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# Chapter 10

## Improving Organizational Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter aims to provide useful information about the implementation of diversity equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) to improve organizational performance. This chapter provides a conceptual framework for organizational leaders who desire additional awareness and knowledge regarding the nature, extent, and impact of diverse employees' barriers. Further, the purpose of this endeavor is to demonstrate that the persistent lack of recruitment, promotion, and retention of diverse employees is due to systemic, structural, organizational, institutional, cultural, and societal obstacles. Further, the theory of generative interactions (TGI) supports how obstacles must be acknowledged and eliminated through increased awareness of the issues linked to evidence-based, data-driven approaches leading to measurable key process indicators (KPIs) and outcomes. To support DEIB initiatives, many organizations have developed the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) position to manage the process, eliminate barriers, and proactively strengthen organizational culture.*

### INTRODUCTION

Awareness of many racial, ethnic, and cultural identities is the imperative of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) initiatives (Stanley et al., 2019). what does it mean for organizations to develop a commitment to diversity? Organizational leaders must demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion by taking a solid position and providing the resources to ensure a culture of DEIB. Broadening this stance, Stanley et al. (2019) determined that organizational change concerning diversity and inclusion does not precipitate in many organizations. Organizations often fail at their attempt to deliver on strategic diversity plans. These initiatives aim to adopt goals, values, and missions, which reflect the social

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and cultural demographics representative of the global society (Ashe & Nazroo, 2017). while employee recruitment and retention remain a human resource priority for organizations, sustainable diversity plans are also prioritized in the current business climate. The CDO often leads organizational institutionalization diversity plans (Leon, 2014). when managing a diverse workforce, recruiting, hiring, training, and supervising a diverse workforce are the main objectives of executing a diversity and inclusion program.

Interestingly, the most challenging diversity issues occur when organizational culture is not established with diversity and inclusion ethos. Moreover, cross-national and intranational diversity management have different foci, yet they could have the same acculturation processes, processes by which group members from one cultural background adapt to the culture of a diverse group. The four main approaches to acculturation are (separation, deculturation, assimilation, integration, and pluralism). Likewise, employees demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion by participating in affinity groups, training, engaging in conversations, and exhibiting a culture of respect for other employees and customers (Adejumo, 2020). Concerns that some employees have about working with diverse populations or communities are how to negotiate between differences. There is debate regarding working with diverse cultures within minorities compared to working with diverse cultures from other nations. As a result, there are distinct strategies to work with the “Big 8”: age, ability, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status (class), and religion (Adejumo, 2020).

## **ORGANIZATIONS COMPRISED OF “BIG 8” DIVERSE IDENTITIES**

Diversity is classified into eight categories. The “Big 8” encompasses eight central identities that indicate humans as individuals (ASU, 2021). The “Big 8” includes age, ability, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status (class), and religion. Additional forms of institutionalized subjugation occur because of a person’s size, weight, educational attainment, income or wealth, academic/social achievement, family makeup, geographic/regional background, language, learning style, citizenship status, and beliefs (political, moral, ethical). Also, Crenshaw’s (1991, 1998) intersectionality has been used as a framework for understanding how “The Big 8” overlaps with one another and within systems of power that disadvantage people in the workplace and the broader community.

For instance, age is an identity categorized by society’s perceptions of different age groups. Older adults are often discriminated against in employment or maybe disregarded as they age. Li et al. 2020 determined that the global trend of increasing workplace age diversity has led to a growing trend in organizational consequences of age-diverse workforces. However, adopting a social capital perspective indicates that age diversity affects organizational performance via human and organizational capital (Gomez & Bernet, 2019; Stanley et al., 2019). Furthermore, workplace functional diversity and age-inclusive management are contingent factors when developing organizational diversity and inclusion initiatives. Another “Big 8” classification is the ability and identity category based on differences in physical, mental, cognitive, developmental, learning, and emotional makeup. Further, sexual orientation includes a person’s sexual, emotional, romantic, and affectional attractions, not necessarily dependent on behavior. Notwithstanding, socioeconomic status is commonly conceptualized as one’s social standing in society based on income, wealth, or poverty (ASU, 2021).

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### **CHALLENGES FACED BY DIVERSE POPULATIONS**

The problem is a persistent lack of recruitment, promotion, and retention of diverse employees due to systemic, structural, organizational, institutional, cultural, and societal obstacles. Therefore, there is a need for diverse, inclusive, and equitable organizations. Challenges experienced by members of historically underrepresented groups are extant. Ashe and Nazroo (2017) found that experiencing or witnessing racism impacts all employees, particularly ethnic minorities, in many ways. This includes directly impacting the mental health and emotional and psychological well-being of ethnic minority workers (Greer & Egan, 2019). Racism also harms the career trajectory of ethnic minority employees, reducing opportunities for additional training and career progression. Many ethnic minority workers often seek alternative forms of employment as a direct response to experiencing racism. Likewise, the promotion of equality, diversity, and fairness is inconsistent across workplaces. On the one hand, some employers promote these values in various ways, sometimes extensively and regularly (Stanley et al., 2019). On the other hand, many employers do not promote equality, diversity, and fairness. Employees often experience a lack of promotion, equality, diversity, fairness, and justice in the workplace.

Issues persistent in the workplace are lack of recruitment, development, and promotion (position and pay) opportunities for diverse populations. Li et al. (2019) investigated the antecedents and consequences of organization-level inclusion climate. As a result, multilevel analyses demonstrate that identity-conscious programs (programs that target specific identity groups) generate an inclusion climate. Moreover, the studies provide evidence of multilevel mediation: In organizations with an inclusion climate, individual employees perceive the organization as fulfilling its diversity management obligations and respond with higher levels of affective commitment. Interestingly, shared perception of organizational inclusiveness develops, and inclusion climate facilitates diversity management objectives. The important role of identity-conscious programs in promoting organizational commitment within a diverse workforce cannot be negated.

Successful strategies to address organizational diversity and inclusion challenges promote equality in today's dynamic workplace environments (Adejumo, 2020). Kemper et al. (2019) indicated that achieving equality in the workplace requires various tools, so the most useful tools for the local context can be selected. Conceivably, those using these tools must be trained appropriately. There is a lack of effective initiating organizational change towards diversity and inclusion. A profound understanding of the mechanisms by which organizational culture and climate can change within and beyond organizational development. At multiple levels, evidence-based policy changes and action plans to address and remove organizational, administrative, institutional, structural, and systemic barriers of employees (Kemper et al., 2019). Organizations thrive in a global competitive environment when guided by leading humanitarian practices locally and globally (Greer & Egan, 2019). Indeed, employees need leadership, awareness, education, actions, intentionality, accountability, and supportive environments (Li et al., 2020). Most importantly, it is essential for leaders to proactively address diversity and inclusion issues before they arise, not after.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AS A SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPERATIVE**

Social justice research methodologies are discussed to provide critical perspectives for these methodologies used by the extant research on DEIB organizational leadership and change management. Strategi-

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cally, leaders and social justice researchers must identify what needs to be accomplished for effective DEIB change management, including use numerous and consistent leverage foci for change as well as to understand whether a single aspect of the framework is changed. Changes may trigger behaviors that will restore the status quo rather than positively affect equity and inclusion (Robbins & Judge, 2018; Stanley et al., 2019). One way to avoid such reversion is to utilize consistent mandates for achieving change. Finally, leaders must develop feedback mechanisms to provide information that ensures change programs move to advance in a coordinated manner (Baltaci & Balcı, 2017). As a result, Kurt Lewin's approach for organizational change is provided. Lewin described how to mastermind and create change using the unfreeze, change, and refreeze method (as cited Robbins & Judge, 2018). Further, the attributes of organizational change that make it ineffective are deliberated. For instance, mechanistic and organic structures affect organizational change but can be impacted by following organizational change methods of Lewin, Kotter, Action Research, or organization development methods.

### **Lewin's Organizational Change Method**

Lewin developed a three-step change model universally referred to as Unfreeze, Change, and Freeze change process (as cited Robbins & Judge, 2018). The model represents an appropriate unpretentious and applicable standard for understanding the DEIB or an organizational change process. The three-stage process of Lewin's change model involves the unfreezing stage by creating the perception that a change is needed, recognizing the need for change, and encouraging the replacement of old behaviors and attributes with new behaviors. The change stage involves moving toward the different, preferred level of behavior by employing change by taking explicit action, helping employees to learn a new conceptual framework, and developing a role model program complete with mentors, specialists, benchmarking outcomes, and coaching is beneficial contrivances to expedite change. The refreezing stage involves solidifying new behavior as the standard. Here, changes are reinforced and stabilized, and leaders integrate the changed behavior or characteristics into the usual manner of doing things, and mentors help emphasize the stability of change (Robbins & Judge, 2018).

Further, Dent and Goldberg (1999) found one of the most generally acknowledged conceptual models that drive hierarchical performance is the possibility that there is protection from change and that supervisors must be the only group responsible for the change. This psychological model is typically held by staff at all levels, interferes with effective change. The one constant is that change is persistent. Moreover, before Kotter, Kurt Lewin presented a change management framework and is a powerful mechanism for leaders and staff similarly (Woodward & Hendry, 2004). Since the broad acceptance of a change model, professionals and academics have confounded the comprehension of change components.

### **Creating And Sustaining Change**

The change process enhances change management skills by linking analysis of practice and understanding with change management applications. Demonstrated is how the change process has connected theory to the field of change management. Change management expertise in organizational development is a significant core competency resulting from managerial emphasis and change management strategy, which permits leaders to create noteworthy improvements in organizational development (Webber & Scott, 2008). Leaders create processes to address organizational problems as well as more abstract technical issues that occur in organizations is vital to organizational performance (Baltaci & Balcı, 2017). The

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capacity to fetch original ideas and methods to light leads to enhanced management of organizational plans (Hosseini et al., 2017). As a result, core proficiencies erudite are best utilized by hypothesizing, introducing, leading, systematizing, assigning, and implementing plans when necessitated.

Likewise, organizational leaders must continuously reinvent themselves as continuous improvement is necessary for professionals as changing business demands require professionals to stay current with the latest industry knowledge. Dean and Bowen (1994) conveyed that knowledge acquisition could be enhanced by incorporating some continuous improvement insights into management theory. Moreover, management practice could be improved by incorporating continuous improvement to improve leadership training and development initiatives. More professionals should incorporate steady improvement theory into career plans. In diversity management, organizational development, compliance, and regulation require leaders to stay informed of regulatory and budgetary policies affecting organizations. (Baltaci & Balci, 2017). Just as the information is essential, the training is necessary to execute new change policies (Webber & Scott, 2008). In this light, organizations must ensure that leaders have the support needed to acquiesce.

### **The Impact of Negative Attributes**

The impact of negative attributes depends on organizations' objectives to make enduring transformations despite the enormous scope of challenges they face. Leaders must manage endeavors by working with stakeholders around key indicators and objectives. Regarding expanding involvement and influence, the impact of negative attributes is mitigated through collaboration rather than unilaterally (Greer & Egan, 2019). Leaders who work alone damage the benefits of shared leadership, which typically concentrates on collective objectives, major endeavors or programs, and shared responsibility (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Productive change asserts that organizations must foster partnerships to make significant organizational progress. Concerning selecting and aligning the leadership team, leaders must choose competent team members and establish an environment for prolific change where all stakeholders develop a mutual vision for organizational shifts that incorporate shared leadership. Further, in the way organizational success is communicated, leadership performance requires a commitment to stakeholders across divisions, particularly those on the front lines (Gomez & Bernet, 2019).

Further, explicating the business case for change requires planning communication messaging based on foresight and insight as to who, what, when, where, and how messages are to be communicated. Envisioning the future requires leaders to develop trust and promote continuous learning and adjustment regarding strategy (Webber & Scott, 2008). On the other hand, characteristics of poor leadership are those with limited vision. For example, a failure of leadership to cultivate themselves, people, and the organization or they may exhibit poor communication skills and lack accountability. In addition, they may promote hidden agendas; misunderstand roles; omit key persons from stakeholder groups; or seen as competitive rather than supportive. Finally, leaders may be viewed as imbalanced, partial, or differing in philosophy from that of the organization, which has been shown to breed a lack of diversity of personnel, fairness, and thought (Adejumo, 2020).

### **How Mechanistic and Organic Structures Affect DEIB Change**

Moreover, whether an organization is organic (informal and less directed; change occurs rapidly) or mechanistic (formal and autocratic; change occurs slowly and methodically), a communication strategy

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is in place to minimize conflict based on the organizational structure (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Thus, the DEIB communication management strategy exists as a proposed order of activities, whereas each contains a specific deliverable that collectively achieves projected objectives for an organization. Attributes needed to analyze organic or mechanistic are to determine what works well, a definition of deliverables and the change control process for each deliverable, what resources are involved in each deliverable, and who is needed for work tasks. Every organization should create standard communication management strategies to promote communication within the team, stakeholders, and across all teams in the organization to mitigate angst and workplace stress.

In summary, Hayes (2014) promulgated that organizational change must maintain traditional organizational development frameworks while adapting to a new framework. As a result, organizational change creates functional roles and relationships that must endure (Hayes, 2014). Leaders must consider tasks incorporation into change plans. These include: deciding who will lead during the transition phase. Further, a well-structured organization avoids unnecessary fragmentation (Robbins & Judge, 2018). While it is important to appoint capable individuals to lead the transition, it is also vital to guarantee they communicate with others who were included at earlier stages simultaneously and maintain the results of changes (Baltaci & Balci, 2017). Next are research-based methods for how leaders can construct diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives.

## **SOLUTION-BASED STRATEGIES**

Empirically based strategies for leaders allow for the creation of more diverse, inclusive, and equitable organizations. This section includes research methodologies that specifically focus on DEIB issues in organizations. This research describes how previous studies have ascertained implement solution-based strategies that demonstrate successful DEIB methodologies. For example, the relationship between diversity and organizational excellence connects with corporate social responsibility (CSR). Benitez et al. (2020) analyzed the connection between an organization's corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities and employer reputation. When organizations perform CSR activities, they encourage employees to engage in higher social, cultural, and organizational acumen. Further, CSR activities enable firms to build greater employer reputation and social capital, demonstrating the merit of CSR's impact on employees and organizational culture.

### **Managing Diversity with Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is the ability of awareness, control, express one's emotions, and manage interpersonal relationships astutely and compassionately. Albeit, responding to a conversation between employees or customers that is offensive requires emotional intelligence. Robinson indicated that employees are thought to engage in deviant workplace behaviors such as discriminatory outbursts when stressed, frustrated, or angry. Employees who demonstrate emotional intelligence are less prone to interpersonal deviance and organizational deviance, and these relationships displayed discriminant validity and meaningful interactive effects with organizational stressors. This assessment extends understanding of workplace deviance in a way that highlights an important role for work-related variations in emotional intelligence and organizational commitment to CSR.

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As a result, leadership must be committed to excellence, have a willingness, and patience to lead others through trepidation and fear of change. Those who lead diversity and inclusion initiatives must be qualified with the appropriate education, previous work experience, preparation for working and training a diverse population (Ashe & Nazroo, 2017). Appropriate ways to incorporate topics related to diversity into organizational culture are to lead by example, develop newsletters, promote celebrations, develop affinity groups, and provide ombudsman capabilities so employees who feel discriminated against can report their experiences in a safe, supportive manner (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Most importantly, a diversity and inclusion leader's background and experience prepare them to be effective in organizational environments that value diversity, is committed to inclusion, have an awareness of and respect diversity as an important value (Stanley et al., 2019).

### **Developing Diversity and Inclusion Training**

The use of training and development as a vehicle to leverage human and structural diversity optimizes knowledge management and improves organizational outcomes. Moreover, there are opportunities to advocate for diversity education and initiatives with individuals who do not see the merit of DEIB training. An impactful strategy to introduce diversity to individuals who have only experienced a limited number of cultures is to schedule regular training to consist of in-person, practical scenario-based, computer-based training (CBT), and gaming. Another effective strategy is to diversify curricula comprised services, programs, courses, course objectives, and learning objectives to maximize cementing value constructs of diversity and inclusion training. When dealing with a majority population environment or individuals with little experience with DEIB, there are proactive approaches to make diversity relevant or valued (Caron et al. 2020).

There is an ideology that a commitment to diversity conflicts with a commitment to excellence. Some employees think they need to lower their standards to achieve or accommodate diversity. Further, the role diversity plays in training, training strategies, and management of training dynamics is to improve organizational culture, reduce employee stress, and increase employee satisfaction. Further, increasing knowledge and understanding about diversity is a continuous process. Gomez and Bernet (2019) stipulated that applying diversity and inclusionary practices is the goal of training and development. For instance, diversity can help organizations improve both customer service and economic results. Leaders can better estimate diversity-related benefits in the context of improved organizational outcomes, productivity, and revenue streams.

Training diverse populations include a model for incorporating cultural diversity in organizations. The model is based on a  $3 \times 3 \times 3$  matrix, which analyzes an organization's functional focus (recruitment, retention, and promotion), barriers (differences: effectiveness training for minorities & majority individuals); discrimination and systemic factors), and cross-cultural competencies (beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and skills). Interpersonal discrimination includes consciousness-raising, sensitivity training, increased knowledge, cross-cultural counseling, teaching, and management skills (Sue, 1991). The model is useful for measuring organizational performance concerning diversity and inclusion (Gomez & Bernet, 2019). Organizational development, systems intervention, creating new programs and practices.

Further, the objective is to provide training to staff in cultural competency and diversity. Organizations must move away from strong awareness of and tolerance for diversity and cultural differences and shift towards an organizational culture that focuses on tolerance to one where diversity is respected, embraced, celebrated, and incorporated into how day-to-day activities are conducted. Steel and Bolduc

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(2020) examined the business case for diversity (BCD), which must be incorporated as a social justice methodology because diverse groups outperform non-diverse groups. However, epistemic benefits of diversity can depend on inequities, including inequalities of intellectual authority along the lines of social identity (Adejumo, 2020). Consequently, a complete account of the complex relationship between equity and epistemic benefits of diversity. Leaders demonstrate leadership or commitment to equity in their work by leading by example.

### **How Organizations Can Overcome DEIB Barriers**

Social justice research aims to provide context regarding the commitment to organizational DEIB initiatives. Adejumo (2020) found that DEIB concepts have a symbiotic but complicated relationship in society. This impediment's foundation is partly due to the social order in which a dominant group subjugates others in society (Stanley et al., 2019). This social order is also mirrored in organizational structures and leadership positions where those in leadership project their cultural influence within the organization (Ashe & Nazroo, 2017). This profoundly affects minorities within the structure, who may feel inadequate while working in the organization. By critically analyzing how organizational leadership and Chief Diversity Officers (CDOs) play a role in DEIB initiatives and conflict management increases organizational performance (Gomez & Bernet, 2019; Greer & Egan, 2019).

### **Situation, Action, Tasks, Results (STAR): Handling Tense Situations**

Handling situations where employees or customers made sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise prejudiced remarks requires skill and tact. Ashe and Nazroo (2017) explored an analysis of the role of leadership, grievance procedures, and the notion of 'resolution' within organizations. An assessment of how racism is handled and what constitutes an acceptable outcome, especially from the person experiencing racism. In terms of 'resolution,' it is important to ensure that apologizing does not become a mere 'safety valve': that is, a means of avoiding conflict while maintaining the status quo. At the same time, grievance procedures must not force the person that has experienced racism to accept an apology. Instead, an act of apology should be part of a broader process that addresses the nature and scale of racism in the workplace. This is also particularly important in addressing the emotional and psychological impacts of racism, principally addressing both a lack of recognition and the feelings of injustice that emerge when racism is disregarded (Robbins & Judge, 2018). It is equally important that employers and managers, in discussion with ethnic minority employees, consider the emotional and psychological impact that continuing to work with the perpetrators of racism has on ethnic minority employees.

Therefore, utilizing the Situation, Action, Tasks, Results (STAR) method to reduce conflict is a method to reinforce positive cognitive behavior. Managers need to understand the conflictual situation to determine which activities and tasks they should initiate. After obtaining evidence, managers are in the best position to recommend corrective action, mediation, litigation, or dismissal. Additionally, Schmidts et al. (2020) found that humans transform their environment to regulate their effect. One way to do so is to avoid negative situations to obtain positive affect. Leaders and managers should anticipate the aversiveness of cognitive conflict when a situation suggests competing for behavioral responses. If cognitive conflict is aversive, it may affect regulation goals, which influences behaviors and actions depending on the magnitude of conflict they contain. Fortunately, employees prefer actions that produce conflict-free situations to actions that produce conflicting situations (Schmidts et al., 2020).

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### **THE CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER (CDO)**

The incorporation of the CDO position is a strength. It is a strategic position that organizations create to address DEIB issues (Leon, 2014). A greater focus on CDOs and their leadership define the impact of CDOs in organizations. Further, research methodologies focus on the effectiveness of the CDO to create DEIB transformation within organizations. Thus, CDOs provide leadership consultation to integrate DEIB strategies into all business and planning processes (Greer & Egan, 2019). CDOs guide senior executive leadership teams in developing a culture that champions inclusion, partners with human resources, training, and development to implement succession plans that include a diverse talent pipeline, leverage data analytics to drive outcomes and reinforce accountability throughout the organization (Leon, 2014). Further, CDOs analyze and report diversity data and research trends to ensure innovative solutions are continuously integrated into inclusion programs and practices.

Notwithstanding, diversity describes the multiple identities represented in an organization. Diversity is important because employees and customers are not monolithic. People make up various cultures and identities that bring innovation, dynamism, and texture to an organization. Diversity is important to leaders, especially human resource management, chief diversity officers, and directors (Robbins & Judge, 2018). They are tasked with developing a culture to ensure their staff operates with a mindset and attitudes consistent with organizational, ethos, vision, and mission philosophy (Greer & Egan, 2019). For instance, Greer and Egan (2019) indicated that knowledge is a core source of vitality for any organization and is a crucial aspect of organizational sustainability. With the elevated importance of knowledge comes the importance of being managed efficiently for organizational performance (Gomez & Bernet, 2019). Expected organizational performance outcomes can be enhanced by including diverse knowledge and perspectives in the organization's knowledge-sharing practices.

Indeed, diversity and inclusion, leadership, training, and customer service are related. Basit and Medase (2019) demonstrated that different knowledge sources are conducive for innovation performance. As a result, they advance that a diverse set of knowledge inputs for internal and external decision-making improves business-level strategy. Likewise, diverse information sources via employees and customers increase employee and customer satisfaction and innovation. Presently, societal perspectives about diversity have changed over time. Nkomo et al. (2019) established that adequate diversity management is at a critical juncture. There are opportunities to address the changing societal context and the complexities associated with management. Diversity and inclusion leaders must incorporate diversity's complexity, unpredictability, and importance into organizational performance metrics to address issues (Gomez & Bernet, 2019).

### **Leading Diversity and Inclusion**

The objectives of diversity and inclusion leaders are to increase or enhance diversity within organizations. Gotsis and Grimani (2016) introduced an intervention to determine the indirect relationship between servant leadership and building inclusive cultures. In so doing, identified organizational practices are supported through servant leadership behaviors that address employee needs for belonging and individuality. Focusing on the principles of servant leadership aligns organizational practices and facilitates employees' views of inclusion by helping them implement practices to attain an inclusive organizational culture.

Indubitably, the CDO is responsible for partnering with the executive leadership teams and other business leaders to develop and execute DEIB strategies, programs, policies, and metrics that successfully

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engage, develop, retain, and attract a diverse workforce, fostering inclusion and a sense of belonging (Leon, 2014). The CDO often partners with Human Resources, but not always. The CDO's responsibilities include developing and implementing enterprise-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and policies leveraging macro-trends, research, analysis, and benchmarks across our diverse workforce, in partnership with key stakeholders and internal business partners. Evaluating existing initiatives, programs, policies, and recommendations is needed to promote a more diverse and inclusive culture and workforce (Adejumo, 2020). CDOs serve as the organizational ambassador and subject matter expert who connects with and understands diverse external communities. CDOs align organizational objectives with corporate social equity commitments to engage in communities. CDOs also develop research as thought leaders in the field of diversity and inclusion (Greer & Egan, 2019).

CDOs also coordinate with the human resources on recruiting and hiring strategies to attract employees from diverse backgrounds, collaborate with organizational development to create and deliver diversity and inclusion education to drive inclusion, belonging, and retention initiatives, collaborate with marketing and communications to design the marketing and communication of programs and updates to ensure awareness, outreach, and relevance (Leon, 2014). CDOs identify relevant diversity and inclusion partnerships, organizations, events, and vendors (Greer & Egan, 2019). They also establish and maintain an internal audit and reporting system to allow for effective measurement of programs, assess and monitor program effectiveness and keep the business informed of progress and challenges through quarterly reports, act as company liaison with government institutions supporting affirmative action and equal employment opportunities, maintain knowledge of diversity-related issues, legislation, and best practices, identify, develop and build relationships with stakeholders to apply best practices to help drive an inclusive culture, and launch and lead affinity group programs (Robbins & Judge, 2018).

## **THE THEORY OF GENERATIVE INTERACTIONS (TGI)**

Organizations have a responsibility to promote nondiscrimination policies in the workplace as a social justice edict. Ahmad et al. (2020) advance knowledge on the implications of perceived corporate social responsibility (CSR) on employee levels of organizational and citizenship behavior (OCB) by incorporating a trust-based mediational process in the organizational performance context. Thus, The Theory of Generative Interactions (TGI) aims to reach and serve diverse groups of traditionally underserved communities. Bernstein et al. (2020) found that to facilitate inclusion, multiple types of exclusionary dynamics (self-segregation, communication apprehension, stereotyping, and stigmatizing) must be eradicated through adaptive cognitive processing and skill development, and engagement in positive interactions must occur to facilitate inclusion that is created and sustained by contextually relevant sets of organizational practices. Thus, organizational practices provide the following conditions for generative interactions: pursuing an important, shared organizational purpose, mixing diverse members frequently over protracted periods, enabling different groups to maintain equal standing and insider status in contributing to success, and maintaining collaborative interdependence, interpersonal relationships, and self-efficacy (Bernstein et al., 2020). These interactions are generative in that TGI challenge the organizational culture's guiding assumptions, reconsider taken-for-granted aspects, and raise fundamental questions about organizations. As a result, properly structured interactions can help organizations address all stakeholders more in creating value of social justice and moral ethics. Ultimately creating equity for individuals and groups (Bernstein et al., 2020).

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Research limitations and implications of the organizational structure were identified and applied to examine the vibrant culture within organizations. This conceptual framework provides a perspective that adds to organizational transformation. Practical implications concerning leading DEIB initiatives in organizations were addressed. Moreover, social and cultural implications postulate how organizational leaders to champion, enhance, and drive DEIB initiatives. Moreover, individuals are quickly becoming a part of a multicultural, multiracial, and multilingual society (Adejumo, 2020). Such demographic changes have a vital impact on economic, social, legal, political, educational, and cultural systems (Stanley et al., 2019). For businesses and industries to survive, they must meet the inevitable challenge of cultural diversity (Leon, 2014). Employees have both positive and negative experiences relating with people whose backgrounds are different from their own; however, the role of diversity and inclusion leaders is to drive organizational initiatives that create an outstanding workplace culture (Ashe & Nazroo, 2017). For instance, when employees realize they have said or done something offensive to another employee or customer, they should acknowledge the behavior, offer apologies, and cease further discriminatory behavior. As a social justice and moral imperative, organizations that value DEIB develops long-range strategies that encompass equity-based awareness in recruitment, on-boarding, training, task development, workplace culture, promotion, succession planning, and retirement.

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### **KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Chief Diversity Officer (CDO):** The Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) role has materialized as an executive-level position, which provides strategic direction for diversity planning and execution efforts (Leon, 2014).

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** An organizational model that assists organizations in their quest for social accountability to itself, its stakeholders, and the public (Benitez et al., 2020).

**DEIB Initiatives:** Organizational efforts to promote awareness of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural identities within diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) initiatives with intentionality and a desire for change.