

## **ORGANIZATIONAL DIVERSITY CLIMATE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Workplace diversity, guided by laws as well as managerial policy for equal opportunity in hiring decisions, becomes part of organizational climate through goal-directed diversity policies and behavioral practices. Organizational managers may strive to effect strategic diversity goals, but they may not accomplish diverse workplaces which suggests a gap may exist during hiring decisions. The purpose of this study is to assess and explore relationships between perceived organizational diversity climate with relationships to individual work ethic, beliefs, personality, culture values, and resistance to change. In this study 400 participants volunteered to participate with 202 completing measures in this online study from a global, southern university and many reported years of work and military experience. Findings indicate that attitudes about workplace diversity are positively related to multidimensional work ethic variables of morality ethics, centrality of work, hard work, and no wasted time. However, workplace diversity attitudes were negatively related to resistance to change, subsuming variables of routine seeking, emotional reaction, and short-term focus. Organizational diversity fairness, inclusion, and fulfillment climate is positively related to work ethic and to exploratory findings for Hofstede's culture values of power distance, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance. Significant regression predictors of diversity climate include hard work, delay of gratification, humanistic, and organizational beliefs. Research implications suggest that knowledge of managerial and employee diversity attitudes and work ethic may pinpoint needs for diversity and cultural training. Development initiatives may include shared workplace experiences on diverse, inclusive work teams and/or opportunities to work at global sites in order to build subsequent diverse, cohesive organizational climates.

*Keywords:* Workplace diversity, organizational climate, equity, inclusion, organizational culture

### **INTRODUCTION**

Workplace diversity, guided by laws as well as managerial policy for equal opportunity in hiring decisions, becomes part of organizational climate through goal-directed diversity policies and behavioral practices. Organizational managers may strive to effect strategic diversity goals, but they may not accomplish diverse workplaces which suggests a gap may exist during hiring decisions. Perspective-taking through directed questions by a partnership between the National

Academy of Human Resources (NAHR) and the Society of Industrial Organizational Psychologists (SIOP) was conducted with Chief Human Resource officers and Academic researchers to review policies and organizational practices for knowledge to change and improve diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Report: NAHR & SIOP, 2021). It was noted that workplace measures for accountability is important to track diversity and inclusion, pools of talent, and training needs. The organizational leaders that followed accountable diversity, equity and inclusive processes to their measured strategic goals improved diversity, networking, and opportunities for women in the workplace. Similarly, Velez-Castrillon and Angert (2016) present compelling individual antecedents including educational attainment and network density and centrality with organizational antecedents including firm crisis, female embeddedness in industry, ratio of female hires, and female inside directors that may propel women to top CEO positions. Whereas, NAHR and SIOP partnered to extend the initiative focus on people of color and women formulating questions around building better organizational diversity climate. Topics included having a diverse board, organizational incentives, leader performance goals and action plans to eliminate diversity gaps, and equity awareness initiatives that focus on women and people of color in order to improve organizational diversity, equity, and inclusion.

For this study we are measuring and exploring several dimensions of organizational diversity climate defined as fairness, inclusion, promises fulfillment, and attitudes. The fairness of an organizational climate is based on the perception of fairness within and across human resource practices to gender, ethnicity, religion and age (e.g. how fairly women and minorities are treated) (Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2012). Whereas, diversity inclusion is defined as organizational support of mentoring programs, networks, and diversity training programs focused on “respect for difference” enhancing organizational belongingness (Buttner, Low, & Billings-Harris, 2012; Kamarck, 2017). It is noted that many earlier research studies have focused on a diversity facet like race, ethnicity, or gender and incorporated diversity within workplace inclusion, specifically studying the need for inclusion of women in the academic sciences (Bilimoria, Joy, & Liang, 2008; Boekhorst, 2015). Boekhorst (2015) presents Roberson’s (2006) definition that further clarifies inclusion as it “refers to employee involvement and the integration of diversity into organizational systems and processes, whereas diversity refers to variability in the composition of a work group.” Boekhorst (2015) states that fostering workplace diversity climate with Inclusion includes a sense of belongingness defined as “acceptance for all organizational members” and uniqueness defined as all employee contributions are “valued whereby each member experiences respect and the opportunity for voice in the workplace.” For this study knowing that organizational diversity climate may be complex with multiple variables, we planned to explore some dimensional facets of diversity climate.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

To build upon how diversity climate may evolve within organizations, we review some diversity initiatives and changes found in the U.S. military. Kamarck (2017) expands upon the civ-mil relationship where the military has supported diversity goals, inclusion, and equal opportunity in the Armed Services in order to encourage recruitment, retention, and promotion of a diverse force with the vision to align with civilian workforce – the civ-mil relationship. Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter (2015) stated “We have to focus relentlessly on the mission, which means the thing that matters most about a person is what they can contribute to it... we must start from a position

of inclusivity, not exclusivity ---- Anything less is not just wrong – it’s bad defense policy, and it puts our future strength at risk”. This 2015 revision to the Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) now closely resembles the Civilian Equal Opportunity Program (EEO) definition. Furthermore, in 2020 Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper propelled the MEO program by implementing initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion (D & I) with a 3-prong approach identifying immediate actions to create more inclusive armed forces. A Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion was established to identify additional/future actions related to D & I. This Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (DACODAI) was founded as an independent committee to provide continuous review of all stages of a military career in order to reflect diversity of the U.S. population (Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion Report, 2020, p.7). It is noted that the DOD defines inclusion as valuing individual differences and encouraging contributions to organizational decision-making (2020, p. 15). Additionally, Ozeren (2014) states that sexual orientation discrimination policies in the workforce are represented through the major pillars of “social institutions, legal frameworks, and cultural norms”. Other factors that complicate organizational diversity climate balance include dispositional Resistance to Change (RTC) that was found to be similar across 17 countries (Oreg et al., 2008). Even research on faculty in academic sciences evidenced gender biases where they favor male students over female students (Kelly, 2019; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). Padhi (2019) suggests that to increase workforce diversity, inclusion needs to be the focus for employees to feel fit, comfort, and belongingness. Inclusiveness helps improve employee’s engagement with an organization.

An earlier review by Boekhorst (2015) suggests that authentic leadership may promote organizational diversity. This new authentic leadership style subsumes transformational variables, “moral compass” related ethics, and tenets from positive psychology including self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced decision-making processes to lower bias, and having a moral compass (Muchinsky & Howes, 2019; Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013). It could be that a combination of leadership like authentic, strategic, and servant styles may facilitate more diverse organizations. In addition, psychological diversity climate can be improved by human resources policies that are seen as fair by employees. Researchers Doghan, Bhatti, and Juhari (2019) proposed a conceptual framework that blends employee psychological diversity climate, and personality traits, with human resource management practices of recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation and benefits. This framework when combined should influence workforce job satisfaction and the outcome of job performance in a multicultural workforce. They suggest that employee perceptions about working in a positive, psychological diverse climate could influence their job satisfaction and performance in a positive direction. Heimstra’s et al. (2017) research focused on the drivers of organizational diversity promotion and found significant results for managerial attitudes and planned behavior as perceived behavioral control (PBC) were strong drivers toward promoting cultural diversity and played a significant role in increasing organizational inclusion.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF DIVERSITY CLIMATE**

With many research studies being done on the facets of organizational diversity climate, theoretical diversity frameworks are needed to clarify gaps and approaches to researching the complexity of diversity climate research. Human resource development (HDR) researchers addressed progress in diversity theory in the Human Resource Development Review, June issue, Vol. 13(2) (Williams

& Mavin, 2014). Diversity research includes Syed and Ozbilgin's (2015) edited book with a global focus on diversity and inclusion management within organizations and Roberson, Kulik, and Tan's (2013) Oxford handbook that guides diversity training. Diversity management (DM) (Olsen & Martins, 2012) includes the approach of terminal achievement values and instrumental guiding values (Rokeach, 1973) that may be held by employees and DM through an acculturation strategy of assimilation and integration (Berry, 1984; Cox & Finley-Nickelson, 1991). This DM theory focuses on how values and acculturation strategies may impact recruitment, selection, retention of women and minorities, nondiscrimination policies, conflict management and sensitivity training. Residuals of workforce diversity are theorized to improve creativity, decision-making, and expanded market access. Further empirical research by Olsen and Martins (2016) evidenced instrumental diversity value raises organizational attractiveness through merit-based hiring decisions. Moreover, Nkomo et al. (2019, p. 499) present a fifty-year historical view figure of the trajectory of the diversity field research within the Academy of Management. This review highlights earlier anti-discrimination, affirmative action, and equal opportunity focus on racial minorities and women to a current focus on identity fluidity, inclusion, and diversity climate through social media, individualism, and the exponential rise of technology platforms. Nkomo et al. (2019) discuss how both external and internal sociopolitical contexts impact the resource support for equality and diversity management. In addition, Clair et al. (2019, p. 596) present a theoretical, cognitive category framework that defines ways to view and understand the change in mindset and social construction, shifting from traditional categorical demographic groups on gender, race, and ethnicity to modern individual identity demographics like multiracial and their experience in organizations. This theoretical framework outlines modern, diverse identities and how a misalignment can happen with traditional, normative categorization still found in many organizational climates. Consequently, individuals with alternative approaches to demographic identity – nonnormative demographic identity – can feel less belongingness and less inclusion within an organization with a climate of traditional categorization of groups. The nonnormative demographic identities of Clair et al.'s (2019) theory framework include intracategorical multiplicities (individuals belong to 2 or more groups in demographic category), intracategorical mobility (fluidity is experienced among groups in category for individual), intracategorical uncertainty (individuals are not sure what group(s) belong to), and acategorical demographic identities (opposition against a demographic group by individual). Foremost, categorization threat can be felt by individuals who feel that others miscategorize them, threatening their identity and psychological well-being (Barreto & Ellemers, 2002; Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Does et al., 2021). Theoretical nonnormative demographic identities need to be recognized and educated to organizational leaders and employees to avoid misalignment tendencies that can be found with normative, traditional demographic categories and, thus, impede organizational goals for organizational diversity climate.

Furthermore, Durrani and Rajagopal, (2016) suggest that diversity attitudes are influenced by perceptions of ethical hiring and overall attitudes to workplace diversity. Additional research indicates that diversity climate may be affected by managerial decision-making through individual personality factors, work ethic (Meriac, Woehr, Gorman, & Thompson, 2013), resistance to change (Oreg et al., 2008), and cultural awareness (Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010). Hofstede (2001) is well known for research on cultural values studied as dynamic motivators for human behavior through the emergence of cultural dimensions through scientific exploration including Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Collectivism, Long-term Orientation (also named

Confucian Dynamism), and Masculinity/Femininity (Yoo, Donthu, & Lenartowicz, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Gaines et al., (2007) evidenced three distinct dimensions in collectivism, individualism, and familism as culture values by race/ethnicity identity and gender. In addition, Buchholz (1978) researched contemporary beliefs about work including Humanistic (meaningful work for full potential), Marxist-related (work for human fulfillment and ownership classes), Organizational (work that is group related within organizational hierarchies), Leisure (fulfillment through choice of leisure activities and creativity), & Work ethic (working hard to overcome obstacles).

### **PURPOSE OF STUDY AND HYPOTHESES**

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to assess and explore relationships between perceived organizational diversity climate with relationships to individual work ethic, beliefs, personality, culture values, and resistance to change. In the DM theory both values (Olsen & Martins, 2012; Cox & Finley-Nickelson, 1991) and acculturation strategy (Berry, 1984) are the framework drivers of diversity-to-performance relationships. To further explore the relationships between terminal and instrumental values and acculturation through assimilation and integration that may motivate behavior, we included Hofstede's (1980) culture values measure to explore these relationships. Hofstede's individualism and collectivism values will be measured for possible relationships to Nkomo et al. (2019, p.499) diversity field on external sociopolitical context that includes individualism, postracialism, technology and social media growth, and environmentalism and possible relationships to internal sociopolitical variables of inclusion and spirituality/humanism. Relationship hypotheses and predictive influencers were formulated between Diversity Climate and the variables subsumed in the measures on Culture Values (Hofstede, 1980), Daily Behavior Personality Trait-Roles (Church et al, 2008), Multidimensional Work Ethic, Daily Beliefs, and resistance to change. We hypothesized that diversity climate will have higher work beliefs defined as Humanistic, Organizational, and Work ethic; whereas, we predicted that diversity climate would be lower for Marxist-related beliefs and moderately related to Leisure beliefs. Additional hypotheses include diversity climate predictors should be lower to the resistance to change variables of routine-seeking, emotional reaction, short-term focus and cognitive rigidity. Understanding that categorical thinking involves cognitive functions and heuristics with Clair et al. (2019) theory on understanding nonnormative demographic identities, we hypothesize that individual cognition is less rigid for those who embrace diversity climate. We hypothesize that the predictors for the multidimensional work ethic profile measure for higher diversity climate should be positively related to self-reliance, morality/ethics, centrality of work, hard work, no wasted time, and delay of gratification. Also, we hypothesized that the leisure variable would be similar to the work beliefs leisure variable and moderately related to diversity climate. Furthermore, we hypothesized that the personality factors of openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness would be related positively to Diversity Climate and the personality traits of extraversion and emotional stability moderately related to Diversity Climate.

### **METHOD**

In this study 400 participants volunteered to participate with 202 participants completing all the measures in this online study from a global, southern university and many reported years of work and military experience. Data analyses included correlational and regression assessments for

relationships and predictors that may influence workplace diversity climate. Participants reported 3.31 GPA average and 32 years of age average who attend a global Southeastern University. Participants reported their gender as 70 males and 291 females with 59% Caucasian, 29% African American, 5% Hispanic, 2% Asian, and 5% other and with 82% reporting both full-time, part-time and military work experiences.

For this research study on diversity and organizational climate, a battery of measures composed this survey and were answered by participant volunteers in an online research platform using Qualtrics survey engine. As noted in the DM theories, multi-levels impact organizational diversity climate and worker potential including understanding nonnormative demographic identities and individual identities within the organization. Therefore, our focus was to measure individual levels through a battery of measures on work ethic, values and attitudes about diversity working within organizations. A Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP) measure was assessed and subsumed the variable of self-reliance, morality/ethics, leisure, hard work, centrality of work, no wasted time, and delay of gratification (Meriac & Gorman, 2017). Some questions included self-reliance, “I strive to be self-reliant,” Morality/ethics included, “One should always take responsibility for one’s actions” and “It is important to treat others as you would like to be treated,” for Leisure “More leisure time is good for people,” Centrality of Work, “I feel content when I have spent the day working,” for Hard Work, “Working hard is the key to being successful,” for Wasted Time, “Time should not be wasted, it should be used efficiently,” and for Delay of Gratification, “The best things in life are those you have to wait for.”

Additional measures included a daily behavior checklist measuring conscientiousness, disagreeable behavior, openness-to-experience behaviors, extraverted behaviors, and neurotic behaviors (Church et al., 2008), a diversity climate management measure with subscales on organizational fairness, organizational inclusion, and diversity promises fulfillment (Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2012). This diversity climate measure held reliability alphas for Organizational Fairness at  $\alpha = .92$ , organizational inclusion at  $\alpha = .64$ , and diversity promises fulfillment at  $\alpha = .89$ . Also, an attitudes towards diversity measure was included (Durrani & Rajagopal, 2016). Some questions on this diversity measure were modified to reflect participant responses to general workplace experiences with supervisors and organizational managers. See the following Figures 1 and 2 for the measure questions that were modified for this study.

Figure 1. Diversity Management Scale modified (Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2012)

1. I feel that I have been treated differently in organizations because of my race, sex, religion, or age.
2. Managers have a track record of hiring and promoting employees objectively
3. Managers in organizations give feedback and evaluate employees fairly, regardless of such factors as the employee's race, sex, age or social background
4. Managers make promotion and tenure decisions fairly, regardless of such factors as the employee's race, sex, age, or social background.
5. Managers interpret human resource policies fairly for all employees.
6. Managers give assignments based on the skills and abilities of employees.
7. Managers in organizations encourage the formation of employee network support groups.
8. There is a mentoring program in use in organizations that identifies and prepares all employees.
9. The "old boy's network" is alive and well in organizations
10. Organizations spend enough money and time on diversity awareness and related training.
11. The performance evaluation system in organizations are fair.
12. I am satisfied with the way performance evaluations are done in organizations.

13. Different opinions, ideas, and perspectives are valued.
14. Racial bias and prejudice is eliminated.
15. Support/understanding of unique issues is provided for employees of minority.

Figure 2. Attitudes towards Diversity scale modified (Durrani & Rajagopal, 2016)

1. I feel that everyone is unique, with differing values and preferences.
2. I believe in fairness in hiring at all levels in organizations.
3. I find it unsatisfying to work within a diverse team.
4. I feel that both newcomers and the organizations in which they work should learn to work together.
5. I feel equally comfortable with all groups.
6. I am knowledgeable about the culture of different ethnic groups (e.g. Asian, African, Middle-Eastern)
7. I show little patience and understanding with people who speak little or no English.
8. I am drawn to others who are different than me.

The Diversity Climate scale is composed of three different dimensions including organizational fairness, organizational inclusion, and diversity promises fulfillment (Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2012). For organizational fairness, an example survey question is “I feel that I have been treated differently here because of my race, sex, religion, or age.” For organizational inclusion, an example question is “supervisors and managers here encourage the formation of employee network support groups.” For the diversity promises fulfillment scale, an example question is “Racial bias and prejudice is eliminated.” An additional measure included the HR Managers’ Attitudes towards Workplace Diversity scale that we modified to reflect participants attitudinal perceptions on organizational diversity (Durrani & Rajagopal, 2016) and an example question is “I am knowledgeable about the culture of different ethnic groups (e.g., Asian, African, Middle-Eastern).” See questions in Figure 2. Additional measures included an Individual Cultural Values Scale (CVSCALE) aligned with Hofstede’s (1980) comprehensive IBM study on five dimensions of cultural variables including Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Collectivism, Long-Term Orientation, and Masculinity (Yoo, Donthu, & Lenartowicz, 2011), a covariate culture values measure on individualism, collectivism, and familism with questions on family closeness (Gaines et al., 1997).

Additional measures were administered and included a Resistance to Change Scale (Oreg, 2003) with variables measuring Routine seeking, Emotional reaction, Short-term focus, and Cognitive rigidity and the Inventory of Belief Statements (Buchholz, 1978) with several beliefs categories including Humanistic, Marxist-related, Organizational, Leisure, and Work Ethic. The Humanistic variable included questions like “the workplace can be humanized” and “the job should be a place of new experiences,” the Marxist-related questions included, “management does not understand the needs of the worker” and “the free enterprise system mainly benefits the rich and the powerful,” the Organizational variable included, “the group is the most important entity in any organization,” the Leisure variable included, “the present trend toward a shorter workweek is to be encouraged,” and Work Ethic included, “by working hard a person can overcome every obstacle that life presents.” The measures included Likert response scales. For example, the Buchholz (1978) measure 5-point scale included “strong disagreement,” “mild disagreement,” “neither agree or disagree,” “mild agreement,” and “strong agreement” and for most of the scales we used the 5-point Likert-type scale (1-Strongly Disagree to 5 – Strongly Agree) for participant data responses.

**RESULTS**

Many significant findings were evidenced through both correlational and regression analyses that viewed diversity management as a Climate total subsuming the variables of diversity inclusion, promises fulfillment, and fairness with attitudes as a separate measure. We found significant correlational evidence for diversity management on attitudes about workplace diversity with attitudes positively related to multidimensional work ethic variables of Morality/ Ethics  $r = .37$ , Centrality of work  $r = .35$ , Hard work  $r = .30$ , and No wasted time  $r = .37$  all at the  $p < .001$ . See the following Table 1 for correlations found on the Diversity Management Scale (inclusion, promises fulfillment, and fairness climate) with the Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile measure (self-reliance, morality ethics, centrality of work, and hard work).

Table 1. Correlations Diversity Management Scale (inclusion, promises fulfillment, fairness climate) with Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile

Variables	Total				
	Diversity Inclusion	Diversity Promises Fulfillment	Diversity Fairness	Diversity Climate	Diversity Attitudes
Self-Reliance	.32	.14	.57	.11	.11
Morality/Ethics	-.18*	-.16*	-.10	-.17*	.37***
Centrality of Work	-.03	-.02	-.01	-.00	.35***
Hard Work	.22**	.27***	.15*	.24**	.30***
No Wasted time	.01	.06	.03	.02	.37***
Leisure	-.14	-.09	-.09	-.09	.02
Delay of Gratification	.29***	.38***	.29***	.36***	.15

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

\*Note: Diversity Climate Total is the sum of Diversity Inclusion, Diversity Promises Fulfillment, and Diversity Fairness. Diversity Attitudes is an independent measure.

Furthermore, the multidimensional work ethic variable of Hard work was found to be significant across all the diversity variables of inclusion, promises fulfillment, fairness, and attitudes. Whereas, total diversity management was found to be negatively related to Morality/ ethics at  $r = -.17$  at  $p < .05$ . The above morality/ethics variable found to be negatively related across diversity inclusion at  $r = -.18$  and diversity promises fulfillment at  $r = -.16$  both at  $p < .05$ . These negative relational findings may suggest misalignment, whether individuals feel that management reflects an understanding of modern nonnormative demographic identities or ways to improve organizational diversity climate (Clair et al., 2019, p. 596). On the other hand, more significant evidence was found for diversity management being positively related to hard work at  $r = .24$  at  $p < .01$  and delay of gratification at  $r = .36$  at  $p < .001$ , suggesting that an organization’s diversity climate may improve with time and recognition of nonnormative demographic identities and reflection of the DM theory on beneficial performance processes through creativity and better organizational decision-making (Olsen & Martins, 2012, p. 1170).

In addition, we used an inventory of belief statements (Buchholz, 1978) to measure participant’s beliefs for relationships to the diversity climate variables. Significant correlational evidence was found across the Leisure and Work Ethic variables. See the following Table 2 for the correlational

results. Significant negative relationships were found for the Leisure variable with Total Diversity Climate at  $r = -.26$ , subsuming Diversity Inclusion at  $r = -.33$ , Diversity Promises Fulfillment at  $r = -.32$  at  $p < .001$ , and Diversity Fairness at  $r = -.23$  at  $p < .01$ . On the other hand, overall Diversity Climate was positively related to Work Ethic at  $r = .24$  at  $p < .01$ , subsuming Diversity Inclusion at  $r = .26$  at  $p < .001$  and Diversity Promises Fulfillment at  $r = .21$  and Fairness at  $r = .19$  both at the  $p < .01$  level. These findings indicate that more leisure does not promote more diversity in the workplace; whereas, having a strong work ethic focused on performance may build stronger, diverse organizational climates.

Table 2. Correlations Diversity Climate Management with Beliefs

Variables	N	Diversity Inclusion	Diversity Promises Fulfillment	Diversity Fairness	Total Diversity Climate	Diversity Attitudes
Humanistic	175	-.10	-.03	.01	-.03	.38***
Marxist-related	171	-.04	-.04	-.01	-.02	.21**
Organizational	173	-.00	.67	.10	.07	.35***
Leisure	175	-.33***	-.32***	-.23**	-.26***	.23***
Work Ethic	174	.26***	.21**	.19**	.24**	-.07

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

Furthermore, while we found significant correlational evidence across some of the multidimensional work ethic profile and inventory of belief variables, we further examined workplace change issues that may influence diversity strategy progress and focused on resistance to change variables of Routine Seeking, Emotional Reaction, Short-term Focus, and Cognitive Rigidity. In this part of the research study, we investigated relational evidence on how organizational diversity climate may be affected by personal resistance to change. See the following Table 3 for correlations of diversity climate to resistance to change.

Table 3. Correlations Diversity Climate Management with Resistance to Change

Variables	Diversity Inclusion	Diversity Promises Fulfillment	Diversity Fairness	Diversity Attitudes
Routine Seeking	.05	.02	.05	-.21**
Emotional Reaction	-.00	-.04	.07	-.17**
Short-term Focus	.04	-.01	.05	-.23**
Cognitive Rigidity	-.04	-.10	-.15*	-.05

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

The results indicated a significant relationship finding for diversity climate fairness found to be negatively related to Cognitive Rigidity at  $r = -.15$  at  $p < .05$ . This evidence suggests that individual cognitive flexibility, not rigidity may benefit a more diverse organizational climate. Moreover, significant relationships were found between workplace diversity attitudes being negatively related to resistance to change subsuming the variables of routine seeking ( $r = -.21$ ), emotional reaction ( $r = -.17$ ), and short-term focus ( $r = -.23$ ) all at the  $p < .01$  level. See Table 3. These relationships indicate building a more diverse organizational climate may call for managers to be more like change agents by offering more flexible work schedules, having more even temperaments and

long-term orientations. Foremost, results indicate that organizational diversity initiatives have more potential to improve with managers who are open to change.

We continued our research on correlational relationships with the use of the Individual Cultural Values Scale (CVSCALE; Yoo, Donthu, & Lenartowicz, 2011) that was first studied by Hofstede (1980) for the variables including Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Collectivism, Long-Term Orientation, and Masculinity to diversity climate. As noted in the DM theory (Olsen & Martins, 2012; Cox & Finley-Nickelson, 1991), values and acculturation (Berry, 1984) are instrumental to the diversity-to-performance relationships. Results indicate that organizational diversity fairness, inclusion, and fulfillment climate are positively related to the culture values of power distance, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance. The Power Distance positive correlational results suggest that power is not equal, yet accepted across the organization for diversity climate. The Uncertainty Avoidance finding suggests diversity climate may be present in uncertain situations within the organization. Whereas, the Masculinity value finding suggests that roles may be highly defined, yet the negative finding for attitudes suggests the opposite that high diversity attitudes is related to lower Masculinity. It may be that participant’s work experiences reflect workplaces more with these values. These results may need further cultural analyses for relationship implications. See the following Table 4 for correlational results for Diversity Climate and the Culture Values.

Table 4. Correlations Diversity Climate Management with Culture Values

Variables <i>N</i> = 187	Diversity Inclusion	Diversity Promises Fulfillment	Diversity Fairness	Diversity Attitudes
Power Distance	.35***	.32***	.28***	-.19**
Uncertainty Avoidance	.23**	.17*	.21**	.27***
Collectivism	.12	.16*	.11	.19**
Long-term Orientation	.06	.17*	.14	.35***
Masculinity	.37***	.31***	.20**	-.21**

\**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01 \*\*\**p* < .001

Additional research analyses included assessing linear regressions for predictors of Diversity climate. Our research evidence indicates significant regression predictors for diversity climate to include hard work, delay of gratification, humanistic, and organizational beliefs. See the following Table 5 for Multidimensional Work Ethic profile predictors to Diversity climate. Of the multidimensional work ethic profile variables, Hard work was found to predict with a  $\beta = .27$  at  $p < .01$  and Delay of Gratification positively predicted diversity climate at a  $\beta = .32$  at  $p < .001$ . Whereas, Morality/Ethics was found to negatively predict diversity climate with a  $\beta = -.28$  at the  $p < .01$  level with an *adjusted R*<sup>2</sup> = .20 at the *F* = 6.391 at  $p < .001$ . Both variable Hard Work and Delay of Gratification were positive predictors suggesting time is needed to train and to build organizational diversity climate for worker potential. The negative predictor of Morality/Ethics with measure questions including, “People should be fair in their dealings with others” may suggest organizational diversity climate has not been achieved at present. Olsen and Martins’s (2012) DM framework approach indicates the need for conflict management when detrimental processes occur suggesting that managers need to recognize and encourage differences and provide work and benefit flexibility. These results may indicate that building a more diverse workplace climate may take time as suggested by the significant predictor of Delay of Gratification. In

addition, organizational structures may be more conducive to Diversity Climate as some are formed as more hierarchical and rigid versus ones designed as horizontal, more flexible organizational structures.

Table 5. Regression Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile Predictors of Diversity Climate Total

Variables	$\beta$	$R$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$F$
Self-Reliance	.001	.48	.23	.20	6.391***
Morality/Ethics	-.28**				
Leisure	-.07				
Centrality of Work	-.09				
Hard Work	.27**				
Wasted Time	.00				
Delay of Gratification	.32***				

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

For our regression analyses of the Inventory of Beliefs, we found several predictors of workplace diversity that combined to predict workplace diversity. Belief variables of Humanistic, Organizational, and Leisure beliefs were positive predictors of Diversity climate. See the following Table 6 for regression belief predictors of workplace diversity.

Table 6. Regression belief predictors for attitudes for workplace diversity

Diversity Climate					
Variables	$\beta$	$R$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$F$
Humanistic	.25**	.46	.21	.19	9.006***
Marxist-related.	-.05				
Organizational	.24**				
Work Ethic	-.06				
Leisure Beliefs	.18**				

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

We continued our regression analyses with stepwise regressions for personality factors and the Culture Values. Significant findings were evidenced and include the stepwise regression analyses for predictors for Diversity Climate including the personality traits of openness to experience at  $\beta = .19$  and emotional stability at  $\beta = .17$  both at the  $p < .05$  level. However, agreeableness was found to be negative at  $\beta = -.20$  at the  $p < .01$  level. Personality factors of Openness to experience and emotional stability were found to be positively related with agreeableness being negative as a predictor. Caution should be used with these findings as the *adjusted R<sup>2</sup>* = .05. See the following Table 7 and 8 for personality predictors for Diversity Climate and Culture Values predictors, respectively. The stepwise regression evidence indicates significant culture value predictors of uncertainty avoidance at  $\beta = .23$  at  $p < .001$ , power distance at  $\beta = .26$  at  $p < .01$ , and masculinity at  $\beta = .18$  at  $p < .05$  at an *adjusted R<sup>2</sup>* = .21. These stepwise regression results suggest building a more diverse organizational climate is complex. The positive predictor findings for culture values of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity may reflect that organizational diversity climate needs rules and regulations in place and organizational management decision-making to improve diversity. We included a covariate cultural values measure on individualism, collectivism,

and familism (Gaines et al. 1997). Regression results with this covariate measure found Culture Familism to predict total Diversity Climate at  $\beta = .22$  at  $p < .01$  ( $R = .20$ ,  $R^2 = .04$ ,  $Adj. R^2 = .02$  and subsuming the individual diversity variables of Organizational Fairness at  $\beta = .19$  at  $p < .05$ , Inclusion at  $\beta = .22$  at  $p < .01$ , Promises Fulfillment at  $\beta = .16$  at  $p < .05$ . Both Individualism and Collectivism in this covariate measure did not predict the Diversity variables, but Culture Familism defined as values oriented toward family/relative’s welfare did predict Diversity Climate. Managers and employees may need to be more receptive to organizational change, yet understand that a more diverse organizational climate brings the need for continued education, training on nonnormative demographic identities, discussions on differences, flexible work arrangements, and ways forward whether an organizational “family” approach to worker engagement to lead to more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizations.

Table 7. Stepwise Regression of Personality Trait predictors for Diversity Climate

Variables	$\beta$	$R$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$F$
Agreeableness	-.20*	.27	.07	.05	4.12**
Emotional Stability	.17*				
Openness to Experience	.19*				

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 8. Stepwise Regression of Culture Values predictors for Diversity Climate

Variables	$\beta$	$R$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$F$
Power Distance	.26**	.46	.21	.19	14.18***
Uncertainty Avoidance	.23***				
Masculinity	.18*				

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

## DISCUSSION

Research implications suggest that knowledge of managerial and employee diversity attitudes and work ethic may pinpoint needs for diversity, nonnormative demographic categories and cultural training. Development initiatives may include shared workplace experiences on diverse, inclusive work teams and/or opportunities to work at global sites in order to build subsequent diverse, cohesive organizational climates. Implications from this research evidence suggests that some employers may have policies for supporting a diverse climate in their organizations, but find that biases and attitudes may be present that form biases in hiring departments, less support for diversity, and resistant to change the organizational culture. Our research findings on delay of gratification, hard work, and work ethic show that building a diverse organizational climate will take time and support at all levels of an organization. It is of note that diverse groups may not lead to greater performance at times as in-groups and out-groups can be formed. On the other hand, Hofhuis, van der Rijt, and Vlug’s (2016) research supports our findings and suggests that diversity works better with trust and open communication in and across work groups. Our theory background section outlines three theoretical frameworks by Clair et al. (2019), Olsen and Martins, 2012, and Nkomo et al. (2019) that combined can be used as models for managers to better conceptualize DM strategies, action plans, and training for improving organizational diversity climate.

In our study we focused on the dimensions of diversity climate of fairness, inclusion, and promises fulfillment with measured attitudes toward organizational diversity. We note that diverse organizations are influenced by the hiring processes in place and the training that is needed to combat implicit biases by hiring managers. Hiring policies and individual biases may have a direct effect on the climate of diversity and inclusion within an organization. Roberson, Ryan, and Ragins (2017) refer to the similarity attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971) when addressing how attitude can affect the workings of a group. Roberson et al., (2017) propose that, “individuals are posited to be attracted to those with whom they possess similar characteristics and attitudes, which subsequently influences social interactions and intergroup relations.” In the case of diversity and inclusion promotion, the hypothetical inability of a hiring manager to put aside their internal biases may directly affect the overall attitude of an organizations level of diversity. In Olsen and Martins (2012) diversity management approach framework, retention of women and minorities with targeted recruitment stems from DM value type and acculturation strategy. Our research evidence on delay of gratification and hard work as predictors of diversity climate as well as significant relationships with humanistic, organizational, and leisure beliefs may assist managers on policy strategies and ways to implement new diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Foremost, supportive research on our delay of gratification finding includes research by Liu and Yu (2017, p. 3) that found informational fairness is a driving factor for workers to practice delay of gratification for future rewards and its relation to job performance. The classic study with children on willpower and delay of gratification for later higher rewards versus immediate gratification was done by Mischel (1974). Delay of gratification correlates with a worker’s ability to work hard. From our research study evidence, it suggests that a more diverse organizational climate needs hard work and will take time to form and develop. Information justice and open communication are key to all organization productivity and supervisors that keep open all available lines of communication will enhance informational justice. Open and trustworthy communication will motivate employees to consider applying for job vacancies and promotions. DM theory emphasizes communicating nondiscrimination policies, sensitivity training, encouraging discussions and expressing differences, and flexible work (Olsen & Martins, 2012). The noteworthy research by Colquitt on the organizational justice dimensions of procedural, distributive, interpersonal and informational justice may be pivotal to the success of implementing vision goals, accountability, and strategies for improved diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2013). In a diverse climate or working group the ability of individuals to accept delayed gratification creates a forward moving environment wherein the employees are working towards a common goal and may create cohesion and acceptance of a more diverse climate.

Whereas Doghan et al. (2019) proposed a framework theory that suggested personality factors of agreeableness, emotional stability, and extroversion as influencers of multicultural workforces, our research evidence on personality factors only supported their research theory for emotional stability as a predictor. The other positive personality predictor we evidenced is openness to experience, with the negative predictor of agreeableness. On the other hand, our negative finding on agreeableness was significantly related to the diversity climate factors, while resistance to change factors of routine seeking, emotional reaction, and short-term focus were positively related to disagreeable behaviors. This negative finding on agreeableness may be due to procedural perceptions about how managers relate to employees, whether seen as high trust, medium trust, or

low trust social exchanges. For example, residual social exchange relationships that lack transparent, open communications with less trust, less reciprocity, and inequities may be unbalanced and evident across Colquitt's organizational justice dimensions. This research finding suggests the need for open communication to lower disagreements within a diverse organization. Thus, supporting an organizational diversity climate may entail managers as well as employees being more open to experience for building trust. Trust in DM is important in order to build worker belongingness, eliminate categorization identity threat (Clair et al., 2019), and lower disagreeable behavior through more openness to understanding nonnormative demographic identities. Konovsky and Pugh's (1994) research found that trust in a manager's decision making is a mediator in procedural fairness and also in employee organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) that are part of social exchange relationships. Organizational citizenship behaviors that go "above and beyond" job role behaviors are best within quality supervisor-subordinate relationships with trust and may assist with building more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizational climate (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Liu & Yu, 2017, p. 3).

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizational managers may need to assess hiring personnel for attitudes, personality traits, daily behavior, and perceptions of current diversity culture for the presence of bias and attitudes that may impede company missions for organizational diversity climate, as well as spot sensitivity training needs on diversity. Even technology can build barriers to a more inclusive diverse organization. For example, barriers to inclusive workplaces and employees with disabilities can be removed with better technologies like global leader GOOGLE did by adding closed captions (CC) to video meetings. (See Google commercial link <https://9to5google.com/2021/04/25/google-oscars-ad-coda/>.) As mentioned earlier, organizational diversity culture needs to be supported through employee training sessions to tap diversity awareness, to express differences, and to improve worker potential. Performance can improve across individuals, teams and the organization, all benefiting for having a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. For example, in the DOD diversity report (2020) it was reported that training is fundamental to an inclusive environment and that leaders need development and training to get the best performance from service members. Ensuring that leaders in an organization are adequately trained may leverage the ability of those leaders to train their subordinates in diversity and inclusion on a more personal level. By implementing diversity education across all organizational levels, it may assist with detecting any training needs in recruitment, hiring, and/or current employment processes that may be found to be biased and need improvement changes. A noteworthy educational research approach by Banaji and Greenwald (2016) and discussed in their book titled *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People* has been used for training purposes for building individual awareness of possible implicit bias on diversity through the research of Harvard Implicit Association tests.

The current historic Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted organizations on our research topic of Diversity Climate. Foremost, equality of gender in the workplace has been compromised with female workers being displaced from the workforce at an unprecedented rate due to losing jobs and/or having to do more family childcare and school mentoring needs for remote learning. According to Forbes (Jan. 12, 2021) American women lost over 5 million jobs in 2020. Gender-role attitudes and gender equity are compromised in this historic pandemic and women more than men with childcare needs will compromise total work hours, contributing to

more gender wage inequities (Reichelt, Makovi, & Sargsyan, 2021; Alon, 2020). With this equity shift in the workplace, we suggest an immediate goal priority for organizations is to plan strategies and accountable goals to build more diverse, equitable, and inclusive climates and to recover workplace gender equity balance soon for economic productivity. Organizational diversity climate is a frontline issue for organizations for continued education, training and development (APA, 2021; Heine, 2020). Therefore, organizational leaders need to double their efforts, accountability, and strategic goals to address diversity, equity, and inclusion hiring and training needs for balanced organizational diversity climate, whether within office space in-person and/or for remote workers.

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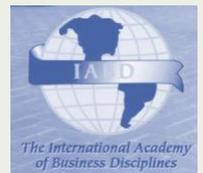
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