Achieving Organizational Metamorphosis Through Developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative

Kostas Voutsas
Arizona State University

Christian Voutsas
Arizona State University

Today's workforce reflects and will continue to reflect diversity. If these changes represent America's future demographic reality, organizations will undergo a massive metamorphosis. A questionnaire was submitted to 300 business students to assess their attitudes towards diversity. Specifically, it investigates whether there is a difference in attitude and assesses whether business students are open to working with an increasingly diverse workforce. The study's results support the hypotheses that different ethnic groups value diversity differently, and that the more years living in a diverse country, the more individuals increase their diversity tolerance. Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives increase in popularity since they build awareness and skills that help cultivate a safe, compassionate, and equitable organizational culture where everyone feels valued. This article discusses implementing a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiative to improve an organization's culture. The five-step DEI Organizational Metamorphosis Model explores how to strengthen an organization's quality of life through implementing strategic DEI initiatives.

Keywords: diversity, equity, inclusion, strategic initiative

INTRODUCTION

Transforming U.S. Demographic Reality

Scholars have become increasingly interested in how diversity affects today's workforce (Choi, 2011; Choi & Rainey, 2014; Pitts & Wise, 2010; Sabharwal, Levine, & D'Agostino, 2018). The U.S. workforce, the most demographically heterogeneous workforce in the world, is characterized by rapid change and diversity (Oudenhoven & Ward, 2013). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of women in the workforce is projected to grow to 57.5% by 2026 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). In addition, the total percentage of the workforce composed of women will be approximately 47.2% by 2026 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Not only is the proportion of women in the workforce increasing, but the percentage of minorities in the workforce is projected to increase over the next decade. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the percentage of Hispanic workers in the total workforce population of the United States is projected to increase from 18.3% in 2018 to 28.6% by 2060. Within the same period (2018-2060), the prevalence of non-Hispanic Caucasian individuals is projected to decrease from 63.7% to 57.8%.

Additionally, the percentage of Asian individuals composing the United States workforce is projected to increase from 5.9% to 9.2% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). The observed spike in United States workforce

diversity also applies to generational diversity and ethnic, racial, and gender diversity. Currently, the workforce of the United States contains members from multiple generations, such as the traditionalist generation, the baby boomer generation, generation X, and the millennial generation. In a recent statistical analysis conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the resulting statistics showed that by the year 2026, less than one percent of the total U.S. workforce will be traditionalists, 21% will be baby boomers, 23% will be generation X members, and 36% will be millennials. Additionally, all generations aside from the millennial generation and Generation Z are expected to decrease in the total workforce participation rate (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019).

Considering the above demographic projections, today's workforce reflects and will continue to reflect diversity based on culture, ethnicity, gender, race, and age. If the above changes represent America's future demographic reality, organizations in the United States will undergo a massive metamorphosis (Ghosh, 2016).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Today, the U.S. workforce is becoming more diverse with the entrance of more women, people with disabilities, immigrants, and people of ethnic minority descent. Organizational group work and team building trends are more popular than ever. As a result of the demographic reality and rapid change, diversity in workgroups is increasing. Organizations must manage group diversity to create more productive teams (Selmer et al., 2013). Corning Kaiser states, "Future leaders will have to learn how to manage cultural diversity" (Dumaine, 1989, p. 59). Foldy and Buckley-Sharp (2020) argue that managing diversity effectively is a prerequisite to stronger team performance and improved innovation. Additionally, Marrone and Shalley (2020) concluded in a systematic review of the current literature on workplace diversity that challenges such as communication barriers and conflicts must be overcome to achieve workplace equilibrium. A systematic review from Roberson and Ferdman (2020) argues that team climate and leadership are crucial in fostering a workplace that supports changes in diversity to improve performance and creativity. Nancy Adler of McGill University (1991) also agrees that managing diversity is a productive resource to a group, whereas ignoring diversity will negatively affect a team's productivity. Cox and Beale (1997) also state, "The challenge is to manage in such a way as to maximize the potential benefits of diversity and minimize its potential disadvantages" (p.42). In managing diversity, organizations need to understand the benefits of diversity: openness to new ideas, better alternatives and multiple perspectives, better decision-making and problem-solving, and more creative and innovative ideas.

Diversity, Group Performance, and Problem-Solving

The proportion of diverse groups in the U.S. workforce is increasing dramatically. With the continuous increase of diversity in the U.S. workforce, organizations must find ways to adapt to constantly changing workplace environments. The current literature has multiple theoretical and empirical studies that justify the positive correlation between workplace diversity and group performance, communication, problem-solving, and decision-making (Szkudlarek, Romani, Caprar, & Osland, 2020; Thomas et al., 2015). Additionally, recent research suggests that companies with stronger executive team gender and ethnic diversity are more likely to outperform companies with lower diversity in the same executive positions. Specifically, these companies with stronger gender and ethnic diversity in executive positions have higher pre-tax profits (Dixon-Fyle, Dolan, Hunt, & Prince 2020). According to a study conducted by Credit Suisse, which analyzed data from 2,400 companies worldwide, organizations that had at least one woman serving on their board had a higher return on equity and experienced greater net income growth than companies that failed to attain female representation in their boardrooms (Rock & Grant, 2016). Another study from the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology took an experimental approach to decipher the effects of diversity. In the study, researchers divided 200 participants into six-person mock jury panels consisting of either all white individuals or a mix of four white and two black individuals. The study participants watched a video of a trial where an African-American defendant was on trial for crimes against victims of Caucasian descent. The participants aimed to determine whether the defendant was guilty or innocent. The study found

that the diverse panels discussed more case-related facts than the homogeneous panels and made fewer factual errors when reviewing the available evidence. In addition, diverse panels were more likely to correct crucial errors during deliberation. The researchers suggested that this might be because white jurors on diverse panels had a better recall of evidence (Rock & Grant, 2016). Heterogeneous groups are likely to consider a greater range of perspectives. They are prone to identify different alternatives and generate unique and high-quality solutions as they offer increased diversity of views (Damelang & Haas, 2012). A McLeod and Lobel (1992) study reported that culturally heterogeneous groups, as opposed to homogeneous groups, produced higher quality solutions in a brainstorming task. Diverse groups have broader and richer experiences with which to approach a problem. According to Cox and Beale (1997), in a series of research studies, Charlene Nemeth concluded that critical analysis in decision-making groups is stronger within diverse groups. She found out that groups that were subjected to minority views had a higher level of critical analysis of decision issues and alternatives compared to groups that were not subjected to minority views.

Research led by Harry Triandis at the University of Illinois compared the problem-solving scores of homogeneous groups with those of diverse groups with training on group dynamics and diverse groups without training (Triandis, Hall & Ewen, 1965). He found that the non-trained diverse groups produced lower problem-solving scores than the homogeneous groups. However, the trained diverse groups produced scores six times higher than the homogenous groups. It is hard to conclude that the trained diverse groups outperformed the other two groups solely because of diversity. This is possible because the homogeneous and non-trained diverse groups received no training. It is possible that the trained group outperformed the other two because of the training.

Similarly, Ziller (1972), after reviewing the literature on small-group performance, concluded that trained diverse groups outperformed homogeneous groups on complex tasks. In 1989, investment clubs composed of males and females reported a 10.4% gain. Those composed of females only reported a 9.1% gain, and those composed of males only reported an 8.7% gain (Hayles & Russell, 1997). Adler (1986) researched ethnically and nationally diverse groups. Adler's findings on how diversity affects group performance agree with Triandis's findings. She concluded that diverse teams were the only ones who achieved the highest levels of synergy.

Creativity and Innovation

Research between creativity and diversity has nearly exploded during the past 20 years. Crotty & Brett, 2012; Jang, 2017; Leung & Wang, 2015). In forty-four studies that took place between 1985 and 2018, diversity is associated with more creativity and innovation (Wang et al. (2019). Sales promotion strategies, product design, advertising, and quality improvement are organizational activities that must be creative and innovative for an organization and a community to grow. The old adage "Two heads are better than one" has value. Combining multiple perspectives in a group often leads to multiple opinions, original work, and innovative solutions.

Recent findings in the literature regarding this topic indicate that organizational revenue positively correlates with group diversity (Cox & Beale, 1997; Lisak, Erez, Sui, and Lee, 2016; National Institutes of Health, 2019; Solakoglu & Demir, 2016). According to the Boston Consulting Group, companies with more diverse management teams were found to have a greater proportion of their revenue generated from innovation-based initiatives (Lorenzo, Voigt, Tsusaka, Krentz, & Abouzahr, 2018). Additionally, literature regarding the banking industry suggests a positive correlation between innovation and top-of-the-line management diversity. The same scenario applies to the marketing industry, as seen in the success of the 1980s American Airlines frequent flier program. Experts on this topic argue that innovation leads to more heterogeneous work teams. This increased heterogeneity is essential in adding unique perspectives to the workplace. Another study from Economic Geography suggests that cultural diversity greatly influences workplace innovation. The data supporting this study was collected from the London Annual Business Survey, which looked at the responses of 7,615 firms and their executives regarding their company's performance. This study showed that companies with culturally diverse leadership teams were more likely to develop new products than those lacking diversity in their leadership positions. The results suggest that

diversity in leadership positions may positively influence the innovative abilities of businesses (Rock & Grant, 2016).

Not only are diverse groups more innovative in decision-making, but also, because they offer originality and variety in perspective, diverse groups are more creative in problem-solving. Research shows that heterogeneous teams are more creative in problem-solving (Harvey & Allard, 2005). Cox and his colleagues tested the hypothesis that the racial and ethnic diverse groups would outperform homogeneous groups of Anglos in a creativity task. During a brainstorming exercise, this study compared the quantity and quality of ideas of diverse groups of Asians, African Americans, Anglos, and Hispanics with those of homogenous groups of Anglos. The study did not show any significant differences regarding the number of ideas. Regarding the quality of ideas, the study concluded that the ethnically diverse groups were rated an average of 11% higher compared to the homogeneous Anglogroups on both feasibilities of implementation and overall effectiveness. This study was relevant to the impact of diversity on marketing success because the groups' task was directly related to marketing (McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1996).

Although diversity can be advantageous, it can create organizational challenges if it is not well managed. Empirical evidence highlights the challenges in managing diversity and equality in the workplace (Ali, Burns, & Grant, 2013; Hvidman & Andersen, 2013). Studies indicate that diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives have failed to decrease workplace biases due to ineffective training (Brady et al., 2015; Kalev et al., 2006; Leslie, 2019; Onyeador et al., 2021).

Ethnic Diversity and Stereotyping

Social scientists have attempted to measure prejudice. In 1928, Bogardus developed the Social Distance Scale that measured the types of contact viewed as acceptable by members of different groups. The second approach of measuring prejudice, stereotyping, focuses on the belief about personal attributes held by members of various groups.

Most theories and studies concentrated on discrimination from Anglos against minorities (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986). A 1991 study examined how Anglos viewed Asians, Hispanics, and African Americans. This study concluded that Anglos viewed Asian Americans as economically successful, self-supportive, and hard working. They viewed them much more positively than they did Hispanics and African Americans. However, they felt equally distant towards Hispanics and Asian Americans (Dyer, 1989; Owen, 1981). Nevertheless, Anglos viewed all groups as less intelligent, more violence-prone, lazier, and more likely to live off welfare (Bobo & Kluegel, 1991). A survey by the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center indicated that Anglos believed that individuals from other ethnic backgrounds were less hard-working, patriotic, and intelligent (Smith, 1990).

An explanation of such attitudes might be that an individual tends to have greater comfort in dealing with his/her own kind (Morrison, 1992). Individuals, consciously or unconsciously, seem to be more comfortable when they are around people who are not different than they are. They may not intend to do so, but due to familiarity and comfort levels, they tend to favor their kind. According to Morrison (1992), the president of a West Coast company, a white male, stated: "Cultural differences are tough for white males to deal with. We hire those who are like us. We perpetuate ourselves believing it is easier to relate to someone with the same values, looks, and perceptions" (Morrison, 1992). Associating with different individuals may create discomfort at work, misunderstandings, and conflict within a diverse group due to stereotypes and prejudice.

Not very many studies gave information about the prejudices and attitudes held by minorities towards Anglos. Like belonging to the majority, minorities are likely to be prejudiced against members of other groups (Dyer, Vedlitz & Worchel, 1989). According to social identity theory, "Individuals derive their identity from the groups to which they belong. To enhance their esteem, they adopt a negative perception of all outgroups and attempt to maintain their distance from these outgroups" (Dyer, Vedlitz & Worchel, 1989). Empirical studies indicated how different minority ethnic groups perceived members of other ethnic groups. Bowler, Rauch and Schwarzer concluded that among several high school students with different ethnic backgrounds, African American and Anglo students were much less ethnically tense (less anxiety in

the presence of others that differ ethnically) compared to Asian students (Bowler, Rauch & Schwarzer, 1986).

Other studies indicated that different ethnic groups have contrasting perspectives on cultural diversity. Lambert and Taylor found that both Albanians and Arabs had negative attitudes towards other ethnic groups, but mainly towards African Americans (Lambert & Taylor, 1988). Social distance scales showed that African Americans held negative perceptions of Asians (Lee, 1987; Shankman, 1982; Thorton & Taylor, 1988). African American and Hispanic interactions indicated antagonistic and cooperative relationships (McClain & Karnig, 1990; Willie, 1986). According to Carl A. Grant, a 1990 Gallup poll found that African Americans were most accepting of Indians and Pakistanis and least accepting of Vietnamese (Grant, 1995).

The purpose of stating the findings of the above empirical studies is not to determine which ethnic group has right or wrong attitudes on cultural diversity. The above examples are given to summarize what the literature supports; the fact that different ethnic groups value members of other ethnic groups differently, which means that they value cultural diversity differently. Nevertheless, it is incorrect to stereotype a whole ethnic group based on a few studies.

Study Hypotheses

According to the literature cited earlier, studies indicate that different minority ethnic groups perceive members of other ethnic groups differently.

H1: Different ethnic groups have different openness to diversity.

H2: The more years living in a diverse country, the more people increase their diversity tolerance.

Methodology

To draw conclusions and recommendations, this study used a diversity questionnaire. Its purpose was to help the participants become more aware of their behaviors and determine whether their attitudes on multiculturalism and diversity were positive. In addition, the demographics section was designed to collect useful information for data comparisons. The questionnaire was distributed to 300 graduate and undergraduate students at a mid-west university. Specifically, it was distributed to approximately 100 graduate students, 100 seniors and juniors, and 100 sophomores and freshmen.

Statistical Analysis

The Likert scale coded the survey questions from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Each variable was analyzed to determine the frequency, mean, variance, and standard deviation, as well as the response rate and the variation. The author chose to use methods of analyses that would be most meaningful with such high rate of return. Therefore, Pearson correlations looked at the relationships between variables, and T tests and one-way ANOVA tests looked at differences among groups.

The dependent variables are the three scales of the diversity questionnaire and the scale which measures the overall score:

- The contact scale measures the students' contact with individuals from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds.
- The open-mindedness scale measures the students' open-mindedness regarding diversity.
- The tension scale measures whether the students feel tension when interacting with people from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds.
- The overall score scale consists of the combined average of the contact scale, the open mindedness scale, and the tension scale. It measures the students' overall openness and acceptance towards diversity.

The following demographic variables were used in subsequent analyses as independent or predictor variables: Gender, race, age, years lived in the U.S., and International/American student status.

Results and Discussion

A high rate of return was realized with 282 out of the 300 distributed surveys completed and returned. Ninety four percent of the sample participated in the survey, whereas 6% did not. The analysis indicated that 99% of the respondents answered all the questions on the contact scale, whereas 1% did not answer one or more. The mean for this scale was 3.7957, which shows that the participants, on average, value and appreciate their contact with individuals from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds.

Ninety percent of respondents answered all questions on the open-mindedness scale. The mean of 3.7319 shows that the participants, on average, are open-minded toward diversity. Ninety-four percent of respondents answered the questions on the tension scale. The mean of 3.9458 shows that the participants, on average, do not feel much tension when communicating with people from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds.

Fewer respondents provided valid responses to the open mindedness scale compared to the other two scales. The mean for the overall score was 3.8329, indicating that the participants generally accept and value diversity. Next, the authors conducted correlation analyses to determine the relationship between dependent and the independent variables.

Race

To investigate the relationship between race and the scales, the authors ran an ANOVA test, which showed significant differences between racial groups and the tension scale (F = 6.799, p< .01). Post Hoc Tests indicated differences on whether different races feel tension when communicating with people from different ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. Specifically, Asian students' responses differed significantly from Black and Hispanic students' responses. Asians had a lower mean (3.5214) compared to Hispanics (4.2338), Blacks (4.1323), and Whites (3.9977). Thus, Asians indicated they felt more tension when communicating with individuals from different ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds.

Furthermore, the ANOVA test indicated significant differences between racial groups and the overall score (F = 2.778, p< .01). Again, looking at the Post Hoc Tests, significant differences were found between Asians and Hispanics. Asians had a lower overall mean score (3.6577) than Hispanics (4.1244). This indicates that Hispanics were more accepting and open to diversity overall to Asians.

The above findings partially support the second hypothesis, which states that different ethnic groups value diversity differently. Although no significant differences were found among Caucasians, African Americans, and Hispanics, significant differences were found between Asians and the other three racial groups.

Age

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated that the only relationship between age and scale scores was for scale 2, which measures students' open-mindedness (r = .147, p<05). This shows that the older the participants, the more open minded they were regarding diversity. Specific questions in the scale revealed that the older students scored higher in refusing to participate in-jokes derogatory to any group, culture, sex or sexual orientation (r = .161, p< .o1).

Years Lived in the U.S.

Most participants lived between 12 and 24 years in the U.S., accounting for 53%. Pearson correlations indicated that significant relationships were found between years in the U.S. and the open mindedness scale, the tension scales, and the overall score. Specifically:

TABLE 1
YEARS LIVING IN THE U.S. AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS

The more years students lived in the U.S., the more open to diversity they were (r = .138, p<.05).
The more years students lived in the U.S., the less tension they felt when communicating with people from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds (r = .201, p< .01).
The more years students lived in the U.S. overall, the more accepting they were towards diversity (r = .132, p< .05). This supports study hypothesis 3.

Significant relationships existed between specific items and the number of years students lived in the U.S. The more years students lived in the U.S.:

- The less they believed that a particular race was superior (r = .190, p< .01).
- The less they believed that a particular race was more intelligent than other races (r = .193, p< .01).
- The more comfortable they felt when communicating with students of the opposite gender (r = .139, p< .05).
- The less nervous they felt when communicating with students from different ethnic background (r = .156, p< .01).
- The more comfortable they felt when being the only ones of their racial group while interacting with others (r = .12, p< .05).
- The less nervous they felt when students from different ethnic backgrounds approached them (r = .129, p< .05).
- The less they tended to trust people from their own ethnic background (r = .177, p< .01).
- The less they felt that their race was more hard working than other races (r = .266, p< .01).

According to these statistical analyses, the more years the participants' lived in the U.S., the more open minded to diversity they were.

International/American Student Status

As the results indicated, 21% of the respondents were international students and 79% were American students. T tests revealed that international and American students had significant differences regarding the tension scale (t = -2.082, p< .05). The means for the tension scale were 3.7619 for the international students and 3.9886 for the American students. This indicated that, compared to international students, American students had less tension while interacting with people from different ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds.

As Pearson correlations show, international students:

- Felt more nervous when students from different ethnic backgrounds approached them, compared to American students (r = .123, p< .05).
- Felt that their race was harder working than other races, as opposed to American students (r = .192, p< .01).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analyses of the survey responses discovered five main themes, which indicate:

1. Significant racial differences regarding diversity tension and diversity overall score: Asians scored lower that Caucasians, African Americans, and Hispanics.
2. Significant age differences regarding open mindedness to diversity: the older the students, the more open minded they were regarding diversity.
3. Significant differences for open mindedness to diversity, diversity tension and diversity overall score, according to the number of years the participants lived in the U.S.; the more years the

participants lived in the U.S., the more open to diversity they were, and the less tension they felt when communicating with people from different ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds.

4. Significant differences between American and international students regarding diversity tension; American students seemed to have less tension while interacting with people from different ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds than international students.

The results and recommendations of this study might be useful for academics or business leaders who decide to manage classroom or workforce diversity to help improve good work relationships.

DEI Organizational Metamorphosis Model

Studies support that developing a DEI initiative will positively metamorphosize an organization. Developing DEI initiatives has increased in popularity over the past couple of decades. Blind (2020) found in a workplace inclusion study that more than 60% of respondents reported that their company has either implemented or plans to implement DEI initiatives. Industries such as public health have also seen an increase in DEI-based policies in recent years (Geller and Kass, 2021). Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives help employees at all levels to work better with colleagues and customers of different identities and backgrounds. The goal is to build awareness and skills that help cultivate a safe, compassionate, and equitable organizational culture where everyone feels valued. The DEI Organizational Metamorphosis Model consists of six stages. The authors have effectively implemented this framework with many organizations that developed DEI initiatives.

FIGURE 1
ORGANIZATIONAL METAMORPHOSIS, DEI, AND BELONGINGNESS FRAMEWORK
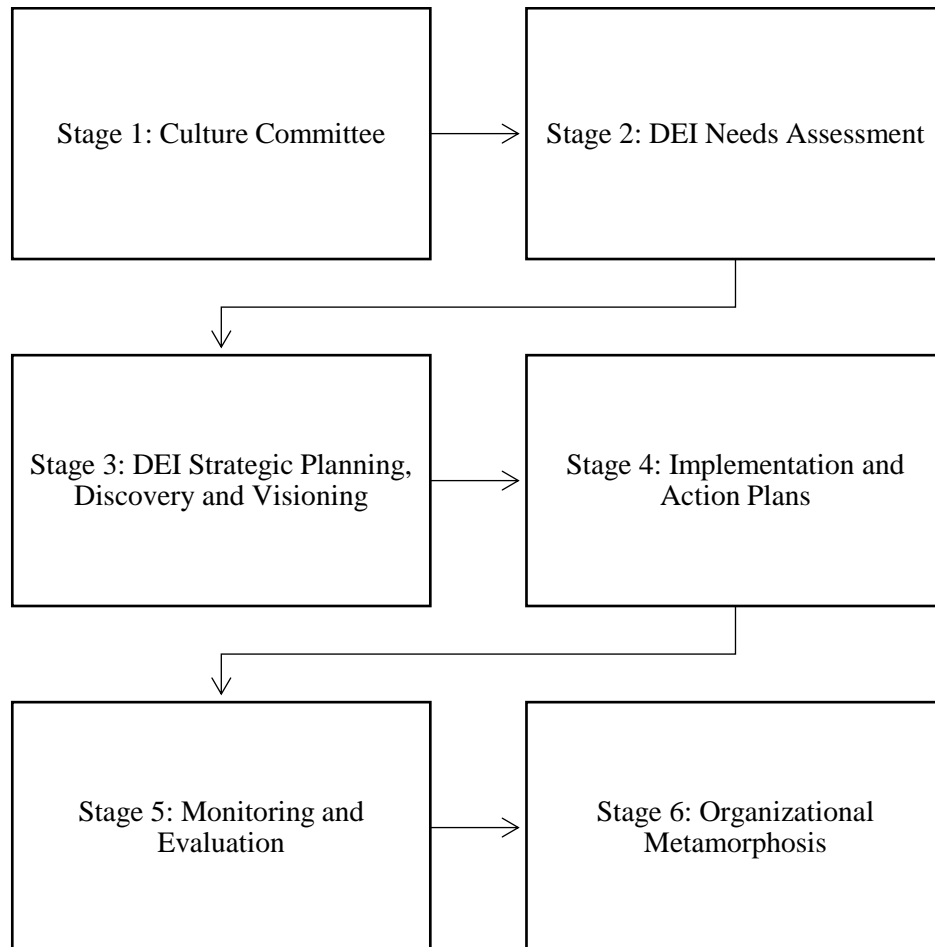
1. **Stage 1: Form a Culture Committee.** A culture team must include all races, genders, ethnicities, and all generations from all levels of authority in the organization. During the formation stage, the culture team must set a clear direction, build support systems, create an empowering team design, and identify key relationships.
2. **Stage 2: Conduct a Needs Assessment.** During the needs assessment phase, an organization needs to review its strategic plan, employee survey results, and any other information relevant to its culture. Data collection and analysis through surveys, interviews, or focus groups will determine internal strengths and challenges regarding DEI and the need for organizational change.
3. **Stage 3: Facilitate a Strategic Planning Meeting.** The cultural committee will first conduct a strategic planning meeting to identify its strategic map, including its mission, vision, and values regarding the DEI initiative. Strategic planning is a process that extracts from the minds of people who run the organization their best thinking about what is happening in the organization, what is happening in the environment, and how to position the organization given those variables. It enables leaders to position the organization to survive and prosper within a constantly changing environment. Experts suggest that strategic planning improves organizational effectiveness, innovation, and performance (George, Walker, & Monster 2019; Kich & Pereira, 2011; Mintzberg, Ahlstrand & Lampel, 2009; Neis, Pereira & Maccari, 2017). By clearly defining the organization's purpose, a DEI culture committee can set goals and objectives to fulfill that purpose. This also allows organizations to define timeframes for implementation and ensure the organization's resources are being used to benefit the organization in the long run. Also, the strategic planning process allows everyone to participate in identifying organizational challenges regarding DEI and problem-solving. This process boosts employee satisfaction since they can communicate, collaborate, and problem-solve. During the strategic planning process, discovery, visioning, implementation of action plans, monitoring, and evaluation occur.

Discovery

In the discovery face, the culture committee will address the following question: "How are we doing today?" In this phase, a SWOT analysis is an effective tool to help identify the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Helms & Nixon, 2010; Ho et al., 2010; Gürel, 2017; Kajanus et al., 2012) regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion and produce effective alternatives (Lee & Ko, 2000; Valentin, 2001; Wang, 2007; Weihrich, 1982). The goal is to capitalize on strengths, take advantage of opportunities, address weaknesses and minimize threats in today's competitive landscape through strategic thinking (Hill & Westbrook, 1997; King, 2004; Panagiotou, 2003). Conducting a SWOT analysis addresses the following:

- How do we identify our critical goals?
- How do we develop plans to meet those critical goals?
- How do we learn from our experiences and change our plans when necessary?

Strengths refer to internal initiatives that are performing well.

- What do we do well regarding DEI?
- What's unique about our organization?
- What do our clients like about our organization?

Weaknesses refer to internal initiatives that are underperforming. These qualities prevent leaders from accomplishing their culture team's mission and achieving their full potential. They bring opportunities for an organization to grow, innovate, and improve its culture.

- Which initiatives are underperforming and why?
- What can be improved regarding DEI?
- What resources could improve our performance?

Opportunities result from existing organizational strengths and weaknesses and any external initiatives that will put an organization in a stronger competitive position.

- What resources can we use to improve weaknesses?
- What are our business goals for the year? Is DEI part of our vision?
- What do your competitors offer?

Threats are areas with the potential to cause organizational challenges that are out of the leaders' control.

- What changes in the community/society are cause for concern?
- What new market trends are on the horizon? How does DEI affect these trends?
- Where are our competitors outperforming us?

Visioning

The next step is visioning. The culture team will create a DEI mission statement, a vision statement, and values aligning with the organization's strategic map. A mission statement discusses the purpose of organizational existence, while a vision statement addresses what the organization intends to become. A shared vision capability exists when there is clear communication and shared responsibility for achieving organizational objectives (Aragón-Correa, Hurtado-Torres, Sharma, & García-Morales, 2008; Lindley & Wheeler, 2000). A shared vision capability provides a basis for action (Pearce & Ensley, 2004). The next step is to identify strategic priorities, goals, and objectives regarding the organization's DEI initiative.

4. **Stage 4: Implement the DEI Action Plans.** Developing and designing a DEI training program for staff is a great strategy to bring DEI awareness. Studies have shown that training could increase organizational performance (Hassan, Fuwad, & Rauf, 2010; Kelloway, Barling, & Helleur, 2000; Parry & Sinha, 2005). Similarly, developing and designing a DEI training program for supervisors will help enforce the DEI initiative since the goal is to create a systemic process that will change the organization's culture. Training topics include diversity, equity, inclusion, unconscious and implicit bias, neurodiversity, gender, race, cultural awareness and belonging, generational communication, stereotyping, prejudice, harassment, bullying, and using pronouns at work. Train the trainer seminars and webinars are effective ways to disseminate knowledge. Such seminars will coach internal facilitators to deliver the DEI training programs throughout the organization. Train-the-trainer programs are widely used for workforce development (Assemi et al., 2007; Orfaly et al., 2005; Trabeau et al, 2008). They could explore transitioning to a trainer, adult learning and retention, training design and materials development, training delivery, facilitating strategies, and training evaluation. These webinars should be tailored to practicing professionals, and considering nontraditional learners' learning needs and styles (Taylor et al., 2021).

5. **Stage 5: Monitor and Evaluate.** During the strategic planning process, the culture committee will discuss how to evaluate the DEI initiative's outcomes and process. Here are some examples regarding outcome evaluation:

   - Diversity percentage in leadership: Do you have diverse representation in management, including the board of directors?
   - Human resources and DEI: Does your organization use quantitative and/or qualitative measurements to assess workforce diversity & inclusion efforts in areas such as hiring, promotions, separations, and career development? What steps are in place to ensure that promotions/ compensation are based on employees' abilities and achievements without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, or other non-abilities-based differences?
   - Retention: Do employees enjoy their jobs and feel they have equal access to opportunities for advancement and upskilling?
   - Program engagement: Are workforce education, mentorship, and other continuous learning programs being used? Has engagement increased since DEI training was implemented?

- Employee feedback: How does the workforce feel about the organizational culture regarding DEI? Do employees feel served by DEI initiatives? Do leaders think current DEI initiatives have been effective?
6. **Stage 6: Gain Organizational Metamorphosis.** DEI initiatives are important factors in an organization's ability to become inclusive (Barak, 2017; Liswood, 2009) and drive efficiency, retention, and overall performance (Morley, 2018). According to Grissom (2018), DiversityInc's Top 50 Companies for Diversity listed organizations that excelled in talent pipeline, talent development, leadership accountability, and supplier diversity. The goal for the DEI initiatives is to achieve organizational metamorphosis. In this final stage, organizational change regarding belongingness and inclusion takes place. Organizational change involves changing people's behaviors regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion to align with the new DEI practices.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study will be useful for leaders who decide to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion awareness in their organizations. Effective education would benefit organizations by helping eliminate stereotypes and unconscious bias, and understanding and accepting differences. Diversity experts revealed the positive impact of diversity on group performance and problem-solving; trained diverse groups outperformed homogeneous groups on complex tasks (Triandis, Hall, & Ewen, 1965; Ziller, 1972). Organizations need appropriate preparation and training to function effectively in today's diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. If not addressed, the mere existence and increase of workplace diversity may lead to increased conflict and misunderstanding. This study's results will help prepare leaders that wish to metamorphosize their workplaces.

This report examined the effects of diversity, equity, and inclusion in improving an organization's culture. It explored the five-step DEI Organizational Metamorphosis Model and how it could strengthen an organization's quality of life. Future studies could assess the effectiveness of this model in organizations that implemented it. Developing a DEI initiative isn't just about protected classes but about developing and sustaining a strong workforce with various strengths. We live in the most diverse environment we've ever experienced, which provides reason to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion.

REFERENCES

Adler, N. (1991). *International dimensions of organization behavior* (2nd Ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Ali, S., Burns, C., & Grant, L. (2013). Equality and diversity in the health service. *Journal of Psychological Issues in Organizational Culture*, *3*, 190–209.

Aragón-Correa, J.A., Hurtado-Torres, N., Sharma, S., & García-Morales, V.J. (2008). Environmental strategy and performance in small firms: A resource-based perspective. *Journal of Environmental Management*, *86*(1), 88–103.

Assemi, M., Mutha, S., & Hudmon, K.S. (2007). Evaluation of a train-the-trainer program for cultural competence. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *71*(6), 110.

Barak, M.E.M. (2016). *Managing diversity: Toward a globally inclusive workplace*. Sage Publications.

Bantel, K., & Jackson, S.E. (1989). Top management and innovations in banking: Does the composition of the top team make a difference? *Strategic Management Journal*, *10*(1), 107–124.

Blind. (2020). *2020 state of diversity, equity & inclusion in the workplace study*. Retrieved from https://d2f6u087vodcai.cloudfront.net/pdf/diversity-inclusion-2020-blind.pdf

Brady, L.M., Kaiser, C.R., Major, B., & Kirby, T. (n.d.). It's fair for us: Diversity structures cause women to legitimize discrimination. *Elsevier Enhanced Reader*.

Choi, S. (2011). Diversity and representation in the U.S. federal government: Analysis of the trends of federal employment. *Public Personnel Management*, *40*(1), 25–46.

Choi, S., & Rainey, H.G. (2010). Managing diversity in U.S. federal agencies: Effects of diversity and diversity management on employee perceptions of organizational performance. *Public Administration Review*, *70*(1), 109–121.

Costello, P.J.M. (2007). *Action research*. London: Continuum Books.

Cox, Jr., T.H., & Beale, R.L. (1997). *Developing competency to manage diversity: Readings, cases, activities*. San Francisco: BK Publishers, Inc.

Crotty, S.K., & Brett, J.M. (2012). Fusing creativity: Cultural metacognition and teamwork in multicultural teams. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, *5*(2), 210–234.

Damelang, A., & Haas, A. (2012). The benefits of migration. *European Societies*, *14*(3), 362–392.

Dixon-Fyle, S., Dolan, K., Hunt, V., & Prince, S. (2020). *Diversity wins: How inclusion matters*. New York, NY: McKinsey & Company.

Dumaine, B. (1989, July 3). What the leaders of tomorrow see. *Fortune*, pp. 48–62.

Foldy, E.L., & Buckley-Sharp, T.R. (2020). Diversity management: A key to business success. *Journal of Management and Marketing Research*, *27*, 1–13. Retrieved from https://www.abacademies.org/articles/JMMR/Vol27/JMMRVol27No1P1-13.pdf

Geller, G., & Kass, N. (2021). Diversity, equity, and inclusion in public health: Navigating ethical challenges. *American Journal of Public Health*, *111*(3), 372–375.

George, B., Walker, R.M., & Monster, J. (2019). Does strategic planning improve organizational performance? A meta-analysis. *Public Administration Review*, *79*(6), 810–819.

Ghosh, K. (2016). Creative leadership for workplace innovation: An applied SAP-LAP framework. *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*, *30*(3), 10–14.

Gooley, T.B. (2000). A world of difference. *Logistics Management and Distribution Report*, pp. 51–55.

Grissom, A.R. (2018). The alert collector: Workplace diversity and inclusion. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, *57*(4), 243–247.

Gürel, E. (2017). SWOT analysis: A theoretical review. *Journal of International Social Research*, *10*(51), 994–1006.

Harvey, C.P., & Allard, M.J. (2005). *Understanding and managing diversity* (3rd Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Hassan, R.A., Bashir, A.F., & Rauf, A.I. (2010). Pre-training motivation and the effectiveness of transformational leadership training: An experiment. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, *9*(1), 1–8.

Helms, M.M., & Nixon, J. (2010). Exploring SWOT analysis – Where are we now? A review of academic research from the last decade. *Journal of Strategy and Management*, *3*(3), 215–251.

Hill, T., & Westbrook, R. (1997). SWOT analysis: It's time for a product recall. *Long Range Planning*, *30*(1), 46–52.

Ho, W., Xu, X., & Dey, P.K. (2010). Multi-criteria decision-making approaches for supplier evaluation and selection: A literature review. *European Journal of Operational Research*, *202*(1), 16–24.

Hvidman, U., & Andersen, S.C. (2013). The impact of performance management in public and private organizations. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *24*(1), 35–58.

Jackson, S.E., Brett, J.F., Sessa, V.I., Cooper, D.M., Julin, J.A., & Peyronnin, K. (1991). Some differences make a difference: Individual dissimilarity and group heterogeneity as correlates of recruitment, promotions, and turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *76*(5), 675–689.

Jackson, S.E. (1992). Consequences of group composition for the interpersonal dynamics of strategic issue processing. In P. Shrivastava, A. Huff, & J. Dutton (Eds.), *Advances in Strategic Management* (Vol. 8, pp. 345–382). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Jang, S. (2017). Cultural brokerage and creative performance in multicultural teams. *Organization Science*, *28*.

Kajanus, M., Leskinen, P., Kurttila, M., & Kangas, J. (2012). Making use of MCDS methods in SWOT analysis—Lessons learnt in strategic natural resources management. *Forest Policy and Economics*, *20*, 1–9.

Kalev, A., Dobbin, F., & Kelly, E. (2006). Best practices or best guesses? Assessing the efficacy of corporate affirmative action and diversity policies. *American Sociological Review*, *71*(4), 589–617.

Kanter, R.M. (1983). *The change masters*. New York: Basic Books.

Kelloway, E.K., Barling, J., & Helleur, J. (2000). Enhancing transformational leadership: The roles of training and feedback. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *21*(3), 145–9.

Kich, J.I.D.F., & Pereira, M.F. (2011). A influência da liderança, cultura, estrutura e comunicação organizacional no processo de implantação do planejamento estratégico. *Cadernos EBAPE. BR*, *9*(4), 1045–1065.

King, R.K. (2004, April 25–27). Enhancing SWOT analysis using TRIZ and the bipolar conflict graph: A case study on the Microsoft Corporation [Paper presentation]. *TRIZCON2004, 6th Annual Altshuller Institute*, Seattle, WA.

Lee, S., & Sai On Ko, A. (2000). Building balanced scorecard with SWOT analysis, and implementing "Sun Tzu's The Art of Business Management Strategies" on QFD methodology. *Managerial Auditing Journal*, *15*(1/2), 68–76.

Leslie, L.M. (2019). Diversity initiative effectiveness: A typological theory of unintended consequences. *Academy of Management Review*, *44*(3), 538–563.

Leung, K., & Wang, J. (2015). Social processes and team creativity in multicultural teams: A socio-technical framework. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *36*(7), 1008–1025.

Lindley, E., & Wheeler, F.P. (2000). The learning square: Four domains that impact on strategy. *British Journal of Management*, *11*(4), 357–364.

Lisak, A., Erez, M., Sui, Y., & Lee, C. (2016). The positive role of global leaders in enhancing multicultural team innovation. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *47*(6), 655–673.

Liswood, L.A. (2009). *The loudest duck: Moving beyond diversity while embracing differences to achieve success at work*. John Wiley & Sons.

Lorenzo, R., Voigt, N., Tsusaka, M., Krentz, M., & Abouzahr, K. (2018). *How diverse leadership teams boost innovation*. Boston, MA: Boston Consulting Group.

Marrone, J.A., & Shalley, C.E. (2020). Managing diversity in teams: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Management*, *46*(6), 854–884.

McLeod, P.L., & Lobel, S.A. (1992). The effects of ethnic diversity on idea generation in small groups. *Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings*, pp. 227–231.

McLeod, P.L., Lobel, S.A., & Cox, Jr., T. (1996). Ethnic diversity and creativity in small groups. *Small Group Research*, *27*(2), 248–264.

Mintzberg, H., Ahlstrand, B., & Lampel, J. (2009). *Safári da estratégia*. São Paulo: Bookman Editora.

Morley, T. (2018). Making the business case for diversity and inclusion: Short case studies and research papers that demonstrate best practice in HR. *Strategic HR Review*.

National Institutes of Health. (2019). *Notice of NIH's interest in diversity*.

Neis, D.F., Pereira, M.F., & Maccari, E.A. (2017). Processo de planejamento estratégico estrutura organizacional: Impactos, confluências e similaridades. *Brazilian Business Review*, *14*(5), 479–492.

Onyeador, I., Hudson, S., & Lewis, N. (2021). Moving beyond implicit bias training: Policy insights for increasing organizational diversity. *Policy Insights From the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *8*, 19–26.

O'Reilly III, C.A., Caldwell, D.F., & Barnett, W.P. (1989). Workgroup demography, social integration, and turnover. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *34*, 21–37.

O'Reilly III, C.A., Snyder, R.C., & Boothe, J.N. (1993). Executive team demography and organizational change. In G.P. Huber, & W.H. Glick (Eds.), *Organizational change and redesign* (pp. 147–175). New York: Oxford University Press.

Orfaly, R.A., Frances, J.C., Campbell, P., Whittemore, B., Joly, B., & Koh, H. (2005). Train-the-trainer as an educational model in public health preparedness. *Journal of Public Health Management Practices*, *11*, S123–S127.

Oudenhoven, J., & Ward, C. (2013). Fading majority cultures: The implications of transnationalism and demographic changes for immigrant acculturation. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *23*(2), 81–97.

Panagiotou, G. (2003). Bringing SWOT into focus. *Business Strategy Review*, *14*(2), 8–10.

Parry, K.W., & Sinha, P.N. (2005). Researching the trainability of transformational organizational leadership. *Human Resource Development International*, *8*(2), 165–183.

Parsi, N. (2017). *Yesterday's workforce won't lead you into tomorrow*. Retrieved from https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/0217/pages/disrupting-diversity-in-the-workplace.aspx

Pearce, C.L., & Ensley, M.D. (2004). A reciprocal and longitudinal investigation of the innovation process: The central role of shared vision in product and process innovation teams (PPITs). *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *25*(2), 259–278.

Pitts, D.W., & Jarry, E.M. (2009). Getting to know you: Ethnic diversity, time, and performance in public organizations. *Public Administration*, *87*, 503–518.

Roberson, Q.M., & Ferdman, R.A. (2020). Diversity and work group performance: An integrative review and future research agenda. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *41*(2), 122–139.

Rock, D., & Grant, H. (2016). Why diverse teams are smarter. *Harvard Business Publishing*. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter

Sabharwal, M., Levine, H., & D'Agostino, M. (2018). A conceptual content analysis of 75 years of diversity research in public administration. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *38*(3), 248–267.

Schneider, B. (1987). The people make the place. *Personnel Psychology*, *40*(3), 437–453.

Triandis, H.C., Hall, E.R., & Ewen, R.B. (1965). Member heterogeneity and dyadic creativity. *Human Relations*, *18*(1), 33–55.

Selmer, J., Lauring, J., & Jonasson, C. (2013). Academic staff involvement and openness to diversity in international educational organisations: Is there a moderating effect of shared language? *Higher Education Quarterly*, *67*(2), 135–156.

Solakoglu, M.N., & Demir, N. (2016). The role of firm characteristics on the relationship between gender diversity and firm performance. *Management Decision*, *54*(7), 1407–1419.

Szkudlarek, B., Romani, L., Caprar, D.V., & Osland, J.S. (Eds.). (2020). *The Sage handbook of contemporary cross-cultural management*. London: Sage Publications Limited.

Taylor, H.L., & Yeager, V.A. (2021). Core competency gaps among governmental public health employees with and without a formal public health degree. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, *27*(1), 20–29.

Thomas, D.C., Liao, Y., Aycan, Z., Cerdin, J.-L., Pekerti, A.A., Ravlin, E.C., . . . Van De Vijver, F. (2015). Cultural intelligence: A theory-based, short form measure. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *46*(9), 1099–1118.

Trabeau, M., Neitzel, R., Meischke, H., Daniell, W.E., & Seixas, N.S. (2008). A comparison of "Train-the-Trainer" and expert training modalities for hearing protection use in construction. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, *51*(2), 130–137.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). *Employment projections*. Retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/unemployment-earnings-education.htm

U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). *National population projections tables: 2018-2060*. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2018/demo/popproj/2018-summary-tables.html

Valentin, E. (2001). SWOT analysis from a resource-based view. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *9*(2), 54–69.

Wang, J., Grand, H.-L.C., Chen, T., & Leung, K. (2019). Team creativity/innovation in culturally diverse teams: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *40*(6), 693–708.

Wang, K.C. (2007, August 5–10). A process view of SWOT analysis [Paper Presentation]. *51st Annual Meeting of the International Society for System Sciences*, Tokyo, Japan.

Wanger, W., Pfeffer, J., & O'Reilly III, C.A. (1984). Organizational demography and turnover in top management groups. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *29*(1), 74–92.

Weihrich, H. (1982). The TOWS matrix—A tool for situational analysis. *Long Range Planning*, *15*(2), 54–66.

Ziller, R.C. (1972). *Homogeneity and heterogeneity of group membership in experimental psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.