

SO WHY, D&I? A STUDY ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE  
WORKPLACE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

by

Dina Abughannam

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations have adapted new models of work that shifted diversity and inclusion initiatives within the workplace digitally. There is very little research that currently exists on diversity and inclusion initiatives in the workplace in the digital age. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this study sought out to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement to bridge the gap in literature. A quantitative, correlational design was used to examine the relationship between the independent variable of this proposed study (manager/ employer involvement) on the dependent variables (employee performance, commitment, and engagement) while work location acted as a moderating variable (in-person, hybrid, virtual). Multiple regression analysis was used for data analysis. The results found a significant and positive correlation between management involvement on diversity and inclusions initiatives and employee engagement, performance, and commitment within the workplace while mode of work moderated the relationship with perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment, and perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives. These findings emphasize the importance of management involvement in the workplace and the impact of organizational involvement on employee functioning.

*Keywords:* diversity, inclusion, perceived management, job performance, employee engagement, employee commitment, human resources management (HRM), digitalization

**Copyright Page**

**Dedication**

For Najwa and Abed Abughannam

Love,

Your Daughter

And for a Free Palestine.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge first and foremost Dr. Angela Rathkamp for her consistent support, wisdom, and motivation throughout this journey. I truly could not have done this process without your unwavering support. Not only have you been a fruit of all knowledge, yet you've become a friend of mine I am so fortunate to have come across paths with. All our back and forth has finally paid off! I am also deeply grateful for the support of Dr. Sarah Spiridigliozzi for the time and intellect given to me throughout this process. You have been such an asset in this journey, and I could not be more appreciative of you!

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### **Introduction**

The twenty-first century has been nothing short of unexpected, revolutionary, and challenging. The evolution of technology has been highlighted at the forefront as digitalization has and will continue to shape human functioning overall. The digital age has allowed organizations to alter their mode of work and reinvent their operations, especially due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that emerged in 2019. COVID-19 posed great challenges to the workplace, creating new stressors while further strengthening prior stressors. Before the pandemic, organizations struggled with hiring diverse talent due to geographical conflict, racial conflict, and lack of a diverse talent pool (Lamba et al., 2022). The focus on diversifying talent and providing an inclusive work culture became more pivotal for individuals as work shifted from in-person to digital.

Due to the virus, organizations had to adapt new remote or hybrid models of work that contributed to the acceleration of human resource, recruitment, and talent acquisition processes that were not necessarily introduced before the pandemic (Kuzior et al., 2021). Organizations were left to adapt new methods of work on top of tackling prior initiatives such as diversity and inclusion within their workplace. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine how perceived management involvement in remote organizations was associated with employee engagement, commitment, and performance.

### **Background**

#### **Benefits of Diversity and Inclusion**

Diversity and inclusion served as significant beneficial factors for organizations that carry out such initiatives. In fact, it has been shown that diversity greatly benefits organizations by leading to positive work outcomes such as work engagement, job performance, higher revenue growth, and innovation (Guillaume et al., 2013). Diversity helps promote and enable organizations to gather details and items from a greater pool of talent which increases the threshold for innovation and better decision-making to allow a larger accessibility for customers and their needs (Guillaume et al., 2013). The findings of other empirical studies have indicated that when an inclusive work climate is implemented or present within a workplace, this correlates with employee perception of the organizational climate of trust, positively impacted employee commitment, job satisfaction, organizational perceived justice, and employee well-being (Wolfgruber & Einwiller, 2023). It was evident that when diversity and inclusion programs are implemented within organizations, the benefits serve a positive impact on organizations, yet are greatly dictated by the involvement of management practices that organizations execute (Varshney, 2020). Diversity management initiatives and programs are voluntary organizational actions that employees value and consider when joining a specific company yet serve as a competitive advantage over other organizations that do not highlight their diverse and inclusive work environment.

### **Benefits of Digitalization in the Workplace**

Research has found that the development of diversity and inclusion (D&I) management practices when carried out by organizations enhances positive work factors, yet companies are hesitant to utilize digitized methods to execute such processes (Varshney, 2020). When utilized correctly, organizations develop unique ways to attract



and retain customers and employees from the relevant data extracted that only technology could have offered. The digitalization of work has great benefits when implemented by management as it also aids in making better decisions, and more effective and timely ones. The digital transformation of work has positively enhanced the way organizations operate such as Human Resources (HR) functioning of payroll, training, performance management, change processes, and diversity and inclusion initiatives. The digitalization of work has allowed organizations to be more competitive as their innovation allows more knowledge to be retained at a faster and more efficient rate (Vecchi et al., 2021) with the technological advances and tools utilized. The digital age that the world currently exists in is reshaping the operations of organizational functioning and organizations can greatly benefit from maximizing the advances of technology in diversifying their work climates.

### **Current State of Diversity and Inclusion**

Research has shown that organizations are comprised of demographic groups that have been the majority since the start of time. In fact, Fortune 500 companies released data that highlights the gender and race of their employees indicating that 72% of those companies listed have white males in leadership positions (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2021).

However, by the year 2045, research suggested that the USA will become minority white (2021) and minority post-millennials will soon outnumber whites within the next 18 years. These shifts are stated to continue due to rising globalization and the advancement of diversity within the workplace rapidly advancing (Norman & Johnson, 2022).

Research suggested that since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an uneven impact by socio-demographic categories and gender, disability, ethnicity, age, social and

economic class (Palalar et al., 2022). The benefits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace are evident as discussed, yet unfortunately not only is the knowledge about this topic limited by certain conditions, but there was still little known about diversity and inclusion management practices that are most effective in promoting positive outcomes for an organization (Guillaume et al., 2013). Michalcea (2017) suggested that at present, HR has offered digitized solutions for businesses and employees to help provide solutions that generate engagement and new experiences for employees, yet a lack of focus on diversity and inclusion efforts is evident. While HR and other business units are offering new digitized programs for novel business experiences, an emphasis on utilizing digitized solutions in providing diverse and inclusive work environments is greatly lacking.

Literature has suggested that future research should be conducted addressing people management practices that will best aid in creating and maintaining diverse and inclusive workplaces (Guillaume et al., 2013; Ojo, 2021; Oskotsky et al., 2020). Prior research has also stated that future studies should examine effective diversity and inclusion practices virtually as this has been a limited area in research. Talent management practices can be further explored as modern-day issues pose a constant threat to organizational functioning, and the lack of virtual organizations and diversity and inclusion programs research should be examined as the usage of such advances in the digital age “might ultimately lead to successful business process management outcomes in the HR domain” (Vechi et al., 2021, p. 1937).

### **Management Involvement Within Remote Organizations**

Leadership has served as an important organizational function in individual job performance, commitment, and engagement (Jiatong et al., 2022). The increase in

organizations resulting in modes of work being more remote-based has caused the organizational transformation from the core and foundation of each company structure. Navigating the transition from in-person work to telework options has naturally led to more involvement from leadership as different types of leadership involvement have directly influenced factors such as employee engagement through workplace digitalization while another type of leadership, or lack thereof, has no significance (Hooi & Chan, 2023). Different types of leadership, specifically transformational leadership, have had the most positive impact on employee engagement, commitment, and performance due to it representing a manager style that conceals subordinates to look ahead of their self-interests by altering their mindset to enhance performance beyond what is expected (Jiatong et al., 2022), however not necessarily on remote organizations. Remote working has been found to have a significant effect on employee performance and previous results show that less stringent supervision impacts employee performance, indicating that leadership must be more stringent to ensure employees are performing (Meiryani et al., 2022). Nurlia (2017) indicated that an individual's leadership style is influential and serves as a determinant factor for increasing and decreasing subordinate performance, suggesting that organizations should adopt more effective leadership styles due to their positive impact (Meiryani et al., 2022). Effective leaders are comprised of more involved, stringent work characteristics to support their subordinates, yet prior research calls for an improvement in leadership effectiveness and efficiency in mechanisms that effective leaders can carry out within the remote workplace. Meiryani et al. (2022) suggested that organizations use remote work as an option for their employees to enhance supervisory duties on remote working systems as this will continue to increase

employee performance, engagement, and commitment as it has done so within in-person work. Current research had found that there was still a continuing need for research examining leadership adaptability to remote organizations as they impact employee engagement, commitment, and performance (Meiryani et al., 2022). This study examined the most current state of perceived management involvement in employee engagement, commitment, and performance and sought out if organizations had adapted any work processes or leadership styles that supported their employees who telework.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem was that there was very little research that existed on diversity and inclusion initiatives in the workplace in the digital age, thus leaving a significant gap in the literature. Diversity and inclusion initiatives have been an ongoing issue with organizations not attaining employees of differing backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, ages, and gender, and digital efforts may have complicated this issue. Understanding how employees' perceptions of the diversity and inclusion initiatives correlated to their commitment, engagement, and performance, may encourage employers to enhance more digital efforts on such initiatives and whether managers should be more involved in these efforts.

It was known that a diverse and inclusive workplace promoted positive worker-job outcomes (i.e., an increase in job performance, engagement, well-being, productivity, and commitment) and helped maintain a strong employee brand (Chakraverty, 2022; Lauring & Jonasson, 2018; Reichwald, 2021). Since the pandemic had pushed organizations to work remotely, organizations were left with working digitally and continuing all work functions through virtual methods. Even with the peak of the

pandemic decreasing, organizational functioning and work practices are forever expected to be renovated, adapting digitalization permanently to work functions (Bellis et al, 2022). Due to the shift and changes in work methods and global virtual teams increasing, scholars have largely ignored inclusivity within virtual workplaces (Lauring & Jonasson, 2018; Tooth, 2021; Umoh, 2020) and diversity programs implemented with the “new normal”. This was largely due to the challenges that the virtual workplace has and specifically, digital technologies have required businesses to restructure their work processes by a business’ core values and work models and adjusting the competencies needed and communication with its involved members Bellis et al. (2022). While previous literature has examined human resource involvement in diversity and inclusion management and its benefits, the lack of research done examining diversity and inclusion efforts executed through digitalization has lacked greatly. Prior research failed to examine the digital implementation of diversity and inclusion efforts and even suggested future research be conducted to examine the impact of diversity and inclusion virtual perceived management involvement on employee engagement, commitment, and performance (Lauring & Jonasson, 2018). With work organizations allowing more employees to work virtually, diversity and inclusion efforts are a major factor in employee retention. This study aimed to bridge this gap in research, focusing on diversity and inclusion management done by organizations that offer remote work and how the digital era can foster an inclusive yet diverse pool of employees like never before.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion

initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this study sought out to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

### **Research Questions**

RQ 1: What is the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee commitment?

RQ 3: What is the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and engagement?

RQ 4: Does work location (hybrid, remote, on-site) moderate the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, or engagement?

### **Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1<sub>a</sub>: A significant positive relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee performance.

Hypothesis 1<sub>0</sub>: No significant relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee performance.

Hypothesis 2<sub>a</sub>: A significant positive relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee commitment.

Hypothesis 2<sub>0</sub>: No significant relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee commitment.

Hypothesis 3<sub>a</sub>: A significant positive relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee engagement.

Hypothesis 3<sub>0</sub>: No relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee engagement.

Hypothesis 4<sub>a</sub>: Work location, specifically in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), or virtual work modes, moderates the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

Hypothesis 4<sub>0</sub>: Work location, specifically in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), or virtual work modes, shows no relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

### **Assumptions and Limitations of the Study**

It was presumed that there would be several assumptions and limitations for this study. Different leadership styles could have had an impact on perceived management involvement, which could have impacted employees' commitment, engagement, and performance. It was assumed that those with more involved leadership produced more positive relationships with diversity and inclusion initiatives as well as employee commitment, engagement, and performance. Those who reported that perceived management were not as involved will produce a more negative relationship with such variables.

Additionally, there was an assumption that there would be a positive relationship between human resource management or leadership involvement with employee

variables when resources are offered such as technology to perform job duties. This assumption was based on the premises and current research findings on the impact and influence that technology has had upon society within work and non-work settings. However, it was anticipated that the pandemic served as a factor greatly increasing the usage of digitalizing organizational operations as companies were left having no option but to digitalize their modes of work due to COVID-19.

Finally, it was assumed for this study about the expected participant answers. Participants that are studied in this research are expected to answer that human resource management or leadership involvement does positively influence worker engagement, commitment, and performance. The knowledge and experience that participants have with technology served as a factor that greatly impacted the results of this study. Examining younger employees and comparing them to the answers of older participants may be drastically different from one another.

For this study, different leadership styles could have posed a limitation and impacted the results of this study (Meiryani et al., 2022). As different leadership styles have been found to influence worker variables, this served as a limitation of this study as different leadership styles were not examined, but rather leadership involvement were examined. A more involved leadership style would have positively impacted employee commitment, engagement, and performance, as these types of leaders are more hands-on, and transforming their organizations and teams would be apparent.

Another limitation this study included were the generational differences. It was assumed that the difference in age and experience utilizing technology, in general, served as a limitation for this study and was important to make note of as newer generations are



more tech-savvy than those that are older. Another limitation of this study pertained to the notion organizations that are not as abundant in revenue or profit will be negatively impacted. Due to the costs of technology and resources (especially due to the increase in such tools since the pandemic), companies that are not as abundant in wealth will struggle. This financial component is not a factor that will be examined in this study but served as a limitation on the results or findings.

Lastly, this study relied on the self-rating of employees and their perceptions of one's performance, engagement, and commitment to their organizations. These self-ratings during the data collection piece of this study served as a limitation of the study as the results were based on self-perception and not supervisory or colleague reporting on one's performance, engagement, and commitment in an organization.

### **Theoretical Foundations of the Study**

Diversity-focused human resources practices can be best described as HR practices that aid in imparting values about diversity to employees (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023). Literature has suggested that HR practices that have addressed the inequalities within recruitment efforts, practices on compensation and advancement opportunities, and performance appraisal are pivotal for successful diversity management. Scholars have stated that diversity-focused practices within HR are important for social structure within organizations to help maintain positive relationships among workers and improve a firm's performance and productivity (Manoharan et al., 2019; Nishii, 2013). Diversity-focused practices are crucial to an inclusive work environment due to such practices being interpreted by the employees as reinforcers that their employers treat them equally and fairly without any biases. A diverse climate has

been argued to matter significantly by scholars, yet empirical evidence to support this has not been presented. However, Buttner et al. (2012) call for more research to be conducted that is tailored to more diversity-focused HR practices in promoting an inclusive climate, and now with the pandemic leading to more digital practices, it is more pivotal to focus on this topic as remote work has increased greatly due to the pandemic and will continue to do so. When reviewing the literature, limited studies were found examining how diversity serves as a strong predictor of diversity effects, and not much is known about how diverse workforces provide inclusion for companies that encourage the digitization of work functions or processes. Inclusion can be best defined as an “employee’s perception of being accepted by others as an insider in a workplace” (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023, p. 246) and an inclusive climate is the extent to which employees perceive that the organization values differences and gives employees from varying identity groups equal access to all organizations opportunities and resources to establish networks within a diverse workforce. When management leverages diversity in their businesses, this promotes a more inclusive work environment as employees perceive their company as supportive and secure in providing their thoughts or methods to accomplish organizational goals (Li et al., 2021).

### **Intergroup and Embedded Theory**

When diversity and inclusion in the workplace are discussed, there is usually a negative connotation surrounding the topic or a lack of true understanding of what diversity and inclusion are comprised of. Almost always, individuals are left thinking that diversity and inclusion deal greatly with race and different religions, yet diversity and inclusion are much more detailed than the broad understanding. Diversity and inclusion

consist of variables such as age, sexual orientation, color, physical ability, cultural beliefs, ethnicity, lifestyle, etc. (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022). In addition to this, the association in which employees with a particular group within an organization is not limited to only demographic variables but also to group interaction and practices within organizations (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022). Alderfer et al. (2022) studied what is known as the Intergroup and Embedded theories which analyze these additional considerations to explain the perceived discrimination phenomenon. The discussions around intergroup theory and embedded intergroup theory argue that it is equally necessary to consider the interpersonal dynamics, such as the relationship with the manager, interpersonal dynamics with colleagues and employees, and company relationship, in evaluating and acknowledging the impact and effect of perceived discrimination with company involvement (Alderfer et al., 2022). Due to the ever-evolving shifts in culture that are present within modern-day society and the business industry, a diverse workforce has been needed and called for. It has been stated that whenever organizations welcome, nurture, and embrace employees from different backgrounds, it automatically promotes diverse cognitive thinking which then leads to an increase in innovation (Alderfer et al., 2022). As well as promoting innovation, diversity and inclusion in the workforce promotes knowledge sharing amongst colleagues which enhances worker motivation and a multidimensional approach towards business issues and obstacles.

### **Social Exchange Theory**

The social exchange theory is an appropriate theory to better understand employee engagement and other paradigms that understand workplace behavior as it advances obligations that are formulated through a sequence of actions between parties

that are in a recycled flow of interconnectedness (Hurtienne et al., 2022). This theory has been used to explain differing relationships including those with colleagues, subordinate-supervisor relationships, romantic relationships, friends, and family (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023). According to social exchange theory, “exchanges between organizations and its members comprise of bidirectional transactions wherein organizations provide exchange resources to its members, which are then reciprocated by the members” (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023, p. 247). A foundational component of this theory states that relationships evolve over time to which more trusting and mutual commitment is developed as a common set of rules are reached, such as when employees receive financial support from their management or employer, they will feel more committed to the organization (Hurtienne et al., 2022). In applying social exchange theory, an employee’s contribution of commitment, which is linked to their engagement and performance, sets an expectation from their employer that will cause a reciprocation in them providing a positive response for the employee. This essentially is a continuous cycle where employee contribution of their performance, engagement, and commitment will cause their employers to react positively thus creating this pattern to continue. When employers are aware and respond positively to the behaviors and actions of their employees, this creates positive social exchanges. On this research and constructs such as diversity and inclusion, social exchange theory is applied when organizations employ an inclusive and diverse workplace for their employees. Organizations that cultivate a diverse and inclusive workforce demonstrate support and concern for their employees’ diverse backgrounds, identities, and well-being, which in turn creates a sense of employee obligation to their employer (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023). This return that the

employees exhibit represents the exchange process that subsequently motivates employees to be more engaged, perform better, and commit to the company.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Digitalization** – According to Gartner’s Glossary, digitization is the “process of the conversion of analog data to the digital form of zeroes and ones” (Stalmachova et al., 2021, p. 2).

**Diversity** – Can be best defined as “a mosaic of characteristics brought to the workplace environment by employees, such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, family conditions, and physical ability” (Gross-Golacka et al., 2022, p.1).

**Inclusion** – Defined as an “employee’s perception of being accepted by others as an insider in the workplace” (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023, p. 246).

**Human Resource Management (HRM)** – Defined as the “management of work and people towards desired ends” and a “fundamental activity in any organization in which human beings are employed” (Azevedo et al., 2021, p. 755).

**Employee Commitment** – Defined as “the relative strength of background and involvement of an individual in a particular organization” (Li et al., 2021, p. 3).

**Employee Engagement** – Can be best defined as “a positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Hurtienne et al., 2022 , p.139).

**Employee Performance** – Defined as “the willingness to work integrated with the positive attitude of employees about their jobs” (Saleem et al., 2023, p. 3).

**Remote Work** – Characterized as a working model or arrangement which “involve employees spending working hours far from their colleagues and/or managers and relying

on electronically mediated communication (e.g., emails and videoconferencing) to interact with them” (Pianese et al., 2023, p. 326).

**Hybrid Work** – Refers to a work model “that combines remote working from home and in-person working from an office cubicle” (Sampat et al., 2022, p. 1).

### **Significance of the Study**

The outcome of this study aided current literature by providing empirical and theoretical research in addition to what has previously been reported. The findings of this study also contributed to what is currently known about diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and what is not known or have not been studied yet post-COVID-19 during the digital era. This study contributed to the literature by addressing present-day research and findings on diversity and inclusion practices in the workplace while building on what is already known empirically and theoretically. This research contributed ideas and findings to the social exchange and intergroup and embedded theory. The explanation of diversity and inclusion programs or work practices aided in the understanding of how employees associate themselves within their work group and contribute to knowledge sharing. Because it was assumed that employees would develop a sense of self-perception in this study, this would contribute to what is known and previously discussed as intergroup and embedded theory. The development of employee perceptions of oneself is a concept and expected behavior to anticipate in this study. This expected outcome as well as the employee dynamics and relationships with their managers that was explored

in this study as it related to one's own perception of organizational involvement and perceived discrimination (Alderfer et al., 2022).

This study also contributed more research and empirical evidence examining the effect that management and their subordinates as the purpose of this quantitative correlational study is to examine the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this study sought out to determine whether work location/mode (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

This contribution was exemplified through the reporting of perceived leadership management by the relationship such involvement has on diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. When employees exhibit their worker commitment, this is essentially linked to their performance and engagement within their organization and sets an expectation for their company to reciprocate. This continuous cycle exemplifies this theory by the exchanges between the firm and its members (Kundi & Aboramdan, 2023).

Ultimately, the exploration of perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives upon employee engagement, commitment, and performance were better understood as this research sought out to provide the most current findings on the relationships that presently exist. By examining the impact of diversity and inclusion efforts by employers on their different employees (remote workers, hybrid workers, and

in-person workers), organizations will benefit from the positive outcomes (i.e., increased worker commitment, performance, and engagement).

### **Summary**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. This study also sought out to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. The lack of research that currently exists exploring the influence of human resource management or perceived leadership involvement with the digitalization of diversity and inclusion work programs upon employee factors is evident. This study provided empirical findings contributing to literature on theories such as the intergroup and embedded theory and social exchange theory. In addition to contributing to theoretical frameworks, this study also provided findings supporting the benefits of digitalizing organizational work variables such as an increase in employee engagement (Michalcea 2017), performance (Quaosar, 2017; Zhou et al., 2021), and commitment (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022).

The knowledge and findings gathered from this study provided a clear and better understanding of how diversity and inclusion initiatives by perceived management involvement and how they affect remote employees' commitment, engagement, and performance. Gaining a better understanding of these effects will help employers understand the importance of diversity and inclusion in a remote work environment, as this study added empirical knowledge filling a gap in the literature and clarified the need



for additional research to be conducted on diversity and inclusion in a remote work environment. The following chapter covered the literature review of this study which consisted of the research strategy, a detailed review of past and current literature examined by scholars, thematic elements that are relatable to the research, and a biblical understanding relating to this study.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Overview

The main focus explored through this research study addressed the current gap that existed within the literature about diversity and inclusion efforts executed digitally by organizations and their impact. The problem was that there is very little research that currently exists on diversity and inclusion initiatives in the workplace in the digital age, thus leaving a significant gap in the literature. Diversity and inclusion initiatives have been an ongoing issue with organizations not attaining employees of differing backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, ages, and gender, and the digital may have complicated this issue. Understanding how employees' perceptions of the diversity and inclusion initiatives correlate to their commitment, engagement, and performance, may encourage employers to enhance more digital efforts on such initiatives and whether managers should be more involved in these efforts.

Digitalization has been an increasingly popular advancement within society since its emergence and continues to accelerate daily. Organizations have and continue to adapt digital tools and technologies that have cultivated new workplace functioning and environments. Previous studies have called for future research to address the impact of digital work environments on supporting diverse and inclusive communities and strategies (Lamba et al., 2021). Literature has also called for future research to explore the effect of management on remote workers, and the impact that management has upon employees within the workforce due to the pandemic altering modes of work.

This chapter begins with a description of the search strategy which highlights the search methods for the literature review, search terms utilized, and how the biblical

research was conducted for this study. This chapter then covered how the COVID-19 pandemic altered the working methods and operations in which many adapted to digitizing their processes through technology and resources. This chapter included a detailed review of the past and current literature that relates to this study. Not only did this chapter discuss the relevance of studying the impact of diversity and inclusion efforts implemented digitally upon employee commitment, performance, and engagement, but it also explored the importance of leadership involvement from organizations and their organizational performance. Subsequently, the themes that emerged from prior and current literature served as a foundation and premise for this research were also discussed. Lastly, this chapter covered a biblical understanding of the constructs that were discussed in this study.

### **Description of Research Strategy**

To conduct the literature review, electronic databases were utilized through Liberty University Library where peer-reviewed sources were gathered from sites such as APA PsycArticles, EBSCOHost, ProQuest, SAGE Journals Online. Google Scholar was also utilized to gather more peer-reviewed sources for the literature review and search strategy. Specific keywords used to conduct the search strategy for the literature review include *impact of technology in the workplace, digitalization of organizational functioning, perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion work practices, the impact of covid-19 and diversity and inclusion practices, impact of covid-19 and technology in the workplace, impact of digital tools on diversity and inclusion, digitalization impact on employee performance, digitalization impact on employee engagement, digitalization impact on employee commitment management impact on*

*employee performance, commitment, and engagement, human resource management and digitalization, and the impact of diversity and inclusion practices on digital workplaces.*

Examples of keywords searched for theoretical framework include *diversity focused human resource practices, intergroup theory, embedded theory, intergroup and embedded theory, and social exchange theory*. The literature reviewed consists of peer-reviewed articles dated from 2017-2023 with one article dated from 2006 to elaborate on the enhancements of technology throughout the twenty-first century. Bible Gateway was also utilized for the search strategy for the biblical foundation to search for keywords such as *diversity and equality*.

### **Review of Literature**

The review of the literature was comprised of existing empirical articles and research that related to the digitalization of diversity and inclusion efforts primarily done within the last five years (specifically post-COVID-19) and the impact it had on employee performance, employee commitment, employee engagement, and leadership/human resources management (HRM) involvement and impact on such variables. As the twenty-first century came to be, so did the enhancements and increases in technology throughout the world. The enhancements in technology throughout time have permeated every facet of human functioning, and organizational workplaces are no different. Organizations have utilized digital technologies to further improve their work processes and performance amongst other work functions to overall assist their companies. More specifically, the impact of digital tools and technology has led organizations to “redefine business processes by impacting firms’ value creation models and modifying and competencies needed and interactions among the stakeholders involved” (Bellis et al.,

2022, p. 822). Digital transformation has resulted in altering customer behavior and expectations, leading to organizational pressure (Verhoef et al., 2019), and alterations of work activities and operations so that employee and worker functioning adapted to the advancements. Digital transformation can be best termed as the “strategic business transformation which, at its core, focuses on the customer and equally requires organizational change, along with the implementation of digital technologies” (Stalmachova, 2022, p. 3). Digitalization is all about technology and digital transformation that adhere to the customer, in which both are customer-centered approaches to business strategies and operational settings that combine the technological mix of organizations (Stalmachova, 2022). Organizations have adapted to digitalization by transforming their methods and work operations with time.

As time has progressed within the twenty-first century, so have digital tools, platforms, and technologies. Digital technologies have provided more information, tools, computation methods, communication, and connectivity, thus leading to new forms of worker collaboration. Schwarzmuller et al. (2018) found that the digitalization of work activities impacted the operations of people and team interactions which were essentially mediated by virtual communication tools such as knowledge-sharing platforms, video calls, and instant messaging. These findings both positively and negatively impacted worker functioning as engagement specifically has been reported to be a variable influenced by digitalization (Pongton & Suntrayth, 2019). The impact of digital tools increased flexibility in time and space allowing workers to work anywhere and enhancing work-life balance (Liao, 2017). Other positive influences it has had upon organizations include but are not limited to, the increase in flexible workspaces, easier global

collaboration of tasks and work assignments (Colbert et al., 2016), but also upon worker performance (Chopra, 2017), and worker commitment (Simon et al., 2023).

While these are positive enhancements on employee-organizational functioning, the digitalization of organizational tools has led to a hindrance in knowledge exchange among workers (Putra et al., 2020), social disconnects such as establishing effective communication and trust between workers (Frisch & Greene, 2021) and the spontaneity and convenience of human interactions (Iannotta et al., 2020). In-person human interaction and socialization have decreased drastically due to the pandemic regarding professional and non-professional realms and greatly altered socialization factors amongst humans entirely. Different and unique methods following the pandemic emerged to allow more social connectedness among humans to alleviate the disconnect that had been created. These positive and negative influences have also greatly impacted the way organizations have approached human resources processes such as diversity and inclusion approaches (Chong et al., 2021). Diversity and inclusion efforts within the workplace and educational settings are powerful tools that enhance learning and positive results amongst learners (Kolluru et al., 2023), and organizations should be mindful of the importance of diversity and inclusion initiatives within the workplace. Taking these newer developments into account and emerging advancements within technology, the relationship between diversity and inclusion within the workforce has been studied but not quite with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as it has been a more recent matter. The lack of current research discussing the relationship between management involvement and employee variables will be an ongoing research topic that continues to evolve due to the nature of technology forever developing.

## **Digitalization and COVID-19**

Digitalization aims to create a change in systems, roles, and business processes and continues to be an increasingly popular phenomenon shaping modern and contemporary organizations (Lindell et al., 2022). Digital tools and technologies have impacted human relationships and interactions and because of such, the importance of understanding what behaviors enhance social interactions and organizational outcomes in digital environments remains vital presently (Cox, 2006). Before the pandemic, the hybrid or remote working model had been viewed and offered more as a reward or perk than a daily reality (Kuzior et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a massive alteration in life itself, resulting in all human operations creating a “new normal” in everyday functioning. The virus challenged human health, economic status, social facets, and mental state amongst humans. The challenges that COVID-19 has instilled upon humans continue to impact livelihood and functions as its lingering effects were caused by unprecedented measures. Employers were forced to adhere to new work practices to best adapt to the deadly disease that altered the world globally.

A massive shift in working methods resulted in individuals needing to work using technology. The idea of working from home was first introduced back in the 1990s by companies such as Yahoo where “telecommuting” or “telework” were first introduced as different methods of working (Stalmachova et al., 2022). The rapid utilization and enhancement of the Internet and technology have led to other methods of work where companies could adapt and adhere to more flexible work arrangements including remote work as an option. Remote work, hybrid work, or telework, were different models of working that were accelerated due to the pandemic (Kuzior et al., 2022) in which

employers were essentially forced to adapt to continue performing and essentially, producing. Remote work has been known as a type of alternative working arrangement that consists of work being done outside of a traditional office environment, performed by individuals who can be completely remote in which they can perform job functions at the convenience and flexibility of their nature (Stalmachova et al., 2022). This type of work is advantageous for both employees and employers for a variety of reasons. For employers, a benefit remote work has is its cost reduction and savings this model offers. Organizations that offer remote work see a reduction in costs towards building expenses, energy, cooling, heating, and workspaces (Stalmachova et al., 2022) which significantly reduces the costs associated with technological infrastructure that would not be evident had remote work not been offered. Remote work also offers savings in labor costs, the potential to improve work-life balance, and less time spent commuting for employees (Stalmachova et al., 2022). These advantages, however, also lead to the disadvantages that come with the flexibility of working remotely, such as the distractions in the work environment in which one performs their work, which essentially decreases worker productivity for employees. For employers, social distance creates a social disconnect from the lack of physical proximity with co-workers. These disadvantages of working from home are still present-day issues that organizations are still facing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in great changes in the ways organizations operate; during the pandemic, employees were working with digital tools and technologies in the workplace remotely from home (Stalmachova, 2022). Organizations that used digital tools adapted to the new working model of working remotely which led



employees to overcome their work situations making work easier (Stalmachova, 2022), allowing them to connect with their families, friends, and others at any time.

A study conducted by Kuzior et al. (2022) found that the adoption of digitalization within work and human resource processes within organizations has aided organizations to achieve the idea of sustainability. Kuzior et al. examined if the accelerated digitalization and remote work model due to the pandemic aided in organizational work functions and sought to see if digitalization aided an enhancement of diversity and inclusion to workplaces. Before the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020, organizations were not forced to digitalize their efforts on diversity and inclusion but soon altered their methods due to the pandemic. Organizations restructured their human resource and work practices and took steps to design and structure HR processes, specifically about diversity and inclusion (Kuzior et al., 2022). This study found that diversity when used as a recruiting key performance indicator (KPI), diversity employer branding, diverse hiring committees, and inclusive work environments, were found to be positive social elements alongside positive environmental factors which served as fundamental conditions to create a sustainable organization (Kuzior et al., 2022). In fact, this study found that the pandemic caused digitalization of work practices and human resources processes aided in achieving organizational sustainability due to such factors in which human resource functions were re-structured. The digitalization of remote recruiting processes, remote working models, and diversity and inclusion programs only positively enhanced organizational functioning which was caused due to the digitalization of work during the pandemic. These digital initiatives executed by organizations

positively enhanced employee variables such as performance (Saleem et al., 2023) and more.

A review of the literature regarding digitalization and COVID-19 was important to this research study because the pandemic dramatically shifted the operational realm of organizational performance and tools. Due to the pandemic, companies were forced to adapt to the increasing utilization of technology in the twenty-first century with no choice, forever altering modes and methods in which organizations operate. Because of this, this research needs to continue examining how the ongoing evolution of technology impacts organizational functioning, especially post-pandemic as the virus resulted in businesses adapting new tools and work processes through the means of technology. As technology continues to evolve, the relationship between its impact on workplace functioning and perceived management involvement should be a continuing discussion to explore due to its relevance and importance in organizational functioning.

### **Digitalization of D&I Initiatives on Employee Performance**

According to Saleem et al. (2023), employee performance is best known as the willingness to work, and the positive attitude employees possess about their jobs. Others define employee job performance as the “role-prescribed behavior that forwards organizational goals, and it is a function of knowledge, ability, skills, and motivation” (Toscano & Zappala, 2021, p. 134). Employee performance has been a significant variable within the workplace that determines an employee’s position within an organization. Although many factors contribute to an employee’s job performance internally, external situations arise that both positively and negatively impact performance. Considering that remote work increased as a work method and model due

to the pandemic, this led to all job activities and functions being conducted at home or in the environment in which the employees performed their work. Toscano and Zappala (2021) stated that the main changes impacting the job performance of employees due to the pandemic had to do with the technological tools and environment in which the job had to be done.

According to Quaosar (2017) and Zhou et al., (2021), organizations that foster human resources management digitalization or leadership management digitalization positively influence company and employee performance. The digitalization of different leadership efforts comprising recruitment strategies and processes, interviews, team development, diversity efforts, and inclusivity, can influence employee commitment as these digitalization efforts have been shown to affect organizational performance (Febrianti & Jufri, 2022). Although the pandemic posed several variables to impact employee performance during this transitional time, the digitization of tools and HRM processes was shown to have a direct, positive influence on factors that affected the company and employee performance (Febrianti & Jufri 2022).

Saleem et al. (2023) found that there was a positive impact of digitalization on employee performance as it was well established in their study as they examined the impact of a digital university in achieving the goals of employees and universities. Additionally, these scholars found that due to the challenges the pandemic posed upon faculty at this digital university, competent employees learned and improved their performance during this time and added that employees tend to improve and learn more during times of crisis and when challenges arise (Saleem et al., 2023). Such improvement

shown in this study stemmed greatly from the hands-on and direct involvement that university leadership and executives exhibited during this time.

Other organizational executives vary in forms such as a human resource department that oversees all employee functioning and processes within an organization. Human resources as well as leadership greatly impact the operations and output of workers within their firms and these departments and leaders played a crucial role during the pandemic. Particularly, HRM digitization on organizational operations and work functions found that the behaviors, attitudes, and individual outlook on work duties only positively impacted their performance. Studies have found that organizations that fail or continue to fail in adapting or evolving their work processes and routines for the post-pandemic period and present-day may find implications that negatively impact their worker performance (Narayanmurthy & Tortorella, 2021). Building on these prior findings, this research study attempted to bridge the gap by examining the relationship between digitally executed diversity and inclusion initiatives implemented by management in organizations post-COVID-19 pandemic and the relationship it has with employee performance.

### **Digitalization on D&I Initiatives on Employee Engagement**

Organizations that seek growth and to build knowledge as time progresses should focus on factors contributing to the success of their companies, including their main asset which is their employees. Employee engagement has been seen as an important component of organizational sustainability and researchers have found that employee engagement is crucial and an important element in the overall success of an organization (Hurtienne et al., 2022). Employees who are more engaged with their work are more

positive, enthusiastic about working, loyal to the organization, and committed to succeeding (Hurtienne et al., 2022). Although worker engagement has been a topic thoroughly discussed within the literature, scholars have proposed and called for future research to be conducted examining how the impact of present-day digitalization influenced employee engagement during radical digitalization alterations (Winasis et al., 2021). Engaged employees have been found to speak more positively about their organizations and workplaces and are more likely to stay in their organizations and strive beyond what is expected of them (Hooi & Chan, 2023). Whereas engaged employees are more likely to perform better within an organization and more likely to stay committed to their organizations, disengaged employees exhibit counter-productive behaviors that hinder an organization's overall performance as a business. Since the impact of the pandemic, organizations that rely on the support of skilled and talented employees for organizational growth post-COVID-19 are making efforts to establish and maintain strong employee engagement (Hooi & Chan, 2023).

According to Azevedo et al. (2021), employee say, voice, and engagement can be greatly achieved through programs that are designed by HRM to encourage team say and voice. Specifically, programs such as joint labor-management committees, autonomous work teams, and quality circles encourage employees to be involved and express their opinions, beliefs, and ideas which essentially enhances employees in being more engaged with their work and duties. Leadership units such as human resources play a major role in this process of employees vocalizing their thoughts and using their voice through engagement as HRM implements programs that meet the organization's strategic goals that strive to aim a more innovative workplace and its outcomes (Azevedo et al., 2021).

As digital tools continue to be integrated with workplace functions and operations, workplace digitalization is believed to influence employee engagement (Bridger, 2018; Winasis et al., 2020). What is currently known about employee engagement due to the enhancement of technology and the pandemic varies; however, employee engagement is increasing as employees favor their working conditions and environments (Gasparovich et al., 2021) considering that modern-day working conditions majorly utilize digital technologies. The degree of the development in which a company maximizes its digital tools and technologies has been noted to be a factor in increasing employee engagement (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023; Gasparovich et al., 2021). Phillip (2021) and Silic and Back (2016) have also called for further studies to explore whether present-day digitalization keeps employees engaged. Although employee engagement has been linked to job outcomes such as positive job attitudes, voicing their thoughts and knowledge, and avoiding counterproductive work behavior (Alshaabani et al., 2022), there is a lack of research examining how diversity management efforts done digitally have continued to impact or overall impacted employee constructs such as employee engagement. Furthermore, for employees to remain engaged for future generations, organizations must provide their workers with proper training and professional development (Gasparovich et al., 2021). Gasparovich et al. (2021) found that digitization, as a factor, does have a direct impact on employee engagement and improving the efficiency of personnel management.

A review of this literature was important in understanding factors contributing to employee engagement within an organization and examining the present findings on this topic. Although the importance of employee engagement in organizations and how

technology has impacted organizations was discussed, the gap still existed in which organizations presently manage diversity and inclusion efforts digitally and the impact this has on employee engagement. Due to the impact that employee engagement has on worker performance and overall organizational production, it was important to continue research on this construct as the pandemic led many companies to alter their modes or methods of work. This research aimed to bridge this gap by examining the impact of digitized efforts used by management and exploring the relationships between such perceived involvement upon employee engagement. Although research had been evident in examining the importance of perceived management involvement upon workers overall, present-day technology utilization within organizations and how companies maximize their resources for digitalization work programs had been lacking.

### **Digitalization on D&I Initiatives on Employee Commitment**

Employee commitment is an important factor that positively affects organizational performance (Baird et al., 2019; Febrianti & Jufri, 2022), and if employee commitment is low within an organization, so is the company's performance. Within the workplace, worker commitment can be viewed as an employee or organizational view, in which both pertain to the identification and degree to which employees feel involved, identified, and loyal to their organization and the willingness one must serve their organization to achieve desired goals (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022). An individual or employee within the workplace's intentions on staying or leaving their company related to variables such as social support, job involvement, absenteeism, and management.

Findings have shown that leadership support and perceived management involvement throughout the varying practices, efforts, and programs, have a direct impact

on employee behavior which essentially reflects on one's willingness or intention to leave or remain in an organization (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022). When employees perceive that management is supporting them and their workplace culture, organizational commitment is positively affected. According to the literature, these findings indicated that employees were then able to perceive how their management was able to foster a culture of support and cooperation, thus enabling themselves and their peers to thrive within their jobs to accomplish desired goals. Prior analyses from scholars found that employees were and are much more committed to their organizations when support is provided by their leaders and leaders who are involved in diversity and inclusion efforts. Particularly, direct involvement from the top management level within diversity-related functions may influence or indicate one's commitment to an organization to diversity and diversity as a component of an organizational culture (Li et al., 2021). Diversity management can positively affect employee commitment, therefore prior studies call for organizations to continue paying attention to workforce diversity management practices (Li et al., 2021), and ways in which organizations should adapt methods and processes that promote diversity and inclusion.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has led to organizational transformation for companies to evolve and adapt, as society and culture shifts continue to emerge. Many organizations have discussed and begun conversations about diversity and inclusion in the workforce and how organizational commitment among employees is affected. Organizational focus has shifted greatly towards resources and methods in which high-quality services and products are offered to workers embracing a culture that is inclusive where employees from diverse backgrounds can harmonize together (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022). Before



the pandemic, organizations were consistently challenged by diversity within their workplace and organizations continue to aid in overcoming this hurdle. Presently, creating diversity and inclusivity through digital platforms has been called for to continue research as technology and digitalization are increasing daily (Febrianti & Jufri, 2022). Due to the nature of work and different work modes, technology has been more relied on to execute work functions. The digitalization of work relies greatly on the implementation and execution of technological tools that organizations execute. Companies that resort to technological means to create programs, training, and resources that aid in employees performing their job functions, see an increase in employee satisfaction and commitment (Calvard & Jeske, 2018). The organization's ability to manage an organization and diversity or inclusion efforts can affect performance which is deeply rooted in employee commitment.

There was an inconsistency in indicating whether employee commitment has increased as workers work more digitally due to the pandemic and whether diversity and inclusion efforts done digitally for these remote workers have impacted employee commitment. The present research had called for future studies to examine whether human resource management digitalization can improve company performance, as employee commitment greatly contributes to this. Literature had lacked a focus on present-day digital diversity and inclusion efforts upon workers due to the pandemic, and whether this digitalization on such key components impacts employee commitment. This research study attempted to bridge this gap by examining present-day phenomena on diversity and inclusion initiatives done by technology and exploring whether this or perceived management involvement influences employee commitment.

Additionally, current research had found that employees benefit from the diverse work environments that organizations demonstrate. These perceived diverse environments revealed that these different perceptions positively impacted employees' commitment versus those who perceived a more stressful diverse work environment (Behnke et al., 2023). Employee commitment is a workplace variable that will continue to be impacted by many organizational factors. However, the lack of true exploration of how modern digitalization impacts worker commitment was apparent. Present research called for a continuing discussion on technology and the impacts it has in the workplace as it is ever evolving and contributing literature and research due to its value and significant impact on workplace functioning.

### **Digitalization on D&I Initiatives and Management Involvement**

Workplace digitalization has been primarily researched and discussed when transforming organizational processes about information technology and strategic management (Hooi & Chan, 2023). Present research and literature emphasized that there was a much needed restructuring or emphasis on the reorientation of management practices to assist in nurturing employee inclusion in the workplace (Sharma & Panicker, 2022) and diversity. Diversity management had been noted to be an important topic of study among scholars for a long time; however, the current discussion surrounding such topics has greatly shifted from simply managing diversity to creating and maintaining a sense of inclusion in addition to a diverse workplace for employees (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022). Managing diversity has been pivotal and a key in creating an inclusive culture; two separate yet intertwining concepts that positively enhance workplace functioning. Inclusion, as stated, is defined as an “employee’s perception of

being accepted by others as an insider in the workplace” (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023, p. 246). Inclusiveness is much deeper than diversity as it values the differences among employees or work groups. Inclusion supports work environments and their potential in which a group of diverse employees and their backgrounds feel more motivated and empowered to perform at their highest potential (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022). An inclusive work culture fosters the different perspectives, values, and decision-making processes shown by employees, promotes improvement towards organizational performance, and due to its continuous and evolving nature, incorporates the diverse viewpoints and knowledge of peers within these companies and aids in building trust and respect amongst employees.

Managing diversity deals greatly with driving the inclusiveness of organizations and focusing their diversity efforts where they can, such as training, recruiting, and other programs designed for diverse employee workforces. Whereas diversity management focuses on such variables, inclusion management focuses on eliminating variables and hurdles hindering worker success within groups and performance. When management provides programs, training, and resources to aid in enhancing diverse workforces and building inclusive environments, individuals feel less threatened and fearful of exclusion, and good working relationships are formed. When management is involved in such diversity and inclusion work initiatives, successful communication, worker interaction, and cohesion are shown which are advantageous in helping minority groups and employees manage “corporate bureaucracy” which strengthens intergroup connections. This in turn results in the strengthening and development of acceptance minorities have within the workforce (Saha & Bhattacharya, 2022).

Nonetheless, it is only considered an advantage when diversity is managed effectively. Effective diversity management is best known as the creation and maintenance of a workplace that is free of discrimination in which stakeholders feel supported and included no matter what the differences are (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023). When leaders effectively manage diversity, it is found that positive relationships and an improvement in a firm's productivity and performance are evident (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023). Additionally, scholars have acknowledged that diversity aimed at human resources (HR) functioning and practices is pivotal to creating and maintaining an inclusive work culture and environment (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023) which essentially impacts employees.

It has been shown and conducted by management that implementing more diverse and inclusive methods in the present-day digital work environments is rooted greatly within the human resources processes that transform work outcomes. Although prior literature indicated the importance of human resource and leadership management on diversity and inclusion efforts upon organizational constructs, continued research was needed to explore how management and organizational processes conducted present-day impact employees as work methods and modes are majorly done using technology.

### **Perceived Management Involvement in the Workplace**

Leadership is known to play an essential role in organizational operations and while there has been much research on leadership involvement in organizational effectiveness, there is not much known about perceived management or leadership involvement in diverse and inclusive workplaces in the digital age. Specifically, current research failed to examine the perceptions of employees on leadership support or

involvement in diversity and inclusion in the workplace versus the actual influence of management involvement on such variables in the workplace.

Current research has found that perceived organizational support, specifically leadership that is more inclusive and involved with their employees stimulates employees to more innovative behavior (Qi et al., 2019). Scholars have stressed the importance of managers developing skills of inclusive leadership as this enhances employees within the workplace and that leadership should consider exemplifying openness and inclusivity to employee ideas, technologies, and individual efforts (Qi et al., 2019). Studies have found that employees reported leaders that were more involved within their workplace, were positively linked to employee engagement within their organizations (Milhem et al., 2019). There is a positive correlation between organizational performance, effectiveness, engagement, and productivity when employees perceive that their leadership or HR practices are high performing (Hai et al., 2020). Employee perceptions of management involvement have positively impacted organizational factors such as diversity and inclusion efforts as those who perceive more involved leadership, feel more sense of reward and belonging within their organizations (Hai et al., 2020). Employees have reported that perceived organizational inclusion efforts and diversity management done by leadership are connected and that the integration and learning to diversify is beneficial for both organizations and their employees (Rabl et al., 2020) as it only improves employee and organizational behavior overall. These employee perceptions play an important role in research as leadership involvement could be rated based on the managers themselves but would essentially provide biased input versus the subordinate ratings on their true actions and behaviors within their workplace. However, there is not

sufficient research that examines how present-day management involvement is perceived by employees through digital workplaces and its impact.

Current research failed to examine how perceived management involvement had impacted diversity and inclusion initiatives executed digitally by present-day organizations due to the pandemic. Because of this gap, this review of the literature was important to highlight. Continued discussion and examination were needed to bridge the gap that existed within the literature.

### **Work Location Impact on Management Involvement**

The shift of work location has altered greatly throughout the last five years due to the pandemic. Before social distancing, most of the work was done in person at work locations with remote or teleworking being an unpopular form of work modes. According to current research, remote work is positively linked to job flexibility, autonomy, worker satisfaction, and work-life balance (Babapour Chafi, 2021). While employees find an improvement in job variables due to remote or telework options, leadership has reported the opposite. According to present-day findings, a study found that when comparing managers' and employee views of remote work, managers report that they had a more negative experience than their subordinates (Babapour Chafi, 2021). Variables such as supervisory, environment, and other work responsibilities may have played a role in such reporting as managers felt weaker ties to their employees as they worked remotely (Babapour Chafi, 2021) than one would if they worked in person.

Other findings suggested that other leaders found remote work to be a method in which employer-subordinate trust was enhanced as employees worked in a hybrid or remote work model (Babapour Chafi, 2021). Such telework options positively improved

trust, it also showed that remote work negatively impacted social connectedness amongst employees. Managers have reported that employees who worked full-time remotely versus in-person, presented this challenge to organizational development as it limited the exchanges with their subordinates due to the limited opportunities they had to receive input and feedback on task accomplishments, performance, and limited exchanges when compared to in-person or on-site office work (Babapour Chafi, 2021). While prior literature explained the link between management impact on work locations, previous literature fails to examine how work location including in-person, hybrid, or telework options serves as a moderating variable in diversity and inclusion initiatives present-day post-pandemic.

Scholars Babapour Chafi et al. (2021) called for future research to bridge the gap of how remote work affects organizational performance post-COVID-19 and explored the range of new challenges that remote work settings have created present day from employee and managerial perspectives. Because the literature failed to examine how work location/ mode can potentially serve as a moderator while considering how such location can impact management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives, this study aimed to bridge this gap and utilized work location as a moderating variable. This review of the literature was needed to examine the importance of work location/ mode on employee and manager perspectives and the impact of work location on organizational output as this study bridged the gap of present-day work location/ mode impact on management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### **Present-Day Digital Efforts on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives**

The present-day workforce is comprised of a multigenerational group of workers which can impact organizational functioning. A contributing variable to organizational performance and functioning among these different generations has been the ability of these individuals to work cohesively and effectively together (Hurtienne et al., 2022). It was evident that differences exist amongst the generations which essentially impacts organizational performance altogether. Organizations must be diligent in recognizing the diverse workforce that currently exists as the different generations work and interact closely together (Hurtienne et al., 2022). Employers should recognize these differences as younger generations tend to change companies more frequently than older generations. Understanding employee engagement has been called for as an urgency due to such factors that contribute to employee commitment and retention (Hurtienne et al., 2022), and HRM should strive to better understand what engagement factors change between these generational differences presently. Not only should leadership be more aware and involved in factors contributing to employee engagement such as these generational differences, but also the diversity brought about by these multigenerational workers. If employers can effectively produce employee engagement within their organizations, they can gain a competitive edge due to the increased productivity and retention that employee engagement provides. Those who are more engaged with their work are less likely to leave their roles, regardless of age. Current research showed that millennial workers are increasingly becoming the largest population of workers within the US workforce (Fry, 2018); however, the lack of diversity or inclusion efforts implemented through HRM or leadership in this present-day workforce poses a gap in the literature. Although the multigenerational workforce that currently exists naturally diversifies the workforce, the



factors, and programs that organizations implement through the digital realm are not thoroughly examined. Because of this, research should be conducted that examines how modern-day technology and tools are being utilized, if at all, on diversity and inclusion initiatives within the workforce.

Additionally, the workforce adhered to different models of work before the COVID-19 pandemic. Methods of recruitment and hiring had been greatly digitalized before the pandemic but have dramatically increased since then. Since March 2020, companies have been forced to shift their working models, and organizations were forced to adapt to hybrid or remote work setups; many continued to adhere to such work models after the restrictions were lifted due to the advantages that working digitally offered. Based on a survey conducted by EY's Future Workplace Index (2023), most organizations will remain in a hybrid or remote working model with about 60% of companies being hybrid, 20% adopting full remote work as their mode of work, and 20% in-office. Processes about recruitment, talent acquisition needs, hiring, and employee retention, became more automated and digitally utilized like never before. Organizations began utilizing revolutionary methods based on analytics, artificial intelligence, and human resource processes that leverage virtual and augmented reality (Kuzior et al., 2022). Organizations that utilize the digitization of tools and resources in these processes have seen a dramatic difference from before the implementation and utilization of technology to the present day. Because such processes have become more digitized, the question that follows is whether this accelerated digitalization and remote work model help bring more diversity and inclusivity to the workplace. According to Kuzior et al. (2022), there has yet to be comprehensive research published on this topic due to

coronavirus being more recent. Due to these work processes becoming more digital, organizations, particularly in Berlin, have seen a significant influx of female employees like never before (Kuzior et al., 2022).

Before the pandemic, female workers made up 5% of the entire workforce with none being a part of leadership for a Berlin-based organization. As of August 2021, 20% of the employees were female with two being a part of management. According to an employee survey given to the employees in the company, 85% of the women claimed that due to the organizational elements that offered work to be done remotely or hybrid work, the job offer was more appealing (Kuzior et al., 2022). Because of such data, examining the management practices in which diversity and inclusion efforts are created and maintained by digital means is important to continue researching. The importance of fostering such diversity and inclusion efforts through the digital nature presently is evident in that such factors greatly contribute to employee engagement, performance, and commitment. Without engaged and committed employees, employee performance and workplace functioning would be non-existent. Therefore, bridging the gap that still existed within the digitalization of diversity and inclusion efforts was pivotal to continue studying.

### **Biblical Foundations of the Study**

A primary goal of integrating psychological research and literature with biblical understanding and framework is so that “new insights that will relieve personal discomfort or despair” (Carter & Narramore, 1979, p. 11) and to better understand humankind. The integration of psychology has been noted to better help the church minister and Christians to follow more effectively the total needs of humanity (Carter &

Narramore, 1979). It was important to note that “psychological and biblical truths provide context for integration, but the content of integration is the ground of being, Christ himself” (Rennebohm & Thoburn, 2021, p.187), and that all findings should relate to God’s truth relayed in scripture.

In the Bible, 1 Colossians 19-20 (*New International Version*, 1978/2011) reminds us that, “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.” For one must remember that God’s wish for all His followers were to treat one another equally “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” (*King James Version*, 1769/2017, Colossians 1:16-17). When implementing effective methods and processes that enhance human functioning through diversity and inclusion in the workplace, one better understands human nature while exhibiting key truths from the scripture and supporting humans altogether. The implementation of diverse and inclusive work processes promotes unity amongst employees and positively enhances relationships between humans in the workplace. God’s wish for His creations is to treat others with equality and treat others as one should treat themselves. By promoting diversity and inclusion practices, one is carrying out their duty to the core principles of God’s wish, enhancing one’s spirituality and professional growth at the same time. When organizations carry out diversity and inclusion initiatives and procedures, not only are they further enhancing job performance and employee engagement, increasing revenue, and much more, they are also fulfilling God’s wish for His followers.

An example provided in the Bible occurs in Genesis chapters 9 and 11 at the Tower of Babel depicting the act of God that created diversity. All humans were clustered together with one another because God had wanted them to “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth” (*New International Version*, 1978/2011, Genesis 9:1). God had wanted humankind to be more obedient, so He had confused their languages making His followers unable to work together as it was impossible to do so. It is Genesis 11:7-9 that indicates God’s doing in which, “Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other. So, the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth” (*New International Version*, 1978/2011). Because of the events that occurred at the Tower of Babel, humanity was then spread across the Earth and humans with similar or the same backgrounds or languages worked with one another. With time, the different cultures, languages, dialects, and races emerged into the diversity that is known now present-day. The Bible provides another reference to cultural diversity in which the three sons of Noah were discussed “And from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth” (*New International Version*, 1978/2011, Genesis 9:19). The scripture’s reference to the term “scattering” signals the multicultural diversity, hinting at God’s scattering of cultural diversity in the earth. This affirmation of diversity within the scripture further signals the importance of this research and how diversity and inclusion initiatives within any construct of life should be studied as it is important. God’s wish for all His followers

to treat others equally and to be healthy relates to the premises of this research as diversity and inclusion only positively impact human functioning within their well-being.

Lastly, the importance that diversity and inclusion serve within the workplace is a fundamental theological principle which all individuals benefit from. The discussion of diversity and inclusion must continue as God Himself promotes unity and humans to take care of themselves and their neighbor. When organizations carry out diversity and inclusion initiatives and procedures, not only are they further enhancing job performance, and employee engagement, reducing revenue, and more, but they are also fulfilling God's wish for His followers. God's wish for His creations is to treat others equally, and fairly, and as one should treat themselves as He created us all diversified yet wants to unite us all. By promoting diversity and inclusion practices, one is carrying out their duty to the core principles of God's wish, enhancing one's spirituality, and not discriminating against God's creations. In the Holy Scripture, God teaches all that humankind is one, "From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands" (*New International Version*, Acts 17:26, 1978/2011). By ignoring the impact of diversity and inclusion on any social factor upon humankind and functioning, one is doing oneself a major disservice in not following the true intention God has set out for His followers. God intends for His followers to unite and celebrate the differences that each human possesses, and continue promoting positive and healthier lifestyles, all of which serve as the premises of this research.

### **Summary**

The evolution of organizational operations and employee functioning was apparent in which variables alter the response to unpredicted events. The COVID-19 pandemic led to many alterations in human functioning, let alone in work implications. The pandemic triggered responses that humankind was forced to adapt to such as social distancing, working remotely, and limiting in-person/social contact. Such transitions led to many organizations utilizing resources and technology at their disposal, which forever shaped and impacted their modes of operations. These interventions impacted variables such as employee performance, engagement, and commitment, constructs that scholars continue studying due to the importance of these factors comprise of. Virtual work environments resulted as a mode of work for employees due to the pandemic, which prior research has examined since the emergence of the virus. However, topics about diversity and inclusion have become increasingly popular constructs that organizations have given focus to, as well as the constructs covered earlier. The evidence supporting the relationship between diversity and inclusion with employee performance, commitment, and engagement, suggests that when implemented effectively, these variables positively correlate to one another. There was, however, a lack of research that examined the use of modern-day technology and digitization of diversity and inclusion initiatives, and scholars such as Kuzior et al. (2022) called out this gap in the literature.

Prior research had shown the importance and value that diversity and inclusion instill upon the workforce, but none have yet to integrate the usage of present-day digitalization with diversity and inclusion efforts executed by management within organizations. Since research had failed to address modern-day usage of digitally executing diversity and inclusion work efforts done by management, a quantitative

approach was used to explore the impact organizations that work remotely had on employee commitment, engagement, and performance. This bridged the gap that existed in literature and continued the discussion of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and how it related to organizational functioning. The following chapter elaborated on the research method and consist of the research questions, hypotheses, research design, participants, study procedures, instrumentation, tools utilized, operational variables, data analysis, the delimitation, assumptions, and limitations of this study.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

### Overview

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this study sought out to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. This research study bridged the gap that literature failed to examine and compared the relationships and moderating variables in which perceived management involvement has on diversity and inclusion initiatives done digitally in present-day work environments.

This chapter discusses the research questions, hypotheses, research design, participants, the study procedures, instrumentation, and tools utilized, operational variables, data analysis, the delimitation, assumptions, and limitations of this study. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the overall design of the study and to examine how this quantitative correlational study will collect its participants, data, and data analysis techniques.

### Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ 1: What is the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee commitment?



RQ 3: What is the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and engagement?

RQ 4: Does work location/ mode (hybrid, remote, on-site) moderate the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, or engagement?

### **Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1<sub>a</sub>: A significant positive relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee performance.

Hypothesis 1<sub>0</sub>: No significant relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee performance.

Hypothesis 2<sub>a</sub>: A significant positive relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee commitment.

Hypothesis 2<sub>0</sub>: No significant relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee commitment.

Hypothesis 3<sub>a</sub>: A significant positive relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee engagement.

Hypothesis 3<sub>0</sub>: No relationship exists between perceived management involvement and employee engagement.

Hypothesis 4<sub>a</sub>: Work location, specifically the in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), or virtual work mode, moderates the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

Hypothesis 4<sub>0</sub>: Work location/ mode, specifically the in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), virtual, shows no relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

### **Research Design**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. This study also sought out to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

A correlational design was used to examine the relationship between the independent variable of this study (manager/ employer involvement) on our dependent variables (employee performance, commitment, and engagement) while work location acted as a moderating variable (in-person, hybrid, virtual). This correlational study aimed to bridge the gap that current literature failed to examine by comparing the relationship between present-day perceived management on diversity and inclusion initiatives in the workplace.

### **Participants**

#### **Recruitment**

Recruiting for this study included the use of convenience sampling, and public outreach by use of electronic resources such as social media postings (LinkedIn, Instagram, X (formerly known as Twitter), worker connections, emails). To qualify for

this study, participants must have: 1) been at least 18 years old, 2) currently be employed (remotely, in-person, or using a hybrid model), and 3) participants should have resided within a 25-mile radius of the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area. Exclusions for participants included: 1) being under the age of 18, 2) being unemployed, and 3) being outside of the 25-mile radius of the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area. Individuals who worked remotely outside of the geographic area for a company that is based within this radius did not qualify for the study, as well as those who worked remotely within this geographical area for a company that is based outside of the geographic area. According to the a priori power analysis from G\*Power, a total of 99 participants was needed to achieve 80% power for this study, yet my study included additional participants for incomplete responses and the like therefor, there were 139 participants that were included in this study.

### **Study Procedures**

The data was collected using an electronic survey, Qualtrics, and analyzed utilizing IBM SPSS 29. There was a preliminary screening portion of the questionnaire that qualified participants for the study within Qualtrics. This preliminary screening determined participant inclusion and if the qualifiers were not met, the survey immediately ended. If the participant qualified, they were then given further access to the remainder of the study. This hyperlink for the study was available to anyone who accessed the link or QR code and had the digital technology to open it.

This survey first began by having participants consent to their participation in the study. The consent form was accessible on the first page of the survey. By electronically typing their name and date and checking the “I consent to this study” box, participants

then gained access to the screening portion of the survey. Participant name acting as a consent signature was deleted during the clean-up portion of this study's data analysis. The screener asked participants if they were at least 18 years of age or older, whether the participant was currently employed, whether the participant worked remotely, used a hybrid work model, or worked in person, and if they resided within a 25 mile radius of the Washington D.C., Maryland, or Virginia. Those who qualified, were then administered to the survey where the questions about demographics were administered. Participants were asked a series of demographic questions in which they were not required to answer. Once this section was completed, participants then accessed part I of the survey. The survey was composed of two portions (part I and part II), one assessing one's perceived perception of employee engagement, commitment, and performance, and the second portion assessing perceived management involvement. Once the survey was completed, data was automatically saved in Qualtrics, and the researcher was notified the survey was completed. Once the data was collected, data was cleaned in Microsoft Excel. Any incomplete surveys were deleted, and participant personal information was deleted. Once the cleaning of data was complete, the data was then transferred and analyzed utilizing IBM SPSS 29.

## **Instrumentation and Measurement**

### **Demographics**

A structured questionnaire was administered which consisted of multiple-choice questions. The primary recruitment method for this study was convenience sampling from the DMV (Washington D.C. and its suburbs including some parts of Maryland close to D.C. and Northern Virginia primarily) areas. Participants were asked to complete a

section in the electronic online survey to collect demographic data information which consisted of items such as 1) job title/department/ duty (whether they hold managerial positions within their organization), 2) if they held a managerial position (yes/ no), 3) education (HS graduate or equivalent, did not graduate, some college, or Bachelor's degree or higher), 4) gender in which they self-identify (male, female, other), 5) age in years (18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56+ years old) 6) ethnicity and race (White, Black or African American, American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, Two or more Races, Hispanic or Latino, Other), 7) the number of years total work experience (<5, 5-10, 10-15,15-20, 21+ years), 8) location in which they resided in (Washington D.C., Maryland, or Virginia), 9) current work mode (in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), virtual/ telework), 10) email address for any future correspondence regarding questions. These demographic variables were selected for the demographics section based on the census data collected from the years 2017-2021 from the U.S. Census Bureau from the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Northern Virginia areas. While this study did not use these demographic variables as moderators, they may be used in future studies for further exploration. This demographic area housed the D.C., Maryland, and Northern Virginia areas in which people lived with both cultural and ethnic diversity. Demographic questions were not required from participants but were utilized to aid in the understanding of the research problem and to examine the relationship between diversity and inclusion in the workplace and ensured that participants met all inclusion criteria.

### **Evaluating Employee Engagement, Performance, and Commitment**

A structured questionnaire that included all variables of this study was administered for data collection purposes. While this study did not use the demographic variables collected in this study as moderators, they may be used in future studies to replicate for further exploration. Dependent variables included employees' commitment, engagement, and performance. Independent variables included diversity and inclusion initiatives by management and workplace location. Work mode such as in-person, hybrid (in-person and virtual), and virtual acted as moderating variables.

### **Perceived Employee Engagement**

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) was administered to examine the relationship between three dimensions pertaining to engagement such as vigor, dedication and absorption, in relationship to diversity engagement within organizations (Hisel, 2020). The UWES-9 item survey was based off a 7-point Likert scale which assess' one's self-perceived reports from very low to very high ratings on work engagement and has a reliable Cronbach's alpha of 0.91. An example item from this survey included items such as "I am immersed in my work" and "I get carried away when I'm working" (Hisel, 2020).

### **Perceived Job Performance**

A questionnaire based off a scale used by Tabouli et al. (2016) was used to assess employee performance. This instrument consisted of 6 items and has an internal reliability value higher than .70. This scale is based off a 5-point Likert scale in which 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree. An example item from this instrument includes "I feel dedication, seriousness and ability to take

responsibility” (Saleem et al., 2022). This questionnaire was used to assess an individual’s self-reporting on their perceived job performance at their current work.

### **Perceived Organizational Commitment**

To best explore the relationship with employee commitment, the questionnaire by Mowday et al.’s Organizational Commitment Scale was used (1979) that was based on a 7-point Likert scale. An example question included “I feel very little loyalty to this organization”. The higher the score for each instrument used, the more the participants agree on whether they feel engaged, committed and performing at their organizations. The lower the score, the less engaged, committed, and performing they feel towards their employers. The Cronbach’s alpha for this instrument ranged from .82 to .93 with a median of .90 (Barge & Schlueter, 1988). There were 6 questions in this instrument (questions 3, 7, 9, 11, 12, and 15) that were negatively phrased and were reverse coded.

### **Perceived Management Involvement in Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives**

The second portion of the questionnaire utilized a scale adopted from the study by Mor Barak et al. (1998) to assess diversity-focused HR practices, perceived management involvement, and inclusion climate. A sample item from Mor Barak et al. (1998) was “Management here encourages the formation of employee interest or network groups” (p. 249). This instrument was measured using a 6-item Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree). The Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for this instrument was 0.87. Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 were reverse coded to make it consistent with the original author of the instruments claims in that the higher the scores for this section of the questionnaire, the more participants rated that their perceived management is positively involved in diversity and inclusion programs. Therefore, once these questions

were reverse coded, those who gave a score to an item of 1, was coded to 6, those who rated an item of a score of 2 were coded to 5, those who rated an item 3 were coded to 4 and vice versa. The lower the score, participants perceived their management were less/negatively involved in diversity.

### **Operationalization of Variables**

**Employee Engagement** –was an ordinal variable and was measured by scores from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9). This variable was based on a 5-point Likert scale and the total score measured this variable. The higher the scores from this questionnaire, participants agreed with the statements on how strongly engaged they are with their work.

**Employee Performance** –was an ordinal variable and was measured by a 5-point Likert scale. The higher the score, the more the employee felt they performed well at the organization. The lower the score, the less the employee felt that they performed at their organization.

**Employee Commitment** – was an ordinal variable that was measured by the questionnaire created by Mowday et al. (1979) known as the Organizational Commitment Scale. This variable was measured by the total score based on this 7-point Likert scale. The higher the score, the more the employee felt commitment to their employer, and the lesser the score, the less committed employees felt toward their employer.

**Perceived Management Involvement** – This ordinal variable was measured by the total scores from items from the questionnaires by Mor Barak et al. (1998) based on a 6-point Likert scale. The total scores from items in these questionnaires will be how management



involvement was operationally defined. The higher the scores, the more involved managers are as the participants perceived them to be.

### **Data Analysis**

For this study, the independent variable was employer/management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives. There were three dependent variables in this study which include employees' performance, engagement, and commitment. Additionally, it was assumed that an employee's mode of work (virtual work, hybrid work, and in-person work), served as moderators. Because the research design for this study was correlational, this allowed for the examination of any predictive or strong relationships, if any existed, between the independent and dependent variables while the mode of work acted as a moderator. Since this study examined the relationships between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement, a correlational and multiple linear regression analysis were run. This analysis was run in IBM SPSS 29 that analyzed the relationships between the variables which examined the work location as it served as a moderator. Descriptive statistics were gathered to analyze the data, and a histogram and P-P Plot were used to visualize the data. From the regression analysis' run, correlations, and descriptive statistics given, this data indicated the influence among variables and specific variable factors. This analysis also determined whether work location served as a moderator between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement.

### **Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations**

#### **Delimitations**

A potential delimitation of this study included the type of participants that will participate in this study. Due to the nature of remote or hybrid workers utilizing technology daily for personal and non-personal use, this served as a potential deterrent for research as those who are in person may tend to use technology less, thus not participating in this study. This study was also delimited to those within a 25-mile radius of Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, individuals who are over the age of 18, and individuals who are employed. Additionally, this study was delimited to those who were only within that 25-mile radius of the DMV area which will only be truly reflective of more technologically based organizations as these areas are denser with tech firms versus non-tech based (Shetler, 2023; Urwin, 2022).

### **Assumptions**

An assumption of this study were the scores gathered from the questionnaires during the data collection would possibly be biased. Due to the nature of this design, participants were to self-report their scores based on their own perceptions of their employee performance, commitment, and engagement as well as perceived management involvement. It was also assumed that the data collected from this study would support the intergroup and embedded theory as well as the social exchange theory. The assumption in the data collected indicated a positive correlation between employee performance, commitment, and engagement with management involvement on diversity and inclusion programs exemplified how these theories were shown in this study. When organizations employ an inclusive and diverse workplace for their employees, employees in return are more likely to be engaged with their work, perform better, and commit more

to their organization (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023). This is known as the social exchange theory.

### **Limitations**

Although this study contributed to the literature by providing data and empirical evidence on the effects management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives has on employee performance, engagement, and commitment in the workplace, there were however several limitations. This study consisted of data within the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia areas which are locations that are technologically advanced when compared to other areas in the nation (Shetler, 2023; Urwin, 2022). Due to this factor itself, the advantage that this region had over the rest of the nation may play a factor in the results of this study as individuals and organizations were more equipped and technologically advanced when compared to other organizations across the country. This advantage may have had an impact on the results of the study and may not present findings that can be best generalized and meaningful to represent the United States overall.

Another limitation that this study had was the focus of leadership/ management involvement on diversity and inclusion efforts and the lack of focus on other variables such as motivation, recruitment, or social responsibility which may aid communication shown in the workplace through diversity. Future studies should be conducted that include an analysis of variables such as innovation, equal opportunities, and social

responsibility as variables that could help improve communication within the workplace as well as management involvement in diversity and inclusion efforts.

Further limitations that this study posed was the impact of different leadership styles. This study focused on the involvement of management in diversity and inclusion programs and not specific leadership styles that may have an impact on such programs. Different leadership styles such as transformational leadership, tend to have a more positive impact and change upon organizations, thus leadership styles may have played a factor in the relationships in this study.

Due to the nature of this correlational study, participants were to complete the questionnaire based on their own perceptions and self-ratings pertaining to their commitment, engagement, and performance in their organizations which could be a potential limitation. The self-perceived ratings may have increased potential bias that may impact the results of the study. Lastly, correlation does not mean causation. Because this study was correlational, this was a limitation. Correlation cannot detect a cause-and-effect relationship and does not establish a direct causal relationship between any two variables (Xia, 2020). Correlation does not equal causation and one cannot infer any causal relationships between variables although correlations may indicate the potential existence of causal relationships between variables (Xia, 2020). When two variables within a study are identified as being correlated, this may not be due to causation but rather due to an underlying or external variable such as a confounding variable. This study aimed to examine a variety of relationships that existed; thus, this limitation of correlational studies was presented in this research as well.

### **Summary**

This chapter summarized the methodology of this study. It presented the participants, instrumentation/ tools that were utilized, study procedures, data analysis, operational variables, delimitations/ limitations, and assumptions. A quantitative correlational design approach was utilized as explored the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. This chapter also sought to determine whether work location/ mode (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. The purpose of this chapter was to highlight the research methods and proposed data analysis of this study. For any study to be replicable for future studies to build on, it is important for detailed information on any research methodology to be defined during the methodology section. The next chapter will consist of the results and all descriptive results will be presented.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Overview

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this study sought to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee engagement, performance, commitment. This research study aimed to bridge the gap that current literature failed to examine and compared the relationships and moderating variables in which perceived management involvement has on diversity and inclusion initiatives done digitally in present-day work environments. A quantitative correlational analysis using a multiple linear regression was conducted to examine the relationships. Participants were recruited by convenience sampling using social media such as Instagram, LinkedIn, in which they completed surveys that tested for employee engagement, commitment, performance, and management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

The first research question that guided this study investigated whether there was a relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity & inclusion initiatives and employee performance. The second research question explored whether there was a relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee commitment, while the third research question determined if there was a relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and engagement. The fourth research question inquired

whether work location (hybrid, remote, on-site) moderated the relationships between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, or engagement.

This chapter presented the results gathered from the study conducted. The demographics of the participants is first discussed, followed by the examination of the relationships between perceived management involvement with employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Finally, this chapter discussed the moderating variables of work mode (in-person, hybrid, virtual) and how it related to this relationship.

### **Descriptive Results**

The sample of participants included 139 individuals, which included 80 females, and 59 males. This data is illustrated in Table 1. Eleven participants are within the education job field, 19 in engineering, 11 in finance/ accounting, 5 in human resources, 18 in IT/ technical, 8 in leadership, 3 in legal, 25 in medical, and 39 in other job fields/ departments. This data is illustrated in Table 3. One-hundred and two participants received a bachelor's degree or higher while 9 participants responded they were a high school graduate or equivalent, and 29 participants reported some college for their highest level of education they received. This data is shown in Table 4.

**Table 1**

*Participant Gender*

Gender	Number of Participants
Male	59
Female	80

**Table 2***Participants Holding a Managerial Position*

Managerial Position	Number of Participants
Yes	48
No	91

**Table 3***Participant Job Field/ Department*

Job Field/ Department	Number of Participants
Education	11
Engineering	19
Finance/ Accounting	11
Human Resources	5
IT/ Technical	18
Leadership	8
Legal	3
Medical	25
Other	39

**Table 4***Participant Highest Level of Education Received*

Level of Education	Number of Participants
Bachelor's Degree or higher	102
HS Graduate or equivalent	9
Some College	28

Ten participants resided in Maryland, 120 in Virginia, and 9 in Washington D.C. This data is illustrated in table 5. Of the 139 participants, 48 work in a hybrid work mode (mixture of in-person and virtual work), 63 participants work in-person and 28 reported to work virtually. This is reported in table 6.



**Table 5***Participant Location*

Location of Residence	Number of Participants
Maryland	10
Virginia	120
Washington D.C.	9

**Table 6***Participant Work Mode*

Work Mode	Number of Participants
Hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual)	48
In-Person	63
Virtual/ Telework	28

Seven participants reported that they closely identify to ethnicity and/or race as Asian, 8 Black or African American, 3 Hispanic or Latino, 89 Middle Eastern, 3 Other, 5 Two or more Races, and 24 White. This data is illustrated in table 7.

**Table 7***Participant Ethnicity and/ or Race Identity*

Ethnicity/ Race	Number of Participants
Asian	7
Black or African American	8
Hispanic/ Latino	3
Middle Eastern	89
Other	3
Two or more Races	5
White	24

Total years of work experience obtained was collected for this study. Thirty-three of the participants have less than 5 years of work experience, 19 participants reported to

obtain 10-15 years of work experience, 16 had 15-20 years, 53 had 5-10 years, and 18 had 21+ years of total work experience.

**Table 8**

*Participant Years of Work Experience Obtained*

Years of Work Experience Obtained	Number of Participants
<5 years	33
5-10 years	53
10-15 years	19
15-20 years	16
21+ years	18

Participants were asked to report their age range. Twenty-nine participants reported that they were between the ages of 18-25 years old, 78 reported they were between 26-35 years old, 12 of them were 36-45 years old, 14 between 46-55 years old, and 6 of them were at least 56 years of age or older.

**Table 9**

*Participant Age*

Age	Number of Participants
18-25 years old	29
26-35 years old	78
36-45 years old	12
46-55 years old	14
56+ years old	6

Lastly, this study utilized 4 instruments to measure employee perceived engagement, perceived performance, perceived commitment, and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. The mean score of each instrument were analyzed for this study to run the correlational analysis. The mean score of

engagement was 4.896 the mean of commitment was 4.510, mean score of performance was 4.263, and the mean score of management involvement was 2.735.

**Table 10**

*Mean Scores of Instruments*

Instrument	Mean Scores of Instrument
Employee Perceived Engagement	4.896
Employee Perceived Commitment	4.806
Employee Perceived Performance	4.263
Perceived Management Involvement	2.735

**Study Findings**

In this study, participants were recruited through use of social media posts on Instagram and LinkedIn. Participants accessed the study survey through a link to be in Qualtrics. The consent form was available for participants on the first page of the survey. Once the participants gave their consent to participate in the study and completed all qualifier questions, they were then allowed to proceed to another screen to begin the survey. When the number of participants needed for this study was obtained, the researcher stopped data collection, and the data was transferred from Qualtrics to Microsoft Excel for clean-up. During this data clean up, incomplete surveys were permanently deleted and all personal information such as consent names (that were provided first page of the survey to act in lieu of a signature) were permanently deleted from the data in Excel in order to preserve the anonymity of all participants. The remaining participants were then transferred from Microsoft Excel to IBM SPSS 29 for analysis. Additionally, a linear regression and Pearson  $r$  was completed for each variable

which showed the relationships between employee engagement, performance, commitment with the perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. After initial analyses were completed, another linear regression was conducted to test whether mode of work (in-person, hybrid, virtual) acted as a moderator between the relationship of perceived employee engagement, performance, commitment, and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### **Perceived Employee Engagement and Perceived Management Involvement**

A correlation was run to assess if there was a statistically significant relationship between perceived employee engagement and perceived management involvement. A Pearson  $r$  was computed to analyze the relationship between perceived employee engagement and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. A weak, but positive relationship was found,  $r(139) = .272$ ,  $p < .001$ . The null hypothesis was rejected. The perceived engagement instrument was found to be highly reliable as the Cronbach's alpha was .908. The instrument measuring perceived management involvement was also found reliable as the Cronbach's alpha was .804.

**Table 11**

*Correlations for Perceived Employee Engagement and Perceived Management Involvement*

		Perceived Employee Engagement	Perceived Management Involvement
Perceived Management Involvement	Pearson r	1	.272**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Perceived Employee Engagement	N	139	139
	Pearson r	.272**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	139	139

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed)

**Table 12***Reliability Statistics for Perceived Engagement Instrument*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.908	.909	9

**Table 13***Reliability Statistics for Perceived Management Involvement Instrument*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.804	.804	16

A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between employee perceived engagement and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives in the workplace. The results, as illustrated in figure 1, show a positive relationship between perceived employee engagement and perceived management involvement,  $r(137) = .272$ ,  $p < .001$ . The equation for the regression line was  $\hat{Y} = .408 + 3.155X$ . The confidence interval of the slope ranged from .164 to .653, an interval which did not contain 0. The analysis found that  $R^2 = .074$ , indicating that 7.4% of the variance in perceived employee engagement was accounted for with perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives. The results of the ANOVA,  $F(1, 137) = 10.922$ ,  $p < 0.001$  indicated that the slope of the line is significant. The standard error of estimate that was provided by the regression line was 1.097, indicating that the data points lie near the regression line. Higher perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives scores correlated to higher scores in involvement by the participants, while lower scores indicated participants perceived their managers as being less involved. Participants that rated their perceived employee engagements high, rated their engagement as high and those who rated their perceived

employee engagement low believed that they were less engaged with their work. The assumption of normality was met, as illustrated by the P-P plot. This supports the results found in figures 1, 2, and tables 12-14, showing that perceived employee engagement had a strong, positive relationship with perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

**Table 14**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.272	.074	.067	1.097	.074	10.922	1	137	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

**Table 15**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.154	1	13.154	10.922	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	164.999	137	1.204		
	Total	178.153	138			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 16**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

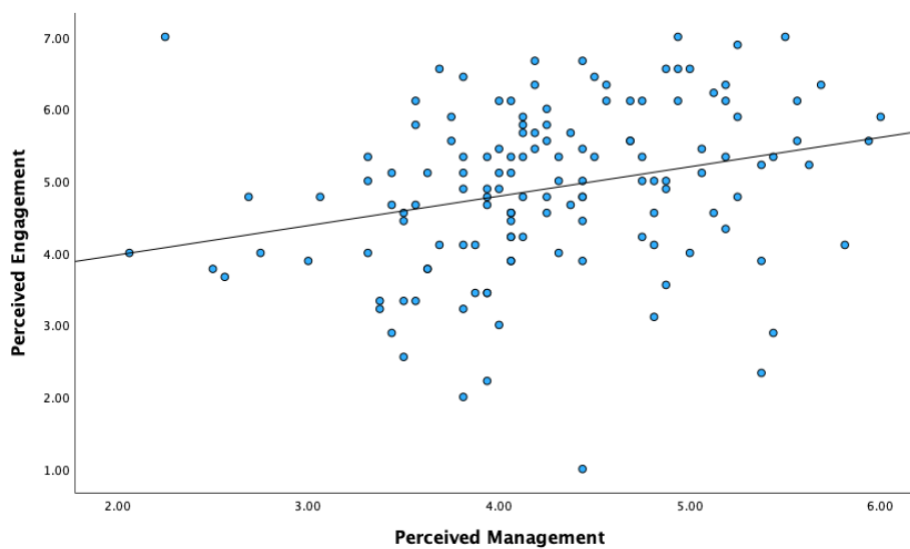
*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.155	.535		5.897	<.001	2.097	4.213
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.408	.124	.272	3.305	.001	.164	.653

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

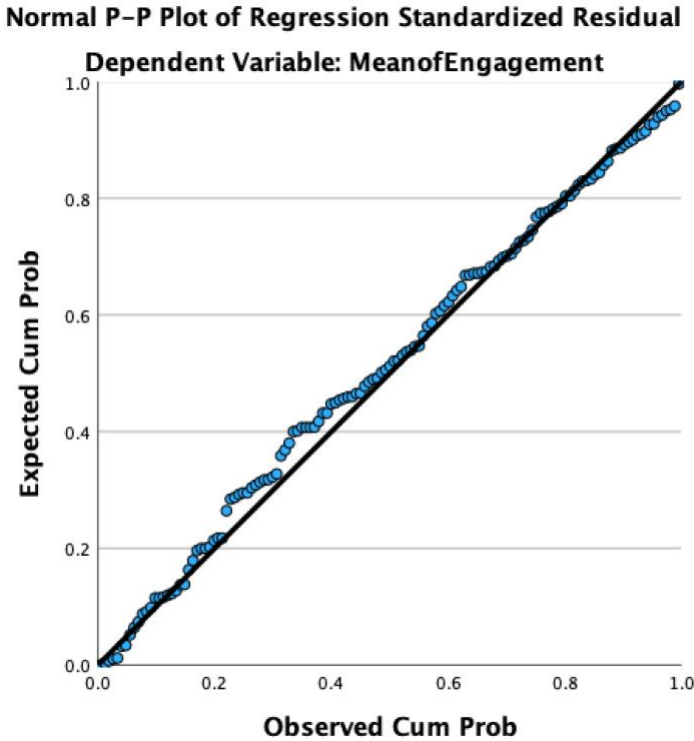
**Figure 1**

*Scatterplot: The Relationship Between Perceived Employee Engagement and Perceived Management Involvement on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*



**Figure 2**

*P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals*



**Perceived Employee Performance and Perceived Management Involvement**

A correlation was run to assess if there is a statistically significant relationship between perceived employee performance and perceived management involvement. A Pearson  $r$  was computed to analyze the relationship between perceived employee performance and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. A weak, but positive relationship was found,  $r(139) = .204, p < .001$ . The null hypothesis was rejected. The instrument measuring perceived employee performance was found to be reliable as the Cronbach's alpha was .868.



**Table 17***Correlations for Perceived Employee Performance and Perceived Management Involvement*

		Perceived Employee Performance	Perceived Management Involvement
Perceived Management Involvement	Pearson r Correlation	1	.204**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	139	139
Perceived Employee Performance	Pearson r Correlation	.204**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	139	139

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed)

**Table 18***Reliability Statistics for Perceived Performance*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.868	.868	6

A regression analysis was conducted to analyze whether perceived management involvement has a relationship with perceived employee performance. The results, as illustrated in figure 2, did indicate a significant positive relationship between perceived management involvement and perceived employee performance  $r(136) = .204$ ,  $p < .001$ . The equation for the regression line was  $\hat{Y} = .172 + 3.528$ . The standard error of estimate provided by the regression line was .628, indicating that the data points lie close to the regression line. The confidence interval of the slope varied from .033 to .312, an interval. The results indicated that  $R^2 = .042$ , meaning that 4.2% of the variance in perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives was explained by perceived employee performance. The ANOVA results,  $F(1, 136) = 5.952$ ,  $p < .001$

indicated that the slope of the line was significant. Because of such results, the null hypothesis that the slope of the line is 0 was rejected, thus indicating that there is a positive, significant relationship between perceived employee performance and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. The higher participants rated their perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives scores correlated to participants rating their involvement was high within their workplace. Participants that rated their perceived employee performance high, rated their own performance as high within their workplace and those who rated their perceived employee performance low, believed that they performed less with their work. The assumption of normality was met according to the P-P plot. This supports the results found in figures 3,4, and tables 16-18 showing that perceived employee performance had a strong, positive relationship with perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

**Table 19**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.204	.042	.035	.628	.042	5.952	1	137	.016

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement  
 Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

**Table 20**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.348	1	2.348	5.952	.016 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	54.036	137	.394		
	Total	56.383	138			

c. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

d. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 21**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

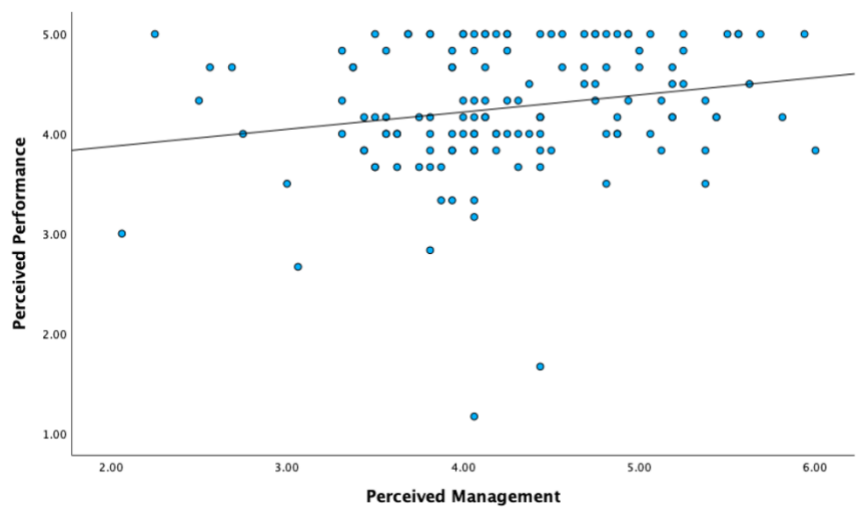
Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.528	.306		11.524	<.001	2.923	4.134
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.172	.071	.204	2.440	.016	.033	.312

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

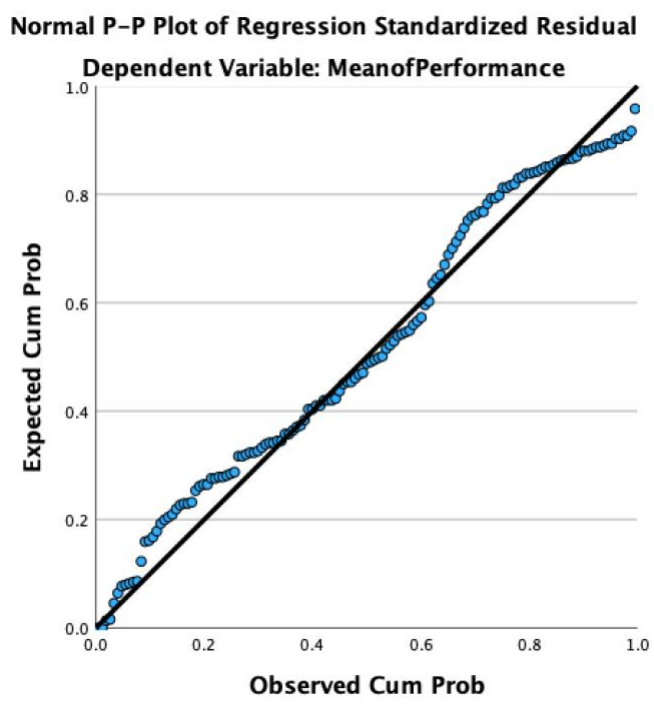
**Figure 3**

*Scatterplot: The Relationship Between Perceived Employee Performance and Perceived Management Involvement on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*



**Figure 4**

*P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals*



### Perceived Employee Commitment and Perceived Management Involvement

A correlation was run to assess if there is a statistically significant relationship between perceived employee commitment and perceived management involvement. A Pearson  $r$  was computed to analyze the relationship between perceived employee commitment and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. A strong, positive relationship was found,  $r(139) = .509$ ,  $p < .001$ . The null hypothesis was rejected. The instrument measuring perceived employee commitment was found to be reliable as the Cronbach's alpha was .876.

**Table 22**

*Correlations for Perceived Employee Commitment and Perceived Management Involvement*

		Perceived Employee Commitment	Perceived Management Involvement
Perceived Management Involvement	Pearson r Correlation	1	.509**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	139	139
Perceived Employee Commitment	Pearson r Correlation	.509**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	139	139

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed)

**Table 23**

*Reliability Statistics for Perceived Commitment*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.876	.885	15

A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between employee perceived commitment and perceived management involvement on diversity

and inclusion initiatives in the workplace. The results, as illustrated in figure 3, showed a positive relationship between perceived employee commitment and perceived management involvement,  $r(137) = .509, p < .001$ . The equation for the regression line was  $\hat{Y} = .713 + 1.765X$ . The confidence interval of the slope ranged from .510 to .916, an interval which did not contain 0. The analysis found that  $R^2 = .260$ , indicating that 26% of the variance in perceived employee commitment was accounted for with perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives. The results of the ANOVA,  $F(1, 137) = 48.021, p < .001$  indicated that the slope of the line is significant. The standard error of estimate that was provided by the regression line was .914, indicating that the data points lie near the regression line. The higher participants rated perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives scores correlated to participants rating their involvement was high, while low scores indicated participants perceived their managers as less involved. Participants that rated their perceived employee commitment high, rated their commitment as high and those who rated their perceived employee commitment low believed that they were less committed with their work. The assumption of normality was met according to the P-P plot. This supported the results found in figures 5 and 6, and tables 20-22, showing that perceived employee commitment had a strong, positive relationship with perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

**Table 24**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.509 <sup>a</sup>	.260	.254	.914	.260	48.021	1	137	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

**Table 25**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.124	1	40.124	48.021	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	114.471	137	.836		
	Total	154.595	138			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

b. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 26**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

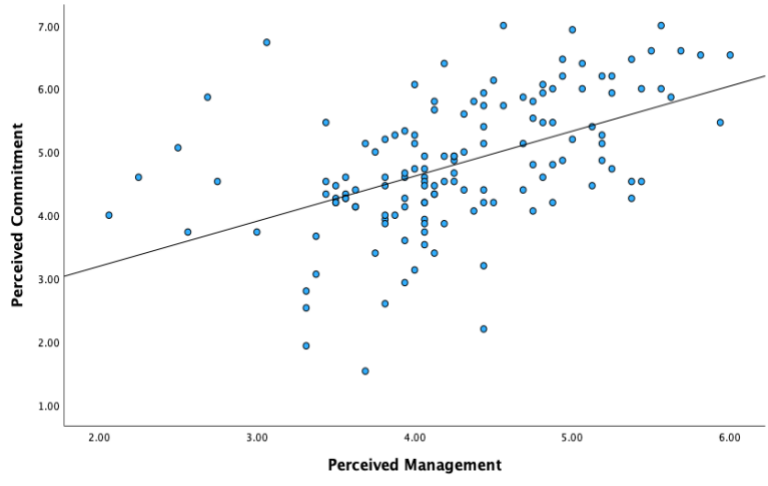
*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.765	.446		3.962	<.001	.884	2.647
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.713	.103	.509	6.930	<.001	.510	.916

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

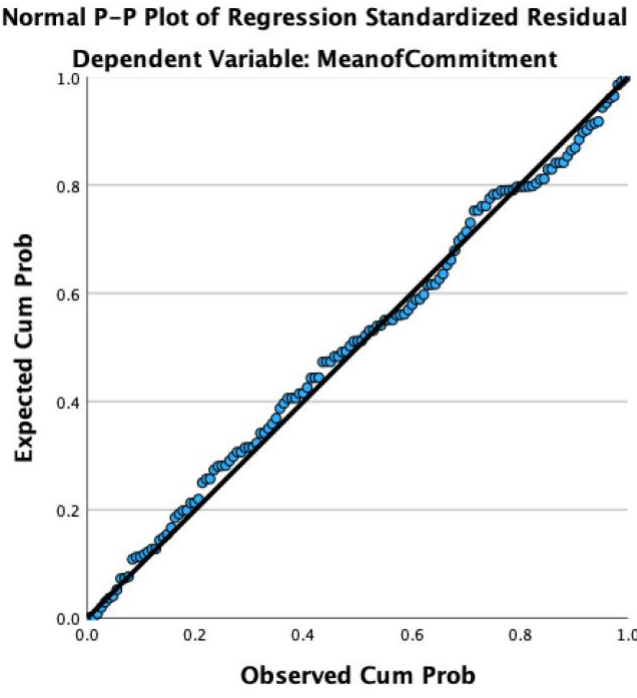
**Figure 5**

*Scatterplot: The Relationship Between Perceived Employee Commitment and Perceived Management Involvement on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*



**Figure 6**

*P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals*





## **Work Mode Moderating the Relationship Between Perceived Employee Engagement, Performance, Commitment, and Perceived Management Involvement**

Work location/ mode which included in-person, hybrid (a mixture of in-person and virtual work), and virtual, was found to moderate the relationship between perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment, with perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### **Employee Engagement**

A correlation was run to assess if there is a statistically significant relationship with work mode moderating perceived employee engagement and perceived management involvement. A strong, positive relationship was found,  $r(139) = .509$ ,  $p < .001$ . The null hypothesis was rejected. A multiple regression analysis was utilized to analyze whether work location/ mode, in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), or virtual work acted as a moderating variable in the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee engagement. The analysis showed that work mode did act as a moderator with the relationship between perceived employee engagement and perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives  $r(136) = .273$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the null hypothesis was rejected. The equation for the regression line was  $\hat{Y} = .027x + 3.149$ . The standard error of estimate that was provided by the regression line was 1.10. The confidence interval of the slope varied from  $-.155$  to  $.208$ . This range did contain zero, showing that this was not statistically significant. The  $R^2$  value was  $.074$ , indicating that 7.4% of the variance in perceived employee engagement was explained by the interaction of work mode and perceived management involvement.

**Table 27**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.273	.074	.061	1.101	.074	5.467	2	136	.005

a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

**Table 28**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.257	2	6.629	5.467	.005 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	164.896	136	1.212		
	Total	178.153	138			

e. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

f. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 29**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95.0% Confidence Interval for B		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.149	.537		5.86	<.001	2.086	4.211
	Mean Of Perceived Management InvolvementxWorkMode	.409	.124	.273	3.302	.001	.164	.655
	Perceived Management InvolvementxWorkMode	.027	.092	.024	.291	.771	-.155	.208

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

### **Employee Performance**

A multiple regression analysis was utilized to analyze whether work location/mode, in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), or virtual work acted as a moderating variable in the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee performance. The analysis showed that work mode did act as a moderator with the relationship between perceived employee performance and perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives  $r(136) = .225$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the null hypothesis was rejected. The equation for the regression line was  $\hat{Y} = .060x + 3.514$ . The standard error of estimate that was provided by the regression line was .626. The confidence interval of the slope varied from -.044 to .163. This range did contain zero, showing that this was not statistically significant. The  $R^2$  value was .051, indicating that 5.1% of the variance in perceived employee performance was explained by the interaction of work mode and perceived management involvement.

**Table 30**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.225 <sup>a</sup>	.051	.037	.627	.051	3.637	2	136	.029

a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

**Table 31**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.862	2	1.431	3.637	.029 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	53.521	136	.394		
	Total	56.383	138			

g. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

h. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 32**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship of Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.514	.306		11.483	<.001	2.909	4.120
	Mean	.175	.071	.207	2.479	.014	.035	.315
	Of Perceived Management PerceivedManagementInvolvementx WorkMode	.060	.052	.096	1.144	.255	-.044	.163

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

### **Employee Commitment**

A multiple regression analysis was utilized to analyze whether work location/mode, in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), or virtual work acted as a moderating variable in the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee commitment. The analysis showed that work mode did act as a moderator with the relationship between perceived employee commitment and perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives  $r(136) = .510$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the null hypothesis was rejected. The equation for the regression line was  $\hat{Y} = -.016 + 1.769$ . The standard error of estimate that was provided by the regression line was .917. The confidence interval of the slope varied from -.167 to .135. This range did contain zero, showing that this was not statistically significant. The  $R^2$  value was .260, indicating that 26% of the variance in perceived

employee commitment was explained by the interaction of work mode and perceived management involvement.

**Table 33**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.510 <sup>a</sup>	.260	.249	.917	.260	23.866	2	136	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

**Table 34**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship of Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.163	2	20.081	23.866	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	114.432	136	.841		
	Total	154.595	138			

i. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

j. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 35**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship of Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.769	.448		3.953	<.001	.884	2.654
	Mean Of Perceived Management Involvement <sup>ntx</sup> WorkMode	.712	.103	.509	6.894	<.001	.508	.917
	Perceived Management Involvement <sup>ntx</sup> WorkMode	-.016	.076	-.016	-.215	.830	-.167	.135

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

### Summary

The results of the statistical analysis conducted for this study illustrates the relationship between perceived employee engagement, performance, commitment, and perceived management involvement. A linear regression showed that there was a weak, but positive relationship between perceived employee engagement and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives, rejecting the null hypothesis. The results also indicated that a positive relationship existed between perceived employee performance and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. The data analysis also found a strong, positive relationship existed between perceived employee commitment and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. The results also showed that work mode did moderate the relationship between perceived management involvement and perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment. The next chapter

discussed the findings of the results, implications, limitations, recommendations for future research, and concluded the study.



## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### Overview

This study examined the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this study sought out to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderated the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee engagement, performance, commitment. This research study bridged the gap that current literature failed to examine and compare the relationships and moderating variables in which perceived management involvement has on diversity and inclusion initiatives done digitally in present-day work environments. This chapter summarizes and discusses the findings of this study and what these findings mean. This chapter will also discuss the implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

### Summary of Findings

This study found that there was a significant and positive relationship between perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment. This study also found that work mode did serve as a moderating variable for perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment.

### Discussion of Findings

#### **Perceived Employee Engagement and Perceived Management Involvement**

The results of this study found a significant and positive relationship between perceived employee engagement and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. Because of such findings, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The findings also illustrated the positive relationship employee engagement had with perceived management involvement, answering a research question sought out to explore in this study. This finding supports the assertion by Milhem et al. (2019) stating employees who reported their managers as more involved within their workplace were more positively linked to employee engagement within their organizations. The results of this study provided real-life data that can be applied to present day practices carried out by organizations to further enhance worker engagement within their workplace by means of diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### **Perceived Employee Performance and Perceived Management Involvement**

The results of this study found a significant and positive relationship between perceived employee performance and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. Because of such findings, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The findings also illustrated the positive relationship employee performance had with perceived management involvement, answering a research question sought out to explore in this study. The findings of this study support the assertion by Hai et al. (2020) stating that there is a positive correlation between organizational performance, effectiveness, engagement, and productivity when employees perceive that their leadership or HR practices are high performing. The results of this study also support the claim that when leaders are effectively managing diversity

and inclusion practices, there is a positive relationship and an improvement in a firm's productivity and performance (Kundi & Aboramadan, 2023). This findings of this study contribute to literature by providing real-life data supporting the claim that employee engagement is positively linked with management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. Organizations can utilize the findings of this study and apply it to present day workplace practices to best enhance employee performance.

### **Perceived Employee Commitment and Perceived Management Involvement**

The results of this study found a significant and positive relationship between perceived employee commitment and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. Because of such findings, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The findings also illustrated the positive relationship employee commitment had with perceived management involvement, answering a research question sought out to explore in this study. The findings of this study support the claim by Rabl et al. (2020) that those who perceived their management to be more involved in organizational inclusion efforts and diversity management are more connected and committed. The findings also support the assertion by Saha & Bhattacharya (2022) stating that supportive leadership and perceived management involvement carried out by varying practices, efforts, and programs, have a direct impact on employee behavior which essentially reflects one's willingness or intention to remain or leave the organization. Thus, when employees perceive that their management is supporting them and their workplace culture, their organizational commitment is positively affected. The findings of this study can be applied to present day workplace

practices, promoting organizations to enhance diversity and inclusion initiatives carried out by leadership to enhance employee commitment.

### **Work Mode Moderating the Relationship Between Perceived Employee Engagement, Performance, Commitment, and Perceived Management Involvement**

The results of this study found that work mode/location served as a moderating variable for perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment, and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. Work mode, whether it being in-person, hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual), or virtual, influenced the relationship between perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment, and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. Because of such findings, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. These findings support the findings of prior literature stating that the flexibility of work modes is advantageous, specifically post pandemic as the digitalization of tools and HRM processes, such as diversity and inclusion practices, had a positive influence on factors that affected the company and employee performance (Febrianti & Jufri, 2022). These findings also support the claim by Meiryani et al. (2022) suggesting organizations that use different modes of work such as remote work as an option for their employees to enhance supervisory duties on remote working systems impacts employee performance, engagement, and commitment as it has done so within in-person work. However, the assertion by Babapour Chafi et al. (2021) is still supported in that future research should be conducted to continue to bridge the gap of how remote work affects organizations post-COVID-19, particularly examining employee engagement and commitment.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study examined the relationship between perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee engagement, performance, and commitment. The results of this study found that a positive relationship between such variables exist. The findings of this study exemplify the premises of the intergroup theory and embedded theory that promote diverse, cognitive thinking, and consider the relationships managers have with their employees (Alderfer et al., 2022). The results of this study illustrate a positive relationship that employees reported believing that the more involved their management was on diversity and inclusion initiatives, their engagement, performance, and commitment increased. The more involved management was on such diversity and inclusion initiatives, knowledge sharing within the worker variables also enhanced, thus enhancing such engagement, performance, and commitment within employees in the workplace.

This study also exemplifies the social exchange theory, which explains the relationship between subordinates and their management. This study applied the social exchange theory by illustrating the relationship that perceived management had on diversity and inclusion initiatives on perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment. The positive relationship between these variables further promote management to continue their practices and involvement in such initiatives as this only positively improves employee factors, ultimately enhancing organizations overall. This essentially creates a continuous cycle for these organizations to continue management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives as it only positively relates to employee engagement, performance, and commitment, exemplifying the social exchange theory.

### **Biblical Foundation**

This research provides a better understanding of humankind and the integration of psychological literature with biblical understanding and framework. This study found psychological truths that support biblical truths, providing content of integrations which is the ground of being, Christ himself (Rennebohm & Thoburn, 2021). The promotion of diversity and inclusion in the workplace positively correlated to employee engagement, commitment, and performance, thus fulfilling God's wish for His followers. As mentioned, God had wanted all of mankind to be more obedient and fruitful when clustered together with one another. The Scripture tells us that God teaches all that humankind is one, "From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands" (*New International Version*, 1978/2011, Acts 17:26). This study indicated that organizations should carry out diversity and inclusion initiatives and procedures, as they not only enhanced job performance, and employee engagement, and commitment, but they also fulfilled God's wish for His followers. God's wish for His creations is to treat others equally, and fairly, and as one should treat themselves as He created us all diversified yet wants to unite us all. By promoting diversity and inclusion practices as this study showed management within their organizations, one carried out their duty to the core principles of God's wish, enhancing one's spirituality, and not discriminating against God's creations.

### **Implications**

This research contributed to current literature in the field of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The finding that there was a significant relationship between

perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment added to the importance of better understand the influence management has within organizations present day. The results of this study were findings that have not been previously found within current literature. The research also examined work mode/location serving as a moderating factor for participants in this study. These findings contributed to literature as they provided present day data on the relationships of work mode/location serving as a moderating variable. These findings emphasized the importance of future researchers contributing more research on work location moderating relationships employees have with their employers.

In addition to the findings of this study providing present-day data to literature and expanding the current discussion for research pertaining to diversity and inclusion in the workplace, the results of this study could be applied by consultants and management within organizations. Because there was a positive relationship between perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives, this showed the positive outcome of organizational involvement overall. When leadership is more involved on diversity and inclusion efforts, it will positively enhance other workplace variables, as indicated by the findings of this study. When organizations enhance their leadership involvement on such initiatives, it will only enhance their workplace.

### **Limitations**

Firstly, this study was limited to people only over the age of 18. The age requirement for this study does not maximize the full scope to best analyze the relationship between perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion

initiatives on employee engagement, performance, and commitment. Secondly, the location requirement of allowing individuals to participate only if they resided within 25 miles within the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area restricted the generalizability to only individuals within the DC, Maryland, and Virginia region. The location restriction also served as a limitation as the geographical region may be more technologically advanced when compared to other regions in the country that are less advanced, limiting the generalizability of the study. Another limitation is that the participants who participated in this study may be individuals that use technology more than those who did not participate. This served as a limitation as the results may only be generalized to those who had access to the survey as they might consist of participants who utilize technology more versus those who do not. Another limitation of this study was that this study solely relied on the self-reporting of participants which may have led to potential bias in answers. Participants were to report and self-rate their experiences and their perceptions of their own engagement, performance, and commitment to their organization. These self-ratings may be biased thus skewing the results of this study.

Leadership style may have also played a significant role in participant answers, as those who have more transformational management reported more positively than those who did not have transformational leaders. This study also did not account for organizational revenue or profit. Organizations that were more wealthy or successful had more of an advantage in providing their organizations more resources to enhance their workplace, such as incorporating diversity and inclusion initiatives. Companies that were not as abundant in money may not have provided such initiatives for their employees. Another limitation was that this study used a convenience sampling method, serving as a



limitation. This method may have led to a specific demographic participating in the survey, contributing to researcher bias, as recruitment was done by means of social media, emails, and networking. Lastly, correlation does not equal causation. This study examined the relationships between perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives on perceived employee engagement, performance, and commitment however this correlation cannot detect a cause-and-effect relationship or direct causal relationship between any two variables.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research should build on this study so that further exploration on the findings of this study can be expounded upon. Firstly, scholars should explore a broader region, allowing more participants to participate in this study to better generalize the findings to the public. The findings of this study only allow the data to be generalized to those within the DC, Maryland, or Virginia area. Secondly, based on the findings that work mode served as a moderator for employee engagement, performance, and commitment, and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives, scholars should continue to explore how work mode has an influence on organizational factors present day. Future research should be conducted specifically examining the relationship between work mode and management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives in the workplace to see if there is a true, significant relationship.

Researchers should also take into consideration different leadership styles when collecting data. Different leadership styles may have had an influence in the results of the study. To add to this notion of biased results, future research should be conducted so that

participants don't self-rate their employee engagement, performance, and commitment, but have their colleagues or peers rate them. This can help reduce potential bias in data collection. Although this study collected data on whether one held a managerial position or not, scholars should consider correlating managers self-reporting with their subordinate ratings specifically. Future research should also consider simple random sampling versus convenience sampling. Due to the nature of this study, those who participated were from the usage of the researcher's social media, email outreach, or networking. If random sampling methods are used for future research, this will decrease bias.

### **Summary**

This study illustrated four important findings that contribute to literature. The first finding was that there was a significant, positive relationship between perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee engagement. The second finding was that there was a positive relationship between perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee performance. The third finding was a significant, positive relationship was found between perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives and perceived employee commitment. These relationships indicate a positive relationship between management involvement on diversity and inclusions initiatives and employee engagement, performance, and commitment within the workplace. The fourth finding was that work mode moderated the relationship between perceived employee engagement, performance, commitment and perceived management involvement on diversity and inclusion initiatives. These findings indicated that the mode of work, or

location (in-person, hybrid, or virtual), influenced the relationship between employee engagement, commitment, and performance and their perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives. This dissertation recommends that organizations continue to implement diversity and inclusion initiatives within the workplace as executed by leadership, as this only positively enhances how engaged employees are, how well they perform, and committed they are to their organizations while taking into consideration that work location may influence such relationships.

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## APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

**Participant Consent Form**

So Why D&I? A Study On Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace in the Digital Age  
Participant Survey

To read and review the consent form please click the link below:

[Dissertation Consent Form.docx](#)

I am interested in learning more about the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this study seeks to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderates the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study. The Principal Investigator of this study can be contacted at the following email: [REDACTED].

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that you have read and agreed to the consent information provided along with the study recruitment materials provided in the link above. I understand that by signing my name electronically below and by checking off the “I consent to the study” box below that you have read, acknowledged, and adhere to the consent form for this research study.

- I consent to this study.  
 I do not consent to this study. I do not wish to participate.

Sign Your Name Electronically Below by Typing Your Full Name Below:

---

Date:

---

## APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT SCREENER AND DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Welcome to the Participant Screening Survey! I am interested in learning more about the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. For this screener, you will be asked three questions relevant to age, current job status/ mode of work, and area in which you currently live. After completing these questions, eligibility in whether you will be able to participate in this study will be determined. If not eligible, the survey will automatically end. If eligible, the survey will continue and proceed to the demographic portion of the survey. This portion of the survey should take 1 minute to complete. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study. The Principal Investigator of this study can be contacted at the following email: [REDACTED].

1. Are you at least 18 years of age or older? Yes No
2. Are you currently employed? Yes No
3. If so, what is your current mode of work?
  - a. In-Person
  - b. Hybrid Model (Half in-person, half virtual)
  - c. Virtual
4. Do you currently reside within a 25-mile radius of the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area? Yes No

### **End of Screening Survey.**

Ineligible Participants Received This Message:

**Thank you for participating in the Screening Survey portion for the research study. Unfortunately, you will not be eligible to participate in the study due to a requirement being unfulfilled that is necessary for the research study.**

**I appreciate you taking the time in taking part of my research and wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors!**

### **Participant Demographic Survey**

Congratulations on being eligible to participate in this study!

For this demographic questionnaire portion of the study you will be presented with questions relating to job factors, age, education, gender, location and ethnicity. Once this portion of the survey is completed, you will then proceed to Part I of the survey which will consist of your self-ratings on your work performance, commitment, and engagement. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. The demographic

survey should take approximately 4 minutes to complete. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study. The Principal Investigator of this study can be contacted at the following email: [REDACTED].

1. What is your current Job Field/ Department?
  - IT/ Technical
  - Human Resources
  - Finance/ Accounting
  - Leadership
  - Medical
  - Engineering
  - Education
  - Legal
  - Other
2. Do you currently hold a managerial position?
  - Yes  No
3. What is your highest level of education that you have received?
  - HS Graduate or equivalent
  - Did not Graduate
  - Some College
  - Bachelor's Degree or higher
4. Gender in which you self-identify with:
  - Male  Female  Other
5. What is your current age?
  - 18-25 years old
  - 26-35 years old
  - 36-45 years old
  - 46-55 years old
  - 56+ years old
6. What is the ethnicity and/ or race in which you closely identify with?
  - White
  - Black or African American
  - American Indian
  - Asian
  - Native Hawaiian
  - Other Pacific Islander
  - Middle Eastern

- Two or more Races
  - Hispanic or Latino
  - Other
7. What is the number of total years of work experience do you obtain?
- <5 years
  - 5-10 years
  - 10-15 years
  - 15-20 years
  - 21+ years
8. Which location do you reside in?
- Washington D.C.
  - Maryland
  - Virginia
9. What is your current work mode?
- In-Person
  - Hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual)
  - Virtual/ Telework
10. What is your email address so that the researcher is able to contact you regarding any questions they have?
- [Click or tap here to enter text](#)



## APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT SURVEY PARTS I & II

### Participant Survey Part I

Welcome to the research study! I am interested in learning more about the relationship between perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee performance, commitment, and engagement. Additionally, this proposed study seeks to determine whether work location (remote, hybrid, onsite) moderates the relationship between the perceived management involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives and employee engagement, performance, and commitment. For this portion of the survey, you will complete the Participant Survey Part I which will ask you questions in which you are to self-rate based off the appropriate scale asked on questions pertaining to how you view your work engagement, performance, and commitment with your current job. There will be a total of 30 questions for this portion. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. This part should take between 5-10 minutes to complete.

Part II will begin automatically once you complete Part I of the survey. Part II will ask you questions pertaining your perception on the diverse climate within your workplace and management involvement. This section consists of 16 questions and should take between 5-10 minutes to complete.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study. The Principal Investigator of this study can be contacted at the following email: [REDACTED].

### Perceived Employee Engagement

Based off a 7-point Likert scale, please rate yourself on your worker engagement on a scale from 1-7:

*1= very low, 2= low, 3= somewhat low, 4= neither low or high, 5= somewhat high, 6=high, 7= very high*

1. At work, I feel bursting with energy
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work
4. I am enthusiastic about my job
5. My job inspires me
6. I am proud of the work that I do
7. I feel happy when I am working intensely
8. I am immersed in my work
9. I get carried away when I'm working

### Perceived Employee Performance

Based off a 5-point Likert scale, please rate yourself on your worker performance on a scale from 1-5:

*1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree*

1. I feel dedication, seriousness and ability to take responsibility
2. I enjoyed professional skill or professionalism and technical knowledge required to carry out the work efficiently
3. I do my work according to specific policies and procedures
4. I feel satisfied with the work I do
5. Planning the work before starting its implementation contributes to setting the goals that need to be achieved
6. I have the ability to plan my work and its accomplishment according to the planned schedule

### **Perceived Organizational Commitment**

Based off a 7-point Likert scale, please rate yourself on your organizational commitment on a scale from 1-7:

*1= strongly disagree, 2= moderately disagree, 3= slightly disagree, 4= neither disagree not agree, 5= slightly agree, 6= moderately agree, 7= strongly agree*

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for
3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization\*
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization
7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar\*
8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization\*
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely\*
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees\*
13. I really care about the fate of this organization
14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work
15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definitive mistake on my part\*

\*indicates a negatively phrased and reverse scored item

### **Participant Survey Part II: Perceived Management Involvement**

Based off a 6-point Likert scale, please rate yourself on your perception on diverse nature of your work environment and management involvement on a scale from 1-6:

*1= strongly agree, 2= mildly agree, 3= agree, 4= disagree, 5= mildly disagree, 6=strongly disagree*

1. I feel I have been treated differently here because of my race, sex, religion, or age
2. Managers here have a track record of hiring and promoting employees objectively, regardless of their race, sex, religion, or age\*
3. Managers here give feedback and evaluate employees fairly, regardless of the employee's ethnicity, gender, age, or social background \*
4. Managers here make layoff decisions fairly, regardless of factors such as employee's race, sex, age, or social background\*
5. Managers interpret human resource policies (such as sick leave) fairly for all employees\*
6. Managers here give assignments based on the skills and abilities of employees\*
7. Management here encourages the formation of employee network support groups\*
8. There is a mentoring program in use here that identifies and prepares all minority and female employees for promotion\*
9. The "old boys" network is alive and well here
10. The company spends enough money and time on diversity awareness and related training\*
11. Knowing more about cultural norms of diverse groups would help me be more effective in my job\*
12. I think that diverse viewpoints add value\*
13. I believe diversity is a strategic business issue\*
14. I feel at ease with people from backgrounds other than my own\*
15. I am afraid to disagree with members of other groups for fear of being called prejudiced
16. Diversity issues keep some work teams here from performing to their maximum effectiveness

\*indicates an item where the scoring was reversed to make it consistent with the rest of the scale

## APPENDIX D: RECRUITMENT FLYER

# Research Participants Needed

## So Why D&I? A Study on Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace in the Digital Age

- ◆ Are you 18 years of age or older?
- ◆ Are you currently employed (remotely, in-person, or using a hybrid model)?
- ◆ Do you live within 25 miles of the Washington D.C., Maryland, or Virginia (DMV) region?

If you answered yes to these questions, scan the QR code below to participate in a 10-15 minute research study to see if your leadership is involved on diversity and inclusion initiatives at your job.

The purpose of this research study is to examine how perceived management involvement in remote organizations is associated with employee engagement, commitment, and performance. Participants will be asked to complete an online survey consisting of questions pertaining to how you perceive your worker engagement, performance, commitment, and management involvement on diversity and inclusion within your organization.



*SCAN ME TO SEE IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE!*

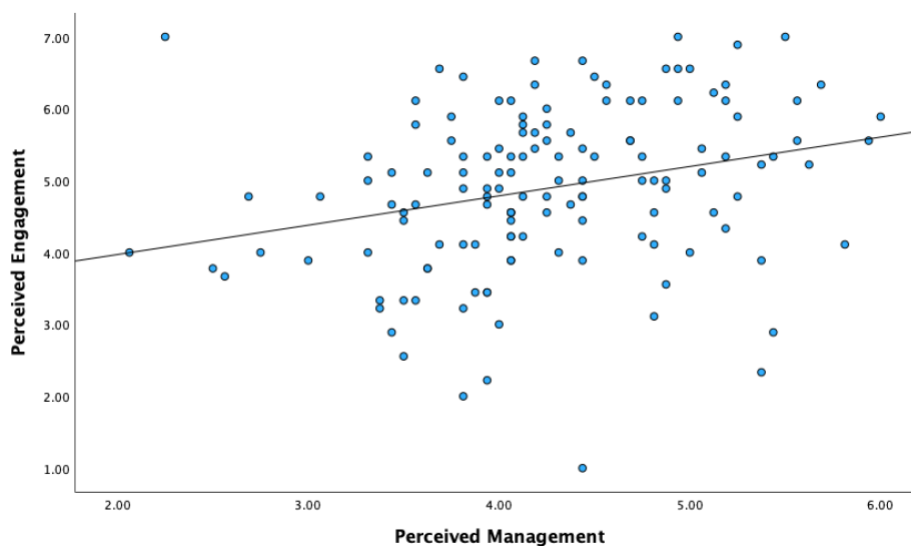
Dina Abughannam, a doctoral candidate in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University is conducting this research study.

Please contact [REDACTED] for more information regarding this study or participation or scan the QR code!

## APPENDIX E

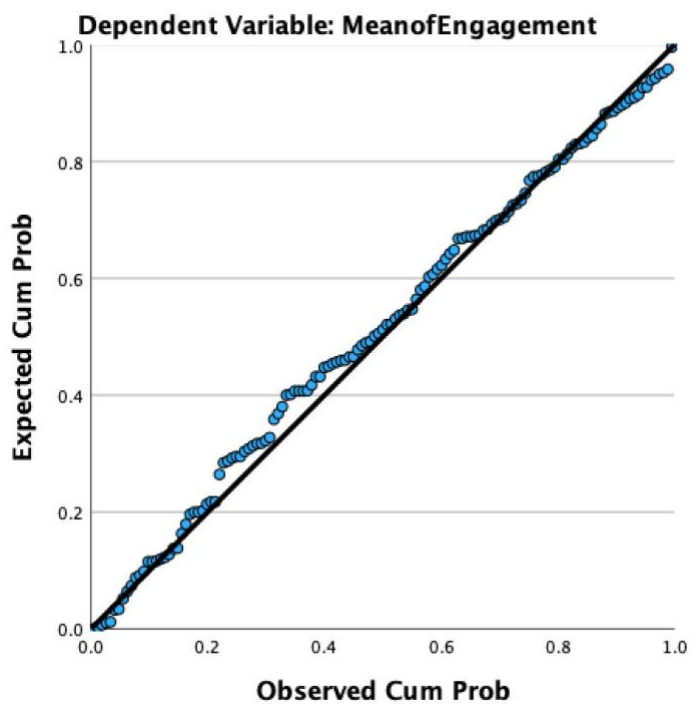
**Figure 1**

*Scatterplot: The Relationship Between Perceived Employee Engagement and Perceived Management Involvement on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*

**Figure 2**

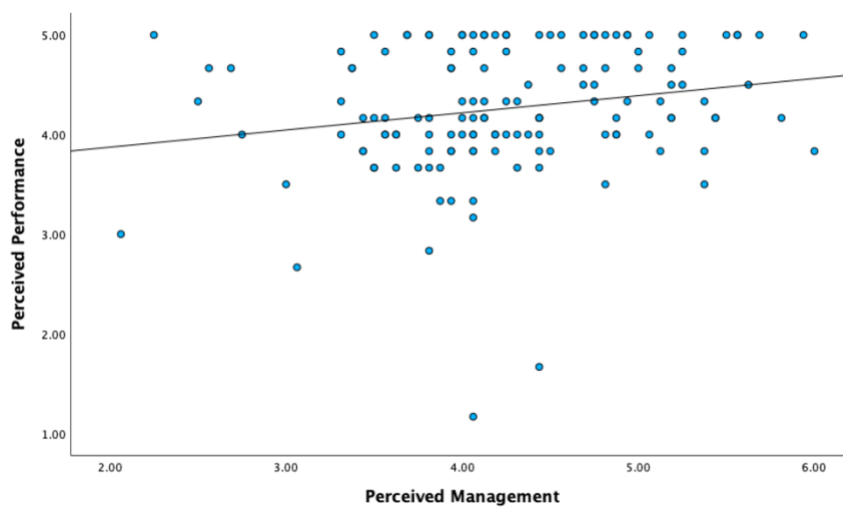
*P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals*

**Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual**



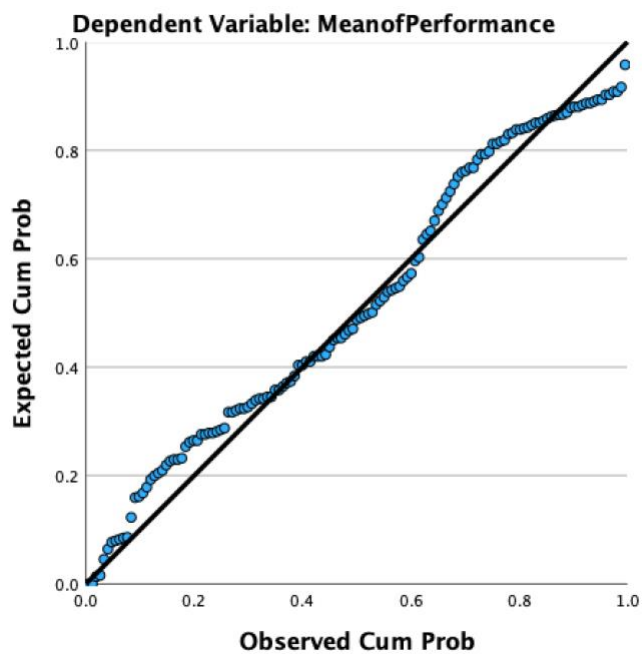
**Figure 3**

*Scatterplot: The Relationship Between Perceived Employee Performance and Perceived Management Involvement on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*

**Figure 4**

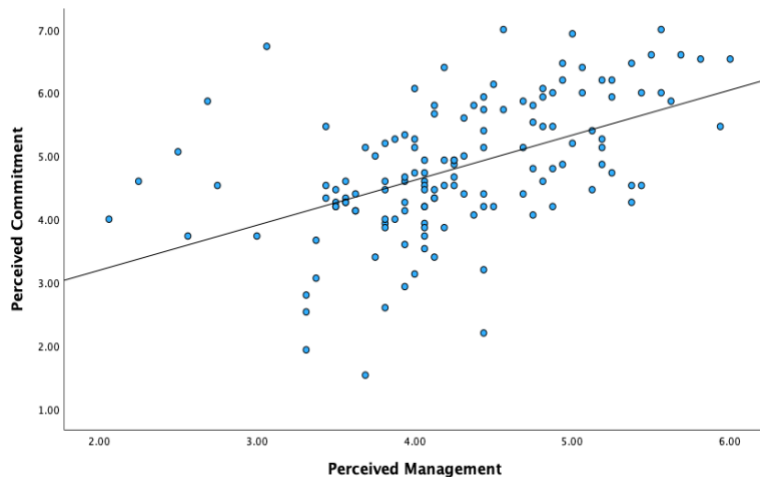
*P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals*

**Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual**



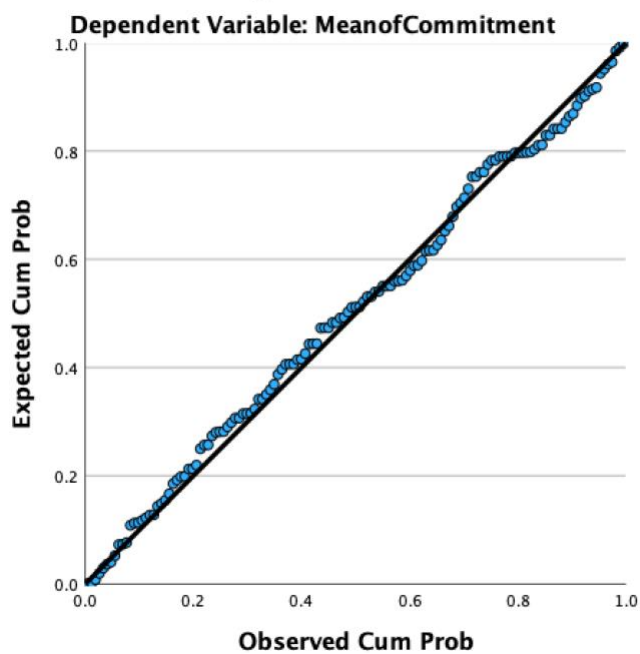
**Figure 5**

*Scatterplot: The Relationship Between Perceived Employee Commitment and Perceived Management Involvement on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*

**Figure 6**

*P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals*

**Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual**



## APPENDIX F

**Table 1***Participant Gender*

Gender	Number of Participants
Male	59
Female	80

**Table 2***Participants Holding a Managerial Position*

Managerial Position	Number of Participants
Yes	48
No	91

**Table 3***Participant Job Field/ Department*

Job Field/ Department	Number of Participants
Education	11
Engineering	19
Finance/ Accounting	11
Human Resources	5
IT/ Technical	18
Leadership	8
Legal	3
Medical	25
Other	39

**Table 4***Participant Highest Level of Education Received*

Level of Education	Number of Participants
Bachelor's Degree or higher	102
HS Graduate or equivalent	9



Some College	28
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**Table 5***Participant Location*

Location of Residence	Number of Participants
Maryland	10
Virginia	120
Washington D.C.	9

**Table 6***Participant Work Mode*

Work Mode	Number of Participants
Hybrid (mixture of in-person and virtual)	48
In-Person	63
Virtual/ Telework	28

**Table 7***Participant Ethnicity and/ or Race Identity*

Ethnicity/ Race	Number of Participants
Asian	7
Black or African American	8
Hispanic/ Latino	3
Middle Eastern	89
Other	3
Two or more Races	5
White	24

**Table 8***Participant Years of Work Experience Obtained*

Years of Work Experience Obtained	Number of Participants
<5 years	33
5-10 years	53

10-15 years	19
15-20 years	16
21+ years	18

**Table 9***Participant Age*

Age	Number of Participants
18-25 years old	29
26-35 years old	78
36-45 years old	12
46-55 years old	14
56+ years old	6

**Table 10***Mean Scores of Instruments*

Instrument	Mean Scores of Instrument
Employee Perceived Engagement	4.896
Employee Perceived Commitment	4.806
Employee Perceived Performance	4.263
Perceived Management Involvement	2.735

**Table 11***Correlations for Perceived Employee Engagement and Perceived Management Involvement*

		Perceived Employee Engagement	Perceived Management Involvement
Perceived Management Involvement	Pearson r	1	.272**
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	139	139
Perceived Employee Engagement	Pearson r	.272**	1
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	139	139

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed)

**Table 12**

*Reliability Statistics for Perceived Engagement Instrument*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.908	.909	9

**Table 13**

*Reliability Statistics for Perceived Management Involvement Instrument*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.804	.804	16

**Table 14**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.272	.074	.067	1.097	.074	10.922	1	137	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

**Table 15**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.154	1	13.154	10.922	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	164.999	137	1.204		
	Total	178.153	138			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 16***Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.155	.535		5.897	<.001	2.097	4.213
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.408	.124	.272	3.305	.001	.164	.653

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

**Table 17***Correlations for Perceived Employee Performance and Perceived Management Involvement*

		Perceived Employee Performance	Perceived Management Involvement
Perceived Management Involvement	Pearson r Correlation	1	.204**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	139	139
Perceived Employee Performance	Pearson r Correlation	.204**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	139	139

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed)

**Table 18***Reliability Statistics for Perceived Performance*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.868	.868	6

**Table 19**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.204	.042	.035	.628	.042	5.952	1	137	.016

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

**Table 20**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.348	1	2.348	5.952	.016 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	54.036	137	.394		
	Total	56.383	138			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

b. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 21**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.528	.306	Beta	11.524	<.001	2.923	4.134

Mean Of Perceived Management	.172	.071	.204	2.440	.016	.033	.312
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a. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

**Table 22**

*Correlations for Perceived Employee Commitment and Perceived Management Involvement*

		Perceived Employee Commitment	Perceived Management Involvement
Perceived Management Involvement	Pearson r	1	.509**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	139	139
Perceived Employee Commitment	Pearson r	.509**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	139	139

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed)

**Table 23**

*Reliability Statistics for Perceived Commitment*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.876	.885	15

**Table 24**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.509 <sup>a</sup>	.260	.254	.914	.260	48.021	1	137	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

**Table 25**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.124	1	40.124	48.021	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	114.471	137	.836		
	Total	154.595	138			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

b. Predictors: (Constant), MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 26**

*Regression Analysis for Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.765	.446		3.962	<.001	.884	2.647
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.713	.103	.509	6.930	<.001	.510	.916

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

**Table 27**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.273	.074	.061	1.101	.074	5.467	2	136	.005

- a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement  
 b. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

**Table 28**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.257	2	6.629	5.467	.005 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	164.896	136	1.212		
	Total	178.153	138			

- a. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 29**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Engagement*

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.149	.537		5.86	<.001	2.086	4.211
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.409	.124	.273	3.302	.001	.164	.655
	PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode	.027	.092	.024	.291	.771	-.155	.208

- a. Dependent Variable: MeanofEngagement

**Table 30**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*Model Summary*

Change Statistics



Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.225 <sup>a</sup>	.051	.037	.627	.051	3.637	2	136	.029

a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

**Table 31**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.862	2	1.431	3.637	.029 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	53.521	136	.394		
	Total	56.383	138			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

b. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 32**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship of Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Performance*

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.514	.306		11.483	<.001	2.909	4.120
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.175	.071	.207	2.479	.014	.035	.315
	PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode	.060	.052	.096	1.144	.255	-.044	.163

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofPerformance

**Table 33**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship with Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.510 <sup>a</sup>	.260	.249	.917	.260	23.866	2	136	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

b. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

**Table 34**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship of Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.163	2	20.081	23.866	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	114.432	136	.841		
	Total	154.595	138			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment

b. Predictors: (Constant), PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode, MeanOfPerceivedManagement

**Table 35**

*Regression Analysis for Work Mode Moderating the relationship of Employee Perceived Management Involvement and Perceived Employee Commitment*

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.769	.448		3.953	<.001	.884	2.654
	Mean Of Perceived Management	.712	.103	.509	6.894	<.001	.508	.917
	PerceivedManagementInvolvementxWorkMode	-.016	.076	-.016	-.215	.830	-.167	.135

a. Dependent Variable: MeanofCommitment