

LEADERSHIP DIVERSITY IN THE TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY

by

Renee' Smith

Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of
Ph.D. in Organization and Management

Liberty University, School of Business

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Abstract

Diversity is a relevant topic in the modern workplace. This research is an exploration of diversity in the workplace from a leadership perspective. Specifically, this research includes the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and its impact on employee turnover and operational costs. The purpose of this research was to contribute to the extant body of knowledge by understanding the issue and determining factors to mitigate the issue. This study utilized a flexible design and qualitative research methodology, specifically a case study. A constructivist paradigm aligned with my Christian worldview. The study included interviews, surveys, and documents as data collection mechanisms. The research methodology allowed for the exploration of the lived experiences of the research participants. The results of the research revealed the various components of the research problem. The study findings can assist leaders in the modern workplace in transforming business processes and modernizing strategic leadership practices.

Keywords: Leadership Diversity, Leadership Diversity Gap, Information Technology Leadership, Diversity Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

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Approvals

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to God, my Savior, my Lord. “Whatever you do [no matter what it is] in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus [and in dependence on Him], giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (*Amplified*, 2015, Colossians 2:15). I thank God for the opportunity to accomplish this goal and for guiding me through. I pray this brings Him glory.

This dissertation is dedicated to my praying family: my amazing husband, Darrell, who has shown me love and unwavering support; my children, Taisia, Darrae, and Shawnai, who are a source of inspiration.

This dissertation is dedicated to true leaders, present and future, who desire to impact change and aspire to make a difference. Leaders who will not settle for the status quo. Leaders who are bothered by systemic issues that continue to go unaddressed. Leaders who dare to be the change they desire to see.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Approvals	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgments	v
List of Tables	xii
List of Charts	xiii
List of Figures	xiv
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Background of the Problem	2
Problem Statement	4
Purpose Statement	4
Research Questions	5
Nature of the Study	8
<i>Discussion of Research Paradigms</i>	8
<i>Discussion of Design</i>	10
<i>Discussion of Method</i>	11
<i>Discussion of Triangulation</i>	15
<i>Summary of the Nature of the Study</i>	16
Conceptual Framework	16
Conceptual Framework Diagram	17
<i>Concepts</i>	18
<i>Theories</i>	19
<i>Actors</i>	21

<i>Constructs</i>	23
<i>Relationship Between Concepts, Theories, Actors, and Constructs</i>	25
<i>Summary of the Research Framework</i>	26
Definition of Terms.....	26
Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations	27
<i>Assumptions</i>	28
<i>Limitations</i>	28
<i>Delimitations</i>	29
Significance of the Study	29
<i>Reduction of Gaps in the Literature</i>	30
<i>Implications for Biblical Integration</i>	31
<i>Benefits to Business Practice and Relationship to Field of Study</i>	32
<i>Summary of Significance of the Study</i>	33
Summary of Chapter 1 and Transition.....	34
Chapter 2: Literature	36
Business Practices	37
<i>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</i>	37
<i>Leadership Diversity Impacts on Diversity</i>	39
<i>Leadership Diversity Impacts on Organizational Performance</i>	43
<i>Leadership Diversity Impacts on the Workforce</i>	44
The Problem.....	45
<i>Leadership Diversity in Technology</i>	46
Concepts.....	50

<i>Diversity Affects Employee Turnover</i>	51
<i>Leadership Development Affects Diversity</i>	55
Theories.....	60
<i>Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory</i>	60
<i>Upper Echelons Theory</i>	61
<i>Complexity Theory</i>	63
Constructs	64
<i>Diversity</i>	64
<i>Leadership Diversity</i>	65
<i>Employee Turnover</i>	67
<i>Operational Costs</i>	71
Related Studies.....	72
<i>The Great Resignation Impacts on the Workforce</i>	72
<i>The Importance of Talent Development and Leadership Engagement</i>	73
<i>Causes for the Great Resignation</i>	75
<i>Gender Diversity in the Technology Industry</i>	76
Anticipated and Discovered Themes	77
<i>Significance of Workforce Diversity</i>	78
<i>The Significance of the Diversity Gap</i>	79
<i>The Importance of Leadership Behavior</i>	80
<i>Leadership Diversity Level</i>	80
<i>Leadership Skills</i>	81
<i>Diversity Should be Considered in Leadership Selections</i>	82

<i>Intentionality is Crucial in Increasing Leadership Diversity</i>	82
<i>Organizational Impacts of Leadership</i>	83
Summary	83
Summary of Chapter 2 and Transition	85
Chapter 3: Methodology	87
Purpose Statement	87
Role of the Researcher	88
Research Methodology	89
<i>Discussion of Flexible Design</i>	89
<i>Discussion of the Single Case Study Method</i>	90
<i>Discussion of Methods for Triangulation</i>	91
<i>Summary of Research Methodology</i>	92
Participants	93
Population and Sampling	94
<i>Discussion of Population</i>	94
<i>Discussion of Sampling</i>	95
<i>Summary of Population and Sampling</i>	96
Data Collection and Organization	97
<i>Data Collection</i>	97
<i>Instruments</i>	97
<i>Data Organization</i>	101
<i>Summary of Data Collection and Organization</i>	101
Summary of Chapter 3 and Transition	102

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results.....	103
Emergent Ideas.....	104
Coding Themes.....	105
Interpretations.....	106
Data Representation.....	106
Analysis for Triangulation.....	107
Summary of Data Analysis.....	107
Reliability and Validity.....	108
<i>Reliability</i>	108
<i>Validity</i>	108
<i>Bracketing</i>	109
<i>Summary of Reliability and Validity</i>	109
Ethical Assurances.....	109
Results.....	110
<i>Themes Discovered</i>	111
<i>Interpretation of the Themes</i>	114
<i>Representation and Visualization of the Data</i>	129
<i>Relationship of the Results</i>	133
<i>Summary of the Results</i>	168
Summary of Chapter 4 and Transition.....	169
Chapter 5: Conclusions.....	171
Additions to the Body of Knowledge.....	173
<i>Practical Implications</i>	174

<i>Theoretical Implications</i>	177
<i>Summary of Additions to Body of Knowledge</i>	179
Recommendation for Further Study.....	180
Reflections	182
<i>Personal and Professional Growth</i>	182
<i>Biblical Perspective</i>	183
<i>Summary of Reflections</i>	185
Summary of Chapter 5	186
Summary and Study Conclusions	186
References.....	191
Appendix A – Interview Guide.....	216
Appendix B – Leader-Member Exchange 7 Questionnaire	217
Appendix C – Employee Survey: Diversity Equity and Inclusion	218
Appendix D – Leader-Member Exchange 7 Questionnaire Permission of Reuse.....	223
Appendix E – Employee Survey: Diversity Equity and Inclusion Permission of Reuse.....	224
Appendix F – Permission to Conduct Interviews and Use Archival Records and Documents ...	231
Appendix G – Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter.....	232

List of Tables

Table 1: Themes Summary	113
Table 2: Hiring and Recruitment Rating.....	122
Table 3: Research Questions and Themes Mapping.....	135
Table 4: DEI Culture Rating	140
Table 5: Immediate Supervisor Rating	150
Table 6: Inclusion Ratings	155

List of Charts

Chart 1: Interview Participants Gender.....	130
Chart 2: Interview Participant's Race and Ethnicity	130
Chart 3: LMX-7 Survey Participant Manager's Gender	132
Chart 4: LMX-7 Rank by Manager Gender.....	132
Chart 5: DEI Survey Participants Gender	133
Chart 6: LMX-7 Questionnaire Scores	149
Chart 7: LMX Scores by Number.....	154

List of Figures

Figure 1: Relationships between concepts.....17

Figure 1: Relationships between concepts.....157

Chapter 1: Introduction

The modern workplace is increasingly complex for a myriad of reasons. An element that significantly contributes to the complexity of the workforce is diversity (Ng & Sears, 2020). Diversity in the workplace has become a priority for organizational leaders. Organizational leaders must consider the impacts of diversity on every aspect of an organization. An aspect to consider is the impact of diversity between organizational leadership and followers. A core aspect of leadership is influence (Northouse, 2019). Diversity elements such as age, gender, race, and nationality could impact how leaders influence followers, which exists within the leader. In addition, potential issues could impact the organization when a lack of leadership diversity exists (Lerman et al., 2022; McGee, 2018; Potvin et al., 2018; Siemiatycki, 2019). Researchers demonstrate that leadership diversity leads to increased diversity within an organization (Potvin et al., 2018). Another consideration is the diversity that exists within the organization. This research is an analysis of considerations related to diversity, leadership influence, and organizational diversity levels. This study is an exploration of the lack of leadership diversity and its impacts on an organization, specifically assessing employee turnover and operational costs. The persistence of the lack of leadership diversity is a known issue in the modern workplace (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2020). This research filled a gap in extant literature by targeting organizational impacts in the technology industry.

The first chapter of the study includes details on the topic. To ensure proper context, background information is relative to the problem. The purpose of the study comes next after the background of the problem. Next, the research questions include details regarding the relevance and intent of each research question. The nature of the study segment provides specific information about the research paradigm and details the design and the methodology. The

relevant concepts, theories, constructs, and correlations are in this section's conceptual framework segment. The final segment of this chapter highlights vital terms included in the study to ensure proper understanding and usage. In addition, the study includes assumptions, limitations, and delimitations to help understand the study's boundaries. Significant points in the study include gaps, alignment to biblical principles, and the benefits and relationship to modern business practices and the leadership discipline.

Chapter 2 includes a literature review of the subject matter of this research. The discussion of the research components and relevant business is from the perspective of researchers in the extant literature. The literature review provides a scholarly perspective of the related studies and anticipated and discovered themes. Chapter 3 details the research methodology, highlighting the research design, participant information, and population and sampling information. A key segment in this chapter is the data collection and organization methods that provide transparency into these processes. The execution of the research methodology yielded the research data presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 4 discusses the data analysis and details of what the data discovered. The research results include the context of the various components of the study. Chapter 4 encompasses this study's reliability, validity, and ethical assurances. The final chapter provides insight into the relevance of this study to the current body of knowledge, including a discussion of the practical and theoretical implications. Recommendations for future research and my reflections are discussed in this chapter. Chapter 5 closes with a summary and conclusions of the study.

Background of the Problem

An increased emphasis on diversity is significant in the contemporary workplace. Diversity is from the perspective of many researchers. This study includes diversity from the

leadership perspective. Organizational leadership still lacks diversity despite a tremendous push to implement diversity initiatives in the contemporary workplace. Research shows that the diversity mix in leadership remains low, with as much as 79% predominantly male leadership teams (Atal et al., 2019). Researchers also document a more significant lack of diversity specifying groups, such as people with disabilities and members of the LGBT community (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2020). The discussion in the literature includes the negative impacts of leadership and the lack of diversity in leadership organizations. Lack of leadership diversity relates to negative impacts on various organizational outcomes, including productivity (Whysall & Bruce, 2023), policy creation, and organizational culture (Simonsen & Shim, 2019). This study includes a deeper understanding of leadership diversity to gain additional insight into its persistence and its impacts on an organization.

Potential contributing and mitigating factors were necessary when assessing the lack of diversity in leadership. Leadership development is a researched area that could possibly be a solution to the issue of the need for more leadership diversity. Many facets and results of leadership development are factors. Leadership development programs attribute to building competent leadership (Ayeleke et al., 2019), improving leadership behaviors and leadership styles (Cohrs et al., 2020), and contributing to the state of an organization's culture (Ahmad et al., 2023). Competent leaders use their knowledge and experience to effectively lead and drive organizational culture, which includes a diversity component. Leadership development is a potential mechanism that could lessen the leadership diversity gap (Soklaridis et al., 2022; Yen et al., 2019). As competent leaders develop, their actions and attitudes could lead to substantial diversity within an organization's culture (Ayeleke et al., 2019).

The influence of leaders can appear positive and negative. Essential organizational performance is an acclimation of leadership (Lemoine et al., 2019). The influence that leaders possess is a work of progress. Relative to diversity, minimal research exists on the impacts of a persistent lack of leadership diversity on employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry. Given the relevance of leadership and diversity in the modern workplace, the findings of this study could assist in modernizing leadership practices and potentially minimizing organizational impacts.

Problem Statement

The general problem addressed was the persistence of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry, resulting in employee turnover. Atal et al. (2019) documented the persistent problem of a lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry. Researchers of extant literature stated that diversity can impact employee turnover (M. Ali & French, 2019; J. Lee et al., 2020). Lack of diversity in leadership contributed to employee turnover (Groenewald & Odendaal, 2021) and employee turnover is costly to organizations (Bergman et al., 2023) The specific problem addressed was the lack of diversity in leadership in a global technology company, which could increase employee turnover and operational costs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this flexible design single case study was to contribute to understanding how the lack of leadership diversity potentially impacted employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry. This research could assist leaders in understanding the importance of the issue and potentially lead to the creation of strategic measures to address the problem. Researchers of extant literature discuss the issues of the lack of diversity in leadership in business and express explicitly the need for research in the technology industry (Atal et al.,

2019; Jankelová et al., 2022). The current knowledge pool needs to evaluate the persistent lack of leadership diversity. In addition, researchers need to include the technology industry and the potential impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. Researchers recommend additional studies regarding the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in a targeted industry (Jankelová et al., 2022). This research extends the current research by providing relevant insight into the impact of employee turnover on operational costs in the technology industry. The findings of this study could contribute to strengthening the understanding of the issue and can be utilized as input into strategic decisions.

Research Questions

This study is an exploration of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the potential impacts of increased employee turnover which can lead to increased operational costs. The research questions were designed to support the focus and scope of the study. The questions and sub-questions were to explore the subject matter comprehensively.

RQ1. Why is there a persistent lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry?

RQ1a. What factors in the technology industry contribute to the lack of leadership diversity?

RQ1b. What factors in the technology industry contribute to the increase of leadership diversity?

RQ2. How did the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry impact employee turnover?

RQ2a. How does employee turnover impact operational costs in the technology industry?

RQ3. In what way could an increase in leadership diversity impact employee turnover in the technology industry?

Research question 1, including the sub-questions, targeted the problem of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry, a documented problem in the literature (Atal et al., 2019; McGee, 2018). The purpose of question 1 was to gain a deeper understanding of the issue and to identify factors that contributed to the sustainment of the problem. Researcher of the extant literature recommends further studies in targeted industries (Jankelová et al., 2022). The technology industry is relevant in the modern workplace. Research sub-question 1a was deliberately to discover aspects specific to the technology industry that contribute to the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry. The discovery of specific actions could provide more awareness and insight into the root causes of the subject matter. Additionally, the information could lead to modifying strategic plans that effectively mitigate the issue. Research sub-question 1b was deliberately to discover aspects specific to the technology industry that contribute to an increase in leadership diversity in the technology industry. The discovery of specific actions that positively impact the issue can create an area of focus that impacts change. Additionally, the information could potentially lead to the modernization of business practices. Researchers support this perspective by suggesting that evaluating leadership diversity in the technology industry can help identify specific areas within the industry that need targeted improvements (Lu et al., 2022).

Research question two was deliberate to discover how the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry impacted employee turnover. Employee turnover is a phenomenon that existed for a while in the workforce. Lack of leadership diversity relates to negative impacts on various organizational outcomes, such as productivity, innovation, and job satisfaction (Potvin et

al., 2018). This research question extended extant research by targeting employee turnover. Research sub-question 2a extended the analysis of the impacts of the leadership diversity gap in the technology industry by further evaluating the organizational impacts, specifically assessing the impact of employee turnover on operational costs. Employee turnover increased operational costs in the manufacturing industry (Harden et al., 2018). Research question 2 and sub-question 2a reflected the analysis's potential impacts on the technology industry. Understanding the impacts of the nuances of the technology industry that contribute to employee turnover and operational costs could help better understand the workforce's needs. Additionally, assessing the dynamics of leadership diversity in the technology industry could also lead to developing new strategies to prevent an increase in employee turnover and mitigate impacts on operational costs.

Research question three was to explore, theoretically, how an increase in diversity in leadership in the technology industry could impact employee turnover and operational costs. Minimal research exists on the impacts of a persistent lack of leadership diversity on employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry. Discovering mitigating factors could lead to long-term strategic impacts on managing employee turnover, potentially positively impacting operational costs in the technology industry. This research question answers the *so what* question. The information gleaned from this question supports the importance of this topic and can lead to recommendations for future research. All components of this research were addressed in the research questions.

The combined content of the data from each research question provided a comprehensive understanding of the problem addressed. The specific problem was the lack of diversity in leadership in a global technology company, resulting in a potential increase in employee turnover and operational costs. Exploring the links between the lack of leadership diversity in the

technology industry, employee turnover, and operational costs to provide a deeper understanding of these relationships. Lastly, the research questions provided insight into potential outcomes of mitigating the issue that could contribute to extending the theoretical knowledge pool on the subject matter. The research questions provided a mechanism to thoroughly address all aspects of the problem statement.

Nature of the Study

The study's nature provides details regarding the research paradigm, research design, and research method, giving context for the study and describing the application and execution of each area. The discussion also included general information in each area to add foundational information. This study included a flexible design, which required the use of triangulation. Therefore, a discussion regarding triangulation was also included in this study. Each segment provides insight into why the approach was appropriate for this study.

Discussion of Research Paradigms

The research paradigm used for this research was constructivism. Several different research paradigms existed, each with a different perspective on research. The literature documents four major research paradigms: constructivism, also known as interpretivism, positivism, post-positivism, and pragmatism. Constructivism considers the experiences of individuals in gaining insight into situations (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and seeks to help in understanding behaviors and experiences (Bogna et al., 2020). Constructivism can be considered subjective. Constructivists view reality as a contingency of inner feelings (Aliyu et al., 2014, as cited in Kankam, 2019).

Positivism is a typical philosophical perspective and asserts that all scientific propositions are based on fact (Kankam, 2019; Robson & McCartan, 2016). The optic of positivists is that

understanding must come from factual evidence. Post-positivism is like positivism but does not depend strictly on the evidentiary component (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Post-positivists believe that answers can come from more than scientific methods (Kankam, 2019). Post-positivists have a less rigid view than positivists.

Pragmatists have another perspective on research. Pragmatists are outcome-focused (Creswell & Poth, 2018) ascribing to the belief that the understanding of ideas comes from the consequences of the ideas and not the ideas themselves (Scott, 2016). Constructivism, positivism, post-positivism, and pragmatism are all interpretive paradigms; however, each has a different optic of the research approach and philosophical assumptions. The philosophical assumptions include ontology, which is the researcher's view of reality; epistemology, which is the researcher's knowledge of reality; axiology. Axiology is the perspective of values and methodology, the process used for this research. These philosophical assumptions are essential because they contribute to the formulation and execution of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Understanding the philosophical assumptions associated with each research paradigm is key to understanding the differences between the paradigms.

The research paradigm for this study that best aligns with my worldview and supports the problem statement is constructivism. My worldview is Christianity. The scripture includes learning and researching all aspects of my perspective. I follow the Godly principle of lifelong learning, and the continual seeking of knowledge and wisdom (Proverbs 9:9, 12:1; 2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 111:2). Christian worldview and constructivist schools of thought are not an exact match, and they are not opposing views. The acceptance of constructivism is essential to the alignment of Christianity and constructivism. Two essential facets of Christians adopting constructivism without compromising their worldview include ensuring God remains first and

understanding God's view on discovering knowledge. Christians should accept constructivism in a manner that assumes God takes precedence. They should accept and understand that God likes his people to engage in activities that lead to discovery (Guthrie, 2019). This study's problem statement and research questions were to understand the problem, specifically from the lens of individuals in the technology industry. Constructivism is a qualitative approach that holds a view that considers interactions between people., This philosophy reflects on individuals, and researchers view the philosophy as an effective method for societal research (Kankam, 2019; Robson & McCartan, 2016). This premise echoes in the literature. Bogna et al. (2020) stated that constructivism depends upon analyzing societal relations. I intended to understand how the leadership component and the interactions between leadership in the technology industry and the workers within the workforce in the technology industry potentially impact employee turnover and operational costs. Constructivist views aligned with this study's purpose and intent and helped to strategically guide the methodology by providing a foundational perspective.

Discussion of Design

This research included a flexible design. Literature groups research design into three categories: fixed, flexible, and mixed method design. Utilizing the most appropriate research design is essential to optimizing a study. Fixed designs are a more rigid approach. Fixed research designs are a process that aligns with a pre-defined approach where research terms appear at the beginning of the study (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Robson and McCartan also credit fixed research design as most appropriate for quantitative research. The scholarly community supports this sentiment. Scholars add that quantitative research encompasses controlled conditions (Headley & Clark, 2020) and maximizes the use of statistical analysis in the process (Farrugia, 2019).

Flexible designs offer more latitude in the approach. Flexible designs provide the researcher with the opportunity to make decisions as they proceed through the process and allow the process to evolve and adapt (Robson & McCartan, 2016). The implementation is not that flexible designs are haphazard, disorganized, or less valuable than fixed designs. Still, they provide a view that shows how the researcher adjusts and strengthens the study as needed. Despite the ability to adjust during the study, the process for flexible designs does involve rigor in collection, analysis, and documentation and better aligns with qualitative studies (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Qualitative includes an understanding of actions and behaviors (Denny & Weckesser, 2019; Headley & Clark, 2020).

As the name implies, mixed method designs encompass many research designs in the same study. Mixed method designs incorporate fixed and flexible designs and multiple research strategies (Doyle et al., 2019; Robson & McCartan, 2016). This study included a flexible design using qualitative methods. The characteristic of a flexible design aligns with the purpose of this study. Additionally, qualitative methodologies study phenomena, including their context and perspectives of appearance (Philipsen et al., 2007 as cited in Busetto et al., 2020) or using words as opposed to numbers as the data source (Busetto et al., 2020). This process is another aspect that supports using a flexible design, a qualitative study. This study included exploring the phenomenon of employee turnover and its potential impacts on operational costs.

Discussion of Method

A case study was the method. Flexible designs have several commonly used research methods, each with unique characteristics that researchers can leverage. The narrative method is effective in exploring an occurrence. The narrative approach is a research method and a mechanism of theorizing phenomena that can offer insights into lived experiences (Carless &

Douglas, 2017; Flynn, 2019). In the narrative exploration, the focus is not solely on individual experiences. Narrative research allows for exploring several other areas. The areas include shared culture, family, semantics, and organization (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A core element of the narrative approach is stories, where the researcher collects stories that play a crucial role in the features standard to narratives. The collected stories are on the researched phenomena or lived experiences and include standard features such as the stories being a collaborative effort and providing insight into how individuals see themselves (Carless & Douglas, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The creation of the stories provides a better perspective of the phenomena or lived experience. Instead of focusing on opinions or abstractions, the stories offer insight into the actual experience (Carless & Douglas, 2017). Narrative researchers rely heavily on stories to assess the phenomena or lived experiences being evaluated effectively.

Phenomenology is another flexible research design method. In a study, phenomenology is experiencing life personally (Williams, 2021). This definition provides the foundation for phenomenological research. Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that the purpose of a phenomenological study is to describe the common meaning of several individuals' experiences relative to a concept or phenomenon, and a concept or phenomenon is any lived experience individuals have in common. Additionally, to determine the commonality of the experience, the researcher collects the data and develops a compound description that represents the experience of all the individuals, including what and how of the experience. Phenomenology has three core foundational concepts that are essential to the methodology. These foundational concepts are qualia, which refer to the aspects of a lived experience that are difficult to verbalize., Dasein refers to self-realization and lebenswelt, encompassing the researcher's historical, social, and past experiences (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). Researchers should consider these concepts for the

proper execution of this methodology. The narrative and phenomenology methods are target phenomena.

Grounded theory, a third flexible research method, differs from the previously discussed methods. A differentiating factor of the grounded method from other methods is that this approach includes seeking to develop or discover a theory for a process or action based upon or rooted in the collective experiences of those who have experienced the process or action (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Tie et al., 2019). The key to this research method is the development or discovery of theory. Therefore, the best use for this approach is when researchers experience limited information about the theory, the theory does not exist, or when researchers do not identify the theory (Tie et al., 2019). Additionally, in grounded theory research, the data and analysis procedures are simultaneous, in an iterative fashion to allow for the constant comparison of data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hoddy, 2019; Tie et al., 2019). This process also contributes to the core component of theory development as theory emerges.

Ethnography is a fourth flexible design research method. Ethnography is the process that documents culture through cultural immersion (Beaton, 2022). Ethnographic research requires researchers to become part of the culture they are studying and is, therefore, most suitable for cultural studies. This methodology encompasses a process that profoundly engages the researcher intending to achieve an understanding of those who experienced the phenomenon (Bartholomew & Brown, 2022). Creswell and Poth (2018) defined features of ethnography as a focus on developing a comprehensive description of a cultural group. Researchers target patterns and ideation systems, use theory to direct focus, extensive fieldwork engagement, data systemization to develop a cultural interpretation, and the analysis resulting in an understanding

of cultural group workings. These features are not all-encompassing but provide insight into ethnographic research's significant characteristics and purpose.

The last commonly used flexible design research method is a case study. A case study method sounds like a simplistic approach to research. However, the case study method is one of the most challenging research types and requires a good understanding of the approach to overcome the difficulties in executing the approach (R. K. Yin, 2018). Researchers use the case study method to explore real-life scenarios of a contemporary bounded system or multiple bounded systems, where bounded means explained within specific boundaries (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The description of the case study includes some parallels with other research methodologies. The key distinguishing aspects of the case study are the requirements for a contemporary aspect and the real-life component (Wohlin, 2021). Determining the optimal scenario for the use of a case study requires the consideration of a few variants. R.K. Yin (2018) stated that if a research question has a *what*, *how*, or *why* format, the study focus is on a contemporary set of events, and the researcher has little or no control over the behavioral events, a case study is the favored choice. This set of criteria is essential in assessing case studies. Wohlin (2021) evaluated the use of the case study label in research and found that 47% of the cases evaluated did not meet the criteria for case studies. Misusing the terminology could stem from a lack of understanding of the method. Knowing the features of a case study and the optimal use of this research methodology will help researchers in the proper design and execution of a case study.

This study included a single case study method. A case study is a qualitative research approach that seeks to explore a specific issue or problem to gain a deeper understanding illustrated through the case (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The decision to use a case study predicated

the study meeting the documented criteria determining when a case study is most appropriate. The main research questions explored the *how* and *why* aspects of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry. The contemporary aspects of this study were the lack of leadership diversity, employee turnover, and operational costs. Lastly, I had no control over the events explored in this study. This study met the criteria stated in R. K. Yin (2018), which supported the reason for the use of a case study.

Discussion of Triangulation

Triangulation is a necessary component of research. Triangulation is a method to ensure that the information derived from research accurately depicts the truth about the research subject matter (Moon, 2019). This mechanism helps the researcher ensure that the data tells the story. Triangulation includes a constructivist perspective by coordinating the three modes of triangulation: convergence, complementarity, and divergent mode (Farquhar et al., 2020). Triangulation has several benefits, including assisting researchers in identifying erroneous data, discovering unexpected findings, and discovering truths about a studied phenomenon (Moon, 2019). The use of triangulation supports my goal of discovery. Four primary methods of triangulation used in qualitative research include method, investigator, theory, and data source. Farquhar et al. (2020) and Moon (2019) described the triangulation methods as follows: method triangulation utilizes multiple research mechanisms to collect data. Investigator triangulation engages multiple researchers to collect and analyze data, and theory triangulation incorporates multiple theories into the research design. Study implementation, data interpretation, and data source triangulation encompass multiple data sources from a single collection method. The preceding methods are the most common. However, they are not the only triangulation methods

that exist. Other qualitative triangulation methods include (a) meta-triangulation, (b) project, (c) perceptual, (d) reflexive, (e) iterative, (f) strategic, and (g) indefinite (Farquhar et al., 2020).

The triangulation methods utilized in this study were triangulation and data source triangulation. Specifically, this study included various data sources in different formats. This study included interviews, documents, and surveys. Triangulation also encompasses conducting multiple interviews with multiple people on the same topic to assure validity (Flynn, 2019) The interview process required selecting an appropriate resource pool. The data sources selected provided the means for efficient data collection for this study. Descriptive statistics were necessary for survey data, demographics, and other relevant numerical data.

Summary of the Nature of the Study

The nature of the study includes relevant details regarding the design and execution. Specifically, the major components of the nature of the study include the research paradigm, the research design, and the research method. The research paradigm for this study was constructivism. Constructivism aligned with the researcher's Christian worldview and supported the identified problem of this study. The research design was flexible, using qualitative methods. The case study method was the most appropriate method for this study. Lastly, several data sources incorporated triangulation into this study. The research paradigm, design, and method outlined in the approach were carefully selected and the most appropriate to answer the research questions. The research paradigm related to leadership diversity in the technology industry and the potential impacts on employee turnover and operational costs.

Conceptual Framework

This research followed a conceptual framework. The conceptual framework was appropriate for this study because the study explored the problem through an extant theoretical

context (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). The purpose of the study was to gain additional insight into the persistent problem of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry and the potential impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. The research framework diagram demonstrated the linkages between the identified concepts, theories, actors, and constructs. A detailed description of the relationships between the various identified components follows the framework diagram.

Conceptual Framework Diagram

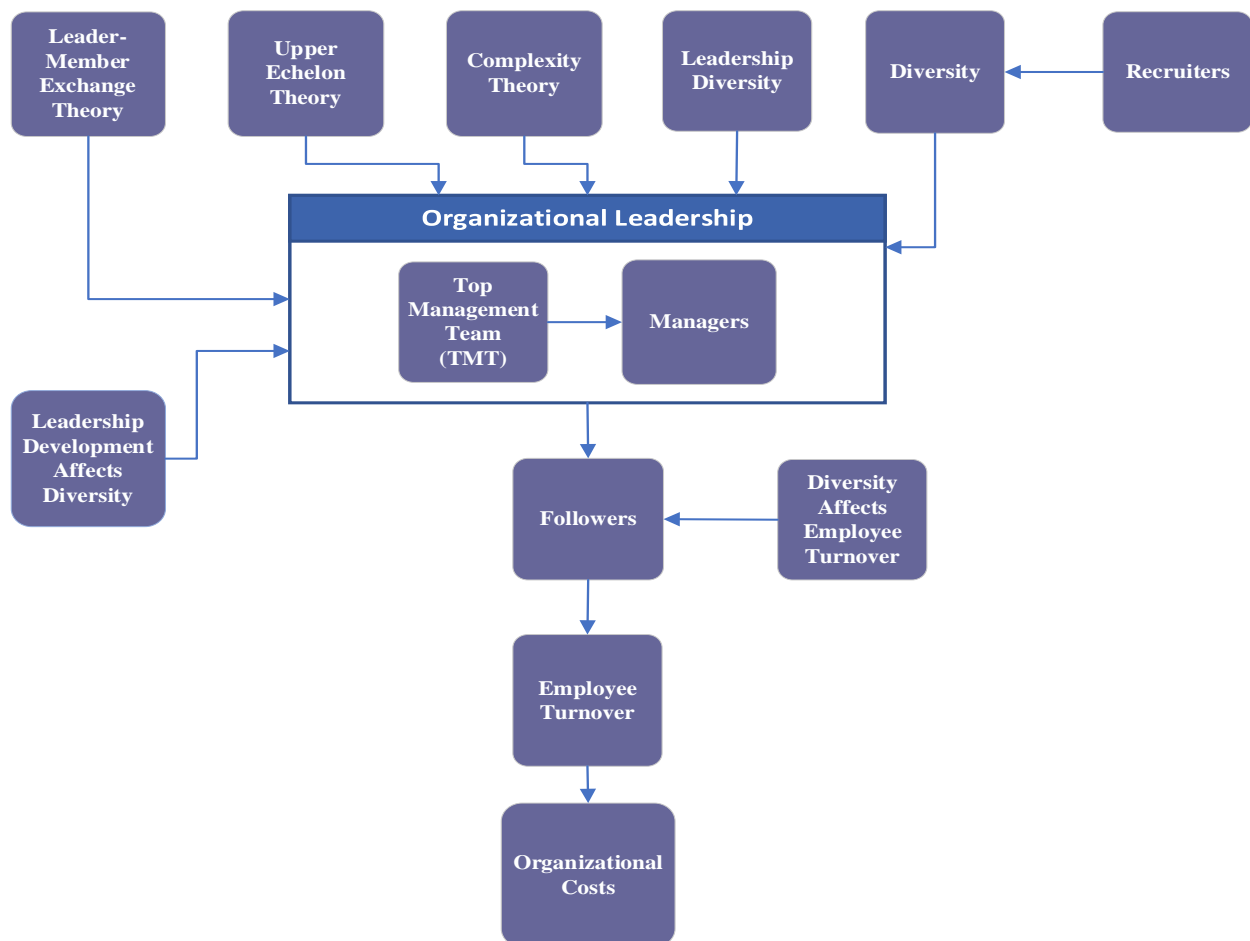


Figure 1: Relationships Between Concepts

Concepts

The diagram reflects the research concepts, providing context to understand factors contributing to the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity. The key concepts identified for this research were leadership development affecting diversity and diversity affecting employee turnover. As demonstrated in the research framework diagram, Figure 1, the concepts flow through different actors engaged.

Specifically, leadership development affects diversity, which flows into the leadership actors, and diversity affects employee turnover, which flows into followers. Considerations for the study included the potential effects of these concepts on organizational leadership and follower components as they relate to the persistent issue of the lack of diversity in leadership and its impact on employee turnover and operational costs. The relationships of these concepts, as demonstrated in the conceptual framework diagram, were accurate.

Diversity Affects Employee Turnover

The concept of diversity affecting employee turnover expresses the impacts of diversity, including diversity management, on employee turnover, depicted in Figure 1. Researchers indicated that diversity could impact employee turnover (M. Ali & French, 2019; J. Lee et al., 2020). Diversity management is a leadership action that could affect the relationship between leaders and followers. Diversity management encompasses activities that prioritize and promote workplace diversity and recognize its benefits (Sabharwal et al., 2018). Sabharwal et al. asserted that diversity management is a mechanism to ensure equality in the workforce. Understanding the effects of diversity and the management of diversity in the context of the problem statement was essential to this study. The study concluded that diversity has minimal impact on employee turnover.

Leadership Development Affects Diversity

Leadership development contributes to establishing effective leadership. Figure 1 demonstrates the flow of this concept into the organizational leadership actors. Leadership development is also essential as it affects diversity (Bilimoria & Singer, 2019; Hughes, 2018; Soklaridis et al., 2022). While formal leadership development programs are the only mechanism to develop leaders, they are essential. Leadership development provides information that contributes to leadership practices. Leadership development focuses on skills and behaviors that can enhance leadership abilities and diversity management (Yen et al., 2019). Extant literature documents that the leadership diversity gap is positively impacted by leadership development (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2020) The study included exploring the additional impacts of leadership development on diversity. In addition, this study addressed the problem of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and its impact on employee turnover and operational costs. This study highlighted leadership development as a mechanism to increase leadership diversity.

Theories

The literature documents numerous theories that could apply within the study context. Reviewing and evaluating many theories was appropriate to determine the impacts on the study subject matter. The scope of this study is beyond evaluating applicable theories. The theories applied in this study were the most relevant: the leader-member exchange theory, the upper echelons theory, and the complexity theory. As demonstrated in the research framework diagram, Figure 1, the theories are inputs into the identified leadership roles, specifically, the top management team (TMT) and the managers. The study included exploring the effects of these learned leadership theories on the problem of the persistent lack of leadership diversity and the

impacts on employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry. Verifying the assertions of these theories was necessary in the study.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory is a relational leadership theory. The theory emphasizes that leaders establish different relationships with each follower, resulting in different treatment of the follower by the leader (Waglay et al., 2020). LMX contributed to exploring factors that contributed to the persistence of the problem of the lack of diversity in leadership despite attempts to address the issue. Additionally, this theory applied to the effects that leaders could have on followers.

Upper Echelons Theory

The literature documents the impacts of leadership within organizations. The upper echelons theory supports the premise that leadership impacts an organization. The theory includes the assumption that the characteristics of the top management team significantly impact organizational outcomes (Triana et al., 2019). The upper echelons theory included context for the problem from the perspective of understanding how the influence of leadership characteristics in the organization impacts organizational policies, organizational processes, and leadership actions that contribute to employee turnover and operational costs.

Complexity Theory

The complexity theory is an extension of the upper echelon's theory. The complexity theory builds upon the framework of the upper echelons theory and targets the relationships between the top management diversity component and high organizational performance (Díaz-Fernández et al., 2020). The complexity theory contributed to understanding the impacts of specific diversity elements within the organization's top management team. The application of

this theory assisted in the context of the study by providing the optic for how the problem of the lack of diversity in the top management team contributes to employee turnover and operational costs. Specifically, the diversity component of the leadership team was a consideration in the study.

Actors

The actors identified for this research are the categories of individuals that are part of the organizational structure. Each group of actors has a role in the process or information flow relative to leadership diversity within the organization. The actors identified were the managers and top management team (TMT), grouped as organizational leadership, followers, and recruiters. Exploring the lack of participation by recruiters in this study was not possible, which affected the relationship of recruiters, as demonstrated in the conceptual framework diagram. Exploring the organizational leadership and follower groups of actors was from the optic relative to their role in the potential problem of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry and the impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. Confirmation of the relationships demonstrated in the conceptual framework diagram (Figure 1) between organizational leadership, followers, employee turnover, and operational costs were in the study.

Managers

Managers are part of leadership within organizations, which is why they are grouped as a component of organizational leadership in Figure 1. Managers have direct subordinates and decision-making responsibilities that impact and influence others within the organization (Lucia, 2018). Managers are vital actors as contributors to the problem explored in this study. Figure 1 shows managers' groups, including the TMT, and flows into the followers. Figure 1 also shows the theories, concepts, and constructs that are inputs into the leadership components,

demonstrating the potential influence of these components on organizational leadership. Relative to managers' impacts on the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity, exploring the relationship, their impacts on employee turnover and operational costs, managers' roles, diversity composition, and diversity impacts were appropriate.

Top Management Team (TMT)

The top management team is a segment of the organizational leadership team. The TMT is commonly understood as a small group of executives with the overall responsibility for the organization (Mintzberg, 1979, as cited in Krause et al., 2022). The TMT is delineated from other organizational managers because of the understanding of their unique roles within the organization. The TMTs grouped with the managers in Figure 1 from the same perspective. As organizational influencers, the TMT is a key contributor to the potential persistence of the lack of leadership diversity. Understanding how the TMT affects the problem, the persistence in the lack of leadership diversity, employee turnover, and operational costs was essential to this study.

Recruiters

Recruiters are an essential component of the talent in the company. Recruiters are employees whose primary responsibilities are identifying and attracting talent for organizations (Gilch & Sieweke, 2021). Recruiters have an added element to their role regarding technology positions. Gilch and Sieweke also discovered that the roles of recruiters in organizations expand in the digital age by bringing external information and targeting digital talent. Recruiters can impact the diversity mix based on the talent recruited for the organization. Figure 1 shows recruiters flowing into the diversity construct. This process demonstrates the impact of recruiters on diversity within an organization. This flow was designed to determine recruiters' impact on

the lack of leadership diversity issue. Exploring this flow was impossible because of the lack of recruiters participating in the study.

Followers

Followers can be an individual at any level within an organization. Followers support organizational leadership by adhering to their guidance and actively engaging in actions that support leadership goals (Thomas et al., 2017). The role of the followers is essential to the root of the potential problem from the perspective of the influence of leaders' diversity and actions. Additionally, the challenges that followers experience in obtaining leadership roles could contribute to the problem with persistence in the lack of leadership diversity. Followers can appear at any level within an organization. This study included exploring followers in non-management roles. Figure 1 depicts a direct link between organizational leadership, including the managers and the TMT, flows to followers. Followers also flow directly into employee turnover, which flows into operational costs, demonstrating that followers' actions could result from leadership influences. Figure 1 also shows the impact of diversity on employee turnover on followers. Exploring these connections aided in understanding the contributing factors to the problem explored in this study. The study results confirmed that organizational leadership influences followers.

Constructs

The constructs identified for this study provided context and understanding of the identified problem. The constructs diversity and leadership diversity closely link, flowing into the identified leadership components, TMT and managers, as shown in Figure 1. Also shown in Figure 1 are the constructs of employee turnover and operational costs, which relate to the identified outcomes of the problem. This study included exploring each construct relationship

depicted in the conceptual framework diagram. The relationship for the diversity construct was found inconclusive. Confirmation of the relationships demonstrated in the conceptual framework diagram for leadership diversity, employee turnover, and operational costs occurred.

Diversity

The construct of diversity was core to this study. Diversity encompasses different aspects of individuals, including components such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, income level, and religion (Potvin et al., 2018). The importance of diversity within leadership is essential to the problem of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity. Figure 1 depicts diversity flowing into organizational leadership. Exploring this relationship occurred in this study.

Leadership Diversity

Understanding the makeup of the organizational leadership was key to this study. The construct of leadership diversity refers to the compositional makeup of the management team, including variations in backgrounds and expertise, within an organization (Lu et al., 2022)Figure 1 shows leadership diversity flowing into organizational leadership. The study's root was exploring the effects of leadership diversity and the relationship between these components.

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is prevalent within organizations. Employee turnover represents employees who leave their employment positions (Reed, 2021)Since the focus of this study was the lack of diversity in technology leadership and its impacts on employee turnover, employee turnover was a follower output in Figure 1. Understanding contributing factors to employee turnover was essential to this study.

Operational Costs

Operational costs relate to employee turnover. Figure 1 shows operational costs as an output of employee turnover to demonstrate the relationship. Operational costs represent the myriads of expenses of an organization, including such expenses as recruiting and training costs (Harden et al., 2018) and healthcare costs (Sull & Sull, 2023). The study included understanding how the lack of leadership diversity contributed to employee turnover and identifying the factors impacting operational costs.

Relationship Between Concepts, Theories, Actors, and Constructs

The conceptual framework diagram, Figure 1, shows how the concepts of diversity affect employee turnover flowing into followers and leadership development. In addition, the effects of diversity of organizational leadership, TMT, and managers. The conceptual framework diagram, Figure 1, also shows the TMT and managers directly linked to followers. Understanding these flows contributed to understanding how diversity and leadership development impacted the relationship between leadership and followers. The theories applied to this study, LMX theory, upper echelons theory, and complexity theory appear in Figure 1 as inputs into the organizational leadership, TMT, and managers. This depiction demonstrates schools of thought that impact organizational leadership's perspectives on diversity. The diversity and leadership diversity constructs are other components that flow directly into the organization's leadership, TMT, and managers. The lack of diversity in these diversity constructs contributed to the persistence of the problem of the lack of leadership diversity. In Figure 1, recruiters appear as flowing into the diversity construct to demonstrate recruiters' potential effect on the diversity composition of the organization. Exploring the role and influence of recruiters relative to the problem of the lack of diversity in leadership was impossible because of a lack of participation from recruiters. The

conceptual framework diagram, Figure 1, shows the relationships and information flows leading to the output's employee turnover and operational costs. Exploring each relationship and information flow was necessary to understand and determine the effects of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity on employee turnover and operational costs.

Summary of the Research Framework

The purpose of the research framework was to provide understanding and context and demonstrate the relationships of the pertinent aspects of the study, visualized in Figure 1. Discussing relevant concepts, theories, actors, and constructs of this study helps provide the focus and perspective for the study as they relate to the identified problem. The core concepts identified for this study are how diversity affects employee turnover and how leadership development affects diversity. The theories and constructs identified supported the foundational concepts that support the identified problem in the study. The actors included demonstrated the specific groups that contribute to or are affected by the problem and the persistence in the lack of leadership diversity. Collectively, the components identified formulated a cohesive framework that supported the ability to study the problem of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the impacts on employee turnover and operational costs.

Definition of Terms

Diversity: A representation of individuals with varying characteristics or traits that includes components such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, income levels, and religion (Martins, 2020; Potvin et al., 2018).

Diversity Management: Organizational programs, policies, and processes created and executed for the effective management of a diverse workforce and to promote equality within the organization (Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014; Prasad & Mills, 1997 as cited in Dennissen et al., 2020).

Employee Turnover: The representation of employees who leave their employment positions (Reed, 2021), and the voluntary separation of an employee from their employer (Kuzior et al., 2022).

Leadership: Individuals that are part of the top management team (TMT), which are organizational executives that are responsible for the organization (Mintzberg, 1979 as cited in Krause et al., 2022), or managers, who are employees with direct reports, decision-making authority, and responsibility within the organization (Lucia, 2018).

Leadership Diversity: The compositional makeup of individuals on the leadership team, with varying characteristics and traits, within an organization (Lu et al., 2022).

Leadership Diversity Gap: An underrepresentation of minority populations in leadership roles (Siemiatycki, 2019).

The Great Resignation: Represents the high rate of voluntary employee turnover that left their places of employment between April 2020 and September 2021 (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022) and continuing through the Summer of 2022 (Formica & Sfodera, 2022).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

This study included exploring employees' lived experiences in the information technology industry. Specifically, the study included seeking to understand if the lack of leadership diversity impacted employee turnover and operational costs. The following section describes the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations that impacted the study execution. The assumptions are aspects of the study that were viewed as widely accepted, limitations are factors that impacted the study that were out of the researcher's control, and delimitations were factors that impacted the study that the researcher imposed (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The details in each area aid in understanding the study's boundaries.

Assumptions

Research assumptions helped to shape the scope of the study. Assumptions are elements of a study, such as issues, ideas, or positions identified in the study (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The assumptions identified in this study were relevant to the core elements of this study. Theofanidis and Fountouki stated that assumptions are important because they help prevent potential pitfalls encountered in a study. For this study, an assumption that the diversity construct is essential to organizations and an organization's performance. Literature documents include that diversity is vital to individuals and an organization's performance (Ly-Le, 2022; Turi et al., 2022). Given the purpose of this study, this assumption was vital because diversity was a core element of this study. To mitigate this risk, study participants represented various diverse groups. An assumption in the study was that my opinion would not impact the findings of this study, nor would any personal biases impact the reliability or validity of this study. Ethical research can be instrumental in incorporating relational aspects like integrity, empathy, and reflexivity and ensuring that the researcher's opinion does not overshadow the participants' voices (Shaw, 2019). Implementing these measures mitigated this risk.

Limitations

Limitations are also an essential element of a study. Limitations highlight weaknesses in a study that could impact the outcomes (Ross & Zaidi, 2019) and are related to specific aspects of the study, such as the research design or research model (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Presentations of limitations in a study communicate relevant information (Ross & Zaidi, 2019). This study included seeking to explore the impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. In analyzing the documentation related to these components, this study was limited to the records maintained by the organization in the study. This study was also limited to the experiences of the

volunteered participants, which could impact the number of leaders and followers analyzed in the study. Additionally, the biases and opinions of the study participants were a limitation of the collected data. Lastly, while the organization selected for this study was a global company, there was still a potential limitation to the generalizability of the study. The purpose of selecting one major technology company was the expectation that the company would have a large enough workforce to provide a good, diverse participant pool.

Delimitations

Delimitations are like limitations, except for the root. Delimitations are set by the researcher rather than arising from the study's components to define the boundaries and limitations of the research (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The diversity element was a core element and delimitation of this study. For this study, the definition of diversity was a representation of individuals with varying characteristics or traits that include components such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, income levels, and religion (Martins, 2020; Potvin et al., 2018)The study emphasized the impacts of diversity on employee turnover and operational costs. Therefore, when soliciting study participants, individuals with diverse backgrounds were appropriate.

Significance of the Study

Leadership is key in organizations. Diversity is also a vital element in the modern workplace. This study included exploring components and their correlation to employee turnover and operational costs. The information in this section provides details regarding the importance and relevance of this study in the modern workplace. The content in this section explains how this study fills gaps in extant literature while simultaneously adding to the extant body of knowledge. This section also included a detailed explanation of the biblical context of the subject

matter and the benefits of this study to leadership practices in the modern workplace. The consolidated content provides a comprehensive understanding of the significance of this study.

Reduction of Gaps in the Literature

This study included examining diversity within the modern workplace and its impacts on the workforce. Specifically, this study targeted employee turnover and operational costs. Extant literature discusses the existing problem of the diversity gap in leadership (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2020). Measures have been taken to mitigate this issue. Some measures corporate leaders have engaged in to address the diversity leadership gap include strategic sourcing initiatives (Atal et al., 2019), instantiation of leadership development programs (Lerman et al., 2022), and the modification of human resource policies and practices (Sung & Choi, 2021). Despite efforts to mitigate this issue, the problem persists (Atal et al., 2019). This study included seeking to add to the body of knowledge by gaining additional insight into why the leadership diversity gap persists. The literature also highlights the diversity component of corporate culture as a factor impacting employee turnover and highlights explicitly the Great Resignation (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022; Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022) In seeking to understand the role of diversity as it pertains to the issue, the study provided greater insight into the role and impacts diversity plays in corporate culture. The findings of the study added to the body of knowledge by increasing the understanding of how to lower employee turnover rates, positively impact operational costs, and innovate organizational practices.

The study included examining leadership practices within the modern workplace. The importance of organizational leadership cannot be understated. Leadership influences and impacts can be felt throughout an organization. This study included seeking to add to the body of knowledge by discovering leadership practices that could lead to innovative, modernized

business practices. Improved leadership practices could positively impact business (Martins, 2020). The findings of this study contribute to the transformation of leadership practices in the technology industry. Extant literature includes exploring various aspects of the subject matter presented in this study. Researchers in extant literature recommended additional studies in targeted industries (Jankelová et al., 2022). This study filled this gap by emphasizing the technology industry.

Implications for Biblical Integration

The diversity gap in leadership and employee turnover are not new phenomena. Researchers document that the leadership diversity gap (Siemiatycki, 2019) and employee turnover (Autrey et al., 2019) are issues that need addressing in the modern workplace. Understanding and addressing the persistence of these issues is an inherent leadership responsibility. “Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others” (*New Living Translation*, 1996/2015, 2 Timothy, 2:2). This scripture demonstrates the importance of passing along information to help others. Understanding the subject matter includes transferring knowledge. Research is a means of gaining knowledge and understanding (Denny & Weckesser, 2019). The scripture supports various research methods and concepts. Foundational research principles include seeking and analyzing information (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). Numerous scriptures support these concepts (Proverbs 25:2; Ecclesiastes: 7:23 – 25). These scriptures support seeking and analyzing knowledge and highlight the importance of leadership engaging in this activity. Regarding research types of qualitative research is a methodology demonstrated in scripture. Qualitative researchers collect data for analysis in the natural setting from those receptive to the subject matter (Farrugia, 2019). This aspect and other qualitative practices exhibit in scripture. The passage of scripture in Judges 6:36 – 40

demonstrates qualitative analysis, where Gideon uses the method of observation of the fleece in his assessment.

“So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (*New Living Translation*, 1996/2015, 1 Corinthians 10:31). Research is included in the things that should be done for the glory of God. This study includes the intention to understand specific issues that contributed to the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity and its impact on employee turnover and operational costs. The research process allowed researchers to integrate into the environment and engage with the study group (Farrugia, 2019). As with all things, the process of conducting and executing research should be done to honor and glorify God. The research design and execution aligned with the biblical perspective of research. This study met the expectations of research documented in scripture.

Benefits to Business Practice and Relationship to Field of Study

This research topic is directly aligned with the discipline of organization and management, with a leadership focus. Whether implicit or explicit, leadership can have far-reaching and lasting negative impacts when absent, toxic, or ineffective (Lemoine et al., 2019). The impacts of leadership explored in this study were potentially negative. The analysis of these practices can redefine business practices. The research topic also encompassed the field's organization and management components. Researchers in the extant literature document diversity's importance in the modern workplace (Dennissen et al., 2020). Exploring and gaining new insight into the impacts of the lack of diversity in leadership, specifically in the technology industry, can help leaders target newly discovered aspects of the subject matter. In addition, it leads to the creation of strategic measures to address the problem. Modernized strategic diversity leadership practices could positively impact organizations and extend the current understanding

of leadership practices (Martins, 2020). Each component of the field of study, organization, management, and leadership was in this study.

Extant literature and research discuss the issues of the lack of diversity in leadership in business and specifically include the technology industry (Atal et al., 2019; Yen et al., 2019). Employee turnover is not a new phenomenon; extant literature exists. However, the current knowledge pool does not evaluate the persistent lack of leadership diversity to include the industry's components and technology; instead, it impacts employee turnover and operational costs. This research provided a mechanism to explore current business practices in an unexplored area. Discovered information could develop new business practices and policies that strengthen the understanding of the issues related to the persistence of the lack of diversity. This information can modernize and transform current business practices.

Summary of Significance of the Study

The study included exploring the issue of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity and its impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. The study included seeking to add to the body of knowledge by discovering why the issue persists. This study also included seeking to add to the body of knowledge by gaining new insights into the role of diversity in corporate culture and its impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. In addition to contributing to the innovation of leadership practices. The study included seeking to fill gaps in extant literature by targeting the technology industry. The methodology and practices employed in this research aligned with biblical principles and will benefit leadership practices in the modern workplace. This study's subject matter and content are also aligned with the field of organization and management and leadership cognate.

Summary of Chapter 1 and Transition

This segment provided details of the purpose and intent of this study and clearly stated the problem focus of the study. Research on the persistent problem of the lack of leadership diversity is necessary to address gaps in the extant literature on this topic despite attempts to address the issue. Additionally, the findings of this research provide leaders, specifically in the technology industry, with relevant, actionable information to strengthen their leadership posture and improve diversity within their organizations. Chapter 1 begins with background information on the problem. This background information provides context and includes scholarly support for the key elements of the study. The problem statement and purpose of the study follow the background of the problem. These sections established the foundation for this study. The research questions identified support the problem statement of this study. The details that support the research questions demonstrate the alignment of the research questions with the problem statement. The nature of the study details the research paradigm, design, and method. The research paradigm describes the constructivist paradigm used to support the problem statement. The design section supports the design of this study. Also described in this section is the selected methodology, a qualitative flexible design utilizing a single case study.

Triangulation is an important concept for qualitative research. Chapter 1 introduced the integration of triangulation into this study. The research framework diagram shows the conceptual framework and demonstrates the relationships between the theories, actors, concepts, and constructs relevant to this study. The discussion for each framework component provided details of the relevance to the identified problem. Key terms, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations relevant to this study have been documented in this chapter. The final segment of this chapter highlighted the significance of the study by presenting a discussion on the reduction

in gaps in the literature, the benefits to business practices, and the relationship of the study to the field of study of organization and management, leadership cognate. To complete this chapter, a discussion regarding the biblical alignment of the research framework and design demonstrates the correlation of the study content to biblical principles. The information presented in Chapter 1 provided a solid foundation for this study. Furthermore, the successful execution of the approach presented in Chapter 1 provided the means for a detailed assessment of the persistent problem of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and its impacts on employee turnover and operational costs.

The next section of this document is the literature review. The literature review systematically presents each study component from a scholarly perspective. The study elements from the literature presented a comprehensive view of the subject matter. The literature review objectively views the study elements, exploring varying opinions and perspectives. Researchers document the scholarly community's views without personal opinions. This section presents the scholarly view of the business practices, the various elements of the problem, and the research concepts, theories, and constructs. This segment also explores related studies, anticipated themes, and discovered themes for a scholarly lens.

Chapter 2: Literature

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many changes occurred in the workforce. During the pandemic, employee turnover rose significantly and spiraled into a phenomenon called The Great Resignation. Employee turnover in the workforce is not a new phenomenon and has documented financial impacts on organizations (Harden et al., 2018). Additionally, some of the causes of this mass exodus of employees were factors that existed in the workforce before the start of the pandemic that needed addressing. The increase in the diversity levels in the workforce was a workforce dynamic that existed before the pandemic. For example, the highly diversified workforce highlighted race and race-related issues in the workforce. In some areas, racism and race discrimination were standard practices that transcended the boundaries of the behavior of individuals and included systematic, fundamental, and inequitable relations of power (Miller, 2020). Organizational leadership is critical to dealing with such issues. Leaders are a critical factor in dealing with discrimination within an organization (Miller, 2020). Other scholars agree that leaders are important in dealing with diversity issues. Leaders must have a good understanding of their environments to address the diversity needs of the organization properly (Sung & Choi, 2021). The influence of leaders also needs consideration in this scenario. Leaders with diverse affiliations can have a high level of influence, (Lerman et al., 2022). Since leaders are essential in managing diverse issues and leadership diversity elements matter, the diversification of leadership within the organizational structure is an area explored in extant literature.

Several key components relate to the problem explored in this study. This study targeted the impacts of the lack of leadership diversity in the workforce (Lerman et al., 2022; McGee, 2018; Potvin et al., 2018; Siemiatycki, 2019). This study's scope encompassed employee

turnover and operational costs and targeted the technology industry. This literature review provides a scholarly perspective of the components relevant to the elements of this study. The literature presents a scholarly view of the business practices, the problem, concepts, theories, and constructs relevant to the problem. This section also includes a scholarly review of the related studies, anticipated themes identified prior to the study, and themes discovered during the study. The literature review includes a comprehensive, detailed perspective of the problem explored in this study.

Business Practices

The research topic explored in this study included an area relevant to leadership practices and the impacts of leadership in the modern workforce. A core element of this study was leadership diversity. Leadership diversity encompasses demographic diversity, based on observable characteristics, such as age, gender, and nationality, and cognitive diversity, based on non-observable characteristics, such as education, experience, and personality (Loh et al., 2022). This literature review segment included aspects of leadership diversity relevant to this study. Specifically, the following section targeted the impacts of leadership diversity on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), organizational performance, and employee turnover. This section also included leadership styles and diversity in the technology industry.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are high-priority topics in the modern workforce. Diversity and inclusion programs are relevant business practices in the workplace (J. Lee et al., 2020). Several factors are driving the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the implementation of business practices that support these initiatives. According to Duncan (2023), the aging workforce will result in all baby boomers above 65 by 2034 (Duncan, 2023). Couch

and Citrin (2018) referred to the aging workforce in the United States and Europe as a silver tsunami that encompasses many leaders ready to retire. Without the number of workforce talent ready to fill the leadership roles that will be vacated. Managers in this diverse workforce must deal with the challenges associated with the aging workforce (Ali & French, 2019). Another key element to the increase in the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion is the rise in immigration. In the United States, the number of immigrants is expected to surpass the natural increase in births over deaths by 2030.

Vespa et al. (2020) and J. Lee et al. (2020) stated that in addition to the aging workforce and migration, globalization and workforce mobility are reasons for an increase in the diversification of the modern workforce. Other scholars attribute the emphasis of importance on diversity, equity, and inclusion to recent movements, such as *MeToo*, *Us Too*, and *Black Lives Matter* (Soklaridis et al., 2022). While different reasons exist, the consensus amongst scholars is that DEI is important in the modern workplace. The changing dynamic of the workforce and the increased focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion places a demand on organizational leadership to address the challenges. This study does not include comprehending all aspects and elements of diversity, equity, and inclusion affected by the evolving workforce landscape. This research reflected on the element of diversity and highlighted leadership diversity. The scholarly community agrees that leadership diversity is essential to addressing the diversity issues in the workforce (Lerman et al., 2022; Loh et al., 2022; Martins, 2020; Potvin et al., 2018; Soklaridis et al., 2022). The remaining sections of this literature review highlight various components of leadership diversity relating to the business practices most relevant to this study.

Leadership Diversity Impacts on Diversity

Extant literature documents the importance and impact of leadership diversity within an organization. One documented impact relates to the increase in the number of diverse employees under a diversified leadership team. Leadership diversity has been found to increase diversity in the workforce (Lerman et al., 2022; Potvin et al., 2018; Siemiatycki, 2019). Lerman et al. (2022) add to this premise, stating that diverse leadership is necessary to recruit and develop a diverse workforce. Increased leadership diversity also has an impact on the leadership level. Research documents include an increase in gender diversity in leadership in the science industry, combined with mentorship, significantly increased female workers' retention and career progression (Potvin et al., 2018). Other scholars highlight the importance of mentorship for diversified leadership. Formal mentorship was an important strategy to address barriers to career advancement and a mechanism to increase diversity in executive leadership (Harris, 2021). While an agreement exists on the benefits of mentorship, the literature also documents concerns. Ghosh and Sanghamitra (2022) highlighted potential issues with mentorship, where mentors possessing harmful organizational norms guide mentees into assuming the same behaviors. The need for leadership diversity is in the literature; however, no agreement exists on attaining the goal of leadership diversity. Scholars agree that the current levels of diversity in leadership do not reflect the increasing diversity in the workforce (Lerman et al., 2022; Siemiatycki, 2019; Soklaridis et al., 2022).

Addressing the leadership diversity gap issue is a leadership activity. The promotion of diversity within the workplace is a critical leadership practice. Strategic diversity leadership is a documented practice by senior organizational leaders that promotes diversity and shapes the values of diversity within an organization (Martins, 2020). To be successful, leaders cannot just

talk about diversity; they must put actions behind their words because their actions also impact diversity. When organizational leaders demonstrate diversity-related actions, such as implementing diversity programs, the organization follows (Martins, 2020). Weech-Maldonado et al. (2018) agreed and added that when leaders implement diversity measures, diversity levels increase within an organization. Other scholars also agree with the assertion that leadership diversity levels impact diversity within the organization (Lerman et al., 2022; Potvin et al., 2018; Siemiatycki, 2019). Leadership styles and behaviors are relevant to leaders' actions. The following segment explored the relevance of leadership styles and behaviors to diversity.

Leadership Styles and Behaviors

Leaders can ascribe many leadership styles, each offering different strengths and weaknesses. Scholars describe leadership styles from different perspectives. Leadership styles are strategically chosen behaviors best designed to fit presented situations (Boyle et al., 2018). Khan et al. (2018) stated that leadership styles impact leaders' influence on followers. Understanding leadership styles can aid leaders in using the most appropriate style to accomplish their leadership and organizational goals. Regarding diversity, certain leadership styles are better suited to promote diversity. The growing diversity in the workforce requires leaders to adopt behaviors that demonstrate an appreciation of the differences that exist in the workforce (Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2022). Researchers of the extant literature support this premise and assert that diversity-oriented leadership is considerate of diverse aspects of employees when setting goals that are fair and void of prejudice (Y. Lee et al., 2021; Luu et al., 2019).

Other benefits of diversity-oriented leadership include creating opportunities to view situations from various perspectives. In addition, it fosters an environment for creative problem-solving and motivates employees to share knowledge. Also, open, inclusive communication

practices positively impact employees' intrinsic need for satisfaction (Y. Lee et al., 2021). Leadership behaviors closely align with leadership styles. Diversity-oriented leadership encompasses leaders' behaviors that generate diverse ideas that consider employees with differing backgrounds are relational, accessible, and attributed with inviting followers to share information (Y. Lee et al., 2021; Luu et al., 2019). Leadership actions are essential to building relationships with employees and establishing open communications while positively impacting employee retention (Robertson, 2021). Diversity-oriented leader behaviors result in increased levels of job engagement by employees and increased knowledge sharing (Y. Lee et al., 2021). The literature demonstrates the value of diversity-oriented leadership and its correlation to leadership actions. Leadership behaviors are an essential aspect of leadership and relevant to organizational diversity.

Several leadership styles better align with diversity-oriented leadership. Servant leadership, transformational leadership, and the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory are leadership styles that are favorable for diversity because of their relational elements (Sims, 2018). Literature depicts servant leadership as counterintuitive to its name because it is the leader who serves the follower. The leaders place the followers' needs above their own, thereby providing leadership based on the leaders' behaviors (Fuller, 2022; Northouse, 2019). The concept appears conflicting because servants typically do not lead. Gandolfi and Stone (2018) stated that servant leadership encompasses proven components of effective leadership, which include modeling, vision casting, empowering others, and encouraging others, making servant leadership a practical and desired leadership approach. Since servant leaders focus on the needs of others, they are more likely to support individuals with diverse backgrounds (Sims, 2018).

Fuller (2022) agreed with this premise, highlighting that servant leaders must promote organizational diversity because they care about the underprivileged.

Transformational leadership is a newer approach to leadership. Transformational leadership encompasses a broad spectrum where a leader's influence results in change to an individual or organization, noting these leaders as change agents (Northouse, 2019).

Transformational leaders have attributes of being motivational and inspirational to their followers, in addition to contributing to leadership development in their followers (Bass, 1985, House & Shamir, 1993, Sashkin, 2004 as cited in Brown et al., 2019). Although transformational leadership is a relational approach, Cote (2017) stated that leaders who learn this approach become proficient in techniques and qualities that encapsulate followers' values, emotions, motivations, and needs. The attributes associated with transformational leadership link to diversity. Brown et al. extended the extant research supporting the belief that transformational leadership benefits leadership diversity. Not only does transformational leadership impact diversity, but it has a reverse relationship. K. Yin et al. (2022) indicated that knowledge diversity within the TMT positively influences transformational leadership behaviors and impacts the organization.

The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory is another leadership style that highlights leaders who establish different relationships with each follower, resulting in the leader's treatment of the follower (Northouse, 2019; Waglay et al., 2020). Scholar's document mixed sentiments regarding the LMX theory. Critics of the theory state that the LMX method includes many flaws, including conceptual and modeling issues (Gottfredson et al., 2020). However, extensive literature from the proponents of the theory documents its value. The LMX theory positively impacts organizational commitment amongst minorities in the technology industry

(Windeler & Reimenschneider, 2016, as cited in Hickman & Akdere, 2018). The use of the appropriate leadership style supports organizational diversity.

Leadership Diversity Impacts on Organizational Performance

The literature supports the premise that leadership diversity impacts organizational performance. Scholars agree that leadership diversity and diverse workforces positively influence organizational performance and innovation (Lerman et al., 2022; Potvin et al., 2018). In healthcare, the increase in leadership diversity is the link to positively impacting patient care (Harris, 2021). While the scholarly community agrees that leadership diversity impacts organizational performance from a high-level perspective, the literature presents various findings from research that perform analyses at a more granular level.

Harris concluded that individual leader cognitive and demographic diversity characteristics, the aggregated diversity components of organizational leaders, have a central role in determining organizational performance and impact strategic decisions made by leaders (T. Lee et al., 2021). Loh et al., 2022 supported this premise, finding that the impact of leadership diversity on organizational performance differs between different leader nationalities and other leader diversity characteristics. The findings for the specific diversity characteristics of age, gender, and education align with the findings for the general perspective on leadership diversity's impacts on organizational performance. Loh et al. indicated that gender, age, and educational diversity positively impacted organizational performance in companies studied in Singapore. Discovered nuances also related to specific diversity characteristics. Loh et al. found that balance matters and that gender diversity in leadership is most impactful when the number of female leaders equals the number of male leaders. The impact begins to decline when the number of

female leaders exceeds 50%. Lafuente and Vaillant (2019) supported these findings and highlighted the importance of leadership diversity balance to organizational performance.

The tenure of the leadership was also the target of research. Tenure was found to positively impact organizational performance, attributed to an accumulation of knowledge (Jukka, 2021). Contrary to the findings for other diversity characteristics, leadership experience alone had no impact on organizational performance in companies studied in Singapore (Loh et al., 2022). However, Loh et al. also found that experience combined with age diversity has a positive impact on organizational performance. Not all scholars agree with the positive impacts of specific leadership diversity characteristics. Lu et al., (2022) found that gender diversity negatively impacted inbound and outbound innovation performance within an organization. Lu et al. also found that age diversity negatively impacted inbound innovation but positively impacted outbound innovation. However, the findings also highlighted the diversity in the TMT, which influenced the success rate of innovation within an organization. Other research has similar findings relative to age diversity. Jukka (2021) found that the increase in the age of the TMT negatively impacted organizational performance, attributed to a decline in cognitive ability; however, experience moderated the negative impact. The findings vary based on diversity category, combined diversity categories, and the existence of moderating factors. This study expanded extant research on leadership diversity and further explored the impacts.

Leadership Diversity Impacts on the Workforce

Researchers of extant literature documented the impacts of leadership diversity specific to the workforce. Diverse leaders develop and implement diverse business practices, positively influencing the workforce (Ashikali et al., 2021). For example, a researcher from the healthcare industry found that when specific diversity actions and intervention measures occur at the

organizational and individual levels in healthcare systems. The diversity culture within the organization and diversity within the workforce increased, which positively impacted competencies within the workforce (Weech-Maldonado et al., 2018). An agreement exists in the scholarly community regarding the positive impacts of diversified leadership. Diversified leadership was found to improve work environments by creating a more inclusive workplace (Martins, 2020). Diversified leadership also influences the attitudes and actions of the workforce. Leadership diversity positively influences the organizational commitment of the workforce, which leads employees to a more robust engagement with their organizations (Saleem et al., 2021). Lack of leadership diversity could also impact the organization. From the open innovation perspective, an organization's competitive advantage could become lost if the TMT is not inclusive (Lu et al., 2022). The impact of leadership diversity on the workforce demonstrates the need for diversified leadership.

The Problem

The general problem addressed was the persistence of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry, resulting in employee turnover. The specific problem addressed was the lack of diversity in leadership in a global technology company, which increased employee turnover and led to increased operational costs. The literature documents a persistent issue with leadership diversity in the technology industry (McGee, 2018). The analysis of the impacts of employee turnover leading to increased operational costs and the technology industry are new aspects that need exploring. This literature review segment provides a scholarly perspective of the various elements of the problem.

Leadership Diversity in Technology

Leadership diversity pertains to the technology industry was an essential component explored in this study. Organizational leadership includes the top management team (TMT), which are the senior executives in the organization (Carpenter et al., 2004 as cited in Jukka, 2021; Lo et al., 2020), who is responsible for establishing and executing organizational strategy (Nielsen, 2010 as cited in Lo et al., 2020). The leadership team also includes first-line managers and middle managers who share in leading the workforce (Jones & George, 2019). Leadership diversity, specifically in the technology industry, included mixed findings regarding the impact, with some scholars finding positive and negative impacts. Leadership diversity within the technology industry was found to have a positive impact when proper support systems were in place that included support of management and leadership at all levels (McGee, 2018). Extant researchers found a positive correlation between employee turnover and the presence of some leadership diversity components. However, the research does not evaluate the lack of leadership diversity, and the researchers recommended further evaluation of industry differentiation (Jankelová et al., 2022). Proponents of leadership diversity in technology document other benefits. Hickman and Akdere (2018) stated that leadership diversity is necessary because diverse knowledge and expertise are necessary for successful information technology solutions. Not all scholars agree with the positive impacts of leadership diversity in technology. Triana et al. (2019) found that leadership diversity in the technology industry, specifically gender diversity, negatively impacted organizational performance through strategic change. The varied findings demonstrate the need for additional research.

Leadership and Employee Turnover

Another component of the problem is the impact of leadership on employee turnover. An unprecedented amount of turnover occurred in the workforce between April 2020 and September 2021, named *the Great Resignation*. Researchers document several aspects of toxic corporate culture as key contributing factors, including the diversity component (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022; Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022). Toxic culture encompasses behaviors and policies that fail to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion and an environment that tolerates disrespectful and unethical behaviors (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). Duncan (2023) included feeling disrespected and lacking advancement opportunities, among the reasons for employee turnover during the Great Resignation. Exploring the demographics of those who quit provides additional context to the rise in employee turnover during the Great Resignation.

The age demographic showed that the younger the age group, the higher the turnover rate. According to the Pew Research Center study, respondents who quit during the Great Resignation grouped accordingly: 37% were 18–29, 17% were 30–49, 9% were 50–64, and 5% were 65 and over (Parker & Horowitz, 2022). The research demonstrates that a toxic work culture was a core driver of the increase in employee turnover during the Great Resignation. Most of the employees who left were from the younger generational cohort. Formica and Sfodera (2022) reported that toxic culture and lack of growth opportunities concern employees, especially Millennials, and contributed to the Great Resignation. Researchers also documented a link between a toxic organizational culture and organizational leadership. Organizational leadership is the best predictor of organizational culture, especially when the culture is toxic (Sull & Sull, 2023). Correlations between the documented contributed factors and leadership were necessary to further understand the relationship between leadership and employee turnover.

Lack of Diversity in the Technology Industry

The lack of diversity in the technology industry is another crucial component explored in this study. Researcher of the extant literature documents a persistent problem with a lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry (“Gender Diversity in the Technology Industry: Improving Recruitment Practices,” 2023; McGee, 2018). This issue is well documented in the literature. The technology industry remains a male-dominated profession, with diversity numbers continuing to decline (Botella et al., 2019). In 2022, women representation was as low as 12% of all employees working in leadership and managerial roles at large technology companies (Statistica, 2023). McGee (2018) stated that the information technology industry has a low diversity rate. While this low level of diversity refers to the entire workforce, the literature also highlights diversity at the leadership level. Atal et al. (2019) stated that leadership diversity remains low despite attempts to address the problem. Alegria (2020) stated that people of color in the technology industry are consistently excluded from leadership positions. Statistics show that in 2021, Black talent comprised 12.9% of executive leadership roles in the top nine technology companies in the United States (Goins et al., 2022).

Much of the focus in the literature on the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry targets gender diversity. Underrepresentation of Women continues in leadership in the technology industry (Lamolla & Ramos, 2020; Catalyst, 2018, as cited in Triana et al., 2019). Botella et al. (2019) stated that the technology industry remains a male-dominated industry. The specific challenge of gender diversity in the technology industry links to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) academics. Enrollment for women in STEM disciplines remains low (Botella et al., 2019; Tao & Gloria, 2019). STEM is not the only cause of the diversity issue but is at the root. For STEM-related professions, diversity cannot succeed if the candidate pool

has a limited number of diverse resources. Recruitment, candidate selection, managerial relationships, and feedback contribute to the gender diversity issue in the technology industry (Atal et al., 2019). These factors demonstrate the potential issue with the systematic approach to obtaining and retaining diverse resources. An organization's diversity initiatives should include recruitment and selection activities. Obtaining diverse resources requires the management component that needs addressing as an element of retention. Researchers in the literature also discussed age diversity. The average age of workers in the technology industry is lower than that of workers in the total workforce (Sung & Choi, 2021). This element needs consideration when exploring the perpetual issue of the lack of diversity. The diverse composition of the workforce, including leadership within the technology industry, was a consideration in this study.

Factors Contributing to the Lack of Leadership Diversity

Determining the factors perpetuating the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry can lead to understanding how to modernize leadership practices that can improve leadership diversity and positively impact the workforce. Lack of leadership diversity negatively impacts organizational outcomes, such as productivity, innovation, and job satisfaction (Potvin et al., 2018). McGee (2018) found several themes that impeded diversity at top leadership levels, including complicated career progression pathways, informal organizational networks and biases, credibility and legitimacy challenges rooted in stereotypes, and ill belief systems. A researcher studying women in the technology industry listed the following reasons as hindrances to career progression: lack of mentors, lack of female role models, biases in the workplace, disparity in growth opportunities, and compensation disparity (Botella et al., 2019). The literature demonstrates that barriers perpetuate the lack of diversity in leadership (Botella et al., 2019; McGee, 2018). The literature also includes documented initiatives implemented to

mitigate the issue, yet the issue persists (Botella et al., 2019; Sulik et al., 2022). I targeted the impacts of this persistent issue. Minimal research exists on the impacts of a persistent lack of leadership diversity on employee turnover (Potvin et al., 2018). Specifically, this research included exploring the correlation of these elements.

Strategic Leadership and Diversity

Scholars have not adopted a single definition of strategic leadership. For this discussion, strategic leadership has been defined as the combination of business strategy and leadership functions and can be described as a mechanism for organizational leaders to create progressive plans that can be executed to direct the path of an organization (Ali et al., 2019). Strategic leadership is needed in the modern workplace to address diverse challenges. When leaders are progressive in establishing effective diversity measures, the entire organization benefits (Melnkovic & Wilding, 2022). Modernized strategic diversity leadership practices could yield positive impacts for organizations and extend the current understanding of leadership practices (Martins, 2020). A better understanding of leadership diversity practices relevant to the technology industry is a component of this study. Evaluation of leadership diversity in the technology industry can aid in targeting specific areas relative to the industry, which researchers could address (Lu et al., 2022). Discovering areas that need addressing could benefit the strategic leadership processes relative to diversity.

Concepts

The concepts identified in this literature review section are most relevant to this study and help provide context. A scholarly review of the concepts includes a detailed perspective. The concepts identified for this research are diversity affects employee turnover and leadership

development affects diversity. This literature review segment presents a scholarly perspective of the elements encompassed in the concepts.

Diversity Affects Employee Turnover

Diversity affects employee turnover, which encompasses diversity, including diversity management and employee turnover. The literature includes documentation on the impacts of diversity on employee turnover (M. Ali & French, 2019; J. Lee et al., 2020). This section of the literature review includes discussions of diversity elements, specifically diversity management, workforce diversity, and age diversity.

Diversity Management

Organizational leadership is responsible for diversity management. The execution of diversity management has direct implications for the workforce. Diversity management acknowledges the benefits of and encourages diversity (Sabharwal et al., 2018), expecting equality in the workplace (Leslie, 2019; Sabharwal et al., 2018). Diversity management is essential in the modern workplace. The minimalist approach to diversity management is to adhere to legislation-established standards (Jankelová et al., 2022). While the minimalist approach may meet legal obligations, it will not be the organization's most effective course of action. Diversity management encompasses promoting diversity in the workforce through management activities, understanding the importance of diversity to the company, promoting cultural awareness of the importance of diversity, and instituting company goals that target diversity (Jankelová et al., 2022). These additional measures increase an organization's chances for successful diversity management in the modern workforce. Diversity management researchers studied the programs, policies, and practices developed and implemented within an organization to effectively manage a diverse workforce (Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014; Prasad &

Mills, 1997 as cited in Dennissen et al., 2020). The activities required to manage diversity properly require understanding the needs of the various diversity groups. For example, researchers in the literature on women of color deal with many biases, microaggressions, and stereotypes. Women often receive more negative than positive feedback and benefit from better communication related to success (Purushothaman & Rein, 2023). Researchers also found that covert, overt, and systemic racism have significant negative impacts on the health of women of color (Reiners, 2021). An effective diversity management strategy would address the specific challenges experienced by women of color.

Enhanced measures of diversity management include establishing diversity as a resource and utilizing diversity as a mechanism to stimulate organizational culture (Jankelová et al., 2022). Senior leaders in the organization cannot ignore the influence of diversity management. The words and actions of the CEOs set the tone for the execution of diversity management (Ng & Sears, 2020). Organizations must recruit and retain leaders who will address diversity issues and support diversity initiatives (Purushothaman & Rein, 2023). Ng and Sears also highlighted that interpreting the CEO's messaging on diversity management is crucial to execution. The interpretation translates into the diversity management policies and procedures. Organizational leaders must act as change agents to effectively deploy a good diversity management strategy that captures the CEO's vision (Ng & Sears, 2020). The literature documents recommendations for successful diversity management. Leaders can improve diversity management efforts by better communicating feedback and placing candidates in leadership positions with diverse backgrounds. In addition, leaders can implement good coaching strategies and cultivate an inclusive environment. In turn, awarding diversity, equity, and inclusive efforts, encouraging self-care, and not rewarding toxic behaviors (Purushothaman & Rein, 2023). As diversity

management policies and practices, the workforce's diversity composition should remain at the forefront of the discussion.

Diversity Management Impacts

Researchers of extant literature document the many positive impacts of diversity management. The intended positive impacts of diversity management include increasing members of diverse groups within the organization, reduced career gaps, and increased inclusion (Leslie, 2019). Effective diversity management also leads organizations to gain a competitive advantage, increased employee engagement, and a sense of belonging (Jankelová et al., 2022). Employees experience the impact of diversity management at various levels throughout the organization. Diversity management is not just the recognition of the varying skills, abilities, and perspectives, but it also encompasses activities to leverage diversity to impact the organization positively (Jankelová et al., 2022). Researchers document that there is a correlation between the increase in the number of diversity management practices and the increase in diversity in management positions (Schoen & Rost, 2021). As with other diversity literature, specific diversity groups add granularity in context to the discussion. The study's findings on age diversity management supported extant research, stating that if employees perceive that organizations support diversity, employees will have more trust, loyalty, and commitment to the organization (Ali & French, 2019). Ali and French also found that proper age diversity management could positively influence employee retention, profit margins, and corporate social responsibility. These findings do not preclude the diversity management of other diversity groups from making the same impact. Unfortunately, diversity management also has the potential for negative impacts. Ineffective diversity management can lead to increased conflicts, negative impacts on quality, inhibited innovation and creation, and increased employee turnover

(Jankelová et al., 2022). Additionally, backfire, negative spillover, and false progress were unintended, adverse outcomes of diversity management (Leslie, 2019). Proactive measures of organizational leadership must occur for effective diversity management. This study added to extant research relative to the impacts of diversity, including diversity management, on employee turnover.

Workforce Diversity

Workforce diversity is apparent yet also simultaneously ambiguous. The meaning is apparent, as its meaning identifies by its name. However, it is also ambiguous because of the many diversity categories. Diversity categories include, but are not limited to, demographic attributes such as gender and age (Ali & French, 2019; Atal et al., 2019; Botella et al., 2019; “Gender Diversity in the Technology Industry: Improving Recruitment Practices,” 2023; T. Lee et al., 2021; Potvin et al., 2018; Sung & Choi, 2021; Thams et al., 2018), cognitive diversity (T. Lee et al., 2021), status diversity, which includes status, prestige, resource control, and authority (Sung & Choi, 2021), education diversity (Guillaume et al., 2017), cultural diversity (Lo et al., 2020), ethnic diversity (Hsiao et al., 2020), race diversity (Luu et al., 2019), and faith diversity (Park & Martinez, 2022). Knowing and understanding the diversity composition within an organization is essential for organizational leaders and an important aspect of diversity management. Workforce diversity is valuable to organizations (Jankelová et al., 2022). The needs of the diversity groups cannot succeed if the diversity composition within an organization is not understood.

Age Diversity

Age diversity is another significant factor in the modern workplace because of an unprecedented number of generational cohorts. The modern workplace has five generational

cohorts (Ezold, 2018), including Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials), and Generation Z (Zoomers) (Purdue University Global, 2021). Each generational cohort has differing mindsets, expectations, priorities, and goals, which adds to the complexity of the diversity issue and effective diversity management within an organization.

Leadership Development Affects Diversity

Leadership development is another essential element. Relevant to this study is the documented impact of leadership development on diversity (Bilimoria & Singer, 2019; Hughes, 2018; Soklaridis et al., 2022; Yen et al., 2019). Leaders develop in many ways, such as leadership training, formal educational programs, and formal leadership development programs. The development of leadership is not as important as the fact that it is developed. This section of the literature review discusses leadership development. Organizational culture correlates with effective leadership practices and is discussed in this literature review section.

Leadership Development

Leadership development has become an essential aspect of organizational corporate strategy. Unfortunately, hired leaders often lack the skillset needed for effectiveness. Literature states that leaders are often hired lacking leadership qualities necessary to positively impact employee turnover, such as the ability to identify job satisfaction issues (Robertson, 2021). Leadership development programs contribute to building competent leaders in the workforce (Ayeleke et al., 2019). Literature distinguishes between the concepts of leadership training and leadership development. Leadership development focuses on long-term, strategic issues, self-management, social facilitation, and work facilitation (Muir, 2014, as cited in Turner et al., 2018). Other documented aspects of leadership development include the focus on skills and behaviors that can enhance leadership abilities and diversity management (Hughes, 2018;

Soklaridis et al., 2022; Yen et al., 2019), and it helps to improve leadership behaviors and styles, such as communication and transformational leadership (Cohrs et al., 2020). No one has the right way to execute leadership development. The lack of standardization in leadership development is not a hindrance, but the most important is that leadership development occurs (Miller, 2020).

Regarding diversity, leadership development must intentionally address diversity in the workplace. One researcher stated that to address race concerns, leadership development must include proactive measures to ensure the topic appears in diversity programs (Miller, 2020). Leaders must initiate programs with a purpose. Unintentional leadership development programs were ineffective (Couch & Citrin, 2018). Extant literature researchers documented various characteristics that contribute to the effectiveness of leadership development programs, such as targeting specific leadership competencies. Additionally, Miller stated that leadership development should be a multipronged approach that addresses individual attributes and skills, leader knowledge, and environmental factors. Couch and Citrin (2018) supported this sentiment, stating that limiting the number of competencies included in the programs should occur in addition to the targeted competencies.

Using information from the workforce can help determine the competencies needed for leadership development (Bassi & McMurrer, 2016). Gathering this information from the workforce could be incorporated into a feedback mechanism. Incorporating feedback into leadership development programs significantly improved leadership skills (Larcenza et al. 2017, as cited in Cohrs et al., 2020). The practical application of the competencies enhances the effectiveness of the leadership development programs. Leadership development programs are most effective when they address real, practical scenarios and should not be individually focused (Turner et al., 2018). An agreement in the scholarly community concerns this point. Turner et al.

(2018) stated that including practical applications increases the effectiveness of leadership development. Another characteristic of effective leadership is the use of a phased approach. Ayeleke et al. (2019) found that personnel implement effective leadership programs in phases and used various methods. Researchers also documented several other considerations for effective leadership programs, such as the level of the individual leader. Leaders at differing levels have different development needs (Day et al., 2009, as cited in Kragt & Guenter, 2018). Additional considerations include integration into daily leadership routines, building flexibility, incorporating a development cadence, and ensuring the development strategy considers the skills of the talent pool and incorporates collaborative learning methods (Couch & Citrin, 2018). Consider globalization, where leadership development programs include environmental variations, which incorporate environmental change and adaptation (Godfrey-Smith, 1998, as cited in Turner et al., 2018). Incorporation of critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and sense-making training (Turner et al., 2018). These previously listed characteristics demonstrate the complexities of developing effective leadership development programs. The literature also demonstrates the importance of leadership development.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture sets the tone for the organization. Organizational culture encompasses shared beliefs, goals, values, norms, and work practices that drive organizational members' interactions and determine the best workplace practices to achieve desired organizational outcomes (Jones & George, 2019). Organizational culture is the guide for proper behavior within the organization. This culture consists of shared beliefs and values, which the organizational leaders establish and then communicate and reinforce to the workforce through various mechanisms. Ultimately shaping employee perceptions, behaviors, and understanding

(SHRM, 2022, as cited in Duncan, 2023). Miller (2020) supported this definition, stating that organizational leaders establish the organizational culture and overarching beliefs. Furthermore, organizational culture cannot change unless leaders are adequately equipped and trained. The literature is clear that organizational leaders are essential to establishing and promoting organizational culture.

Miller (2020) documented the importance of organizational culture in the modern workplace. Gupta (2019) stated that in this current landscape of diversity; to attract the best talent, organizations must create an inclusive culture and manage diverse employees. Organizational cultures that have greater leadership diversity are more predictive of female representation (Potvin et al., 2018). This factor demonstrates the premise that diversity breeds diversity. Empirical data supports extant research that states that women in senior leadership roles create cultures that are more inviting and assessable for other women in the science industry (Potvin et al., 2018). Diversity must groom organizational culture.

Toxic Organizational Culture

Given the current workplace diversity level, organizations must create cultures conducive to a diverse workforce. Unethical behaviors and disrespectful, non-inclusive, cutthroat, and abusive environments comprise the top five attributes associated with a toxic culture (Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022). The element of a non-inclusive organizational culture highlights a key diversity element. Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al. stated that the organizational culture is generally non-inclusive and contains cliques and groups that create an environment exclusive to the general employee population. Additionally, while a non-inclusive organizational culture includes all demographics, the following five demographic groups ranked highest for being impacted, including gender, race, gender identity and orientation, disability, and age. Relational issues also

contributed to a non-inclusive, toxic organizational culture, specifically, cronyism, referring to nepotism, leadership favoritism, and cliques. Another perspective on toxic culture highlights ethics. Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al. found that during periods of high organizational change, organizational leaders experience a significant increase in pressure and are more likely to engage in unethical behaviors. Unethical behaviors foster toxic cultures, as employees observe unethical actions by leadership and feel pressured to emulate the leaders (Meidav, 2021). Perpetuating toxic behavior is a symptom of organizations with cultural issues. Despite involved grievance policies and robust investigative processes, personnel lack follow-up and action concerning complaints about toxic behaviors (Purushothaman & Rein, 2023). Ignoring the issues contributes to the perpetuation of a toxic culture.

To better understand various organizational culture components and determine the root elements of the toxic culture, scholars recommend analyzing organizational culture at organizational and individual levels. Targeting company averages or organizational-level analysis could lead to missing the toxic elements of organizational culture. Therefore, it is necessary to assess individual levels (Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022). Assessing culture in this manner provides more insight into the culture that would not otherwise appear. Through the execution of organizational level and individual level analysis, Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al. 2022 found that the organizational cultural attributes contributing factors to a toxic culture at both levels include disrespect (Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022) and unethical behaviors (Meidav, 2021; Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022).

Literature researchers also document the impact of a toxic culture. A toxic organizational culture could impact employee health by causing increased stress levels, burnout, and mental and physical illness (Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022). Purushothaman and Rein (2023) agreed with

this premise and added that toxic work environments are making women of color physically ill. Employee turnover is another area linked to toxic cultures. Scholars estimated that toxic cultures can lead to employee turnover (Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022). Other scholars agree that toxic culture was the best predictor of attrition during the first six months of the Great Resignation (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022; Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022). On the contrary, companies with a reputation for a healthy culture experienced lower turnover during the Great Resignation (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). A toxic culture negatively causes many other factors. The list of negative impacts includes negative impacts on the organization's brand. In addition, hiring, financial standing because of decreased productivity, unethical or illegal behaviors (Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022), and competitive advantage (Triana et al., 2019). The impacts of toxic organizational cultures demonstrate the need to understand and address the issues.

Theories

Many theories were relevant to this study. The theories applied in this study were found most relevant. The following discussion presents a scholarly perspective on the leader-member exchange (LMX), upper echelons, and complexity theories.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory is a leadership theory that highlights relationships. LMX theory is a leadership style based on the relationship between the leader and the follower. Leaders develop closer relationships with members of an in-group who get more of the leader's attention and are willing to do more for the leader than members in an out-group (Northouse, 2019). Other scholars extend this description and state that the LMX theory includes the assumption that leaders differentiate how they treat their followers. The theory aligns with the type of exchange and impacts the quality of the relationship (Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2018).

The LMX theory targets the nature and quality of the relationship between leaders and followers (Cortellazzo et al., 2019). Trust, respect, and mutual obligation characterize the quality of the relationship that influences organizational outcomes (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995, as cited in Hickman & Akdere, 2018; Gerstner & Day, 1997, as cited in Cortellazzo et al., 2019).

The quality of the leader-follower relationship influences the relationship outcomes. For the employee, high-quality relationships established through the LMX theory positively impact job satisfaction and employee wellbeing (Anand et al., 2011 as cited in Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2018). The leader establishes strong relationships through the LMX theory, positively impacting the leader's effectiveness, which increases satisfaction and commitment (Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2018). High-quality relationships were also found to provoke comparisons among followers, leading to workplace ostracism (Wang & Li, 2018). The premise of the LMX theory can apply to various components of this study. LMX theory positively influences organizational commitment among employees in the information technology industry (Windeler & Reimenschneider, 2016, as cited in Hickman & Akdere, 2018) and attributes to promoting diversity (Turi et al., 2022). Exploring the leader-follower relationship contributed to understanding the impacts leaders have on follower decision-making, including the decision to quit.

Upper Echelons Theory

The upper echelons theory is vital to the foundation of this study. The upper echelons theory assumes that an organization's actions are the results of the organization's top management teams (TMT). The injection of filtered information based upon their cognitive base, values, perceptions, and interpretations impacts the environment (Hambrick and Mason, 1984, as cited in Triana et al., 2019), and the characteristics of the TMT significantly impact organizational outcomes (Triana et al., 2019). Jukka (2021) characterized the upper echelons

theory as utilizing the demographics of an organization's top executives to determine the cognitive state of the leadership team. In addition, aggregated properties of the leadership team link to an organization's strategic plan and performance. The impact of the TMT on an organization's innovation is a documented result. The upper echelons theory states that the senior management of an organization can predict the organization's innovation and effectiveness (Bantel & Jackson, 1989, Hambrick et al., 1996, Hambrick & Mason, 1984, Ruiz-Jimenez & Fuentes-Fuentes, 2016 as cited in Triana et al., 2019). Frambach and Schillewaert, 2002 as cited in Lu et al. (2022) agreed with the positive impact on organizational innovation. They added that the TMT influences an organization's path and culture.

The upper echelons theory highlights specific diversity characteristics of the TMT. The targeted characteristics of the TMT include age, experience, functional background, education, socioeconomic roots, financial position (Hambrick and Mason, 1984, as cited in Triana et al., 2019), nationality (Cannella, as cited in Lo et al., 2020). In addition, cultural background (Lo et al., 2020), tenure, and functional background (Sperber & Linder, 2018). The upper echelons theory is nuanced and not straightforward (Triana et al., 2014, as cited in Triana et al., 2019). Applying this theory allows the nuances of the concepts of this study for research at a deeper level. Specifically, exploring diversity characteristics at a granular level in this study can impact outcomes. For example, extant research specific to gender diversity in the TMT that utilized the upper echelons theory as a foundation found gender diversity within the TMT to positively impact strategic change and organizational performance. Organizations are amenable to establishing alliances when educational diversity exists within the TMT (Triana et al., 2019). Triana et al. contributed to the upper echelons theory literature by evaluating the impacts of strategic change from a comprehensive senior leadership perspective. Jukka (2021) stated that

the upper echelons theory aggregates the demographic characteristics of the TMT and uses them as a determinant of the cognitive state and traits of the TMT. The TMT can relate to the organization's decisions and performance. The Jukka study also contributes to the upper echelons theory literature by evaluating aspects of organizational performance's TMT age and tenure diversity.

Not all scholars agree with the upper echelons theory. Díaz-Fernández et al. (2020) stated that research relative to the upper echelons theory is contradictory and insufficiently mature. Despite the lack of agreement in the scholarly community, overwhelming support exists in the literature for the theory. Therefore, this study used the upper echelons theory to explore the impacts of the TMT on the workforce.

Complexity Theory

The Complexity Theory is a theory with a broad foundation. The complexity theory includes several assumptions that include the existence of independent components, which include their diversity elements, and the ability for change based on the connections and interactions of the components (Pavlov & Micheli, 2023). Implementing the principles of the complexity theory provides a mechanism for a deeper evaluation of the components. The complexity theory extends the framework of the upper echelons theory by targeting the relationships between the top management teams (TMT) diversity components and high organizational performance (Díaz-Fernández et al., 2020). Pavlov and Micheli stated that when aligning the evaluation of organizational performance with the complexity theory, the interactions between individuals generate organizational performance. The literature documents varied findings on TMT diversity attributes and organizational performance, including positive, negative, and no impacts (Díaz-Fernández et al., 2020). However, the literature does encourage

the application of the complexity theory for future research (Díaz-Fernández et al., 2020; Pavlov & Micheli, 2023). This study included the complexity theory to explore leadership diversity, its influence on the workforce, and the impacts on employee turnover.

Constructs

The constructs identified for this study provide context and understanding of the identified problem. The relevant constructs are diversity, leadership diversity, employee turnover, and operational costs. This section of the literature review presents a scholarly perspective of each construct. The discussion also explores how each construct is relevant to this study.

Diversity

Diversity is an essential construct in this study. Diversity is the variety of differences among organizational members concerning specific attributes (Harrison & Klein, 2007, as cited in Triana et al., 2021). The list of differences and attributes included within a diverse composition is extensive. Diversity encompasses, but is not limited to, various cultures and ethnicities that exist within an organization (Northouse, 2019). This includes different aspects of individuals, such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, income level, and religion (Potvin et al., 2018). Diversity has many impacts. One critical impact of diversity is that it benefits organizations because it increases the variety of information and allows for various perspectives (Lu et al., 2022). Loh et al. (2022) confirmed and added to findings from extant literature that state that leadership diversity positively impacts organizational performance. Sung and Choi (2021) and Turi et al. (2022) agreed with the premise of the positive impacts of a diversified workforce on organizational performance. Given the composition of the modern workforce, proactively building a diverse workforce is essential to organizations. Technology is a

mechanism that can increase diversity (Webster & Williams, 2018). Researchers in the literature document a correlation between an increase in diversity management practices and an increase in diversity in the workforce (Schoen & Rost, 2021). Diversity is complex and researched at the leadership and employee level in the study.

Leadership Diversity

Leadership diversity is another essential element in the modern workplace. Leadership diversity refers to the compositional makeup of the management team, including variations in backgrounds and expertise, within an organization (Lu et al., 2022). Leadership diversity has a positive impact on an organization, such as positively impacting organizational governance and performance (Loh et al., 2022), maximizing organizational potential (Lerman et al., 2022), and improving innovation (Sung & Choi, 2021). Despite its importance, leadership diversity remains challenging in the modern workplace. The United States ranked 51 in 2018, which was down from ranking 45 in 2016, on the Global Gender Gap report that rates the equal treatment of women considering various aspects such as financial participation and opportunity, education, and political empowerment (World Economic Forum, 2018 as cited in Triana et al., 2019). Despite a downward trend in leadership diversity for women in the United States, some industries gained positive changes. In science society cultures, researchers found that women were more likely to hold leadership positions (Potvin et al., 2018). While there is a disparity between industries, the issue remains. Literature documents that many women of color are first-generation professional workers with few professional peers (Purushothaman & Rein, 2023), which poses a challenge in attaining leadership positions. Relative to the technology industry, the skillset needed for leadership is expanded. In addition to good leadership, business, and soft skills, candidates need good technical skills for leadership roles in the technology industry

(McGee, 2018). Leadership diversity is another aspect that continues to lack in the modern workplace.

Leadership Diversity Impacts

Leadership diversity has many impacts on an organization. Researchers documents that organizations with increased diversity and equity within leadership are more inclusive, productive, and innovative (Potvin et al., 2018). A researcher in the healthcare industry found that increased leadership diversity reduces disparities and produces better problem resolutions (Soklaridis et al., 2022). Organizational cultural elements can impact TMT diversity. Organizations will experience increased benefits to gender diversity within the TMT when the organization is receptive to multiple perspectives (Triana et al., 2019). Increasing leadership diversity is a strategic action. Leadership diversity in the workforce is a strategic asset that positively impacts an organization's competitive advantage (Jankelová et al., 2022). The literature supports assessing leadership diversity components to better understand the impacts of leadership diversity. Assessing surface-level leadership characteristics, such as age and gender, compared to deep-level characteristics, such as experience and educational background, provides the ability to understand the influence of specific leadership characteristics on diversity (Lu et al., 2022). In assessing gender diversity within the TMT, Lu et al. found that increased gender diversity within the TMT can positively benefit organizational performance in complex environments (Triana et al., 2019). Triana et al. also found that organizations would benefit from a balance between men and women in leadership by gaining improved performance through better strategic change when alliances and educational diversity exist. Innovation is another documented area impacted by leadership diversity. The level of open innovation in an organization is contingent upon the level of diversity and the type of diversity within the TMT

(Lu et al., 2022). Some scholars have found negative impacts resulting from leadership diversity. The diversity among leaders could stifle innovation, hinder the ability to reach a consensus, complicate communications, and negatively impact agility and the decision-making process (Loh et al., 2022). The study explored the impacts of leadership diversity on employee turnover that could lead to increased operational costs.

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover depicts employees leaving their employers. Scholars define employee turnover as the representation of employees who leave their positions (Reed, 2021), and the voluntary separation of an employee from their employer (Kuzior et al., 2022). Employee turnover has various impacts on organizations. Employee turnover impacts are costly to organizations because of the loss of experienced and productive employees and the cost of recruiting and training new employees (Dess & Shaw, 2001, Shaw, Gupta, & Delery, 2005 as cited in Autrey et al., 2019). Many reasons exist as to why employees decide to leave their employers. Burnout has been documented as a contributing factor to employee turnover (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). Relative to the technology industry, Sull, Sull, and Zweig also stated that innovation could lead to burnout, which could lead to employee turnover. However, burnout is not a direct measure of turnover. While burnout is not a new factor found to contribute to turnover, the impacts of burnout significantly increased in the healthcare sector during the pandemic. The issue equates to inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE), moral and ethical dilemmas, and staggering numbers of colleague deaths (Sheather & Slattery, 2021). Jura (2022) found that the primary complaints reported for employee turnover were burnout and feeling unappreciated. Many other contributing factors exist to employee turnover. Passive leadership actions, oversight of employee concerns, and a lack of job satisfaction links to high

rates of employee turnover (Robertson, 2021). Employees are also leaving to prioritize their mental health (Purushothaman & Rein, 2023). Understanding the root cause of employee turnover can assist organizational leadership in mitigating the issue.

A key element of this study is diversity. Diversity groups have nuances and may have varying reasons for leaving their employer. For example, regarding age diversity, factors that impact employee turnover vary between generational cohorts. Researchers show that specific factors motivate work engagement for Generations Y (Millennials) and Generation Z (Zoomers) differ. The factors of motivation for both cohorts can categorize as personal values and self-fulfillment-related factors (Kuzior et al., 2022). Duncan (2023) stated that Millennials cared more about work culture than salary. Kuzior et al. also stated that studies showed that in 2021, the number of Millennials and Zoomers will increase. Kuzior et al. stated that millennials were planning to change jobs almost double the amount of Baby Boomers. Formica and Sfodera (2022) documented that Millennials were highly represented in the Great Resignation. Employee turnover is a core element explored in this study.

The Great Resignation

The Great Resignation is a recent phenomenon that occurred in the modern workplace. The Great Resignation highlights issues with employee turnover in the modern workplace. The Great Resignation is a significant loss of employees from the voluntary separation of employees that significantly impacted inflation (Kuzior et al., 2022; Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022), According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, the Great Resignation has positively linked to the increase in inflation (Kuzior et al., 2022). The Great Resignation represents over twenty-four million employees who left their employers between April 2020 and September 2021 (Demirkaya et al., 2022; Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). Continuing through the Summer of 2022

(Formica & Sfodera, 2022). Other researchers documented that during the Great Resignation, almost fifty million employees in the United States voluntarily separated from their employers (Kuzior et al., 2022). In April 2021, four million employees voluntarily left their jobs (Robertson, 2021). This phenomenon did not just occur in the United States. The Great Resignation impacted countries globally (Demirkaya et al., 2022; Kuzior et al., 2022). This phenomenon was not limited to specific industries; not all industries were equally affected. Resignation rates were high during the Great Resignation and impacted blue-collar companies, such as the apparel retail industry, and the fast-food restaurant industry. Equally impacted were white-collar, such as management consulting and the engineering sector (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). The technology industry was an industry significantly impacted during the Great Resignation, with one of the highest attrition rates of (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). The Great Resignation had a significant impact, still evaluated by the scholarly community. Evaluating the Great Resignation contributed to the overall understanding of employee turnover.

Causes of the Great Resignation

Researchers are still exploring the causes of the Great Resignation; however, they have begun to capture factors that spawned this phenomenon. The analysis of causes of the Great Resignation from various perspectives, including mental stress, burnout, and mental disorders, such as anxiety and depression (Kuzior et al., 2022). Scholars agreed that burnout significantly contributed to employee turnover during the Great Resignation (Hurria, 2023; Jura, 2022). A correlation between a decreased quality of life, which was experienced during the pandemic, and depression, leading to higher turnover (Demirkaya et al., 2022). Other factors that impacted attrition during the Great Resignation included job insecurity and reorganizations, highly innovative environments, lack of performance recognition, and poor response to COVID-19

(Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). The reasons for employee turnover are extensive. A Pew Research Center study that had 6627 non-retired workers in the United States captured the major and minor reasons employees left their employment in 2021. The study found the following major and minor reasons combined percentages: 63% cited low pay, 63% cited no advancement opportunities, and 57% cited feeling disrespected (Parker & Horowitz, 2022). Other reasons for attrition found in research include ethical, cultural, relational, and personal, where the emphasis was on flexibility and self-development (Kuzior et al., 2022). Researchers also document reasons why employees were considering leaving but had not yet left their employers. According to a survey of 2542 adult workers in August 2021, 55% were seeking new employment opportunities, of which 56% cited working hours arrangements. Fifty-three percent cited higher pay, 47% cited job security, and 41% cited remote work options as the reasons for their decision (Kuzior et al., 2022). A theme seen in these studies is employees who left and those considering leaving, which encompasses organizational culture. Toxic culture is a significant driver for attrition early during the Great Resignation (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022; Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., 2022). Sull, Sull, and Zweig, (2022); Sull, Sull, Cipolli, et al., (2022) explored contributing factors of leadership on employee turnover considering the Great Resignation phenomenon.

Mitigating Employee Turnover

Organizational leadership can employ purposeful actions to mitigate unwanted employee turnover. Effective diversity management mitigates employee turnover (M. Ali & French, 2019; J. Lee et al., 2020). Research also shows that high work engagement levels positively influence employee retention (Kuzior et al., 2022). Demonstrating that the organization cares through actions can make a difference in work engagement. Organizational behaviors that can prevent employee turnover include providing opportunities for job mobility, increasing corporate

sponsored social events, allowing remote work options, and offering more predictable work schedules (Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022). Investing in preemptive measures can also have a positive impact. In the healthcare industry, to help mitigate turnover, healthcare organizations must invest in a broad range of initiatives to address the burnout issue, such as stress management programs, promotion of self-care, communication training, and leadership training (Sheather & Slattery, 2021). Kuzior et al. (2022) found that targeting relational initiatives, cultural initiatives, and elements that address employee self-fulfillment goals can mitigate employee turnover. The diversity of the leadership could impact the execution of these actions (Lerman et al., 2022). While employee turnover is inevitable and will never disappear, the literature demonstrates that organizational leadership can implement measures to mitigate employee turnover, and that leadership diversity could have an impact.

Operational Costs

Leaders manage operational costs in an organization through operating budgets. Operating budgets are the *blueprint* organizational leadership uses to direct resources to effectively and efficiently achieve organizational goals (Jones & George, 2019). Operational costs can vary based on the organization and the nature of the business. The increased use of electronic health records impacted operational costs in the healthcare industry (Rhoades et al., 2022). Other operational costs can be standard across industries. Standard operational costs across industries include but are not limited to, recruiting and training costs (Harden et al., 2018) and healthcare costs (Sull & Sull, 2023). Employee turnover is a core element of this study. Scholars agree that employee turnover is another area that impacts organizational costs across industries because of the impact of losing experienced and productive employees and echo the sentiments that recruiting and training costs (Dess & Shaw, 2001, Shaw, Gupta, & Delery, 2005

as cited in Autrey et al., 2019, Li et al., 2022). This study included seeking to understand how employee turnover could increase organizational costs in the technology industry.

Related Studies

A significant number of studies related to the problem explored in this study. This segment of the literature review discusses four studies with subject matter related to this study. Two studies highlighted the Great Resignation and diversity management, one targeting the technology industry. Each study offers findings pertinent to the subject matter explored in this study.

The Great Resignation Impacts on the Workforce

The following discussion is based upon the study that highlights the need for a more holistic approach to work and personal life considering the Great Resignation, which highlights employee turnover (Liu, 2023). Liu stated that the COVID-19 global pandemic was a driver for the Great Resignation because it caused individuals to consider their mortality, reevaluate priorities, and seek more balance between life and career. The aspect of re-negotiation of boundaries was also a consideration in this study. When workers were forced to work from home, individuals were forced to re-negotiate boundaries between work, co-workers, managers, and family. Additionally, dimensions of time and space required transformation in meaning considering the Great Resignation.

Liu (2023) evaluated how to move toward a more holistic and sustainable approach, referencing the findings of several scholars. Sons and Niessen (2022) found that employee wellbeing is essential to the job change process and that voluntary job changes negatively impact employee wellbeing and satisfaction. This study also highlighted the limitations of Great Resignation from the employee's perspective relative to organizational success. Hatfield et al.

(2022) lobbied for a great reimagination to make work more rewarding by eliminating frivolous tasks, leveraging technology to aid workers, engaging in reskilling, and modifying the hybrid workplace.

Hirsch (2022) highlighted the power of negotiation. The Great Resignation allowed workers to renegotiate and reestablish work and life conditions to improve their well-being. Liu (2023) found that the Great Resignation allowed individuals to cultivate a more holistic and sustainable lifestyle by reestablishing boundaries for time and space. Kuzior et al. (2022) supported the premise of prioritizing employee wellbeing, stating that post-pandemic, an organization must incorporate employees' personal needs to achieve organizational sustainability. Linzer et al. (2022) stated that organizations will need to focus on improving the organizational culture to meet the needs of employees. Linzer et al. highlighted the importance of individuals' well-being. The perspective of how the Great Resignation influenced the workforce was relevant to this study because it provides additional insight into the mindset of the workers amid this phenomenon characterized by a significant increase in employee turnover.

The Importance of Talent Development and Leadership Engagement

The following discussion presents the case study that evaluated the impacts of the investment (Melnkovic & Wilding, 2022). Melnkovic and Wilding studied the U.S. Steel company. In response to a significant increase in employee turnover during the Great Resignation, leaders considered investing in talent to address the issue of employee turnover. U.S. Steel began investing in talent before the Great Resignation. In 2017, the company leaders embarked upon an initiative to build an inclusive workplace. As a result, when the United States was experiencing an employee turnover rate that exceeded 30%, U.S. Steel's employee turnover rate was 4%. The implementation of inclusive practices causes a low employee turnover rate.

Senior leaders at U.S. Steel oversaw the establishment of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs that impacted many company areas, including recruitment and leadership development. The leadership at U.S. Steel believed in the positive impacts that DEI could bring to the company.

Key to the formation of the DEI initiatives was data. The company leaders analyzed its diversity composition and used that data to determine the diversity groups that needed targeting. They also used data to identify patterns of attrition, which allowed for preemptive measures to develop. This level of analysis revealed issues with management changes in the organization and helped the leadership better understand the dynamics within their workforce. The company implemented a strategy that ensured DEI was in every business segment of the company and that the workforce was supported by creating employee resource groups (ERGs), resulting in seven distinct ERGs. The ERGs aligned with the leadership team, helped to communicate the needs of each diverse group, and provided an opportunity to meet the workforce's needs. Members of the senior leadership team actively engaged with the ERGs, contributing to their success. Allyship was another DEI initiative that managers implemented with strong leadership support. The company has received high ratings from external organizations because of its DEI practices. U.S. Steel managers continued to demonstrate their commitment to DEI by allowing members of their leadership team to serve as part of a diversity and inclusion coalition on a full-time basis.

Melnkovic and Wilding, 2022 case study was relevant to this study because of its focus on DEI and leadership engagement. Melnkovic and Wilding demonstrated the positive impact DEI initiatives have on attrition. The practices implemented addressed the all-encompassing diversity composition of the workforce within the company, including demographics, life stages, and career stages. The importance of leadership was also highlighted in this study. This case

study demonstrated that leadership was responsible for driving and sustaining a diverse culture in the workplace.

Causes for the Great Resignation

The discussion in this section presents a study that included seeking to determine the causes of the Great Resignation, specifically amongst Generation Y, also called Millennials, and Generation Z, also called Zoomers (Kuzior et al., 2022). The author credits the naming of the phenomenon, the Great Resignation, to Anthony Klotz. Anthony Klotz a professor who attributed this phenomenon to the changes in employee behaviors because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The need to understand why a voluntary mass exodus of employees has become an organizational and human resource management issue, with broader implications of psychological and economic impacts. The hypothesis for this study was that ethical, cultural, relational, and personal factors primarily caused the Great Resignation. The study combined a desk analysis and a case study.

The desk analysis highlighted key concepts that were essential to gaining an understanding of the relevant issues. Work engagement, which encompasses cognitive, emotional, and physical engagement, was essential to providing context to the study. Researchers of extant literature show that work engagement affects many areas within an organization, of which employee turnover was the most significantly impacted. This finding supported the need for further analysis of work engagement. The study analyzed the concept of work engagement from the perspective of Millennials and Zoomers. The literature documents that values and priorities differ between generational cohorts. A key distinction for Millennials is that they are not money driven. Scholars attribute this to Millennials having the benefit of being raised under more privileged circumstances. While Zoomers are not money-driven either, they may accept

salary-based employment but quit if other non-financial expectations are not met. Since money is not the answer, the deeper elements that lead to work engagement were explored.

The analysis in the study highlighted a significant discrepancy in why employers thought employees quit, as opposed to the actual reasons why employees quit. According to the research, employers thought the impetus for quitting was compensation, work/life balance, and physical and emotional health. Employees stated that they quit feeling undervalued, having relational issues with their managers, and lacking a sense of belonging. The case study concluded that employees quit because they were looking for better opportunities, unchallenging work, issues with organizational culture and values, and relationships with managers. These findings supported the hypothesis that ethical, cultural, relational, and personal factors primarily caused the Great Resignation. This study related to the study because it highlighted the aspect of age diversity during the significant loss of employees throughout the Great Resignation. This study's findings also highlighted the importance of organizational leadership to understand, be attentive to, and be responsive to their workforce.

Gender Diversity in the Technology Industry

The discussion in this section presents a study that targets the issue of gender diversity within the technology industry (Garcia-Solarte et al., 2018). Gender diversity in managerial positions, including senior leadership positions, continues to be an issue in the corporate world. Gender diversity is the ratio between men and women within an organization in senior leadership roles. Gender diversity benefits organizations and is attributed with positively impacting organizational development and economic performance. The attributes of women in leadership associates with transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is preferred because of its positive impact on the organization and the workforce. The purpose of the study is to answer

the question of whether gender diversity in leadership subject matter experts (SMEs) in the high-tech industry impacts organizational leadership. In addition, to answering the question of gender diversity in favor of women, promotes transformational leadership amongst SMEs. Analyzing several key concepts were to form the study hypotheses' foundation, including transactional leadership, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation. In addition, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and contingent rewards. This empirical study assessed SMEs in the high-technology industry in Latin America. The study found a positive correlation between gender diversity and transformational leadership practices. Specifically, gender diversity is positively linked with inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Garcia-Solarte et al. (2018) study did not find a correlation between gender diversity and transactional leadership. The study links gender characteristics with leadership styles.

Garcia-Solarte et al. (2018) study is relevant to the current study because it highlighted several of the same essential elements. First, while not assessed, the information contained in this study documented the persistent issue of the lack of leadership diversity. The study documented statistics of the low rates of leadership diversity despite efforts to mitigate the issue. Secondly, this study targeted the technology industry. Lastly, this study documented the importance of diversity within organizational leadership.

Anticipated and Discovered Themes

Three themes emerged from the literature analysis performed before conducting the research. The anticipated themes are workforce diversity, the significance of the diversity gap, and the importance of leadership behaviors. Through the research process, themes emerged. The discovered themes are leadership diversity level, leadership skills; diversity should be considered

in leadership selections. In addition, intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity, and organizational impacts on leadership. This section presents a scholarly perspective of anticipated themes and discovered themes.

Significance of Workforce Diversity

A theme demonstrated in the literature was the emphasis on the significant levels of diversity in the workforce. Diversity in the workforce is extremely complex. A significant number of diverse groups exist within the workforce. Diversity groups include cultural diversity representing different nationalities (Lo et al., 2020), racial diversity, religious diversity, age diversity, gender diversity, sexual orientation, and disability (Potvin et al., 2018). The research in the extant literature includes the importance of supporting and promoting workforce diversity and its positive impacts. The literature also highlights the importance of organizational leadership to a diverse workforce. Organizational leadership should properly manage workforce diversity to allow the organization to remain competitive and sustainable. Two factors that contribute to workforce diversity are globalization and the aging workforce. The following discussion will provide additional context regarding these concepts.

Globalization

Globalization is a significant contributing factor to the landscape of the modern workforce. An increase in globalization is a contributing factor to the surge (Brown et al., 2019; Vito & Sethi, 2020). Globalization impacts corporate culture (Nart et al., 2018) and sparks innovation (Fatima, 2017). The increasing globalization of the workforce is steering organizations to become more open to diversity in the workplace and to create inclusive environments. Diversity programs can help mitigate the disadvantages women and women of color encounter and facilitate improved organizational performance (Beckwith et al., 2016).

Gupta (2019) stated that female leaders can create an inclusive culture that demonstrates diversity because of their inherent nature. The impact of globalization is an emergent theme in the literature relevant to workforce diversity. This dynamic in the workplace could allow diversity to continue to increase. Understanding the nuances and impacts of globalization can aid organizational leadership in addressing the impacts strategically.

The Aging Workforce

The aging workforce is also a theme documented in literature that influences the diverse landscape of the modern workplace. As the baby boomers age and more Generation Z (Zoomers) enter the workforce, organizational leadership will experience additional age diversity challenges. Extant literature reflects the values and needs of the members of the generational cohorts differ (Kuzior et al., 2022). Additionally, as employees age, their needs change. The dynamic of the age diversity element in the workforce presents new challenges related to diversity management for organizational leaders. Age in the workforce is another theme that emerged in the literature that adds to the complexity of the modern workplace.

The Significance of the Diversity Gap

Another theme demonstrated in the literature was the significance of the diversity gap. Extant literature extensively reflects significant measures being implemented to address diversity issues within the workforce. Despite these efforts, a diversity gap remains in organizational leadership. The diversity gap is the difference between the expectations and promises in the workforce, relative to diversity, as opposed to the reality of what is happening (Sulik et al., 2022). This theme permeates literature, with enumerable documented accounts of measures developed to promote diversity. Yet, the gap between what is and what should be continues.

The Importance of Leadership Behavior

Leadership behaviors also permeated the literature. Extant literature documents the impacts of leadership behaviors. Leaders' and followers' relationships (Waglay et al., 2020), and trust and vision are among the factors that impact leadership effectiveness (Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020). Leaders are effective when employees buy into the actions of the leader and trust that the leader's strategic decisions are beneficial to organizational sustainment (Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020). Support in the scholarly community is prevalent on this aspect of leadership effectiveness. The perceptions of leader quality are in this area of discussion in that the perception of quality impacts the perceived level of leadership effectiveness (Edelmann et al., 2020). Leadership actions influence employee actions (Kim & Fernandez, 2017).

Leadership Diversity Level

The first theme discovered in this research was leadership diversity level. This theme encompasses study participants' perspectives of the leadership diversity level in the studied company. Research participants' responses expressed positive and negative views on the company's leadership diversity level. Negative views highlighted the company's leadership as male-dominated and not having changed much over the years. Research participants also expressed concerns with the company's statements about diversity compared to their actions. Positive views included sentiment that the company's leadership diversity level improved. This theme also encompasses research participants' perspectives on how the company's leadership diversity was trending. There was significant support for the premise that the company's leadership diversity was trending positively.

The discovered theme, leadership diversity level, relates to the anticipated theme, the significance of the diversity gap. The anticipated theme, the significance of the diversity gap,

highlights a continual issue in workforce diversity despite the implementation of diversity initiatives. The discovered theme, leadership diversity level, echoes the same sentiment regarding leadership diversity levels in the studied company. The studied company implemented diversity initiatives, yet the lack of leadership diversity persists.

Leadership Skills

The second discovered theme, leadership skills, encompasses research participants' perspectives on essential leadership skills for leaders in a technology company. The two skill categories from the data were interpersonal and leadership skills. Leadership skills represent demonstrated abilities, such as executing strategic vision and directing a team in achieving desired goals. Vision and communication were two key areas targeted by research participants regarding leadership skills. Interpersonal skills demonstrate the ability to relate to people and include empathy, compassion, and emotional intelligence. This theme also considers skills needed for leaders in a technology company. While some leadership roles may require technical skills, the dominant perspective was that a high level of technical knowledge was not required for leadership in the technology industry.

The discovered theme, leadership skills, correlates with the anticipated theme, the importance of leadership behavior. The anticipated theme, the importance of leadership behavior, highlights the impact of leadership on followers based on leadership actions. Leadership actions relate to their knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are highlighted in the discovered theme, leadership skills. The discovered theme includes specific areas of leadership skills that impact follower actions.

Diversity Should be Considered in Leadership Selections

Employers should consider the third discovered theme, diversity in leadership selections, which encompasses the pattern that emerged from the data regarding the importance of diversity in the leadership selection process. This theme encompasses two categories. The two categories include diversity considerations that demonstrate how diversity is included in the leadership selection process and the importance of diversity in the leadership selection process. The importance of diversity captures the mixed sentiment of research participants, where some stated that diversity should not be considered in leadership selections. However, the majority stated that diversity was important and should be considered in leadership selections. This discovered theme correlates with the anticipated theme, the significance of workforce diversity. The anticipated theme, the significance of workforce diversity, targets workforce diversity management. The workforce includes the leadership. Employers should consider the discovered theme, diversity, in leadership selections and contribute to the discussion of diversity management in the anticipated theme, the significance of workforce diversity.

Intentionality is Crucial in Increasing Leadership Diversity

The fourth discovered theme, intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity, consolidates data that supports the premise that intentionality is vital to leadership diversity. Research participants' responses articulated that intentionality in organizational initiatives and leadership efforts is essential. Organizational initiatives are company-wide activities that target diversity initiatives to increase diversity. Leadership efforts are leadership actions needed to support an increase in leadership diversity. The anticipated theme, the significance of the diversity gap, highlights the diversity gap in organizational leadership. This discovered theme discussed mechanisms leaders can implement to address the organizational leadership gap issue.

Organizational Impacts of Leadership

The fifth discovered theme, organizational impacts of leadership, demonstrates the pattern that emerged from the data about the organizational impacts resulting from leadership. Research participants cited the impacts of the lack of leadership diversity relative to this study's subject matter, employee turnover, and operating costs. For the organizational impacts on employee turnover, research participants highlighted leadership diversity impacts that depict how leadership diversity impacts employee turnover. In addition, exit reasons identify reasons why employees have left the company or role, and leadership impacts identify the impacts of leadership on employee turnover. The impact on operating costs includes data relative to the operating costs impacted by employee turnover. This discovered theme did not align with anticipated themes in this study. The data captured in this discovered theme adds to extant literature.

Summary

The general problem addressed was the persistence of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry, resulting in employee turnover. Atal et al. (2019) documented the persistent problem of a lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry. The specific problem addressed was the lack of diversity in leadership in a global technology company, which increased employee turnover and operational costs. This literature review dissected the elements of the problem and determined the associations and correlations from a scholarly perspective. The first section of the literature provided a high-level view of the problem by exploring related business practices. Literature demonstrates the relevance and importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, this discussion highlighted diversity as the key element of this study. Leadership diversity, also explored in this segment, demonstrated the relationship between

leadership diversity on diversity, organizational performance, and the workforce. The perspective presented highlighted the presence of leadership diversity. This study included exploring the impacts of the lack of leadership diversity in an organization. The problem segment of the literature review presented the current state of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the current perspective on the relationship between leadership and employee turnover and operational costs. Each of the concepts linked back to the problem.

The concepts are diversity affects employee turnover and leadership development affects diversity. Literature supports the premise of each of these concepts. Next, a discussion of the theories upon which the foundation of this study was built was in the study. The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory highlights the leader-follower relationship. This theory supports the premise that leaders can significantly impact follower behavior. The upper echelons theory assumes that the TMT's diverse characteristics impact the organization's direction. The complexity theory builds upon the premise of the upper echelon's theory, targeting the relationship between the TMTs' diversity components and the organization. The principles of these theories provided the foundation to explore the relationship between leadership, followers, and the organization. The constructs are essential to understanding how the elements of this study connect and link to the problem. The literature demonstrated a relationship between diversity and leadership diversity, employee turnover, and operational costs. The review of the related studies presented the details of the studies, in addition to highlighting their relationship to this study. The last section presents themes expected to emerge from this study based on extant literature and discovered themes that emerged from the research. This literature review provided an objective view of the significance of this study, the correlation of the study elements, and the

relationship with the extant body of knowledge. This literature review also reflected how this study added to the current body of knowledge.

Summary of Chapter 2 and Transition

This literature review provided a detailed, scholarly perspective of the essential elements of this study. The literature review comprises seven areas of focus that present a comprehensive view of the components of this study. The first section of the literature documents the business practices related to the identified problem. The first business practices discussed were diversity, equity, and inclusion. A core component of this study is diversity. The discussion on diversity, equity, and inclusion provides foundational context, presenting an understanding of the relevance and importance of the topic. The remaining business practices explored discuss leadership diversity and its impact on other business concepts. Specifically discussed are leadership diversity impacts on diversity, organizational performance, and the workforce. Leadership diversity is a foundational element of the study. The discussion of its impacts demonstrates the importance and need for leadership diversity. The next section of the literature review provided a scholarly view of the problem. The lack of leadership in the technology industry and its impacts on employee turnover and operational costs includes assessment from the perspective of extant literature.

The problem is dissected for a detailed analysis of the essential components. Concepts are the next segment discussed in the literature review. The concepts discussed are that diversity affects employee turnover and that leadership development affects diversity. The exploration of these concepts demonstrates the link between the concepts and the problem. The literature also highlights the association between the concepts and the constructs discussed later in the review. The study's foundation was the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, upper echelons theory,

and complexity theory. The crux of these theories highlights the importance of leadership and the relationship and impact on followers, which is the root of this study. The next segment of the literature review discussed the constructs. Details on diversity, leadership diversity, employee turnover, and operational costs include an exploration of the associations of these constructs with the other elements of the study and with the problem. The final segments of the literature review present related studies, anticipated themes based on the information presented in the literature, and discovered themes based on information from the current study. This literature review provided a scholarly word picture of the problem explored in this study.

The next section of this details the methodology of this study. Chapter three begins by detailing the purpose of this study. The following section provides insight into my role in this study. This segment will present a transparent view of my expected actions. Additionally, this section will document the measures I will take to avoid the injection of personal bias in the execution of this study. The final section of chapter three will detail the appropriateness of the selected research methodology.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study included evaluating the problem of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. This chapter details the research methodology. The research methodology encompassed the processes used to execute the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018)The methodology described in this chapter was the best approach to accomplish the research goals. To establish the context for the methodology, this chapter begins with the purpose statement for the study. This chapter also provides details related to my role in this study. In addition to the research methodology, this chapter discusses the study participants, population, sampling, data collection, and data analysis.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this flexible design single case study was to contribute to understanding how the lack of leadership diversity impacts employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry. This research included seeking to assist leaders in understanding the issue's importance and lead to the creation of strategic measures to address the problem. Researchers of the extant literature discussed the issues of the lack of diversity in leadership in business and specifically expressed the need for research in the technology industry (Atal et al., 2019; Jankelová et al., 2022). The current knowledge pool does not evaluate the persistent lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. Researchers recommended additional studies regarding the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in a targeted industry (Jankelová et al., 2022). This research extends the current research by providing relevant insight into employee turnover impacts on operational costs in the technology industry. The findings of this research contribute to strengthening the understanding of the issue and utilized as input into strategic decisions.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is essential to the research. The researcher is the leading instrument throughout the research process and is responsible for the construction and execution of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Execution of the research methodology encompasses several activities. The research process includes activities such as locating the data collection site, conducting purposeful sampling, collecting the data, and recording the information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The specific activities and execution vary based on the study's methodology. The researcher plays an active role in this process. I am an employee of the studied company and had access to study participants for this study. I located study participants that fit within the study's boundaries for the interview portion of the study. Additionally, I executed data collection activities, including collecting and recording the data through interviews and performing document reviews. I also coded and analyzed the data, developing a thematic representation.

Researcher bias can be an issue within a study and could introduce ethical issues (R. K. Yin, 2018). Researcher bias could impact the data collection process, causing researchers to taint the collected data based on opinions. Researchers should strive to uphold the highest ethical standards during the study, which includes ensuring data accuracy and pursuing authenticity (R. K. Yin, 2018). Researchers must take precautions to guard against bias impacting the study. I am an employee at the studied company. This relationship did not present any known biases. Bracketing was necessary to ensure known and unknown biases in this study. Researchers use bracketing to set aside preconceived notions and experiences that could influence the study (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). Reflexivity is a specific mechanism used in this study to implement bracketing. Reflexivity actively assesses the researchers' role and relationship with the research

(Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Various reflexivity methods were in this study, including researcher memos and researcher journals.

The role of the researcher is at the core of the development and execution of the study. As highlighted in this section, the specific actions of the researcher included identifying the research site, data collection activities, and data analysis. Given the essential role of the researcher, the researcher must manage their views during a study. This research employed bracketing through reflexivity as a preemptive measure to guard against potential issues from researcher bias. Specifically, I used memos and journals to guard against bias. Understanding my role and expectations contributed to the success of this study.

Research Methodology

This study included a flexible design using qualitative methods, specifically, a single case study design. The research methodology presented guided the study of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry and the impacts on employee turnover and operational costs (Atal et al., 2019; Jankelová et al., 2022). The methodology for this research achieved results that increased the understanding of the identified problem. This section provides an understanding of the appropriateness of the research design and methodology for this study, including the appropriateness of the triangulation methods used in this study.

Discussion of Flexible Design

The flexible, qualitative research method has several defining characteristics. The flexible aspect refers to the latitude of this approach. Robson and McCartan (2016) referred to flexible research design as a research approach that aligns with a self-directed mentality that allows the process to evolve and adapt. The flexible, qualitative design allows the researcher to implement modifications as they proceed. Flexible research is not haphazard, disorganized, or less valuable

than other research approaches. However, the flexible design provides a view that shows how the researcher is empowered to adjust and strengthen the study as needed. Despite the ability to adjust during the study, the process for flexible, qualitative methods does involve rigor in research processes, including during data collection, data analysis, and reporting (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Employing qualitative research methods allows researchers to explore individuals' thought processes and behaviors to understand the why behind their actions (Denny & Weckesser, 2019). This premise of flexible, qualitative research aligned with the purpose and expectations of this study. The intent of the study was to understand why a problem persists in leadership diversity and how the actions and behaviors of leadership could impact follower behaviors.

Discussion of the Single Case Study Method

Case study research is a complex approach to research. Case study research is the most challenging and requires a good understanding of the approach to overcome the difficulties in executing the approach (R. K. Yin, 2018). Case study research is a qualitative methodology utilized to explore real-life scenarios of contemporary or multiple-bounded systems. Bounded refers to the limits or parameters applied to the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study description includes some parallels with other research methodologies. The key distinguishing aspects of the case study are the requirements for a contemporary aspect and the real-life component (Wohlin, 2021). This research method is appropriate for qualitative research; however, determining the optimal scenario for using a case study requires the consideration of several variants. Yin (2018) stated that the study reflects on a contemporary set of events if a research question has a what, how, or why format. The researcher prefers a case study and has little or no control over the behavioral events. This set of criteria is important in assessing the

appropriateness of using case studies in qualitative research. Wohlin (2021) evaluated using a case study label in research and found that 47% of the cases evaluated did not meet the criteria for case studies. Click or tap here to enter text. Misusing the terminology could stem from a lack of understanding of the concept. Knowing and understanding the criteria of a case study and the optimal use of this research methodology will help researchers properly design and execute a case study.

A case study was the optimal methodology for this research because the study met the criteria outlined in the literature. Evaluating a contemporary scenario over which the researcher had no control, the research questions were how, why, and what questions (R. K. Yin, 2018), The qualitative case study focus confines to specific parameters (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This case study will confine by targeting individuals within the technology industry. Additionally, the literature documents case studies that explore similar subject matter. Melnkovic and Wilding (2022) used a case study methodology to explore the impacts of diversity, equity, inclusion, and organizational leadership engagement on employee turnover. Another study utilized a case study methodology to discover the causes of employee turnover across various generational cohorts (Kuzior et al., 2022). Single case studies attribute to several benefits, including leading to innovative approaches, corroborating existing theories, and challenging existing theoretical assumptions (Bao et al., 2017). The single case study approach in this study can contribute to the development of innovative practices for improving organizational diversity. Additionally, exploring this subject matter could strengthen organizational leadership.

Discussion of Methods for Triangulation

Triangulation is vital to the research process. Triangulation enhances the validity of a study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). The triangulation methods utilized in this study were methods

triangulation and data source triangulation. Methods triangulation allows for the complete data view using different data collection methods (Moon, 2019). This method of triangulation aligned with this study because of different data collection methods, specifically interviews and follow-up interviews. Triangulation encompasses conducting interviews with different study participants on the same topic (Flynn, 2019). Interviewing numerous participants was necessarily on the same subject matter related to this study. Data source triangulation also with this study's data collection methods. Data source triangulation requires data from multiple sources (Moon, 2019). In addition to interviews, this study included surveys, documents, and archival records. Employing various data sources and triangulation methods allows the data to converge and strengthens the accuracy and acceptability of the study findings (R. K. Yin, 2018). The triangulation methods selected support the triangulation process and are most appropriate for this research methodology. Moon included descriptive statistics as the quantitative analysis method, survey data, demographic data, and other relevant quantifiable data.

Summary of Research Methodology

The research methodology comprises the details of the study's execution. This study included a flexible design with qualitative methods, specifically a case study. The methodology selected was not just appropriate for this study but was also appropriate for research that aligns with the criteria for the methodology. Key criteria elements that deemed this study appropriate for this methodology included exploring real-life scenarios. The boundary of the research required the research questions to have a what, how, or why format. A lack of control existed over the behavioral events. Triangulation is also an important element of research. The triangulation methods highlighted in this section support and aligned with the research

methodology. The selected research methodology provided an effective strategy for the exploration of the research problem.

Participants

Appropriate study participants are essential to the success of the research execution. Data comes from research participants in the study (R. K. Yin, 2018). The selection of study participants considers the study components and qualities of the potential participants to maximize the potential of participant contributions (Farrugia, 2019). Yin also highlights the informants, who are research participants who provide critical information about the research. The participants may also provide recommendations to the researcher regarding additional sources of information for the study. This study focused on the lack of leadership diversity. The study participants included individuals who have known and can attest to the leadership selection process relative to the company studied.

As previously documented in chapter one, leadership is individuals that are part of the top management team (TMT), which are organizational executives that are responsible for the organization (Mintzberg, 1979, as cited in Krause et al., 2022), or managers, which are employees with direct reports and decision-making authority and responsibility within the organization (Lucia, 2018). Participants for this study encompassed leadership from varying levels, including upper, middle, and lower-level managers. Recruiters were not included in the study participant pool because of a lack of participation; given the leadership focus of the study, the length of time with the company, or the length of time in the role were not delineating criteria for organizational leadership participants. The selection included twenty-six leaders from diverse backgrounds and with experience in leadership hiring practices. This study also assessed the impact of the lack of leadership diversity on employee turnover. To provide insight into the

sphere of influence of organizational leadership, study participants included non-management employees from diverse groups, hired at the studied company within the last five years and whose previous employer was a technology company. Additional study participants came from a diversity survey open to all company employees.

Population and Sampling

The location of the interviews and who participates ensure that a study generates valid and credible results. Properly selecting the population and sampling are essential elements of a study. The population of a study represents the entire group of interest as potential study participants (Stratton, 2023). Sampling is the selection of a subset of the population that represents the intended population (Stratton, 2023). The selected sample must provide trustworthy, valid data that answers the research questions (Headley & Clark, 2020). The following discussion details the population, and sampling is specific to this study.

Discussion of Population

This study's limitations include a global technology company. The studied company has approximately 221,000 employees worldwide, with approximately 120,000 employees in the United States (Company X, 2022). Literature documents included over 318,000 managers in the technology industry in the United States (Zippia Hiring Hub, 2023). In the studied company, the culture operates under the premise that everyone is a leader and does not publicize the number of leaders. However, approximately 22,000 managers worked in the company in 2021 (Hu, 2021). The problem for this research reflected on the persistent lack of leadership diversity and its impacts on increased employee turnover and operational costs. The targeted population for this study included current employees of this global technology company whose previous employer was a technology company. The targeted population also included individuals within the global

technology industry who understand and have experience with the leadership selection process with the global technology industry. Given the diversity element of this study, the targeted population included individuals from diverse backgrounds. The company reported that the workforce included 54.8% racial and ethnic minorities (Company X, 2023), therefore, the population could include 121,000 employees.

Discussion of Sampling

The research method drives the mechanism used for the selection of research participants. The sampling method for the study was purposeful. For qualitative research, purposeful sampling is the preferred population sampling method (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Purposeful sampling, also called judgment sampling, is a non-probability sampling method (Stratton, 2023). The researcher selects research participants with intentionality based on desired results, considering the qualities of potential participants (Farrugia, 2019). The design of a purposeful sampling method includes three main components. The strategy for designing an excellent purposeful sampling should include consideration for who should be included in the sample, the type of the sample, and the size of the sample (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Good sampling contributes to the collection of good data and helps strengthen the overall study. Snowball sampling was used to support the purposeful sampling further. Snowball sampling or snowballing is a technique where identified study participants identify other candidates for the study (Farrugia, 2019). Purposeful sampling and snowballing maximized the potential to ensure the selection of the proper study participants.

The sample frame for this study was individuals within the technology industry, which meets the industry identified in the problem statement. The participants included individuals currently employed at the studied company and whose previous employer was a technology company. This subset of individuals was able to contribute to the data needed relative to

employee turnover. Additionally, the study included individuals with experience with the leadership selection process. The sampling targeted individuals with diverse backgrounds.

The sample included organizational leaders, employees who understood the leadership selection process, and recent organizational hires to meet the study's goals. A component of the study was also open to all company employees. This sample is appropriate because it encompasses individuals who provided data that addressed the research questions. In qualitative research, the sample size should lead to data saturation. Data saturation is the point at which the research issues are thoroughly addressed, and no new data emerges (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). In qualitative research, a smaller number of study participants is acceptable to allow for a deeper exploration of the data (Farrugia, 2019). The sample size for the interview portion of the study was 26, which is more than adequate for the recommended sample size in a qualitative study (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). I am an employee at the studied company and have access to the targeted population.

Summary of Population and Sampling

Population and sampling are essential components of a study. The population for this study was employees of a global technology company. Specifically, the desired individuals were employees who knew the leadership selection process, were recent hires, and had diverse backgrounds. A segment of the research was open to all company resources. Purposeful snowball sampling ensured the selection of the appropriate study participants. The sample frame targeted individuals who provided relevant study data. This study also utilized a sample size of 26 for the interviews, sufficient to reach data saturation. The outlined population and sampling methods contributed to successful data collection that met the goals of this study.

Data Collection and Organization

The research process includes proper collection and management of data. Researchers can use numerous mechanisms for data collection. In qualitative research, data collection methods include interviews, observations, and field notes (Hamilton & Finley, 2019; Nassaji, 2020). Researchers must properly organize collected data. Effective data organization contributes to proper analysis. The following discussion in this section details the process to effectively collect, organize, and analyze the data. Specifically, this section includes the data collection process, data organization process, data analysis process, reliability and validity process, and ethical assurance process.

Data Collection

Data collection involves more than a simplistic measure of gathering information. Creswell and Poth (2018) highlighted that data collection includes considering ethical issues, executing an effective sampling strategy, and exercising good data recording. Addressing issues and mechanisms, ensuring that issues are addressed, and implementing good data protection measures are part of the process. Researchers can utilize various methods in the data collection process. The data collection methods for this study incorporated these facets to ensure the data collection processes were effective. In qualitative research, effective data collection tools include but are not limited to, interviews, field notes, journals, and observations (Nassaji, 2020). The data collection methods utilized for this study were interviews, surveys, and documents. The study includes permission to collect data described at the studied company (see Appendix F).

Instruments

I had access to various research instruments, including interview guides, surveys, and documents. The following discussion details how these appeared in this study.

Interview Guide

A practice recommended for planning interviews is the development of an interview guide (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The purpose of the interview guide is to provide a prescriptive process and approach that researchers can use in the execution of the interviews (Rogers et al., 2021). An interview guide is essential to the study. The intent is not to lock the researcher into a rigid process but to assist the researcher in the effective execution of effectively executing the process (Roberts, 2020). The categorical information in an interview guide can generalize; however, the specific information is customary for each study. The basis for the objectives and criteria of the study on interview-specific content (Oerther, 2021). An important component of an interview guide is the interview questions. The interview questions should strategically align with the explored topic (Roberts, 2020). The development of the interview guide is an iterative process. This process includes modifying the interview guide based on feedback received as the process is executed (Oerther, 2021). Developing and using an interview guide is beneficial to the research process.

Semistructured interviews maximized the information received from the interview process. In addition, it allows the interviewer to have a free-flowing conversation guided by a checklist of topics and default wording. The flexibility in this method will allow the interviewer to ask questions in a manner that will elicit more information based on the interviewee's responses. I used probing questions and ensured the questions did not compromise ethical standards, disclose researcher biases, provide transparency and validity, and ensure biases were not injected into the interview. Microsoft team helped conduct the interviews. Study participants who knew the leadership selection process provided data on the diverse composition of leadership in that technology company. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, participant

validation, or member checking, was appropriate when study participants shared feedback (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Slettebø, 2021). Various methods are appropriate for member checking. Transcript reviews and follow-up interviews are member-checking methods (Sahakyan, 2023). In this study, follow-up interviews were necessary. Follow-up interviews were necessary to obtain different types of feedback. Feedback from follow-up interviews could apply to the transcripts' accuracy or the data interpretations' accuracy (Sahakyan, 2023). The feedback collected from this study's follow-up interviews helped validate the data interpretations.

The interview guide (Appendix A) contains the questions used to guide the interviews. The interview questions targeted organizational leadership with information regarding the leadership selection process and employee retention. Interview question 1 addressed research question RQ1 by discovering the leadership perspective on organizational diversity composition. Question 2 also addressed research question RQ1 by discovering the qualifications necessary for leadership selection. Question 3 addressed research question RQ1 by discovering the role of diversity in the leadership selection process. Question 4 addressed research questions RQ1a and RQ1b by discovering factors specific to the technology industry needed in leadership. Question 5 also addressed research questions RQ1a and RQ1b by discovering other relevant skills for leadership. Question 6 addressed research question RQ2 by discovering how diversity could increase in leadership. Question 7 addressed research question RQ2 by determining how leadership in the technology industry influenced employee turnover. Question 8 addressed research question RQ3 by discovering how leadership diversity influenced employee turnover.

Surveys

Surveys are another method for data collection utilized in this study. Surveys produced quantifiable data (Denny & Weckesser, 2019) and contributed to the quantitative analysis

component of this study. This study utilized the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX-7) Questionnaire (Appendix B), which contains seven questions. Per guidelines, the researcher obtained permission to reuse this survey (Appendix D). The LMX-7 questionnaire appears in numerous leadership studies (Tamvakologos et al., 2019). Research documents the validity and reliability of the LMX-7 questionnaire using various methods, including descriptive statistics (Alshamasi & Aljojo, 2016; Tamvakologos et al., 2019). The consolidated data from the LMX-7 questionnaire in this survey addressed research questions RQ2 and RQ3. Data emerged supporting insight into how leadership and diversity in the technology industry influence employee turnover. This study also included the Employee Survey: Diversity Equity and Inclusion (see Appendix C). Please see Appendix E for the reuse permission statement. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), a leading human resource organization developed by the SHRM, supports building strong workplaces that maximize the use of human resources (Society for Human Resource Management, 2023). This survey includes a 5-point Likert scale. This survey design has been useful in other diversity studies and has been deemed a reliable and valid evaluation method (Turi et al., 2022). This survey addresses research questions RQ1 and RQ3 by discovering the impacts of diversity within the organization.

Archival Records and Documents

Archival records are another data source explored in this study. Archival records are sources of evidence used in qualitative research, including service records and organizational records (R. K. Yin, 2018) and other sources such as strategy reports, financial data, and e-mails (Verleye, 2019). This study could not include exploring corporate archival records because of the confidentiality of the data. Instead, publicly available corporate documents were utilized to support the research. Permission correspondence to use documents from the company are in the

appendix (see Appendix F). The data collected from the review of corporate documents contributed to addressing research questions RQ1 and RQ1b by discovering the impacts of leadership diversity on employee turnover.

Data Organization

The data organization for this study was specific to the collected data. The data collected for this study included responses to interview questions. Microsoft Teams assisted with conducting and recording the interviews. The recorded files were imported into the qualitative software NVIVO. NVIVO is a data management software used to support qualitative research data analysis (Lumivero, 2023). The organization of the files was by interview and consolidated in the software to support proper data analysis. The data collected from the surveys was tracked through IBM SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Software is essential to effective data management and data analysis. Computer software is a viable tool for qualitative research; however, the software is not a replacement for the work required by the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Software supported me in the execution of the study.

Summary of Data Collection and Organization

Data collection and organization are integral parts of the research process. For this study, data collection included semistructured interviews. An interview guide maximizes the effectiveness and efficiency of the interview process and assists with guiding the interview. Collected data came from documents. Software supported the data collection and data organization process. Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Excel, IBM SPSS, and NVIVO were specific for the study.

Summary of Chapter 3 and Transition

This chapter detailed the methodology used in this study. This section began with restating the purpose of the study, which is that this study contributed to the understanding of how the lack of leadership diversity impacted employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry. The segments that followed documented how the various components of the methodology supported the execution of the study to fulfill the purpose of the study. The researcher was highlighted as a key instrument in the study and essential to the development and successful execution. The role of the researcher included ensuring ethical standards are upheld. Mitigating researcher biases, a potential pitfall that could impact the study, was also part of the researcher's role. Reflexivity was a mechanism to ensure the researcher could properly manage researcher biases.

The methodology for this study was flexible design using qualitative methods, specifically, a case study. This methodology was appropriate for this study because the study fits the criteria documented in the literature. The study participants most valuable for this study were individuals who had recently been hired at the studied company and those who knew the leadership selection process. Participants also included individuals from diverse backgrounds. The population for this study was a global technology company. Purposeful sampling and snowball sampling ensured the most appropriate selection of study participants. This section also detailed the data collection and organization processes. The data for this study included interviews, documents, and surveys. Conducting the interviews included using a semi-structured format to maximize the data collected. An interview guide guided the interview process. The software supported the data collection and organization processes, specifically Microsoft Teams,

Microsoft Excel, IBM SPSS, and NVIVO. The totality of this section provides a solid methodology that supported the successful execution of this study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of this research. Specifically, the details of the data analysis process and results. The data analysis section includes emergent ideas, discovered themes, interpretations, and data representation. This section provides detailed insight into the executed processes used for successful data analysis. This chapter also includes a discussion on how trustworthiness succeeded in the study and the integration of ethical assurances. The last section of Chapter 4 provides a detailed discussion of the research results. The section provides a comprehensive view of the various study components, the data, and the findings.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Proper data analysis is essential to substantive qualitative research. Scholars have documented prescribed models to assist the qualitative researcher in effective and efficient data analysis. Creswell and Poth (2018) documented the *data analysis spiral*, the core model used for this study. The NVIVO software is a tool that assists with the data analysis throughout the process. Some components of the NVIVO software aligned well with the reflective thematic analysis (RTA) approach documented and expounded upon by Braun and Clark (2006, 2021). Therefore, components of this approach were necessary during the data analysis process. IBM SPSS, Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft OneNote were other tools used to support the data analysis. The data analysis process yielded results that represent the views of the lived experiences of the study participants, supporting this study's approach. The following sections provide additional details of the approach used to determine emergent ideas, coding themes, interpretations, data representation, and analysis for triangulation in this study.

Emergent Ideas

The foundational process used for this study is the data analysis spiral. The data analysis spiral is a five-step data analysis process that encompasses a systematic data analysis approach that is necessary for effective qualitative analysis (Bingham, 2023; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first step in the data analysis spiral is managing and organizing data. This study collected data through interviews, surveys, and documents. Microsoft Teams assisted with the recording and transcribing of the interviews. The recorded interviews were in an MP4 file format, interview transcripts were in a Microsoft Word format, documents were in a PDF format, and survey data was captured in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Proper organization and management of the data is a crucial element in the process for success in the succeeding steps (Creswell & Poth, 2018) NVIVO, IBM SPSS, and Microsoft Excel assisted with managing and organizing the data

The next step in the process helps to generate ideas from the data. The second step in the data analysis spiral process is reading and memoing emergent ideas, which requires documenting thoughts while reviewing and reflecting upon the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This process allows for reviewing data as ideas emerge. Scholars agree with continuously reviewing and documenting ideas from the collected data. Integrating the approach into other prescribed methods of qualitative data analysis processes, such as the five-phase process and RTA (Bingham, 2023; Bloomberg, 2023; Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, themes emerge emergent iteratively throughout the research process.

Memoing captured emergent ideas. Memos for interviews emerged at various times, including after the initial interviews. The review of the initial interview recordings and transcripts, the follow-up interviews, and the review of the follow-up interview recordings and transcripts. Reviewing the survey data and documents occurred various times throughout the

process. Memoing of survey data and documents completed each time during the data review. As the process dictates, identified emergent ideas reflect the information captured in the data.

Microsoft Excel and OneNote assisted with the memorization and documentation of emergent ideas.

Coding Themes

Coding themes are components of the overarching data analysis process. Coding themes is the third step of the data analysis spiral and encompasses a detailed review of the data and identifying patterns (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The same coding process occurred for all data instruments, including interview transcripts, documents, and comments from survey data. Sorting data based on the data content is an inductive analysis approach (Bingham, 2023; Bloomberg, 2023). In this study, reviewing and verifying the transcripts was necessary after each interview, initial, and follow-up. Inductive analysis was appropriate for sorting the data and the transcripts into codes. The initial codes were descriptive of the data. After the initial coding, conducting another data review was appropriate; the data was viewed in the context of the research questions. Additionally, the open coding method assisted with data coding. Open coding encompasses reviewing the data and constantly comparing further to define the codes (Bingham, 2023). The data was refined through this process, and the codes changed from descriptive to informative. Changing codes from descriptive to informative is a method used to assist in qualitative data analysis (Jackson & Nowell, 2021) This process was evolutionary, and codes needed to be added, defined, and redefined. Throughout the coding process, patterns were identified and developed.

The NVIVO software assisted throughout the coding process in documenting the codes and themes. Additionally, throughout the process, codes and themes were identified and defined,

and a codebook was created. A codebook specifies pertinent details for each theme and related codes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Microsoft OneNote assisted with creating the codebook, and Microsoft Excel maintained it for maintenance.

Interpretations

Extrapolating the meaning of the data is an important part of the data analysis process. Data interpretation in qualitative research involves deep diving into the codes and themes to extract the larger meaning of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). While no exact methodology guarantees accurate data interpretation, recommended practices are necessary. In the data analysis spiral process, developing and accessing interpretations is the fourth step in the process, where gathering and scrutinizing the interpretations occur (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, determining and verifying the data was done through an iterative data analysis process. The NVIVO software helped to support the development of interpretations, and Microsoft OneNote assisted with documenting and interpreting interpretations as they emerged.

Data Representation

How data depiction is a part of the data analysis process. The fifth step in the data analysis spiral is representing and visualization of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The purpose of data visualization is to present the data in a way that helps understand the data (Ningi, 2022) Tables and charts are the visual aids used for the qualitative data in this study. This study also includes quantitative data, which is also visualized using tables and charts. Details of the tables and charts are in the results section and utilized as visual aids to help understand the data and findings discussed in this study.

Analysis for Triangulation

Triangulation is a necessary component of qualitative research. Various methods exist to accomplish triangulation. This study utilized method triangulation, used to corroborate data, including interviews and field notes. Multiple interviews with people on the same topic is another triangulation mechanism (Flynn, 2019). In this study, 26 people participated in the interviews utilizing the same interview questions. I interviewed each interviewee again to verify the data collected in the first interview and obtain additional comments. This study also used data sources in various formats to triangulate. Specifically, this study utilized data from interviews, survey data, and documents. Descriptive statistics captured the quantitative data from the surveys.

Summary of Data Analysis

Data analysis is a multi-step process designed for the proper assessment of data. This study used the data analysis spiral as the foundational process for data analysis. The data analysis spiral encompasses five steps not intended for linear execution but iterative execution. Supporting the execution of the data analysis spiral process using several tools, including NVIVIO 14, IBM SPSS, Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft OneNote. The first step in the data analysis spiral is managing and organizing data. The second step is discovering emergent ideas. The discovery of emergent ideas required scrutinizing data and memoing throughout the process. In step three, inductive analysis and open coding are used for data coding. Descriptive codes emerged that evolved into informative codes as the data transformed. Step four included determining data interpretations through scrutinizing the data as part of the iterative process. The fifth step, data representation, is vital to aid in communicating the meaning of the data. Charts and tables were the best way to aid in effectively communicating the data in

this study. Triangulation is necessary in qualitative analysis to ensure the depiction of accurate data. Method triangulation included interviews and field notes. Data source triangulation included interviews, surveys, and documents. Integrating these key components provided an effective data analysis structure for this study.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are necessary for a qualitative study. Reliability and validity assist in establishing the trustworthiness of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018) Many ways exist to execute a study with reliability and validity. The following discussion details how reliability and validity integrated and executed in this study.

Reliability

Reliability is an essential aspect of a qualitative study. Some scholars refer to reliability as dependability to ensure that the research process is articulated, consistent, and traceable (Bloomberg, 2023), with the intent of minimizing errors and biases in the study (R. K. Yin, 2018). This study included field notes and coding to ensure reliability. Maintaining field notes were appropriate in electronic format utilizing Microsoft OneNote and Microsoft Excel. Coding used in this study established reliability. In this study, NVIVO 14 Software assisted with coding all data including initial interviews, follow-up interviews, survey data, and documents.

Validity

Validity is another important aspect of qualitative research. Validity encompasses employing mechanisms to determine the accuracy of the study findings as assessed by the researcher, study participants, and study reviewers (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study used method triangulation and data source triangulation to ensure validity. Method triangulation utilizes multiple data methods for triangulation and data source triangulation utilizes multiple

data sources from a single collection method (Farquhar et al., 2020; Moon, 2019). This study utilized interviews and field notes for method triangulation. This study also incorporated member checking by conducting follow-up interviews to verify data. In addition to interviews, this study utilized survey data and documents as data sources, contributing to triangulation.

Bracketing

Researcher bias could be an issue in qualitative research. To mitigate that issue, using bracketing allows the researchers to allay biases that could impact the study (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). This study utilized reflexivity through memos and journaling as bracketing mechanisms to prevent the influence of researcher biases. Throughout the research process, I created memos and journal entries to note potential biases that could impact the research.

Summary of Reliability and Validity

Trustworthiness is crucial in qualitative research. Reliability and validity contribute to establishing trustworthiness. This study included field notes and coding to ensure reliability. NVIVO 14, Microsoft OneNote, and Microsoft Excel were tools used to support the reliability techniques. Method triangulation and data source triangulation were necessary for validity. Member checking was also employed through follow-up interviews with each participant to support the study's validity. Integrating bracketing mechanisms was to mitigate the potential influence of researcher biases in the study. The proper execution of these methods ensured the trustworthiness of this study.

Ethical Assurances

The research process must also include ethics. Ensuring ethical concerns is for proper actions that occur in the research processes. I followed recommended practices documented in the Belmont Report (Ryan et al., 1979). First, before the start of the research process, all

documentation and the research plan went through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. The IRB ensures the proper implementation of ethical practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, aligns with university standards. Next, informed consent was necessary for all study participants. For survey participants, informed consent forms occurred at the start of the survey, allowing study participants to leave the survey if they disagreed and decided not to complete the survey. Participants signed informed consent forms for the interview sent electronically to my email address. Lastly, the identities of study participants were protected. The participants anonymously completed surveys, and the data did not include any of the participants' identities. To protect the identities of interview participants, a coding schema helped prevent any participant identification.

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine leadership diversity in the workplace and the potential organizational impacts. The general problem addressed was the persistence of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry, resulting in employee turnover. The specific problem addressed was the lack of diversity in leadership in a global technology company, resulting in a potential increase in employee turnover and increased operational costs. The results of this study addressed the various components of the stated problem. The following section begins by discussing the themes resulting from the research. This section also details the findings and discusses how the findings relate to key components. The key components of the research include the research questions, the conceptual framework, anticipated themes, the literature, and the problem.

Themes Discovered

Determining themes is essential to the data analysis process. Themes represent a synthesized data view and can be present as a term, phrase, or sentence (Bingham, 2023). Themes emerge as part of the evolutionary process of coding and synthesizing the data. The data analysis process for this study yielded five themes. Each theme represents patterns of thought gleaned from the interview participants' responses and was corroborated by other data sources. The first discovered theme was leadership diversity level. The purpose of this theme is to encapsulate what the data says regarding the leadership diversity level in the studied company. The second theme was leadership skills, which incorporates the perspective of the data on the skills needed for leadership. The third theme was that diversity should be considered in leadership selections. This theme demonstrates the perspective on integrating diversity into the leadership selection process. The fourth theme was that intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity, which presents how intentionality is included and needed to increase leadership diversity. The fifth theme is organizational impacts of leadership, which encompasses the perspective on the organizational impacts as they relate to the study subject matter, specifically, employee turnover and operating costs. Table 1: Themes Summary summarizes the discovered themes and associated codes and descriptions. The *When to Use* column in Table 1 depicts the selection of the research participants' responses as contributing to each theme.

Themes	Codes/Subcodes	Code Descriptions	When to Use
1. Leadership Diversity Level	Negative Leadership Diversity	Evidence that acknowledges or expresses that leadership is lacking a satisfactory diversity composition.	When research participants refer to the need for more diversity in leadership.
	Positive Leadership Diversity	Evidence that acknowledges or expresses positive sentiment about the leadership diversity composition.	When research participants express satisfaction with the diversity composition in leadership.
	Leadership Diversity Trends	Evidence that expresses the perception of how the leadership diversity mix is trending.	When research participants express views on the trend of the leadership diversity composition.
2. Leadership Skills	Interpersonal Skills	Evidence that demonstrates the ability to relate to people.	When research participants identify specific interpersonal traits.
	Leadership Skills	Evidence that demonstrates general leadership skills.	When research participants identify general leadership skills and traits.
	Technical Skills	Evidence supports the perspective and expectation on technical skills needed for leadership roles.	When research participants express their perspectives on technical skills required for leadership roles.
3. Diversity Should be Considered in Leadership Selections	Diversity Considerations	Evidence that demonstrates how diversity is included in the leader selection process.	When research participants express how diversity is integrated into the leadership selection process.
	Importance of Diversity	Evidence that supports the importance of diversity in the leadership selection process.	When research participants express the importance of diversity in the leadership selection process.

Themes	Codes/Subcodes	Code Descriptions	When to Use
4. Intentionality is Crucial in Increasing Leadership Diversity	Organizational Initiatives	Evidence that identifies diversity initiatives at the organizational level.	When research participants highlight diversity initiatives implemented at the company level.
	Leadership Efforts	Evidence that identifies diversity initiatives at the leadership level.	When research participants highlight diverse activities and actions being utilized by individual leaders,
5. Organizational Impacts of Leadership	Employee Turnover		
	Leadership Diversity Impacts	Evidence that identifies how leadership diversity impacts employee turnover.	When research participants highlight leadership diversity impacts on employee turnover.
	Exit Reasons	Evidence that identifies why people have left the company or role.	When research participants highlight why people have left the company or business units within the company.
	Leadership Impacts	Evidence that identifies how leadership impacts employee turnover.	When research participants highlight leadership actions or activities that impact employee turnover.
	Operating Budget	Evidence that identifies how the operating budget is impacted by employee turnover.	When research participants highlight employee turnover impacts on operational costs.

Table 1: Themes Summary

Interpretation of the Themes

Using a systematic data analysis approach to analyze and code the data patterns leads to emerging themes. The five themes discovered in this study represent the data collected during the research process. This section provides a detailed discussion of the analysis and interpretation of the themes.

Theme One - Leadership Diversity Level

Theme one, leadership diversity level, summarizes study participants' responses and sentiments related to the leadership diversity level in the studied company. When asked, "How did you feel about the diversity composition of the company's leadership?" interview participants' responses demonstrated a pattern that produced three codes. The first code, negative leadership diversity, represents the lack of a satisfactory leadership diversity level. Of the 26 interview participants, 88% provided responses that contributed to the negative leadership diversity code. Interview participant statements: Interview participant RPF09 stated, "As a technology company, we are not unexpectedly very male-dominant." The research participants who completed the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Survey supported the sentiment of the interview participants. In the diversity culture segment of the DEI survey, survey participant DEI15 stated,

I sense a gap between public pronouncements and actual deeds, e.g. it's "easy" to hire a DEI person and run a few webinars, but the hard work of making teams truly diverse is still a work in progress. For example, if 75% of our developers are from one part of the world, and 75% of our managers are based in Redmond, we're probably not as diverse as we think we are.

Another DEI survey participant, DEI26 stated,

Executive leadership should take a hard look at the diversity in leadership beyond the 1st level of management. Past M1's there is a steep decline in diversity of leadership and looks to employees of color that there is no area for growth within Company X.

The interview and DEI survey participants highlighted the acknowledgment of the studied company employees. In company documentation, the studied company employees discussed dissatisfaction with the leadership composition levels (Company X, 2023). Additional interview participants' statements that support this code include the following: RPF27 stated,

I look back for 10 years like it has not, in my mind changed much. And when I say the diversity and I'm talking specifically of Black and Latina heritage in leadership positions, you just really do not see much traction there... So I see it as a huge miss. I see very little progress.”

RPM20 stated,

If you look at the executive level, I think it's pretty it's not very diverse. I mean, it's got women, which is good, but I think as far as the other traditionally marginalized communities, they're underrepresented.

The second code contributing to this theme is positive leadership diversity, where responses indicated positive sentiment about the composition of leadership diversity. Sixty-five percent of the interview participants provided responses contributing to the positive diversity leadership code. Participant responses contributing to this code include participant RPM02, who stated that the Company “has a much more diverse leadership chain than what I've experienced in the past.”. DEI survey participants also support the positive sentiment expressed by interview participants. DEI survey participant DEI46 stated, “Diversity at this company is more prevalent

than in many others. A lot of emphasis is placed on Diversity in training and in core priorities. A lot of emphasis is placed on training in Diversity during hiring practices.” Following are additional statements from interview participants that support this code: RPF01 stated, “It’s very rare that I join a call where I’m the only female these days...a leadership call...it’s even probably rarer that I join a call a leadership call and there’s no African American or Latinx or some other ethnic group other than Caucasian. RPF15 stated: “I speak specifically for the work area that I am at as well as upper-level leadership, I have seen some improvement in female leadership, so that’s from gender, I have seen diversity there.” Participant responses contributing to the negative and positive leadership diversity codes overlapped, with 54% providing input to both codes.

This theme also includes the code leadership trends that demonstrate and express the perception of how the composition of leadership diversity is trending. Fifty percent of the interview participants provided responses that contributed to the leadership diversity trends code. Fifty-four percent of the responses for this code were from female interview participants, and 46% were from male interview participants. Interview participant responses indicate that the leadership composition is increasing and trending positively. Regarding the leadership diversity trends, interview participant RPF17 stated, “It has certainly changed dramatically. We have definitely gone up...when I started, I don’t think I knew of a Black female manager at all.” This sentiment is echoed in documentation from the studied company. The company reports include that leadership diversity numbers increased because of the current organizational initiatives (Company X, 2023). Additional interview participant responses contributing to this code include: RPM23 stated: “It has trended in a more diverse direction...it’s on more of a trend in a more

diverse direction.” RPF15 stated, “There's still more work to be done...but small strides are being made.”

Theme 1 includes insight into the leadership diversity level in the studied company. The data included in this theme provides a positive perspective on the leadership diversity level in the studied company. Many of the responses indicate satisfaction with how the diversity level is trending. However, study participants also highlighted negative aspects of the leadership diversity level. This theme confirms that a lack of leadership diversity persists in the studied company. The finding supports extant literature relative to the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry (Atal et al., 2019; McGee, 2018). Theme 1 contributed to the findings for research question 1: Why is there a persistent lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry? The results were inconclusive and discussed in the research questions section.

Theme Two - Leadership Skills

Theme two, leadership skills, demonstrates interview participants' perspectives on leadership skills. Three interview questions were to gather what leadership skills were most important for leaders in the technology industry. To discover factors contributing to leadership selection, interview participants answered the following questions: What qualifications are most important in leadership candidates, and what other skills are important for leadership candidates? Interviewees' responses to these interview questions highlighted necessary skills in two codes: interpersonal and leadership skills. All study participants contributed to the interpersonal skills and leadership skills codes.

More females than males participated in the study (see Chart 1: Interview Participants Gender for the leadership skills code). The male study participants provided slightly more input

than the female participants, providing 51% of the contributing data. The race/ethnicity of the interview participants appears in Chart 2: Interview Participant's Race/Ethnicity. Thirty-seven percent of the data contributing to the leadership skills theme came from Caucasian males, 24.5% from Caucasian females, and 22.5% from Black or African American females.

Leadership skills demonstrate the ability to execute a strategic vision and guide a team to a desired outcome. While not the only areas called out by interview participants, vision and communication are examples of two key areas targeted by interview participants when discussing leadership skills. In response to the interview questions, interview participant RPF03 stated,

Looking at what's going on in the market and then how do we adapt and build a strategy in a vision to get us where we're going in the next few years and being able to put all of the all of the chess pieces together to be able to get us there.

Interview participant RPM20 supported this sentiment stating,

Having a sense of direction where you wanna go, then able to lay down objectives and key results and goals I think is important that are, you know, they gotta be realistic, but they have to be enough to where they stretch the workforce without breaking the workforce.

Researchers of extant literature document the importance of vision for leadership. Ng and Sears (2020) Stated that vision is essential in executing diversity management. Cakir and Adiguzel (2020) stated that vision impacts leadership effectiveness. Highlighting communication, interview participant RPM23 stated, "Great leaders can articulate what is most important, and they do it often." Communication is also an area discussed in extant literature. Effective communication contributed to fostering inclusive environments (Y. Lee et al., 2021), is

necessary to improve employee-manager diversity relationships (Purushothaman & Rein, 2023), and leadership diversity could negatively impact the environment (Loh et al., 2022).

Like leadership skills, all interview participants contributed to the interpersonal skills code. However, regarding interpersonal skills, female interview participants were more verbose in this area, providing approximately 62% of the content for this code. Interpersonal skills are skills that demonstrate the ability to relate to people. As highlighted in the content from interview participants, verbiage for this code included words such as empathy, emotional intelligence, and compassion. Interview participant RPF09 stated,

There has to be an element of empathy in our ability to lead successfully...that's not a book taught and a capability and one that requires someone to get out of themselves whose empathy is not about me. It's about you and a lot of very capable, very smart people have a hard time disassociating themselves from the equation. And so I think that's to me, that's a critical capability.

Interview participants RPF17 and RPF26 contributed to this code by stating, respectively,

So, I believe an area of discernment or emotional intelligence is really key.

You'll find allot of way more conflicts than you realize that require more emotional intelligence than just running the numbers., and Empathy and going along with empathy is probably compassion, so that probably have to be able to support their teams and to do so in a compassionate way.

The importance of interpersonal skills discovered in this research supports extant literature. The quality of leader-employee relationships positively impacts employee actions (Robertson, 2021) and has been found to impact organizational outcomes (Graen and Uhl-Bien,

1995 as cited in Hickman & Akdere, 2018; Gerstner & Day, 1997 as cited in Cortellazzo et al., 2019).

The core of this study is the possible discovery of items specific to the technology industry. Theme Two also encapsulates the perspective on technical skills needed for leaders in a technology company. Interview participants answered the question of what technical skills are required for leadership. This question was to discover nuances specific to the technology industry that impact leadership selection. Perspectives on technical skills were captured under the technical skills code. Ninety-six percent of the interview participants contributed to this code, with female participants providing 53% of the content and male participants providing 47%. Despite the overall percentage for males being less than females, white males provided the highest percentage of responses based upon the demographic groups, contributing 32% of the content for this code. As demonstrated below, participant responses contributing to this code do not support the need for a high level of technical knowledge for leadership in the technology industry. The data does support the need for some level of technical knowledge. This perspective aligns with extant literature as other scholars agree with the need for technical skills for leadership roles in the technology industry (McGee, 2018). The conflict between extant literature and this study is the level of technical skill needed by leaders in the technology industry. The following interview participant responses in this research demonstrate a perspective that limited technical skills needed for leaders in the technology industry. RPF01 stated, “A generalized understanding of the technical offerings that the company has is always helpful...you can't talk smart about something you don't know anything about.”RPF05 stated: “At a high level, leaders need to understand, you know, the strategy from our leadership, from a technology perspective.” RPF09 stated,

I rely on technical experts to make sure that the content is technically accurate, and they depend on me for understanding the customer and then how to use your digital channels to communicate with customers. And so I'd say your technical acumen depend the needs. For technical acumen depend on the role that you're in...it just depends on what organization you're in.

Theme Two provides context surrounding skills and attributes desired for and executed by leadership at the studied company. This data provides insight relative to leadership selection. Additionally, this data assists in analyzing contributing factors to the lack of leadership diversity and potential mitigation of the issue. Theme Two contributed to the findings for research questions 1, 1a, and 1b, which are in the analysis of the research question section.

Theme Three - Diversity Should be Considered in Leadership Selections

Another important aspect of this research is discovering contributing factors to the lack of leadership diversity and the potential mitigating actions. The analysis in this research considered the element of diversity in leadership selection. Theme Three, diversity should be considered in leadership selections, encompasses the pattern that emerged from the data regarding the importance of the element of diversity in the leadership selection process. Theme Three contributed to answering research question 1, supporting the assessment of how diversity criteria impact the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry.

The interview question contributing to the development of this theme is: What role does diversity play in leadership selection? The interviewee responses for Theme Three grouped into two codes. The first code for this theme, diversity considerations, demonstrates how the leadership selection process includes diversity. Ninety-six percent of the interview participants contributed content to this code. Female interview participants provided 55% of the content for

this code, with African American women providing 35% of the overall content. Of the 96% of the interview participants who contributed to this code, 85% indicated that diversity is or should be a critical factor in the leadership selection process. Twelve percent indicated that diversity is not or should not be a critical factor in leadership selection, and 8% indicated that diversity is not or should not be considered in the leadership selection process. The interview participant data differs from data collected in the Hiring and Recruitment segment of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) survey. As seen in Table 2: Hiring and Recruitment Rating, the mean rating for diversity hiring and recruitment is 3.566 out of 5. Which indicates survey participants were slightly above neutral, not strongly agreeing nor disagreeing with the company's diversity hiring and recruitment practices. This mean score does not align with the 85% of the interview participants who expressed that diversity should be considered in hiring. Some DEI survey participants provided strong commentary against considering diversity in the hiring process. DEI participant DEI2 commented, “Diversity should NOT be a factor when considering candidates.” We should not prefer ANY race or gender - it's about qualifications, not checking arbitrary boxes..” Survey participant, DEI27 supported this sentiment commenting, “Focus on hiring whose best for the role not meeting a metric of your team”.

DEI Hiring and Recruitment Rating					
Survey Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This company takes active measures to seek a diverse candidate pool when hiring.	53	1	5	3.74	1.077
There is diversity among the people a job candidate will meet/see on their first visit to the company.	53	1	5	3.40	1.198
DEIHiringScale	53	1.00	5.00	3.5660	1.04255
Valid N (listwise)	53				

Table 2: Hiring and Recruitment Rating

For those interview participants who are proponents of diversity consideration in the leadership hiring process, a lack of consistency in considering diversity existed. This statement is contingent upon the needs and perspective of the hiring manager. According to interview participants, the studied company has no policy that dictates how diversity is incorporated into the leadership selection process. Below are examples of participant statements regarding diversity considerations in the leadership selection process. RPM12 stated, “We take a diversity lens on any hiring action we take and I think it gets...dialed up a little bit more, especially for managers.” RPF18 stated, “That certainly a consideration, but there's no hard line or policy that's like, you will make sure that you have the next hire be of diversity of diverse candidacy.” RPF26 stated that, “I believe diversity should be included in leadership selection in order to help teams succeed as much as possible.”

The importance of diversity code demonstrates the importance of diversity in the leadership selection process. This code encompasses perspectives that express that diversity is important and feedback that does not support the importance of diversity. While most participants attested to the importance of considering diversity in leadership selection, only 20% of the 96% who contributed content to this theme provided explicit statements that presented their views. The importance of leadership diversity is supported in extent that literature and scholars have documented several benefits, including improved organizational performance (M. Ali & French, 2019; Lerman et al., 2022; Loh et al., 2022) and improved innovation (Sung & Choi, 2021). Below are examples of direct statements that interview participants provided that contributed to this code. RPF01 stated, “Diversity, I think inherently is in every hiring decision that a good leader makes.” RPM10 stated: “Look at the person qualified to do the job. It really doesn't even concern me, you know, whether the person is white, Black, Asian, male, female.”

RPM12 stated: “Depending on the makeup of my team, you know specifically for diversity that could vary. If I have a very diverse team, maybe that's not as critical of an attribute of the hiring process.”

Theme Four - Intentionality is Crucial in Increasing Leadership Diversity

Theme Four, intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership, consolidates data supporting the premise that intentionality is vital to leadership diversity. The interview question contributing to this theme was, what can be done to increase leadership diversity? All interview participants contributed to this theme and responded, denoting the need for consistency.

Interviewee responses incorporated into this theme grouped into two codes: organizational initiatives and leadership efforts. The code organizational initiatives demonstrate the need for company-wide activities that target diversity initiatives to increase diversity. Fifty-four of the interviewee respondents for this theme contributed to this code. The percentage of male and female contributions to this code closely aligns with the male and female distribution of interview participants (see Chart 1: Interview Participants Gender), with 54% of the contributions from females and 46% from males.

Interview responses contributing to this code highlighted the need for consistency in organizational-level initiatives to increase leadership diversity. Interview participant RPF17 stated, “I would challenge to build a consistent development program...so consistent in a scalable delivery leadership development program that will move members of diverse backgrounds from lower leadership into upper leadership levels.”. The extant literature supports this sentiment specific to leadership development programs. Leadership development programs have been credited with building good leaders (Ayeleke et al., 2019), improving leadership abilities (Cohrs et al., 2020), and positively impacting the leadership diversity gap (Soklaridis et

al., 2022; Yen et al., 2019). Interviewees also discussed that the studied company does have organizational-level initiatives and cited some pros and cons associated with the current initiatives. Interview participant RPF05 highlighted company diversity initiatives, stating, “At a company level, we have a number of different forums for diversity and a lot of I think that we brought like the outside in series that there's a lot of topics around diversity, you know, neurodiversity.” Interview participant RPM02 highlighted concern regarding the company’s diversity initiative, stating, “A forced policy that way, then creates a scenario where you know you have an individual that's like literally they said, I feel like I get invited to every interview.”

The element of consistency highlighted across both codes, contributing to this theme. The leadership efforts code demonstrates the need for intentional actions to support increased leadership diversity. One hundred percent of the interview participants contributed to this code. Like the theme, the percentage of male and female contributions to this code closely aligns with the distribution of male and female interview participants, with 54% of the contributions from females and 46% from males. The content included in this code provides examples of the types of leadership efforts utilized to support an increase in leadership diversity. For example, interview participant RPF05 stated, “On my team I have like a lead for diversity inclusion and he's the one that kind of brings in topics to my team meetings and things like that.” This code supports extant literature on the importance of leadership engagement and actions that support diversity. The diverse workforce that exists in the current marketplace requires leaders to exhibit behaviors that support a diverse workforce (Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2022). The responses for this code also align with leadership styles that support diversity. Putting the needs of others first and supporting diverse employees is a behavior demonstrated in servant leadership (Fuller, 2022; Sims, 2018). The leadership actions discussed in this theme also support organizational change,

which is a behavior demonstrated by transformational leaders (Cote, 2017; Northouse, 2019).

The following are additional statements from interview participants demonstrating support for this code. RPF03 stated, “I sort of go out of my way to make sure they're getting recognized, spotlighted, and promoted. Being that leader that seeks people out and helps them to get there.”

RPF04 stated, “Be very, very strategic into making sure also to trying to get people to apply because we know sometimes people just look at the job description and disqualify themselves.”

Theme Four contributes the findings for research questions 1b and 2. The details of these findings are documented in the research questions section.

Theme Five - Organizational Impacts of Leadership

Theme Five, organizational impacts of leadership, demonstrates the pattern that emerged from the data about the organizational impacts resulting from leadership. Leadership impacts on organizations are extensive. For the context of this research, exploring the impacts of the lack of leadership diversity targeted the areas of employee turnover and operating costs. All interview participants contributed to the development of this theme. Three interview questions contributed to the information related to employee turnover. Interview participants were asked how leadership influences employee retention. How does leadership diversity impact employee retention? What reasons do people give when they decide to leave? The responses to these questions contributed to the employee turnover code. The responses also revealed that the employee turnover code required further definition broken down into three subcodes. The first subcode is leadership diversity impacts, which depicts how leadership diversity impacts employee turnover, highlighting the diversity component. While interview participants expressed various ways that leadership diversity impacts employee turnover, the commonality in the

responses reveals an impact. In response to the interview questions, interview participant RPF04 stated,

It does play a factor even if you come on an interview and you see who's interviewing you. Even the interview panel right is if you're coming from the outside, it's like an entryway that give you a little insight into what inside looks like.

Interview participant RPF17 provided a more simplistic statement: "People stay when they see people like them there."

Interview participant RPF26 provided another supporting view: "I would think that it's important for diverse employees to see themselves in leadership and to see a path for themselves. And I think that's like the whole idea around representation." The importance of diversity echoes throughout the responses of the interview participants and correlates with the extant research. Scholars stated that organizations that do not promote diversity impact employee turnover (Duncan, 2023; Sull, Sull, & Zweig, 2022), which supports the perspective discovered in this research.

The second subcode for employee turnover is exit reasons, which identify why employees have left the company or role. The third subcode for employee turnover is leadership impacts, which identifies the impacts of leadership on employee turnover. As previously stated, consistency existed in the sentiment that leaders impact employee turnover. The literature documents the impact of leadership on employee turnover. Robertson (2021) stated that leadership actions can positively impact employee retention. Scholars that support found that leadership actions specifically related to diversity management positively impact employee retention (M. Ali & French, 2019; J. Lee et al., 2020). Interview participant responses for

subcode exit reasons include: RPF03 stated, “They leave because of their manager. Now the issue with their manager is probably, you know far and wide...that's the number one reason people leave.” RPF18 stated, “I don't see a career path. I don't see like a career growth here. I don't see opportunities.” RPM08 stated, “Better opportunity, obviously more money”

Interview participant responses for subcode leadership impacts include: RPF04 stating, “I think it has a huge factor for sure, because if you think about the leader being the strategic person, giving, sharing that vision and bringing people along, it makes people either wanna be part of that team, part of that org.”RPF05 stated, “I think there is definitely a correlation, but I also think it, not just retention, but it's also performance levels.”RPF15 stated: “I feel like as a manager to some degree I can influence retention through helping team members find opportunities for growth and development.”

The operating costs code includes data relative to the types of operating costs that are impacted by employee turnover. All interview participants contributed to the development of this code. When asked how employee turnover impacts operating budgets, interview participants echoed the sentiment that employee turnover does impact operating costs. The participants cited different ways and different types of costs that contribute to the impacts on operating costs. In response to the interview question, interview participant RPF03 stated, “It costs a lot of money to bring on a new person because typically so it's whatever the companies costs are to recruit... there's costs and bringing on new people and then we often have to offer competitive package.” Researchers in the literature also documented employee turnover's impacts on operational costs. Employee turnover has been highlighted as an area that impacts organizational costs because of varying aspects, such as the loss of qualified employees and increased recruiting and training costs (Dess & Shaw, 2001, Shaw, Gupta, & Delery, 2005 as cited in Autrey et al., 2019, Li et al.,

2022). The following interview participant responses provide additional support for this code:

RPM08 stated,

Severely, because in any typical business, when you bring on a new employee, you're not gonna see impacts from that employee for at least six at best, six at, you know, up to year...lost progress that could be lost revenue that could be lost the you know intellectual property.

RPM20 stated, "It affects it in a way that you have to, you know, continue to invest in developing, as people leave, can't have start over and redevelop."

Theme Five includes two specific impacts of leadership on an organization: employee turnover and operational costs. The data encompassed in Theme Five contributed to the findings for research questions 2, 2a, and 3. The details of these findings are in the research questions section.

Representation and Visualization of the Data

In this study, the data visualized using tables and charts. Various tables and charts integrated throughout the results section to assist with discussing the data. This section provides charts that represent the demographics of the research participants.

Interview Participants Demographic

The study required managers to participate in the interviews in the studied company. Twenty-six managers participated in the interviews in this study. The charts in this section show demographics associated with the interview participants, including race/ethnicity and gender.

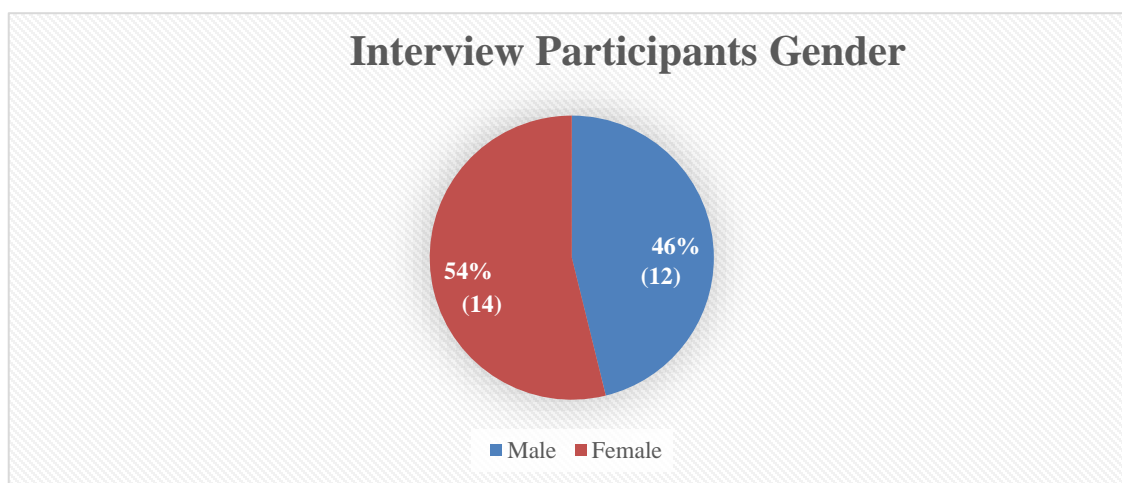


Chart 1: Interview Participants Gender

Interview Participants Race/Ethnicity

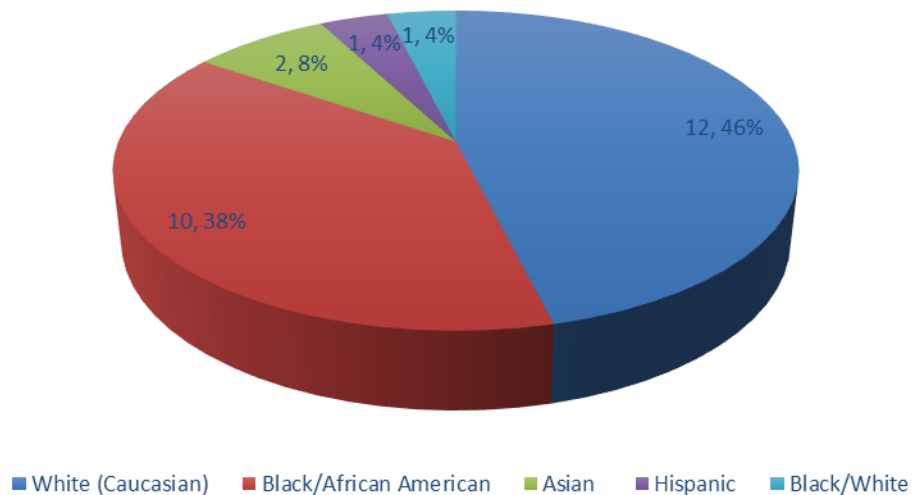


Chart 2: Interview Participant's Race and Ethnicity

Leader-Member Exchange 7 Survey Demographics

The Leader-Member Exchange 7 questionnaire includes responses from non-management employees employed with the company for less than five years and whose most recent former employer was a technical company. Forty employees attempted the survey. However, 14 employees did not pass the screening. Twenty-six employees completed the survey. The demographics collected for this questionnaire pertain to the survey respondent's manager, not the respondent, and include the manager's gender and race/ethnicity. The following charts show the demographics of the survey respondents' direct managers and the survey participants' LMX-7 ranking, grouped by their managers' gender.

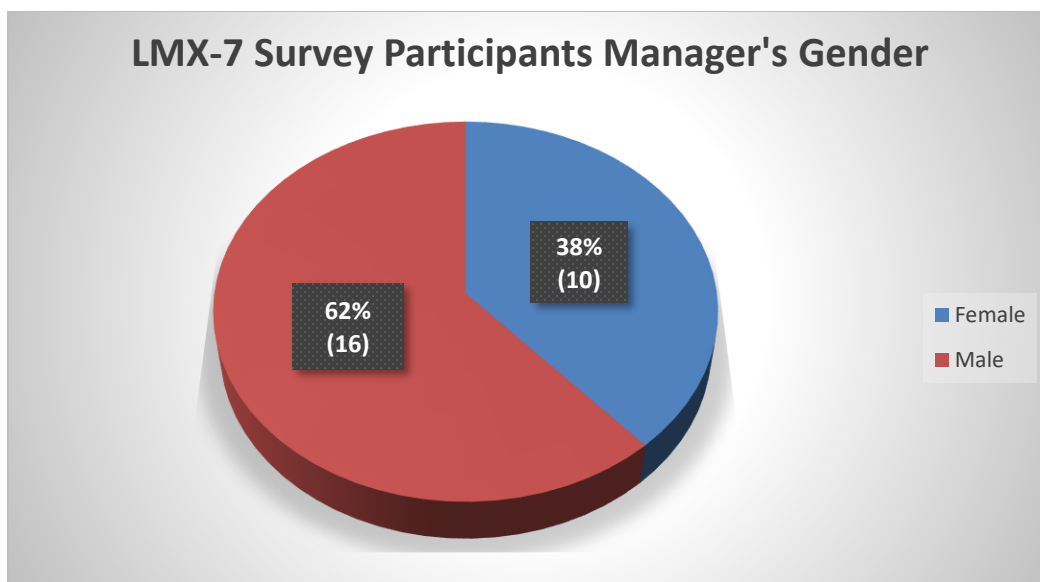


Chart 3: LMX-7 Survey Participant Manager's Gender

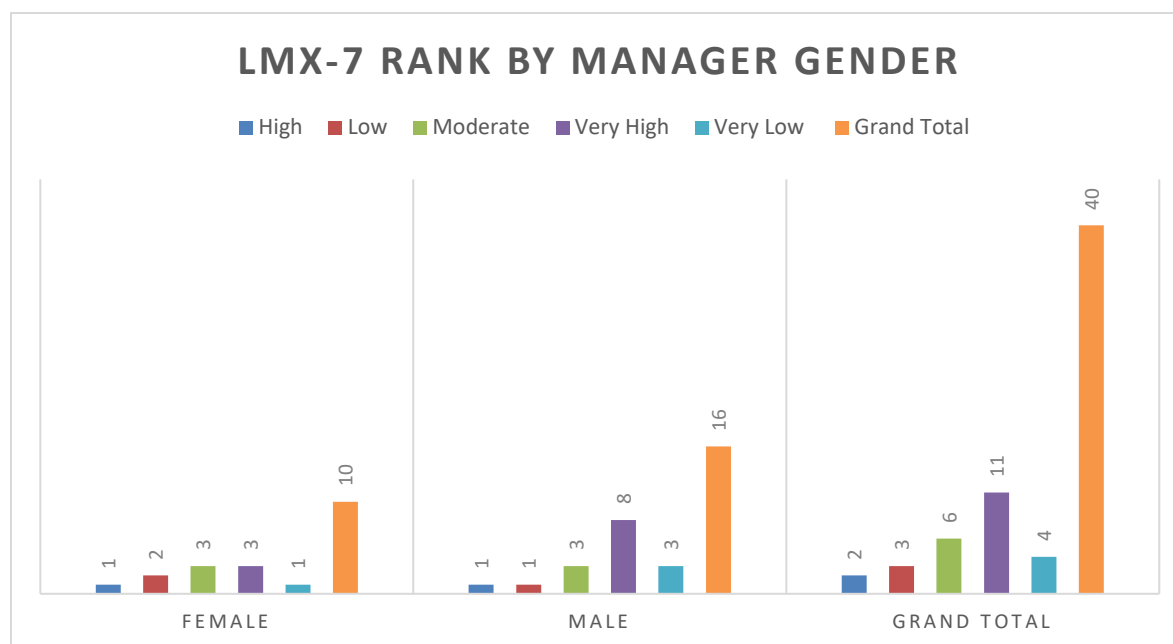


Chart 4: LMX-7 Rank by Manager Gender

Employee Survey: Diversity Equity and Inclusion Demographics

The Employee Survey: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was open to all employees. 53 employees completed the survey. The following chart reflects the demographics of the survey participants grouped by gender.

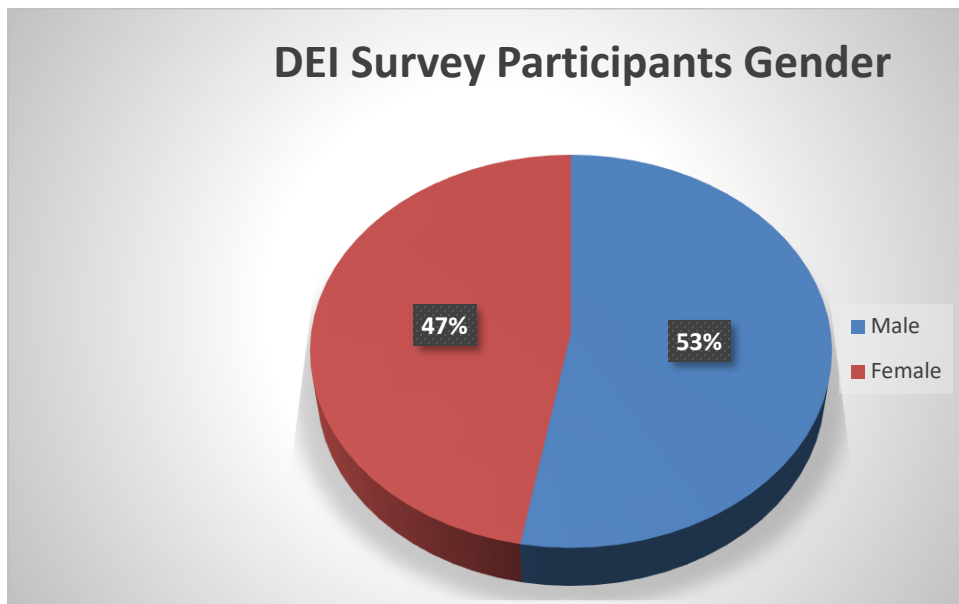


Chart 5: DEI Survey Participants Gender

Relationship of the Results

The results of this study address the various components of the problem statement and apply to each key area of the study. This section includes a discussion of how the findings relate to the research questions, the conceptual framework, anticipated themes, the literature, and the problem. The following discussion demonstrates the relevancy of the findings in each of these areas.

The Research Questions

This study explored the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the potential impacts on employee turnover leading to increased operational costs. Six research questions, three primary questions, and three sub-questions were identified, addressed the scope

of the explored topic, and provided a comprehensive view of the problem. Exploring each research question was done through interviews, surveys, and documents related to at least one theme discovered from the study. Table 2: Research Questions and Themes Mapping shows the relationship between the research questions, themes, and interview questions. The discussion of a detailed analysis of these relationships is in this section. This section also presents the findings for each research question, which includes one finding for each research question.

Research Questions		Themes	Interview Questions
RQ1	Why is there a persistent lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry?	Theme 1 Leadership Diversity Level	1. How did you feel about the diversity composition of your company's leadership?
		Theme 2 Leadership Skills	2. What qualifications are most important in leadership candidates?
		Theme 3 Diversity Should be Considered in Leadership Selections	3. What role does diversity play in leadership selection?
RQ1a	What factors in the technology industry contribute to the lack of leadership diversity?	Theme 2 Leadership Skills Perspective	4. What technical skills are required for leadership?
			5. What other skills are important for leadership candidates?
RQ1b	What factors in the technology industry contribute to the increase in leadership diversity?	Theme 2 Leadership Skills	4. What technical skills are required for leadership?
		Theme 4 Intentionality is Crucial in Increasing Leadership Diversity	5. What other skills are important for leadership candidates?
RQ2	How did the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry impact employee turnover?	Theme 4 Intentionality is Crucial in Increasing Leadership Diversity	6. What can be done to increase diversity in leadership?
		Theme 5 Organizational Impacts of Leadership	7. How does leadership influence employee retention?
			8. How does leadership diversity influence employee retention?

	Research Questions	Themes	Interview Questions
RQ2a	How does employee turnover impact operational costs in the technology industry?	Theme 5 Organizational Impacts of Leadership	10. How does employee turnover impact your operating budget?
RQ3	In what way could an increase in leadership diversity impact employee turnover in the technology industry?	Theme 5 Organizational Impacts of Leadership	8. How does leadership diversity influence employee retention?
			9. What reasons have people given when they decide to leave?

Table 3: Research Questions and Themes Mapping

Research Question 1: The Persistent Lack of Leadership Diversity

RQ1: Why is there a persistent lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry?

The purpose of this question is to explore the persistence of the problem of the lack of leadership diversity and potentially discover contributing factors to the persistence of the issue. Three interview questions contributed to assessing this research question. Interview question 1: How did you feel about the diversity composition of your company's leadership? This question helps to determine the participants' perspective on the composition of the company's leadership diversity. The responses to this question contributed to the discovery of Theme One, the leadership diversity level. Interview participants expressed positive and negative views of the leadership diversity level in the studied company. When asked interview question 1, most participants expressed negative sentiments, such as participant RPF03, who stated, "There's not enough women in leadership or just say, not everybody wants to be a leader, but just say in key influential roles.". This perspective was supported by other research participants who stated:

RPF09 stated, “It's always been this way, so I have no expectation that will be different and I've kind of always grown up this way.”

RPF19 stated, “I don't see a lot of, diversity as far as you know, female leaders, leaders of color within our leadership teams and on our executive leadership teams as well.”RPM24 stated: “Our company’s leadership is not as diverse as let's just say it's not as diverse as the makeup of America. It is not as diverse as the makeup of the world.” In response to interview question 1, participant RPF01 expressed a positive view of the composition of leadership diversity, stating, “I see more and more diversity in roles at the leadership level and in the people management level and higher.”. This perspective was supported by other research participants, including: RPF05 stated, “I mean in the 10 years that I've been here, I think it's gotten more diverse for sure because I remember I used to be like, you know, a lot of white male.” RPM10 stated: “Much more diversified than other companies I've worked for.”

Despite the primary thoughts, whether positive or negative, the overall sentiment of the research participants is that the composition of leadership diversity needs improvement. Ninety-two percent of the interviewees expressed that the leadership diversity level needs improvement. This perspective communicated by the interview participants in this study aligns with extant research that documents that persistence in the leadership diversity gap calls for improvements (World Economic Forum, 2018 as cited in Triana et al., 2019). Additionally, most interviewees stated that the composition of leadership diversity in the studied company was trending positively. Interview participant RPF03 stated, “I think it's gotten better...I still don't think we're there at all.” This sentiment also aligns with extant literature that documents upward trends in leadership diversity (Triana et al., 2019). Other examples from this research that support this perspective include: RPM11 stated: “When I think about targets that are established each year for

our diversity, inclusion and aspirations as a culture in the in our company, it's admirable...trending in a positive direction.”RPF17 stated: “It has certainly changed dramatically. We have definitely gone up... when I started, I don't think I knew of a Black female manager at all...but the progress has certainly been great.”

Interview question 2: What qualifications are most important in leadership candidates?

This question also contributed to the findings for research question 1 and the discovery of Theme Two, leadership skills perspective. In the context of RQ1, the purpose of this question was to discover potential leadership qualifications that could impact leadership diversity. When asked interview question 2, interview participants' responses highlighted qualifications categorized as interpersonal and leadership skills. Interview participants' responses that support Theme Two and align with this research question include responses for interpersonal skills. RPF18 stated, “So you need to be a strong communicator.” RPF19 stated, “I mean definitely the soft skills. I think the openness to learning. Supporting your team and not feeling the need to be always the smartest person in the room.”RPF25 stated:

that's where the empathy is going to show up right again, if you, whether you have a local team or global team, whatever, can you empathize with a personal situation and manage them and lead them through it, and there's integrity, there's trustworthiness.

Responses for Leadership Skills, RPF09 stated, “how do you lead through change and how do you lead stubborn teams because there is an element of like there is always change here constant change and our ability to be flexible and to lead our teams through that change is so critical. RPF26 stated,

A broad category of servant leadership. Ability to be strategic and think about strategy and vision and to share that with others in a compelling way that brings them along. To communicate well, articulate their vision, and understand the points of view of others. Conflict negotiation or conflict resolution. Interview question 3: What role does diversity play in leadership selection? This question also contributed to the findings for RQ1 and the development of Theme 3: diversity should be considered in leadership selections. The purpose of interview question 3 was to discover the role diversity plays in leadership selection. Most interviewees indicated that diversity is essential in the leadership selection process. When asked interview question 3, interview participants responded: RPF26 stated, “I believe diversity should be included in leadership selection in order to help teams succeed as much as possible.” RPF28 stated, “I come with a very diverse lens and perspective of and understanding the importance of diversity to business success. And so my lens is different. Therefore, my priority is greater is higher. I place a higher priority on it...” RPF12 stated,

It's definitely something discussed and you know, that we focus on when we make hiring decisions for sure. I think you know, for the most part, it's a consideration for hiring in general, whether it's leadership...we take a diversity lens on any hiring action we take, and I think it gets, maybe you know we dial it up a little bit more especially for managers.

The studied company has publicly declared that diversity, equity, and inclusion are core priorities. In 2020, company leaders announced a series of initiatives to support racial equity that included a commitment to double the number of Black/African American, Hispanic, and Latinx leaders in the United States by 2025 (Company X, 2024). These initiatives have yielded positive results toward the company's goal of increasing the composition of leadership diversity in the

United States. As of June 2024, the company has reported making significant strides and achieved 63 percent of the goal for Black/African Americans for lower level managers, 126.6 percent of the goal for Black/African American at the director level, and 94 percent of the goal for Hispanic and Latinx at the people manager level (Company X, 2024). The company reports continue to include the initiatives to achieve the desired goals.

This research included a diversity, equity, and inclusion survey. This survey includes a 5-point Likert scale to measure various areas within the company's environment related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The values used for measurement in this study are 5 being strongly agree, 4 being agree, 3 being neutral, 2 being disagree, and 1 being strongly disagree. As seen in Chart 5: DEI Survey Participants Gender, 53% of the DEI survey participants were male and 47% were female. Table 3: DEI Culture Rating shows the survey values that measure the current overall diversity culture. The survey shows that the mean value for the overall diversity of culture is 3.75. This rating, along with survey participants' comments, supports the interview data and the document data on the need for improvement in the company's diversity culture. The comments from DEI survey participants specifically address the DEI culture portion of the survey. DE17 stated,

I see the leadership of this company promoting the idea of diversity using words. However, when you look at leadership in certain areas, that diversity is not reflected. I feel like that as a minority in this company, there isn't much room for equity or inclusion.

DEI48 stated, “There is room for improvement at all levels of the company.”

DEI Culture Rating						
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Management shows that diversity is important through its actions.	53	4	1	5	192	3.62
The leadership at this company encourages diversity.	53	3	2	5	214	4.04
This company fosters a workplace that allows employees to be themselves at work without fear.	53	3	2	5	200	3.77
This company is committed to improving the diversity of employees.	53	4	1	5	202	3.81
This company respects individuals and values their differences.	53	4	1	5	205	3.87
The leadership at this company treats all employees fairly.	53	4	1	5	185	3.49
At this company, employees appreciate others whose backgrounds, beliefs and experiences are different from their own.	53	4	1	5	195	3.68
DEICultureScale	53	2.71	2.29	5.00	199.00	3.7547
Valid N (listwise)	53					

Table 4: DEI Culture Rating

The finding for RQ1 was inconclusive. The research demonstrates that the lack of leadership diversity continues to persist in this technology company; however, the research did not discover why the lack of leadership diversity persists. The analysis considered the data and the themes discovered in this study. Theme One, leadership diversity level; Theme Two, leadership skills; and Theme Three, diversity should be considered in leadership selections, were assessed for this research question. The data does reflect continuity in what was reported by interviewees, the survey responses, and what was reported by the company. Overall, interviewees documented that leadership diversity is vital in the selection process. Leadership diversity is improving, and more work is necessary to increase leadership diversity. The DEI

survey data support these findings, and the documented sentiment, initiatives, and data reported by the company.

Research Question 1a: Technology Industry and the Lack of Leadership Diversity

RQ1a: What factors in the technology industry contribute to the lack of leadership diversity? This research question helps to discover nuances that potentially exist in the technology industry that could contribute to the lack of leadership diversity and target the area of leadership skills. Two interview questions answered this question. Interview question 4: What technical skills are required for leadership? Interview question 5: What other skills are important for leadership candidates? These questions emphasized skills needed for leadership and determined if specific skills needed for leadership in the technology industry. The data from these questions contributed to the discovery of Theme Two, leadership skills. Technical skills were non-essential for leadership in the technology industry, as demonstrated by the following participant responses to interview questions 4 and 5: RPM07 stated,

I think it depends on the team and as a company of this size there's plenty of teams where you don't have to be technical to be a leader or manager for that matter. Even in an org like this that where technical skills are probably less important.”

RPM13 stated, “Any leader of any business needs to understand how the business works. There needs to be an understanding, but you don't need to have, you know detailed level to be a good leader in a technology company.” RPM16 stated,

Definitely understanding technology, being conversant in technology, knowing the role that it plays. Knowing what's hard, what's easy in our line of work is

important. Allot of folks that wouldn't call themselves technical who can carry on a very detailed conversation.

The finding for RQ1a is that no skills specific to the technology industry impact the lack of leadership diversity. The research revealed that technical knowledge could be essential for some leadership roles in a technology company. The findings also revealed that strong leadership and interpersonal skills are more important than technical knowledge. The findings for this research question relate to Theme Two, leadership skills.

Research Question 1b: Increasing Leadership Diversity in the Technology Industry

RQ1b: What factors in the technology industry contribute to the increase of leadership diversity? This question was to view leadership diversity from a different optic, focusing on how to increase leadership diversity. Three interview questions align to answer the question. Interview question 4, what technical skills are required for leadership, and interview question. Question 5, which is about what other skills are essential for leadership candidates, was to target nuances that may exist in the technology industry related to leadership skills. Assessing the data for these interview questions and applying the data to this research question yields results similar to those of RQ1a. The data indicated that leadership and interpersonal skills have more impact than technical skills for leadership in the technology industry. The analysis of this data contributed to the development of theme two, leadership skills..

Interview question 6: what can be done to increase diversity in leadership? was to gain insights into actions and/or activities that could contribute to increasing leadership diversity. Interview responses from the participants provided many different actions and activities that could aid in increasing leadership diversity. Recommendations to increase leadership diversity

were put into organizational initiatives and leadership actions. Responding to organizational initiatives, when asked interview question 6, RPF05 stated,

There's initiatives. I feel like those initiatives get a lot more love and care when we are in like more of a stable mature business model then like right after we've like reorg'ed. So, I think like the emphasis on it seems to like kind of ebb and flow, based on you know whether the company is like kind of maturing their business or whether they're like revamping.

RPF18 stated,

We have a formal sponsorship program where HR does work with the business leaders to identify the diverse talent within the organization and try and partner them with a sponsor to make sure that they're being coached and making sure that they have like a sponsor, someone who's gonna vouch for them when it's time to say hey, they should have a stretch opportunity or give them visibility and forms that they may not have otherwise had the opportunity.

PF19 stated,

I've seen more training come around this than there has been in the past around examining that bias, I think you have to, you have to really start changing the culture of your leadership to be able to have people that genuinely are being intentional about looking at how they're giving people opportunities and finding those audiences.

Responding to leadership actions, the replies included the following comments: RPF01 stated,

Continued awareness of the benefits of making sure that roles are filled by individuals that bring dynamic perspectives. Making sure that when opportunities

arise that requisitions are written in a way that appeal to anyone with the qualifications to do the job right, making sure that we provide enough pieces of information that it attracts different perspectives. Going into those interview loops with an open growth mindset.

RPF18 stated, “So you have to have the leader who's actually passionate about changing the makeup of the organization.”

RPM23 stated,

As a leader of leaders, you're, you know, there has to be accountability and challenging people not just their thought, but in their actions. If you as a leader of leaders are not paying attention to those things and emphasizing those things, then they're gonna follow your lead. They're gonna be like, well, yeah, I believe in diversity and that's it.

The data analysis from interview question 6 led to the discovery of a common element to organizational initiatives and leadership actions: the need for intentionality. This analysis contributed to developing theme four: Intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity. The premise of intentionality in organizational initiatives aligns with the documentation published by the studied company. The diversity report states that the company employed a long-term vision and has the support of senior leadership to pursue diversity efforts year after year persistently (Company X, 2023). When interview participants were asked what could be done to increase diversity in leadership, interview participants' responses included the following:

RPM23 stated,

Intentionality has meant having capturing data, reporting on that data so that we can always assess or if we've set out a goal to create a more diverse leadership

team. Are we doing that? If you don't measure it, you're not gonna get it. I do think you have to have if you're intentional, and if you're measuring it in some way, you're going to programatize.

RPF18 stated, "You have to be intentional if you want to change anything." RPF22 stated:

It is really important that where authentic in really embracing that and I think that is a journey for us, you know, even here. But it is really including being intentional about from the job description to the interview, schedule, and to whom you bring in an interview and selecting your interviewers, being able to and also capturing information from each person and reviewing that information and looking for even in the discussions. What could be the biases that they have that could be for or against a candidate? So it's really important in both applying the process, and defining the job that we are being intentional about what that experience needs to look like.

RPM16 stated:

We had diversity in kind of the experience levels and age groups as well and that that sort of happened sort of organically and then we started being more intentional about it because there's just an energy and experience you know that was really working well for us and more and more and I can't take credit for this, although this is where climate and culture come in.

For RQ1b, intentionality in both organizational initiatives and leadership actions contributed to increasing leadership diversity. Organizational initiatives involve increasing diversity in the leadership pipeline and leadership development. (Company X, 2023). Leadership actions include embracing diversity and executing with a diverse mindset. The finding for this

research question relates to discovered themes: theme two, leadership skills, and theme four; intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity.

Research Question 2: Lack of Leadership Diversity Impacts on Employee Turnover

RQ2: How did the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry impact employee turnover? This question was to explore the impact of the lack of leadership diversity on employee turnover, targeting the technology industry. To explore this relationship, responses from three interview questions emerged. The context for interview question 6, what can be done to increase diversity in leadership, came from the lens of the technology industry. Responses to this question did not indicate that some actions or activities specific to the technology industry would contribute to increasing leadership diversity.

The data from interview question 6 contributed to the discovery of theme 4: Intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity. Interview question 7: How does leadership influence employee retention? This question emerged to discover how leadership influences employee turnover. The data from this interview question contributed to the discovery of theme 5, organizational impacts of leadership. The responses were consistent in that all interview participants acknowledged some impact of leadership on employee turnover. While several methods cited on how leadership influences employee turnover, many of the responses centered around the lack of good leadership and the leader-employer relationship, as demonstrated in the responses below: RPM16 stated, “The old adage you know, people don't leave companies, they leave managers. It absolutely influences our retention.” RPM11 stated,

Employees don't leave the company. They don't leave the work. They leave their manager. They leave their most important relationship that they see it's the one

that has the most implications on their professional experience here that company or any company. So I think it's probably the most paramount importance.

RPM20 stated, "I think that's critical to employee retention. The old adage, people will leave bad managers. They will leave companies if they feel like they have bad managers, bad leadership. So I think I think it's critical. It's absolutely critical."

Interview question 8: How does leadership diversity influence employee retention? This question reflected the impact of leadership on employee turnover but added the diversity element as a consideration in the response. The data from this question contributed to developing theme 5, organizational impacts of leadership. Some thought the diversity element was essential, while others thought employee turnover was more about the leader than the diversity. The following interview participant responses provide examples from both optics: first, leadership diversity matters, followed by leadership matters.

Responding to leadership diversity matters, the replies included the following comments:

RPM07stated,

Diverse leadership...I think it is important for retention that people can see themselves in the leadership and so again, if all of the leadership is the same kind of cookie cutter, middle aged white guy, less of the talent pool, we'll see themselves in that leadership and so I think it really matters. I don't think it's necessarily, I need to see somebody like myself, but I need to see somebody that I identify with.

RPF17 stated,

Diversity leadership....would or might have a positive impact in employee retention in that again from that diverse perspective, many times leaders who are

diverse because of perhaps there maybe earlier experience early on or maybe they've had some experiences where they were not included, a lot of minority leaders who I know from the black managers are invested in that and they have a special passion because they look back and saying under different scenarios before I became a leader, how was I treated was I included was there psychological safety for me was my voice heard.

RPF25 stated,

This is the first year I've reported to a Black manager. It is different because there are things that I don't have to explain to him. So, I think it's important because one of the things that I always say it is hard to be what you can't see.

When the participants responded to leadership matters, RPM08 stated,

Ensuring that your leaders have good emotional IQ and good training around emotional IQ will then help retention because again, people work for people. And if people are happy working for the people they work for, then they're gonna stay in place.

RPM10 stated, "I don't personally concern myself of the diversity factors when I look at my leader, I just look at whether they are a good leader and they're treating me with the respect that I feel that I deserve." RPM21 stated,

You need to care about the people. You need to care about their careers. You need to treat them like professionals. You need to understand that they have a life that they have family, that that you know you need to understand, where priorities lie for the human that is on the other side, you need to treat people like humans not like resources.

The Leader-Member Exchange 7 (LMX-7) Questionnaire administered as a component of this study tested the quality of the leader-follower relationship (Hanasono, 2017). Non-management employees who have been with the company for less than five years. received the survey This survey provides a perspective on the strength of the leader-follower relationship in the current environment at the studied company where the lack of leadership diversity persists. As demonstrated in Chart 6: LMX-7 Questionnaire Scores, the survey results show that 42% of the survey respondents have a very high LMX score, demonstrating leader-follower solid relationships. Of the 42%, 73% have male managers, and 27% have female managers (see Chart 4: LMX-7 Rank by Manager Gender). Strong leader-follower relationships demonstrate followers being part of the leader's in-group. Followers in these groups receive more attention from the leader and are more likely to engage in behaviors that are beneficial to the leader and the company (Northouse, 2019). Leadership data supports the sentiment that issues of leadership when building strong leader-follower relationships and provides an indication that leader diversity is less important.

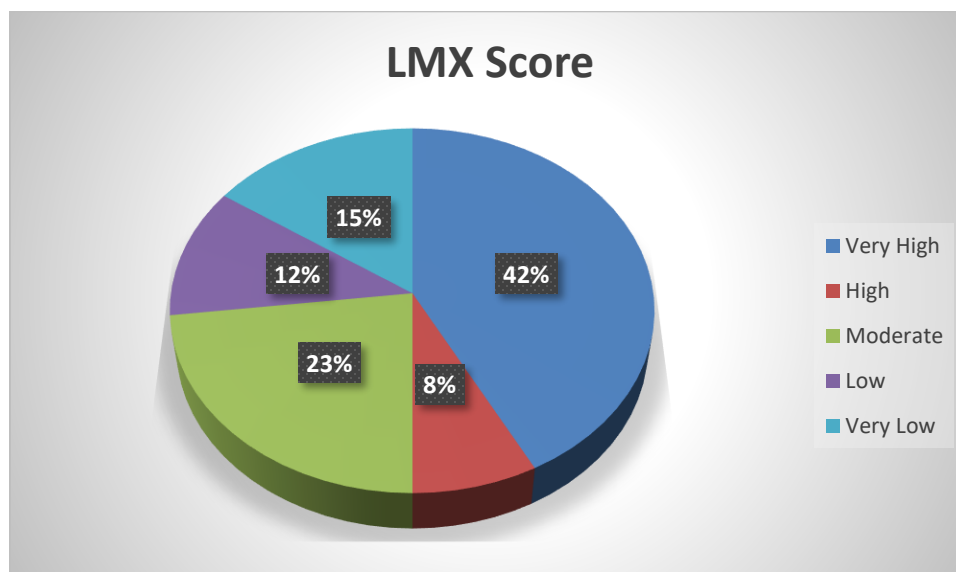


Chart 6: LMX-7 Questionnaire Scores

The Employee Survey: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was also a component of this study. Ratings for the immediate supervisor section demonstrate that survey participants agree that their immediate supervisors support diversity, equity, and inclusion (see Table 5: Immediate Supervisor Rating). This survey data demonstrates the attitudes of leaders in the current environment of the studied company. The data shows that survey participants agree that diversity, inclusion, and equity matter to their immediate supervisors, with a mean score of 4.08 for the overall supervisor scale.

Immediate Supervisor Rating					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My supervisor is committed to, and supports, diversity, equity, and inclusion.	53	1	5	4.11	1.086
My supervisor handles matters related to diversity, equity, and inclusion matters satisfactorily.	53	1	5	4.06	1.099
SupvScale	53	1.00	5.00	4.0849	1.05946
Valid N (listwise)	53				

Table 5: Immediate Supervisor Rating

The finding for RQ2 is that the lack of leadership diversity was found to have minimal impact on employee turnover. While the lack of leadership diversity could impact employee turnover, the research shows that the quality of the leader is more impactful than the diversity of the leader. Data from Theme 4, intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity. Theme 5, organizational impacts of leadership was a consideration in the determination of the finding for RQ2.

Research Question 2a: Employee Turnover and Operating Budget

RQ2a: How does employee turnover impact operational costs in the technology industry? This question seeks to explore the correlation between employee turnover and operational costs.

Interview question 10: How does employee turnover impact your operating budget? This question was to help how employee turnover impacts operational costs. The data from this question contributed to developing theme five: organizational impacts of leadership. The interview participants' responses consistently demonstrated employee turnover impact operational costs. In assessing how employee turnover, tangible and intangible impacts operational costs highlighted in the interview participant responses below. When the participants responded to tangible impacts on operational costs, RPF01 stated, "There's a cost for doing that, whether it's through advertising or marketing or job fairs or it's people time, it's actual operating costs." RPM13 stated,

That's gonna vary quite a bit depending on what your business model is, the cost, you know, of course are associated with recruiting. The more people, the more turnover we have, the more recruiting you need and recruiting costs money.

RPR26 stated, "I believe high employee turnover negatively affects operating budget because it costs a lot to attract and train new talent. And so that there's definitely a cost savings for lower turnover or higher retention." When the participants responded to intangible impacts on operational costs RPM21 stated,

The ramp of the person, it takes you a lot of time to understand the landscape. Even you could have all the education in the world, they will educate you in all systems. When you get here, you get the latest and greatest and that is gonna take time to understand. You need to understand the business. It is super costly for me to lose people.

RPF22 stated,

It impacts it significantly, hiring and onboarding is as a tremendous effort. You hire and they leave and you have to go through the cycle. That's a pretty significant disruptor and not only just really in terms of from a budget, but actually the teams morale as well.

RPM02 stated,

I think it does influence indirectly is, are our pipeline, our reputation, our ability as an organization to be successful. If I have high turnover, I'm not able to show up to the customer consistently. If I'm not able to show up to the customer consistently, they're going to value my contributions less if they value my contributions less, they're going to purchase less. If they purchase less then I have to struggle more in order to go get that same business indicator achieved. It's not immediately obvious how high turnover would affect like my budget, but it is immediately obvious to me how it's how it affects the success of my business all up, the ability to deliver on customer expectations and by delivering well, earning additional faith and trust from the customer that becomes much more difficult if we have a lot of turnover.

This research found that employee turnover impacts operating costs in ways that are tangible and intangible. The tangible costs can track specific operational line items in the company's budget. Intangible costs are costs that do not directly tie to a budget line item but could potentially quantify such as employee ramp time and the company's reputation. The quantifiable data related specifically to employee turnover is not publicly available because of confidentiality. Therefore, this study could not determine the monetary value of the impact of

employee turnover on operational costs. However, the study data does demonstrate impacts. The finding for RQ2a relates to Theme Five, organizational impacts of leadership.

Research Question 3: Increasing Leadership Diversity and Employee Turnover

RQ3: In what way could an increase in leadership diversity impact employee turnover in the technology industry? This question explores how an increase in leadership diversity could potentially impact employee turnover. Responses from two interview questions were contributing to the assessment of the question. Interview question 8, stated how does leadership diversity influence employee retention? This question was to discover leadership diversity has minimal impact on employee turnover. Interview question 9: What reasons have people given when they decided to leave? This question discovered the driving influence of employee turnover. Both interview questions contributed to developing Theme Five, organizational impacts of leadership. Interviewees highlighted several factors contributing to employee turnover, however, leadership diversity was not a prevalent factor.. When asked interview question 9, interview participants responded: RPM07 stated, “Lack of recognition, merit increases, bonuses, promotions. Alignment to core values as a way I think like doing work that are more meaningful to that person.” RPM11 stated,

One key is rooted in I'm ready for a change, when you feel stifled by the situation that you're currently in, perhaps you know the forecasts of opportunities that exist in front of you. Is it more of the same or is it actually going to produce something that you feel. It feels like growth like things that you can refer back to and see how things have improved.

RPM13 stated:

Monetary reasons that people leave. People leave because they don't feel supported by their manager and that could include, some of the, diversity issues that we've already discussed. They may leave because they feel like they've kind of capped out what they can accomplish.

Inclusivity was a potential contributing factor to employee turnover. LMX-7 survey data shows that less than half of the survey participants have low LMX scores, demonstrating low leader-follower relationships, and those members are in out-groups (see Chart 7: LMX Scores by Number). Sixty-two percent of the LMX-7 survey participants have male managers, and 38% have female managers (see Chart 3: LMX-7 Survey Participant Manager's Gender). Members of out-groups are more likely to feel excluded (Northouse, 2019) This data demonstrates that despite the current environment's lack of leadership diversity, the fewer the out-group members.

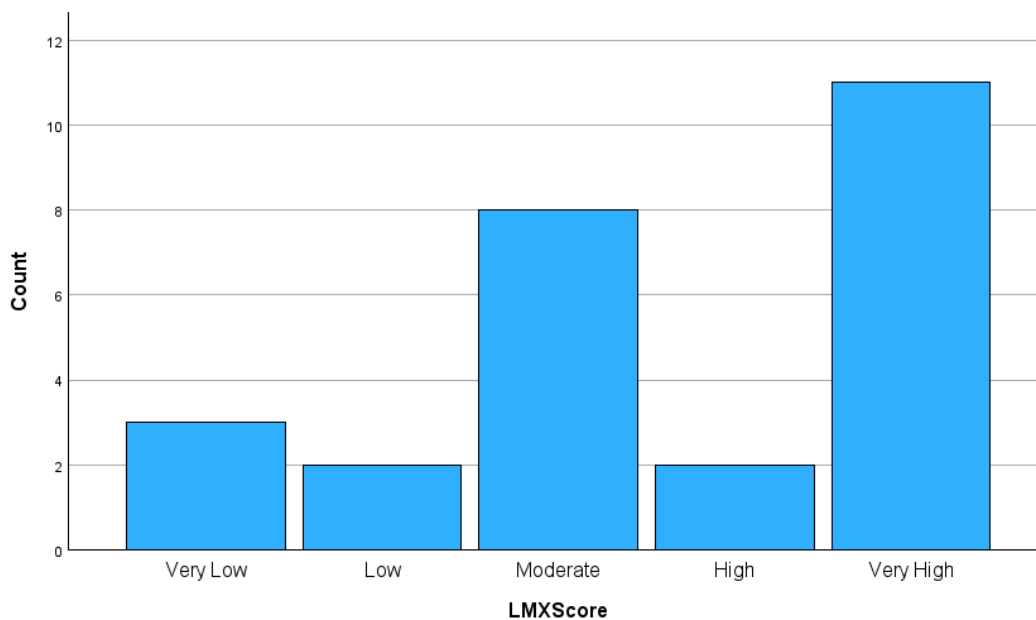


Chart 7: LMX Scores by Number

On the Inclusion portion of the DEI survey, the data shows a mean rating that is close to agreement on inclusivity in the organization, with a mean score of 3.89 (see Table 5: Inclusion Ratings). This data indicates the current environment in the studied company promotes inclusivity.

Inclusion Ratings

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees of different backgrounds interact well in this company.	53	1	5	4.04	.876
Management of this company demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of employees with disabilities.	53	1	5	3.91	.904
Employees of different ages are valued equally by this organization.	53	1	5	3.81	1.093
Racial, ethnic, sexual and gender-based jokes or slurs are not tolerated at this organization.	53	2	5	4.19	.962
This company provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas, opinions, and beliefs.	53	1	5	3.53	1.219
InclScale	53	2.60	5.00	3.8943	.71748
Valid N (listwise)	53				

Table 6: Inclusion Ratings

The research implies that an increase in leadership diversity would have minimal impact on employee turnover. The finding for this research question can relate to Theme 5, organizational impacts of leadership. While leadership diversity was found to have minimal impact on employee turnover, interviewees highlighted the importance of leadership diversity. They stated other areas that could benefit from an increase in leadership diversity. RPF03 stated, “The product that having a diverse perspective and diverse capabilities that meet different people's needs and wants based on where their perspective from, from where they come from in the world, etcetera, that matters and that will drive growth.” RPF26 stated: “I think that there's evidence that diverse teams perform better, and diversity is a benefit and a value. When there's a chance for teams to get different viewpoints, different experiences, and different perspectives, they perform better. Diversity is valuable. Resource diversity is a valuable building block for

performance.” RPM24 stated, “Having diverse leadership teams is also super important to the health of wellness of companies. Actually, companies that have diverse leadership teams make more money than companies that don't.”

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between the relevant concepts, theories, actors, and constructs identified for this study. The components in each of these segments identified as contributing to discovering the details of the stated problem of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity (Atal et al., 2019). In addition, the potential impacts on employee turnover and operational costs. Information on each component of the conceptual framework is in the context of the results of the research.

Concepts

Two concepts were identified for this study: diversity affects employee turnover and leadership development affects diversity. As depicted in the conceptual framework diagram, Figure 1, the concept of diversity affecting employee turnover flows into the followers.

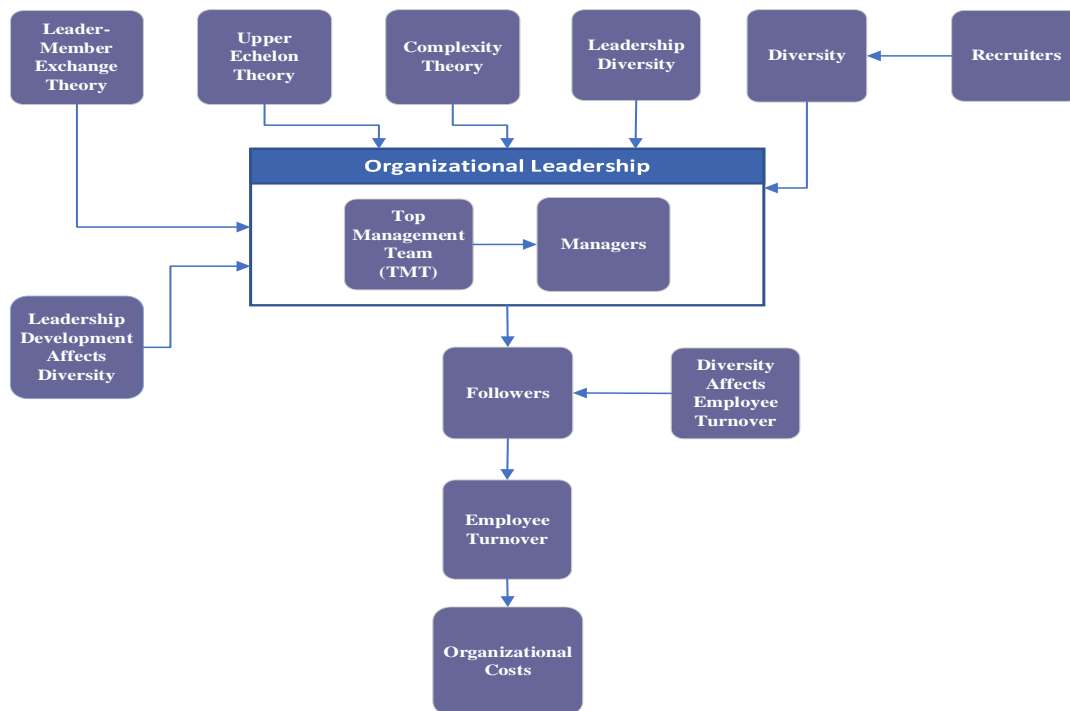


Figure 2: Relationships Between Concepts

The concept predicated on extant literature that stated that diversity could impact employee turnover (M. Ali & French, 2019; J. Lee et al., 2020). This research found that diversity does impact employee turnover, however, the impact is minimal. This concept correlates with Theme Five, organizational impacts of leadership. This concept also includes diversity management, which encompasses activities that prioritize, promote, and recognize the benefits of workplace diversity. The research demonstrated an understanding amongst corporate leaders of the benefits of diversified leadership. RPF014 stated,

When I go to hire for a role, I like to bring people in who have similar priorities to me. They kind of look at life the same way, and the leadership the same way, but I like it when they come at it from a different perspective. In order to accomplish a goal here, we're gonna need to do A, B, C, and D, you know, they come in and

say, hey, I absolutely agree that we should start at A, but I'm really thinking that maybe we should look at X and 1 and D to get to E.”

RPF03 stated, “Having diverse perspectives does actually prove that it attributes to the bottom line.”RPF17 Stated: “I just feel like you miss a lot of potholes and miss you have a lot less missteps when you have diversity on your team.” The studied company also demonstrated a commitment to leadership diversity by implementing initiatives to increase leadership diversity, specifically to include Black/African American and LatinX (Company X, 2023). The DEI survey data reflects the current environment. Table 3: DEI Culture Rating shows the average DEI culture as 3.75 out of 5. This demonstrates the need for continued efforts related to creating a truly diversified culture.

The second concept for this research is how leadership development affects diversity. As depicted in the conceptual framework diagram, Figure 1, this concept flows into organizational leadership. This concept encompasses various aspects of leadership development that include leadership skills and behaviors that could enhance leadership abilities and diversity management Click or tap here to enter text.. While interviewees did not specifically call out leadership development, leadership actions highlighted as a mechanism to increase leadership diversity. This concept relates to Theme Four, intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity. Leadership actions include intentional actions that could enhance leadership abilities and diversity management. Interview participant responses supporting this premise include RPF03 stating, “You have to purposefully speak out for people who you see what they're doing really well, even if it's in a different part of the organization, and make sure they're getting visibility.” RPF05 stated,

I think sometimes the criteria for the leadership position might be a little bit more male oriented...has more male characteristics in the job description. You know bold, a bold leader or something like that...I don't describe a lot of women as like bold, for example. If the language doesn't speak to you, then you know, some candidates who may be qualified maybe just ruled themselves out just because of the language and the job.”

RPF15 stated,

Sometimes you may have all the great skills and all the great talent, but if you don't have a sponsor, someone that could help open the door and helped put you in the right place or the right conversations, you may not get there and that doesn't say that isn't to say that you don't need grooming. You also need grooming but, with that comes with that network and that sponsor that will help get you there. And I say, oftentimes we don't have that strong connection.

Theories.

The leader-member exchange theory (LMX), the upper echelons theory, and the complexity theory were most relevant for this study. The theories assessed in this research relate to theme two, leadership skills, and theme five, organizational impacts of leadership. As depicted in the conceptual framework diagram, Figure 1, all three theories flow into organizational leadership. The LMX theory is a relational theory that highlights the leader-follower relationship. The LMX theory states that leaders can influence the followers in the in-groups, meaning they have strong relationships with their leaders (Waglay et al., 2020). This research supports the premise of this theory, finding that leadership can influence employee behaviors. Specifically, as it relates to this study's findings, leaders impact employee turnover.

The key to this study is the aspect of leadership diversity. The impact of leadership was evident in the results of this study; however, the impact of leadership diversity has minimal impact on employee turnover. Yet, this study did find that employee turnover does impact operational costs. These findings relate to the upper echelons theory and the complexity theory. The upper echelons theory states that the characteristics of the top management team impact organizational outcomes (Triana et al., 2019). The complexity theory builds upon the upper echelons theory by targeting the relationships between the top management team and organizational performance (Díaz-Fernández et al., 2020). Although the impact is minimal, the findings of this study support the premises of these theories.

Actors

The actors identified for this study are organizational leadership, which includes managers and the top management team (TMT), recruiters, and followers. This study was unable to explore the role of recruiters because of a lack of participation from recruiters in this study. The identified actors in this research are integrated through every research component. Therefore, the actors relate to each theme discovered in this research. The relationships demonstrated in the conceptual framework diagram (Figure 1), between organizational leadership, followers, employee turnover, and operational costs were found to be accurate. A key finding in the study was the impact of leadership on followers, impacting employee turnover and impacting operational costs. The concept diversity affects employee turnover depicts in the conceptual framework diagram (Figure 1) as flowing into followers. This premise predicated on extant literature that states that diversity could impact employee turnover (M. Ali & French, 2019; J. Lee et al., 2020). This concept also encompasses diversity management, which includes prioritizing and promoting diversity in the workplace (Sabharwal et al., 2018). This relationship

was also found to be accurate. In the study context, leadership diversity was found to have minimal impact on followers as it relates to employee turnover.

Constructs

The constructs identified for this research are diversity, leadership diversity, employee turnover, and operational costs. The purpose of the constructs is to provide context and aid in understanding the identified problem. As depicted in the conceptual framework diagram (Figure 1), the constructs of diversity and leadership diversity flow into organizational leadership. In exploring the construct of diversity as it relates to this study, the attitudes towards the company's leadership diversity composition were explored, and the importance of diversity in the consideration of leadership selection. While interviewees echoed the sentiment that diversity should be an essential consideration in the leadership selection process, they also expressed dissatisfaction with the company's leadership composition. These responses contributed to the finding that a persistent lack of leadership diversity exists. The finding for the persistence of the issue was inconclusive as the reasons for undermining the persistence of the problem. This construct relates to Theme One, leadership diversity level.

The construct of leadership diversity flows into organizational leadership to demonstrate the diversity aspect of the leadership team. Through organizational leadership, the construct flows to employee turnover and operational costs. This flow intends to demonstrate the impacts of leadership diversity on followers, leading to employee turnover, which impacts operational costs. This study found minimal impact of leadership diversity on employee turnover. This study also found that employee turnover does impact on operating costs, demonstrating that this relationship is accurate. Lastly, the study found that increasing leadership diversity could

minimally impact employee turnover. These constructs relate to theme five, organizational impacts of leadership.

Anticipated Themes

Based on extant literature, three anticipated themes emerged: the significance of workforce diversity (Lo et al., 2020; Potvin et al., 2018), the significance of the diversity gap (Sulik et al., 2022), and the importance of leadership behaviors (Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020; Edelman et al., 2020; Kim & Fernandez, 2017; Waglay et al., 2020). Of the three anticipated themes, the significance of the diversity gap and the importance of leadership behaviors correlated most with this study and were closely aligned with this study's findings.

The significance of the diversity gap refers to the expectations related to diversity as opposed to the reality of diversity in the workforce (Siemiatycki, 2019; Sulik et al., 2022), despite the implementation of significant measures to address the issue. Atal et al. (2019) supported this sentiment, highlighting leadership diversity in the information technology industry. The findings of this study align with the extant literature in that the studied company has committed to addressing the lack of leadership diversity and has implemented initiatives to address the issue, yet the problem persists. The finding of this study regarding why the issue persists was inconclusive, which aligns with Sulik's literature as the cause of the persistence of the phenomenon has not been identified. This anticipated theme aligns with the discovered theme in the research, Theme One, which is leadership diversity.

The anticipated theme of the importance of leadership behaviors encompasses the leader-follower relationship, trust in leadership, and the quality of the leader. This theme correlates to this study as this study found that leaders do have an impact on follower actions and aligns with the discovered themes. The themes include, Theme Two, leadership skills and Theme Five,

organizational impacts of leadership. The context of this study specifically related to employee turnover. In this finding, the quality of the leader emerged as a highlight in this discussion. Interviewees stated that the quality of the leader took precedence over the diversity of the leader. Additionally, the discussion of leadership skills was assessing the research questions. In determining what factors in the technology industry contribute to leadership diversity and what factors in the technology industry contribute to the increase in leadership, leadership skills and technical skills were in the discussion. Technical skills were deemed non-essential. Interview participants highlighted leadership behaviors as contributing to factors demonstrating their importance. Interview participants supporting this sentiment include: RPF28 stated, "When people know that a leader cares about them and what they're doing, they will move mountains to do things that they don't even think are possible." RPM07 stated,

It is also more important to the younger generations coming in than it used to be, and so I think while my personal preference have changed, where manager and leadership is more important to me, I also think as a society there's more people in the workforce that, where the quality of the manager matters more to them.

RPM23 stated:

Great leaders care deeply about the people that they lead. They care about the wellbeing of the people, but their focus is also on the career development or just development period. Maybe you could just say development and growth of people, great leaders care about those two things, the growth and development as well as just the people in charge. Great leaders can learn really quickly and understand what people are working on, what they should be working on, and then they do a really good job of kind of back to where I set up before about

communicating clarity or prioritization. Often, they just communicate well and often.

The anticipated theme, the significance of workforce diversity, encapsulates the significant levels of diversity in the workforce and the role of organizational leadership in the diverse workforce. The research reflected on the diversity of leadership, not the diversity of the general population of the workforce. Therefore, the findings of the research differ from this theme in the significance of leadership diversity was the focus. While the discussion does highlight the need for and importance of leadership diversity, specific to this research as it pertains to employee turnover, leadership diversity was not essential.

The Literature

Extant literature includes the various components of the study. Chapter 2 includes detailed information of the components of this study from a scholarly perspective. This section includes relevant components of literature, highlighting key areas pertinent to the results of this study. Leadership diversity is essential in the modern workplace. The literature includes current leadership diversity levels that are insufficient and do not reflect the level of diversity in the workforce (Lerman et al., 2022; Siemiatycki, 2019; Soklaridis et al., 2022). This research aligns with the sentiment that the lack of leadership diversity persists in the studied company. This perspective on leadership diversity relates to theme one, leadership diversity level. The literature reflects how leadership diversity is essential in addressing diversity issues that exist in the workplace (Lerman et al., 2022; Loh et al., 2022; Martins, 2020; Potvin et al., 2018) and the impacts of leadership diversity. The literature it reflects how leadership diversity increases workforce diversity (Lerman et al., 2022; Potvin et al., 2018; Siemiatycki, 2019). Specifically, diverse leadership was necessary for the recruitment and development of a diverse workforce

(Harris, 2021; Lerman et al., 2022; Potvin et al., 2018). The study described what can happen to increase leadership diversity. The interviewee responses aligned with extant literature reflecting the need for recruitment and development efforts, RPF15 stated,

So, it's an elements of diversity, but at the same token, we have to be cognizant of it and we also have to be deliberate because I'm you want to make sure that within your workspace, your fostering an environment that predicates diversity and that that is actually very important in your recruitment. You want to bring in people that number one fosters that mindset in terms of diversity of thought, in terms of diversity in background diversity in the skillsets that they bring to the table you want to bring all of these elements, but I would say it is challenging sometimes when you're recruiting and you're trying to bring in the best talent.

RPM21 stated, "Based on my experience I always have a very diverse teams because obviously every time I post a role in every LinkedIn post I get like 20,000 Latinos...super high potential teams." RPF17 stated,

I think it would be good for us to build consistent development programs that stay around. That show for proven results because I know we gotta have that to move people from lower level leadership roles into upper level leadership roles for people that are already in the company. That's a self investment, so you know I would charge this company that I love so dearly to continue or cause.

The literature includes information reflecting the need for formal mentorship as a strategic measure to address diversity issues (Harris, 2021; Potvin et al., 2018). Not all scholars agree with the benefits of mentorship. The literature includes potential pitfalls within mentorship relationships when mentors with harmful organizational norms negatively influence mentees

(Ghosh & Sanghamitra, 2022). The research results revealed an agreement with extant literature regarding the benefits and value of mentorship and added sponsorship as a mechanism to increase leadership diversity. The discussion aligns with the discovered theme four: intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity. The following interview participant responses demonstrate support for the literature: RPF25 stated, “There's mentorship, there's sponsorship. I think all of those things are extremely important.” RPM20 stated,

Real sponsorship is one thing that can be done, yet, I have sponsorship at the senior levels to help you know your name. Get it into places where it otherwise wouldn't. You have to have good mentorship and you have to have really good networking and networking is sponsorship and mentorship should all come together to help you with the learnings you need to prepare for senior roles, for leadership roles.

RPM21 stated, “It's all about sponsorship. It's all about how many people you know around you and how many people know you and many people want you to be successful. And then they back you up.”

Literature supports the use of strategic leadership practices to promote diversity (Martins, 2020). This research agreed with this sentiment as organizational initiatives that are strategically implemented were highlighted as contributing factors to increase leadership diversity. This sentiment also aligns with the discovered Theme Four, Intentionality is Crucial in Increasing Leadership Diversity. Company X documents a strategic plan to increase diversity that encompasses a layered approach and includes engaging employees, communities, leaders, and experts to increase understanding diversity matters (Company X, 2023). These strategic practices align with the literature.

The literature includes several positive impacts of diversified leadership. The impacts include the implementation of diverse business practices (Ashikali et al., 2021), improving the environment by creating an inclusive workplace (Martins, 2020), and influencing the workforce, leading to a robust engagement with their organizations (Saleem et al., 2021). Not all scholars agree with the benefits of diversified leadership. Gender diversity in leadership was found to have negative impacts on various aspects of innovation performance (Lu et al., 2022) and age diversity was found to negatively impact organizational innovation and performance (Jukka, 2021; Lu et al., 2022). The research supports the premise that positive impacts result from leadership diversity. However, the level of impact as it pertains to this study was minimal relative to employee turnover. The aspect of literature correlates with theme five, organizational impacts of leadership.

The Problem

The general problem addressed is the persistence of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry, resulting in employee turnover. The specific problem addressed is the lack of diversity in leadership in a global technology company resulting in the potential increase in employee turnover leading to increased operational costs. The first component of the problem was the persistence in the lack of leadership diversity in a global technology company. The research results confirm that this problem is a continuing issue in the global technology company studied. The company publishes a diversity report that documents growth in leadership diversity; however, despite concerted efforts, leadership diversity numbers are still lacking (Company X, 2023). The second component of the problem was the impact of leadership diversity on employee turnover. Specifically, the problem reflected how lacking leadership diversity could increase employee turnover. In assessing leadership diversity, the study's results discovered that

leadership diversity has minimal impact on employee turnover; therefore, the lack of leadership diversity would have minimal effect on an increase in employee turnover. The final component of the problem was how employee turnover leads to increased operational costs. The study's results found that employee turnover does have an impact on operational costs. Therefore, an increase in employee turnover could lead to increased operational costs. In the study's context, employee turnover caused by the lack of leadership diversity is minimal; therefore, the increase in operational costs resulting from an increase in employee turnover would most likely not result from the lack of leadership diversity.

Five themes emerged in the analysis of this study. Each theme addresses various components of the stated problem. The discovered themes for this research are Theme One, leadership diversity level, and Theme Two, leadership skills. In addition, Theme Three, diversity should be considered in leadership selections, Theme Four, intentionality is crucial in increasing leadership diversity, and Theme Five, organizational impacts of leadership. Each theme links to and addresses a component of the stated problem and contributes to providing a comprehensive view.

Summary of the Results

The results section details the five themes discovered through the data analysis process. This discussion includes the codes that contributed to the definition of the themes and how they were applied in the research. The data is visualized throughout the results section using charts and tables. The data section contains charts of the demographic data for the survey participants. The primary focus of this section surrounds the results and how findings relate to the key components of the study.

The purpose of this research is to understand the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the impact on employee turnover leading to an increase in operational costs. This research has six findings, one finding per research question. The study findings include that the lack of leadership diversity continues to persist in the technology industry. Why this phenomenon persists was undetermined therefore the finding was inconclusive. The study also found that leadership does impact employee actions. However, leadership diversity has minimal impact on employee turnover. Employee turnover was found to impact operational costs. Therefore, an increase in employee turnover could lead to increased operational costs. However, the increase would most likely not contribute to the lack of leadership diversity.

The findings of this study highlighted the importance of good leadership. Good leadership includes leaders who understand the value and importance of leadership diversity. Leadership diversity does have organizational impacts. However, the organizational impacts studied were employee turnover leading to increased operational costs, which this study found are minimally impacted. The studied company was a demonstration and understanding of the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion and has implemented a strategic plan to address the issue. However, the lack of leadership diversity persists in this company. This study's conclusions revealed that lacking leadership diversity has organizational impacts. However, employee turnover is not significantly impacted. The study also concludes that leaders' intentionality and mindset are essential and need addressing to close the leadership diversity gap.

Summary of Chapter 4 and Transition

Chapter 4 includes the details of the execution of this study and presents the research results. The first segment of this chapter details the data analysis process executed in this study.

The data analysis section explains the processes utilized to discover emergent ideas, highlighting the use of the data analysis spiral as the foundational process employed for data analysis in this study. An essential component of the data analysis process is data coding. The coding themes segment of this chapter details the data coding method, describing the evolutionary process used to develop the themes for this study. A discussion is also included regarding how this evolutionary process contributed to the interpretation of the data. Data visualization is necessary to assist in communicating the meaning of the data. The data representation section explains the data visualization mechanisms selected for this study. The last segment of the data analysis section includes the importance of triangulation, and the methods used to execute it during this study. The section included a discussion about the tools to support the processes. The trustworthiness of a qualitative study is established through reliability and validity. This chapter's reliability and validity section includes a discussion on the use of field notes and coding to establish reliability and the use of various triangulation methods to establish validity. Bracketing is in the context of addressing potential researcher biases. The final section of this segment details the processes in this study to ensure addressing ethical considerations.

The second segment of this chapter presents the results of this research. The key to understanding research is to explore the discovered themes. The discovered themes segment of the chapter provides a detailed discussion of the five themes discovered during this study. This chapter also includes a correlation of the themes to the codes discovered in the research. The interpretation of themes section provides a deeper discussion of the discovered themes. This section includes data from the study that supports the interpretation of the themes, providing a 360-degree view of the research data. The representation and visualization of the data section provides visualizations of the data to aid in the discussions. The final section of this segment is

the relationship to the results section. This section provides a detailed discussion of the research findings and the correlation between the major components of the study, specifically, the research questions, the conceptual framework, the anticipated themes, the literature, and the problem. Each section incorporates the findings, the themes, and the correlations between the research data into the discussion.

The next chapter, chapter 5, is the conclusion of this study. This section highlights how this research contributes to the extant literature and presents a practical and theoretical perspective. Recommendations for further studies are also presented. The basis of these recommendations is on the data analysis of this research that identified potential areas where further exploration could benefit. The final section of Chapter 5 presents my reflections. This segment details my views on personal and professional growth experienced because of this study. This section also includes a biblical perspective of various components of this study.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This qualitative study assessed a current phenomenon in the modern workplace. The general problem addressed was the persistence of the lack of diversity in leadership in the technology industry, resulting in employee turnover. The specific problem addressed was the lack of diversity in leadership in a global technology company resulting in the potential increase in employee turnover leading to increased operational costs. This research was to determine how the lack of leadership diversity influences employee turnover, increasing operational costs. Six research questions assessed the problem and accomplished the intended purpose of this study.

The following research questions were in this study:

RQ4. Why is there a persistent lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry?

- RQ1a. What factors in the technology industry contribute to the lack of leadership diversity?
- RQ1b. What factors in the technology industry contribute to the increase of leadership diversity?
- RQ5. How did the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry impact employee turnover?
- RQ2a. How does employee turnover impact operational costs in the technology industry?
- RQ6. In what way could an increase in leadership diversity impact employee turnover in the technology industry?

The paradigm for this research was constructivism, which aligns with my Christian worldview.

A flexible design using the qualitative method, a case study, was in this study.

The study occurred at a major, global technology company. The study utilized interviews, surveys, and documents as data collection mechanisms. Microsoft teams assisted in the interviews. The data was automatically transcribed, which is a feature of the Microsoft Teams software. Twenty-six managers participated in the interview to ensure successful data saturation. After each initial interview, viewing the autogenerated transcripts was necessary, in conjunction with the recorded interviews. Corrections were made to the transcripts, as necessary, to ensure the documented verbiage matched the spoken words. Follow-up interviews were also conducted for each interview participant. The follow-up interview transcripts were also reviewed and verified against the recorded transcripts. Two surveys were in this study. The leader-members exchange 7 (LMX-7) questionnaires captured the interviews and generated 26 qualified responses. The Employee Survey: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion generated 53 qualified

responses. Various readily available company documents were also used in this study. The data analysis spiral was the foundational process used for the data analysis. This study employed field notes, coding, methods triangulation, and data source triangulation. Reflexivity was also incorporated to address potential researcher biases. The tools utilized to support this study included NVIVO 14, IBM SPSS, Microsoft Teams, Microsoft OneNote, and Microsoft Excel.

The study resulted in six findings that answered the research questions and addressed the various components of the research problem. The study findings confirmed the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in this global technology company. The study results revealed that leadership diversity minimally impacts employee turnover, and employee turnover does impact operational costs. The study findings also revealed that leadership diversity benefits the company.

Additions to the Body of Knowledge

Other scholars researched the various components of this study. Researchers of the extant literature stated that a persistent issue exists with a lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry (Atal et al., 2019). This study results revealed that the lack of leadership diversity exists in the studied company, which supports this research. Extant literature includes that diversity impacts employee turnover (M. Ali & French, 2019) and a lack of leadership diversity contributes to employee turnover (Groenewald & Odendaal, 2021). This study's findings revealed that the lack of leadership diversity minimally impacts employee turnover, which supports the extant literature. In addition to supporting the extant literature, additional discovered insights added to the existing body of knowledge on the subject matter. The following sections include the practical and theoretical implications resulting from this study.

Practical Implications

Leaders in the modern workplace cannot ignore diversity, equity, and inclusion. Researchers of the extant literature documented the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in the modern workforce (J. Lee et al., 2020). The landscape of the workforce is continually changing. Factors impacting the changing landscape in the workforce include immigrant relocations (J. Lee et al., 2020; Vespa et al., 2020), the aging workforce, globalization, workforce mobility (J. Lee et al., 2020), and social movements (Soklaridis et al., 2022). Workforce diversity includes the diversity composition of organizational leadership. This study emphasized leadership diversity, exploring the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in this global technology company. The leadership diversity composition in this studied company does not represent the company's desired leadership diversity levels. In 2020, this company launched diversity initiatives to increase leadership diversity by doubling the number of diverse leaders by 2025 (Company X, 2023).

While progress has been made toward the company's goals, this research highlighted a clear need for more work in accomplishing leadership diversity. The research finding revealed that most interview participants, who were all managers at varying levels, agreed that leadership diversity is important, and that the leadership diversity levels in the company need improvement. In this case study, the studied company is taking action to address the problem, yet the problem of the lack of leadership diversity persists. Organizational leaders can utilize this aspect of the research as an indicator of the need to evaluate the effectiveness of diversity initiatives. This research suggests the need for a consistent focus on diversity, transparency in processes, and accountability of leadership. Additional areas of consideration are the perceptions of leadership at the studied company. These considerations include leaders mentioning diversity. However,

some leaders do not put actions behind their words, and some leaders do not have a diverse mindset. This was not the message of most of the study participants. However, some of the data support these perspectives. Organizational leaders could consider increasing transparency and accountability to mitigate these perceptions and highlight issues if the perceptions are found accurate. Additionally, continual focus, transparency, and accountability could contribute to identifying the root cause of why the lack of leadership diversity persists.

This study's findings revealed that technical skills are not a requirement for all leadership roles in a technology company. This assumption suggests that the lack of leadership diversity is not because of the limited number of diverse candidates with technical backgrounds. This assumption also suggests that organizational leaders should consider including non-technical candidates when building the leadership pipeline. Research participants highlighted the importance of building a pipeline that includes diverse candidates early in their careers. The study's results highlighted that leadership development opportunities should be available for employees at all levels, opening opportunities for career advancement. Leadership diversity has proven to increase diversity in the workforce (Lerman et al., 2022; Potvin et al., 2018; Siemiatycki, 2019) and is necessary for the recruitment and development of a diverse workforce (Lerman et al., 2022). Organizational leaders should consider leveraging the current diverse leaders to increase diversity in the pipeline internally and externally. Additionally, consistency in leadership development programs that target diverse candidates should remain under consideration.

This study targeted leadership diversity impact on employee turnover. The study's findings revealed minimal impact of leadership diversity on employee turnover and discovered that the quality of the leader was more important. Effective leaders in this diverse landscape must

adopt behaviors that demonstrate an appreciation for diversity in the workforce (Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2022) and be diversity-oriented leaders who are considerate of diversity when providing direction (Y. Lee et al., 2021; Luu et al., 2019). Leadership behaviors should work in concert with leadership styles. Some leadership styles are more effective and beneficial to diversity-oriented leadership. Specifically, servant leadership, transformational leadership, and leader-member exchange (LMX) theory align with diversity-oriented leadership (Sims, 2018). Organizational leaders should consider leadership development programs that target diversity-oriented leadership behaviors and styles to improve leadership quality and build leadership prepared to engage and lead a diverse workforce.

Leadership behaviors and styles also correlate with the impact of leadership diversity on the organization. This study assessed the impact of leadership diversity on employee turnover, which leads to increased operational costs. The research findings revealed minimal impact of leadership diversity on employee turnover. The finding of the study also discovered that employee turnover significantly impacted operating costs. These research findings demonstrate that leadership actions, exhibited through leadership behaviors and styles, have a greater impact than the diverse makeup of a leader. Leadership actions have a financial impact on a company; specifically, the impact of operational costs in this study. This assumption supports the previously stated importance of leadership development. In addition, those companies will benefit from investing in leadership development programs that focus on leading a diverse workforce. Benefits include a diverse workforce to the organization, and the effects of leadership actions on an organization.

The findings of the study revealed a minimal impact of leadership diversity on employee turnover, but also discovered agreement on the importance of leadership diversity and

documented several benefits. The data highlighted that an increase in leadership diversity could strengthen the organization. This assumption aligns with extant literature that includes documenting the benefits of diverse leadership that includes positive impacts on organizational performance (Harris, 2021; Lerman et al., 2022; Potvin et al., 2018). Organizational leaders should consider the company's benefits from investing in increasing leadership diversity. Educating the workforce on these benefits could assist in increasing acceptance across the organization and shifting the organizational culture as it pertains to leadership diversity.

Theoretical Implications

The leader-member exchange theory (LMX) targets relationships. LMX theory targets the nature and quality of the relationship between the leader and the follower (Cortellazzo et al., 2019; Northouse, 2019). LMX theory was relevant to this study in exploring the factors that impact the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity. The research found that the lack of leadership diversity does persist in the studied company but was inconclusive in determining why the lack of leadership diversity persists. Therefore, the research could not determine if the LMX theory applied to this aspect of the research. The LMX theory was relevant to this study in exploring the influence of leadership on follower actions relative to employee turnover. Relative to high-quality relationships, the LMX theory. The LMX theory includes the assumption that leaders benefit followers by showing positive results, such as improved satisfaction and employee well-being (Anand et al., 2011 as cited in Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2018), Another assumption is that leaders are more effective, which leads to increased satisfaction and commitment (Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2018), and attributes with promoting diversity (Turi et al., 2022).

LMX theory also supports the premise that leaders can influence follower actions. LMX theory attributes strong leader-follower relationships to influencing employee behaviors in the information technology industry (Windeler & Reimenschneider, 2016 as cited Hickman & Akdere, 2018). The findings of this research support the assumptions of this theory. This research found that leadership behaviors impact employee actions; specifically, leadership actions impact employee turnover. The study's findings also revealed strong relationships in an environment where a lack of leadership diversity persists. This assumption indicates that strong leader-follower relationships yield positive outcomes.

The upper echelons theory was also relevant to this study. The upper echelons theory states that the top management team's (TMT) characteristics impact organizational outcomes (Triana et al., 2019). Furthermore, asserts that the demographics and traits of the leadership team impact an organization's strategic direction, performance (Jukka, 2021) and organizational culture (Frambach and Schillewaert, 2002 as cited in Lu et al., 2022). In this study, the TMT grouped with managers as part of the organizational leadership. Relevant to this theory, this research included seeking to discover diverse characteristics that have organizational impacts relative to employee turnover and operational costs. Specific demographic information about organizational leadership was not readily available; therefore, the study could not compare specific leadership demographics to the organizational impacts. While the research could not confirm the assertions of this theory relative to specific demographics, the study did confirm that leadership diversity overall does impact organizational outcomes.

The complexity theory embeds in the interdependency of systems. The complexity theory applies to the framework of the upper echelons theory by correlating the relationship between the TMT's diversity composition and organizational performance (Díaz-Fernández et al., 2020).

This research assessed leadership diversity, where leadership encompassed managers of all levels, including the TMT. This research assessed the impacts of the leadership diversity composition on organizational impacts, specifically, employee turnover leading to an increase in operational costs. The study's findings revealed that the leadership composition had minimal impact on employee turnover. This supports the premise of complexity theory. This research discovered other positive impacts of leadership diversity on organizational outcomes. This discovery provides more solid support for the assertions of the complexity theory.

Summary of Additions to Body of Knowledge

The findings of this study are relevant to modern business practices from practical and theoretical perspectives. The study's practical implications include the need for a review of diversity initiatives to determine their effectiveness. Additionally, the research suggests consistency, transparency, and accountability should appear in organizational DEI initiatives. The study also discovered the need to focus on building a leadership pipeline that includes resources with non-technical backgrounds. Leadership development programs are also essential. Organizational leaders should consider targeting diversity-oriented leadership behaviors and styles to lead the diverse workforce effectively. Lastly, organizational leaders need to invest. Companies cannot just talk about diversity; they must provide financial backing and invest in diversity initiatives.

The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, upper echelons theory, and the complexity theory were relative to this study. The findings of this study support the assertions of the LMX theory as they relate to leadership impacts on employee turnover and the impacts of strong leader-follower relationships. This study does not provide support for the upper echelons theory relative to specific leadership characteristics or traits but can provide support to this theory

relative to overall diversity. The aspect of diversity also supports the premise of the complexity theory.

Recommendation for Further Study

This research was an assessment of the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in a global technology company. This research confirmed that the lack of leadership diversity persists. The findings of this study support the findings of extant research (Atal et al., 2019). This study could not determine why the lack of leadership diversity persists. A recommendation for future research is to investigate the leadership selection process, targeting the lack of diversity in selecting leadership roles. Performing a root cause analysis on the leadership selection process could provide insight into the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity. This research could provide details regarding where the leadership selection process is breaking down. Findings from this research could assist organizational leaders in assessing and modernizing hiring practices to address the issue.

Another recommended area for future research is the effectiveness of diversity initiatives. In this case study, the studied company has published initiatives demonstrating a commitment to increasing leadership diversity, yet there is still a lack. Survey data in this study demonstrated the need for improvement in the diversity of culture of the studied company. Additionally, data in this research discovered a belief that the company's DEI ideologies are well documented but not effectively executed. This assumption suggests that the diverse initiatives employed may need modification to accomplish the desired results. Scholars can assist organizational leaders in developing effective DEI policies and initiatives by researching the effectiveness of current policies and initiatives. Additionally, the data suggests that despite the company's position and support of DEI, the effective execution of current policies may influence non-diverse mindsets.

Research that evaluates the attitudes of organizational leaders can assist in discovering the existence of non-diverse mindsets and the impact of these attitudes. Complementary to evaluating leadership attitudes could appear as an evaluation of organizational resources relative to inclusivity. Data captured in this study included evidence of resources citing an issue with the inclusivity of diverse resources. This data was not a common thread but an outlier to the common sentiment of study participants. This data suggests a potential issue worth further exploration that could assist organizational leaders in strengthening a company's DEI position and success.

Theories most relevant to this research were the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, upper echelons theory, and complexity theory. The findings of this research support the assertions of the LMX theory in that this research discovered that leaders influence follower behaviors. This research also supports the assertions of the upper echelons theory in determining that leadership diversity impacts organizational outcomes. Specifically, this study concluded the impact of leadership diversity on employee turnover. Information on specific organizational leadership characteristics was unavailable. Therefore, this research could not confirm that assertion for the upper echelon theory and the complexity theory relative to specific leadership traits. A recommendation for future research is to conduct research in an environment that has or allows for transparency in the compositional data of their organizational leaders. The visibility of this data will allow scholars to investigate the impacts of specific leadership characteristics further. This discovery can contribute to a better understanding of the upper echelon's theory and the complexity theory.

Reflections

Conducting research is an arduous process. Despite meticulous planning, the journey comes with many unexpected events. The combination of the expected and unexpected activities of the research journey provides many opportunities for growth and development. This section includes the personal and professional growth I experienced during the research process.

Additionally, this section will align the business functions explored in this research with my Christian worldview. The final segment of this section will provide a biblical perspective on the subject matter of this study.

Personal and Professional Growth

The development and execution of this qualitative research stretched the researcher in many ways, which resulted in personal growth. The areas where I experienced personal growth can categorize into three areas that include mental growth, emotional growth, and spiritual growth. First, regarding mental growth, the development and execution of this qualitative research allowed me to increase knowledge in the qualitative research process and the study's subject matter. In gaining this knowledge, I have an improved aptitude and enhanced cognitive ability in how I view and process information. I also enhanced my emotional intelligence. Secondly, I experienced emotional growth, which contributed to personal growth. The qualitative research process is intense and stressful. The successful execution of this process required me to learn and employ stress management mechanisms that led to emotional growth. Lastly, I experienced personal growth from a spiritual perspective. Spiritual growth demonstrated through enhanced prayer life and increased understanding of the scripture.

Execution of the qualitative research process also provided an opportunity for professional growth. First, my professional network expanded through the process. This research

required managers to participate in the interviews in the studied company. The number of managers in the researchers' direct network limited. Therefore, I had to leverage others to recruit study participants. This process allowed me to make new connections in the organization and expanded my professional network. This process also allowed for professional growth through enhanced business knowledge. The execution of the qualitative research process allowed for the discovery of and better understanding of current business practices. I applied this knowledge in the workplace. I also expected to leverage this learned knowledge to assist in career advancement opportunities.

Biblical Perspective

Included in this study are several business functions. At the core of this study is diversity, which includes diversity management. The discussion of diversity is in the scriptures. “For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God’s promise to Abraham belongs to you.” (*New Living Translation*, 1996/2015, Galatians 3:26 – 29). This passage of scripture demonstrates diversity, highlighting that backgrounds should not negatively influence the unification of the people. This scripture was written for a community of people coming together for a common purpose. This same mindset is applicable in the modern workplace. Individual backgrounds should not preclude people from working together. The scripture also says, “The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. For we are both God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building.” (*New Living Translation*, 1996/2015, 1 Corinthians 3:8 – 9). This scripture

also promotes unity and suggests the need for people to work together. Everyone has a role and everyone's contribution to achieving their goals is valuable.

Another important aspect of promoting diversity in the workplace is the importance of supporting others. "Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength, and not just please ourselves. Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification" (*New American Standard Bible*, 1960/1995, Romans 15:1 – 2). The scripture also states, "Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important." (*New Living Translation*, 1996/2015, Galatians 6:2 -3). These scriptures clearly articulate the importance of those with more support and helping those with less. This study highlighted the importance of those with leadership positions and preferences, supporting and assisting in providing opportunities for others. The application and execution of this concept in the modern workplace demonstrates the biblical principle.

Assessing leadership influence was also in this study. Relative to this study, leaders were found to impact employee actions relating to employee turnover. "So Jesus called the followers together. He said, "You know that the rulers of the non-Jewish people love to show their power over the people. And their important leaders love to use all their authority over the people. But it should not be that way with you. Whoever wants to be your leader must be your servant. Whoever wants to be first must serve the rest of you like a slave. Do as I did: The Son of Man did not come for people to serve him. He came to serve others and to give his life to save many people." (*Easy-to-Read Version*, 2006, Matthew 20:25 – 28). This passage of scripture recognizes leaders' influence on people. This scripture also instructs leaders to utilize servant leadership. Servant leadership has been documented as an effective leadership methodology in a

diverse workforce (Sims, 2018). The scripture acknowledges leadership influence and guides positive leadership impacts. Leaders should not abuse their authority but use their authority to help others.

This study included exploring the impact of employee turnover on operational costs. Understanding the impact of decisions is also in the scripture. *But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. (New Living Translation, 1996/2015, Luke 14:28 - 29).* The concept of counting the costs can lead to better decisions. Relative to this study, leaders in the modern workforce should consider the impact of employee turnover on operational costs when creating policies to address the issue.

Summary of Reflections

This segment provided my reflections. From a personal perspective, I expressed personal growth mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Mental growth includes increased knowledge, improved aptitude, and enhanced cognitive ability. Emotional growth occurred through enhanced stress management. Spiritual growth resulted in a stronger prayer life and a better understanding of the scripture. I experienced professional growth through an expanded network and enhanced business knowledge.

This segment also provided a biblical perspective of the business practices relevant to this study. First, a biblical perspective on diversity and diversity management, was a key aspect of this study. Scripture supports diversity and guides collaboration. Secondly, a biblical perspective provided promoting diversity and supporting others. The scripture demonstrates the importance and need for this support. Third, leadership influence demonstrated in scripture highlighting the

importance of servant leadership. Lastly, discussing counting the costs was from a biblical perspective and correlated to understanding the impact of employee turnover on operational costs. Each of the points discussed from a biblical perspective applies in the modern workplace.

Summary of Chapter 5

The introduction to Chapter 5 provides a summarized overview of this study, followed by a discussion of the study's contributions to the extant body of knowledge. The additions to the body of knowledge section provide an understanding of this research's practical and theoretical implications. The practical implications of this study highlight diversity, equity, and inclusion in the modern workforce and express how the findings of this research can have practical applications in modern business practices. The theoretical implications highlight how this study's findings support the theories assessed in this research, specifically, the LMX theory, the upper echelons theory, and the complexity theory. The chapter also includes recommendations for further research. The recommendations presented information based on discovered themes throughout this study. The final segment of this chapter presents my reflections. My reflections provide insight into my personal and professional growth experienced throughout this study. My reflections also include a biblical perspective of the subject matter that demonstrates my worldview.

Summary and Study Conclusions

This research was an exploration of a problem identified as relevant in the modern workplace. The problem explored was the persistence of the lack of leadership diversity in the technology industry and the potential impacts on employee turnover. Specifically, the problem was explored at a global technology company and targeted increased employee turnover leading to increased operational costs. Chapter 1 of this research provides background information that

supports the stated problem. This segment provides insight relevant to diversity in the modern workplace and highlights the leadership diversity component. The purpose statement supports the problem statement based upon extant literature. The purpose statement highlights the benefits of the research including strengthening understanding of the issue and positively impacting strategic organizational decisions. Three research questions and three sub-questions documented to support the detailed exploration of the topic. In addition to the research questions, this segment of Chapter 1 encompasses a detailed discussion regarding how each research question addresses the various components of the problem statement and how the combined exploration of the research questions provides a comprehensive view of the problem.

The nature of the study segment in Chapter 1 details the research paradigm, design, and method. The research paradigm section includes several research paradigms and offers support for the use of constructivism, the selected research paradigm for this study. Constructivism aligns with my Christian worldview and is an effective paradigm for qualitative research. The design discussion details the flexible, mixed methods design that was used in this study. The various qualitative research methods are also discussed in the methods section. This section provides support for the use of a single case study for this research and highlights the importance of and description of triangulation. The specific aspects of methods triangulation and data source triangulation were in this study are documented in the section. The conceptual framework is a core component of the study. The conceptual framework diagram provides a pictorial view of the research concepts, theories, actors, and constructs, showing their relationship and providing the context of the study. The framework section also describes the various components and details their interactions. To ensure a common understanding of key terms used in this study, definitions are present. Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations are common elements in all studies. The

study includes assumptions, limitations, and delimitations that are relevant to this study. The final section in Chapter 1 explores the relevance of this study. The study includes a discussion on how the study adds to the current body of knowledge and how the study benefits extant business practices. This section also includes a discussion on the biblical integration of the subject matter.

Chapter 2 includes a detailed literature review. This chapter dissects relevant components of the study and provides a scholarly perspective, based on extant literature, on the various study elements. The chapter closes with the exploration of related studies, documenting their correlation to this study., Furthermore chapter two included the discussion of anticipated themes identified before the start of this research, and the discovered themes identified during the research process. Chapter 3 provides details relevant to the various components of the research methodology. Specific components discussed in this chapter include the researchers' role, study participants, population, sampling, data collection, reliability, validity, and ethics. The information in Chapter 3 explains how the study was executed by detailing the criteria for eligible study participants and discussing the process of collecting data. Reliability, validity, and ethical considerations describe how these elements added credibility to the study. Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis of the data and a detailed discussion of the results of this study. The themes discovered are documented and correlated with the study data, providing a comprehensive view of all aspects of this study. The research findings are highlighted and discussed in the context of supporting data collected during the study. The final chapter, Chapter 5, concludes this study. Key aspects of this research are presented as they relate to adding to the current body of knowledge and recommendations for further research. Chapter 5 closes with the researchers' reflections, which include personal growth, professional growth, and a biblical perspective on the study.

Several key areas and key results are in this study. The following discussion highlights a few of the key areas and key results of this study: First, leadership diversity was a core element of this study. Relative to this study, leadership diversity was found to have minimal impact on employee turnover. However, that finding should not overshadow the importance of leadership diversity to an organization. This study discovered that leadership diversity is important, and that organizational leadership should intentionally increase leadership diversity levels. Most study participants highlighted the importance of leadership diversity and provided examples of how it positively impacts an organization. Secondly, exploring leadership influences on follower actions was in the study. This study found that leadership actions impact the actions of followers. Specifically, the quality of the leader and leadership behaviors were found to contribute to decisions made by followers. Research participants highlighted the need for leaders with the skillset conducive to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment. Lastly, leadership development was a key area of focus. This study concluded that good leadership skills were more important than technical skills for technology company leaders. Research participants also highlighted the need to engage, train, and develop early career, non-technical, and varying-level individuals to build a strong leadership pipeline.

This study included exploring the lack of leadership diversity and the impacts on employee turnover leading to increased operational costs. Several findings and relevant insights emerged. This study highlights an existing problem in the modern workplace relevant to the workforce and will not self-correct. Purposeful actions by organizational leaders are necessary to address this issue. This research also provided insights into contributing factors and areas that need addressing to mitigate the issue. In addition to the other areas and findings documented in this study, this section can help organizational leaders take intentional actions. These actions

improve business practices in the modern workplace and demonstrate proper understanding and support of leadership diversity in the workplace.

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Appendix A – Interview Guide

Provide a brief introduction and thank the interviewee for participating.

Date:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Length of employment at current company:

Gender:

Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic, Black or African American, White (Caucasian), Native Americans and Alaska Native, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Other

Education Level: HS Diploma/GED; AA/AS, BS, MS/MBA, PhD/DBA

Age Group: 18-30 years; 31-40 years; 41-50 years; 51-60 years; above 60 years

Introduce the project.

1. How did you feel about the diversity composition of your the company's leadership?
2. What qualifications are most important in leadership candidates?
3. What role does diversity play in leadership selection?
4. What technical skills are required for leadership?
5. What other skills are important for leadership candidates?
6. What can be done to increase diversity in leadership?
7. How does leadership influence employee retention?
8. How does leadership diversity impact employee retention?

Conclude the interview with a discussion on follow-up interviews and thank the interviewee for participating.

Appendix B – Leader-Member Exchange 7 Questionnaire

Manager Gender:

Manager Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic, Black or African American, White (Caucasian), Native Americans and Alaska Native, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Other

1. Do you know where you stand with your leader . . . do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do? (*Rarely, Occasionally, Sometimes, Fairly Often, Very Often*)
2. How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs? (*Not a Bit, A Little, A Fair Amount, Quite a Bit, A Great Deal*)
3. How well does your leader recognize your potential? (*Not at All, A Little, Moderately, Mostly, Fully*)
4. Regardless of how much formal authority they have built into their position, what are the chances that your leader would use their power to help you solve problems in your work? (*None, Small, Moderate, High, Very High*)
5. Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your leader has, what are the chances that they would “bail you out,” at their expense? (*None, Small, Moderate, High, Very High*)
6. I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify their decision if they were not present to do so? (*Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree*)
7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader? (*Extremely Ineffective, Worse than Average, Average, Better than Average, Extremely Effective*)

Appendix C – Employee Survey: Diversity Equity and Inclusion

How long have you worked for this company?

- Less than one year
- One year to less than two years
- Two years to less than five years
- Five years to less than ten years
- Ten years or more

Age Group: 18-30 years; 31-40 years; 41-50 years; 51-60 years; above 60 years

Gender?

Which of the following best describes your role in the organization?

- First-level supervisor
- Manager/supervisor higher than first level (including senior management positions)
- Not a manager or supervisor

Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.					
Overall Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Culture	5	4	3	2	1
The leadership at this company encourages diversity.					
Management shows that diversity is important through its actions.					
This company is committed to improving the diversity of employees.					
This company fosters a workplace that allows employees to be themselves at work without fear.					
This company respects individuals and values their differences.					
The leadership at this company treats all employees fairly.					

At this company, employees appreciate others whose backgrounds, beliefs and experiences are different from their own.					
Comments or suggestions for improvement:					
Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.					
Hiring and Recruitment	5	4	3	2	1
This company takes active measures to seek a diverse candidate pool when hiring.					
There is diversity among the people a job candidate will meet/see on their first visit to the company.					
Comments or suggestions for improvement:					
Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.					
Career Development	5	4	3	2	1
Employees of different backgrounds are encouraged to apply for higher positions.					
Employees of different backgrounds are treated fairly in the internal promotion process.					
There is a career development path for all employees at this company.					
Comments or suggestions for improvement:					

--

Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.

Personal Experiences	5	4	3	2	1
My experiences at this company have led me to become more understanding of differences among my coworkers.					
Getting to know people with backgrounds different from my own has been easy at this company.					
My experiences at this company have led me to become more understanding of differences among my coworkers.					

Comments or suggestions for improvement:

--

Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.

Policies and Procedures	5	4	3	2	1
The company's policies or procedures encourage diversity, equity and inclusion.					
I am aware of and understand the procedures for reporting incidents of discrimination and/or bias in the workplace.					
I believe the company will take appropriate action in response to incidents of discrimination and/or bias.					

Comments or suggestions for improvement:					
Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.					
Inclusion	5	4	3	2	1
Employees of different backgrounds interact well in this company.					
Management of this company demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of employees with disabilities.					
Employees of different ages are valued equally by this organization.					
Racial, ethnic, sexual and gender-based jokes or slurs are not tolerated at this organization.					
This company provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs.					
Employees of different backgrounds interact well in this company.					
Comments or suggestions for improvement:					
Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.					
Your Immediate Supervisor	5	4	3	2	1
My supervisor is committed to, and supports, diversity, equity and inclusion.					

My supervisor handles matters related to diversity, equity and inclusion matters satisfactorily.					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Comments or suggestions for improvement:

Using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree, please select one response for each statement.

Diversity Training	5	4	3	2	1
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This company has done a good job providing educational programs that promote diversity, equity and inclusion in our workplace.					
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Comments or suggestions for improvement:

What improvements, if any, can be made to improve the diversity, equity and inclusion efforts at this company?

Appendix D – Leader-Member Exchange 7 Questionnaire Permission of Reuse

12/4/23, 12:35 PM

Mail - Renee Smith - Outlook

[External] Re: Permission for Reuse

Uhl-Bien, Mary <m.uhl-bien@tcu.edu>

Sun 12/3/2023 12:13 PM

To: Smith, Renee Y <rsmith589@liberty.edu>

You don't often get email from m.uhl-bien@tcu.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

You have permission to use the LMX-7.

All best,
Mary

From: Smith, Renee Y <rsmith589@liberty.edu>

Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023 at 12:06 AM

To: Uhl-Bien, Mary <m.uhl-bien@tcu.edu>

Subject: Permission for Reuse

[EXTERNAL EMAIL WARNING] DO NOT CLICK LINKS or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Dr. Uhl-Bien,

I am a student at Liberty University. I am currently working on my dissertation for a PhD in Organization and Management, Leadership cognate. My dissertation topic is the Lack of Leadership Diversity in the Technology Industry and the Impacts on Employee Turnover. I am using the LMX theory as one of the foundational theories for my study. I would like to use your survey, Leader-Member Exchange 7 Questionnaire (LMX-7) as part of my research. I am writing to request use of the survey and for permission to publish survey as part of my dissertation when completed.

Thank you in advance for your response,
Renee' Smith

Appendix E – Employee Survey: Diversity Equity and Inclusion Permission of Reuse

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Instructor Name	Dr. David Duby	Expected Presentation Date	2023-12-08

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iv) **Books and Records; Right to Audit.** As to each permission granted under the academic pay-per-use Service, User shall maintain for at least four full calendar years books and records sufficient for CCC to determine the numbers of copies made by User under such permission. CCC and any representatives it may designate shall have the right to audit such books and records at any time during User's ordinary business hours, upon two days' prior notice. If any such audit shall determine that User shall have underpaid for, or underreported, any photocopies sold or by three percent (3%) or more, then User shall bear all the costs of any such audit; otherwise, CCC shall bear the costs of any such audit. Any amount determined by such audit to have been underpaid by User shall

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immediately be paid to CCC by User, together with interest thereon at the rate of 10% per annum from the date such amount was originally due. The provisions of this paragraph shall survive the termination of this License for any reason.

b) *Digital Pay-Per-Uses of Academic Course Content and Materials (e-coursepacks, electronic reserves, learning management systems, academic institution intranets)*. For uses in e-coursepacks, posts in electronic reserves, posts in learning management systems, or posts on academic institution intranets, the following additional terms apply:

i) The pay-per-uses subject to this Section 14(b) include:

A) Posting e-reserves, course management systems, e-coursepacks for text-based content, which grants authorizations to import requested material in electronic format, and allows electronic access to this material to members of a designated college or university class, under the direction of an instructor designated by the college or university, accessible only under appropriate electronic controls (e.g., password);

B) Posting e-reserves, course management systems, e-coursepacks for material consisting of photographs or other still images not embedded in text, which grants not only the authorizations described in Section 14(b)(i)(A) above, but also the following authorization: to include the requested material in course materials for use consistent with Section 14(b)(i)(A) above, including any necessary resizing, reformatting or modification of the resolution of such requested material (provided that such modification does not alter the underlying editorial content or meaning of the requested material, and provided that the resulting modified content is used solely within the scope of, and in a manner consistent with, the particular authorization described in the Order Confirmation and the Terms), but not including any other form of manipulation, alteration or editing of the requested material;

C) Posting e-reserves, course management systems, e-coursepacks or other academic distribution for audiovisual content, which grants not only the authorizations described in Section 14(b)(i)(A) above, but also the following authorizations: (i) to include the requested material in course materials for use consistent with Section 14(b)(i)(A) above; (ii) to display and perform the requested material to such members of such class in the physical classroom or remotely by means of streaming media or other video formats; and (iii) to "clip" or reformat the requested material for purposes of time or content management or ease of delivery, provided that such "clipping" or reformatting does not alter the underlying editorial content or meaning of the requested material and that the resulting material is used solely within the scope of, and in a manner consistent with, the particular authorization described in the Order Confirmation and the Terms. Unless expressly set forth in the relevant Order Confirmation, the License does not authorize any other form of manipulation, alteration or editing of the requested material.

ii) Unless expressly set forth in the relevant Order Confirmation, no License granted shall in any way: (i) include any right by User to create a substantively non-identical copy of the Work or to edit or in any other way modify the Work (except by means of deleting material immediately preceding or following the entire portion of the Work copied or, in the case of Works subject to Sections 14(b)(1)(B) or (C) above, as described in such Sections) (ii) permit "publishing ventures" where any particular course materials would be systematically marketed at multiple institutions.

iii) Subject to any further limitations determined in the Rightsholder Terms (and notwithstanding any apparent contradiction in the Order Confirmation arising from data provided by User), any use authorized under the electronic course content pay-per-use service is limited as follows:

A) any License granted shall apply to only one class (bearing a unique identifier as assigned by the institution, and thereby including all sections or other subparts of the class) at one institution;

B) use is limited to not more than 25% of the text of a book or of the items in a published collection of essays, poems or articles;

C) use is limited to not more than the greater of (a) 25% of the text of an issue of a journal or other periodical or (b) two articles from such an issue;

D) no User may sell or distribute any particular materials, whether photocopied or electronic, at more than one institution of learning;

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E) electronic access to material which is the subject of an electronic-use permission must be limited by means of electronic password, student identification or other control permitting access solely to students and instructors in the class;

F) User must ensure (through use of an electronic cover page or other appropriate means) that any person, upon gaining electronic access to the material, which is the subject of a permission, shall see:

- a proper copyright notice, identifying the Rightsholder in whose name CCC has granted permission,
- a statement to the effect that such copy was made pursuant to permission,
- a statement identifying the class to which the material applies and notifying the reader that the material has been made available electronically solely for use in the class, and
- a statement to the effect that the material may not be further distributed to any person outside the class, whether by copying or by transmission and whether electronically or in paper form, and User must also ensure that such cover page or other means will print out in the event that the person accessing the material chooses to print out the material or any part thereof.

G) any permission granted shall expire at the end of the class and, absent some other form of authorization, User is thereupon required to delete the applicable material from any electronic storage or to block electronic access to the applicable material.

iv) Uses of separate portions of a Work, even if they are to be included in the same course material or the same university or college class, require separate permissions under the electronic course content pay-per-use Service. Unless otherwise provided in the Order Confirmation, any grant of rights to User is limited to use completed no later than the end of the academic term (or analogous period) as to which any particular permission is granted.

v) Books and Records; Right to Audit. As to each permission granted under the electronic course content Service, User shall maintain for at least four full calendar years books and records sufficient for CCC to determine the numbers of copies made by User under such permission. CCC and any representatives it may designate shall have the right to audit such books and records at any time during User's ordinary business hours, upon two days' prior notice. If any such audit shall determine that User shall have underpaid for, or underreported, any electronic copies used by three percent (3%) or more, then User shall bear all the costs of any such audit; otherwise, CCC shall bear the costs of any such audit. Any amount determined by such audit to have been underpaid by User shall immediately be paid to CCC by User, together with interest thereon at the rate of 10% per annum from the date such amount was originally due. The provisions of this paragraph shall survive the termination of this license for any reason.

c) *Pay-Per-Use Permissions for Certain Reproductions (Academic photocopies for library reserves and interlibrary loan reporting) (Non-academic internal/external business uses and commercial document delivery).* The License expressly excludes the uses listed in Section (c)(i)-(v) below (which must be subject to separate license from the applicable Rightsholder) for: academic photocopies for library reserves and interlibrary loan reporting and non-academic internal/external business uses and commercial document delivery.

- i) electronic storage of any reproduction (whether in plain-text, PDF, or any other format) other than on a transitory basis;
- ii) the input of Works or reproductions thereof into any computerized database;
- iii) reproduction of an entire Work (cover-to-cover copying) except where the Work is a single article;
- iv) reproduction for resale to anyone other than a specific customer of User;
- v) republication in any different form. Please obtain authorizations for these uses through other CCC services or directly from the rightsholder.

Any license granted is further limited as set forth in any restrictions included in the Order Confirmation and/or in these Terms.

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d) *Electronic Reproductions in Online Environments (Non-Academic-email, intranet, internet and extranet)*. For “electronic reproductions”, which generally includes e-mail use (including instant messaging or other electronic transmission to a defined group of recipients) or posting on an intranet, extranet or Intranet site (including any display or performance incidental thereto), the following additional terms apply:

i) Unless otherwise set forth in the Order Confirmation, the License is limited to use completed within 30 days for any use on the Internet, 60 days for any use on an intranet or extranet and one year for any other use, all as measured from the “republishing date” as identified in the Order Confirmation, if any, and otherwise from the date of the Order Confirmation.

ii) User may not make or permit any alterations to the Work, unless expressly set forth in the Order Confirmation (after request by User and approval by Rightsholder); provided, however, that a Work consisting of photographs or other still images not embedded in text may, if necessary, be resized, reformatted or have its resolution modified without additional express permission, and a Work consisting of audiovisual content may, if necessary, be “clipped” or reformatted for purposes of time or content management or ease of delivery (provided that any such resizing, reformatting, resolution modification or “clipping” does not alter the underlying editorial content or meaning of the Work used, and that the resulting material is used solely within the scope of, and in a manner consistent with, the particular License described in the Order Confirmation and the Terms.

15) Miscellaneous.

a) User acknowledges that CCC may, from time to time, make changes or additions to the Service or to the Terms, and that Rightsholder may make changes or additions to the Rightsholder Terms. Such updated Terms will replace the prior terms and conditions in the order workflow and shall be effective as to any subsequent Licenses but shall not apply to Licenses already granted and paid for under a prior set of terms.

b) Use of User-related information collected through the Service is governed by CCC’s privacy policy, available online at www.copyright.com/about/privacy-policy/.

c) The License is personal to User. Therefore, User may not assign or transfer to any other person (whether a natural person or an organization of any kind) the License or any rights granted thereunder; provided, however, that, where applicable, User may assign such License in its entirety on written notice to CCC in the event of a transfer of all or substantially all of User’s rights in any new material which includes the Work(s) licensed under this Service.

d) No amendment or waiver of any Terms is binding unless set forth in writing and signed by the appropriate parties, including, where applicable, the Rightsholder. The Rightsholder and CCC hereby object to any terms contained in any writing prepared by or on behalf of the User or its principals, employees, agents or affiliates and purporting to govern or otherwise relate to the License described in the Order Confirmation, which terms are in any way inconsistent with any Terms set forth in the Order Confirmation, and/or in CCC’s standard operating procedures, whether such writing is prepared prior to, simultaneously with or subsequent to the Order Confirmation, and whether such writing appears on a copy of the Order Confirmation or in a separate instrument.

e) The License described in the Order Confirmation shall be governed by and construed under the law of the State of New York, USA, without regard to the principles thereof of conflicts of law. Any case, controversy, suit, action, or proceeding arising out of, in connection with, or related to such License shall be brought, at CCC’s sole discretion, in any federal or state court located in the County of New York, State of New York, USA, or in any federal or state court whose geographical jurisdiction covers the location of the Rightsholder set forth in the Order Confirmation. The parties expressly submit to the personal jurisdiction and venue of each such federal or state court.

Last updated October 2022

Appendix F – Permission to Conduct Interviews and Use Archival Records and Documents

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, February 2, 2024 5:00 PM

To: Renee Smith [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: PhD Research Permission Request [REDACTED]

Renee,

Thank you for your patience and working with CELA and HR. Again, appreciate your learning mindset and your passion to make an impact.

Per your request:

1. Permission has been granted for Renee' Smith to contact organizational members to invite them to participate in her research study.
2. Permission has been granted for Renee' Smith to utilize publicly available data (documents, records, etc.) in her research study. The requested data **WILL BE STRIPPED** of all identifying information before being utilized in the study.

I wish you the best of luck with the endeavor and look forward to gaining insights from your learnings.

Best,

[REDACTED]

From: Renee Smith [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, February 2, 2024 4:26 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: PhD Research Permission Request [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]

Per the direction of CELA and HR, this e-mail is being sent to obtain permission to conduct research at Microsoft.

I am a student in the School of Business at Liberty University. I am conducting research on the potential impacts of the persistent lack of leadership diversity on employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry as part of the requirements for a PhD degree. The title of my research project is Leadership Diversity in the Technology Industry, and the purpose of my research is to understand how the lack of leadership diversity potentially impacts employee turnover and operational costs in the technology industry. This research seeks to assist leaders in understanding the importance of the issue and potentially lead to the creation of strategic measures to address the problem.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at [REDACTED] which involves contacting members of the organization to invite them to participate in my research study and accessing and utilizing publicly available organizational data (i.e. documents, records, etc.) in my research study. **Participation by employees shall be voluntary and at their discretion.**

Some participants will be asked to complete a survey and some participants will be asked to be interviewed. The data collected will be used to determine potential impacts of employee turnover on operational costs, and to discover why employees chose to leave the company. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. **Taking part in this study is completely voluntary**, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by email confirming the following:

1. Permission has been granted for Renee' Smith to contact organizational members to invite them to participate in her research study.
2. Permission has been granted for Renee' Smith to utilize publicly available data (documents, records, etc.) in her research study. The requested data **WILL BE STRIPPED** of all identifying information before being utilized in the study.

Thank you in advance for your response,

Renee' Smith, PMP, PMI-ACP, CSM

Senior Delivery Project Manager [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix G – Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter

[External] IRB-FY23-24-1407 - Initial: Initial - Exempt

do-not-reply@cayuse.com <do-not-reply@cayuse.com>

Thu 4/11/2024 12:30 PM

To: Duby, David G (School of Business) <dduby@liberty.edu>; Smith, Renee Y <rsmith589@liberty.edu>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

April 11, 2024

Renee Smith
David Duby

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-1407 Leadership Diversity in the Technology Industry

Dear Renee Smith, David Duby,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application per the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data-safeguarding methods described in your IRB application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46.104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study Details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents, **which you must use to conduct your study**, can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

This exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office