constructs: (a) *interactional justice*, perceived fairness of interpersonal treatment; (b) *procedural justice*, perceived fairness of procedures; and (c) *distributive justice*, perceived fairness of outcomes (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003; Bies, 1987, 2005; Folger & Konovsky, 1989). The interactional justice practices include work and play delineation and advocacy for diversity and inclusion between directors and their employees; the procedural justice practice is feedback; and the distributive justice practices include fairness and annual performance review (APR). In my discussion of

work and play delineation, I explore at length a new construct that emerged from the data that I call “mirroring.”

Interactional justice

Interactional justice (perceptions of interpersonal fairness) of the employees was cultivated when directors bridged differences, treated employees with respect, and explained their rationale for their decisions. Further, the creation of fair exchanges positively removed concerns of racial palatability, white male homogeneity, and negative stereotyping of marginalized employees. The individual and contextual antecedents discussed earlier often leave marginalized employees in an intrapersonal battle between their professional aspirations and their personal identities and values. This section presents findings that influenced employees’ perceptions of interpersonal fairness.

Mirroring—Is it work or play?

Many of the directors and their direct reports spoke of the importance of clear work and play boundaries. This was articulated as maintaining a strict professional and (some considered) confidential stance and demeanor at work. Some leaders viewed themselves as two separate beings—serious leader at work and carefree follower at home. As I took a deeper dive into this phenomenon, it was revealed that people from marginalized communities engaged in the task of delineating work from play more than their white male peers. Their articulation of work and play delineation, however, was covering (masking a stigmatized aspect of their identity). However, these impression management tactics were not effective for Black employees because the

color of their skin revealed their stigmatized characteristic. Instead, I observed a phenomenon that I call mirroring. This was a uniquely intrapersonal process that marginalized employees underwent as they grappled with reflecting, mimicking, constructing, and understanding the “appropriate” workplace identities that defied common cultural stereotypes and simultaneously respected the ethos of their cultures.

Authenticity in work and play

My data showed a strong relationship between being authentic and delineating work from play. Over half the directors and their direct reports (high, medium, and low cultural competence) who discussed the importance of separating work from play were not able to be their authentic selves at work. What is more, 75% of Blacks (directors and direct reports) in the study felt it important to differentiate between work from play. And an astounding 100% of all the Black participants (directors and direct reports) were not able to be their authentic self at work, and 100% of Black participants (directors and direct reports) applied impression management techniques. In contrast, 56% of the white male employees were able to be their authentic self, and only 44% applied impression management techniques (Figure 23). The admission of Black employees applying impression management techniques was articulated by Dissimilar 6 (Black female director) who shared that Black employees must separate work from play and mask their true selves to excel in corporate America. Then she lamented, “My upbringing sort of prepared me for that. Like the higher you get, you’re just gonna be alone. You just have to adjust, get used to it, and then have your outlet after work. This just is what it is.”

Marginalized people mirroring

Mirroring was revealed as an intrapersonal battle for marginalized employees between their individual antecedents (e.g., mental models, demographic background, fundamental values) and the contextual antecedents (e.g., country history, organizational culture, geographic setting) that defined their workplace. Marginalized employees struggled to gain approval and navigate the political nuances of corporate America. They expressed ways in which the historically discriminatory and exclusionary confines of America's workplaces morphed their identities. That is, they described how their understandings of their selves immediately shifted in the context of America's workplace. Many struggled to understand who they were, where they fit, and how they should engage in corporate America.

Mirroring, unlike code-switching (process of shifting dialect depending on social context) (Morrison, n.d.) was not characterized as merely an instantaneous tactic to gain approval. It was described as a distinct phenomenon that called the values and culture of employees into question. While many of the participants in my study admitted to using code-switching regularly, they described what I call mirroring as an always-present, never-ending intrapersonal battle that, sometimes, had long-lasting adverse effects.

This was demonstrated when Dissimilar 3 (Latinx male) was coached and instructed by Director 3 (white female with high cultural competence), against his natural

inclinations, to rewrite one of his direct reports' annual performance review (APR) to include more harmful examples that "hit the negative aspects." The employee who received the negative APR raised major concerns with HR, complaining of favoritism and discrimination by Dissimilar 3. Dissimilar 3 admitted the undesirable personal impact of the incident, "There's no way in my values, my core values, is that what I'm about. I would never do that to someone...Separating them out and whatnot." And while Dissimilar 3 did struggled with his leader's approach, he mirrored her behaviors to gain a sense of belonging.

My study showed that 100% of the employees of color engaged in mirroring to navigate their relationships and interactions at work. To be accepted and to appear less different, these employees labored to conceal their authentic cultural expressions with behaviors, values, and linguistics that mirrored dominant culture. Figure 23 offers an overview.

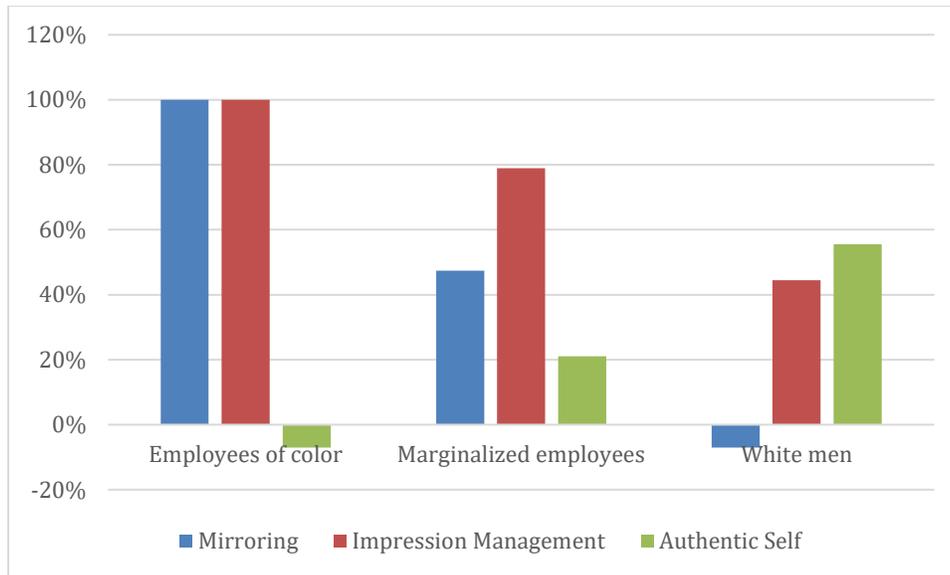


Figure 23. Mirroring, Impression Management, and Authenticity

Mirroring of Black employees

The heightened awareness and commitment of Black employees to “keep it real” and to be authentic in all they do was discussed when I met with four Black directors and two Black vice presidents. Before speaking on a panel about Blacks in the workplace, they grappled with how much of their authenticity they would reveal. Many agreed that there are iterations of their authenticity. As one shared, “My work self is different than my personal self. I will share what is ‘work appropriate.’” And another director discussed the importance of being honest about his journey to help other Black people in the workplace.

The process of mirroring (Figure 24) described by my study participants was highly influenced by the contextual settings. My observation was that contextual antecedents influenced the practices of the direct reports (mirrorer) and the directors (the other

person). The individual antecedents (of the other person and the mirrorer) influenced their behaviors. Of most distinction, the behaviors of the other person heavily influenced the mirrorer. The mirrorer iteratively went back and forth grappling with how they were perceived by others, questions about the other person, evaluations about behaviors, reflections of inner self, comparisons, and making decisions about their behavioral and communicative adjustments they would make to gain contextual clarity of self. This process of mirroring is illustrated on the following page in Figure 24.

In one example, a director (Black male) and four Black managers described their affinity for seeing other Black people (even strangers) in the workplace. They laughed about their shared experiences of walking in their office buildings and saluting unknown Black colleagues with a synchronized smile and head nod. In contrast, walking past an unknown white person did not engender the same warm sentiments. Instead, those encounters were instantaneous reminders of difference that prompted them to quickly suppress authentic expressions of Blackness, and to mitigate stereotypes by mirroring the values, behaviors, gestures, and vernacular of the non-Black person.

During my interviews, Black employees showed an acute awareness of Black cultural norms and the undesirable typecasts attributed to Black people. They used an exorbitant amount of energy making intrapersonal decisions about how they should show up in the workplace. The inner conflict about the need and benefits to stretching, distorting, and bending their authentic selves to avert negative stereotypes while authentically reflecting their distinct Black culture at work was pervasive. This was demonstrated when a Black individual expressed how he wanted to grow a beard but believed that Black men with beards did not get promoted in corporate America. He shared that people are scared of Black men, and beards make them more unapproachable. He intentionally shaved his beard to mirror his peers and to be accepted at work. In fact, 100% of the Black male directors in the Fortune 500 company I studied did not wear beards, and 100% of the white male vice presidents

did not wear beards, see Figure 25. This shed light on the tacit nature of Black directors mirroring their white vice presidents.

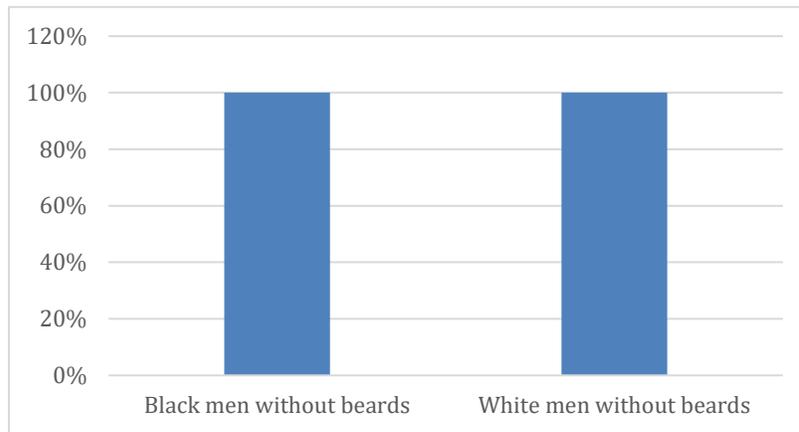


Figure 25. Mirroring Beards

In another example, Director 5 (Black male with medium cultural competence), who has been described as a leader who assimilated, discussed his ongoing quest to navigate the social and political ecosystem of this company. He said,

Here's the, here's the thing you have to take a look at. And this is not just about being a black leader, but, but you have to take a look at what is changing within the ecosystem of the company. And what do you need to do to personally adapt and be very mindful of etcera. Um, and if you do a scan of that, and you inventory yourself and you inventory what's happening across the ecosystem, it's likely that you're going to identify some behaviors that potentially you can change or a different way to go about...So, uh, I find myself thinking about that often and changing my behaviors.

There was not a distinct difference in the high, medium, and low cultural competence directors' impact on mirroring. All the employees of color shared examples of

mirroring and said that they did so because they did not feel empowered to be their full authentic self. The phenomenon of mirroring appeared to be linked to the contextual antecedents, individual antecedents of the direct reports, and the behaviors of the directors. Many employees of color in my study explained that the absence of positive relational interactions with their colleagues restricted them from being authentic at work. Instead, they mirrored. This suggests that having a skill like cultural competence alone does not create inclusion. Leaders need to apply their skills to bridge cultural differences and to empower historically marginalized people to be their authentic selves.

Advocacy for diversity and inclusion

My research showed that advocacy for diversity and inclusion, like being one's authentic self at work, was also difficult for employees of color. The company in which I did my study sponsored eight company employee resource groups (ERG) that advocated for diversity and inclusion (D&I). They were drawn together by shared characteristics (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, ability) and aimed to be a resource to the company and a community for marginalized employees.

There were approximately 2,500 employees who were members of the ERGs. And while 60% of the director participants were members of the ERGS, and 75% of white male directors were members of the ERG, 0% of directors of color were members of the ERGs (Figure 26). The data also revealed that 78% of the study's people of color were not part of an ERG dedicated to their cultural background (e.g., Black, Latinx,

Asian). Marginalized leaders mirrored their white peers to navigate the negative stereotypes associated with D&I advocacy as a minority.

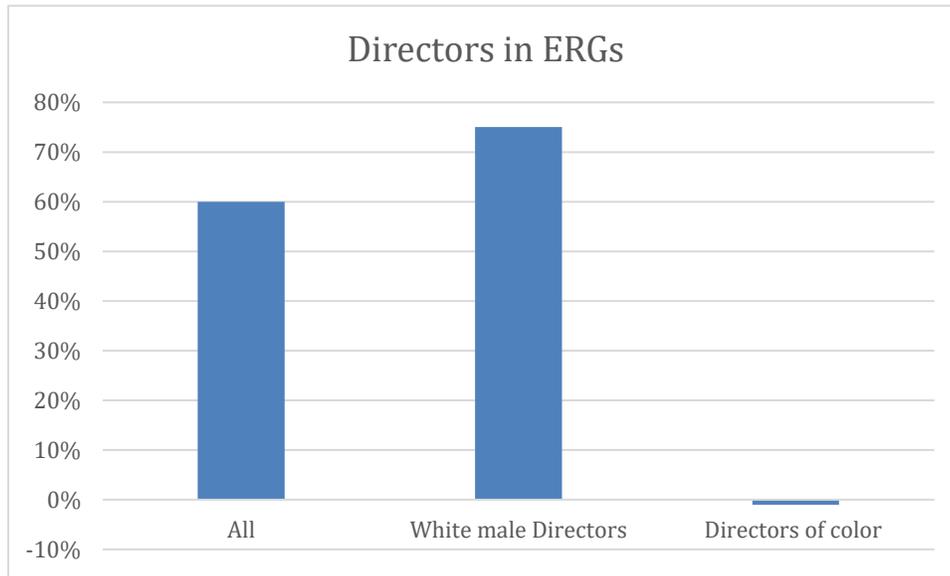


Figure 26. Directors in ERGs

Existing literature on D&I shows that when white male leaders make statements of support for D&I efforts, they are considered inclusive—whereas when women and people of color displayed diversity-valuing behaviors, they were likely to be negatively stereotyped and receive lower performance ratings than their peers (Hekman, Johnson, Foo, & Yang, 2017). This was validated in my data, which showed 86% of white male participants who were members of ERGs received an exceed expectations (EE) or higher on their annual performance review (APR). Similarly, 71% of marginalized employees (race and gender) and 86% employees of color who were members of the ERGs received a lower performance rating of meets expectations (ME) or lower (Figure 27).

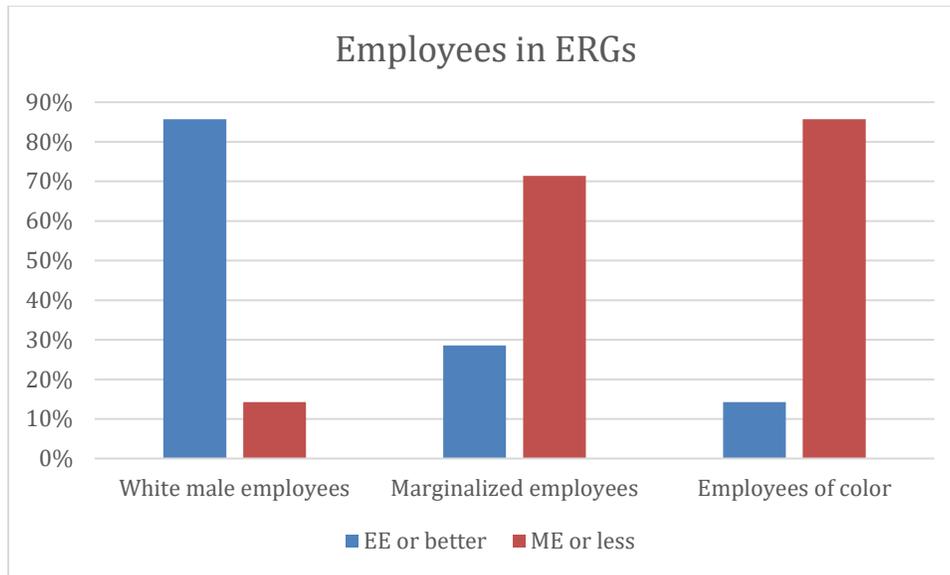


Figure 27. Ratings of Employees in ERGs

These numbers reflect a clear distinction in how the advocacy for D&I by white people versus people of color was perceived. In comparison to their white male peers, when marginalized people advocated for diversity and inclusion by joining an ERG, it had negative effects on their annual performance rating. Many of my study participants “divorced” themselves from their ERG cultural allegiance to assimilate into or mirror the larger company culture. Thus, they intentionally aligned with ERGs different from their cultural background or steered away from participating in ERGs altogether. Figure 28 details how 100% of white male employees who were not in ERGs received an EE or better for their annual performance rating. Their results were vastly contrasted by their marginalized peers who also were not in ERGs. Only 50% of the marginalized employees who were not in ERGs received an EE or better. The

same held true of the employees of color, only 50% who were not members of the ERGs received an EE or better.

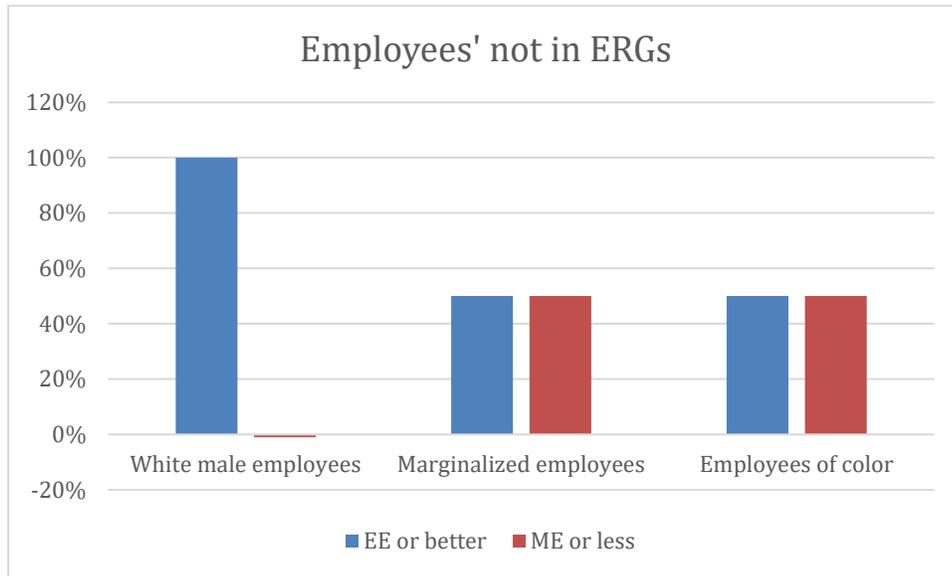


Figure 28. Ratings of Employees Not in ERGs

This was illustrated when the ERG involvement of Similar 5 (Latinx female) and her peer (Latinx female) was not supported by their leader (Director 5, Black male with medium cultural competency) and vice president (white female with low cultural competence). Similar 5 said that she and her peer were interrogated about the importance of the ERGs and the time commitment associated with participating. She felt Director 5 expected them to suppress their cultural heritage to assimilate with white peers, as he had done. Instead, Similar 5 decreased and hid her ERG involvement because she did not feel comfortable sharing her passion and commitment to diversity and inclusion with Director 5 and others. Her peer

voluntarily left the company and noted in her exit interview how she felt the inability to be her full authentic self.

Cultural competency and diversity and inclusion advocacy

The data showed 80% of white male employees' directors had medium or low cultural competence. Additionally, 46% of marginalized employees and 43% of employees of color had directors with medium and low cultural competence and their direct reports (Figure 29). This data, combined with the data from Figure 27 and Figure 28, suggest that lacking cultural competence had no adverse impact on white men. That means white men did not need a culturally competent director to experience successful outcomes.

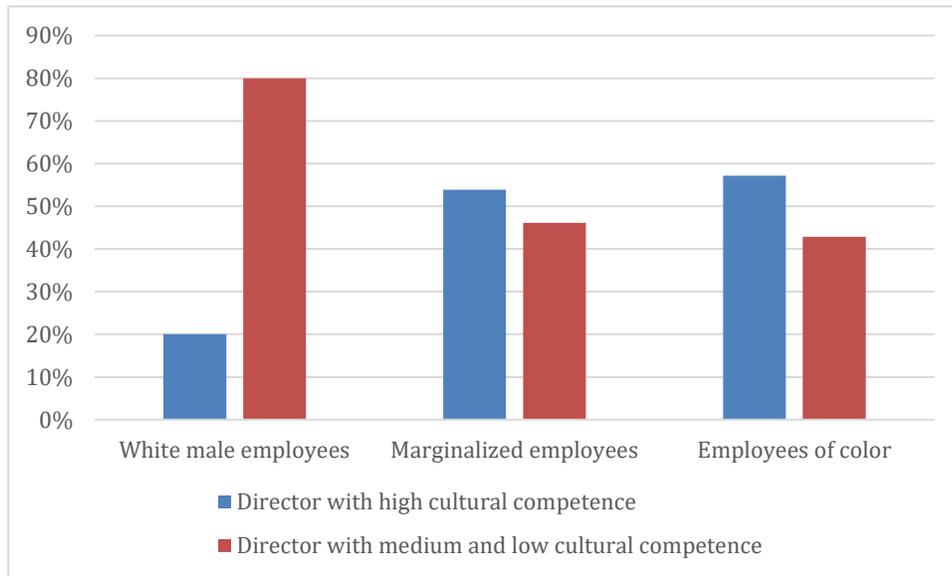


Figure 29. Cultural Competence and Employees

The company's IDI average for all directors was in minimization: They grossly overestimated their cultural competence and lacked the skills needed to successfully

bridge cultural differences (Figure 11). The company-wide lack of D&I advocacy at the director level was articulated when Dissimilar 6 (Black female with medium cultural competence) expressed that she was not optimistic about her white peers' ability to promote Black employees. When asked if a minority leader could be successful at this company she said, "I do think white women can be, um, I do think LGBT people community can be. I struggle and I think only time will tell if Black people can be."

Procedural justice—Feedback

Existing literature shows that employees' perceptions of procedural justice (perceived fairness in processes) were correlated with their perceptions of their directors (Bies, 1987). Fair feedback processes are an important form of procedural justice. As described by the participants, good feedback is fair, balanced with commending and correcting conversations, scheduled regularly, and relative to the development and performance of the employee. It is described as being integral to remaining aligned with the director's performance expectations and perceptions. While it is a process, it must be given and perceived through the unique lens of individuals.

Giving feedback with high cultural competence

The study revealed 75% of the direct reports with high cultural competence directors perceived their feedback process to be fair. In contrast, only 20% of the direct reports with medium and low cultural competence directors perceived the feedback process to be fair; see Figure 30. This suggests that cultural competence has a relationship with fair feedback. To give details, Director 2 (white female, high cultural

competence) and Director 4 (white female, high cultural competence) were the only directors in this study to have both direct reports (similar and dissimilar) positively describe their feedback process as fair. This implied that their individual antecedent of high cultural competence (Director 2 in adaptation and Director 4 in cusp of adaptation) heavily shaped their ability to comfortably bridge differences that allowed them to have effective (transparent, quality, good cadenced) feedback conversations with their similar and dissimilar direct reports.

While 75% of direct reports (high cultural competence directors) were pleased with their directors' feedback process, 25% were not pleased. To illuminate, Dissimilar 1 asserted, "honest feedback not only builds trust, but it maintains trust within our relationship." She expressed a strong belief that feedback should be ongoing and "shouldn't just be provided when something isn't going well." Along the same sentiments, Dissimilar 3 explained, "My leader's very heavy-handed with coaching for the negative and not coaching for the positive. I don't feel as though my talents are valued, largely because a lot of the feedback I get is negative." The irony is that Director 3, like many leaders, did not have insights into how her team felt. She said,

I've always very much felt like we as leaders must be very careful with the words we use and very responsible for the feedback we give, because this is people's livelihoods. In our organization people are a bit more reckless and give feedback based upon perceptions. They don't have direct interaction. It becomes this carrying on of the Ya-Ya Sister Club and that's dangerous and frustrating to see.

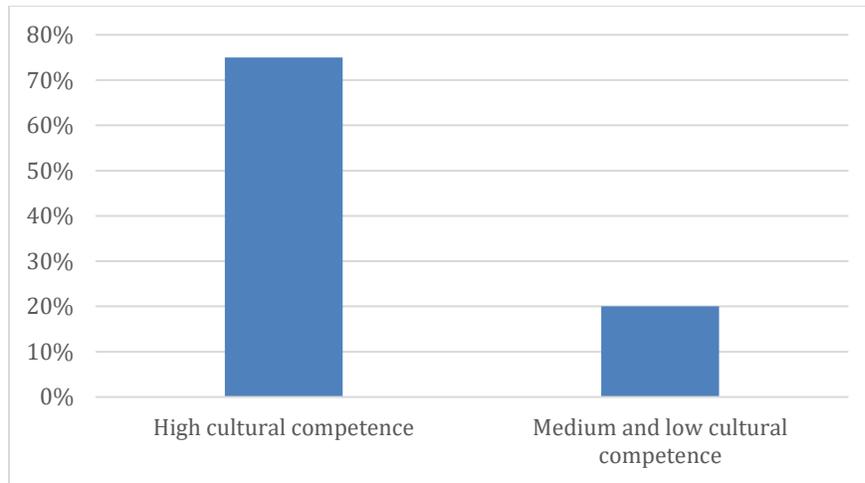


Figure 30. Cultural Competence and Fair Feedback

Giving feedback with medium and low cultural competence

Figure 31 details how 46% of marginalized direct reports (race and gender) and 29% of employees of color thought their feedback process was fair. Surprisingly, at 67%, more white females thought their feedback process was fair than their white male peers (at 40%). A deeper dive revealed that 67% of the white men who received unfair feedback from their director reported to women and people of color with low cultural competence. These directors' lack of cultural competence highlighted the importance of cultural competence of all leaders. Being a member of marginalized groups did not render them culturally competent. Regardless of the demographic background, directors who lacked cultural competence had a decreased ability to bridge differences with their employees and were simply unable to connect with their dissimilar direct reports. And while the stats show the inequity of power that white men hold in corporate America, these men, like many of their marginalized peers, felt the inequitable sting of their leader lacking dexterity to connect with them.

As demonstrated, Dissimilar 7 articulated the same negative sentiments about Director 7's feedback—it was inconsistent, and he did not trust it. He said,

I don't have much faith in it, uh, to be, to be honest. It's just one of those things. It's kind of, um, I'm having a hard time... That's one of my largest point of contention with my director and the senior director of trying to get any type of a consistent feedback—direct feedback, you know. It's so inconsistent. It's not documented. It's word of mouth. It's, uh, it's just kind of forgotten. What little shared with me is a verbal, uh, I, I, I just, at this point, I don't necessarily have that much faith in our process of, you know, promotion other than, um, or my, my career development to be honest with you.

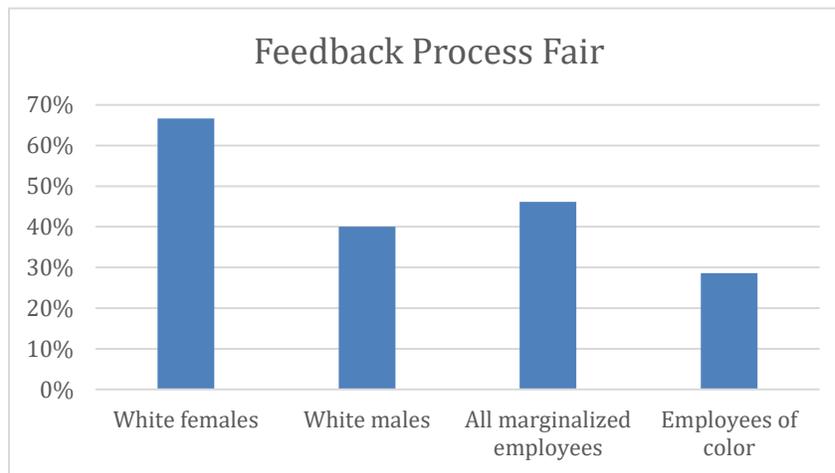


Figure 31. Demographics Feedback Process

All in all, directors with high cultural competence had increased probability they would give their direct reports a feedback process that is fair and of good quality. The rationale is simple: Culturally competent directors had the skill to successfully bridge

differences with their employees. This in turn co-created positive interactions that facilitated processes that were considered equitable, fair, and consistent.

Distributive justice

Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of personal outcomes (e.g., employee compensation and annual performance review ratings) (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Colquitt, 2001; Folger & Konovsky, 1989). This concept supposes that fairness can largely be demonstrated through equal distribution. This section presents findings on how annual performance reviews influenced employees' perceptions of their directors, both positively and negatively.

Fairness and surprises in annual performance reviews

Annual performance reviews (APRs), like the feedback process, had huge impacts on the employees' perceptions of the directors. When employees were given fair, good quality, regular cadenced feedback they were abreast of their directors' performance expectations and perceptions and were aligned with the annual performance reviews. The participants largely articulated that fair feedback equated to good annual performance reviews. They articulated that new performance issues should never be introduced during annual performance reviews. And 40% of the participants referenced good APRs as having "no surprises."

The APR ratings were considerably higher for white men than their marginalized peers. As revealed, 52% of all the participants received an EE or better for their performance rating. However, 89% of white men received an EE or better. And only

33% of marginalized employees, and 22% employees of color received an EE or better. These percentages, as illustrated in Figure 32, show the outcomes of the annual performance review. Still, it is prudent to compare the ratings with the feelings of the employees about the process.

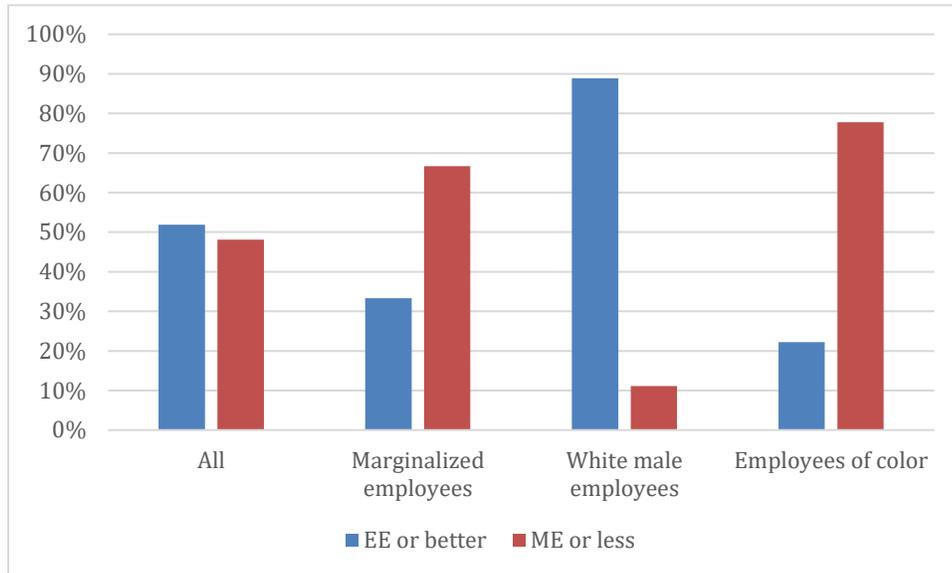


Figure 32. APRs for Participants

The relationship between fair feedback and fair annual performance reviews

There was a strong relationship between feedback and annual performance reviews.

Employees felt the fairness of their feedback process was comparable to the fairness of their annual performance reviews. As shown (see Figure 33), 75% of direct reports (high cultural competence directors) felt they received fair feedback processes and annual performance reviews, while 25% did not. As with the data from feedback processes, this data also revealed 20% of the direct reports (medium and low cultural competence), 29% of employees of color, 40% of white males, and 67% white females perceived their annual performance reviews as fair and well facilitated.

Again, the white females' numbers being higher than white males prompted a deeper dive.

To articulate the explanation differently, 75% of the white women who received fair APRs from their directors reported to other white women. Their similarity (white females) lessened the need for the directors to be culturally competent. However, 100% of these white female directors were high in cultural competence. Their cultural aptitude proved to be effective with creating more positive interactions and bonds with all employees, similar and dissimilar.

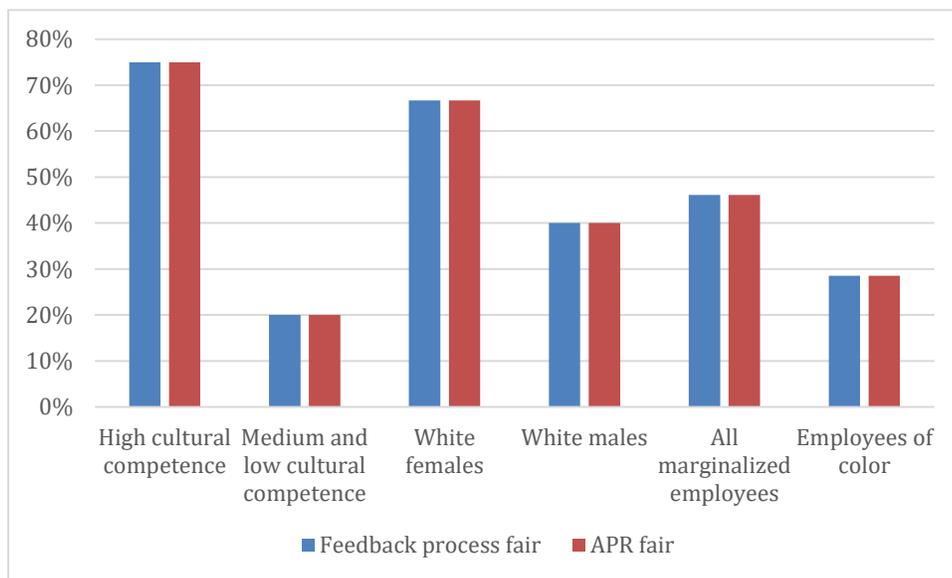


Figure 33. Relationship of Fair Feedback and Fair APR

The data also showed a strong relationship between the feedback process, annual performance reviews, and employees trust in directors (Figure 34). That is, employees who perceived their high cultural competence directors' feedback processes and

APRs to be fair also trusted their director. Similarly, only 29% of employees of color trusted their directors (high, medium, and low cultural competence), and only 29% perceived their directors feedback processes and APRs as fair. Thus, trust was integral in co-creating positive interactions with marginalized employees because it largely impacted the employees’ perceptions of the directors’ ability to give fair APRs and feedback.

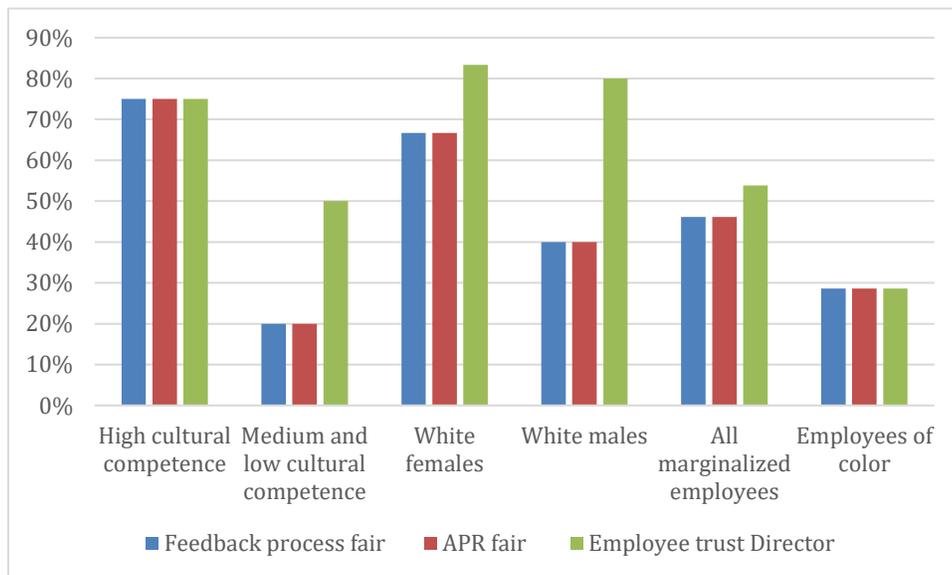


Figure 34. Relationship of APR, Feedback, and Trust

The directors who gave unfair and poor APRs’ adversely impacted the APR process for their skip level employees and created negative interactions with their direct reports. To explain, these directors (high, medium, and low cultural competence) overmanaged the APR process for their minority direct reports’ teams. They inserted themselves, controlled, and instructed their marginalized employees on how to conduct APRs. The directors’ unwelcomed and forceful interferences in the APR

processes rendered their marginalized direct reports (who were manager- and director-level leaders) unable to effectively lead and shield their teams from adverse impacts. Ultimately, the directors' uninformed evaluations and biases were cascaded amongst the entire teams, and employees' perceptions of inequitable and unfair treatment by leadership were heightened.

In one case, Director 1 (white male) instructed Dissimilar 1 (Black female) to assign her direct report a performance rating lower than she initially assigned. Dissimilar 1 regretfully lowered the performance rating, but declared to me "There is inconsistency in what is communicated on the APR. That gives me pause. Just know going forward, that I will give my employees what I believe they deserve and not cave into influences outside."

In another example, against his better judgement, Dissimilar 3 (Latinx male) followed the orders of Director 3 (white female) to amend the APR for one of his direct reports. She insisted he include more harmful additions to "hit the negative aspects." The employee who received the negative APR elevated concerns with HR, complaining of disparate treatment and discrimination by Dissimilar 3. Dissimilar 3 woefully confessed the personal impact of the incident. He said, "There's no way in my values, my core values, is that what I'm about. I would never do that to someone...Separating them out and whatnot."

In another case of directors' overmanaging, Director 6 (white male) pressured Dissimilar 6 (Black female) to fire a female manager who was previously on a performance improvement plan. Although this manager did a positive 180-degree improvement, Director 6 ordered Dissimilar 6 to fire this manager. Director 6 said, "You're not looking hard enough because, you know, I still think she is one of the worst managers in the organization." Dissimilar 6 admitted that the organization's pressure to get rid of this manager was heavy. She said, "If I don't do something, you know, then I'm going to be deemed as not confident enough. But her results are there right now."

These cases highlighted the compounding impact that negative interactions can have on employees' perceptions of their directors. The data also reinforced how directors with high cultural competence have the ability to effectively bridge differences, increasing the likelihood to co-create positive and equitable interactions and processes that positively influence their employees' perceptions of their leadership. However, having the skill is not the same as having the will. Directors must willfully decide to employ their cultural competence to authentically connect with employees who are dissimilar from them.

Outcomes

As a D&I practitioner, I initially began this research with a preconceived list of outcomes from inclusive leadership. I considered the outcomes of inclusion to be the most self-explanatory portion of the study. From my pre-research perspective,

inclusive leadership would render increased diverse senior leadership, pay equity, and a sense of belonging and authenticity for employees. And while it may support those outcomes, inclusive leadership alone will not yield those results. Instead, inclusive leadership proved to be the beginning efforts to creating inclusion (a sense of belonging and value for authenticity and uniqueness).

However, the outcomes of this research highlighted that matters of equity (giving everyone what they need to be successful) were largely unattended in the pursuit of inclusive leadership, alone. Instead, D&I practitioners must understand the difference and simultaneously support inclusion and equity. I named this effort *equision*—creating a sense of belonging and value for the authentic and unique expression of stigmatized differences while replacing barriers with opportunities that give everyone what they need to be successful.

This study identified that employees' senses of belonging and value for being their authentically unique selves were strongly tied to the directors' practices and the employees' individual antecedents. The directors' practices were also heavily influenced by their individual antecedents and the contextual setting. The employees' individual antecedents, however, played a dual role as they also influenced the employees' perceptions of the inclusive leadership. Thus, inclusive leadership (ability to be authentic and a strong sense of belonging) was ultimately the creation of employees and their directors.

Feeling valued

This research showed 88% of the direct reports (high cultural competence directors) felt they were valued (Figure 35). This elevated percentage suggested a strong relationship between employees feeling valued and having culturally competent directors. As identified earlier, culturally competent directors who effectively bridged differences and behaved positively increased the likelihood of creating experiences that positively affected their direct reports perceptions. These increased positive exchanges and positive relational gestures created sentiments of being valued, as proven in this research. Thus, employees' increased feelings of being valued were highly impacted by their directors' level of cultural competence.

To specify, directors made their employees feel valued by empowering them to use their voice, as with Director 2, who proclaimed, "I want people to challenge me. Everyone has a voice...My team can come into my office, shut the door, and they can vent...They know when they walk out, they're not going to be judged for any of it." In contrast, employees who were unable to voice their feelings did not feel valued. Dissimilar 3 perceived Director 3's communication style as "not affording everyone the opportunity to speak up" and "not deferring to folks at lower levels on the team to chime in." He explained, "My opinion should be sought out...I don't always feel comfortable sharing with her. I watch how I say and when I say...When you've got enough of a read on your audience, you find the right time when they're gonna be able to listen."

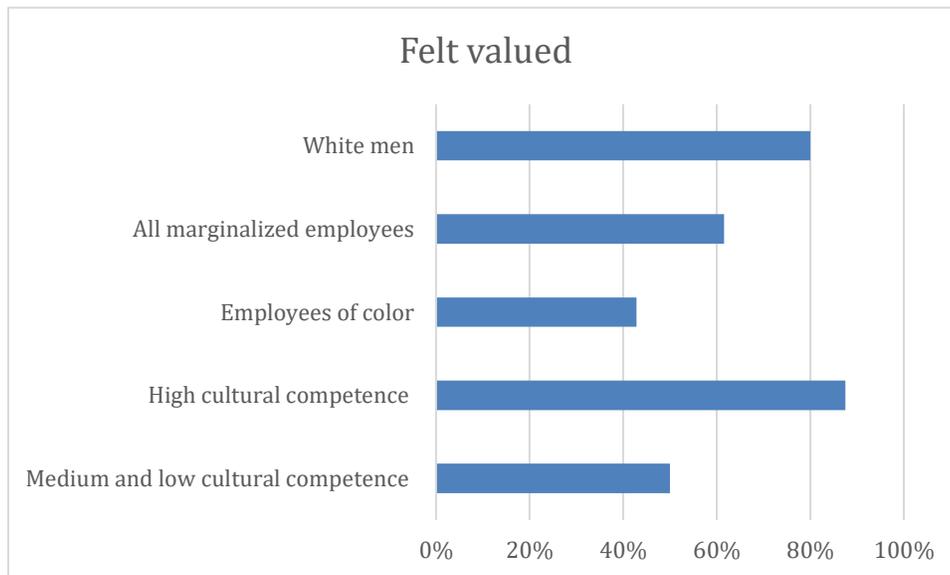


Figure 35. Relationship of Feeling Valued and Cultural Competence

Only 50% of the direct reports (from medium and low level of cultural competence directors) felt valued (Figure 35). This was not a surprise as it supported prior data points that proved high culturally competent directors increased the employees' positive perceptions, the leaders' behaviors, and outcomes. Also, 62% of marginalized employees and 43% of employees of color felt valued. After a deeper dive, I learned the 62% of marginalized direct reports who felt valued all had high cultural competence directors. And from the 43% of employees of color who felt valued, 75% of their directors had high cultural competence. This further supported the premise that culturally competent directors have an increased ability to create perceptions of inclusive leadership where employees feel a sense of value for being their authentic selves. Still, many leaders were unable to create positive relationships

with their direct reports—as in the case with one direct report who explained that while she is allowed to speak, she does not think “people will hear.” She said,

I pick my battles. I don't, I don't challenge as much as I think I could. I'm just trying to figure it out. Cause it seems that the challenges of other ethnicities are praised and recognized. I don't speak up and challenge as much as I used to when I was at (last job). I'll be honest because at (last job) I was the majority. I felt a little bit more comfortable to speak up and it was embraced a little bit more. Um, in this world I feel like I can speak up. I just don't know if, if they'll hear me.

She continued to describe meetings where she was “over-talked” and another meeting where she made an impactful recommendation that was ignored, but her peer repeated the exact recommendation and the idea was adopted. In another case, Similar 9 completed her annual culture survey and shared that she did not use her “authentic, real voice.” She continued, “I don't feel I'm in the right place to, to, um, continue to be vocal.” She believed that when she brought an issue to senior leadership it was ignored or “the conversation of appeasement” occurred.

The level of the director's cultural competence (high, medium, and low) influenced the ability to bridge differences. The high IDI scoring directors increased positive exchanges and positive relational gestures that created feelings of being valued. The medium and low IDI scoring directors did not have the ability to bridge differences. Thus, their relational gestures and exchanges were often negative, and half their direct reports did not feel valued.

Belonging and authentic self

This research showed 38% of the direct reports (from high cultural competence directors) felt a full sense of belonging, but 75% were not able to be their full authentic self at work. This suggests a strong relationship between feelings of belonging and being authentic. Employees who felt a sense of belonging but were not able to be their full authentic selves signaled their attempts to apply impression management tactics such as (a) covering, to mask distinct and stigmatized aspects of their social identities (Yoshino & Smith, 2018) and (b) mirroring, an intrapersonal process that marginalized employees undergo as they grapple with reflecting, mimicking, constructing, and understanding the “appropriate” workplace identities that defy common cultural stereotypes and simultaneously respect the ethos of their cultures.

As best described by Dissimilar 1 (Black female), “there’s levels of authenticity.” She clarified that her level of comfort in speaking with me (another Black female) was high, yet very different from how she presented her professional self. In another case, Similar 2 (white female), a self-proclaimed creative person, acquiesced, “I’m not like everyone else. I’m not going to be like everyone else...But we ultimately have a box that we need to fit into the larger department.”

Figure 36 further illustrates the results of belonging, authenticity, and cultural competency. These employees' sentiments exposed their conscious decisions to cover and mirror in an effort to belong.

Mirroring to belong

In a case where mirroring occurred, Dissimilar 2 (only Black female on team) admitted that Director 2 made her feel valued, but still she did not feel comfortable being her full authentic self. Her statement was further explained when she said, "I feel like it's my work that represents who I am. And I'm very lucky to have a leader that is focused mainly on the work." Dissimilar 2's mimicked desire to merely focus on her work, and not share personal aspects of herself, was mirroring the leadership posture that she perceived from Director 2.

Ironically, in our interview, Dissimilar 2 was incredibly open and overshared personal aspects of her life. However, her leader's overemphasis on their team's commonalities, not differences, exposed her trailing orientation of minimization on the Intercultural Development Continuum. People in this trailing orientation, like Director 2, at times have a prevailing mindset to highlight the universal commonalities of people and mask and minimize recognition and appreciation of cultural differences (Hammer, 2016). These limitations of Director 2's cultural competence explained why Dissimilar 2 felt compelled to mirror her behaviors. She did not feel empowered to be her authentic self and did not have a full sense of belonging. Her sense of belonging was temporal and not genuine.

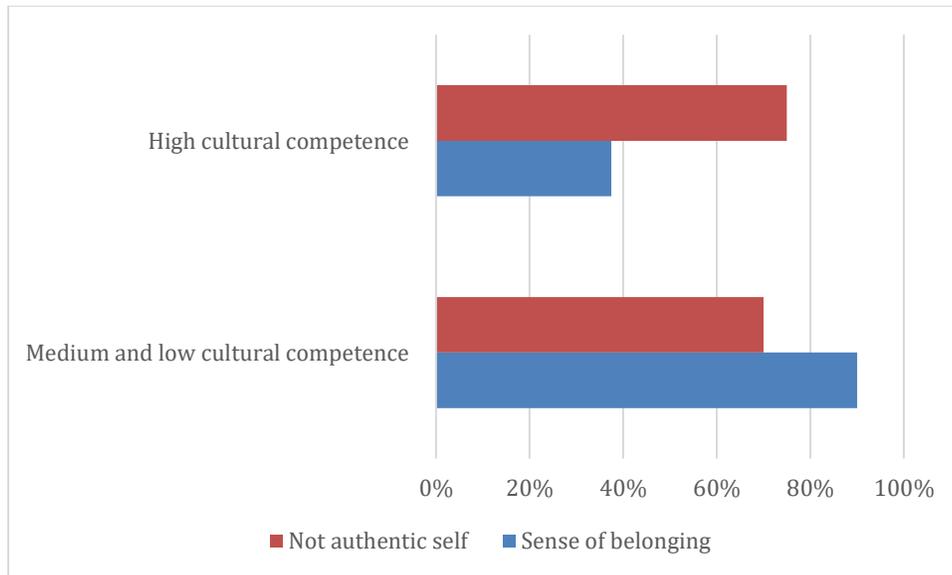


Figure 36. Relationship of Belonging, Authenticity, and Cultural Competence

Belonging and authenticity with medium and low cultural competence directors

An astonishing 90% of the direct reports (from medium and low cultural competence directors) described feelings of belonging. Yet 70% were not able to be their full authentic self at work. These two data points brought an important question to the fore: If 70% of employees were unable to be their full authentic self, how did 90% feel a sense of belonging? As proven in other cases, the inverse relationship of highly belonging but not being able to be authentic indicated employees’ assimilation and use of impression management tactics or mirroring to disguise stigmatized parts of their social identities to gain a sense of belonging. Thus, these employees experienced assimilation, not inclusion since they were not able to present a full expression of their authentic selves. As with other cases, their “sense of belonging” was ephemeral and not genuine. See Figure 37 for the relationship between belonging, inauthenticity, impression management, and mirroring.

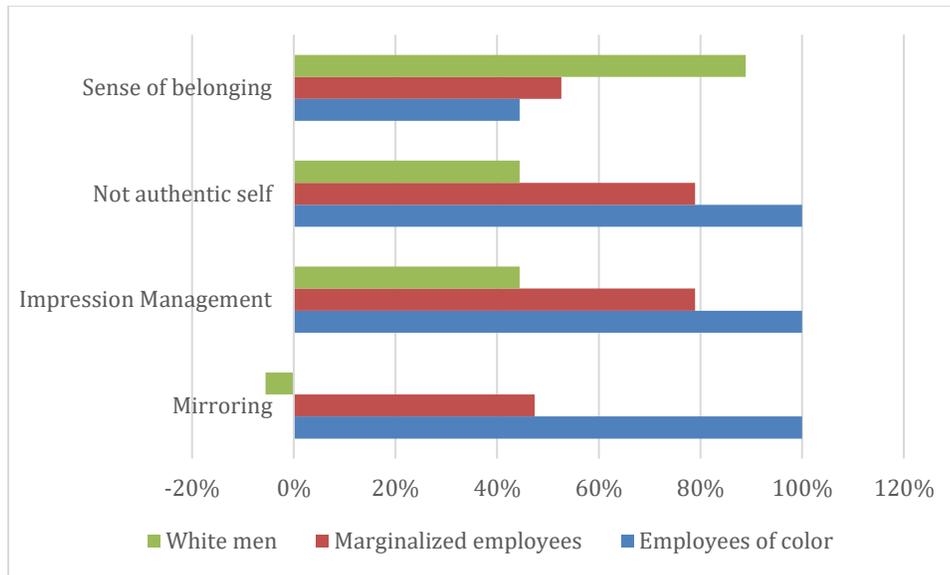


Figure 37. Belonging, Inauthenticity, Impression Management, and Mirroring

To further understand this phenomenon, I asked Director 6 (white male) about his team’s ability to be their authentic selves. He pointedly asserted, “I absolutely believe that because they can. They’ll get called out by me if they’re not being authentic to themselves.” His response overstated his authority and illuminated why his dissimilar direct report felt unable to be her authentic self. Still, his similar direct report (Similar 6, white male) voiced that he could be his authentic self. He said,

That’s a big part of what I, what I, like about being here...Is I don’t have to pretend I’m something I’m not. I don’t have to, um, say I agree when I don’t...You know, like that’s, that is a big part of why I leave here every night and feel fulfilled, if you will. I don’t think you can be your best at work if you are not your true self. I just, I don’t think we can maximize potential unless you’re very comfortable—professional, obviously—but, but comfortable bringing your best self with you every day.

Similar 6 was like his director, and he was afforded the right to be his authentic self. On the other end of the spectrum, his peer, Dissimilar 6 disclosed that she was torn about how she should show up in the workplace and disclosed, “the inclusion piece is missing.” She lamented,

When I do too much, you already know...I might be perceived as being aggressive...I can say whatever. I just don't know. I don't know how at the end of it, I'll be viewed.

Dissimilar 6 admitted to masking her true self and most times remaining quiet. She said, “I feel like I will be judged if I say certain things...I definitely can't say and express myself to (Director 6).” She restated, “I can't be my authentic self.” Then continued, “So it's different being an African American, millennial, female, single, no kids, no pets.”

An alarming 100% of the Black participants (directors and their direct reports) felt unable to be their full authentic selves. And 90% of all the direct reports (from medium and low cultural competence directors) experienced assimilation, not belonging. Fitting in was often confused with belonging although the two are very distinct constructs. Fitting in is akin to assimilation. According to Shore et al. (2011), assimilation is when employees are treated as organizational insiders but expected to conform to the customs of dominant culture—ignoring their uniqueness. Thus, the outcomes of inclusive leadership were manifested when all employees, especially

historically marginalized, felt a sense of belonging and value for being their authentically unique selves.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Results

Restating the Problem and Purpose

Given the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, it is clear that diversity is foundational to America's existence, as evinced in the following: (a) in 2015, women comprised 46.8% of America's workforce (Fry & Stepler, 2017); (b) the data showing that from 2015 to 2035, immigrants and their children will drive the growth of America's workforce (Passel & Cohn, 2017); and (c) in 2010, the Black population grew at a faster rate than the total U.S. population (Rastogi et al., 2010). The business case for diversity in the workplace was effectively established in other studies (Bourke et al., 2016; Dillon & Bourke, 2016; Hunt et al., 2012; Page, 2008, 2017).

This study recognized the physical, psychological, neurological, emotional burdens, and heavy costs that exclusion had on marginalized employees (Eisenberger et al., 2006; Kerr & Levine, 2008; Robinson et al., 2013). Marginalized employees were engaged and their performance was optimized when they were inclusively led (Page, 2008, 2017). The absence of aligned diversity and inclusion theories and pragmatic approaches are, in part, why American companies grapple with understanding how to create inclusion, inclusive leaders, and inclusive environments (Shore et al., 2018).

This study identified and explored the antecedents (cultural competence, confidence, proximity of work location, and trust), and the concept of directors and employees co-

creating perceptions of inclusive leadership in America's workplaces. The second part characterized some salient practices that gave perceptions of inclusive leadership: (a) interactional justice practices (work and play delineation, advocacy for diversity and inclusion), (b) procedural justice practices (feedback), and distributive justice practices (fairness and surprises in annual performance reviews). The final section discussed the outcomes (feelings of belonging and authenticity) of inclusive leadership.

Methodology

There was no recognized technique to distinguish an inclusive leader from an exclusionary leader. All experiences were created and perceived from varied lenses and perspectives. The participants' perspectives were shaped in part by their experiences, mental models, personalities, race, gender, sexual orientation, beliefs, values, and contextual settings. As supported by Tajfel (1981), the participants assessed things that happened in their environments with self-meanings and reacted with behaviors that preserved and supported their social identities, self-definitions, and personal identities.

So, simply asking a director if they were inclusive is flawed. People must be introspective to understand who they authentically are (mental models, biases, competencies). Similarly, asking employees if their director was inclusive is flawed without understanding the contextual background that situates their directors' behaviors, the individual antecedents of the directors, and the individual antecedents

of the employees. To better understand this phenomenon, I administered the IDI to directors, considered the employees' perceptions of their directors and the directors' perceptions of themselves, observed interactions and behaviors, and reviewed extant HR data.

The objective of this study was to shed light on the antecedents, behaviors, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplaces. Yin (2017) described analytic generalizations as generalizable findings and lessons that extend beyond the context of a specific case. Thus, the generalizability of these findings allowed me to effectively build theory (Eisenhardt, 1989b; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Interesting Findings

Co-creating with antecedents

The Lexico online dictionary defines *antecedent* as “a thing or event that existed before or logically precedes another” (“antecedent,” n.d., para, 1). In D&I practice and research, the primary focus has been building the business case, and emphasizing the practices (e.g., policies, processes, and behaviors) and outcomes (increased diverse leadership, engagement, pay equity, and decreased turnover) of inclusion, inclusive leadership, and inclusive environments (Dillon & Bourke, 2016; Nishii, 2013; Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). However, the antecedents such as *mental models* (generalizations that represent a domain or situation that strengthens understanding and interpretation) (Genter, 2001), demographic background, personality traits (e.g., confidence), biases, cultural competence, and proximity of

leader heavily influenced the directors' behaviors and employees' perceptions of inclusive leadership. In fact, this research showed that the individual and contextual antecedents had the greatest influence on the practices and perceptions of inclusive leadership.

While directors heavily influenced employees' perceptions of inclusion (Mayer et al., 2007; Randel et al., 2018), they alone did not create inclusion. The directors (high, medium, and low cultural competence) attested to treating their direct reports the same, with no preferential treatment. Still, their direct reports (similar and dissimilar) experienced and perceived different intentions, behaviors, and outcomes. The disparity of the direct reports' outcomes implied (a) the directors behaved differently based on how their individual antecedents were influenced by the contextual setting (country history, organizational culture, geographic setting, proximity to leader) and (b) the individual antecedents of direct reports (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, trust, biases, cultural competence) were uniquely different and played significant roles in the co-creation of interactions and perceptions of their directors' behaviors.

Psychologists and social psychologists debate the precursors of behaviors. Social psychologists usually take the *situationist view* that claims our behaviors and actions are primarily determined by our surroundings (Dumper, Jenkins, Lacombe, Lovett, & Perimutter, n.d.; Sabini, Siepmann, & Stein, 2001). I considered this perspective

flawed because it did not consider the individual antecedents that permeate behaviors (Dumper et al., n.d.; Sabini et al., 2001). In contrast, personality psychologists promote the *dispositionist view* that claims behaviors are primarily determined by internal elements such as beliefs, values, personality traits, or abilities (Dumper et al., n.d.; Sabini et al., 2001). I considered this flawed because it over-accentuated the traits of people and ignored the situational contexts for behaviors (known as fundamental attribution error (Dumper et al., n.d.; Sabini et al., 2001).

The behaviors of the directors were heavily influenced by the individual antecedents of the employees and directors (dispositionist view) and the contextual antecedents (situationist view). The context of the situation affected the individual antecedents of employees (dispositionist view). And individual antecedents swayed the employees' perceptions of the directors' behaviors. This study aligned with the social-personality psychology perspective that claims behaviors are complex interactions of both the situation (e.g., cultural background, social identity, and the existence of followers) and of the person's disposition (e.g., personality traits) (Dumper et al., n.d.; Russell, 2014; Sabini et al., 2001).

This study, however, does not suggest that employees from marginalized communities invite exclusionary behaviors, nor can they control them. Instead, this research provides a pronounced awareness and understanding of the distinct roles that leaders, employees, and antecedents have in the creation of inclusion perceptions.

This can inform how D&I practitioners create strategies and interventions to address and include the contextual and individual antecedents of leaders and followers. This framework provides theoretical support to eliminate colorblind D&I strategies and highlights the importance of having racial conversations that acknowledge the individual and contextual antecedents. It gives white male employees a framework to understand how their behaviors are influenced and perceived by their marginalized employees and peers. It illuminates the powerful influence of individual and contextual antecedents. It supports the articulation of these antecedents to ground effective conversations that bridge differences, invite empathy, and invoke grace. It situates marginalized employees in America's oppressive history and lessens the burdens of mirroring, assimilating, and applying impression management tactics to gain approval.

Literature gaps

The literature talks about inclusion as a phenomenon that happens to (or is received by) employees. It depicts employees as either victims of exclusionary behaviors or beneficiaries of inclusive leadership. Randel et al. (2018) acknowledged the role played by a leader's individual difference factors like pro-diversity beliefs, humility, and cognitive complexity. However, the limited literature excluded the contextual settings that support, ignite, and influence the leader's behaviors and the significant and active role that antecedents of marginalized employees play in the co-creation of experiences, relationships, and ultimately perceptions of inclusion and inclusive leadership. The literature's omission of these integral factors was demonstrated with

Mor-Barak and Cherin's (1998) theory of inclusion that described the phenomenon as a combination of company culture and diversity composition; Pelled et al. (1999) described it as a person being accepted and treated as an insider by others in a work system; and Janssens and Zanoni (2008) described it as simultaneously treating people the same while acknowledging their differences.

Nishii (2013) further described inclusive environments as having (a) fairly applied employment practices, (b) an integration of differences, and (c) inclusion in decision making. Shore et al. (2011) offered that people feel included when their belongingness and uniqueness needs are simultaneously satisfied. And a literature review on inclusive leadership defined it as "behaviors that collectively facilitate all group members' perceptions of belongingness to the work group and that encourage group members contributing their uniqueness to achieving positive group outcomes" (Randel et al., 2018, p. 194). They further described behaviors of belongingness as (a) supporting diverse employees, (b) ensuring fair and equitable experiences of employees, and (c) providing opportunities for shared decision making with an emphasis on sharing power (Randel et al., 2018). Still, these theories did not account for the antecedents that contextualize America's unique history, the individual antecedents that influence the behaviors of leaders, nor the individual antecedents of the employees who perceive the quality and inclusivity of the leaders' behaviors.

Findings of Co-Creation

Bridging and cultural competence

Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam did a landmark study that identified the two ways we form social connections and identify our sense of belonging to in- and out-groups as *bridging* and *bonding* (Putnam, 2000). Bonding occurred within members of in-groups (usually homogeneous) who connected through their shared cultural norms and values (Putnam, 2000; Tajfel, 1981). People in these bonded in-groups (“similar to me”) perceived themselves through their membership in the groups and experienced a sense of belonging to these groups that were important to them (Abrams et al., 1990; Putnam, 2000; Reicher, 1984; Tajfel, 1981; Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2012). And bridging occurred between members of two different out-groups (usually heterogeneous) who connected to share, usually from mutual need and desire (Putnam, 2000; Ross & Tartaglione, 2018; Tajfel, 1981).

Bridging facilitated the sharing of opinions, values, and cultures that built connections between different groups when they shared a mutual goal larger than their differences (Putnam, 2000; Ross & Tartaglione, 2018). Because America’s workplaces (contextual settings) are socially structured systems, our social identities, behaviors, values, and perceptions were heavily influenced by America’s history of oppression, discrimination, prevailing ideals, and stereotypes (Tajfel, 1981). Our social identities, specifically the ones that are based on observable characteristics like

race and gender, created and manipulated in- and out-group dynamics (Kearney & Gebert, 2009).

We developed an emotional and critical awareness of our group identities and preference to people who were similar to us when we were young (Abrams et al., 1990; Tajfel, 1981). We distinctly divided our social worlds into in-groups (similar to me) and out-groups (dissimilar to me) (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg, & Turner, 1990; Reicher, 1984; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2012). These embedded preferences and understanding of our social identities played an integral role in creating and resolving conflict and tension amongst people from varying cultural groups (Tajfel, 1981).

Cultural competence, the ability to shift cultural perspectives to appropriately adapt behaviors to cultural differences and commonalities (Hammer, 2016), required bridging. It is key to understand that bridging was done by mutual need or desire. Hence, directors having the skill of cultural competence did not always equate to having the will (desire) to apply the skill. Given the deep-rooted negative contextual antecedents of Black and Brown peoples' inequities in America, the dissimilarity of race and ethnicity required bridging skills. And while white women also experienced inequities, their cultural norms and similarity to white men attenuated the biases and negative effects of their gender differences. Although the cases were comprised of similar and dissimilar groups, dissimilarity in gender alone did not prove to require

cultural competence (bridging skills) to create positive perceptions; they only required bonding skills. Instead, bridging was required when there was a race or ethnicity differences. However, directors who lacked cultural competence were unable to bridge differences with their dissimilar direct reports.

Culturally competent leaders were skilled with the ability to effectively bridge differences by acknowledging and valuing the authenticity of all their employees, especially people from historically marginalized groups. Our sense of belonging was created from social interactions where reciprocal care and concern was expressed and frequent positive social exchanges (Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Confidence

Confidence is our certainty, belief, and expectancy about someone and/or something (“confidence,” n.d.). This study showed that many employees got their abundance or lack of confidence from their directors. That is, employees were influenced by the biasing expectations of their directors (Babad, Inbar, & Rosenthal, 1982). As supported by the Pygmalion effect that articulated how one’s expectancies of another become self-fulfilling, the impacts of the directors’ positive anticipatory images of employees increased the employees’ tendency to go towards it (Babad et al., 1982; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1969). The directors’ positive expectations of marginalized employees were influenced by the contextual settings of America’s prevailing stereotypes but attenuated with their individual antecedent of high cultural competence. Thus, these findings showed (a) marginalized employees had less

confidence than their white male peers and (b) there was a significant relationship between the employees' confidence and the directors' cultural competence.

As proven, 75% of the direct reports (high cultural competence directors) had high confidence. These high cultural competence directors displayed positive expectations through positive relational gestures. In turn, the direct reports (high cultural competence directors) perceived their directors' elevated expectations and co-created interactions that fulfilled the expectations and increased employees' confidence (Babad et al., 1982; Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1969).

On the other end of the spectrum, 78% of the direct reports (medium and low cultural competence directors) had low confidence, and 78% of all the direct reports with no confidence were from marginalized groups (race and gender). The low confidence of white men alone only represented 22% of all participants. This phenomenon was best articulated by Michelle Obama (2018): "Failure is a feeling long before it becomes an actual result" (p. 66). These medium and low cultural competence directors lacked the cultural competence to bridge differences, connect, and effectively communicate with their marginalized employees. Their employees experienced the Golem effect, a phenomenon described as directors placing low biased negative expectations on employees, and the employees' tendency to fulfill the prophecy (Babad et al., 1982; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1969). These medium and low cultural competence directors

exhibited their low expectations through negative interactions. The direct reports perceived their low expectations and co-created interactions that fulfilled the expectations and decreased the employees' confidence (Babad et al., 1982; Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1969). Thus, the antecedents of cultural competence (high, medium, and low) influenced the directors' behaviors, the co-creation of experiences, and ultimately the direct reports' confidence.

Trust

Trust was a precursor to marginalized people revealing their authentic selves (Clair et al., 2005). Employees' perceptions of interactional justice were largely associated with trusting their directors (direct leaders) (Barling & Phillips, 1993; Bies, 1987). This study showed 61% of the direct reports trusted their director as well as a strong relationship between cultural competence and trust. However, a deeper dive revealed that 80% of the white males trusted their directors, while only 54% of marginalized employees trusted their directors, and a mere 29% of employees of color trusted their directors. Data showed (a) marginalized employees (race and gender) had less trust in their directors than their white male peers; (b) there was a strong relationship between distrust of directors and employees of color; and (c) there was a strong inverse relationship between trust and the cultural competence of the directors of white men.

These findings also suggest that the directors of white men do not need high cultural competence to gain trust from their white male employees. Even when the white male

reported to a woman of a different race, he trusted the director. These findings highlight the strong influence that individual and contextual antecedents have on leaders' behaviors and followers' perceptions. However, the culture of corporate America was created by white men, so their contextual positioning is one of familiarity, privilege, and power (DiAngelo, 2011; Page, 2017). They did not need to trust to be included. They are the foundation of the socially structured companies and status quo (Page, 2017). White men's distrust of directors was not experienced as widely as employees of color. In contrast, white men experienced more positive outcomes in their annual performance ratings (Figure 32) and recent figures show white men leading over 92% of Fortune 500 companies (Zarya, 2018)

Also shown was the reciprocal nature of trust between the leader and follower. As proven, 75% of the direct reports (high cultural competence directors) trusted their director, and 75% of high cultural competence directors trusted their direct reports. At the other end of the cultural competence continuum, 50% of the direct report (medium and low cultural competence directors) trusted their directors, and 50% of the medium and low cultural competence directors trusted their direct reports.

As with its relationship to confidence, the cultural competence of directors largely influenced the reciprocal trust created with their employees of color. That means the directors' antecedent of cultural competence (high, medium, or low) positively or negatively swayed their behaviors and facilitated interactions that either bridged,

where reciprocal care and concern were expressed and imbued a sense of trust with their direct reports, or divided, where there was no sense of reciprocal concern or care, and a mistrust of the direct reports was created (Babad et al., 1982; Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Putnam, 2000; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1969).

The results that showed trust being developed through positive frequent interactions over time aligned with the belonging theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). An astounding 86% of employees who did not trust their director were from marginalized communities (race, gender). This highlighted the importance of understanding how the contextual setting is situated against the directors' dispositions, a social-personality psychology perspective (Dumper et al., n.d.; Russell, 2014; Sabini et al., 2001). These antecedents influenced the directors' behaviors and employees' perceptions of trust. Further, trust was a precursor to marginalized employees revealing their authentic selves. When employees perceived their directors as fair, their trust increased.

Work proximity

Employees who worked in close proximity to their directors experienced increased informal and unplanned exchanges and encounters that amplified their feelings and perceptions. The data showed that proximity had polarizing effects on employees.

The cultural competence of the directors and work proximity to their employees were highly correlated to the employees' feelings of inclusion or exclusion. The bad outcomes showed 86% of employees who experienced exclusion were from

marginalized groups (race and gender) and worked at the same location as their director. What is more, 71% of those directors had medium and low cultural competence. Also, 92% of employees who were not able to be authentic at work and 85% of employees who used impression management tactics to gain a sense of belonging worked at the same location as their director. At the other end of the spectrum, the good outcomes of employees working in close proximity showed 86% of employees who had high confidence worked at the same location as their director. Also, 73% of employees who felt valued and 73% of employees who trusted their director sat at the same location as their director.

These dichotomous statistics highlighted the polarizing effect that working in close proximity had on employees' experiences and perceptions of their directors' behaviors. Working at the same location magnified behaviors and increased the employees' perceptions of directors as being inclusive or exclusionary. Frequent interactions that were initially perceived as bad became worse, and good interactions were perceived as great. When nurtured, recurring interactions (e.g., walks to Starbucks, lunch dates, water cooler talks, casual walks) became positive and allowed direct reports and directors to get acquainted. Their frequent exchanges imbued a sense of trust and familiarity that cultivated positive working relationships. However, when the exchanges were not positive, the frequent interactions augmented negative feelings and distrust.

The contextual antecedents heavily influenced the directors' and employees' behaviors. The close proximity of the directors' teams created frequent interactions that afforded the directors and their teams to go through Tuckman's (1965) forming, storming, norming, and performing stages quickly. When these interactions were positive, it created perceptions of inclusion (Brimhall et al., 2017). Thus, the increase of positive and close proximity encounters heavily influenced employees' perceptions of interactional justice—perceived fairness of interpersonal treatment (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003; Bies, 1987, 2005; Folger & Konovsky, 1989).

A total of 88% of the medium and low cultural competence directors and their direct reports believed that working in close proximity to each other heavily influenced their perceptions and relationships. Their perceptions of close proximity's influence were, in fact, self-fulfilling: It intensified their negative and positive perceptions of behaviors. Thus, direct reports who worked in close proximity to their directors felt the behaviors of their directors were magnified.

However, dominant similarity to the director and/or high cultural competence attenuated the negative effects that proximity could cause. When directors were not culturally competent and worked in close proximity to their marginalized direct report, it intensified the bad experience for the employee. When directors were culturally competent and worked at the same location as their employee, it improved their relationship and increased perceptions. These cases highlighted the importance

of directors applying cultural competence to decrease biased and culturally excluding behaviors that created negative outcomes for marginalized employees.

Practices

Mirroring

A professor of psychology at the University of Florida profoundly asked, “Shall we permit our fellows to know us as we are, or shall we remain enigmas, wishing to be seen as persons we are not?” (Jourard, 1971). Throughout history, stigmatized people have chosen to mask their authenticity to protect themselves against criticism or rejection (Clair et al., 2005; Jourard, 1971). Stigma theory proposed that people within a culture commonly agree on which characteristics are considered stigmatizing and they will apply impression management techniques to maintain positive social perceptions (Clair et al., 2005; Goffman, 1963). Self-monitoring theory claimed that people observe, regulate, and control how much they will adhere to social expectations of their roles (Snyder & Copeland, 1989). High self-monitors are people who closely scrutinize how they are perceived in their interactions with others (Clair et al., 2005). They have increased awareness to situational pressures, a wide range of impression management behaviors, and likelihood to conform to socially acceptable norms (Clair et al., 2005).

These theories align with what I have named mirroring. Mirroring was a uniquely intrapersonal process that marginalized employees (high self-monitors) underwent as they grappled with reflecting, mimicking, constructing, and understanding

“appropriate” workplace identities that defied common cultural stereotypes and simultaneously respected the ethos of their cultures.

All minorities felt pressure to create “facades of conformity,” suppressing their individual values, perspectives, and traits to assimilate to the company. However, a study of 2,226 workers in various industries and companies proved that Black people created facades more frequently than other marginalized groups (Hewlin, 2003). And they felt the inauthenticity more deeply (Hewlin, 2003). Thus, mirroring challenged the fundamental values of marginalized people as they juggled their individual influences, contextual situations, and their metaperceptions of their directors in an effort to gain contextual clarity of self.

Mirroring, in part, is aligned with the theory of reflected appraisals that claimed people assume the responses of others and create self-evaluations based on them (Kinch, 1968) and the theory of the looking glass that claimed people judge themselves by how others perceive and respond to them (Cooley, 2017; Kinch, 1968). The theory of reflected appraisals further suggested (a) the frequency of reinforcing interactions, (b) the perceived significance of the other person, (c) the temporal proximity of interactions, and (d) the consistency of the responses inform a person’s concept of self (Kinch, 1968).

Mirroring, however, extends these theories to include the metaperceptions of the marginalized person, their individual antecedents (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, trust, biases, cultural competence), contextual antecedents (country history, organizational culture, geographic setting, proximity to leader), and the perceptions and judgements of the director and the directors' individual antecedents. Marginalized people, specifically people of color, have strong cultural identities that permeate their behaviors. When they see themselves and people who look like them, they see a clear reflection of their culture self. Social identity theory supports this by claiming that our identities influenced how we view ourselves (Tajfel, 1981) and how we believe we are perceived by others (metaperceptions) (King, Kaplan, & Zaccaro, 2008). Thus, when marginalized people interact with people from their social identity group, their metaperceptions are closely related to self-perceptions (Frey & Tropp, 2006).

In contrast, when outgroups interact with people from different social identity groups, their metaperceptions were expected to be based on stereotypes (Frey & Tropp, 2006). Marginalized people assess and evaluate people who differ from them, and they question how the other people will perceive and interact with them (King et al., 2008). The marginalized employees' encounters with dissimilar directors were instantaneous reminders of differences that prompted them to quickly suppress authentic expressions of their culture to mitigate well known stereotypes by mirroring the behaviors, gestures, and vernacular of the director. The marginalized employee's

identity became a distorted mirror that waddled between a clear reflection of their unique cultural background to a shrinking, stretching, and amalgamated reflection of their metaperceptions of the director and their perceived ought self (a portrayal of qualities that they and others thought they should possess) (Higgins, 1987).

As aligned with other research, the marginalized employees in this study struggled to gain approval and navigate the political nuances of corporate America (Carbado & Gulati, 2000, 2009). They consistently struggled to gain clarity of self through their metaperceptions and reflections from their distorted mirror. The confines of America's workplaces (antecedent—contextual settings) morphed their identities, and their self-understandings shifted in the context of America's inequitable workplace. They ultimately struggled to understand who they were, where they fit, and how they should engage in corporate America.

To elaborate, Carbado and Gulati (2000) claimed that discrimination against Blacks in the workplace was driven by physical indications of difference (e.g., color of skin and hair), and behaviors that Black people presented in their workplace identities (e.g., speech, mannerism, personality, gestures). Black people did not have the privilege of covering (as established in prior literature), because the color of their skin revealed their stigmatized characteristic. This study showed 100% of the people of color and over a dozen other Black directors and employees engaged in mirroring to navigate their relationships and interactions at work. Further, 100% of the people who

mirrored also expressed being unable (or partially unable) to be their authentic self at work. To be accepted and to appear less different, employees labored to conceal their authentic cultural leakages with behaviors, values, and linguistics that mirrored dominant culture.

This company had eight employee resource groups (ERGs) dedicated to diversity and inclusion. These were volunteer, company-supported, and employee-led groups drawn together by shared characteristics (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, ability). These groups formed a sense of community for marginalized groups. While the organization had approximately 2,500 employees (over 40%) who were members of the ERGs, 78% of this study's people of color were not part of an ERG and 100% of the directors of color (high, medium, and low cultural competence) were not affiliated with the ERG dedicated to their cultural background (e.g., Black, Latin X, Asian). Their behaviors of disassociation were echoed in a nationwide survey of 374 Black professionals revealing that 78% experienced discrimination, and 38% felt their companies would never allow them to speak about their experiences of bias (Hewlett, Marshall, & Bourgeois, 2017). Affiliation into groups (like ERGs) articulated a divide and had an implicit negative effect on the person of color's professional trajectory. To avert discrimination, they avoided behaviors that were closely tied to their cultural identities and acted in ways that were racially palatable to white people (Carbado & Gulati, 2000). Many Black employees ultimately accepted colorblind strategies and assimilation norms (Carbado & Gulati, 2000). Thus, many ambitious people of color

intentionally aligned with an ERG different from their cultural background or steered away all together.

Black people represent 13.4% of America's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018) and 12% of the workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). There are only three Black chief executives of Fortune 500 companies (Donnelly, 2017), and Black individuals make up only 8% of managers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). Black employees struggled to fit in and found it emotionally taxing to be Black in America's workplace (Travis, Thorpe-Moscon, & McCluney, 2016). Expressions of Black culture were often evidenced in vernacular, expressive gestures, robust orations, music affinities, dance and rhythmic expressions, hair and fashion choices, religious and values-based foundation, cuisine, worldviews, and political affiliations. When Black people saw other Black people, they saw a distinct reflection of themselves and their cultural experiences. Still, they struggled with feeling inauthentic at work (Hewlin, 2003). And 53% of Black college educated employees under 50 attested to having to frequently change how they expressed themselves around people from difference racial and cultural backgrounds (Dunn, 2019).

The tales and parables about the field slave (darker skin complexion, did fieldwork, not given adequate clothing to cover their bodies) and the house slave (lighter skin complexion, did domestic work, given food and clothing leftovers from the slave masters) are often referenced in Black communities across America. These anecdotes

are narrated when Black people act pretentious, inauthentic, and undermine other Blacks for favor with white people. The aim of the narration is to communicate that while a house slave thinks they are superior to the field slave, they are all but slaves to the slave master who seeks to use and divide them.

Similarly, the Black employees carried the burden of not selling out or acting like house slaves. They were expected to show brotherly and sisterly love to other Blacks in the workplace. However, their expressions of authenticity were waddled to distorted, shrunken, stretched out, amalgamated reflections of the people they were around. Specifically, mirroring of Black employees bared the ancestral imprint of being descendants of Africans who were enslaved and systemically disenfranchised by America's people and government. Mirroring challenged a fundamental value of Black employees—to be authentic and real.

This study found that marginalized employees were careful not to upset the sensibilities of their white male directors. Their efforts to create the “appropriate” workplace identity that countered prevailing stereotypes were exhausting (Carbado & Gulati, 2000). Many participants discussed the uptick of racial issues in the workplace since Trump's presidency. See Appendix C for a chart of FBI hate crime statistics for 2017. America's hate crimes increased 17% from 2016 to 2017 (Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2017). These numbers illuminate

systemically driven cultural nuances that communities of color engaged with on a daily basis.

People naturally seek to belong to a group. Upon meeting new people, our salient characteristics such as race, gender, and age divide us into distinct groups. There is an implicit expectation of people of color to divorce their cultural differences to assimilate into the larger company universal culture. Covering is an ineffective impression management tactic for Black employees because the color of their skin and the inequalities associated with it permeate their presence. Instead, they employ mirroring to defy common cultural stereotypes while simultaneously attempting to respect their cultural upbringing and fulfill the anticipatory expectations they perceived their directors held.

Feedback and APR

When employees were given fair, good quality, and regularly cadenced feedback, they were abreast of their directors' performance expectations and perceptions and were aligned with the annual performance reviews. The paralleled results of feedback and APRs revealed that 75% the direct reports of high IDI scoring directors perceived their feedback processes and annual performance reviews to be fair and of good quality. Similarly, only 20% of the direct reports of medium and low IDI scoring directors perceived their feedback processes and annual performance reviews to be fair. This data suggests there is a strong relationship between (a) employees' perceptions of the feedback process and annual performance reviews, which implied

that employees saw them as an extension of each other, and (b) cultural competence and fairness in feedback and APRs.

The feedback processes and annual performance reviews had huge impacts on the marginalized employees' attitudes and perceptions of their directors. As learned, only 46% of marginalized employees (race and gender) and a mere 29% of employees of color received fair feedback processes and APRs. Additionally, 67% of white females and only 40% of white males considered their feedback processes fair. A deeper dive revealed that 67% of the white men who received unfair feedback from their director reported to women and people of color with low cultural competence. These directors' lack of cultural competence prevented them bridging with people who were dissimilar from them (Putnam, 2000; Ross & Tartaglione, 2018; Tajfel, 1981).

Equally revealing, 75% of the white women who received fair APRs from their directors reported to other white women. Their similarity (white females) lessened the need for the directors to be culturally competent. However, 100% of these white female directors were high in cultural competence. Their cultural aptitude proved to be effective with creating more positive interactions and bonds with all employees, similar and dissimilar. In sum, the directors' cultural competence was perceived by their employees and exhibited in the directors' behaviors.

Also uncovered, the feedback process, annual performance reviews, and employees' trust in directors were highly correlated. All of the direct reports who trusted their

director (high, medium, and low IDI scoring) perceived their directors' feedback processes and APRs as unfair and of poor quality. Similarly, 29% of employees of color trusted their directors (high, medium, and low cultural competence), and 29% perceived their directors' feedback processes and APRs as fair. Trust was integral in co-creating positive interactions with marginalized employees because it largely impacted their perceptions of directors' abilities to give fair feedback processes and annual performance reviews.

These cases highlighted the compounding effects that frequent interactions can have on employees' perceptions of their directors (Carver, 2004). The data also reinforced how directors with high cultural competence have the ability to effectively bridge differences and an increased likelihood to co-create positive and equitable interactions and processes that positively influence their employees' perceptions of inclusive leadership. However, having the skill is not the same as having the will. Directors must willfully decide to employ their cultural competence to authentically connect with their marginalized employees.

The employees' perceptions of procedural justice (perceived fairness in processes) became evident in their articulation of their feedback processes. As supported by research, procedural justice perceptions were heavily influenced by the employees' perceptions of objective, fair, bias-free processes (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001). These fair processes, like feedback, aimed to produce fair outcomes

(distributive justice) for employees, like annual performance review ratings (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Colquitt, 2001; Folger & Konovsky, 1989). These high distributive justice perceptions were fostered in employees when annual performance reviews were equitable (Colquitt, 2001). However, the interactional justice perceptions (perceived interpersonal fairness) were largely associated with employees trusting their directors (Barling & Phillips, 1993; Bies, 1987). As proven by research, interactional justice perceptions strongly influenced employees' attitudes (Bies & Moag, 1986; Bies & Shapiro, 1987). The interactional justice perceptions were determined by the employees' relationships with their directors. Thus, no process or outcome will be fair unless the director, who heavily influences how processes are implemented and outcomes are distributed, is fair.

Outcomes

Belonging and authenticity

Humans are social beings. Having a sense of belonging signifies the presence of positive, stable, and significant relationships in our lives. Our sense of belonging consists of (a) enduring social interactions where reciprocal care and concern is expressed and (b) frequent social exchanges that are not negative (Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Our emotions, cognition, and behaviors are predominantly influenced by the quality of our social interactions (Baumeister, 2012; Gordon et al., 2008). These social interactions and connections help us to maintain psychological and physical well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Kerr & Levine, 2008; Wesselmann & Williams, 2017). However, brief social interactions alone

cannot satisfy our desire to belong. This innate need is only satisfied with genuine bonds that create a sense of belonging (Baumeister, 2012).

This study showed 100% of the Black participants (directors and their direct reports) felt unable to be their full authentic selves, and 90% of all the marginalized direct reports (race and gender medium and low cultural competence directors) experienced assimilation (employees are treated as organizational insiders but expected to conform to the customs of dominant culture, ignoring their uniqueness), not belonging (Shore et al., 2011). Similarly, 38% of the direct reports (from high cultural competence directors) felt a full sense of belonging, but 75% were not able to be their full authentic selves at work. There was a strong relationship between feelings of belonging and being authentic. Employees who felt a sense of belonging but were not able to be their full authentic selves signaled their attempts to apply impression management tactics such as (a) covering to mask distinct and stigmatized aspects of their social identities (Yoshino & Smith, 2018) and (b) mirroring, an intrapersonal process that marginalized employees undergo as they grapple with reflecting, mimicking, constructing, and understanding the “appropriate” workplace identities that defy common cultural stereotypes and simultaneously respect the ethos of their cultures.

As proven in other cases, the inverse relationship of highly belonging but not being able to be authentic indicated employees’ assimilation and use of impression

management tactics or mirroring to disguise stigmatized parts of their social identities to gain a sense of belonging. Thus, these employees experienced assimilation, not inclusion, since they were not able to fully present an expression of their authentic selves.

We all share a basic need: to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). We all seek to gain acceptance and avoid rejection from others (Baumeister et al., 2007; Eckes & Trautner, 2000; Erikson, 1985; Maslow, 1954). This data confirmed research that the majority of marginalized employees in America applied impression management tactics (Yoshino & Smith, 2018). Our social identities prompt behaviors that support stereotypical perceptions that give and rescind our sense of pride and belonging (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Authenticity is a privilege. Marginalized people often have a stigmatized characteristic of their identity that they mask to assimilate (Yoshino & Smith, 2018). I observed the natural ways that employees attempted to differentiate themselves while simultaneously looking to find their sense of belonging in a group (Brewer, 2007). Not everyone can be authentic without perceived and realized penalties. To create inclusion, there needs to be value for uniqueness and a high sense of belonging (Shore et al., 2011). Our sense of belonging consists of (a) enduring social interactions where reciprocal care and concern are expressed and (b) frequent social exchanges that are not negative (Baumeister, 2012; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Thus,

outcomes of inclusive leadership were manifested when all employees, especially historically marginalized individuals, felt a sense of belonging and value for being their authentically unique selves. Our sense of belonging is essential to inclusion (Stamper & Masterson, 2002).

Chapter 6: Implications for Practice and Future Research

Chapter Overview

This final chapter will examine the practical and theoretical implications of this study and suggest recommendations for future research. This chapter will conclude with a summary of the research.

Implications for Practice

This study provided several contributions: (a) a theoretical model (illustrating the process of co-creating experiences) to inform the effective design of learning and development programs, diversity and inclusion strategies, and interventions; (b) insights into mirroring, a uniquely intrapersonal process that marginalized employees undergo as they grapple with reflecting, mimicking, constructing, and understanding “appropriate” workplace identities that defy common cultural stereotypes and simultaneously respect the ethos of their cultures; and (c) a plethora of data on how a leader’s cultural competence can influence employees’ confidence, trust, perceptions of fairness, authenticity, feelings of belonging, and experiences of leaders.

The data from this research could be applied in corporate America in a plethora of ways, including to inform the development and creation of the following:

- An inclusion competency as part of the annual performance review process and performance management strategies,

- A culture that expects and rewards participation in D&I activity,
- Cross-cultural mentoring programs,
- The calibration of promotions against inclusive and culturally competent leaders,
- Focused training that promotes authenticity and mindfulness,
- Facilitated discussions about race in America's workplace,
- Shadowing programs for young minority employees,
- Expectations for leaders to participate in employee resource groups,
- Zero tolerance policies and cultures for exclusionary behaviors,
- Interactive training initiatives to improve the cultural communication, and
- Job aides, training, and live modeling of effective feedback and APR processes

Using the theoretical model to develop programs

The theoretical model illustrates the process of co-creating inclusive leadership. It displays how the individual antecedents of leaders and followers (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, trust, biases, cultural competence) and contextual antecedents (country history, organizational culture, geographic setting, proximity to leader) acted as mediating variables that heavily affected the practices (behaviors) of leaders (acknowledging and valuing authenticity of uniqueness and facilitating positive interactions that promoted equity, authenticity, and belonging). The contextual antecedents also influenced the individual antecedents of followers (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, biases, cultural competence). And the individual antecedents of the follower acted as moderating

variables that strongly influenced the follower's perceptions of inclusive leadership (ability to be one's authentic self and a strong sense of belonging).

This model provides a scholar-practitioner approach and gives a wide-range view for D&I practitioners to understand the influencers of inclusion. With this tool, practitioners can create effective strategies to increase awareness around individual antecedents. For example, a forward-thinking D&I leadership development program could educate leaders on the powerful effects of the contextual antecedents on perceptions of behaviors. This could include a year-long program where the D&I department that partnered with the employee resource groups to sponsor and facilitate programs that promoted conversations about race and gender issues to include white heterosexual able-bodied men's perspectives. The context of these conversations would promote openness, psychological safety, and trust.

Cultural competence programming

This study proved the positive and negative impacts of having or lacking cultural competence. And it urges leaders in corporate America to build their *cultural competence*—the ability to shift cultural perspectives and appropriately adapt behaviors to cultural differences and commonalities (Hammer, 2016). With the knowledge of *bridging* (connecting with people dissimilar to me) and *bonding* (connecting with people similar to me) (Putnam, 2000; Tajfel, 1981) diversity and inclusion (D&I) practitioners could create interactive programming that intentionally partners similar and dissimilar employees and leaders for frequent positive

interactions. The Intercultural Development Inventory could be administered to assess leaders' cultural competency pre- and post-D&I interventions. The results of this study could inform corporate decisions to invest in cultural programming to increase the experiences, interactions, and encounters with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Given the knowledge that proximity influences relationships, corporations can mitigate negative effects by investing in cultural experiences to bring their dispersed teams together. They can further create and support a culture that dispels the myths of proximity by providing technology tools that have video availability and expectations that leaders and followers have cadenced meetings using technology, regardless of their proximity. Ultimately, the outcomes of this research could support and inform a collaborative scholar-practitioner approach that is required to address the challenges of diversity and inclusion in corporate America (Shore et al., 2018).

Implications for Future Research

In this section, implications to extend this research are considered. First, further research to test the theoretical model on co-creation and inclusive leadership are needed. Doing a study with different types of organizations from variant industries would further prove the generalizability of this research. Also, a limitation of this study was the sample size. Although saturation was reached (Mason, 2010), a larger sample size would allow for more data analysis.

Researching *equision*

Second, this study employed a qualitative multicase study methodology to effectively collect, analyze, and combine the findings in a compelling manner (Yin, 2017). At the beginning of this study, I thought the outcomes of inclusive leadership would render a path to increased diverse senior leadership, pay equity, and a sense of belonging and authenticity for employees. And while it may support those outcomes, inclusive leadership alone will not yield those results. Instead, inclusive leadership proved to be feelings and perceptions. In the purest sense, inclusive leadership indicated leaders who co-created perceptions of inclusion for employees (a sense of belonging and value for authenticity and uniqueness). Still, D&I practitioners and researchers alike lump inclusive leadership to encompass increased diverse senior leadership and pay equity. However, the outcomes of this research highlighted that matters of equity (giving everyone what they need to be successful) were largely unattended in the pursuit of inclusive leadership alone.

Instead, research is needed to better understand the difference of the constructs: inclusion and equity. Moreover, there needs to be an insurgence of vernacular and understandings that fully encompasses the intention of creating morally ethical and authentic places for marginalized individuals to belong and optimize their talents with financial benefits. I named this effort *equision*—creating a sense of belonging and value for the authentic and unique expression of stigmatized differences while replacing barriers with opportunities that give everyone what they need to be

successful. Thus, a research method that employs a mixed method would consider the personal meanings captured in participant interviews and a statistical comparison to determine if the illusions of inclusion equate to equity for employees.

Bridging and bonding

There are instances when low cultural competence directors behaved in manners that created negative outcomes for their employees of color but positive outcomes for their other marginalized employees. Race attenuated the differences that gender caused. This highlighted the distinct difference in *bridging* (connecting with people dissimilar to me) and *bonding* (connecting with people similar to me) (Putnam, 2000; Tajfel, 1981). I surmise there are many micro skills, including the ability to take another person's perspective and empathy, that create cultural competence. Further research is needed to understand the components of cultural competence. What is lacking when there is bonding but an inability to bridge?

Mirroring

Further research is needed to understand how marginalized people apply mirroring in the workplace. How does mirroring affect their sense of identity? How does mirroring affect perceptions of their leadership with their similar and dissimilar peers and direct reports?

Conclusion

My study addressed the following research question: "What are the antecedents, practices, and outcomes of inclusive leadership in America's workplaces?" This study identified the antecedents to be most important in the co-creation and perceptions of

inclusion. The individual antecedents (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, trust, biases, cultural competence) and contextual antecedents (country history, organizational culture, geographic setting, proximity to leader) heavily influenced the creation of experiences that gave perceptions of the directors' behaviors.

A theoretical model was created to illustrate the co-creation of inclusive leadership. The model displayed how the individual antecedents of leaders and followers and contextual antecedents acted as mediating variables, heavily affecting the practices (behaviors) of leaders (acknowledging and valuing authenticity of uniqueness and facilitating positive interactions that promoted equity, authenticity, and belonging). The contextual antecedents also influenced the individual antecedents of followers (mental models, demographic background, personality traits, trust, biases, cultural competence). And the individual antecedents to the follower acted as moderating variables that strongly influenced the follower's perceptions of inclusive leadership (ability to be authentic self and a strong sense of belonging).

This research also discovered the insurgence of what I named, mirroring. It is a uniquely intrapersonal process that marginalized employees, especially Black people, underwent as they grappled with reflecting, mimicking, constructing, and understanding "appropriate" workplace identities that defied common cultural stereotypes and simultaneously respected the ethos of their cultures. Mirroring

challenged the fundamental values of marginalized people as they juggled their individual influences, contextual situations, and their metaperceptions of their directors in an effort to gain contextual clarity of self.

This research also identified cultural competence to be highly correlated to employees' trust in their director as well as employees' confidence, feelings of authenticity and belonging, feelings of being valued, fairness in the feedback process and annual performance reviews. The proximity of work location to the directors to their employees magnified the directors' behaviors. Culturally competent directors co-created positive experiences with their direct reports, while medium and low culturally competent directors co-created negative experiences for their employees of color. However, the frequency of positive interactions created positive sentiments where employees felt a true sense of belonging while being their authentic self. Thus, they co-created perceptions of inclusive leadership.

Appendix A: Consent Form for Interview

To: Potential Interview Participant

From: Salwa Rahim-Dillard, Ph.D. Candidate, Benedictine University

Subject: Informed Consent to Participate in Study

Date: ^^ Insert date here^^

Dear: ^^Insert name of whoever is granting you permission to access participants^^

My name is Salwa Rahim-Dillard, and I am a Ph.D. Candidate at Benedictine University. I am researching inclusive leadership. This research will add to the body of knowledge about inclusive leadership. This research could potentially assist with a greater awareness of how inclusive leadership affects the outcomes in Corporate America.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the interview. Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If at any time you do not want to continue with the interview, you may decline. Your time and involvement are profoundly appreciated. The entire interview will take approximately one hour. To maintain the essence of your words for the research, I will record the information. At any time, you may request to see or hear the information I collect. I will call you within ten days to set up a convenient time for the interview, which may be in-person or via video conference software.

The interview will be recorded, and I will take notes. This is done for data analysis. The recording will be transcribed and kept confidential in a password-protected computer. All individual identification will be removed from the hard copy of the transcript. Participant identity and confidentiality will be concealed using coding procedures. For legal purposes, data will be transcribed on to a compact disc and transmitted to a Benedictine University faculty member for secure and ultimate disposal after a period of seven years. Dr. James Ludema is the Benedictine University faculty member who will secure and ultimately dispose of the information. Please find his information is at the end of this form.

Excerpts from the interview may be included in the final dissertation report or other later publications. However, both you and your organization will be assigned a pseudonym. If, at a subsequent date, biographical data were relevant to a publication, a separate release form would be sent to you.

I would be grateful if you would sign this form on the line provided below to show that you have read and agree with the contents. Please return it by email to me at salwarahim@gmail.com. An electronic signature is acceptable.

Your electronic signature above

If you have problems with the electronic signature, please call me at 708.250.8033.

This study is being conducted in part to fulfill requirements for my Ph.D. in Values-Driven Leadership at Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois.

The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Benedictine University. The Chair of Benedictine University's Institutional Review Board is Dr. Alandra Devall. She can be reached at 630.829.6295 and her email address is adevall@ben.edu. The chairperson/advisor of this study is Dr. James Ludema. He can be reached at jludema@ben.edu or 630.829.6229 for further questions or concerns about the project/research.

Sincerely,

Salwa Rahim-Dillard
Benedictine University

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Questions for Directors

Interactional justice questions

- How do your direct reports perceive the transparency and candor of the decisions you make? Do you share your rationale for decisions?
- How do your direct reports perceive you treat them?
- How would you describe your relationship with your direct reports?
- Do your direct reports feel safe to share their ideas and contribute? Do they feel that you are attuned to their unique strengths and needs?

Procedural justice questions

- Is there a process for your direct reports to use their voice in decision-making?
- When decisions are made can your direct reports challenge them and offer an alternative? Do they?
- How do you determine who gets high-visibility projects and opportunities?
- How do you determine the level of information that will be shared with your direct reports?
- Share your philosophy about feedback. How do you give feedback?
- How do you give your high-potential employees extra feedback? How do you give additional feedback to employees who need more support?

Distributive justice questions

- Do you feel like your direct reports are properly acknowledged for their efforts? Position, salary, awards, and recognition?
- Are there people on your team who you heavily rely on, more than others? Like your go-to people? What did they do to earn that reputation?
- How often do you communicate with your direct reports? What's the cadence of your 1:1?
- Do you have informal and formal interactions like lunch and after-work events with any of your direct reports?
- How do you determine who gets promoted?
- How do you determine the performance ratings of your direct reports? Do you consider individual growth over 12 months, results accomplished, efforts exerted, and/or ranking against peers when completing the performance appraisal process?

Questions for Direct Reports

Interactional justice questions

- Do you feel your leader treats you in an equitable and consistent manner?
- Is your leader transparent and candid about the decisions they make?
- Do they share their rationale for decisions?
- How would you describe your relationship with your leader?
- Do you feel safe to share your ideas?
- Is your leader aware of your unique strengths and needs?
- Do you feel comfortable sharing and being your authentic self?
- Do you feel like you belong?

Procedural justice questions

- Are you able to voice your opinion in decisions?
- Is there a consistent process and neutral approach to involve you and your peers in the decision-making process?
- When decisions are made that you're not aligned with, how can you challenge them and offer an alternative?
- Do you feel you and your peers have an equitable opportunity to make decisions?
- What is your leader's philosophy on feedback?
- How does your leader give feedback? What's the process? Do some of your peers get more feedback than others?
- Is there a process for people who need you think additional feedback and support?
- How does your leader determine who gets high-visibility projects and opportunities?
- How does your leader determine the information that will be shared with you and your peers?

Distributive justice questions

- Do you feel like you and your peers are properly acknowledged for their efforts? Position, salary, awards, and recognition?
- Does your leader heavily rely on some of your peer more than others? Share an example.
- How often does your leader communicate with you? And your peers? Do you have a cadence for your 1:1 meeting?
- Do you have informal and formal interactions like lunch and after-work events with your leaders? Do your peers?
- Do you feel that the performance appraisal process is consistent for you and your peers? Promotion process? Are they free from bias?

Appendix C: FBI Hate Crime Statistics

Table 5. FBI Hate Crime Statistics

Bias motivation	Victims
Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry:	5,060
Anti-White	864
Anti-Black or African American	2,458
Anti-American Indian or Alaska Native	321
Anti-Asian	165
Anti-Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	18
Anti-Multiple Races, Group	229
Anti-Arab	131
Anti-Hispanic or Latinx	552
Anti-Other Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry	322
Religion:	1,749
Anti-Jewish	1,017
Anti-Catholic	76
Anti-Protestant	40
Anti-Islamic (Muslim)	325
Anti-Other Religion	86
Anti-Multiple Religions, Group	57
Anti-Mormon	15
Anti-Jehovah's Witness	13
Anti-Eastern Orthodox (Russian, Greek, Other)	27
Anti-Other Christian	32
Anti-Buddhist	12
Anti-Hindu	15
Anti-Sikh	26

Bias motivation	Victims
Anti-Atheism/Agnosticism/etc.	8
Sexual Orientation:	1,338
Anti-Gay (Male)	774
Anti-Lesbian	164
Anti-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender	333
Anti-Heterosexual	37
Anti-Bisexual	30
Disability:	160
Anti-Physical	37
Anti-Mental	123
Gender:	54
Anti-Male	26
Anti-Female	28
Gender Identity:	132
Anti-Transgender	119
Anti-Gender Non-Conforming	13

Appendix D: Study Participants

This Appendix provides a description of the participants of my study (10 directors and 18 direct reports). It includes the work background, company tenure, annual performance review (APR) ratings, demographics, and educational background for each participant. It also includes a brief summary of each director's cultural competence scores on the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and their orientation on the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC). Finally, it includes perceptions of the directors and their approach to leadership. These may include self-perceptions, the perceptions of their direct reports, and my perceptions and/or observations as a researcher.

High cultural competence—Director 1

Director 1 is a white male director from Generation X with over ten years of tenure at this company. He received a far exceeds expectations (FE) on his annual performance review last year and a meets expectations (ME) the year prior. He has an undergraduate degree and was recently promoted to this directorship from a different functional area. He has company tenure but no functional experience in the department he leads.

Director 1 scored the highest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. His Perceived Orientation (PO) was 139.16, an Adaptation mindset. His Developmental Orientation (DO) was 138.501, an Adaptation mindset. As a result, his Orientation Gap (OG) was 0.66 which means his perceived cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are closely aligned. Moreover, his IDI score revealed his ability to effectively bridge cultural differences. However, his Cultural Disengagement score of 2.8 reflects that he is unresolved with some aspects of his cultural community.

Director 1's direct reports

Director 1's similar direct report (referenced as Similar 1) is a white male manager who is a Millennial with over five years of tenure at this company. Similar 1 holds an undergraduate degree. The prior two years he received exceeds expectations (EE) on his annual performance review. He has been a direct report of Director 1 in the past and acknowledged their strong positive history and relationship. He works at the same geographic location as Director 1 was promised this current role before he officially interviewed. Similar 1 has no functional experience in the area he leads.

Director 1's dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 1) is a Black female senior manager from Generation X with a couple years tenure at this company. She received a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review and works

from the same location as Director 1. She holds two master's degrees and over 20 years of experience in her domain. Dissimilar 1 also applied for Director 1's current position but was passed over for what she perceived as office politics. After the interview, Dissimilar 1 was given a company award for being a "collaborative leader who consults across functions and leverages her experience."

Director 1 and his team displayed strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 1

Director 1 self-described as seeing the "glass half full," asking a lot of questions, and observing a lot. Similar 1 and Dissimilar 1 experienced Director 1 as having an open-door policy. Dissimilar 1 shared that Director 1 is "never too busy to take time and stop and actively listen." Similar 1 described Director 1 as an anomaly—a leader who combines "high emotional intelligence, care, and ethics in one package" and a leader who "never betrays the instinct to have the conversation."

Similar 1 spoke favorably of his interactions and experiences with Director 1. He described Director 1 as a very wise leader who "does a lot behind curtain to help and protect his team's bandwidth, sanity, and ability to produce." He regarded Director 1 as "extremely levelheaded and consistent no matter if he had good or bad day" and a leader who knows the strength of his team members (based on their level of expertise) and does not "play favorites."

In contrast, after recording the interview, Dissimilar 1 revealed her nervousness about the future of her job. She was in the throes of an investigation and fight with HR (in support of her female direct report). She was negative about Director 1's handling of the situation and alleged that he "lied" and misrepresented the situation to be politically safe. However, Dissimilar 1 considers herself politically astute and announced her commitment to not letting her direct report become the "scapegoat" of the scandal and pledged to "have her back."

High cultural competence—Director 2

Director 2 is a white female director from Generation X with over five years company tenure. She holds an undergraduate degree and received exceeds expectations (EE) on her annual performance reviews for the last two years. She scored the second highest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. Her Perceived Orientation (PO) was 139.01, an Adaptation mindset. Her Developmental Orientation (DO) was 134.25, an Adaptation mindset. As a result, her Orientation Gap (OG) was

4.76 which means her perceived cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are closely aligned. Moreover, her IDI score revealed her ability to effectively bridge cultural differences.

Director 2 has a Minimization Trailing Orientations on the IDC. Trailing Orientations are orientations “in back of” your DO that are not resolved (Hammer, 2016). When an earlier orientation is not resolved a “trailing” perspective may be utilized to make logic of a specific cultural situation, difference, or topic (Hammer, 2016). Not everyone has a Trailing Orientation. Her Minimization Trailing Orientation indicates there may be certain times when a Minimization mindset prevails (highlighting cultural commonality and universal values and masking recognition and appreciation of cultural differences).

Her Cultural Disengagement score of 5.0 reflects that she is resolved with the core aspects of her cultural community. I observed that Director 2 chose to enter a fictitious name on her IDI assessment. However, special user ID’s were created to properly identify all participants.

Director 2’s direct reports

Director 2’s similar direct report (referenced as Similar 2) is a white female manager from Generation X with over three years at this company. She received exceeds expectations (EE) on her annual performance reviews for the last two years. She is and a new mom who sits at the same geographic work location as Director 2.

Director 2’s dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 2) is a Black female manager Millennial. She is single with no kids and the only minority on Director 2’s direct report team. She has been with the company for over two years and received meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance reviews the past two years. She sits at the same geographic location as Director 2 and has no experience in this functional area.

Director 2 and her team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 2

Director 2 is the leader of a department formed in the last few years. She acknowledged that it took two years to build trust, credibility, and the high-performing team that she’s proud to currently lead. She is passionate about leadership development and committed to helping people develop and advance their career. She

is also an empathetic leader who cares deeply for her team members. She expressed emotional conflict while discussing a “key person” who left the company to advance his career.

Director 2 empowers and expects her team to use their voice. She shared, “I expect if they come in and need a solution, they’re also bringing the solutions to the table...It’s not always me trying to come up with the solve...That’s part of their growth.”

In the beginning of Similar 2’s tenure at the company, she and her peer experienced frustration and communication issues with Director 2. As a tongue-in-cheek gesture, they drew a picture of Dante’s Circle of Hell on Director 2’s white board. Then, every day they would go into her office and point to a ring to communicate their emotions. This seemingly funny tactic helped their lines of communication grow. Now Similar 2 credits Director 2 for giving real time feedback with a “balanced approach between the positive and the ability to learn and improve and do better.”

Director 2 approached this interview as a project. She requested “detailed questions” beforehand to “prepare” for the interview. She also gave a fictitious and interesting name on her IDI assessment. However, due to backend coding, I identified her as Director 2. Due to the nature of this study, I perceived her as nervous and wanting to appear culturally competent and an inclusive leader.

High cultural competence—Director 3

Director 3 is a white female director from Generation X with over five years of company tenure and a graduate degree. She received a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review for the last two years. She scored the third highest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. Her Perceived Orientation (PO) was 136.90, an Adaptation mindset. Her Developmental Orientation (DO) was 133.10, an Adaptation mindset. As a result, her Orientation Gap (OG) was 3.81 which means her perceived cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are closely aligned. Moreover, her IDI score revealed her ability to effectively bridge cultural differences.

Director 3 has an Acceptance Trailing Orientations on the IDC. Trailing Orientations are orientations “in back of” your DO that are not resolved (Hammer, 2016). When an earlier orientation is not resolved a “trailing” perspective may be utilized to make logic of a specific cultural situation, difference, or topic (Hammer, 2016). Not everyone has a Trailing Orientation. Her Acceptance Trailing Orientation indicates there may be certain times when an Acceptance mindset prevails (recognizing and appreciating patterns of cultural difference and commonality in cultures). She has a Cultural Disengagement score of 4.20 that reflects she is resolved with the core aspects of her cultural community.

Director 3's direct reports

Director 3's similar direct report (referenced as Similar 3) is a white female manager from Generation X. She has less than a year working at this company and sits at the same geographic location as Director 3. Her dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 3) is a Latinx male who is a senior manager from Generation X with over ten years of company tenure. He received an exceeds expectations (EE) on his annual performance review last year and a meets expectations (ME) the prior year.

Director 3 and her team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 3

Director 3 is a self-described "niche" who manages a channel and has a lot of ownership and ability to drive business recommendations. She has a strong personality and high confidence in her ability to produce. She touted that she was paid to "voice expertise" and the "strategic view of the business." She admitted her need to navigate the "tricky balance" of not to stifling the design philosophies of her direct reports with what she described as her "strong design background and holistic perspective the business aspirations."

Director 3 has a high and misaligned opinion of her relationship with her team. She conveyed, "I have a much deeper and more in tuned relationship with my direct reports than I do with my senior leaders. I very much will ladder things up if there's an issue. But I wouldn't expect my leader to be at the same level of involvement with me as I am with my team."

However, Dissimilar 3 revealed that while Director 3 was on maternity leave for three months, there was a positive "culture paradigm shift" amongst the team. He admitted to seeing glimmers of hope and was inspired that the team could be stronger, and better place to work "in the absence of the energy that she brings." He also shared, "...I find it more challenging with her than with most." While Dissimilar 3 acknowledged Director 3's high business acumen and expertise, he voiced major concerns with her poor leadership, decision making processes, and communication style.

Interesting observation, after the interview Director 3 asked which of her direct reports I would interview and if I would compare notes. Due to the confidentiality of this study I would not divulge information. Director 3 was noticeably curious and concerned with what her direct reports would share.

High cultural competence—Director 4

Director 4 is a white female director from the Baby Boomer generation with over ten years of tenure at this company. She has received an exceeds expectations (EE) on her annual performance review for the last three years. She scored the fourth highest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. Her Perceived Orientation (PO) was 136.05, an Adaptation mindset. Her Developmental Orientation (DO) was 128.91, on the Cusp of an Adaptation mindset.

Being at the Cusp of Adaptation reflects that Director 4 is at the early stages of deeply understanding and adapting behavior across cultural differences. As a result, her Orientation Gap (OG) was 7.14 which means there is a significant difference between what she perceives of her cultural competence (PO) and her actual cultural competence (DO) scores on the IDC. Thus, she has a significant overestimation of her cultural competence.

Director 4 has a Minimization Trailing Orientations on the IDC. Trailing Orientations are orientations “in back of” your DO that are not resolved (Hammer, 2016). When an earlier orientation is not resolved a “trailing” perspective may be utilized to make logic of a specific cultural situation, difference, or topic (Hammer, 2016). Not everyone has a Trailing Orientation.

Her Minimization Trailing Orientation indicates there may be certain times when a Minimization mindset prevails (highlighting cultural commonality and universal values and masking recognition and appreciation of cultural differences). However, her IDI score revealed her ability to effectively bridge cultural differences. And her Cultural Disengagement score of 4.80 reflects that she is resolved with the core aspects of her cultural community.

Director 4’s direct reports

Director 4’s similar direct report (referenced as Similar 4) is a white female manager from Generation X and has over ten years of tenure with this company. She also sits at the same geographic location as Director 4 and has reported to her for over six years. Similar 4 has received a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review from Director 4 for the last three years.

Director 4’s dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 4) is a Black female manager from Generation X and has over twenty years of tenure at this company. Dissimilar 4 has received a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review from Director 4 for the last three years. After the interview Dissimilar 4 was given a company award for having, “fire for change and moving associates and leaders forward.”

Director 3 and her team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 4

Director 4 is passionate about diversity and inclusion and has provided her direct reports with supplemental diversity and inclusion trainings from the annual company obligations. Her direct reports have been reporting to her since 2010. She exclaimed, “We know each other very well!” She is nearing retirement and wants her legacy to be that she was “fair to anyone and all.” She wants people her to declare, “She wanted me to be a better person, not just here, but everywhere.” She is a values-driven leader who thinks her purpose is to build leaders in the world, not just the company.

She grew up in Corporate America where “women didn’t speak very often and when they did, they were often ignored.” She described working in corporations where “diversity was never talked about” and trying to advance in companies with “glass ceilings so low that you could bump your head on it when you stood up.” She believes you should never exclude people and everyone’s voice is “important enough to be heard.” She exudes verbose wisdom and shared, “The world is bigger than your own little plot.” Similar 4 and Dissimilar 4 were 100% aligned with Director 4’s self-assessment. They think she is a highly inclusive and thoughtful leader.

Medium cultural competence—Director 5

Director 5 is a Black male director who is a Millennial with over fifteen years of tenure at this company. He has an undergraduate degree and received a meets expectations (ME) on his annual performance review last year and an exceeds expectations (ME) the prior year. He scored amongst the midrange in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI.

His Perceived Orientation (PO) was 124.37, an Acceptance mindset. His Developmental Orientation (DO) was 105.44, a Minimization mindset prevails (highlighting cultural commonality and universal values and masking recognition and appreciation of cultural differences). As a result, his Orientation Gap (OG) was 18.93 which means his perceived cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are not aligned. He grossly overestimated his level of cultural competence. Moreover, his IDI score revealed his inability to effectively bridge cultural differences.

Director 5's direct reports

The similar direct report (referenced as Similar 5) is a Latinx female who is a senior manager from Generation X and over ten years of tenure at this company. She received a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review the last two years. She sits at the same location as Director 5.

The dissimilar direct report (referenced as Similar 5) is a white male Millennial who is a senior manager and been working at the company for over ten years. He received a meets expectations (ME) on his annual performance review the last three years. He also sits at the same location as Director 5.

Director 5 and his team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 5

Director 5 described his professional journey as growing up in this company. He thinks it is imperative to be politically astute to survive office politics. He has great gratitude for the leadership experiences that this company has afforded him. He touted that he is a relocated eight times over his twenty years with the company. He is an introvert who by many accounts is not easily accessible. When in the rare occasion that he is in the office and not traveling, he does not connect with his direct reports. His emails are usually quick and simple one-liners. He is known to forget his 1:1 meeting with his direct reports and waiting until the last minute to include his team on large projects with deadlines.

While he has been at the company for a while, he is not known for being affiliated with a person or distinct group. He is a loner who does not let his true feelings of an issue widely known. He has been identified as someone who manages up better than he manages his team. I observed him as being effective with navigating office politics. He steers away from controversial topics and advocacy for diversity and inclusion related work.

Medium cultural competence—Director 6

Director 6 is a white male senior director who is a Millennial with over fifteen years of tenure at this company. He has an undergraduate and described his self as “a pretty confident person.” Last year he received an exceeds expectations (EE) on his annual performance review and the prior year, he got a meets expectations (ME).

Director 6 scored amongst the midrange in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. His Perceived Orientation (PO) was 122.52, an Acceptance mindset. His Developmental Orientation (DO) was 104.17, a Minimization mindset prevails (highlighting cultural commonality and universal values and masking recognition and appreciation of cultural differences). As a result, his Orientation Gap (OG) was 18.35. This means his perception of his cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are not aligned. Thus, he grossly overestimated his level of cultural competence. Moreover, his score revealed his inability to effectively bridge cultural differences. His Cultural Disengagement score of 3.40 reflects that he is unresolved with the core aspects of his cultural community.

Director 6's direct reports

This group, unlike other groups in this research, is comprised of a senior director and two directors. As a result, their perspectives were heavily assessed since I was able to review the effects of cultural competence and leader behaviors at two levels—the senior director (Director 6) and his director reports (Similar 6 and Dissimilar 6).

Director 6's similar direct report (referenced as Similar 6) is a white male director from Generation X with over ten years of tenure at this company. Director 6 gave Similar 6 a meets expectations (ME) on his annual performance review the last two years. Similar 6 also sits at a different location than Director 6.

Similar 6 is amongst the higher midrange in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. His Perceived Orientation (PO) was 125.23, an Acceptance mindset. His Developmental Orientation (DO) was 111.53, the Cusp of Acceptance. This demonstrates his early orientation to recognizing and appreciating patterns of cultural difference. His IDI score revealed his ability to effectively bridge cultural differences. However, his Orientation Gap (OG) was 13.70 which means his perceived cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are not aligned. Therefore, he grossly overestimated his level of cultural competence. Director 6's dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 6) is a Black female director who is a Millennial that has been working at the company for less than two years. She received a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review the last couple years. She works at a different location than Director 6.

Dissimilar 6 scored amongst the higher midrange in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. Her Perceived Orientation (PO) was 130.78, an Adaptation mindset. Her Developmental Orientation (DO) was 111.33, the Cusp of Acceptance, demonstrating her early orientation to recognizing and appreciating patterns of cultural difference. This makes her Orientation Gap (OG) a 19.45, which indicates that her perceived cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are not aligned. So, she grossly overestimated her level of cultural competence.

However, Dissimilar 6's IDI score revealed her ability to effectively bridge cultural differences.

Dissimilar 6 has a Minimization Trailing Orientations on the IDC. As shared earlier, Trailing Orientations are orientations "in back of" your DO that are not resolved (Hammer, 2016). When an earlier orientation is not resolved a "trailing" perspective may be utilized to make logic of a specific cultural situation, difference, or topic (Hammer, 2016). Not everyone has a Trailing Orientation. Her Minimization Trailing Orientation indicates there may be certain times when a Minimization mindset prevails (highlighting cultural commonality and universal values and masking recognition and appreciation of cultural differences). Her Cultural Disengagement score of 5.00 reflects that she is resolved with the core aspects of her cultural community.

Director 6 and his team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 6

Director 6 described his self as being an outspoken person who grew up in this company. He was often the youngest director in the room and felt that he had to earn the respect of his peers and direct reports. Early in his career, the company provided him with an executive coach to strengthen his leadership approach. He is a proud company man who feels a strong sense of belonging.

Dissimilar 6 shared that she and Director 6 have a "strong communication gap." According to her, attempts to talk with Director 6 are ineffective and she perceives him as defensive. She persisted, "He'll have something made up in his mind and he'll go with it." When having a data-driven conversation she described him retorting, "Okay you're making excuses." She maintained, "No, the data shows it. I'm not making excuses." During the interview she admitted to, "trying to figure out a better way to communicate to him because I feel like the way I do might not be registering. He assumes one thing as opposed to what my intents are." She feels inequitable treatment from Director 6 and believes he has favorites who work at his office location.

In contrast, Similar 6 and Director 8 are Director 6's direct reports. They are all white men who have worked at this company for over ten years. Director 8 sits at the same location as Director 6 and they have a close relationship. Similar 6 works from in a different state than Director 6. Still Director 6 gives him special opportunities and

projects to get visibility and feel a sense of belonging. Similar 6 views Director 6's special treatment as creating equity on the team. While Similar 6 described Director 6's actions as the behavior of an inclusive leader, it essentially illuminates Dissimilar 6's perceptions of inequity and exclusion.

Low cultural competence—Director 7

Director 7 is a white female director from Generation X with over fifteen years of tenure at this company. She holds an undergraduate degree and received a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review last three years. She scored amongst the lowest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI.

Her Perceived Orientation (PO) was 113.04, a Minimization mindset. Her Developmental Orientation (DO) was 76.26, a Polarization mindset that reflects an "us and them" judgement towards cultural differences. As a result, her Orientation Gap (OG) was 36.78 which means her perception of her cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are not aligned. Thus, she grossly overestimated her level of cultural competence.

Director 7's IDI responses indicate your Polarization perspective is from a Reversal view. This is where cultural practices of others are judged less critically than the cultural practices of his own group (Hammer, 2016). Moreover, her IDI score revealed his inability to effectively bridge cultural differences.

Director 7's direct reports

The similar direct report (referenced as Similar 10) is a white female manager from Generation X with over five years of tenure at this company. Similar 10 received an exceeds expectations (EE) on her annual performance review last two years. She works at the same office location as Director 7.

The dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 7) is a white male senior manager from Generation X whose been working at the company for over five years. He received an exceeds expectations (ME) on his annual performance review the last couple years. He also works at the same location as Director 7.

Director 7 and her team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 7

Director 7 described herself as “a decent leader, but not a cheerleading leader.” She and her direct report described that she needs to improve with giving feedback and recognizing the accomplishments of her team. She shared, “no news is good news.” However, this flawed philosophy has been negatively reflected in her annual culture survey results and ultimately caused disengagement of Dissimilar 7.

During Director 7’s interview she revealed, “I don’t need a lot of kudos and recognition.” She incorrectly assumed her direct reports shared the same perspective. The day of the interview, she completed a ten-month leadership program with twelve of her director peers. She thinks she gained insights on how to become a better leader. Still, she is not a “people person.” She jokingly said, “Um, you know, the, I think the toughest part about our jobs is that we work with people and not robots.”

Low cultural competence—Director 8

Director 8 is a white male director from Generation X with over fifteen years of tenure at this company. He has a graduate degree and received an exceeds expectations (EE) on his annual performance review last year and a meets expectations (ME) the prior two years. The relationships of Director 8 and his direct reports represent strong faultlines. After the interview, Director 8 received a company award. The company recognized that he has “consistently displayed resilience” and touted that he led with “an adaptive, calm, and balanced mindset.”

Director 8 scored amongst the lowest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. His Perceived Orientation (PO) was 114.46, a Minimization mindset. His Developmental Orientation (DO) was 75.41, a Polarization mindset that reflects an “us and them” judgement towards cultural differences. As a result, their Orientation Gap (OG) was 39.05 which means his perception of his cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are not aligned. Thus, he grossly overestimated his level of cultural competence.

Director 8 ‘s IDI responses indicate your Polarization perspective is from a Defensive view. This is when the values, perceptions, and behaviors from different cultural groups (them) are negatively judged while the values, perceptions, and behaviors of people from the same group (us) are judged more favorably (Hammer, 2016). Moreover, his IDI score revealed his inability to effectively bridge cultural difference.

Director 8 ‘s direct reports

The similar direct report (referenced as Similar 8) is a white male senior manager from Generation X with over fifteen years of tenure at this company. Director 8 gave Similar 8 an exceeds expectations (EE) on his annual performance review last year and meets expectations (ME) the two preceding years. While he sits at a different

location than Director 8, his office is in closer vicinity than his peers. After the interview, Similar 8 accepted a company award for being “competitive” and effectively leading and supporting his team.

The dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 8) is a white female senior manager from Generation X whose been working at the company for over ten years. Director 8 gave her meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review the last couple years. She also sits at the same location as Director 8. This role is her second position that reports to Director 8. He asked her to join this team several years ago.

Director 8 and his team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 8

Director 8 an avid reader of leadership books by Henry Cloud, Ph.D. and Brene Brown, Ph.D. He is a self-professed good leader who can be vulnerable and admit when he is wrong. He spoke about many of his leadership practices, like the habit of speaking last when meeting with his team to encourage rich dialogue and debate amongst them. He likes structure and sets the rules of engaging in healthy debates or as he framed it, “open debate with healthy soldering.”

Similar 8 sits at the same geographic location as Director 8 and has a good friendship with him. On several occasions he has facilitated their team meetings while Director 8 was traveling and inaccessible. He considers Director 8 to be a fair and equitable leader. When asked how he was chosen to facilitate meetings, he and Director 8 stated that he expressed a desire to increase that skill set. So, Director 8 gave him a shot.

Still, given their close relationship, this could make Similar 8’s peers feel excluded and perceive inequitable treatment for Director 8. Given Dissimilar 8’s long history at the company and with Director 8, I observed her cautiously describing their relationship. She seems to be fond Dissimilar 8 but admitted to not depending on him as much as her team depends on her. She explained the lack of leadership support as a reality for leaders. As they advance in their career, they will need and receive less leadership support, unless they request it. This appeared to be a cop-out.

Interesting observation, after the interview Director 8 how he was chosen to participate in the interview. Due to the confidentiality of this study I would not divulge specific information. Instead I offered a generalized response.

Low cultural competence—Director 9

Director 9 is a white male who is a senior director and Baby Boomer with over ten years of tenure at this company. He has a graduate degree and received an exceeds expectations (EE) on his annual performance review the past two years. He scored amongst the lowest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. His Perceived Orientation (PO) was 112.501, a Minimization mindset and his Developmental Orientation (DO) was 74.443, a Polarization mindset that reflects an “us and them” judgement towards cultural differences.

Director 9’s IDI responses indicate 47% of his resolution of Polarization perspective is from a Defensive view. This is when the values, perceptions, and behaviors from different cultural groups (them) are negatively judged while the values, perceptions, and behaviors of people from the same group (us) are judged more favorably (Hammer, 2016). In contrast, his responses also indicate 53% of his resolution is from the Reversal view. This is where cultural practices of others are judged less critically than the cultural practices of his own group (Hammer, 2016).

Director 9’s Orientation Gap (OG) was 38.06 which means his perception of his cultural competence (PO) and actual cultural competence (DO) are not aligned. Thus, Director 9 has grossly overestimated his level of cultural competence. Moreover, his IDI score revealed his inability to effectively bridge cultural difference. And his Cultural Disengagement score of 4.80 reflects that he is resolved with the core aspects of his cultural community.

Director 9’s direct reports

The similar direct report (referenced as Similar 9) is a white female who is a senior manager and Baby Boomer with over ten years of tenure at this company. Director 9 gave Similar 9 a far exceeds expectations (FE) on her annual performance review last year and a meets expectations (ME) two years ago. She also sits at the same location as Director 9.

The dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 9) is a white female Millennial who is a senior manager with over ten years of company tenure. Director 9 gave her a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review the last couple years. She also works at the same location as Director 9. This role is her second position that reports to Director 9. He asked her to join this team several years ago.

Director 9 did not have much diversity on his manager direct report team. All his managers are white males or females and over 60% Baby Boomers. The only person of color served as an administrative assistant. For the purposes of this research, we only interviewed manager level contributors and above. Thus, Director 9 and his team displayed medium faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will

intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 9

Director 9 self-described as being “pretty honest and straight-forward” and he “doesn’t sugarcoat.” He also considered himself a “go-to person” and a “social creature.” He takes pride in not being a being a “micromanager” and attested to setting the goals and objectives and “giving people the freedom to go get things done.”

Director 9 explained his personality as being courageous and outspoken. He reflected, “Well, I’ve always been willing to heck, even as a little kid I got my fair share of trouble, um, you know, face the music. I’m willing. Um, I haven’t committed any career suicide yet in my career, but I have been willing to, when I get pushed to a point, to raise an unpopular item and say, ‘Hey, this don’t feel right to me.’”

Similar 9 described Director 9 as having a charismatic personality but being a self-focused leader. She said, “This is what’s so hard when you’ve got a really great personality, um, you kind of overlook” what you need in a leader. She described exemplary leaders who “promote their team members and take a back seat.” These leaders know that “their success is because their team members are successful.” She then clarified, her leader, Director 9 was not one of them. Instead, he takes credit for her work and rarely promotes his team.

Similar 9 worked with Director 9 for five years. They had a good relationship until recently, when he questioned her ethics and perspective on a highly confidential human resources matter. The details of their exchange are listed in the Appendix. However, after that incident, she lost trust in Director 9. She sadly shared, “It’s hard to show up anymore every day, but I do, cause I’m there for my team.” Within a month of this interview, Similar 9 resigned from the company and joined another organization in a similar role.

Dissimilar 9 reported to Director 9 in multiple roles over the last seven years. Neither one of them had experience in their current functional area. However, Director 9 asked her to join this current team. She has learned to depend on his brand of leadership to excel. She described him as “one of the most approachable people in the world.” She continued, “I’m very lucky in that he’s not, um, he’s not hard to talk to. So, um, that’s good for me as someone that can be scared to talk sometimes. He has that personality it works well for me.”

I also observed Director 9 to be a very friendly and personable person. He recognizes his team as being subject matter experts in their areas. Some portions of his team are revenue generating (Dissimilar 9) and the other is not (Similar 9). These distinct differences augment feelings of not being valued and inequity.

Low cultural competence—Director 10

Director 10 is an Asian female director from Generation X with less than five years of tenure at this company. She has a doctorate degree and received an exceeds expectations (EE) on her annual performance review over the last three years. Director 10 and her direct reports represent strong faultlines.

Director 10 scored amongst the lowest in cultural competence of all 111 directors who took the IDI. Her Perceived Orientation (PO) was 111.87, a mindset that she rates her own capability in understanding cultural differences at the Cusp of Acceptance. However, her actual competence as indicated by the IDI showed her Developmental Orientation (DO) was 68.94, a Cusp of Polarization. This reflects a relatively early expression of an “us and them” judgmental viewpoint toward cultural differences.

Director 10 ‘s IDI responses indicate 41% of her resolution of Polarization perspective is from a Defensive view. This is when the values, perceptions, and behaviors from different cultural groups (them) are negatively judged while the values, perceptions, and behaviors of people from the same group (us) are judged more favorably (Hammer, 2016). In contrast, her responses also indicate 59% of her resolution is from the Reversal view. This is where cultural practices of others are judged less critically than the cultural practices of his own group (Hammer, 2016).

As a result, her Orientation Gap (OG) was 43.33 which means her perception of his cultural competence and actual cultural competence are not aligned. Thus, Director 9 has grossly overestimated her level of cultural competence. Additionally, she has a Denial Trailing Orientations on the IDC. Trailing Orientations are orientations “in back of” your DO that are not resolved (Hammer, 2016). When an earlier orientation is not resolved a “trailing” perspective may be utilized to make logic of a specific cultural situation, difference, or topic (Hammer, 2016). Not everyone has a Trailing Orientation.

Director 10 ‘s Denial Trailing Orientation indicates there may be certain times when a Denial mindset prevails (an orientation that likely distinguishes observable cultural differences like food, but not deeper cultural difference like conflict resolution styles). This Denial mindset may also avoid or withdraw from cultural difference and highlight cultural commonality and universal values and masking recognition and appreciation of cultural differences. Moreover, her IDI score revealed her inability to

effectively bridge cultural differences. And her Cultural Disengagement score of 2.20 reflects that she is unresolved with the core aspects of their cultural community.

Director 10's direct reports

Director 10 's similar direct report (referenced as Similar 6) is an Asian female senior manager from Generation X with less than five years of tenure at this company. Like Director 10, she has a doctorate degree. Director 10 gave her a meets expectations (ME) on her annual performance review the last three years. She works at the same location as Director 10.

The dissimilar direct report (referenced as Dissimilar 10) is a white male senior manager from Generation X whose been working at the company for over fifteen years. He has no functional experience in this specialized area, but he has learned on the job. Dissimilar 10 gave him an exceeds expectations (EE) on his annual performance review the last three years. He works from the same location as Director 10. After the interview, Dissimilar 10 was given a company award for being a "high impact leader with skills."

Director 10 and her team display strong faultlines. This increases the likelihood that members will intentional and unintentionally divide into smaller homogenous subgroups based on demographic traits (Bezrukova et al., 2009; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Zanutto et al., 2011). When formed, these homogenous groups exclusively communicate and share data primarily in their subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 2005).

Perceptions of Director 10

Dissimilar 10 described Director 10 as a transparent leader who micromanages. Her direct reports think she has very strong opinions. Similar 10 was notably nervous about sharing her true perspective about Director 10. Both Similar 10 and Director 10 are Asian women with PhDs. At first glance I thought these two would have a strong relationship cemented by their cultural and academic similarities. This was not the case. Similar 10 experienced many issues of Director 10 not trusting her ability to get work done.

Similar 10 judged Director 10 to have "favorites" who get preferential treatment and undeserved recognition. She is convicted that Director 10 tries to make their "ordinary work" appear "extraordinary" simply because she likes a person. Moreover, she feels Director 10 is unprofessional and she feels "really afraid" to voice her opinions about her bad working environment. Similar 10 admitted to doing her work twice (knowingly the wrong way) just to appease her manager.

Still as an Asian female director, Director 10, only feels a sense of belonging 80% of the time. She feels like she needs constant development and is afraid to become

complacent. She in turn leads fearfully and augments her marginalized direct reports feelings of not belonging.

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