Multidisciplinary Approach to Diversity and Inclusion in the COVID-19-Era Workplace

Rilla J. Hynes, Carlos Tasso Aquino, and Josephine Ursula Hauer

IGI Global
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Dedicated to Dr. Bethany Mickahail. Her bright light and endless curiosity will be greatly missed.

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Section 1
DEI Organizational Impacts and the Challenges Faced by the Post-Pandemic Workforce

Chapter 1

> *Robert W. Robertson, Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute, Bahamas*
> *Carlos Tasso Eira de Aquino, Gettysburg College, USA*

The skills gap has increasingly been identified as a growing concern that may negatively impact the economic growth of nations across the globe. Indeed, the future of work is changing, and there is a growing need for employees and employers to recognize the fact that the skills of today will not be sufficient to operate in the technology-driven economy of the future. This chapter discusses the challenges faced by the workforce in addressing diversity and inclusion issues and the skills gap in the global marketplace. It explores and highlights the importance of a structured method of addressing conflict via an effective negotiation using a seven-step theoretical model, while dealing with diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

Chapter 2

> *Seterra D. Burleson, Old Dominion University, USA*
> *Kristen D. Eggler, Old Dominion University, USA*
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Organizations have begun to embrace remote and hybrid work arrangements while simultaneously prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) in a post-COVID-19 work era, bringing forth new challenges in socializing organizational newcomers. In this chapter, a DE&I perspective is applied to further understanding of the unique challenges organizations and leaders face in socializing remote workers, encouraging organizations to proactively foster newcomer development of essential cognitive, regulative, and normative knowledge; self-efficacy; and a sense of social inclusion. Evidence-based recommendations are provided to provide a path forward for organizations to socialize organizational newcomers in the new age of remote work in a way that upholds DE&I goals and values.

Chapter 3

Merlin Patricia Grueso-Hinestroza, Universidad del Rosario, Colombia
Angelica Sanchez-Riofrio, Universidad Espíritu Santo, Ecuador & EQ-Lab, Ecuador
Mónica López-Santamaría, Universidad del Rosario, Colombia
Concha Antón, Universidad de Salamanca, Spain

The COVID-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented situation, impacting all productive sectors. Human resources departments have been instrumental in migrating from a functional to a strategic perspective, contributing to the strengthening of organisations. This chapter aims to analyse workplace responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the adoption of human resources practices through a systematic literature review. Findings indicate that the main responses to the pandemic were creating a work team to manage the crisis; virtual work at the individual and group levels; encouraging virtual leadership; psychological, financial, and health support; fostering a work environment favourable to empowerment, shared decision-making, and participation. Other frequently mentioned human resources practices were compensation, flexible working, work design, performance management, remote working, work-family balance, recognition programmes, and training and development practices.

Chapter 4

Vildan Tasli Karabulut, Yalova University, Turkey

Drawing on enrichment theory, the study examines whether academics' experience in one domain of work-life interface resulted in any enrichment in the other domain. The researcher conducted 26 semi-structured online interviews with academics from Turkey and the UK. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify themes and subthemes. The study shows that married people with young children (under 12) and especially female academics struggled the most to balance work and life during the pandemic because they had to fulfill their work and family responsibilities at the same time and place. Considering the research's findings from the enrichment model's perspective, it is concluded that remote work offers work and life enrichment to some extent to individuals, but individuals' diverse living circumstances matter in discussing work-life balance and the level of enrichment in work and life domains. This is important for organizations to put on their agenda while thriving to achieve diversity and develop inclusive workplaces in the post-COVID-19 era.

Section 2
DEI and Leadership in Post-Pandemic Times

Chapter 5

Grace Christian Journey, Thomas Edison State University, USA

During the COVID era, diverse industries require persons willing to go towards another level of transformational leadership. This author proposes multigenerational leadership as a valuable addition. Five generations in the modern workforce described as the Silent Generation (1928-1945), Baby-Boomers

(1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Generation Y also known as Millennials (1981-1996), and Generation Z (1997-2012) are creating history! Each generation demonstrates unique perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors. The purpose of this chapter is to encourage the addition of multigenerational leadership to established leadership approaches that will require commitment to intentional learning about representatives of each generation, multigenerational challenges, change management styles, multiple intelligences, and effective soft skills. This chapter would emerge as an initial guide during the COVID-19 pandemic and envisions transformation during the post-pandemic era.

Chapter 6
Cindy Anne DeMarco, Insperity, USA & Grand Canyon University, USA
Rodney D. Satterwhite, Insperity, USA

The COVID-19 pandemic put a proverbial magnifying glass on many societal and business issues. Business leaders were not as prepared as they would have liked to have been to address the issues and as a result learned multiple lessons, in particular, how to navigate increased need for attention to workplace diversity and inclusion (D&I). With these lessons in mind, understanding opportunities to expand how we think about and define diversity, the need for belonging/inclusion, how changing workplace demographics are becoming more influential, and the critical role organizational leadership plays in the D&I journey are essential as we move through the COVID-19-pandemic era. Leveraging transformational leadership as a mindset and an emerging model, reflect-forward framework, practical strategies are presented to help leaders reflect, assess, and set the stage to move forward. Due to the evolving nature of the topic, resources include a combination expertise of the authors, research data, popular press, and scholarly articles.

Chapter 7
Ronald R. Rojas, University of St. Mary of the Lake, USA

The damage to Hispanic small businesses caused by the pandemic has triggered a sense of immediacy that poses a substantial threat to long-term operational viability. Pre-pandemic financial, educational, and social inequities were aggravated by low sales volume, supply chain disruptions, and employee health concerns. Many Hispanic small businesses have temporarily closed or remained in survival mode as they struggle to find relief from loans and subsidies, mainly from banks and government sources. Others are without guidance, training, or professional help as they navigate haphazardly through the inequalities of a post-pandemic era. Yet during times of crisis, leadership is sought, and the pandemic is a significant crisis for Hispanic business owners. A re-education of entrepreneurial leadership concepts proved valuable as a continuing education topic for many businesses. Providing entrepreneurial leadership initiatives and networking are seen as effective remedies to salvage the viability of Hispanic businesses as we traverse a post-pandemic era.

Chapter 8
Kelley A. Conrad, University of Phoenix, USA
Susanne Beier, Beier Counseling, USA
Richard Davis, University of Arizona Global Campus, USA

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased fear and uncertainty, creating an intense focus on safety, skewing the relationships between the government, organizations, and individuals. Currently, the onus to deal with the changes has been mainly on individuals. However, the pandemic creates trends and actions that add an equity lens guiding organizations, governments, and businesses. This equity lens promises a better future with more significant workplace equity. This chapter identifies four crucial areas where this is happening: 1) community and civic engagement, 2) trust and transparency, 3) increasing diversity in the communications workforce, and 4) mental health support. The challenge is to make the currently emerging new approaches and processes become part of our organizational lives and our new normal. It is the opportunity to make our positive responses to the COVID-19 pandemic permanent ones, increasing diversity, inclusion, equity, engagement, and health.

Section 3
Societal and Individual Impacts on the Future of the Workforce

Chapter 9

Donnie Hutchinson, University of Dayton, USA

The mission of this chapter is to encourage and provide a model for leaders to lead organizations through a work-life balance (WLB)-centered holistic leadership approach. This approach begins by explaining why it is imperative to lead by considering the totality of each person from a diverse and inclusive viewpoint. The totality of each person includes one's self-care management practices and all roles one plays in life. The apex of this mission is to provide leaders with a research-based practitioner model to create an inclusive culture of organizational health and wellness. The self-care flourished living (SCFL) model coupled with a holistic leadership approach that diversifies to meet individual employee needs will be showcased in this chapter. The result of leading employees through SCFL and a holistic approach will promote living a life of balance through effective self-care.

Chapter 10

Pamela Ann Gordon, University of Phoenix, USA
Julie A. Overbey, University of Phoenix, USA

Bias, both conscious and unconscious, is defined in many ways. Bias incorporates implicit stereotypes and prejudices, impacts judgments, is displayed in nonverbal behaviors, and may result in a dissociation between what a person believes is right and unconscious beliefs that cause negative actions. Understanding and recognizing the negative impact of unconscious, or implicit, bias during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021 is an important leadership tool. Unconscious bias manifests in many forms. A clear awareness of these forms of bias, learning to recognize the biases, and understanding how to reduce the negative impact of unconscious bias are important to leaders in workplaces upended by the effects if the pandemic. Twelve forms of unconscious bias, its manifestation in the workplace, and the impact of COVID-19 are explored.

The rapid global spread of the Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) commencing February 2020 ushered in remote working as a means to stem the virus's spread and continue production. However, not all jobs can be remotely performed, as evidenced in Latin America and the Caribbean, where only 20% of available jobs can be executed remotely. Many managers across Latin America and the Caribbean have no experience with managing remote workforces. Several issues exacerbated the challenges these inexperienced and unprepared managers faced, including the lack of training and the unavailability of internet and communication technologies, especially critical disruptive innovations such as broadband internet. The lack of broadband internet and training on using information and communication technologies hinders diversity and inclusion, as many managers and the workforce at large from Latin America and the Caribbean region could not make contributions to global and national production, which negatively affected the quality of their lives.

The purpose of this survey research study was to understand how information literacy and critical thinking skills might play a role in individuals' decision-making process toward taking or not taking the COVID-19 vaccine. The 106 participants, from Brazil and the United States, ranged from a spectrum of diversity in ethnicity, social and educational backgrounds, careers, and ages. Participants answered 21 closed-ended questions in a survey via electronic mail. Pro-vaccine and anti-vaccine groups ascertained that multiple resources were sought which led to informed decisions prior to choosing to inoculation or to forego the COVID-19 vaccine. The primary reasons to take the vaccine were cited as concerns for personal health and concerns for others' health. The 22 participants' central reasons for not taking the vaccine were to wait to see how the vaccine would affect others and a lack of confidence in vaccine efficacy.

Section 4
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Post-Pandemic Times

This chapter focuses on the future of diversity, inclusion, and equity in the sports industry after the COVID-19 pandemic. It discusses the changes that athletes may experience and how sports may change as a result of the pandemic. The discussion covers topics such as mental health and the wellbeing of minority athletes. Other issues explored include the increasing popularity of women's sports and the increasing activism among athletes. Further, the chapter addresses the loss of recreational facilities and services and closure of many collegiate sports programs. A special focus of the chapter is on the conditions for Black athletes.

The aftermath of the global pandemic in 2020 brought many public and private organizational leaders to the whiteboard, and with a dry eraser in their hands, human leaders were expected to produce solutions, but only a few managed to write the new blueprint to protect millions of employees, customers, and students from the life-threatening COVID-19 virus. Subsequently, artificial intelligence was adopted as part of the solution to the unprecedented organizational disruptions. Nonetheless, leaders appeared to have overlooked the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity. This chapter provides an expansive review about artificial intelligence and diversity in the context of cultural identity, economic power, social demographics, and ethnographic communication currently not included in organizational diversity and inclusion programs.

COVID-19 impacted how families live, learn, work, and connect, especially for those living at the margins, coping with poverty and other stressors. The rapid shutdown across the country disrupted human services and in-person operations for public benefit programs. State and federal leaders had to pivot to virtual human service delivery (VHSD) to meet the rapidly increasing need for food, housing, health, and economic supports. This shift revealed existing gaps in systems yet drove opportunities to address eligibility and access challenges quickly. Virtual human services worked well for many individuals and families but not all. This chapter highlights the importance of an equity lens in determining who does and does not benefit from VHSD. Insights and lessons learned from virtual operations for policy and practice are discussed as emerging technologies continue to impact workforce and client experience into the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted women's lives. Many already juggled two full-time jobs, that of employee and that of primary homemaker and caregiver; the pandemic exacerbated these challenges. Unprecedented numbers left paid employment altogether, some by choice, some by necessity, and others by jobs that disappeared. Disruptions may have lasting consequences for gender equality in the workplace. The pandemic exacerbated existing barriers in the workplace, augmented by the intersection of gender and race/ethnicity that contributes to challenges women of color and immigrant and migrant women face. The chapter covers how the pandemic has exacerbated barriers and challenges, how it affected women's labor force participation and work and home lives, and the economic and social consequences. The chapter also covers new challenges and opportunities and current and emerging research and policies. The chapter concludes with consideration of implications for supports and policy and recommendations for further research.

Foreword

The Coronavirus pandemic has upended life as we know it. The overwhelming toll of illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths reported daily, sometimes hourly, weigh heavily on our collective national conscious. We cringe every day watching numbers tick upward, each one representing a child, friend, coworker, neighbor or loved one impacted its wide reach.

In my three decades as a journalist, never have I struggled more to keep the public properly informed about something so important. Now, as an educator, I teach students how to recognize and fight misinformation. I find myself policing my own social media feeds, correcting well-meaning friends who share false information about COVID-19. Some of this information creates doubt about solid science and discourages people from getting vaccinated – the one thing we *can* do to protect ourselves. The culture of vitriol and uncivil discourse that preceded the pandemic creates an environment that makes it even harder to fight false information with facts.

On the front lines, medical facilities are strained dealing with COVID-19 cases. Health workers are stressed. There's an explosion of new mental health concerns. Scientists are racing to stay one step ahead of the next variant mutating as we speak.

Yet this pandemic is much more than just a health crisis. The response to this virus has shaken the world's largest economies and shuttered whole industries. It's forced big companies and mom and pop stores to close their doors for the last time. As schools transitioned to virtual learning, COVID-19 exposed deeply-embedded inequities in education, in our communities and in the workplace. Suddenly parents had to decide whether to homeschool or work, *if* their job still existed. Not everyone has the flexibility to do both.

COVID-19 touched every corner of the earth and commanded the attention of every single human being. And It's not over. But as we adjust to the new normal of living with COVID-19, this pandemic offers critical lessons and new opportunities. We quickly learned how to conduct business while not in the same room together. We kept the world spinning from a computer screen. In less than two years whole industries transformed to operate remotely. Broadcast journalists like me always had to go where the news was happening. In March 2020, within days, I was talking to the world from a fully functioning live studio in my basement, with help from colleagues working in theirs.

Adversity breeds innovation. And introspection.

In the silence of working alone, millions of people who were laid off or forced to work remotely started asking themselves "What do I really want to do in life? Is this my calling? What's my purpose?" The Great Resignation began! More than 38 million people quit their jobs in 2021. I was one of them. As the Delta variant began to wane, I traded 30 years as a television reporter for a career in education. Today I am pursuing my passion - inspiring students and helping the public better understand public policy.

A life-changing decision made alone in the solitude of my basement during a pandemic.

This massive shift in the workforce led to a critical labor shortage affecting retail, manufacturing and service industries. It also presents an opportunity, a reset for employers to learn how to keep workers, particularly diverse workers, on the job. Employees are looking for balance – and last year's jaw-dropping labor numbers prove they're willing to take risks to find it. Managers can leverage this shift in mindset to identify and retain new talent. The following chapters explain how.

Remote work opportunities are a big part of the flexibility required to rebuild a productive and satisfied workforce. While working from home can improve work-life balance, it also presents new challenges. It's harder to create effective teamwork over email, Slack and Zoom. Trading interpersonal interactions for written communication can lead to misunderstanding and unintended conflicts, requiring managers to develop new skills in remote conflict resolution. For individual workers, it's tricky to cultivate relationships and mentoring needed to advance professionally. This is especially for true underrepresented groups: women, people of color, LGBTQIA individuals, and disabled workers among others.

The lack of face-to-face interactions in the workplace forces managers to build new skills to develop talent. It dictates that corporate leaders consider new policies to ensure that talented, motivated employees who want to move up, can.

Research before and during the pandemic has made one thing is clear: DIVERSITY PAYS. Companies that commit to diverse recruitment, hiring and advancement invest in their own success, improve their bottom line more than companies that don't. The following pages break down how business leaders can identify and address gaps in employment practices.

Defining diversity is a critical part of baking it into the DNA of a company's culture. It's literally not just black and white. Managers aiming to build a post-pandemic workforce must stretch their concept of diversity to ensure equity for workers of different ages, socioeconomic groups, family structures (i.e. single parents), philosophies and other personal characteristics and life situations that may not be easily apparent below the iceberg. A robust diversity effort also involves exploring unconscious bias, both individually and in business practices.

In other words, different approaches are needed for different groups. One size cannot fit all. Workers, divisions within companies, and different industries require individualized approaches.

Finally, in this pandemic world, it's critical to distinguish between diversity and inclusion. Getting people to the table is just the first step. Listening to diverse employees, ensuring that their contributions are valued and used, creating an environment where they're comfortable sharing and bringing their authentic selves and experiences to work every day – that's the challenge. Even for companies with a strong stated commitment to diversity and inclusion, making it happen can seem overwhelming. Where does a well-meaning CEO, HR manager, or supervisor begin?

Turning the page now is a good place to start.

Tracie Potts
Eisenhower Institute, Gettysburg College, USA

Preface

Businesses and organizations located in any part of the globe face constant challenges related to the highly competitive environment they operate, in a world without borders, shrunk by globalization. In this reality, Diversity and Inclusion has been playing an increasing and important role. Professionals in the workforce must be fully prepared to address all multi-cultural, multi-generational, and other challenges created by a diverse workforce driving our global marketplace. The survival of businesses and organizations depends, therefore, on developing that competitive advantage by creating an inclusive and diverse environment, in which professionals are constantly going through professional development that can help them to navigate and succeed in a globalized and diverse workforce.

The workforce today is composed of different age groups, races and ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientation. There are people in full command of their physical abilities working side by side with other employees with disabilities. On the top of that, participants in the workforce, due to their different backgrounds and education, are capable of leading, managing, thinking, and learning in diverse ways. Professionals are more likely than ever before to work with other people with different demographic or functional backgrounds. It is not easy, but with good preparation, a comprehensive understanding of diversity, and the embracing of equity and fostering of inclusion, individuals can not only booster performance, but also promote creativity and innovation.

This globalization of the workforce, and the demands associated with that, has been heavily impacted by the COVID19 pandemic, since the end of 2019. The need to reinvent or adapt solutions that have been in place for years has challenged the creativity and innovation of people around the world. The acceleration of business trends that were previously embryonic or in earlier stages became part of our reality. For instance, the *Great Resignation* currently going on in America can be partially connected to the pandemic and fed by incredible advances of technology in the 21st century that led to more people opting for working remotely.

This book intends to foster deeper discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and, therefore, on the global workforce., while proposing some innovative approaches and sharing successful experiences to face the challenges of the pandemic times we are going through.

The intention of the authors is to provide an update of former publications on the topic of DEI, such as Diversity and Inclusion in the Global Workplace (Aquino and Robertson, 2018) and Diversity and Inclusion in Latin American and Caribbean Workplaces (Aquino and Rojas, 2020), by adding a new perspective that encompasses COVID-19 pandemic issues that impact DEI. The chapters reflect experiences and research in different countries and continents, bringing a flavor of multiculturalism to the manuscript. By using this approach and by bringing those topics into a book, the authors intend not

only to expand the discussion of Diversity and Inclusion, but also help individual, organizations, and businesses to have the information and tools to remain successful in post-pandemic times.

This is a four-part book, where Section 1 addresses some of the "DEI Organizational Impacts and the Challenges Faced by the Post-Pandemic Workforce"; Section 2 encompasses topics related to "DEI and Leadership in Post-Pandemic Times"; Section 3 lunges into the "Societal and Individual Impact on the Future of the Workforce"; and, finally, Section 4 provides readers with broader perspectives of "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Post-Pandemic Times." The uniqueness of this effort resides in making available a comprehensive, still fine-tuned description and discussion of experiences and challenges that emerge from the nuances of diversity and inclusion in post-pandemic times.

As stated above, Section 1 presents a rich perspective of organizational impacts and the challenges faced by the post-pandemic workforce related to DEI and includes Chapters 1 through 4.

Chapter 1, "DEI Challenges and Need for Conflict Management in a Post-Pandemic World," discusses the challenges faced by the workforce in addressing diversity and inclusion issues and the skills gap in the global marketplace. It explores and highlights the importance of a structured method of addressing conflict via an effective negotiation using a seven-step theoretical model, while dealing with diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

In Chapter 2, "A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Perspective on Organizational Socialization in the New Age of Remote Work," a DEI perspective is applied to further understanding of the unique challenges organizations and leaders face in socializing remote workers, encouraging organizations to proactively foster newcomer development of essential cognitive, regulative, and normative knowledge; self-efficacy; and a sense of social inclusion. Evidence-based recommendations are provided to provide a path forward for organizations to socialize organizational newcomers in the new age of remote work in a way that upholds DE&I goals and values.

Chapter 3, "What We Know About Workplace Responses During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Human Resources Processes and Their Outcomes," embraces a HR perspective, analyzing workplace responses to the Covid-19 pandemic and discussing the adoption of human resources practices through a systematic literature review. Findings indicating the main responses to the pandemic are presented and assessed, providing the reader with key information that can be critically applied to their own business and organizations. The chapter also discusses human resources practices that have been frequently mentioned in these post-pandemic times, such as flexible working; work design; remote working; work life balance; and training and development practices.

In Chapter 4, "Remote Work: An Ally or Enemy for the Work-life Balance? Remote Work Experiences of Male and Female Academics in the UK and Turkey During COVID-19," a thorough discussion of remote work associated with gender in an Asian and a European countries is presented. The chapter presents findings from the application of enrichment theory to assess whether remote work offers work- and life-enrichment to some extent to individuals, and if individuals' diverse living circumstances matter in discussing work-life balance and the level of enrichment in work and life domains.

Section 2 consists of Chapters 5 through 8 and has its focus on DEI and leadership in post-pandemic times.

Chapter 5, "A New Normal Multigenerational Leadership Model for Leaders in the COVID Era," is devoted to encouraging the addition of multigenerational leadership to established leadership approaches that will require commitment to intentional learning about representatives of each generation, multigenerational challenges, change management styles, multiple intelligences, and effective soft skills. According to the author of this chapter, a new Multigenerational Leadership Model would emerge as an

initial guide during the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to a more effective leadership approach for a post pandemic era.

Chapter 6, "Applying Lessons Learned From COVID-19: Leading Into the New Era of D&I," focuses on how leaders have to deal with increased need for attention to the workplace Diversity & Inclusion (D&I). It discusses in detail the importance of understanding opportunities to expand how we think about and define diversity, the need for belonging/inclusion, how changing workplace demographics are becoming more influential, and the critical role organizational leadership plays in the D&I journey as we move through the COVID-19 Pandemic era. The chapter also presents practical strategies to help leaders reflect, assess, and set stage to move forward. Resources include a combination expertise of the authors, research data, popular press, and scholarly articles.

Chapter 7, "The Post-Pandemic Horizon of Hispanic SMEs: An Entrepreneurial Leadership Challenge," presents a discussion on the damage to Hispanic small businesses caused by the pandemic, and how that has triggered a sense of immediacy that poses a substantial threat to long-term operational viability. Many Hispanic small businesses have temporarily closed or remained in survival mode as they struggle to find relief from loans and subsidies, mainly from banks and government sources. Others are without guidance, training, or professional help as they navigate haphazardly through the inequalities of a post-pandemic era. Research shared in the chapter shows that re-education of entrepreneurial leadership concepts proved valuable as a continuing education topic for many businesses. Providing entrepreneurial leadership initiatives and networking are seen as effective remedies to salvage the viability of Hispanic businesses as we traverse a post-pandemic era.

Chapter 8, "Constructing Post-COVID-19, Resilient, Inclusive, Diverse, Community-Centered Workplaces," highlights how the COVID-19 pandemic has increased fear and uncertainty, creating an intense focus on safety, and skewing the relationships between the government, organizations, and individuals. But the pandemic also has created trends and actions that add an equity lens guiding organizations, governments, and businesses. This equity lens promises a better future with more significant workplace equity. This chapter identifies four crucial areas where this is happening: 1. Community and Civic Engagement, 2. Trust and Transparency, 3. Increasing Diversity in the Communications Workforce, and 4. Mental Health Support. The challenge embraced here is how to identify and apply emerging new approaches and processes to become part of our organizational lives and our new normal and, in turn, make positive responses to the COVID-19 pandemic permanent ones, increasing diversity, inclusion, equity, engagement, and health.

Section 3 presents a rich perspective of organizational impacts and the challenges faced by the post-pandemic workforce related to DEI and includes Chapters 9 through 12.

Chapter 9, "The COVID-Era Impact on Work-Life Balance," describes a proven framework that can be used by leaders in the Post-Pandemic Era to lead organizations through a work-life balance (WLB) centered holistic leadership approach. This approach begins by explaining why it is imperative to lead by considering the totality of each person from a diverse and inclusive viewpoint (Ziebarth, 2016). The totality of each person includes one's self-care management practices and all roles one participates in life. The apex of this mission is to provide leaders with a research-based, practitioner model to create an inclusive culture of organizational health and wellness. The Self-Care Flourished Living (SCFL) model coupled with a holistic leadership approach that diversifies to meet individual employee needs will showcase this chapter. The result of leading employees through SCFL and a holistic approach will promote living a life of balance through effective self-care.

Chapter 10, "Unconscious Bias in the COVID-19 Era," discusses twelve forms of unconscious bias, its manifestation in the workplace, and the impact of COVID-19 on them. Bias incorporates implicit stereotypes and prejudices, impacts judgments, is displayed in nonverbal behaviors, and may result in a dissociation between what a person believes is right and unconscious beliefs that cause negative actions. Understanding and recognizing the negative impact of unconscious, or implicit, bias during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021 and the Post-Pandemic Era is an important leadership tool. A clear awareness of these forms of bias, learning to recognize the biases, and understanding how to reduce the negative impact of unconscious bias are important to leaders in workplaces upended by the effects if the pandemic.

Chapter 11, "Worker Response to the Rapid Changes Caused by Disruptive Innovation: Managing a Remote Workforce Without any Training or Preparation," highlights how the rapid global spread of the Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) commencing February 2020 ushered in remote working as a means to stem the virus's spread and continue production. However, not all jobs can be remotely performed, as evidenced in Latin America and the Caribbean, where only 20% of available jobs can be executed remotely. This chapter discusses the challenges faced by many managers across Latin America and the Caribbean that have no experience with managing remote workforces, and the issues that exacerbate the challenges these inexperienced and unprepared managers faced. The lack of broadband internet and training on using information and communication technologies hinders Diversity and Inclusion, as many managers and the workforce at large from the Latin America and the Caribbean region could not make contributions to global and national production, which negatively affected the quality of their lives.

Chapter 12, "Making a Decision to Take or Not to Take the COVID-19 Vaccine: A Study on Critical Thinking and Information Literacy," presents the results of an interesting survey research realized in Brazil and in the US to understand how information literacy and critical thinking skills might play a role in individuals' decision-making process toward taking or not taking the Covid-19 vaccine. The 106 participants, from the two countries, ranged from a spectrum of diversity in ethnicity, social and educational backgrounds, careers, and ages. The chapter presents the structure of the survey which led to informed decisions prior to choosing to inoculate or to forego the Covid-19 vaccine. The primary reasons for taking or not taking the vaccine are also presented and discussed in the chapter.

Section 4 includes Chapters 13 through 16, in which various topics related to a broader sense of the different industries and dimensions of diversity, equity, and inclusion are covered under the perspective of the post-pandemic era.

Chapter 13, "The Future of Sport Education in the Post Pandemic Era," focuses specifically on the sports industry, and the future of diversity, equity, and inclusion after the COVID-19 pandemic. It discusses the changes that athletes may experience and how sports may change as a result of the pandemic. The discussion covers topics such as mental health and wellbeing of minority athletes. Other issues explored include the increasing popularity of women's sports and the increasing activism among athletes. Further, the chapter addresses the loss of recreational facilities and services, and closure of many collegiate sports programs. A special focus of the chapter is on the conditions for black athletes.

Chapter 14, "Impact of Artificial Intelligence as Part of an Organization's Diversity," discusses the aftermath of the global pandemic in 2020, and how it brought many public and private organizations' leaders to the whiteboard to produce solutions to protect millions of employees, customers, and students from the life threatening COVID-19 virus. The outcomes of this initiative seemed not to be the expected ones since leaders appeared to have overlooked the impact of artificial Intelligence as part of an organization's diversity. This chapter provides a comprehensive review about artificial intelligence and diversity

in context of cultural identity, economic power, social demographics, and ethnographic communication currently not included in organizations' diversity and inclusion programs.

Chapter 15, "Virtual Human Services Delivery: Lessons for Equity, Leadership, and the Future," focuses on how COVID-19 impacted how families live, learn, work, and connect, especially for those living at the margins, coping with poverty and other stressors. The rapid shut down across the country disrupted human services and in-person operations for public benefit programs. State and federal leaders had to pivot to virtual human service delivery (VHSD) to meet the rapidly increasing need for food, housing, health, and economic supports. This shift revealed existing gaps in systems yet drove opportunities to address eligibility and access challenges quickly. Virtual human services worked well for many individuals and families, but not all. The chapter highlights the importance of an equity lens in determining who does and does not benefit from VHSD. Insights and lessons learned from virtual operations for policy and practice are discussed as emerging technologies continue to impact workforce and client experience into the future.

Chapter 16, "Women and Work During the COVID-19 Global Pandemic: Challenges, Intersectionality, and Opportunities," covers the topic of gender equality and how much the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted women's lives, discussing in detail how the pandemic has exacerbated barriers and challenges; how it affected women's labor force participation and work and home lives, and the economic and social consequences. Before the pandemic, many women already juggled two full-time jobs, that of employee and that of primary homemaker and caregiver; the pandemic exacerbated these challenges. Unprecedented numbers left paid employment altogether, some by choice, some by necessity, and others by jobs that disappeared. Disruptions may have lasting consequences for gender equality in the workplace. The pandemic increased existing barriers in the workplace, augmented by the intersection of gender and race/ethnicity that contributes to challenges women of color and immigrant and migrant women face. The chapter also covers new challenges and opportunities and current and emerging research and policies and concludes with consideration of implications for support and policy and recommendations for further research.

The overall goal of this book is, therefore, to provide readers with the possibility of expanding discussions and assessing real-world experiences and research shared by the chapters' authors to successfully navigate in the diversity, equity, and inclusion world of this post-pandemic era better and successfully. Enjoy the reading.

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Section 1

DEI Organizational Impacts and the Challenges Faced by the Post-Pandemic Workforce

Chapter 1

Leadership in a Post–Pandemic World:
D&I Challenges and the Need for Conflict Management

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ABSTRACT

The skills gap has increasingly been identified as a growing concern that may negatively impact the economic growth of nations across the globe. Indeed, the future of work is changing, and there is a growing need for employees and employers to recognize the fact that the skills of today will not be sufficient to operate in the technology-driven economy of the future. This chapter discusses the challenges faced by the workforce in addressing diversity and inclusion issues and the skills gap in the global marketplace. It explores and highlights the importance of a structured method of addressing conflict via an effective negotiation using a seven-step theoretical model, while dealing with diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

INTRODUCTION

The skills gap has increasingly been identified as a growing concern that may negatively impact the economic growth of nations across the globe. Indeed, the future of work is changing and there is a growing need for employees and employers to recognize the fact that the skills of today will not be sufficient to operate in the post-pandemic environment and the technology driven economy of the future. Many scholars suggest that the post-pandemic reality will require enhanced leadership skills to achieve necessary and stated goals and to build the necessary skills for the needed workforce. A key leadership skill relates to managing conflict in increasingly diverse organizations.

It is evident that countries, organizations, and individuals are subject to significant factors of change. These change factors are fundamentally altering many of the traditional societal relations and work practices that have been pervasive. Generally, change is something that requires a structured positive approach. In terms of changes to the processes and practices within the workplace, there will be an increasing demand for a structured approach to identify the needs associated with the firm and by employees. The growing diversity of the workforce, in all its dimensions – race and ethnicity, generational, religion and spirituality, thinking, etc. – demands extra actions and leadership skills, to increase inclusion and belonging, while selecting and developing the best talent in a path to success.

Individuals and organizations have experienced considerable challenges and change during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the pandemic has added to the dimensions of change and generated more research on the importance of diversity of the workforce. For example, the World Economic Forum (2021a) suggests that the pandemic and its disproportionate economic impact on women and ethnic minorities has once again pushed inclusion, equity and diversity to the forefront of the corporate agenda. One important element of workforce diversity and the changes it is going through relates to the concept of "conflict", which will require close attention from leaders. In a post-pandemic world, the need for managing conflict will become even more important as firms seek to develop their comparative advantage.

Fundamentally, conflict relates to people, diversity, inclusion, belonging and social justice (Fisher, R. et al., 2011). The increasing complexity of inter-personal and inter-organizational relationships have been enhanced by the globalized, diverse, and technologically driven economy. The need for inclusion, equity, belonging, and social justice is a must for successful government and business initiatives. In that regard, a broad understanding of conflict can be a key skill for leaders, and a consequent benefit for solving the skills gap issues in all societies, but particularly in emerging economies. Also, understanding conflict can assist leaders in addressing and managing it, which can contribute to both our success as individuals as well as to the success of organizations.

This chapter discusses the challenges faced by the workforce in addressing diversity and inclusion issues and the skills gap in the global marketplace, with a clear focus on Conflict Management and Negotiation. It will explore and highlight the importance of a structured method to address conflict via effective negotiation using a seven-step theoretical model, while dealing with diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

CHANGE IN A GLOBAL WORKPLACE

Change is a constant in the world of today. Organizations operate in a challenging and turbulent environment of change. At a macro level, many scholars (Schwartz et al., 2017) suggest that the challenges of change are driven by three key factors: globalization, demography, and technology.

Globalization

Globalization is apparent through the highly integrated commercial systems that drive the global economy. Globalization has been a key driver as firms are now subject to competition from across the globe. The evidence of the importance of the integrated global economy is illustrated in the blockage of the Suez Canal by the container ship Ever Given which ran aground on March 24, 2021. (Topham, 2021) The Ever Given is one of the largest container ships in the world carrying approximately 18,000 containers of cargo.

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"About 12% of global trade passes through the Suez Canal, carrying well over $1tn worth of goods a year. About 50 ships a day, carrying a total of $3bn to $9bn worth of cargo, will make the journey north or south between Suez port and Port Said" (Topham, 2021).

This one incident had a considerable impact on the global supply chain. The six-day blockage impacted more than 350 vessels and included an estimated $ 9 billion dollars per day or more than $ 63 billion in disruption (TechFruit, 2021). The incident reflects the importance and fragility of the importance of globalization as a factor driving change and the global supply chain.

Additionally, it is important to note that globalization does not only have economic impacts, but a much broader impact, as illustrated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic has been systemic, involving different spheres of the society, such as social, economic, political, technological, and legal. The economic impact on world GDP growth is massive. The COVID-19 driven global recession is the deepest since the end of World War II. The global economy contracted by 3.5 percent in 2020 according to the April 2021 World Economic Outlook Report (IMF, 2021) published by the IMF, a 7 percent loss relative to the 3.4 percent growth forecast back in October 2019. While virtually every country covered by the IMF posted negative growth in 2020 (IMF, 2020), the downturn was more pronounced in the poorest parts of the world" (Noy et al. 2020).

Demographics

Demographics is an important global factor driving change. There is an increasingly diverse workforce globally. There are significant demographic factors that are evident requiring firms to be aware of the diversity in their competitive environment. Many countries are dealing with migrations and an aging workforce and, particularly, industrialized countries are seeing significant changes as the baby boomer generation retires from the workforce. The multitude of languages and cultures in some globalized companies and marketplaces make the ability to remain effective and efficient depend on different points of view and the consequent need of conflict management.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also accelerated the rate at which baby boomers are retiring in the US and other developed countries. Fry (2020) states that "millions of Baby Boomers retire each year from the U.S. labor force. But in the past year the number of retired Boomers increased more than in prior years."

These retirements have immediate impact on organizations looking to implement succession plans as well as remaining effective and competitive. The demographic changes related to retirements have an impact on the skill sets available within organizations. As skilled baby boomers retire there is a need to replace the prerequisite skill sets. Individuals must recognize the fact that employers are consistently concerned about the skill sets of existing and prospective employees. That add another component to the conflict pool already in place: the clash of generations, due to different needs and expectations of individual that belong to different generations.

Technology

Finally, technology is evolving at an increasingly faster pace and many countries and firms are using innovation as means to develop and maintain comparative advantage within their particular sector. Digital skills have been consistently identified as a significant factor driving change. Indeed, the era

of technology change has been called "the fourth industrial revolution" due the pervasive nature of the changes that have and continue to occur.

The World Economic Forum (2021b) notes that the "Fourth Industrial Revolution represents a fundamental change in the way we live, work and relate to one another. It is a new chapter in human development, enabled by extraordinary technology advances commensurate with those of the first, second and third industrial revolutions".

In terms of digital skills, currently scholarship shows that the pandemic will accelerate the digitization of the economy globally. Robertson (2021) notes that the post pandemic workforce will need to increasingly have solid digital skills that include the capacity to operate in a touch free system that expands the concept of remote work. In the article, the author states that organizations are using digitization to improve their delivery of services and products. And many companies adapt technology to meet the "new demands" of the pandemic and this trend will continue post COVID.

Technology also provides another opportunity related to Diversity & Inclusion. It has boosted the access to the marketplace and to the global workforce to people with disabilities, whom otherwise would have limited opportunities. With the increase of remote jobs and of digital accessibility, more people, that before could not be part of the workforce due to physical limitations, are now being sought after by different employers due to their credentials and skill sets.

The big picture

Overall, it is important to reflect on the fact that these factors of change—globalization, demographic and technological—serve as stressors on individuals and organizations looking to adapt. Leaders must be prepared to adapt to the changing realities generated by these macro-level change agents.

Skills that will be in high demand post-COVID19 include soft skills; emotional intelligence; critical thinking; and technical skills (Cukier et al., 2021). Robertson (2021) highlights a recent report from the European Union that suggests that almost nine million individuals need "upskilling" to meet the new digital demands of the workplace. Of course as organizational skills evolve to meet changing demands leaders must adapt. For example, an increase in employees working remotely will challenge leaders to be able to manage these remote employees. In addition, a recent survey by the Manufacturing Institute (2021) identifies that an "inclusive workplaces lead to increased hiring, retention rates more engaged employees and an improved bottom line."

As these macro-level change factors have developed there has been more recognition of an emerging skills gap impacting countries globally. Fundamentally, businesses are identifying that the employees that they require to remain competitive are simply not available.

Increasingly, it is also clear that society can be described as a "global village." The global population is approaching eight billion people and there is, by necessity, more interaction that occurs between individuals and organizations economically and socially. At times, this added level of interaction can include more complexity as cross-cultural tensions may increase. Wilmot and Hocker (2011, p.2) suggest that "conflict is a fact of human life. It occurs naturally in all kinds of settings. Nations still struggle, families fracture in destructive conflicts, marriages face challenges and often fail, and the workplace is plagued with stress."

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COVID-19 AND THE GLOBAL SKILLS GAP

It is important to note that the skills gap has been identified for some time and it has evolved to meet the changing societal, economic, and human factors previously identified. Indeed, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2012) developed a series of recommendations for countries to consider as they developed strategies to address the skills gap, including (p.1):

- Improve the quality of learning outcomes by putting the premium on skills-oriented learning instead of qualifications focused education upfront.
- Involve employers and trade unions more closely in designing and delivering education and training programs.
- Encourage adults to invest in further learning, especially in small and medium-sized firms. A levy on firms to increase their contribution to staff training that targets specific sectors or regions should be considered.
- Facilitate the internal and cross-border mobility of skilled workers.
- Calibrate tax and benefit systems to make work pay.
- Help employers make more effective use of their employee's skills.
- Help local economies to move up the value-added chain, foster entrepreneurship and stimulate the creation of more high-skilled jobs.

At a national level, many countries have identified a skills gap, and some are taking steps to address this issue. For instance, a report by Deloitte and the Human Resource Professional Association of Canada (2017) stated that:

"… by 2030, automation could threaten more than 10 percent of Canadian jobs. Workers need to build new skill sets to be competitive and meet the needs of the changing labor market". Similarly, a report prepared by Deloitte and the Human Resource Professionals Association suggests that the percentage of jobs that may be threatened is in the 35 to 42 percent range and that these jobs cover a range of occupations.

In Europe, a recent report from McKinsey and Company (2020a) identifies an increasing need to address the skills gap. In fact, this research by McKinsey and Company (2020a) suggests that there is a need for 1.7 million employees with technical skills; 3.2 million with digital literacy skills; and 3.7 million with classical skills, for a total of 8.6 million. "

Today, the COVID-19 outbreak is not only intensifying the need for the digitization of a wide range of administrative services (such as unemployment benefits), but it is also making digital skills a prerequisite for employees to successfully work from home. In turn, companies need to be embracing digital accessibility in a comprehensive way to accommodate the needs of those with physical disabilities.

While the pandemic poses immense challenges, the current crisis is also an impetus for governments across the EU-28 to accelerate and deliver on their digital ambitions" (McKinsey and Company, 2020a). Indeed, McKinsey Global Institute identifies an opportunity for sectors that are lagging — "such as manufacturing, mining, healthcare, and education— to double their use of digital assets and increase the digitization of labor, the EU-28 could add €2.5 trillion to its GDP by 2025, boosting GDP growth

by 1 percent per year until then" (McKinsey and Company, 2020b). In the United Kingdom, a City and Guilds survey suggests that 87% of respondents struggle to identify and recruit the employees required by their organizations (City and Guilds, 2018). Additionally, the research by City and Guilds notes that "employers need to think more laterally about recruitment to close the skills gap, such as building relationships with local schools and colleges, so they can inspire young people to work for them in the future (City and Guilds, 2018). In the United States, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) suggests "that the US faces skills gap that is increasing to the extent that it threatens the long term and sustainable economic prosperity of the country" (Society for Human Resource Management, 2019).

The workforce simply does not have enough workers and skilled candidates to fill an ever-increasing number of high skilled jobs (Society for Human Resource Management, 2019). Indeed, the research done by SHRM notes that 75% of HR professionals have difficulty recruiting due to a shortage of critical skills in those candidates that are seeking employment. On the top of that, there is also the phenomenon known as the Great Resignation or the Big Quit (Allman, K., 2021; Sheather, J., & Slattery, D., 2021)

In another recent survey of US firms completed by McKinsey and Company findings suggest that "companies lack the talent they will need in the future: 44 percent of respondents say their organizations will face skill gaps within the next five years, and another 43 percent report existing skill gaps. In other words, 87 percent say they either are experiencing gaps now or expect them within a few years" (McKinsey and Company, 2020b). Robertson (2018) identifies the importance of local jurisdictions in the US to develop a skilled workforce as a method to attract economic development to their community.

In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) similar concerns related to a widening and systemic skills gap have been raised by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in a report titled Jobs for Growth (Alaimo et al., 2015). This report highlights the importance of "ensuring successful career paths by guaranteeing workers start out their working lives with skill sets that meet the requirements of their positions". Essentially, the IDB proposes a series of integrated public policies aimed at developing a more resilient and productive labor force across the region. Figure 1 illustrates the cyclical nature of the issue as identified by Alaimo et al (2015).

Figure 1. The Vicious Cycle in Career Paths in the Latin American and Caribbean Region
Source: (Alaimo et al., 2015)

Overall, Peacock (2020) argues that there will be "increased challenges with respect to diversity and inclusion initiatives post COVID-19. In particular, firms will look to enhance their efficiency and discretionary initiatives such as those related to D&I may be "coronavirus casualties.

Conflict in the Workforce

The increasing recognition of a global skills gap has been accelerating the creation of diverse organizations. Indeed, the expanding skills gap in the global workforce, and the changes in demographics happening around the world, will require leaders to build the post pandemic workforce using tools to embrace diversity, and manage conflict to create synergy.

As employees and as individuals, it is evident that conflicts and disputes are all around us every day. The term "conflict" is defined in a variety of ways including: "existing in any situation where facts, desires or fears pull or push participants against each other or in divergent directions" (Heitler, 2012). Heitler (2012) suggests a key to successfully resolving conflicts is the need for the parties to agree and support a framework or resolution process that specifically identifies methods by which all parties are provided with an opportunity to present their side of the conflict and essentially be heard. This process of negotiation is critical to successfully reaching a resolution to the conflict. In addition, Wilmot and Hocker (2011, p.11) state that conflict can be defined as "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals." On a practical level, Fisher et al. (2011), suggest that the method of negotiation is critically important. They suggest that conflict can become too personal, emotional and unstructured and, as a result, it is important to separate the people from the problem, focus on interests not positions; invent options for mutual gain; and insist on using objective criteria to more effectively resolve conflict (Fisher et al., 2011, p.16).

The Evolving Nature of Managing Conflict

In fact, there is a long history of study related to conflict management. For example, Batten (2018) notes that *The Art of War*, a highly influential and succinct treatise on military strategy, was written by Sun Tzu, in the sixth century B.C. Tzu's *The Art of War* "clearly identifies that war is the ultimate, and most often the worst, approach to conflict resolution. As a result, war should be avoided if at all possible" (Tse and Kesten, 1997). Further, General Tzu suggests there are, in fact, similarities that are evident between war and other conflict resolution approaches which are more peaceful in nature and, in fact, more effective. A key aspect to *The Art of War* is that "war or a battle should be avoided if possible as victory can possibly be achieved by other means" (Tse and Kesten, 1997). Indeed, "the essence of *The Art of War* is not to defeat the enemy but to maximize gain (by negotiation) for one's own self" (Batten, 2018). The *Art of War* could be viewed as one of the earliest attempts to bring science to the art of negotiating conflict.

Conflict resolution

Historically, conflict has increasingly been resolved using a formalized legal system which includes litigation. Unfortunately, the legal system is perceived as generating a winner and a loser. The legal system is viewed as taking too long and costing too much to resolve conflicts efficiently and effectively. Access to the legal system has been raised as a potential concern (United Nations, n.d.). In that regard,

an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approach has been advocated as a supplement to litigation. In many cases, ADR alternatives can assist in generating "win/ win" solutions to a conflict. The U.S. Department of Labor defines ADR as "any procedure agreed to by the parties of a dispute in which they use the services of a third party to assist them in reaching an agreement and avoiding litigation" (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.).

Fundamentally, there are advantages to ADR including: "i) flexibility and control—the parties generally have more input into the procedural rules and timing as compared to the public litigation process; ii) speed—on average US District Court cases took 12-16 months longer than arbitration; iii) costs—less time generally equals less cost; iv) evidence and discovery rules—often these elements are less formal and easier to address; v) privacy—in contrast to litigation there is a higher threshold of privacy and confidentiality; vi) arbitrator—the parties may select an arbitrator who often is a subject matter expert as opposed to a judge who may not understand the specific industry/ sector; viii) finality—appeal rights are limited" (Arbitration Resolution Services, 2018, p.16).

Although frequently viewed as negative, conflict has another important side that is important. For example, Wilmot and Hocker (2011, p.9) state "in the Chinese language the character for conflict is made up of two different symbols: one indicates danger whereas the other indicates opportunity." As a result there may be benefits within the process of conflict resolution. Specifically, the conflict resolution process could be important in generating solutions. The traditional and historical resolution processes including both war and litigation often generate "winner/ loser" outcomes. The newer conflict resolution models including formal negotiations are more capable of developing "win/ win" options that could be beneficial to both parties (win/win).

As discussed, conflict is a form of disagreement between two or more parties. Critically, conflict involves individuals—people. In the journey to understand the future of the workforce, and to bridge the existing skills gap, there is a need to use a structured approach that embraces differences and opinions (diversity) and leads to solutions that are inclusive by nature. Goleman (1995) states that a key to being successful in managing conflict is linked to a series of key skills related to managing inter-personal relationships including: Emotional self- awareness; Accurate self-assessment; Self-confidence; Self Control; Trustworthiness; Conscientiousness; Adaptability; Achievement orientation; Initiative; Empathy; Organizational awareness; Service orientation; Developing others; Leadership; Influence; Communication; Change- catalyst; Conflict Management; Building bonds; and, Teamwork and collaboration. Raiffa (1982) suggests that these emotional intelligence skills represent the "art" side of negotiation.

As discussed above, the fabric of the post pandemic workforce is heavily impact by diversity, and the need for inclusion leads to conflict management, due to the different cultures, languages, generations, etc. involved in the process of having a skillful and synergistic workforce. There are many approaches available to manage conflict in organizations. In reviewing the literature, the authors decided to embrace, for its appropriateness to diversity issues in the workforce, the approach proposed by Patton (2005).

To achieve interpersonal management and to guide individual and organizational approaches to managing conflict Patton (2005) has developed a Seven Element Model framework that can serve as a useful structured approach.

THE PATTON SEVEN ELEMENT MODEL

Patton (2005) has enumerated a seven-element framework that highlights the key steps to be considered in successful negotiation and conflict resolution:

Interests

In any conflict each party has basic motivations and needs. It is important for us to understand the interests with respect to the positions of our counterparts. At times, these interests may not be overtly evident, and we need to probe to establish these basic motivations. Interests may reflect cultural diversity requiring an understanding by both parties to a conflict. As an example of interests, a car salesman may be interested in selling the car; however, an underlying interest may include the need to clear the old model year cars off the lot to accommodate the new model year automobiles. Understanding this broader interest is important. In fact, understanding this fact may suggest that timing as a motivating factor can assist in our negotiation process.

Legitimacy

In negotiations we see that many decisions or outcomes are viewed under the lens of legitimacy or fundamental fairness. In the event we are faced with an offer we see as fundamentally unfair we may simply reject that offer and walk away. For a negotiation to be perceived as successful the process and the outcome must be viewed as fair and legitimate. For example, a new employee may be excited to negotiate a start to a new job. However, if they find out that other new hires with the same qualifications and job description are paid more this excitement may diminish markedly. Legitimacy speaks to the importance of sustainability with respect to an agreement.

Relationships

In any negotiation it is important to recognize that the relationship with your counterpart must be viewed as something that is not a "one off". We should recognize the importance of an ongoing relationship as an underlying dynamic of the conflict and the negotiation process. In the cases in which there is an existing ongoing relationship it is important to build trust and rapport with our counterpart. Using a more ethical approach can drive longer term relationships. For example, this element can be particularly important in cross cultural negotiations as building the relationship is deemed as important with many cultural groups. The Project on Negotiation (2019) suggests that the relationship component is a very important piece of the negotiation process as we are more apt to agree with someone with whom we have built some rapport.

Alternatives and BATNA

In any negotiation it is important to be pragmatic and consider alternatives to reach our objectives. In advocating this pragmatic approach, Patton (2005) suggests that having alternatives on the table may identify mutually acceptable options. In addition, Patton (2005) notes that we should undertake an analysis of our Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA). The concept of BATNA is developed in

Getting to Yes and it essentially means that we need a back-up plan in the event that we cannot achieve a negotiated resolution. For example, in the event we are negotiating with an employer with respect to a particular position it is of advantage to us to have a BATNA. In this case, a BATNA may include moving on to another employer or alternatively assessing other options to pursue graduate education. A BATNA may include simply walking away. Patton (2005) notes that it is important to know the BATNA of the other party as this can facilitate creating options. As you develop your understanding of the BATNA of the other party you are more prepared for the negotiations.

Options

In any negotiation, having a range of options should be considered as these may assist one or both parties in achieving their interests and motivations. Too often alternatives are constricted as parties focus on a limited agenda. Patton (2005) advocates a broader range of options that may highlight the similarities within both parties. A key objective here is to create a larger pie to be shared by both parties—adding value to the negotiation process.

Commitments

As an outcome of a negotiation there is often a commitment made by the parties which can be classified as an agreement or promise(s). A commitment could be simply an agreement to meet at a prescribed time to continue the negotiation. Alternatively, a commitment could occur at the end of the negotiation to codify the outcome of the process. For example, commitment could take the form of agreement with respect to the negotiation agenda; the physical place and time for the meeting(s) or ultimately at the successful conclusion of the negotiation.

Communication

Fundamentally, negotiation is a communication process between individuals. In that regard all of the elements proposed by Patton (2005) include communication. Communication can use a variety of different modes including an increasing use of technology. In that regard the process of communication using technology can have an added level of complexity. Communication is based on a sender and a receiver including the critical component of active listening. As negotiators we must recognize that communication is iterative, and it gradually builds a level of trust between the parties. A successful negotiation can rise or fall on the communication process. At times it is not what is said but how it is said. A key issue with respect to communication is to recognize the importance of cross-cultural diversity and ensure that our communication reflects the many different parties that we may encounter in a conflict situation (Faure & Sjostedt, 1993). Of course, Patton (2005) identifies all these seven elements as important. However, the cross-cultural aspect of communication is crucial (Project on Negotiation, 2019). This involves skills in understanding diversity and inclusion including inter-personal skills, communication skills and emotional intelligence. As we look to negotiate with someone from another culture patience is important. Too often my experience has included seeing colleagues from Europe and Asia looking to quickly negotiate a contract with little success. A more deliberate approach was often a better option even though this option is more time consuming.

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The Patton (2005) model outlines a framework for managing conflict and improving negotiation practices. The model highlights the importance of addressing diversity and improving organizational efforts to recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion. In reviewing the model it is evident that each element has a linkage to improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency by understanding the increasingly important role of diversity and inclusion and proactively managing conflict.

SUMMARY

There are several themes that may be drawn from this research. First, it is evident that we live in turbulent times and change notably driven by globalization, demographics and technology continue to impact firms globally. The COVID-19 pandemic has added another important dimension to the changes impacting individuals and society. Within these factors driving change it is apparent that there are emerging skills gaps that must be addressed for firms and countries to develop and retain comparative advantage. The uncertainty generated by change in many cases leads to increased conflict. Indeed, conflict is a fact of life facing us as individuals and as organizations. It is important that we understand conflict and the important role that negotiation plays in resolving conflict. Although some may try to avoid or simply ignore conflict it is omnipresent.

This chapter embraced the seven- step model advocated by Patton (2005) to address conflict management emerging as a top need in creating a post pandemic workforce. The model provides a useful systematic framework that can assist in the development of more effective negotiation skills and build "win/win" results. Patton (2005) suggests that a simple but robust framework or model can be of assistance to a negotiator in that it can help define our goals and identify and take advantage of opportunities as they arise. As Fisher et al. (2011 p. xxvii) note in *Getting to Yes* "…conflict is a growth industry;" and a principled negotiation framework based on these elements identified by Patton can yield better and more sustainable outcomes that recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion in organizational success.

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Chapter 2
A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Perspective on Organizational Socialization in the New Age of Remote Work

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ABSTRACT

Organizations have begun to embrace remote and hybrid work arrangements while simultaneously prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) in a post-COVID-19 work era, bringing forth new challenges in socializing organizational newcomers. In this chapter, a DE&I perspective is applied to further understanding of the unique challenges organizations and leaders face in socializing remote workers, encouraging organizations to proactively foster newcomer development of essential cognitive, regulative, and normative knowledge; self-efficacy; and a sense of social inclusion. Evidence-based recommendations are provided to provide a path forward for organizations to socialize organizational newcomers in the new age of remote work in a way that upholds DE&I goals and values.

INTRODUCTION

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations had to be agile in transitioning employees from

in-person to remote work. Within the first few months of COVID-19, over one third of U.S. employees were working from home in at least some capacity (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). Increasing reliance on remote work is predicted to remain a prevalent business strategy as the pandemic subsides, with 74% of CFO's reporting plans to make remote work permanent for some employees (Lavelle, 2020) and prominent organizations, such as Google, Target, and CITI Group, planning to make hybrid options accessible to the majority of employees (Diaz, 2021; McGregor, 2021). In tandem with this shift towards remote work, commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) has become increasingly essential as COVID-19 tensions and new ways of working have put DE&I concerns center stage, presenting unfamiliar challenges and opportunities (Deloitte, 2020). The accelerated organizational adoption of new remote work norms and increasing investment in DE&I efforts have necessitated the adaptation of a variety of organizational processes and practices. One such process that has been relatively overlooked, thus far, is the remote socialization of organizational newcomers.

Successful organizational socialization or onboarding involves transitioning newcomers from outsider to insider status and is related to knowledge acquisition, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, person-job fit, intentions to stay, and performance (Bauer et al., 2007; Ellis et al., 2014; Saks et al., 2007; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Remote onboarding brings with it new opportunities and challenges for promoting successful integration of newcomers into their role, team, and the broader organization. The new age of remote work opens doors for the improvement of many aspects of work life — the effective management of diverse work and family responsibilities, incorporation of diverse perspectives from varying locations and backgrounds, and participation of people who face physical barriers in the in-person workplace, to name a few. However, it also introduces novel challenges to socializing organizational newcomers, such as difficulties in ensuring that essential knowledge about the role and organization is being acquired and that social connections within the organization are being fostered (Gruman & Saks, 2018). Some challenges with fostering DE&I in the socialization process include the potential isolation of minority status and underrepresented newcomers, stereotype threat limiting information seeking and self-efficacy, and limited access to role models and mentors (Hart, 2018; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Considering the challenges associated with transitions to remote work and the promotion of DE&I early in the socialization process, it becomes essential for organizations to take a proactive approach to facilitate a smooth and inclusive onboarding process in a world of hybrid and fully remote work.

In this chapter, a DE&I perspective is applied to better understand the dynamics associated with socializing remote workers, encouraging organizations to proactively implement remote socialization practices that are supportive of a diverse and inclusive workforce. This chapter provides a contrasting perspective to reactive approaches in which organizational DE&I concerns are addressed only as they become apparent. Addressed first are the unique challenges organizations and leaders face in in creating a remote socialization experience that fosters DE&I, focusing the discussion on newcomer development of a) cognitive, regulative, and normative knowledge; b) self-efficacy; and c) social integration components of successful socialization. Following, is a series of evidence-based socialization strategies designed to help organizations and leaders start on the right path when it comes to DE&I in the new age of remote work.

CHALLENGES TO SUPPORTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF REMOTE WORKERS

Successful socialization is dependent on newcomers developing cognitive, regulative, and normative knowledge; becoming socially integrated; and building self-efficacy (Bauer et al., 2007; Feldman, 1997). Existing barriers in socializing newcomers of varying backgrounds and characteristics (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, socioeconomic status, disability status, national origin, and location) have the potential to be intensified in a remote setting, where additional barriers to successful socialization are introduced.

Developing Cognitive, Regulative, and Normative Knowledge

Upon organizational entry, there are three key types of knowledge newcomers need to acquire to be successful: cognitive, regulative, and normative (Scott, 2013). Cognitive knowledge is task-related information that facilitates role clarity (Bauer et al., 2007). Regulative knowledge, encompassing organizational rules and policies, helps establish clear behavioral expectations (Ahuja & Galvin, 2003). Finally, normative knowledge, including group values and expectations, promotes a sense of belonging and organizational commitment (Saks et al., 2007). Collectively, acquiring this knowledge has important benefits for newcomers and organizations, such as quicker adjustment, higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and improvements in job performance (D. G. Allen, 2006; Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007).

Newcomers acquire cognitive, regulative, and normative knowledge both passively and proactively (T. D. Allen et al., 2017; Bauer et al., 2007). Passive strategies include observing the behavior of organizational insiders and daily informal interactions (T. D. Allen et al., 2017), whereas proactive approaches involve newcomers directly seeking information from insiders (Bauer et al., 2007). Passive learning allows newcomers to acquire subtle knowledge that is unspoken and not easily expressed in words, while proactive learning is used intentionally to gain specific knowledge. Newcomers who engage in information seeking successfully acquire more information than those who do not (Saks et al., 2011), leading to improvements in a wide range of socialization outcomes, such as quicker adjustment, increased role clarity, higher self-efficacy, and social acceptance (Bauer et al., 2007). In a remote context, opportunities for passive learning are limited, necessitating newcomer reliance on proactive strategies to gain relevant knowledge. Although seeking information proactively has benefits for newcomers, there are barriers to information seeking in remote contexts, particularly for newcomers who are underrepresented or from minority status groups.

In a remote context, newcomers may have limited access to organizational insiders, who are important sources of knowledge (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Further, insiders provide newcomers with cues of acceptance, encouraging newcomers to engage in more information seeking (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). When communicating virtually, newcomers are likely to miss these cues or receive fewer of them, as cues are often nonverbal and informal (Cooper et al., 2021). Without cues of acceptance, newcomers avoid asking questions due to concerns that they will be perceived to be nuisances to their coworkers (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). This can reduce newcomer information seeking, hindering the ability of newcomers to learn the cognitive, regulative, and normative knowledge required to succeed.

Remote newcomers who do engage in information seeking have been found to sufficiently seek and share cognitive and regulative knowledge but are less likely to acquire normative knowledge (Ahuja &

Galvin, 2003). Cognitive and regulative knowledge are easily communicated with direct and technical language verbally and through written materials, making the information more easily distributed and accessed via virtual communication (Ahuja & Galvin, 2003; Gruman & Saks, 2018). Moreover, the simplicity and clarity in which cognitive and regulative knowledge can be conveyed makes it more accessible to a global workforce and neurodivergent employees. For example, written organizational policies and practices and clearly outlined expectations and guidelines for behavior can be easily distributed to new employees.

In contrast, normative knowledge is more subtly communicated, and the importance of normative information is often not salient to those sharing the knowledge (Ahuja & Galvin, 2003; Schneider et al., 2013). Additionally, normative information is difficult to express verbally and in writing, typically being acquired through observation of formal and informal group dynamics, making it challenging to convey and observe via virtual interactions (Ahuja & Galvin, 2003; Schneider et al., 2013). In a global organization with employees from varying cultural backgrounds, employees do not have a shared base knowledge of societal norms and values, resulting in newcomers needing to acquire normative knowledge for the organization as well as the broader cultures in which the organization and fellow employees operate. For instance, norms around office humor, though implicitly understood by insiders, are challenging to articulate through formal written and verbal communication, making the information difficult to learn in a remote setting. Because of the nature of normative knowledge, newcomers may miss out on pertinent information that neither organizational insiders nor newcomers realize needs to be communicated.

Along with the barriers presented by remote contexts, evidence suggests that minority status group members face additional barriers to gaining access to knowledge. Minority status employees may experience stereotype threat – fear of confirming negative stereotypes about an identity group they belong to and an associated pressure to demonstrate competence (Kalokerinos et al., 2014; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2011). To avoid confirming negative stereotypes, minority status employees may choose to avoid question asking and help seeking that would otherwise be common for newcomers. Further, the informal networks that serve as important sources of knowledge are often less accessible for underrepresented groups who are commonly excluded from these networks (Allen, 1996).

In addition, finding role models and mentors in a remote setting may be challenging for minority status and underrepresented employees, as there are fewer organizational insiders with whom they share similarities, and newcomers, particularly in remote settings, have limited access to workplace social networks (Cortland & Kinias, 2019; Haynes & Petrosko, 2009). Role models are organizational members who newcomers can observe passively, learning from watching the role model successfully navigate the workplace (Saks & Gruman, 2011). Mentors are individuals with whom the newcomer engages in an active relationship and are considered a key factor in successful socialization, as they have access to key information, facilitate social integration, and foster newcomer development of self-efficacy (T. D. Allen et al., 2017; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). When newcomers have role models and mentors from a shared identity group, they experience greater adjustment, information seeking, and sense of belonging, as these role models and mentors are better able to help newcomers navigate the work environment in a way that is tailored to their unique needs and experiences (B. J. Allen, 1996; Zheng et al., 2021).

Mentoring relationships are commonly initiated between mentors and protégés with shared surface-level similarities (Underhill, 2006). In virtual communication (e.g., email, instant messaging; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014), surface level differences such as age, race, and gender are less salient, making it harder for newcomers to identify possible mentors and role models outside of their immediate work circle (Burleson et al., 2018). However, when surface-level differences are less salient, newcomers may feel

more comfortable seeking feedback, initiating relationships, and asking questions from all organizational insiders irrespective of surface-level similarities (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2011). It is important to note that, although surface-level similarities foster the formation of relationships, deep-level similarities (e.g., personality, values, beliefs) lead to higher-quality mentoring relationships (Eby et al., 2013; Underhill, 2006). In virtual work environments, where engagement with current employees is limited, it can be difficult for newcomers to find opportunities to determine whether organizational insiders share deep-level similarities with them, potentially leading newcomers to rely on surface-level similarities in identifying and selecting potential mentors.

Becoming socially integrated

Social integration – the development of belonginess, social ties, and trust – and person-organization fit are key factors in newcomer adjustment, satisfaction, and intent to remain (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013; Mitchell et al., 2001; Morrison, 2002; Wang et al., 2011). Relationships formed early in the socialization process are particularly important for fostering commitment and the development of strong ties to the organization (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). Newcomer development of a workplace social network is key to facilitating knowledge acquisition, task mastery, and role clarity and promoting social integration and commitment (Morrison, 2002). Organizations encounter challenges in fostering social integration in remote onboarding, as extensive reliance on individual online orientation processes can limit formal and informal opportunities to connect with and learn from fellow newcomers, tenured coworkers, leaders, and other organizational insiders (Ahuja & Galvin, 2003; Gruman & Saks, 2018; Wesson & Gogus, 2005). Proportion of time spent working remotely, relative to in-person, is related to feelings of social isolation and reduced quality of relationships with coworkers and supervisors (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Morganson et al., 2010).

Further, the lack of cues in virtual communication (e.g., pitch, tone, body language, speech cadence) may lead to unintentional harm to others due to misinterpretations and miscommunication (Giumetti et al., 2013). This could lead some newcomers to feel like they are being mistreated, jeopardizing their development of a sense of fit with and belongingness in the organization. As underrepresented and minority status employees often experience a disproportionate amount of uncivil treatment in the workplace (i.e., subtle racism, sexism, and microaggressions; e.g., Cortina et al., 2013), they may be at particular risk of feeling excluded or unwelcome due to a lack of social cues in the remote socialization process. However, the normalization of asynchronous virtual communication (e.g., email, texts, and chats) in remote socialization processes may provide newcomers with opportunities to compose statements, inquiries, and responses to send to organizational groups, leaders, current employees, and fellow newcomers without the day-to-day stereotype threat and uncivil interruptions that they may be more likely to encounter during an in-person socialization experience (Burleson et al., 2018).

Social integration is especially important for underrepresented and minority status group members who already face well-documented barriers to their inclusion and belongingness. Examples of barriers include stereotypes, biased informational materials, unwelcoming work climates, a lack of role models and mentors, differential treatment, and a lack of supervisor support (e.g., Dasgupta & Stout, 2014; Hart, 2018; Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). For example, women may be particularly susceptible to subtle incivility in the socialization process as they already report feelings of exclusion and a perceived "chilly climate" in male-dominated occupations, in which implicit and explicit messages indicate that they are not a good fit for the demands of the role due to their gender (Hughes, 2014). For people with disabili-

ties, coworkers and supervisors have been identified as being more important in promoting successful integration than organizational practices and employee proactive behaviors (Kulkarni & Legnick-Hall, 2011). Therefore, difficulties related to forming connections with supervisors and coworkers in a remote socialization process may be particularly harmful for the development of minority status group members' belongingness, social ties, and trust.

Building self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is essential to successful socialization and particularly to the success and retention of people representing a variety of backgrounds and characteristics (Bauer et al., 2007; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Dennehy & Dasgupta, 2017). Newcomers' self-efficacy is their belief that they have the cognitive resources and skills to successfully complete tasks and achieve desired outcomes in their new role (Bauer et al., 2007; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014). Of the three socialization components, self-efficacy is fundamental, as it facilitates the development of both knowledge acquisition and social integration (Saks et al., 2007). In addition, self-efficacy is associated with quicker task-mastery, job satisfaction, and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Saks et al., 2007).

Employees gain self-efficacy by successfully completing small tasks, having their input considered in decision making, and practicing tasks in fail-safe atmospheres (D. G. Allen, 2006; Bauer et al., 2007). These opportunities provide newcomers with feedback on their progress and cues that their contributions are valued by the organization. In a remote context, opportunities to acquire self-efficacy in one's new role may be limited, as hands-on experiences and feedback are often asynchronous and infrequent in remote environments (Chen et al., 2021). As such, newcomers are likely to require more time before they are confident in their roles.

In addition to practice and feedback, support from supervisors and peers is instrumental in promoting newcomer development of self-efficacy (Bauer et al., 2019; Dasgupta et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2020). Supervisors who build strong relationships with newcomers create safe environments for newcomers to ask questions and make mistakes (Bauer et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2020). Talking with peers is an effective way for newcomers to share ideas and get informal feedback on their progress (Bauer et al., 2007). Further, coworkers provide encouragement and advice that help newcomers feel welcome, aiding in development of their self-efficacy (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Coworkers may not support all newcomers equally, however. Newcomers who are socially distinct or do not share surface-level characteristics with insiders may be viewed as less competent and receive less support than their peers (Andersen & Moynihan, 2018; Cooper et al., 2021; Pan et al., 2014). This may be exacerbated in remote settings, as newcomers in remote work environments have limited exposure to coworkers, particularly those who are not on shared projects, reducing availability of opportunities for informal interactions and feedback.

For minority status group members, additional barriers inhibit the development of self-efficacy. For example, stereotype threat is related to reduced self-efficacy (Kalokerinos et al., 2014), and differential treatment from managers and trainers can provide subtle cues that minority status newcomers are not perceived to be as competent as their peers (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). When newcomers have mentors with shared identity status, fears of confirming negative stereotypes are reduced and mentors can provide newcomers with strategies for navigating situations that undermine self-efficacy (Haynes & Petrosko, 2009; Zheng et al., 2021). In a remote context, mentors may be less accessible or harder for newcomers to identify.

PROACTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION THROUGH REMOTE SOCIALIZATION

The transition towards remote work in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic presents challenges for effectively socializing a remote workforce in a way that is supportive of DE&I. The following sections draw on the literature to provide recommendations for organizations and leaders to proactively support organizational DE&I goals and values while promoting successful socialization for all newcomers.

Foster DE&I in Dissemination of Knowledge Through Transparency, Openness, Clarity, and Communication

Let Newcomers Know What to Expect from the Remote Socialization Process

Socialization tactics that provide clear information about the content, order, and timing of socialization activities lead to increased commitment and reduced turnover, as they convey organizational support (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). By clearly outlining the organization's remote socialization process, organizations and leaders can help avoid some of the confusion that occurs from unclear expectations (Ellis et al., 2015). This is particularly important in the remote work setting, as newcomer confusion or frustration may not be immediately apparent to leaders and team members, due to a lack of face-to-face interaction and associated cues. Further, those who perceive themselves as different from the group may be more reluctant to seek information for fear of appearing incompetent or unprepared (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2011). Thus, conveying clear information regarding the socialization process is particularly important to promote DE&I goals in remote work settings. To help ensure that newcomers are not feeling lost and unsure of what they should be doing, which can easily go unnoticed in a remote setting, leaders can check in virtually to ask new team members whether they have any questions about the socialization process, the team, the work role, or the organization.

Deliberately Develop and Disseminate Effective and Unbiased Informational Materials

Those in charge of the socialization process, whether it be managers or human resource professionals, need to ensure that socialization materials (e.g., documents, invited talks, trainings, and videos) are representative of all employees and cover the broad array of information needed for newcomers to effectively function in their new role (Hart, 2018). These materials should be carefully reviewed to ensure that they are not unintentionally biased and are equally applicable and accessible to all newcomers, including those who speak different languages and those with disabilities requiring special accommodations. To make materials easily accessible, organizations can create a database of information available to all employees (e.g., an onboarding document, a chart outlining various organizational departments and their connections and roles, a list of frequently asked questions and answers; Ahuja & Galvin, 2003).

Designate an Organizational Representative to Act as a Socialization Liaison

Research shows that having an experienced organizational member assigned to act as a conduit between newcomers and the broader organization can facilitate information exchange and encourage informa-

tion seeking (Ahuja & Galvin, 2003). Remote or in-person meet-greet sessions with key personnel in various departments can help make inter-departmental relationships and roles clear and facilitate future collaboration (Goodermote, 2020). Providing a list of "go-to" organizational contacts for newcomers can facilitate information exchange as newcomers may feel more comfortable asking questions and expressing concerns when it is clear who can best answer their question. Supervisors and existing employees can make introductions through virtual communication (e.g., via email), as they would in person, to promote newcomer comfortability in seeking information and building relationships.

Facilitate Social Integration Virtually by Providing Opportunities to Form Connections

Create Opportunities for Newcomers to Interact with Experienced Organizational Members

Providing positive interactions with experienced organizational members during the socialization process is key to promoting a positive newcomer socialization experience (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). However, these opportunities are often difficult to create organically in a remote context. Organizations can facilitate these experiences by hosting virtual happy hours and teambuilding activities, setting aside time for informal conversation at the start or end of meetings, and pairing newcomers with experienced organizational members for informal virtual "coffee chats." Pairing newcomers with organizational insiders provides opportunities for newcomers to discover shared interests, backgrounds, values, and experiences with current employees. Awareness of deeper-level similarities can foster DE&I by helping newcomers build a sense of fit and belongingness in addition to helping newcomers identify role models and potential mentors. Experienced employees can convey organizational norms and expectations in a remote context while providing a sense of social support for newcomers.

Incorporate Virtual Group Learning Experiences

Oftentimes, organizations attempting to socialize newcomers remotely rely heavily on asynchronous or self-paced learning sessions, but opportunities to learn as a group (i.e., with other newcomers) can facilitate successful newcomer socialization (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). To promote belongingness and inclusion, multiple group socialization activities in which newcomers are encouraged to interact with fellow newcomers can be incorporated into the socialization process. For smaller organizations, where there may be few newcomers entering the organization simultaneously, this may necessitate socializing newcomers from across the organization on topics such as company culture and history or organizational tools, policies, practices, and procedures to ensure exposure to other newcomers. Companies that are not hiring many newcomers simultaneously may benefit from staggering group learning sessions so several newcomers can attend simultaneously despite being at different places in their socialization timelines. Temporary networks such as social networking channels and email lists can be set up across departments and workgroups in the organization to connect newcomers with fellow newcomers and facilitate group information sharing and learning (Good & Cavanagh, 2017).

Formally Connect Newcomers with Potential Mentors and Role Models

In addition to providing opportunities for newcomers to connect with potential mentors informally, organizations can formally initiate mentoring relationships by pairing newcomers with established organizational members. Formal mentoring programs can improve the accessibility of mentors to all newcomers, thus fostering goals for equity. As much normative information is learned through observation and informal interactions, pairing newcomers with established organizational mentors can help newcomers assimilate to the organizational culture (Ahuja & Galvin, 2003). Mentoring relationships with seasoned organizational members can also act as pathways through which newcomers can form connections with other organizational members and teams. Moreover, remote and hybrid workers, who often encounter barriers to career development and career advancement (e.g., promotions) due to their contributions going unseen and unrecognized, stand to benefit greatly from the sponsorship that mentors can provide (Burleson et al., in press). Sponsorship involves advocating for protégés and actively seeking to provide them with career enhancing opportunities (Nolan et al., 2008).

Encourage Employees to Form Multiple Mentoring Relationships

To accommodate a variety of newcomer needs and promote DE&I, a multiple mentor approach may be best. Pairing an individual with someone in a similar role or location or with a similar background can promote relatedness and information exchange (Scandura & Williams, 2001). Mentors who have shared characteristics with newcomers can provide guidance that is unique to their shared identity and experiences (Thomas et al., 2005; Williams et al., 2018). For instance, women in fields where they are underrepresented benefit from having women mentors who model behaviors associated with their unique experiences. These mentors help newcomers overcome barriers and provide clear and relatable examples of pathways towards career advancement (McKeen & Bujaki, 2007). Conversely, pairing newcomers with mentors who have different identity statuses can provide access to the in-group, further encouraging inclusion and belongingness. For example, women often benefit from having men as mentors, particularly in male-dominated fields, as men are gatekeepers to opportunities for career advancement (McKeen & Bujaki, 2007; Scandura & Williams, 2001).

While mentor-protégé similarities and differences carry unique advantages, meta-analytic evidence indicates that protégé gender, race, and other demographic similarities have little to no relationship with mentoring support, and instead, deep-level similarities lead to better social support, career support, and quality of relationships (Eby et al., 2013). Therefore, it is important to pair newcomers with mentors who share these deep-level characteristics to best promote DE&I in the remote socialization process. For example, newcomers could be paired with three or more mentors initially for frequent meetings to determine whether the mentors share deep-level similarities with them, provide effective emotional support, or offer the most beneficial career advice and knowledge. Newcomers should be given encouragement and autonomy to continue to meet frequently and routinely with mentors with whom they connect while naturally reducing the frequency and routineness of meetings with those mentors who are less central to their career and personal development. A multiple-mentor approach also allows for the possibility of having multiple mentors who can be called upon when their unique mentoring strengths would be most helpful to the newcomer.

Utilize Virtual Platforms and Technology to Systematically Include Newcomers

As part of the onboarding process, newcomers can be systematically added to various communication channels and team events (e.g., listservs, message boards, Slack channels, team drives, team meetings, virtual happy hours), promoting equity in the access to social integration opportunities. Though remote workers do not share the same physical space, they often convene informally and formally in remote settings, whether it be in virtual meetings or chat platforms. Organizations can invest in effective platforms that are intuitive and user-friendly. Once organizations have platforms in place for seamless virtual workplace communication, it is important that leaders utilize these platforms to introduce new team members to existing team members, allowing current employees to welcome newcomers and fostering social integration. Social connections can be promoted through company efforts to connect employees using a randomized meeting generator such as a virtual coffee chat generator or even themed meeting pairings where employees can discuss targeted topics such as DE&I, work-life balance, leadership, and career development. Similarly, team-, department-, and organization-level virtual or in-person happy hours, where everyone is included, can help newcomers who are working remotely to acquire normative information about the organization and form social connections. Finally, newcomers working remotely can be introduced to social network groups within the organization that pertain to interests and identities that they share with others in the organization, creating microclimates in which they feel a sense of belonging.

Build Newcomer Self-Efficacy and Incorporate Diverse Perspectives and Ideas

Encourage Engagement in Proactive Behavior and Information Sharing

It should be emphasized throughout the socialization process to all newcomers that asking questions is highly encouraged by the organization and leadership and conveys engagement and motivation as opposed to a lack of knowledge or intelligence. This message should be reinforced with supportive actions from throughout the organization. For example, leaders and organizational insiders should make an effort to promptly and supportively respond to questions asked by newcomers. In addition, leaders can set aside time to ask and reward questions after meetings and trainings. A lack of proactive behavior from newcomers may be an indicator that they perceive themselves to be dissimilar to the rest of their work group and may not feel comfortable seeking information (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2011). In these situations, leaders can utilize check-ins with the newcomer to answer any questions and provide support.

Emphasize the Value of "Authentic Selves"

Research suggests that emphasizing the value of newcomers' "authentic selves" to the organization is associated with better performance and lower turnover (Cable et al., 2013). When individuals feel that the organization values who they are as a unique person, it has the potential to foster a stronger sense of fit with the organization, thereby giving newcomers a solid foundation from which they can share unique ideas and diverse interests. In virtual communication platforms and on employee directories, newcomers can be encouraged to share information about their backgrounds and individual interests. For example, there can be questions regarding employees' favorite foods and movies, where they would most like to travel, and what they like to do in their spare time. These platforms can be utilized to give

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employees an opportunity to express themselves. Similarly, newcomers can be encouraged to personalize the space behind them in video calls to mimic how they might express themselves in the workplace (e.g., personalizing their office space and chatting in hallways).

Weekly prompts on social networks to encourage employees to share information about themselves can help foster self-expression as well. For example, employees can be prompted to share a song they loved to listen to or a meal they loved to have growing up. Remote happy hours involving games can, similarly, foster creativity, self-expression, and authenticity. Remote work blurs boundaries between work and home, making it important to also embrace employee decisions to talk about family events and activities outside of work (Burleson et al., in press; Delanoeije & Verbruggen, 2019). Embracing employees' roles outside of their work role (e.g., parenthood, volunteering, coaching) can help to promote a sense of organizational support for employees' personal lives and responsibilities. Efforts to allow employees to express their individuality allow them to be recognized for who they are rather than subsumed by broader organizational identity (Cable et al., 2013).

Provide feedback

Feedback has been identified as a key resource in helping newcomers build self-efficacy (T. D. Allen et al., 2017; Bauer et al., 2007). To ensure newcomers are receiving quality feedback, organizations can train supervisors on effective feedback communication and encourage frequent check-ins with employees. Effective feedback focuses on providing employees with comments regarding the task and not comments directed at the character of the person (Brett & Atwater, 2001). In addition, feedback should highlight tasks and skills newcomers are doing well and not just things that need improvement. To promote equity in feedback, supervisors can provide feedback in a systematic manner that ensures all employees are receiving feedback in equal frequency and consistency. Check-ins allow supervisors to learn what areas they may feel less confident in and can more clearly direct feedback and instruction. Organizations can normalize using emails and workplace social networks for informal messages such as "Good job!" and "Excellent presentation!" to allow for more positive feedback that occurs naturally in person but gets ignored in remote communication.

Demonstrate Supervisor and Organizational Support

Developing high quality relationships with supervisors can mitigate fears of confirming stereotypes and the need to work hard to convey competence, encouraging minority status employees to engage in information seeking (Zhang et al., 2020). Further, supervisor support can be an important factor in mitigating feelings of stereotype threat and a lack of belongingness (O'Brien et al., 2016; Schmitt, 2021). Leaders can conduct regular one-on-one check-ins via phone, video chat, email, and other communication platforms to answer questions, assess newcomer progress in the socialization process, identify concerns and difficulties, determine whether there are topics in need of further clarification, and build a stronger leader-follower relationship (Goodermote, 2020). This can be an effective means through which all newcomers can have equal opportunity to ask questions with reduced hesitancy to seek information in the group context.

Follow Up Remote Socialization Efforts with Positive Post-Socialization Experiences

Matching positive experiences during socialization with continued support after newcomers become integrated into the organization can reduce honeymoon hangover effects (i.e., high initial satisfaction that declines over time) and unmet expectations, which are associated with reduced satisfaction and commitment and increased turnover intentions (Boswell et al., 2009; Major et al., 1995). In a remote work context, providing opportunities to engage in professional development activities and ongoing mentorship in addition to providing supervisor and organizational support encourages continued skill and knowledge building and development of self-efficacy. Further, in the transition from newcomer to integrated organizational member, opportunities to interact and build relationships with coworkers (e.g., virtual team building events, virtual team meetings, virtual communication networks) should be provided consistently to promote continued belongingness, commitment, and desire to remain with the organization.

EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ONBOARDING EFFORTS

To determine whether remote onboarding efforts are promoting successful socialization while supporting organizational goals and values related to DE&I, it is essential to empirically evaluate whether objectives have been achieved, identify newcomers' ongoing socialization needs, and note deficiencies in the socialization process. Targeted evaluation of the socialization process can be utilized to optimize the organization's socialization system and processes. Empirically validated measures and procedures should be utilized by trained practitioners to ensure assessments are used with care and do not undermine DE&I goals and values.

After being formally socialized into the organization, newcomers should be surveyed to determine whether they have acquired the knowledge that is relevant for their role in the organization. Assessments for normative knowledge content can be developed by surveying existing employees regarding the values and expectations they perceive to be defining of and salient in the organization. Regulative and cognitive information assessment can be developed based on a review of organizational policies, practices, and procedures as well as knowledge and skills required to succeed in the job. Further, newcomers should be surveyed to determine whether they have developed self-efficacy related to their ability to perform in their new role, whether they feel a sense of fit with the organization (i.e., person-organization fit) and the job (i.e., person-job fit), the strength of their relationship with their supervisor, the and the degree to which they feel supported by their supervisor and the organization. Criteria such as belongingness, intent to remain or seek other work, and engagement in and quality of mentoring relationships can be included to assess the socialization process more directly for its support of DE&I goals and values.

Pre- and post-test surveys should be taken by newcomers in each of these areas to determine whether there has been a change due to the socialization process (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006). Some of these criteria should be evaluated immediately following formal socialization experience to assess early newcomer attitudes and skills, but further assessment is recommended as it typically takes time for individuals to become fully socialized into the organization. Some common timepoints for assessing socialization outcomes are one month after newcomers' initial start dates, three months post-entry, and six months post-entry (T. D. Allen et al., 2017). By evaluating at each of these timepoints, organizations can start to see a full picture of whether socialization outcomes have been achieved and whether the effects

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of the remote socialization process are lasting. In addition, organization should periodically evaluate the accessibility of socialization materials, mentoring programs, current employees, development opportunities, and feedback to ensure access to these resources is equitable to all newcomers. Results should be evaluated to determine whether subgroup differences exist for any socialization outcomes and resource accessibility. Identified discrepancies can serve as focal targets in efforts to improve the socialization process. However, workgroups, leaders, and identity groups should not be singled out when addressing subgroup differences in newcomer socialization experiences to avoid undermining DE&I goals. Rather, organizations should adopt a systematic approach in facilitating DE&I in the socialization process by targeting discrepancies with organization- or department-wide adoption of actionable strategies, such as those outlined earlier, to reduce such discrepancies and promote a more successful onboarding process for all newcomers.

CONCLUSION

In sum, the chapter encourages organizations and leaders to take a proactive approach to DE&I early in the newcomer socialization process, particularly for those who will be working remotely. Such an approach can help organizations and leaders best achieve their DE&I goals in the new age of remote work while providing newcomers of all backgrounds with building blocks to help them perform to the best of their abilities. Inclusive and purposeful remote socialization practices serve to integrate newcomers into the unique culture of the organization, allowing newcomers to develop the skillsets and required knowledge they need to succeed, providing them with the confidence to perform to the best of their abilities and share their unique perspectives, and develop strong ties to the organization and connections to other organizational members.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Cognitive Knowledge: Information pertaining to the skills and tasks associated with one's role.

Deep-Level Diversity: Differences in non-observable aspects of a person including beliefs, values, and personality.

Hybrid Work: A work model in which employees spend part of their time working in-person and part of their time working remotely.

Regulative Knowledge: Information pertaining to organizational rules, policies, and procedures.

Remote Work: A work model where the employee is working from a location outside of a physical workplace, typically at their personal residence.

Minority Status: A category of people who experience disadvantage relative to members of a group that is socially dominant.

Newcomer: An employee who has entered a new role within the organization.

Normative Knowledge: Information pertaining to the culture, expectations, and social norms within the organization.

Organizational Insider: An existing member of the organization who has been fully integrated, or socialized, into the organization.

Self-Efficacy: Belief in one's ability to successfully complete desired tasks and achieve goals.

Social Integration: The process in which newcomers develop feelings of belongingness, social ties, and trust with existing organizational members.

Socialization: The process of successfully integrating into a new role within the organization.

Surface-Level Diversity: Differences in observable characteristics of a person such as their age, race, and gender presentation.

Chapter 3

What We Know About Workplace Responses During the COVID–19 Pandemic:
Human Resources Processes and Their Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented situation, impacting all productive sectors. Human resources departments have been instrumental in migrating from a functional to a strategic perspective, contributing to the strengthening of organisations. This chapter aims to analyse workplace responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the adoption of human resources practices through a systematic literature review. Findings indicate that the main responses to the pandemic were creating a work team to manage the crisis; virtual work at the individual and group levels; encouraging virtual leadership; psychological, financial, and health support; fostering a work environment favourable to empowerment, shared decision-making, and participation. Other frequently mentioned human resources practices were compensation, flexible working, work design, performance management, remote working, work-family balance, recognition programmes, and training and development practices.

INTRODUCTION

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in unemployment, underemployment, and inactivity (ILO, 2021). There is no doubt that this represents an unprecedented global situation that has had short-term and long-term effects on societies (Alkhamshi et al., 2021; Coccia, 2021) and the socio-economic order (Chang et al., 2021), as well as impacting business (Singh et al., 2021) and the world of work across the globe (Kniffin et al., 2021). It is also a situation that has posed a threat to public health (Adam et al., 2021) and has significantly changed life in general (Chang et al., 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented situation challenging humanity (Grueso-Hinestroza et al, 2021; Tse et al., 2021) that has negatively impacted both the vast majority of productive sectors and the economy (Cudris-Torres et al., 2021; Joseph et al., 2020) and has posed major challenges both for businesses and employees (Kniffin et al., 2021).

This pandemic has highlighted several issues that had not previously been considered in the world of work. First, most jobs are performed in close physical proximity, so there were no previous measures to mitigate the challenge of the social distancing required to reduce the spread of the virus (Joseph et al., 2020). In this sense, the pandemic has created a challenging environment for human resource management that has changed the work environment in technical, physical, and socio-psychological terms never seen before (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

In recent years, human resource management has migrated from a functional to a strategic perspective (Sánchez-Riofrío & Silva, 2016; Sánchez-Riofrío, 2018), which has contributed to the strengthening of organisations, especially during times of prolonged crisis (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). Therefore, this chapter aims to analyse workplace responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as to analyse the adoption of human resources practices in this context. To achieve this, the chapter is structured as follows. First, a framework is provided for the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic in the context of work and in terms of the management of people in organisations. The subsequent section describes the analytical strategy employed for the systematisation of the research-based findings and the results obtained. The final section provides a discussion of the findings and conclusions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The way individuals interact and work has been immediately and significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic (Kniffin et al., 2021); therefore, companies around the world have had to implement remote working (Kniffin et al., 2021), home working (Kniffin et al., 2021), and flexible working (Chang et al., 2021) measures to ensure the safety and proper organisation of all employees (Picatoste & Touza, 2020). However, these measures have led to difficulties for employees, such as burnout (Martínez-López et al., 2021), stress (Kniffin et al., 2021), longer working hours, economic pressure, childcare without access to day care, home schooling, and care for the elderly or chronically ill (Mucharraz Y Cano & Cuilty Esquivel, 2021) .

At the beginning of the pandemic, HR departments were focused on moving the same level of productivity from the company context to their employees' homes; however, as time at home became more widespread, managers were forced to change their HR strategy while still seeking to create a model that connects more emotionally with their employees in order to avoid mental health problems, spread engagement collectively, and ultimately improve productivity (KPMG, 2021; Quintana, 2020).

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Since the beginning of lockdown, physical and mental exhaustion, also known as burnout, has increased significantly (Martínez-López et al., 2021), entailing symptoms such as chronic exhaustion, lack of motivation to perform work, pessimism, and reduced effectiveness at work, with serious repercussions for work productivity (Malacara, 2021; Mucharraz y Cano & Cuilty Esquivel, 2021). To mitigate these consequences, HR departments need to focus on creating employee-centred policies to create engagement. For example, in Iceland, the working week was reduced from 40 hours to 35 hours. This reduced the level of stress and burnout and increased or maintained productivity levels (employees were not paid less for working fewer hours). Similarly, it has been announced that, by the end of 2021, Spain will use 50 million euros from the EU coronavirus recovery fund to test this shorter working week in 200 medium-sized companies participating in the study (Euronews, 2021).

From HR function's perspective, engagement can be considered a psychological construct that reveals the level of commitment or involvement that is created in terms of labour relations (SupeRRHH Heroes, 2019). According to a study conducted in 2017, work engagement has a positive impact on the productivity of a company's employees; in other words, the higher the level of employee engagement, the higher their productivity, which translates into economic growth and improved profitability for the company (Espinosa Quispe, 2017). It has recently been demonstrated that, months after the start of the pandemic, 45% of employees were working more productively. Unfortunately, this improvement came at the cost of a blurred work–life boundary and increased symptoms of pain, anxiety, and burnout (Mugayar-Baldocchi et al., 2021)

This situation has prompted reflection on potentially more flexible HR models. In addition, in research conducted by McKinsey & Company on the creation of a more humanised model, the vast majority of HR managers in large European companies stated that they were eager to change their model (Khan et al., 2021).

RESEARCH-BASED RESULTS

Methodological strategy

Given that the Covid-19 pandemic took humanity by surprise, there is no literature prior to 2020 that allows us to understand the responses of organisations and human resources areas in such a context. Hence, we decided to address this issue through a systematic literature review in the Web of Science (WoS) database, given that this is a citation index frequently used in this type of literature review (Vanhala et al, 2020; Sánchez-Riofrío et al., 2017). Thus, "Human Resources and Covid-19" and "Workplaces and Covid-19" were entered as keywords for the title search, resulting in 48 research articles. The articles were filtered, eliminating those that focused on epidemiological issues, leaving 33 articles on which a systematic literature review was carried out utilising a semi-systematic approach.

Results

Research about Workplaces responses and Human Resources Management in Covid19 era has been conducted, especially in Western countries (e.g. Germany, the US, Australia, and Canada) and in Asia (e.g. India, Vietnam, Taiwan, and China). The economic sectors and professions where workplace responses

and human resources practices during the Covid-19 pandemic have been most studied were: teachers; information technology professionals; health care workers; and tourism sector companies.

Covid-19 pandemic crisis

Based on the results of the analysis conducted in this chapter, it became evident that the Covid19 crisis, given its magnitude, had effects at various levels. In the first place, there were effects at the global level, which will be described below as *Contextual Effects to the Covid19 Crisis*, and on the other hand, there were effects at the macroeconomic level, which for this chapter will be referred to *Organisational Responses to the Covid-19 Crisis* (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Workplace Responses During the Covid-19 Pandemic: Human Resources Processes and their Outcomes
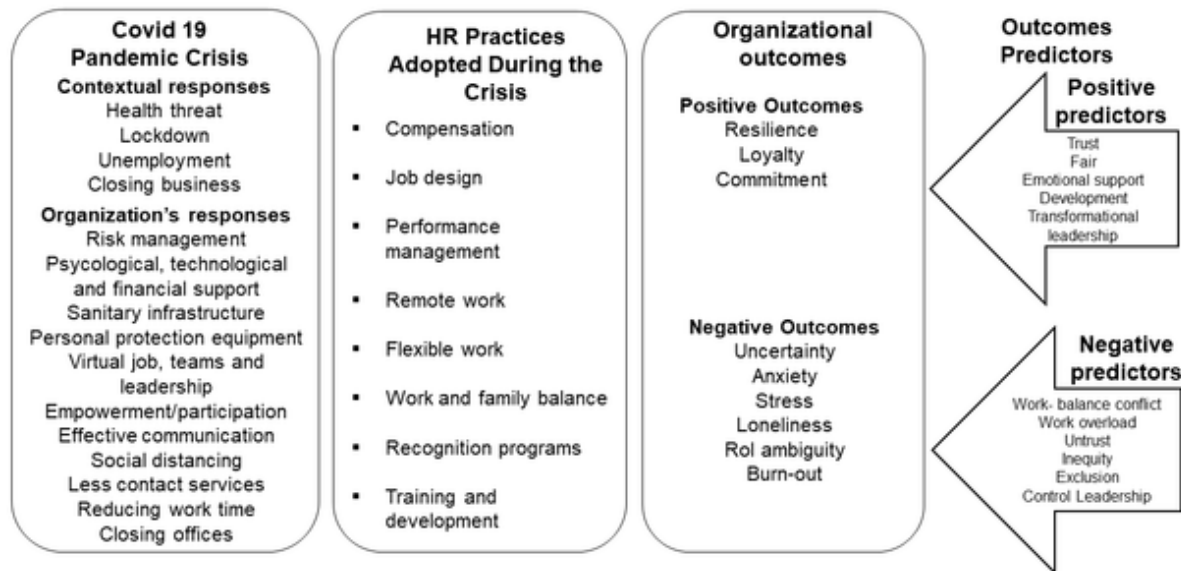
Contextual Effects to the Covid-19 Crisis

The most challenging response to the crisis generated by the Covid 19 pandemic was the global lockdown, as it was considered a threat to public health (Adam et al., 2021), that had a negative impact both the vast majority of productive sectors and the economy (Cudris-Torres et al., 2021; Joseph et al., 2020). In the studies that were taken as a basis for this chapter, massive company closures were reported, except the essential services, (Lee, 2021), with a consequent increase in unemployment, underemployment, and inactivity (ILO, 2021). As a result of the above, the World Health Organization issued directives for companies to implement workplace practices to continue their business operations during the Covid19 crisis (Lee, 2021).

Organisational Responses to the Covid-19 Crisis

Based on the literature reviewed, it was found that, among the responses developed by organisations, risk assessment and management was one of the main actions (Lee, 2021), as was the creation of a crisis management task force (Adam et al., 2021; Sangal et al., 2020). Actions were also developed to introduce more focused virtual work at the individual and group levels (Adam et al., 2021; Agba et al., 2021; Kniffin et al., 2021), as well as a virtual leadership style (Kniffin et al., 2021) (Figure 1).

As shown in Figure 1, it was also observed that some companies provided psychological support to their workers (Adam et al., 2021; Agarwal, 2021; Chang et al., 2021; Ngoc Su et al., 2021) and also generated strategies to maintain extensive communication with employees (Adam et al., 2021; Agarwal, 2021; Lee, 2021) and create a work environment conducive to empowerment, shared decision-making, and participation (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). The use of strategies aimed at workers' financial security and technology support to workers and managers was also evidenced (Agba et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2021).

Other responses from organisations were related to restructuring processes, such as closing offices and operations (Agba et al., 2021) and cutting unnecessary costs (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). Similarly, organisations took measures aimed at reducing staff costs, including cutting the payroll, bonuses, and benefits, reducing the use of temporary staff, reducing expenditure on training and development processes, and freezing recruitment to avoid redundancies (Ngoc Su et al., 2021).

Given that the new organisational dynamics were generated by a health crisis, the responses generated by organisations, from a health perspective, were prominent in this analysis. Most of the companies reported that they had adopted social distancing measures (Agba et al., 2021; Joseph et al., 2020; Lee, 2021; Liu et al., 2020; Urick, 2020) and the reporting of travel activities (Lee, 2021). To avoid contagion risks, a number of companies temporarily suspended employee activities, reduced working hours (Chang et al., 20201), implemented non-contact services (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Chang et al., 2021), reorganised workstations (Adam et al., 2021; Lee, 2021), provided personal protective equipment (Lee, 2021), modified the health care infrastructure (Joseph et al., 2020), and modified workflows (Sangal et al., 2020).

HR Practices Adopted During the Crisis

According to the analysis, eight HR practices were the most frequently adopted during the crisis: compensation; flexible working; job design; performance management; remote working; work–family balance, recognition programmes, and training and development practices (Figure 1).

In terms of compensation, for example, some companies withdrew all economic benefits (Agarwal, 2021). In addition, regarding job design, evidence indicates that some companies provided opportunities for job rotation (Chang et al., 2021) and job redistribution (Ngoc Su et al., 2021).

Performance management is seen in the context of the pandemic as an opportunity to develop individual and organisational resilience capacities (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). However, the results obtained show that this issue that was rarely reflected upon during the pandemic, from a human resources management perspective.

Remote work was by far the most widely implemented HR practice in response to the pandemic (Agba et al., 2021; Akingbola, 2020; Chang et al., 2021; Kniffin et al., 2021; Lee, 2021), followed by flexible working, with several organisations incorporating flexible working hours and compressed work weeks (Chang et al., 2021).

In response to the crisis, practices to balance work and family responsibilities were introduced by some organisations, especially for those workers who were most exposed to the virus (Chang et al., 2021) and for employees who had opted for remote work in order to balance paid work and personal life (Agba et al., 2021).

The creation of recognition programmes for those workers who developed safe and healthy behaviours in organisations was evidenced in the literature review conducted (Chang et al., 2021). For example, monetary incentives, cafeteria vouchers, and attending coaching sessions were used as recognition strategies targeting employees (Sangal et al., 2020).

Finally, there is evidence of the use of a range of actions aimed at staff training and development during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as actions focused on developing skills to preserve health and maintain productivity (Chang et al., 2021), decreasing the stigma attached to employees contracting the virus (Joseph et al., 2020), and increasing employee interactions and, consequently, well-being (Ngoc Su et al., 2021).

Organizational Outcomes/ Outcomes Predictors

Based on the research carried out, it was also possible to identify a list of effects of the crisis derived from Covid19 at the level of the organizations, both positive and negative, as well as a set of factors that are predictors of such effects (See Figure 1). The findings are developed below.

Positive Outcomes and Their Predictors

While it is true that the Covid-19 pandemic entailed multiple negative social, economic, and health effects, some authors see this crisis as an opportunity to build resilience capacities, as well as to develop employee commitment and loyalty, based on employees feeling that the organisation has genuinely cared about them during the crisis and the organisational recovery (Ngoc Su et al., 2021).

However, for this to happen, a number of actions need to be taken by the organisation, which are set out below. First, employees expect the organisation to demonstrate trust (Agba et al., 2021; He et al., 2021; Lee, 2021), empathy, and fairness in the allocation of work (Lee, 2021). It is also important to create a space for high-quality social interactions (Kniffinet al., 2021), as well as providing psychological support to employees (Chang et al., 2021). Other actions that organisations can take to capitalise on the impacts of a crisis can be the development of personal skills and competencies that enable employees to better cope with uncertainty (Jayathilake et al., 2021).

Other recommended actions are the democratisation of learning, the development of self-directed learning systems and reverse mentoring (Jayathilake et al., 2021), the development of an environment of empowerment, participation, shared decision-making, and the development of a more transformational leadership style based on an organisational culture of respect for employees (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). Desirable leadership styles during the pandemic were those that were empathetic (Lee, 2021), that supported worker autonomy (Collie, 2021), that were trust-based (Agba et al., 2021), and that were more transformational, providing support and guidance to employees (Urick, 2020). The development of top-down strategies is also seen as a way to generate valuable resources for dealing with crises in an appropriate manner (Kniffin et al., 2021), as is the creation of employee assistance programmes (Kniffin et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2020).

Negative Outcomes and Their Predictors

The following negative effects were noted. At the individual level, psychological effects, mental problems (Lee, 2021), uncertainty and anxiety (Lee, 2021), stress (Collie, 2021; Kniffin et al., 2021), psychological pain, feelings of loneliness, and loss of social connections (Kniffin et al., 2021) were all highlighted. Regarding the work context, effects such as job insecurity (Lee, 2021), unemployment (Kniffin et al., 2021), role ambiguity (Chang et al., 2021), and work overload (Akingbola, 2020; Chang et al., 2021) were evident (Figure 1).

The Covid-19 pandemic also exposed processes at the organisational level that were unhealthy and, given the crisis context, were likely to be exacerbated. The review showed that, for example, unfairness in task allocation was experienced, especially among part-time workers when compared to full-time workers (Lee, 2021)

According to various authors, there are organisational conditions that amplify the impact of crises, among which the most representative were: low participation in organisational dynamics (Lee, 2021); a lack of information provided by the organisation (Akingbola, 2020); a lack of separation between personal and family life (Kniffin et al., 2021); conflict between work and family responsibilities (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020); mistrust; work overload; a lack of organisational support; inequity and exclusion (Agarwal, 2021); and bullying and violent behaviours (Akingbola, 2020). There was evidence of micro-management practices as a control mechanism, which were interpreted by workers as a lack of trust and respect from their bosses (Lee, 2021). Similarly, leadership styles that did not respect autonomy became undesirable in the context of the pandemic (Collie, 2021).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the Covid 19 crisis has had both negative and positive effects. Among the negative effects, it has become evident that the loss of human lives has been one of the greatest blows to humanity, among other things because the crisis highlighted the disparities in terms of health services between countries and within countries. Likewise, the massive closure of businesses, some temporarily and others permanently, had an impact on the increase in unemployment and inactivity rates, which fortunately have been moving back as the economy has been reopening. Likewise, the crisis brought with it social distancing, which has had negative effects for many workers around the world, who were already facing mental health problems and were aggravated by the loneliness and vulnerability to which they were exposed.

But it was also evident that the pandemic created a space of opportunity for organizations. For example, millions of businesses around the world reinvented themselves, especially by incorporating digital technologies and solutions, to compete in other markets. There was also a deep interest in the development of employee-centred policies as well as in the adoption of strategies focused on the psychological wellbeing.

Thus, the HR function in times of crisis is highly relevant as it can generate the context and competencies required to face and overcome adverse conditions. Similarly, it is vital to understand that we are facing a post-pandemic hybrid HR revolution; it is necessary that both productivity management and staff wellbeing are balanced, as this will help to build engagement based on good communication

As noted above, there are a number of factors that can determine how organisations experience crises, including leadership styles and organisational culture, the creation of an environment of trust towards

workers, high quality social interactions, and empathy and fairness in the allocation of job responsibilities. When these factors are aligned, they lead to positive employee outcomes, such as commitment and loyalty to the organisation. In contrast, when the opposite is the case, the outcomes generated include mental problems, stress, uncertainty and anxiety, feelings of loneliness, psychological pain and loss of social connections, job insecurity, role ambiguity and work overload. Thus, the achievement of positive results will depend on the human resources function in organizations focusing on the permanent search for the physical and psychological well-being of their employees, so that both individuals and organizations develop the necessary resources to face critical situations, such as the one experienced recently, which has not yet been overcome.

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Chapter 4

Remote Work:
An Ally or Enemy for the Work-Life Balance? Remote Work Experiences of Male and Female Academics in the UK and Turkey During COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on enrichment theory, the study examines whether academics' experience in one domain of work-life interface resulted in any enrichment in the other domain. The researcher conducted 26 semi-structured online interviews with academics from Turkey and the UK. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify themes and subthemes. The study shows that married people with young children (under 12) and especially female academics struggled the most to balance work and life during the pandemic because they had to fulfill their work and family responsibilities at the same time and place. Considering the research's findings from the enrichment model's perspective, it is concluded that remote work offers work and life enrichment to some extent to individuals, but individuals' diverse living circumstances matter in discussing work-life balance and the level of enrichment in work and life domains. This is important for organizations to put on their agenda while thriving to achieve diversity and develop inclusive work-places in the post-COVID-19 era.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, people have been concerned about the influence of technology on their lives and how they will continue working in the digital era. Some industries have already started doing operations (e.g., banking, shopping, training, etc.) on both physical and digital platforms. But the unexpected outbreak of COVID-19 forced a lot of organizations from different industries to transfer their operations to the online world, and it accelerated other organizations' plans for digitalization. Transferring operations to

the online platform has enabled several industries' employees to work remotely (teleworking). Eurofound (2020)'s e-survey with 87,477 participants from 27 EU countries in April 2020 shows that around 50 percent of the employees in the sample worked from home during the pandemic. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics also reports a large increase in teleworking such that 33 percent of US workers worked remotely because of the pandemic (Loewenstein, 2021).

Remote work offers employees some benefits, such as flexible working times, spending more time with the family, etc. (Lewis & Cooper, 2005). From the work-life balance (WLB) perspective, however, remote work in COVID-19 quarantine resulted in a blurred boundary between work and private life for remote workers and unprecedented levels of uncertainty in remote workers' personal lives and job security (Magni et al., 2020). This situation is expected to have a substantial influence on employees' work-life balance during quarantine. A large body of research exists on remote work and WLB, but remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic is an extraordinary situation (Wang et al., 2021). This requires the need to approach remote work and WLB in a new context-i.e. during the pandemic and post-pandemic period. Several studies (e.g., Ornell et al., 2020; Restubog et al., 2020) addressed the negative effects of COVID-19 on mental health and psychological strategies to cope with these effects. Some studies (e.g., Guy & Arthur, 2020) particularly focused on the experiences of diverse groups such as working mothers during the COVID-19 quarantine, as these mothers are considered to be the most vulnerable group negatively influenced by the pandemic.

A brief literature review on WLB and remote work in the COVID-19 context shows that most of the studies provide insight into the topic predominantly from a quantitative research perspective. Contributing to the debate in the literature, this research provides a qualitative-empirical perspective and concerns the diversity of individuals by searching for their different living circumstances. The research explores the academics' remote work experiences during the COVID-19 quarantine while carrying out their academic role-i.e., teaching and research. The key question addressed in the research is how the COVID-19 period and its consequence of remote work have influenced male and female academics' personal and professional roles and responsibilities. Reviewing the debates in the WLB literature, two outcomes emerge. As the boundary theory suggests, remote work may create a limitation in putting the boundary between work and private life (see Nippert-Eng, 1996). Alternatively, as the enrichment model suggests, it may enable academics to try new initiatives and lead to positive outcomes in both work and life domains-e.g., more productive work, trying new initiatives, quality time with the family, etc. (see McNall et al., 2010).

BACKGROUND

Remote Work, Work-life Balance and Workforce Diversity

Two key terms, i.e. remote work and work-life balance, shape the framework of this research. Olson (1983, p.182) defines remote work as "organizational work that is performed outside of the normal organizational confines of space and time". This definition suggests that remote work may offer flexibility in the location and work schedule to a worker. Remote work can be done anywhere outside the organizational boundary. However, considering the health-related concerns because of COVID-19 and 'stay at home' orders, this research refers to working from home when using the term 'remote work'. Working from home means using the same space for both professional and family life, which concerns the concept of 'work-life balance' (WLB). WLB is defined as "satisfaction and good functioning of work and home with

a minimum of role conflict" (Clark, 2000, p.751). Different expressions, such as work-family balance, also address the same issue. However, this study uses the term 'WLB' to maintain textual consistency. WLB is a debated term and, as suggested by Guest (2002), someone should approach it carefully. 'Work' is mostly associated with the employment and professional identity of an individual. 'Life' is defined in a broader way as non-work activities. The term 'balance' also requires a careful approach. 'Balance' is defined as 'equal weight on both sides' (*ibid*, p. 261). This suggests that work is not integrated into life; therefore a trade-off exists between the two domains, shifting responsibility for balance between work and life to individuals (Gregory & Milner, 2009).

The issue of WLB as part of companies' employment practices emerged as early as the 1930s (Lockwood, 2003). Before World War II, Kellogg Company, as an early example of companies' WLB practices, decreased the hours of per shift from three eight-hour shifts to four six-hour shifts, which increased employees' motivation and productivity (*ibid*). The topic of WLB also attracted researchers' attention. Since the 1960s, there has been an increase in the number of studies focusing on the connection between work-family roles, women's roles, and work-family stress (Gregory & Milner, 2009). These studies shifted attention away from work to both work and non-work domains in employment research (*ibid*). Different terms related to WLB emerged in the literature: work–family conflict or interference, work–family accommodation, work–family compensation, work–family segmentation, work–family enrichment, work–family expansion (*ibid*). The concept of WLB encompasses the assumption that individuals have the flexibility and autonomy to negotiate their time and presence in both work and personal lives (Gregory & Milner, 2009; Lockwood, 2003). Byrne (2005) argues that it is especially the case with young employees, who, unlike the previous generation, demand greater control and voice over their work and personal domains.

Social actors, including policy-makers and business leaders, see remote work as a potential route to WLB (Sullivan, 2012). Several studies confirm this perception. A study with IBM employees conducted by Hill et al. (1998) explores the influence of the virtual office on WLB. It compares virtual office workers with traditional workers. The study shows that remote work leads to an increase in productivity, flexibility, and work-life balance. Maruyama et al. (2009)'s study provides similar findings. Conducting a survey with 1566 teleworkers in the UK, the authors show the overall positive work and life experiences of teleworkers supported by telework. These examples suggest that remote work enables access to a flexible work schedule so that individuals divide their time between work and non-work activities. "This shift in greater access to flexibility allows a greater diversity of employees to be involved in the workplace and creates a more inclusive workplace where more workers can combine work with other non-work roles." (Kossek et al., 2012, p.740). Organizations may foster inclusive workplaces by adopting policies that support employees to achieve WLB (Sang & Powell, 2013). But there are two issues for organizations to consider. First, it is questionable whether 'one-size-fits-all' WLB policies are effective while managing a diverse workforce (Hutchinson, 2018). The logic behind this uniform approach may be to treat employees equally. However, different needs and circumstances of employees require customization of WLB policies (*ibid*). Second, remote work in normal times should be differentiated from remote work in crisis times (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic). Remote work promoting flexibility in the work schedule may sound like an opportunity for WLB in normal times. However, it is expected to be a challenge in the COVID-19 lockdown context in which work and life boundaries became more blurred because all family members had to share the same space during the lockdown. Several studies reveal that remote work under COVID-19 quarantine was mostly a challenge for female employees. During the quarantine, mother employees played multiple roles because of the extra caregiving responsibilities at home while

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carrying out their work responsibilities. The global survey of Deloitte (2020) with 400 working women around nine countries shows that seven out of ten women experienced a negative shift in their work routine because of irregular and shorter working hours. Collins et al. (2021) examine changes in the work hours of mothers and fathers in the COVID-19 context. They show that mother employees with young children had to work four to five times shorter hours than fathers. Some women have questioned their long-term career plans, which suggests that ongoing uncertainty because of COVID-19 poses a threat against women's participation in the workforce and the progress towards gender equality.

Academics are one of those groups experiencing remote work and the flexibility of working times, as their work enables this. The existing body of research on remote work and the WLB of academics in 'normal' situations suggests that one of the potential benefits of remote work is a better balance between personal, family, and work life (see Ng, 2006). For example, focusing on the remote work experiences of academics in a distance education institution in South Africa, Tustin (2014) shows a relationship between remote work and high levels of work productivity, low levels of emotional and physical fatigue, and work stress. Hunter (2019)'s study specifically examines the impact of remote work on the research activities of academics. It shows that remote work improves WLB and this situation results in increased creativity in research. Currie and Eveline (2011) highlight both positive and negative aspects of remote work. Their study in Australian university academics with young children reveals that e-technologies at home offer a benefit to parent academics' work but with a cost of family life, "delivering a blessing and a curse" (ibid, p.533). Considering remote work and WLB in the COVID-19 context, it is argued that the borders between work and life are more blurred, which makes it more challenging to achieve WLB than the situation in normal times. Several studies focus on the WLB experiences of academics during COVID-19. Corbera et al. (2020) discuss the effect of COVID-19 on the academics' profession and WLB and offer several suggestions to foster a culture of care and enhance the quality of teaching and research in the future. Esteves et al. (2020) conducted a survey with 70 academics from a university in the UK to understand the impact of COVID-19 lockdown on the WLB of academics, particularly female academics. Donoso et al. (2021) focus on mother academics' remote work experiences during COVID-19. Their research presents three autobiographical narratives exploring adaptation and adjustment of mother academics to remote teaching and research and childcare during the lockdown.

Role Accumulation and Work-life Enrichment

WLB literature widely focuses on the conflict aspect of role accumulation-i.e. participation in multiple roles. Work-life (family) conflict refers to the situation where "participation in one role makes it difficult to participate in another role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p.7). Conflict arises due to the limited time and energy to be allocated among several tasks at work and in life (*ibid*). Role accumulation in the remote work context may have several negative effects on work, such as working longer hours, work intensification, low organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and communication overload (Grant et al., 2013).

Despite the extensive focus on the conflict aspect of WLB in the literature, some studies show the benefits of overlapping roles in work and life. The argument is that work and family/private life domains do not have to conflict with each other, but on the contrary, they may create synergy by feeding each other, revealing the positive aspect of the work-life interface (Carlson et al., 2006). This is defined as 'work-family/life enrichment' in the literature (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). It is argued that our understanding of the work-family interface is not complete without considering the concept of work-family enrichment (Wayne et al., 2004). Greenhaus & Powell's (2006) work-family enrichment concept empha-

sizes that work and family roles are allies rather than enemies. They address two paths to enrichment: an instrumental path and an affective path. In the instrumental path, the direction of enrichment is from family to work. It may emerge in different ways. For example, individuals may learn conflict resolution at work by using the skills they gain at home with children and spouses (Carlson et al., 2006). Individuals can develop patience with colleagues by using developed patience with family members at home (*ibid*). Magni et al. (2020) explore family-to-work enrichment by surveying 134 educational workers in Italy. Their study shows that family-to-work enrichment has a positive impact on work effectiveness. They found that workers having a more family-focused work-life balance experience less anxiety and achieve more effectiveness at work. Working on remote workers, Kelliher and Anderson (2010) suggest that remote work can be instrumental in supporting organizational commitment, increased job satisfaction, and willingness to work more. In the affective path, enrichment direction is from work to family. Rothbard's (2001) analysis shows that a positive mood at work leads to being more positive and patient towards family members. Voydanoff (2001) lists the positive outcomes of role accumulation. First, additional effects emerge on physical and psychological well-being, so an individual experiences work and life satisfaction that helps individual happiness. Second, role accumulation buffers individuals from stress in one of the roles, which is like mitigating the risk of being lost in one role. Sieber (1974) refers to the 'personality enrichment' aspect of role accumulation. Experiences in one role may nurture the outcomes in the other role and create a positive impact on an individual's personality (e.g., tolerance, flexibility-i.e. adjustment to changes, enhanced self-esteem).

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative approach was used to capture academics' remote work experiences and the challenges they faced while carrying out their work and family roles during the COVID-19 quarantine. This approach enables understanding of the experiences of individuals in a pandemic (Teti et al., 2020). The researcher conducted a semi-structured interview for data collection. This type of interview allows the generation of deep insights into the studied phenomena by exploring the subjectivity, opinion, and experiences of the respondents (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997; Ritchie et al., 2003).

The researcher conducted online interviews with 26 academics in total from Turkey and the UK during the period between April and October 2020. The interviews took place with 13 participants from two UK universities and 13 participants from two Turkish universities. Appendix 1 provides a detailed summary of the demographics and working background of the participants. The researcher conducted a comparative study to explore the experiences of the participants in two countries given their different institutional contexts. The participants in the UK are employed by universities governed with a neoliberal approach, which means a low level of job guarantee, strict performance criteria and a high level of competitiveness (see Riegraf & Weber, 2017). On the other hand, the participants in Turkey work in state universities offering employment guarantees and less strict performance criteria when compared to the situation in the UK.

Given the limited conditions of the pandemic, accessibility became a priority in sampling. The researcher accessed the participants through her network to gain insight from their individual stories. Purposive sampling was used to include people from various academic and family backgrounds. This is important to achieve individual diversity in WLB research, although the literature in this field extensively focuses on dual-career couples (Wayne et al., 2004). The researcher prepared the interview outline by

using the literature on WLB, remote work, and productivity. The interview questions were split into five sections (adapted from Grant et al., 2013):

Section 1: "About you" requesting demographic details

Section 2*:* "Your remote work experiences during the COVID-19" including questions like "How do you define your life during quarantine?" "What surprised or made you disappointed about your work-life balance, habits and performance?"

Section 3*:* "Work-life balance" including questions like "How did you arrange your work schedule during the COVID-19 quarantine?"

Section 4: "Your academic role before and during quarantine" including questions like "How did the COVID-19 context influence your research and teaching activities?"

Section 5*:* "Concluding remarks"

The interview questions were written in English and then translated into Turkish for the participants in Turkey. A colleague fluent in both languages checked the translation of the interviews for accuracy and consistency. The researcher conducted four pilot interviews with two interviewees from the UK and two interviewees from Turkey. The questions and answers of the pilot interviews were revised to ensure clarity and the coverage of all related issues. The interviews were conducted in two languages-i.e. Turkish and English. Each interview lasted around 40-50 minutes. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Open coding and thematic analysis were employed in data analysis. The initial codes were loose, detailed, and tentative. The researcher used a summary of participants' quotes with keywords from these quotes to prepare data for coding. She created a detailed excel spreadsheet and recorded the initial codes to this spreadsheet by reading the interview transcripts line-by-line and coding with the pre-defined themes drawn from the literature and the themes emerging from the data (see Table 1). The excel table enabled the researcher to conduct an overall assessment of the data and update the table as new data came in. After creating the codes, the researcher identified which themes came up the most and acted on them. In exploring the themes, commonality, relationships and differences became important (Gibson & Brown, 2009).

Table 1. Core themes and open codes

Core themes	Open codes
Work-life balance (WLB)	• The boundary between work and life • Flexibility in WLB • Role management/conflict • Enrichment • Work intensification • Social isolation • Gender diversity • Family conditions/marital status
Productivity	• Research productivity o Research output (the number of publication output) o Research collaboration • Teaching productivity o Upgrading technology skills o Effective teaching

Reliability is an important issue when considering the quality of the data and assessing whether the data supports the results and conclusions of the study. While discussing reliability, it is essential to remember the aim of qualitative research. Unlike quantitative research, the goal of qualitative research is not to replicate or generalize research results, but to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Stenbacka, 2001). Therefore, the essence of reliability in qualitative research is based on consistency.

Silverman and Marvasti (2008) state that consistency is achieved either by checking whether different observers assign the same category to instances or by ensuring that the same observer assigns the same category to instances on different occasions. The second option was employed in this study. In the coding process, the researcher used memos to keep track of the evolving codes and the decision-making process for the final codes and themes. This approach enabled the researcher to check the consistency of coding in later times, as she repeated the coding process at different times. It also enables an external researcher to understand how coding-related decisions are made and conclusions reached (Stuckey, 2015). In addition to the memos, as mentioned, the researcher documented the data analysis procedure by using an excel table and recording data in this table. This approach allowed the researcher to view the whole data in a table and prepare the coded data for external audit.

RESULTS

Work-life balance

Before going into a deep discussion about the participants' WLB experiences during the quarantine period, the researcher asked the participants to define the concept of WLB. The participants showed a different understanding of the term. Two participants (UK1; TR9) referred to the need to adopt a holistic approach in defining the term WLB. One of them quoted:

Life is life. It is not meaningful to divide it into work and life. (TR9)

While providing their definition, some participants differentiated WLB through what it should be and what it should not be. WLB is mostly associated with the ability to manage the whole life by determining what is important and what the primary goals of an individual are. The majority of the participants agreed that the work domain should not dominate the (private) life domain. It means that a person should not define himself/herself only by his/her work identity and dedicate their time to work, but they should spend time with loved ones. One participant (TR8) referred to the term 'fairness'-i.e. giving adequate time to work and non-work. He stated that in his WLB definition, family comes first, but this does not mean ignoring work-related responsibilities. It means that these two domains (work and family) should not take time and energy from each other. But one single-male participant (UK10) warned that the marital status of a person needs to be considered while discussing WLB. He stated that the term is more meaningful when considered together with the family concept. As a single person, working long hours in the office may not be a problem, whereas it may damage WLB if the person lives with his/her family.

An important issue to consider is the boundary between work and life. WLB presumably refers to putting clear boundaries between work and private life. It means relaxation of the mind from work while being together with the family or not worrying about family/personal issues while focusing on work.

In its simplest form, WLB is defined as sticking to the working hours and after completing the work, stopping all work-related activities and focusing on private life. To achieve WLB, three participants (UK6, TR11, TR13) addressed the 8-hour rule, dividing a day into three parts: 8 hours of sleep, 8 hours of work, and 8 hours of leisure (family time, hobbies, etc.). However, one participant questioned how to define and distinguish the work and life domains as they are intertwined.

Some participants strongly rejected the assumption of balancing work and (family/private) life. Mother participants, in particular, stressed that their family role inevitably takes precedence over their work role, resulting in an imbalance. As one participant put it, dedicating long hours to work is not possible while having a family. A mother participant who is originally from Egypt but now works in the UK made an interesting comment. She stated that national culture matters in discussing the work and family role of female academics. She said that motherhood is perceived as more important than work in her home country, whereas in the UK the parenting role is equally divided between men and women. However, other participants did not refer to such a difference in gender roles. Mother participants in both the UK and Turkey mentioned how their maternal role became a priority before work. This suggests that gender roles are argued to be the same in both countries.

Three participants (UK1; TR5; TR6) stated that academic life enables WLB flexibility. The assumption is that, unlike other jobs, academic life does not have certain working hours, and an academic has control over their research and teaching schedule to some extent, so they can allocate enough time to work and life. However, rejecting this assumption, a participant (TR4) referred to the absence of clear-cut boundaries between work and life in academia as academic activities permeate into every corner of their personal lives.

In terms of flexibility in following a work-life routine, family conditions, including marital status (e.g., single, married but childless, married with children) matter. As expected, single participants reported a more flexible routine for both work and private life during the COVID-19 quarantine. Among those married but childless participants, both male and female participants stated that they were able to follow a work routine and they did not face any serious challenges in WLB. Male participants, however, were more flexible in following a daily routine during quarantine. The shared concern of married people with children was how to survive at home with children while working. Some informants stated that they were already familiar with the home-office concept. But the context of COVID-19 quarantine is different because all family members have to share the same place for work and life. This means almost no boundary exists between work and life, especially for those sharing the office with their spouses or working in the kitchen/living room because of the absence of their own office. Some participants stated that it is difficult to explain the quarantine situation to their young children, as it is unprecedented and the children are too young to understand and accept it. They reported that working in such a mentally challenging condition was difficult and stressful for them.

The mother participants stated that they struggled with developing a daily work routine. They shared the same place at home with their children, so they had to rearrange their work schedule during quarantine and mostly work at night after everyone had gone to bed. The majority of mother participants questioned their work and family roles during quarantine, as they had to play both roles in the same space. One participant (TR2) complained that her motherhood was not as effective as it used to be before COVID-19. She struggled to put a mental boundary between work and family roles. For example, while playing with the children, her mind was busy with work; or while working, she worried about her children. She said that this situation negatively affected her relationship with her husband and children as they had less quality time, even if they spent more time together. Almost all the mother participants stated that they

became more flexible in their work roles, as motherhood became a priority. During this time, research became a secondary important task (it was important but not urgent) while they had to prioritize more urgent and important tasks such as childcare, online meetings, and teaching. The feeling of guilt was a shared concern among the mother participants. Like their female counterparts, male participants with young children also mentioned that they struggled with remote work during quarantine, as all family members shared the same space. This situation pushed them to become more flexible about work and family responsibilities. They stated that they shared more housework and childcare responsibilities at home during quarantine.

Academic productivity

While exploring the remote work's impact on academics' WLB during the COVID-19 quarantine, the research particularly focuses on the work domain through the work outcome-i.e. academic productivity (the number of publication output, the number/hour of courses for teaching and attending academic meetings). Before having a deep discussion about this issue, the researcher asked the participants how they would measure productivity. Almost all the participants highlighted that they ideally measure it through quality and meaningfulness (contribution to the students/research field/society) of the work and the level of personal satisfaction with the outcome. But in this research, the participants referred to the number of tasks completed when they defined and evaluated the concept of productivity.

Before elaborating their productivity for each academic role (research and teaching), the participants evaluated their overall productivity during the quarantine period. The majority of the participants reported a decrease in their productivity. The main reasons for the low productivity were identified as lower work motivation due to the negative impact of COVID-19 news on their mental health, an increase in teaching workload and methodological issues (e.g., challenges in accessing data and getting ethical approval to conduct research). The findings show that, as expected, female participants (married with children) reported a lower level of productivity when compared with their male counterparts, as they were primarily busy with childcare and online teaching.

Research productivity

The majority of the participants highlighted the difficulty of measuring research productivity. Setting specific goals, such as publishing quality papers and presenting papers at a well-known conference, can be the ideal indicators for productivity. But the most common method of measuring research productivity is the amount of publication output. One participant referred to the organization's approach, i.e. being teaching or research oriented-as an important indicator for encouraging research productivity for both quality and quantity:

At my university, productivity is linked to research output (the amount of quality research) … But in any teaching-oriented university, productivity is linked to student satisfaction and teaching quality. (UK10)

The impact of the COVID-19 quarantine on the participants' research activities was examined under two headings: overall research productivity and research collaboration. Almost half of the participants reported that the quarantine period had no substantial influence on their research activities. Some participants in this group often use online data or buy datasets for their research so they can follow their existing

research agenda. Some other participants' typical research method comprises face-to-face interviews and fieldwork, but during the COVID-19 quarantine, they changed the research approach by conducting online interviews or using available online data/secondary data. A minority of participants (15 percent) evaluated the quarantine lockdown as an opportunity as they focused on COVID-related research topics. For example, one participant (TR1) undertaking the administrative role in his university's distance education center said that his team published a paper by collecting data from the university staff and students to understand their satisfaction with the university's distance education facilities during the quarantine.

The study compared the research productivity of the married female and male participants. As expected, most of the female participants, especially those having children, reported lower productivity when compared to their male counterparts. Research activities became a secondary priority, particularly for the mother participants, who had to prioritize other responsibilities (e.g., teaching and family responsibilities). One participant said that her mind was so busy with several tasks that she could not find adequate time and energy for research. However, there were exceptions. Two married but childless women (UK1, TR10) reported that they had more time and energy to focus on new research ideas and defined the lockdown as a research and writing retreatment. Two mothers also reported that they turned the lockdown into an opportunity by using the limited time efficiently. One of them said that she wrote and published a paper with her husband as they spent more time together at home. The other participant said that she had limited but more focused time at home as she was away from her colleagues' disruption, toxic work environment, and long faculty meetings. She stated that the online meetings were shorter, so she saved more time for research. Another important point she highlighted is the upgrade of technology-related skills and using online social platforms to stay connected with her academic community and update her knowledge of the research field. All these factors together helped her to achieve research productivity.

35 percent of participants felt that the lockdown was a challenge to their research productivity. One reason for this situation was the decrease in their research motivation because of the uncertain and psychologically damaging environment of COVID-19 (bad news, feeling anxious about their health and loved one's health). The participants emphasized that they felt mentally stressed, as they did not know how long remote work conditions would continue. One participant indicated that uncertainty due to the pandemic demotivated him to initiate new projects or establish research collaboration with other people. In connection with uncertainty, some participants in the UK commented that the limitation in their research budget and the risk of losing their job due to the economic crisis as a result of COVID-19 and Brexit (e.g., a decrease in the number of international students) were the major sources of a decrease in their research motivation.

Social isolation is another reason for the decrease in research motivation and research collaboration. Some participants reported that being away from the work environment demotivated them to create a research routine. Three participants from the UK (UK3, UK11, UK12) stated that remote work offered fewer chances to discuss an issue informally; therefore, they missed the chance of spontaneous discussions to generate new ideas. One of them said that the workplace was a natural environment where they could meet with colleagues and work on new research ideas in quick coffee meetings:

Normally, I jump into a colleague's office and share my ideas immediately. For example, I say 'look, I am doing this. Do you think it makes sense?' (UK3)

Two participants from the UK (UK11, UK12) referred to the negative impact of remote work on losing the sense of community in their academic environment (e.g., department, research group). Similarly,

one participant (TR7) said that she used to meet her academic community regularly through conferences and establish new research networks. Not being able to meet people physically and feel their energy influenced her research motivation negatively. Another participant said that remote work during quarantine may enable meeting people online, but everyone was so busy with several roles (teaching, projects, family responsibilities, etc.) that it was difficult to meet them regularly to work on a new research idea.

Six participants reported that remote work offered an opportunity for their research collaboration because, thanks to technology, people could arrange online meetings by using virtual tools and sharing files/documents, etc. They referred to the positive impact of technology transcending physical country borders and changing people's perception of location. The participants reported that, regardless of being in different countries/continents, people were more accessible through online conferences and seminars. For example, one participant said that her division became more active during quarantine as they invited remarkable guest speakers and arranged online seminars available for many people.

Teaching productivity

Before discussing teaching productivity, it is essential to clarify the remote teaching concept used in this study. There are several terms, such as online teaching, distance teaching, and emergency remote teaching, that identify the remote teaching concept. This study's focus is on the remote work experience of academics in the COVID-19 lockdown context. Therefore, the study refers to Hodges et al. (2020)'s term of 'emergency remote teaching' while using the term 'online teaching' and discussing academics' remote teaching experiences.

Teaching productivity is defined from two perspectives. From a lecturer's perspective, productivity means transferring the knowledge to students effectively and helping them understand the basic concepts and philosophy of a course and its usage in practice. From a student's perspective, productivity can be measured with positive feedback about the lecturer's teaching style and what they learn from the course. The findings show that around 70 percent of the participants defined the online teaching experience as unproductive. The participants often highlighted that they felt mentally and physically tired while trying to teach in front of a screen without seeing the students. Almost all the participants stated that they prefer a physical (face-to-face) teaching environment where they can build a relationship with students through body language and especially eye contact that is missing in online education. Another important point is the observation of students' progress and the measurement of their performances. Concerns were predominantly expressed about student engagement and peer learning. The findings show a low level of student attendance and engagement in online education. One participant (TR9) said that some students have self-discipline, so there is no need to check whether they follow the lectures, but most of the students need external support and push to follow the lectures and receive feedback, which is difficult in online education.

One participant stated that the current version of online teaching- i.e. ERT- consists of uploading the slides while offering a weak level of interaction with the students. He confessed that online education was mostly done at a minimum level through fulfilling the requirements. The participant suggested that lecturers should adapt their course content to online learning for effective education. A similar concern came from a participant questioning his teaching role in online education, quoted as:

My teaching role should go beyond simply uploading documents to the system; rather, I should provide value-added benefits to my students, which requires the preparation of rich and interesting teaching content. (TR9)

One participant referred to the demanding nature of online teaching, as it requires more time and effort to design an online course and make the online lecture notes clear and easy to understand for students. But she also reported that this process was an enriching experience for her, as she created rich course content that was more informative when compared with the face-to-face learning environment. In particular, the participants teaching accounting courses referred to the challenge of teaching numerical courses online, as they would feel more comfortable explaining the topics on the physical board by discussing them with the students. One participant teaching a social course also claimed that online education was not effective in teaching social topics. As she argued, social courses require face-to-face interaction, where a lecturer can use body language and active classroom discussion methods. However, the online class does not offer that synergy.

Contrary to the majority's concern, six participants defined online teaching as an opportunity. Two major themes emerged from the analysis: saving time and upgrading technology-based skills. Some participants stated that online teaching enabled them to save time, as they did not need to travel, they could just focus on the course delivery. However, these comments were mostly made by single people and married men, whereas mother participants complained that it was difficult to focus on teaching at home because their children could disrupt them during online teaching. In terms of the positive aspect of online teaching, the participants referred to the improvement of technology-related skills, as they had to use online systems and applications to upload the lecture notes, arrange online classes and conduct exams. One participant stated that during quarantine, she learned new software programs and methods to teach her courses in the most effective way.

DISCUSSION

This study's findings enable us to explore how the COVID-19 pandemic and its subsequent consequence of remote work influenced male and female academics' work and life roles. While answering this question, the study draws on enrichment theory by examining whether academics' experience in one domain of work-life interface resulted in any enrichment in the other domain. Work enrichment in this study is defined through productivity at work and life enrichment is defined through the quality of personal/family time.

The study shows that remote work offered both opportunities and challenges for academics' WLB in the COVID-19 context. This finding is consistent with those of Dolot (2020) and Esteves et al. (2020). Conducting quantitative research with 327 respondents, Dolot (2020) assesses the remote work done before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her study shows that remote work has positive effects in terms of efficiency and work adjustment to personal needs. Similarly, Esteves et al. (2020)'s study with academics demonstrates that remote work saves time from work because academics do not need to travel, allowing them to spend more time with family or on non-work activities. This positive impact of work on life/family is defined as work-to-family enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). In line with Esteves et al. (2020)'s finding, the current study found that especially the academics commuting long hours before the COVID-19 pandemic perceived remote work to be more efficient. Online meetings,

in particular, were defined as time-saving because academics followed a schedule within a limited time frame, leaving more time for personal life. One male participant having young children mentioned that during the quarantine period, he was more productive by using the limited but concentrated time for working without any disruption from colleagues or students. Thanks to remote work, he had more time to spend with his family, which illustrates work-to-family enrichment. However, not all participants enjoyed such enrichment through remote work. For example, one mother participant stated that, contrary to her expectations, despite having so many other responsibilities at home (housework and childcare), she was more productive at work during quarantine than she was in normal times. However, her life domain suffered as a result of constantly feeling guilty about not spending enough time with her family. This situation can be defined as 'work enrichment' but as 'family conflict'.

Regarding the negative effects of remote work during pandemics, the study supports the findings of Dolot (2020). The most highlighted themes that emerged in the present study are social isolation and blurred boundaries between work and life. This may sound confusing, as remote work contributes to work-to-family enrichment by saving time from work (no commuting, shorter meetings, etc.); but it also creates challenges due to the intertwined boundary between work and life. An explanation would be the different circumstances of individuals. Participants who did not have any caring responsibilities enjoyed the time they saved from work, whereas those who had young children struggled to balance their work and family roles. These participants complained that social isolation exacerbated the situation because they could not receive any external support (e.g., caregivers, extended family members, friends, etc.). Work intensification was another emphasized theme in the study. The participants referred to the more demanding nature of online teaching compared to face-to-face teaching, and the increased number of meetings and student emails. This result supports those of Watermeyer et al. (2021). Surveying 1148 academics in the UK, they found that remote work during the pandemic means timelessness of being online and therefore more workload, which results in a challenge to put the boundary between work and life.

An obvious finding of the study is that married people with young children (under 12) struggled the most to balance work and life during the pandemic because they had to fulfill their work and family responsibilities at the same time and place. This finding was also reported by Dolot (2020). Her study shows that the greatest impediment to the work-life balance of the married participants with children was the presence of children at home and more time that the participants needed for childcare (e.g., checking the children's homework, preparing food for them, playing with them, etc.). As expected, the mother participants in this study were found to be the most vulnerable group. Their maternity role overrode their professional role during the pandemic. This situation influenced the majority of the mother participants' research performance negatively. This finding supports the evidence of those studies exploring the working conditions of male and female academics during the pandemic. Flaherty (2020) reported that male academics' paper submissions increased while female academics' paper submissions decreased dramatically. The mother participants in the present study had concerns about the negative impact of COVID-19 on their career progress in the long term due to the lower research performance. Watermeyer et al. (2021) define the mother academics' situation as vulnerable to the 'maternal wall'-- that a woman's maternity creates an impediment to her career. But it does not mean that single women do not suffer during the pandemic. Conducting an auto-ethnographic study, Utoft (2020) shows that single ladies also experience work demotivation during the pandemic, whereas the literature on WLB mostly differentiates women as 'mothers or spouses' but not considering the other categories (e.g., single, single mother, etc.). This current study confirms Utoft's (2020) finding. Four single female participants reported how the isolated environment of COVID-19 negatively affected their research motivation and

productivity. The report by Deloitte (2020, p.7) shows that women without caregiving responsibilities feel "a more negative impact on their mental (44 percent vs. 37 percent) and physical (49 percent vs. 38 percent) wellbeing than their caregiving counterparts". As highlighted in Deloitte's report and supported by this study, whether caregiver or non-caregiver, all women struggled during the pandemic and need organizational support for a better work-life interface.

While discussing the findings of remote working and WLB, as suggested by Sumer and Knight (2001), it is important to consider the participants' different backgrounds. The marital status and gender of participants were mentioned above. Individuals also differ in terms of their personality and this difference influences their experience of the WF interface and their response to crisis times, such as a pandemic. Wayne et al. (2004) argue that structural factors may substantially contribute to work-family conflict (WFC), but an individual's personality may also be an important contributor. For example, negative affectivity-i.e. a personality trait connected with negative emotions, is directly related to a greater WFC (Carlson, 1999). This suggests that positive affectivity is more related to enrichment. Individuals with positive affectivity are expected to use the experience in one domain of the WL interface to improve the other domain and turn the remote work into an opportunity for WLB. An individual who is open to new experiences, for example, is more likely to accept changes and reveal adaptive behaviours in changing conditions (Grant et al., 2013; Wayne et al., 2004). This person would be more willing to transfer skills gained in one domain of WL interaction to another domain.

The book 'Positive Intelligence' by Chamine (2012) refers to the concept of 'sage perspective' that means accepting everything as a gift and opportunity rather than labeling it as a problem or crisis. This perspective seems to be linked with the personality and enrichment of work and life interface. The researcher asked the participants whether they perceived COVID-19 quarantine circumstances as a problem or opportunity while evaluating their work-life balance in the context of remote work. The study shows that a minority of the participants activated their 'sage perspective' and considered the remote work as an opportunity, even if they acknowledged that they initially struggled to keep the balance and remain productive. After a few weeks of adjustment, they became more productive at work. Despite the limited time, they achieved more focused work by liberating their minds from unnecessary work that was usually taking time in the office. They used the focus time to generate new research topics and prepare detailed and informative teaching notes to make teaching more effective for students' learning. This finding supports Sieber (1974)'s 'personality enrichment' concept. It is argued that people with a proactive personality are more likely to develop skills, receive information, and support others. This study shows that remote work during quarantine encouraged the proactive participants to be flexible in their work routines, develop new skills to adapt to the changes (e.g., technology skills, research skills) and achieve mental resilience during crisis times by focusing on priorities rather than sticking with the negative mood.

Considering personality differences, it is expected that extroverts who are outgoing and talkative find meaning in their work by communicating with others, generating ideas together, and creating synergy (see Wayne et al., 2004). These people are more likely to be motivated by the work environment. Therefore, remote work may negatively influence their self-actualization and motivation. On the other hand, introvert people are expected to enjoy remote work due to their self-contained character. This was the case, especially with two participants from the UK. They referred to their introverted characteristics and explained that they felt comfortable working from home. However, the majority of the participants from both Turkey and the UK stated that their motivation was strongly connected to the work environment where they could be socialized. These people were more motivated by communicating with other people

while working. The participants in this group reported that remote work influenced their work motivation and productivity negatively during the quarantine period. Two participants provided an interesting insight. Despite their need for socialization, they said that being away from the toxic work environment enabled them to focus on their research and spend the quarantine period efficiently (e.g., producing new research ideas, publishing papers, etc.). In line with evidence of Esteves et al.'s (2020) study, overall findings of this study show that a great majority of the participants want to have a hybrid work option (remote and office work) after the pandemic as the 'work environment' offers both socialization and opportunity for synergy to produce new research ideas.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that remote work's influence on WLB in crisis times such as COVID-19 needs to be assessed differently than in normal times. During the COVID-19 quarantine, due to 'stay at home' orders, all family members shared the same place for life and work, which makes it difficult to achieve a boundary between work and private life. It may be relatively easier for single people and those living with their spouses/partners to manage their work and life boundaries. But it was the married people with young children who struggled the most. Given the different experiences of diverse groups, organizations need to consider employees' contextual differences while designing remote work policies in the post-COVID-19 world. Individuals' diverse circumstances (marital status, gender, living with dependents-e.g., children, elderly people, having a separate workspace at home, etc.) may enable or disable remote work and subsequently a balanced work and life. This is an important issue for organizations to put on their agenda while thriving to achieve diversity and develop inclusive workplaces, even if these workplaces become more virtualized. Organizations need to develop new inclusion strategies in the post-COVID-19 era, particularly for working mothers, to keep them in the workforce and achieve gender equality.

Considering the study's findings from the enrichment perspective, it is concluded that remote work offers work and life enrichment to some extent to individuals. However, individuals from different living circumstances experience enrichment at different levels and usually by sacrificing one domain rather than a two-way enrichment (work-to life; life-to work). Another important issue for organizations to consider is how remote work will influence work outcomes (productivity, creativity, etc.). Rather than saying 'goodbye' to offices and fully shifting to remote work, organizations may follow a hybrid model that enables flexibility for employees to arrange their work schedule in the office and at home. A workplace may be the source of distraction for concentrated work and a challenge for work efficiency. However, it nurtures the socialization needs of employees and offers an environment fostering the generation of new ideas and creativity through the intellectual synergy of colleagues. The nature of a job also matters while assessing remote work. This study shows that the research aspect of academia may enable remote work to some extent. Nevertheless, teaching still requires face-to-face interaction to a great extent. Future studies may explore the evolution of academia to a new and intense virtual form (online teaching, research, academic collaboration, etc.) in the post-COVID-19 era and how research and teaching can be enhanced on the online platform.

For university institutions, this study recommends that rather than following ad hoc initiatives, they should adopt a mindset shift for long-term diversity and inclusion (D&I) policies and practices and make this approach embedded in organizational culture while designing remote work models in the post-COVID-19 era. To achieve this goal, they should communicate with employees about the university's

plan to enhance D&I practices and ask about the employees' opinions/suggestions in terms of D&I practices. Universities may conduct an employee engagement survey and qualitative employee focus groups to assess the diverse circumstances of their academic staff and to understand their opinions about D&I practices. Using D&I metrics is a useful tool to identify diverse groups and their different needs. Thanks to the metrics, universities do not need to limit diversity measurement to gender; rather, they can include other categories (e.g., family status, parental status, age, tenure, etc.). After identifying the different needs of diverse groups, universities' HR departments may work on how to develop diversified practices for each group and how to implement them in practice. Implementation of a flexible working policy- i.e. offering flexible working hours and working spaces (home office, work office) may be one option in supporting different employee groups.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

A limitation of this study is that it was conducted with participants from higher education-i.e. knowledge workers whose profession already enables remote work. The study should be repeated by including knowledge workers and non-knowledge workers from other industries to understand the industry-level differences while discussing remote work and WLB from a diversity and inclusion perspective. The situation of non-knowledge workers needs consideration due to the different nature of their work. Another limitation is that this study was conducted with academics in the business administration department. Findings show the different nature of research and teaching in different fields- e.g., accounting, management, etc. Considering the nature of work in different faculties, the results are expected to change dramatically. Further research may explore and compare the remote work experiences of academics from different faculties. In addition, the study referred to the similarity of gender roles in Turkey and the UK while discussing remote work and WLB. However, the data was insufficient for further discussion of this topic. Future studies may conduct qualitative research with academics in the UK and Turkey to understand their perception of different gender roles while assessing WLB.

Despite the study's limitation, its findings enhance our understanding of remote work and WLB in crisis times. The study especially adds to the debates on enrichment theory by providing multiple perspectives on WLB and remote work. Furthermore, a detailed examination of academics' experiences during the COVID-19 quarantine provides evaluators/funders with information about individuals' productivity and the challenges they faced during times of crisis. The study encourages managers and HR professionals to revise their management policies and offer more support to individuals living in different circumstances. A further study may explore the HRM strategies, including diversity and inclusion policies, for both knowledge and non-knowledge workers in an expected scenario of acceleration in the permanent digitalization of workplaces. It seems that in the post-COVID-19 world, organizations will survive only if they enhance their human resources' remote work conditions and support diverse groups of individuals' WLB in a remote work context.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Diversity: The practice or approach of employing people from different backgrounds.

Enrichment Theory: A theory of work-life balance that suggests that the experience in one domain of work-life interface results in improvement in the other domain.

Gender Diversity: The practice of achieving equal representation of different genders at workplace.

Inclusive Workplace: A workplace where people from different backgrounds work and have equal rights.

Remote Work: The flexibility of working from anywhere outside of normal office boundaries.

Role Accumulation: Participation in multiple roles in work and life domains.

Work-Life Balance: Achieving an equal weight of time, attention and energy on both work and life domains.

APPENDIX 1

The researcher conducted online interviews with 26 participants in the UK and Turkey. Table 2 illustrates the work and life backgrounds of the participants.

Table 2. Profile of the participants from the UK and Turkey

	Gender	Marital status	Number of children	Living conditions (private/shared house)	Office at home	Academic title	Research/teaching field	Service year in Academia
UK1	Female	Married	0	Family	Yes	DR.- post-doctoral researcher	Innovation management policy	4 years
UK2	Female	Married	1 (younger than 12)	Family	Yes	DR- Lecturer	Accounting and Finance	7 years
UK3	Male	Married	2 (younger than 12)	Family	No	Assistant Professor	Accounting and Finance	3,5 years
UK4	Female	Single	0	Private house	Yes	DR.- post-doctoral researcher	Accounting and Finance	6 months
UK5	Female	Married	2 (younger than 12)	Family	Yes, sharing with her husband who is an academics	DR-lecturer	Politics and Economics	9 years
UK6	Female	Single	0	Shared house	Yes	DR- Lecturer	Marketing	2,5 years
UK7	Female	Married	2 (younger than 12)	Family	Partial yes, sharing with husband, mostly working in the dining table	DR- Lecturer	Marketing	7 years
UK8	Female	Single	0	Private house	Yes	DR- Lecturer	International Strategy and Business	2,5 years
UK9	Male	Single	0	Private house/ family (parents)	Yes	DR- Lecturer	Economics	6 months
UK10	Male	Single	0	Private house	Yes	DR- Lecturer	International Business	5 years
UK11	Male	Married	1 (younger than 12)	Family	Yes	DR- Senior Lecturer	Human Resources Management	14 years
UK12	Male	Married	1 (older than 12)	Family	Yes	Professor	Human Resources Management	more than 20 years
UK13	Male	Married	0	Family	Partial yes, house under construction	DR.- post-doctoral researcher	Human Resources Management	
TR1	Male	Married	3 (younger than 12)	Family	Yes	Associate Professor	Numerical Methods	19 years
TR2	Female	Married	2 (younger than 12)	Family	No	DR- Researcher	Accounting	2 years
TR3	Female	Married	1 (younger than 12)	Family	No, creating a space for myself (bedroom, balcony, living room if everyone is sleeping)	Assistant Professor	Accounting	2 years
TR4	Female	Married	2 (younger than 12)	Family	No, using the living room after the children sleeping	Assistant Professor	Social Service	2 years

Table 2. Continued

	Gender	Marital status	Number of children	Living conditions (private/shared house)	Office at home	Academic title	Research/teaching field	Service year in Academia
TR5	Male	Single	0	Private house	Yes	Assistant Professor	Finance	2 years
TR6	Male	Married	2 (younger than 12)	Family	Yes, sharing with his wife who is an academics	Assistant Professor	Marketing	4 years
TR7	Female	Single	0	Private house	Yes	Associate Professor	Accounting	15 years
TR8	Male	Married	3 (younger than 12)	Family	Partial yes (trying to arrange a room as home-office after the quarantine)	Assistant Professor	Human Resources Management	11 years
TR9	Male	Married	0	Family	Yes, sharing with his wife who is an academics	Associate Professor	Strategic Management and International Business	10 years
TR10	Female	Married	0	Family	Yes	DR-Researcher	International Relations	2 years
TR11	Female	Single	0	Private house/				
Family (parents)	Yes	DR-Researcher	Management	2 years				
TR12	Female	Single	0	Private house	Yes	Associate Professor	Accounting	8 years
TR13	Male	Single	0	Family (parents)	Yes	DR-Researcher	Accounting	2 years

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Section 2

DEI and Leadership in Post–Pandemic Times

Chapter 5
A New Normal Multigenerational Leadership Model for Leaders in the COVID Era

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ABSTRACT

During the COVID era, diverse industries require persons willing to go towards another level of transformational leadership. This author proposes multigenerational leadership as a valuable addition. Five generations in the modern workforce described as the Silent Generation (1928-1945), Baby-Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Generation Y also known as Millennials (1981-1996), and Generation Z (1997-2012) are creating history! Each generation demonstrates unique perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors. The purpose of this chapter is to encourage the addition of multigenerational leadership to established leadership approaches that will require commitment to intentional learning about representatives of each generation, multigenerational challenges, change management styles, multiple intelligences, and effective soft skills. This chapter would emerge as an initial guide during the COVID-19 pandemic and envisions transformation during the post-pandemic era.

INTRODUCTION

For "New Normal Leaders" in a "New Normal Workforce," the Covid-Era continues to create "New Normal Challenges." Historical observations in contemporary work environments include representations of five generations described as The Silent Generation (1928-1945), Baby-Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Generation Y, known as Millennials (1981-1996) and the most recent group is entering the workforce in the form of Generation Z (1997-2012) (Dimock, 2019; Stutzer, 2019). Essential learning points in this chapter reveal unique characteristics of multiple generations in the modern workforce that should be considered part of the evolution of the diversity and inclusion model. Current

research suggests generational differences associated with perceptions of COVID-19 risks and social distancing behaviors among Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation; GenX; Millennials and GenZ (Masters, Shih, Akel, Kobayashi, Miller, Harapan, Lu & Wagner (2020). Leaders in diverse industries would benefit from understanding how a multigenerational workforce can inspire new strategies. Multi-generational management styles, teams, and mentorship programs will be part of a new model to address Covid-19 challenges and opportunities to evolve towards re-imagining a more diverse and inclusive multigenerational workforce.

Considering diverse, multigenerational perspectives would lead to developing "A New Normal Multigenerational Model as a practical leadership guide during the Covid-19 pandemic and visions of transformation during a post-pandemic era. Strategies associated with this model would offer valuable and meaningful guidance towards understanding how to motivate and encourage multiple generations to be more mindful of negative stereotypes and engage in intentional awareness and meaningful learning experiences. Stutzer (2019) suggests strategies for confronting negative generational stereotypes include deliberate efforts by individuals to recognize unique characteristics that would be valuable contributions in work environments currently experiencing transformations because of the Covid pandemic. Mutu-ally beneficial forms of communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, critical thinking, teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership could be soft skills explicitly designed for multiple generations in the workplace.

Additional recommendations from a qualitative study focusing on leading a multigenerational or-ganization (Miranda & Allen, 2017) encourage leaders and managers to establish a firm foundation of knowledge that involves intentional learning about multiple generations as a significant first step in the new normal model. Promoting productive and meaningful work in multigenerational work environments would be included in the toolbox of leadership strategies. An important recommendation from the focus groups in this qualitative study suggests a combination of multiple intelligence and soft skills are neces-sary for leaders of a multigenerational workforce (Miranda & Allen, 2017).

Therefore, demonstrating more than one type of intelligence and exhibiting soft skills is an effective management strategy for a multigenerational workforce in the Covid-Era.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a practical and valuable guide for "new normal leaders" challenged by a "new normal workforce" and ensuring diversity and inclusion for multiple generations in the Covid Era. Multiple perspectives associated with various generations would become part of a new model that includes non-traditional communication, motivation, and soft skills among workers required to develop new skill sets and demonstrate continuous innovation. These are the areas where leaders would benefit from the perspectives of multiple generations and intentional learning about dif-ferent types. Participants in a research study about leading multiple generations in the workforce also encouraged consideration of multiple intelligences, including intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual (Miranda & Allen 2017). However, this multigenerational approach towards the Covid-Era workplace is new. Recommendations from this author encourage additional research study to discover perceptions of leadership and the most effective types of leadership styles in organizations that represent multiple generations.

A brief review of the Covid-Era conditions and the continuous challenges will establish the founda-tion of a new normal model. However, this chapter will begin with a short review of the beginning of COVID-19 and the rapid dispersion of a viral epidemic representing one of the most severe epidemics of infectious disease in modern history.

BACKGROUND

The Beginning of COVID-19

Initial reports of the COVID-19 virus occurred in December 2019 from Wuhan, China. The inability to control continuous outbreaks of acute pneumonia infections resulted in a global pandemic (Bao, Sun, Meng, Shi, and Lu, 2020). The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as a pandemic in March 2020 (World Health Organization, 2020). Infections from the virus impact disproportionate numbers of older adults (Applegate and Ouslander, 2020). Clinical data indicated an average age of 56 years for individuals infected with COVID-19. Older adults with multiple diseases represented many patients requiring support from intensive care. (Sohrabi, Alsafi, O'Neil, Khan, Kerwan, Al-Jabir, Agha (2020).

However, thorough reviews and explanations of the origins and history of Covid-19 are beyond the scope of this chapter. The following resources offer credible information if readers are interested in historical and current updates related to this topic.

1. **COVID-19**

   a. Global Pandemic Information.
      i. The Center for Disease Control.
      ii. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
      iii. World Health Organization
      iv. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Trends associated with this global pandemic reflect significant challenges throughout the COVID Era.

Continuous Challenges in the COVID Era

Church and Ezama (2020) predict three significant shifts that will be emergent and persistent for several years into the future of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Shift 1: "Reconfiguring the nature of work and careers."
Shift 2: "Ruthless process digitalization."
Shift 3: "Focus on the "new face" of engagement."

Shifting the Nature of Work and Careers

The nature of work and careers will shift towards a focus on re-skilling and up-skilling employees in the workforce. The traditional job market will transform into a "***gig market***" that offers flexible work options. The conventional routine promotion process may replace "the idea of "***critical experiences***" that build new skill sets. A transition to more lean management structures will occur while the adoption of more global business services accelerates at a phenomenal pace towards becoming a standard and cost-efficient model (Church & Ezama, 2020). The next transition will include a shift in the process towards "digital work."

Shifting the Process to Digital Work

The introduction of diverse technologies into employees' work routines is standard in the modern workforce. However, advancements in technology will allow employees to use technological skills that increase productivity (Church and Ezama, 2020). In the future, leaders should look forward to training and development transitioning to a completely digital format. Employees who fail to be proactive and enhance technological skills associated with diverse types of work may not remain competitive and marketable in the future.

The New Face of Engagement

Virtual meetings that occur in real-time create opportunities to re-evaluate professional communication and behaviors differently. Teamwork and group dynamics will require creative ways to communicate, collaborate and resolve conflicts. Interpretations of virtual behaviors will require the development of new skill sets (Church & Ezama, 2020).

Leaders must recognize that multiple generations may reflect the trends associated with these challenges differently. Negative stereotypes exist regarding some individuals and groups' ability to adapt to new ways of interacting and communicating in the work culture. Considering this current reality, the development of multigenerational strategies begins with *"intentional learning"* about each generation. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics revealed significant changes in the labor force associated with five generations. Considerable research and statistical data exist on descriptions of The Silent Generation (1928-1945), Baby-Boomers (1946-1964), and Generation X (1965-1980). Leaders would benefit from the following foundational knowledge about transformations occurring among different generations in the workforce.

Baby-Boomers and the Workforce

Basic knowledge regarding the Baby Boom generation indicates that a large percentage of this population is moving towards retirement (Emmons, 2018, Rigoni & Atikins, 2016). Still, Baby Boomers also remain in the workforce for a more extended period (Fry, 2019). In 2014, 40% of individuals aged 55 and older were employed or seeking work (Toossi & Torpey, 2017). By 2024, The Bureau of Labor Statistics revealed that the labor participation rate would increase more rapidly among persons aged 65-74 and 75 and older. However, an interesting prediction was that the participation rate for other age groups would not change significantly over the next decade (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). Significant events that have not occurred in more than half a century are 29% of Baby Boomers ages 65-72 who choose to continue in the workforce and actively seek work (Fry, 2019). There are expectations by Baby Boomers of working past the age of 65 even after qualifying for Social Security Retirement Benefits.
Leaders should recognize the diverse reasons that Baby Boomers continue to work.

1. Compared to previous generations, Baby Boomers are healthier with a longer life expectancy.
2. Baby Boomers have higher levels of education that increase the ability to remain in the workforce.
3. Continuing to work is an incentive to save more for retirement.
4. Changes in Social Security benefits and employee retirement plans encourage Baby Boomers to continue working.

But there must also be recognition of another growing trend in the modern workforce reflecting a significant increase in the Millennial Generation! Individuals representing Generation X are managing challenges associated with caring for parents who are aging and the needs of children in the college-age range (Fry, 2018; Parris, 2018). However, a critical analysis of U.S. Census Bureau statistical data identified Generation Y, Millennial, Digital Natives (1981-1997) as the largest population in the labor force (Fry, 2018). Future predictions from the Pew Research Center Survey also suggest that the global workforce consist of 75 percent of individuals who represent Generation Y.

As these transformations continue to occur throughout global society, consider that Multigenerational Training Strategies will contain each of the following in its foundation that consists of future workforce trends.

Future workforce trends

- Significant Shifts from Traditional Work Routines
- gig markets with flexible work hours
- critical experiences that build new skill sets
- digitalized formats for training and development
- virtual communication and virtual meetings in real-time
- COVID-19 perceived risk of infection
- COVID-19 social distancing
- COVID-19 mandatory vaccines

According to The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development report (2020), collaborations are encouraged between government entities and employers to promote the development of multiple generations in a "new normal" workforce. Non-traditional workforces would have the ability to adapt to continuous changes occurring because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following discussion includes elaborations on the perceptions of the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X (Millennials), and Generation Z regarding the risk of infection and social distancing. Leaders in the modern workforce would benefit from knowledge related to how various generations exhibit different attitudes, behaviors, and willingness to comply with safety limits in the workplace. Discussion of these issues will begin with a description of basic COVID protocols in the work environment, perception of risk of infection, social distancing, and mandatory mask requirements.

COVID Protocols in the Workplace

Since January 2020, each generation in the workplace has been subjected to strict limitations to meet requirements for COVID-19 protocols. The World Health Organization and U.S. Centers for Disease Control developed the following recommendations for social distancing. "Social distancing" requires individuals to maintain a physical distance of 6 feet or at least 2 meters as one way to limit the transmission of the COVID-19 virus spread by respiratory drops (World Health Organization, 2020).

Generational Differences and Perceived Risk of Infection

Research from The Journal of the American Medical Association indicates a severe infection from SARS-COV-2 depends on age. The severity of disease symptoms and higher mortality rates occur among older individuals (Wu & McGoogan, 2020). However, results from the first study to examine perceptions of risk and social distancing behaviors in the United States by (Masters et al., 2020) revealed exciting comparisons of the Baby Boom Generation (age 56-74) to Millennials (age 24-39). Baby Boomers had a lower perception of the risk of infection but a greater tendency to practice social distancing behavior.

Generational Differences and Social Distancing

Social distancing behavior was higher among the Baby Boom Generation (age 56-74), followed by the Millennials (age 24-39) (Masters et al., 2020). But there was no significant difference in social distancing among the Silent Generation (age 75 and older, or Generation Z (age 18-23). As the age increased among individuals, there was a slight increase in social distancing (Masters et al., 2020). But researchers associated with this study emphasized, "…overall more than 60% of adults of all generations were trying to maintain a physical distance of 6 feet or more from others, indicating that a majority of the population was engaging in social distancing efforts" (Masters et al., 2020, p.8). However, results from the study suggest some possible explanations for generational differences associated with perceived risk and social distancing.

Explanation of Generational Differences

Various factors may contribute to the generational differences in perceived risk and social distancing behavior 1. Reactions may have occurred among Baby Boomers even before stay-at-home orders regarding the unusually high number of COVID-19 cases among older adults in long-term care facilities 2. Millennials who had higher perceptions of risk demonstrated a low frequency of social distance behavior because of barriers related to employment, childcare, insecurities related to housing, or failure to understand the meaning of social distancing" (Masters et al., 2020).

The examples of generational differences related to the current COVID-19 pandemic should encourage leaders to engage in "intentional learning" about perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Issues, Controversies, Problems

Multigenerational training strategies

Intentional Learning of Multiple Generations

- **The Silent Generation (1928-1945)**
- **Baby Boomers (1946-1964)**
- **Generation X (1965-1980)**

- **Generation Y Millennials (1981-1996)**
- **Generation Z (1997-2012)**

Current work environments include five generations of workers with diverse attitudes, behaviors, and routines that challenge efforts to build working relationships. Being mindful of each person as a unique individual would be helpful towards avoiding negative stereotypes. (Stutzer, 2019). Team-building exercises could include knowledge of characteristics and significant events of multiple generations that encourage meaningful dialogue about similarities and differences.

Initial challenges for leaders in the modern workforce include ensuring that the learning approach is "intentional." A review of characteristics and significant events of multiple generations is available in Table 1. Recommendations from a qualitative study on leading a multigenerational organization suggest that leaders begin to establish a foundation of knowledge from credible and established diversity and inclusion research and training literature (Miranda & Allen, 2017).

Table 1. 5 Multiple Generations

Generations	Characteristics	Significant Events
Silent (1928-1945)	● Strong Work Ethic ● Survival Mentality ● Expects rewards for loyalty ● Respect for Authority ● Higher achievement means following the rules ●Expects rewards for hard work	● World War II 1939-1945 ● Great Depression ● Wall Street crash ● Banks collapse ● Food riots ●1 income families
Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	● Workaholic Behavior ● Questions Authority ● Questions Status Quo ● Appreciates Recognition ● Team Oriented ● Team Players ● Work is connected to self-worth and personal fulfillment	● Vietnam War ● Civil Rights Movement ● Assassination Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy ● Space race ● Expansion of television for news and entertainment ● 2 parent family with employed father and mother at home
Generation X (1965-1980)	● Belief in short term employment ● Baby Boomers in leadership positions hinder work opportunities ● Learned to be cautious and manage at a young age ● Self-reliant and independent ● Latchkey kids ● Will not compromise family wellness ●Comfortable with technology	● Fall of Berlin wall ● Women's movement ● AIDS epidemic ● Watergate ● 40% grew up in a divorced household ● Dual-career household ● Challenger explosion ●Roe vs. Wade
Generation Y (1981-1997)	● Represents more racial and ethnic diversity than previous generations ● Higher levels of education ● Global Perspectives ● Able to demonstrate sophisticated technical skills ● Group-oriented ● Achievement Oriented ● Motivated ● Able to multitask ● Accustomed to scheduled and structured environments ● Networkers ● Work-life balance is important ● Accepts divergent values	● September 11 tragedy ● Columbine tragedy ● Death of Princess Diana ● Internet ● Social media ● 60% raised in homes with 2 employed parents ● Mothers are older in age
Generation Z (1997-Post Millenial)	● Autonomy is important ● Computer and smart phone technologies information is normal life ● Decreased motivation to read ● Decreased amounts of sleep ● Close family relationships	● Frequent exposure to terrorism, tragedies with natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, Earthquakes in Haiti

The following additional challenges should become goals for leaders to address common issues associated with workers who represent multiple generations and multiple perspectives.

Multigenerational challenges

- **Effective Communication**
- **Miscommunication**
- **Work-Life Balance**
- **Work Ethic**
- **Stereotypes**
- **Sense of Entitlement**

A valuable exercise for leaders would include the development of a multigenerational survey that inquires about the positive aspects of working with colleagues who represent multiple generations. Challenges for employers include building an inclusive workforce that recognizes diversity among aging employees that will reflect four out of ten persons age 50 and older and one person, age 65 for every two persons within the age of 20-64 (OECD, 2020). Additional questions could also include recommendations for improving relationships between individuals and teams at all levels of the organization. A brief review of issues related to Generation Z into the modern workforce will encourage employers to prepare for their arrival.

Generation Z: The New Kids on the Block

Generation Z (1997-2013) consists of the newest employees entering the labor market. Unique patterns of behavior characterize this generation. The modern workforce would benefit from intentional learning to recognize characteristics including lack of work experience, managing expectations, demonstrating diversity, equity, and inclusion, mental health needs, fostering autonomy, fostering a growth mindset, providing coaching, and building communication skills. Schroth (2019) describes this post-millennial generation as a. the most achievement-oriented b. more excellent economic well-being c. more highly educated d. more ethnically and racially diverse than all generations." (Schroth, 2019, p.1). However, because of intentional learning, leaders would discover that this generation has a higher probability of minimal to no work experience resulting in unrealistic expectations about work, lower levels of commitment, and higher turnover. Research indicates that Gen Z employees want a positive attitude and clear targets from their leaders. Effective proactive strategies communicate with each new employee in this generation about their expectations and provide a thorough onboarding process. Onboarding help

Gen Z employees manage fears and uncertainties about the workplace. Without thorough training and clear instructions, the possibility increases that the Gen Z employee may quit their job within six months. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are also essential to this generation since 52% are non-Hispanic whites (Fry & Parker, 2018). But the Millennial Generation also has unique expectations and behaviors demonstrated in the growing global work environment.

The Millennial Generation and Expectations in the Workforce

The Millennial generation is also known as the Internet Generation, Generation Next, the Net Generation, and Digital Natives. Leaders in diverse organizations would benefit from recognizing that the expectations of Generation Y in the workforce include independence, entrepreneurship opportunities, and immediate feedback. Communication preferences include brief e-mails instead of traditional face-to-face

interactions. Generation Y have a higher level of technical competence; believe in a work-life balance, are very achievement oriented, needs frequent praise, attention, feedback and guidance, and believe that thay have equal status with persons in authority (Kane, 2019). Considering the characteristics of each generation, leaders would benefit from self-assessment to determine their role as Multigeneration Change Managers with unique change management styles.

Multigeneration Change Management Styles

A multigeneration organization could consider themselves the change managers who would drive and implement necessary strategies to navigate the Covid Era. Palmer, Dunford, and Buchanan (2021) suggest, "…it is also important to recognize the image of the "Change Manager since the image influences how the change manager approaches the important issues. The ability to switch from one image to another would be considered a valuable skill."
Shaping (enhances capabilities)

- **Coach**
- **Interpreter**
- **Nurturer**

This author proposes that the "shaping" image of managing would be the most effective demonstration of multigeneration change management styles. This type of change management is associated with the participative management style that encourages team involvement during the change process. Shaping multigenerational attitudes and behaviors in an organization enhances leadership capabilities and other change managers who are part of the team that does not have the official position as a leader. This author would like to apply a multigenerational perspective to diverse leadership approaches. The Multigeneration Coach;

Multigeneration Interpreter and Multigeneration Nurturer can influence leaders and management styles in a multigeneration organizational environment.

The multigeneration coach

Demonstrating a **multigeneration coaching leadership style** allows one to approach change related to values and skills. The multigenerational coach would use this style for resolving interpersonal conflicts and assisting employees representing different generations in understanding how to solve their unique problems.

The multigeneration interpreter

Demonstrating a **multigeneration interpreter leadership style** challenges the ability to manage the meaning of attitudes and behaviors by influencing diverse generations to consider different thoughts about the issues that directly or indirectly impact them. The interpreter could provide explanations that help others understand what is meant by diverse generational perspectives (Palmer, Dunford, and Buchanan, 2021).

The multigeneration nurturer

Leaders who demonstrate a **multigeneration nurturer leadership style** can be resilient, involved in continuous learning among different generations in the workplace. This approach is also more effective when diverse generations are confronting competition, changes in external pressures, and comply with requirements for consistent efforts to regenerate and engage in adaptation.

Achieving competency for each multigenerational approach would include demonstrating the most effective multigenerational leadership style. However, in the process of developing competency, a significant concern when exhibiting multigenerational coaching, interpreting, and nurturing is to be sure to monitor levels of "employee engagement."

Employee engagement

A study of "employee engagement" in 155 countries revealed a deficit in levels of engagement. Employee engagement scores from organizations within the United States reported 30 percent employee engagement. Although differences in engagement would be expected depending on organizational conditions in diverse countries, employee engagement scores did not exceed 40 percent for any country! According to Gallup (2017), employers whose employees reported higher levels of engagement in their work environments, in the top 25 percent range, including 70 percent of employees,

1. 17 percent of employees said more productivity
2. 21 percent of the organizations reported increases in profits
3. Confrontation of deficits in employee engagement would benefit efforts to encourage positive organizational change

Ensuring employee engagement is a valuable strategy for multigenerational management. However, multigenerational perspectives for leadership roles would also involve recognizing that individuals representing different generations demonstrate multiple types of intelligence.

Multigeneration multiple intelligence

Leaders in multigenerational work environments would benefit from establishing a foundation of knowledge recognizing multiple intelligences. Palmer, Dunford, and Buchanan (2021) elaborate on descriptions of unique types of intelligence, such as collaborative intelligence. This author suggests that diverse types of intelligence be considered part of a multiple intelligence model for leaders to consider when working with various individuals who represent multiple generations:

- Social Intelligence
- Emotional Intelligence
- Ethical Intelligence
- Spiritual Intelligence
- Collaborative Intelligence

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Social Intelligence from a Historical Perspective

Dewey (1909) and Lull (1911), as cited in Kihlsrom and Cantor (2011), were the creators of the term ***"social intelligence*."** A description of social intelligence developed in 1920 by E. L. Thorndike suggests exploring how to think and behave during human situations.

The evolution of social intelligence continued with Goleman (2006) with the addition of "social skills" so that the individual demonstrates:

1. Appropriate self-expression
2. Insightful observations
3. Understanding during social interactions

Albrecht (2009) creates a social intelligence profile including basic skills in different categories

a. Situational awareness
b. Presence
c. Authenticity
d. Clarity
e. Empathy

This author suggests that the ability for leaders to understand and demonstrate "social intelligence" would be beneficial in multigenerational environments to address issues related to the Covid-era occurring in the present and predictions for the future. Palmer, Dunford, and Buchanan (2021) suggest that **social intelligence** is necessary for occupations associated with business, management, and finance, considering that it involves demonstrating the ability to understand other individuals while being mindful of the effect of the interaction. Social Intelligence would be an advanced skill for leaders in a multigeneration environment and continuous professional development goals. Feedback from team members who represent different generations in the work environment would be essential for more accurate reflections of progress and areas for improvement. This author suggests that social intelligence be included in a competency model for leaders to achieve continuous progress in addition to emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence

Observations from participants in a qualitative study suggested that the demonstration of emotional intelligence was an essential skill for leaders in a multigenerational workforce (Miranda & Allen, 2017). The Change Management Institute, a global non-profit organization located in Australia, includes emotional intelligence in self-management as part of one of the most comprehensive competency frameworks (Change Management Institute, 2017).

A description of emotional intelligence suggests an ability to discern and manage emotional cues and information. By including emotional intelligence in self-management, leaders may develop valuable skills. Baack (2017) also provides a more detailed description of **e*motional intelligence*** separated into distinct dimensions.

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Self-Motivation or Self-Persistence
4. Empathy
5. Social Skills

This author suggests that emotional intelligence is a process, and leaders should expect continuous growth during professional developmental stages in their careers. A multigeneration work environment would create opportunities to understand the diversity of emotions while mastering the ability to manage and express feelings. Emotional intelligence is one of the competency-based skills that could positively influence a multigeneration work environment.

ETHICAL INTELLIGENCE

Ethically intelligent leaders

Dr. John T. Opincar provided the following description of ***ethical intelligence*** in the final chapter of his book, "Ethical Intelligence: The Foundation of Leadership." He described the ethically intelligent leader designed to encourage self-assessment among leaders who include it as an area of continuous growth and development.,

"For leaders, every leader/follower relationship is a garden. Into that garden, we sow seeds of hope, recognition, and expectation. We fertilize those seeds with teaching and direction. We water with encouragement and understanding. We cultivate with a vision of our destination. We weed with assessment and feedback. We prune by allowing mistakes."

"Through it all, we set clear expectations for a bountiful harvest. Those who master this new art of relationship gardening will become the great ethically intelligent leaders who change the world." (Opincar, 2016, p. 332).

Leaders of a multigenerational workforce in the Covid-era would benefit from demonstrating this type of ethical intelligence that would be an active application of honest thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. But, also consider that spiritual intelligence would be a valuable addition to complement emotional intelligence, social intelligence, and ethical intelligence (Miranda, Allen, 2017) as part of the new model for managing in the Covid-era.

Spiritual intelligence

Another type of intelligence that would be worthy of intentional learning by leaders of multiple-generation work environments is "spiritual intelligence." From a historical perspective, an initial description of spiritual intelligence" involved developing the ability to identify and reconnect with some meaningful and authentic purpose in an organizational environment are essential aspects of spiritual intelligence (Scharmer, 2009). However, this author encourages awareness of significant differences when distin-

guishing spiritual intelligence from spirituality or religion. Spiritual Intelligence is associated with "the ability to maintain complete peace while demonstrating wisdom and compassion regardless of the circumstances (Wigglesworth, 2012, p.4).

Applying spiritual intelligence to different generations in the workforce would reveal valuable information about what is meaningful, what defines authenticity and purpose, and what goals are essential to achieve according to unique generational perspectives (Miranda and Allen, 2017).

Persons who represent The Silent Generation, Baby-Boom Generation, Generation X (Millennials), Generation Y, and Generation Z would report diverse perspectives associated with spiritual intelligence.

Application of this perspective to issues in the Covid-era workforce would be part of the new-normal multigeneration model. Kaur and Kaur (2015) expand on the demonstration of spiritual intelligence that includes high levels of growth associated with the ability to adapt and problem solve within the following domains a. cognitive b. moral c. emotional and interpersonal. Intense personal and professional struggles associated with multiple generational workers would benefit from demonstrations of these various characteristics' spiritual intelligence by leaders in diverse organizations.

However, the development of this model requires another addition for leaders of multiple generations in the workforce. The emergence of collaborative intelligence suggests a collaboration between humans and artificial intelligence, becoming the next significant trend in the modern workforce.

Collaborative intelligence

Trends associated with transformations in the Covid-era involve an increase in customer interactions. Management by non-human agents and diverse self-service technologies are visions of the future. However, Wilson & Daugherty (2018) suggest that humans and artificial intelligence will form relationships that emerge from *collaborative intelligence.* The authors suggest that the objective is not to replace human beings with artificial intelligence. A description of artificial intelligence is a type of computer science that creates machines and programs with the ability to demonstrate multiple types of intelligence without depending on a program of instructions (Hyacinth, 2017). The devices can imitate human reactions considering the design allows critical thinking and learning. The ability to make decisions, changes, and improvements may be part of embedded algorithms in machines. There would be no need for human intervention to direct or control intelligent machines.

Organizational performance goals would enhance collaboration between humans and artificial intelligence, allowing human beings to pursue a new reality of work-life balance.

However, to remain marketable, leaders should encourage workers to develop knowledge and skills associated with artificial intelligence in their fields of expertise or be left behind. The establishment of collaborative intelligence cannot occur without this foundation of knowledge and skill.

Intentional learning of multiple intelligences would be valuable to leaders in multigenerational work environments. Diverse leaders could recognize other levels of cultural intelligence, including social intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, ethical intelligence, and collaborative intelligence. This author also recommends developing multigeneration mentorship programs as potential solutions for the growth and development of the multigeneration workforce.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Multigeneration mentorship programs

Palmer, Dunford, and Buchanan (2021) recommend **intergenerational mentoring** as a valuable practice. Development of mentorship agreements may occur between employees from the Baby Boom Generation. They offer guidance in defining strong work ethics and meaningful work, while employees from Generation Y share their knowledge and skills about diverse social networking. Leadership staff may assist by sharing knowledge of each generation's value for achieving team and organizational goals. A multigeneration model for leaders in the Covid-Era would combine all of the strategies and recommendations proposed by this author and establish research associated with multiple generations in the workforce.

Multigeneration model

The multigeneration model in Figure 1 consists of

1. Multigeneration Intentional Learning
2. Multigeneration Multiple Intelligences
3. Multigeneration Change Management Styles
4. Multigeneration Mentorship Programs

Figure 1. Multigeneration Model
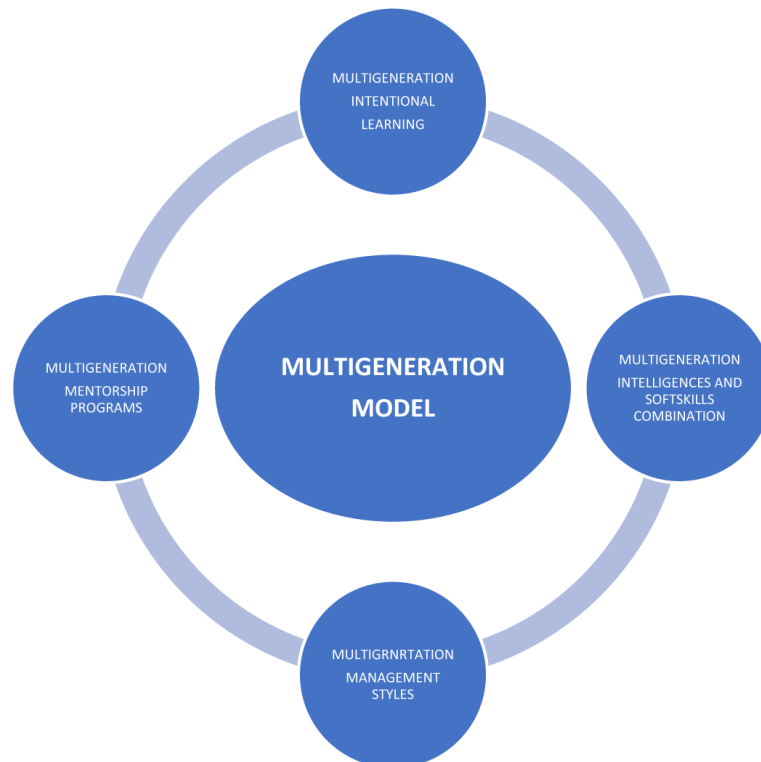
In multigeneration work environments, practical applications of this model suggest active participation, active learning, and development in multigeneration teams. Additional emphasis on demonstrating essential soft skills related to communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and conflict resolution supports soft skills.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Interest in research associated with generational differences and diversity has increased over the past 20 years (Berge & Berge, 2019). A historical trend in the workforce reveals five generations of workers with diverse attitudes, behaviors, and routines that challenge efforts by leaders to build working relationships.

Future research trends suggest that intentional learning about multiple generations in the COVID-Era will continue. Additional research studies would provide valuable information about attitudes and behaviors associated with how different generations in the workforce perceive risks of infection, social distancing, mandates to wear mask protection, and mandatory vaccinations with evidence of compliance for some workers.

However, the debates in the research continue regarding support for focus on generational differences or generational similarities. However, standard research agreement indicates the need for strategies and interventions to confront negative generational stereotypes and generational discrimination in the workplace.

CONCLUSION

The historical event involving five different generations existing in the modern workforce requires new normal leaders willing to seek strategies to address new normal challenges. During this Covid-Era, people from multiple generations perceive COVID protocols differently in diverse attitudes and behaviors. Negative generational stereotypes exist regarding some individuals and groups' ability to adapt to new ways of interacting and communicating. Considering this current reality, the development of multigenerational strategies begins with *"intentional learning"* about each generation.

A combination of change management approaches, such as multigeneration coaching, multigeneration interpreter, and multigeneration nurturer, offers practical strategies for leaders in diverse work environments. However, multigenerational challenges include effective communication, miscommunication, work-life balance, work ethic, stereotypes, and entitlement.

A valuable exercise for leaders in the COVID-Era would include the development of a multigenerational survey that inquires about the positive aspects of working with colleagues who represent multiple generations. Additional questions could also include recommendations for improving relationships between individuals and teams at all levels of the organization. However, leaders would also benefit from self-assessment to determine their role as Multigeneration Change Managers with unique change management styles. The modern workforce would benefit from new normal leaders willing to evolve to new leading levels by intent.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Change Management: Use specific goals, strategies, and models to manage various changes effectively.

Collaboration Intelligence: The combination of human efforts and artificial intelligence to accomplish goals and objectives.

Critical Experiences: Work-related experiences specifically designed to build new skill sets.

Intentional Learning: An active plan to intentionally seek diverse experiences to build knowledge, abilities, and skills.

Multigeneration Challenges: Challenges experienced by different generations include communication, miscommunication, stereotypes, work-life balance, work ethic, and sense of entitlement.

Multigeneration Model: The application of intentional learning, multiple intelligences, change management styles, and mentorship programs to different generations.

Multiple Intelligences: Recognition of different types of intelligence such as social intelligence, emotional intelligence, ethical intelligence, spiritual intelligence, collaboration intelligence, and artificial intelligence.

Chapter 6
Applying Lessons Learned From COVID–19:
Leading Into the New Era of D&I

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic put a proverbial magnifying glass on many societal and business issues. Business leaders were not as prepared as they would have liked to have been to address the issues and as a result learned multiple lessons, in particular, how to navigate increased need for attention to workplace diversity and inclusion (D&I). With these lessons in mind, understanding opportunities to expand how we think about and define diversity, the need for belonging/inclusion, how changing workplace demographics are becoming more influential, and the critical role organizational leadership plays in the D&I journey are essential as we move through the COVID-19-pandemic era. Leveraging transformational leadership as a mindset and an emerging model, reflect-forward framework, practical strategies are presented to help leaders reflect, assess, and set the stage to move forward. Due to the evolving nature of the topic, resources include a combination expertise of the authors, research data, popular press, and scholarly articles.

INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 will be synonymous with an epic reference point in history due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. It was essentially an entire year where the unwelcome rule of the day was volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) (Worley & Jules, 2020). The expression *leading on quicksand* felt more like a reality than an expression. Economic reporters suggested trying to stabilize a business

during COVID-19 "is built on quicksand" (Knapp, 2020). It is estimated that it will take five plus years for many industries to recover from the pandemic (Dua et al, 2020).

The pandemic and its secondary effects of largely forcing the world to pause and periodically to see through lenses that were often new, was a bleak reminder to many of the how much we can be better as citizens, communities and people whether in our personal, civic or business lives. Failing to pay close attention to, plan for change or respond quickly in the face of information contrary to the familiar lead to missed opportunities, untapped potential or worse. While the pandemic has been difficult including the strains of mental health loneliness and isolation, the learnings have been significant - a glimpse of what is possible and what is acceptable. We could clearly see changing societal values and expectations which would eventually influence business and the workforce. At the societal level increased focus and visibility on world and local events would again begin to influence political discussion, activism and policy. These factors combined with technology adoption would fuel new information exchanges and new voices, aiding a cultural shift back from big institutions to individuals and communities. These efforts, visible across the gamut from climate change, healthcare and income equality to immigration and rights debates to debt, harassment and social justice, each would eventually influence business, redirecting culture, attention and resources.

COVID, without giving us a choice, forced a pause that gave the world time to reset, time to reevaluate what is most important today in our personal lives, local and national communities, and global society. From a workplace standpoint we reaffirmed how important business and the corresponding relationships are to our well-being on multiple levels, from simply earning a living to providing benefits, mental health and social needs. Work may have become the place to achieve common goals and a shared sense of mission in a world where people feel growing public frustration and societal distrust, polarization and tribalism (Dixon, 2019).

Frustration and distrust were not the only things emerging, attention on demographics trends were increasing. The traditionalist and boomers were either retiring or preparing to retire, and the ethnic/cultural make-up and perspectives of Gen Y, X and Z were influencing both as workers and fairly significantly as consumers (Rahilly et al., 2020). All of these factors became more prominent as COVID-19 unfolded and we started to see and feel the divide and differences among these groups (Radin & Korba, 2020).

COVID-19, in essence, became the magnifier of all that was ailing us. What we once knew to be guiding principles for business, government, health and wellness, and the global economy disappeared or seemingly changed overnight with no clear road map on how to navigate; hence the increased use of the phrase "leading on quicksand". What we as consultants, educators and researchers observed overtime and in the process of developing this chapter was for the first time in over a century, organizational leaders and business owners were faced with the realization that they had existed in a world where:

- business scenario planning was weak to nonexistent based on COVID-19 response,
- leaders were mired in predictable prescriptive processes and procedures that didn't work,
- agile and innovative cultures were scarce,
- how we needed to broaden and prioritize our perspectives on what are we missing around talent hiring and utilization,
- all too often employees took a backseat to the customer, and
- the reality of a clear need to revisit, and in some case start, diversity and inclusion conversations was at the forefront of workplace, community, and national conversations'.

COVID-19 as a magnifying glass. The pandemic prompted an intense magnification on some of the biggest societal and business issues: D&I, work-life balance and boundaries, toxic politics, environmental sustainability, who comes first in business – the customer or the employees (aka talent), and the growing differences in age demographics in the workplace (Tisdell, 2020). At the heart of this list is nothing new, these issues existed, but no longer were we able to ignore them. There were "so-called" efforts working on elements of these issues; however, the mantra about continuous improvement, growth, agility, change and innovation was a C- grade at best; but why? The answer, societal and business leaders were inching through changing the status quo and planned for the predictable. No one planned for a pandemic, nor that into almost every living room or available on every electronic device would social injustice be front and center and the death of George Floyd be broadcast (Gunderson, 2021). We were observing real-time and become on a very large-scale privy to a very dark side of humanity that was supposed to serve and protect (Subramanian & Arzy, 2021). There was no longer the opportunity to not know, this event and other events in 2020 and 2021 created increased social awareness that could not be ignored.

The list of opportunities to improve post-crisis business scenario planning, increased economic agility, and improved national and global health protocols were clearly candidates for revamping; but D&I catapulted to universal attention. Although skeptical, there is hope and optimism that leaders are open to taking action to foster a renewed approach and perspective to D&I. D&I has the possibility to enable the greatest transformation in both the world of work and communities in which we live. With this in mind, this chapter serves to help leaders navigate current and future change leveraging 2020 and 2021 experiences and lessons from COVID-19 with a focus on understanding the past, so we can adjust mindsets in the present and enable increased action on D&I now and into the future. Through observations and lesson-learned, specific concerns are addressed and an emerging model, Reflect-Forward Framework, (Larson DeMarco & Hall, 2021) is offered to support leaders on the journey to assess and execute change as it relates to facilitating resilient mindsets and post-pandemic D&I.

As we provide insights and opportunities in this chapter, note that scholarly research, popular press, and interviews were conducted based on the fluid nature of the topic and desire to provide as current information as possible to support leadership in an authentic D&I journey.

BACKGROUND: LESSONS LEARNED & DATA

Pandemic-Life. In late 2020 and into 2021, it was not uncommon to frequently hear, "I can't wait for things to get back to normal" or "When we go back to …." fill in the blank. As leaders and managers, we evangelize the importance of continuous learning, innovation and change; yet we hold on to what we have grown to know (i.e., accepted norms, processes and procedures have worked in the past) and create cultures that do the same. "Familiar situations tend to be safer and more predictable for us" (Boyes, 2021). This applies to how we develop our business strategies; acquire, develop, optimize and retain talent; develop cultures that value D&I, lead people to get the best out of them; and ultimately execute on our customer promise. What was discovered, as a result of the pandemic, was a greater and deeper need to address all these areas in order to develop new organizational competencies for the future especially as is related to D&I.

Demographics & Age. We have a better understanding now that none of the issues were new, they were just more apparent. Over the course of the first two decades of the 21st century the US demographics had been changing steadily (Buckey & Bachman, 2017). Millennials may have been the first to push

on workplace status quo, but reality is their wants and asks prompted other generations to take a look at how they worked, who they worked with, workplace culture, and the meaning of work and having impact. Millennials further helped push that D&I is more than a nice to have, but an imperative (Alexander, 2016). They also helped to further expand the definition of D&I to include not only race, sexual identity, and the common elements of a traditional definition but to value the talent in the workplace "inclusion is the support for a collaborative environment that values open participation from individuals with different ideas and perspectives that has a positive impact on business" (Dishman, 2015).

Over the last 10 years, momentum that was largely already present because of shifting worker demographics with differing individual needs such as employee alignment to organizations' mission, values, culture and community impact or the need for more balanced lives, flexible workplaces, and professional development (SHRM.org, ret. 2021). In reflection, the authors' experience suggest that these factors would create a growing gap between new workers entering the workforce and the boomer generation who redefined business and employee relationships in the late 1970's and 80's.

Post boomer generations are looking for feel connected, valued and understand how they are being measured (Pewresearch.org, 2010). Cultural elements such as diversity and inclusion also play vital role in for whom and how long they work for an employer. Of note, while there have been numerous diversity-intended initiatives dating back to Affirmative Action, now the business' needs may drive the emphasis on connecting to changing demographics and shrinking borders. This achieved by gaining cultural competence, market intelligence/connection and creativity/innovation enabled by having a diverse talent portfolio that is led to high performance by inclusive leaders.

Teams. Acquiring the best talent and producing at a high level is so important that companies such as Google have invested in studies like the Aristotle Project (Google, ret. 2021) where they looked to find the common characteristics across their most successful teams. Google (https://rework.withgoogle.com/print/guides/5721312655835136/) identified five dynamics of effective teams:

1)   Psychological safety: Team members feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable in front of each other.

Psychological safety refers to an individual's perception of the consequences of taking an interpersonal risk or a belief that a team is safe for risk taking in the face of being seen as ignorant, incompetent, negative, or disruptive. In a team with high psychological safety, teammates feel safe to take risks around their team members. They feel confident that no one on the team will embarrass or punish anyone else for admitting a mistake, asking a question, or offering a new idea.

2)   Dependability: Team members get things done on time and meets Google's high bar for excellence.

On dependable teams, members reliably complete quality work on time (vs the opposite - shirking responsibilities).

3)   Structure and clarity: Team members have clear plans, roles and goals

An individual's understanding of job expectations, the process for fulfilling these expectations, and the consequences of one's performance are important for team effectiveness.

4)   Meaning: Work is personally important to team members

Finding a sense of purpose in either the work itself or the output is important for team effectiveness. The meaning of work is personal and can vary for each person: financial security, supporting family, helping the team succeed, or self-expression for each individual, for example.

5)   Impact: Team members think their work matters and creates change

The results of one's work, the subjective judgement that your work is making a difference, is important for teams. Seeing that one's work is contributing to the organization's goals can help reveal impact. (Website)

Managers. Google with their Project Oxygen research set out to determine what makes a manager great at Google. Their People Analytics team defined manager quality based on two quantitative measures: manager performance ratings and manager feedback from Google's annual employee survey. The data revealed that managers did matter: teams with great managers were happier and more productive. Going through the comments from the annual employee survey and performance evaluations, Google (https://rework.withgoogle.com/guides/managers-identify-what-makes-a-great-manager/steps/learn-about-googles-manager-research/) found ten common behaviors across high-scoring managers.

1)   Is a good coach*
2)   Empowers team and not micromanage*
3)   Creates an inclusive team environment, showing concern for success & well-being*
4)   Is productive and results-oriented*
5)   Is a good communicator*
6)   Supports career development*
7)   Has a clear vision/strategy
8)   Has key technical skills to help advise the team
9)   Collaborates across Google*
10)   Is a strong decision maker. (Website)

Individuals – A sense of belonging. Deloitte (2020) found that creating a sense of belonging at work is the outcome of three mutually reinforcing attributes.

- Workers should feel **comfortable** at work, including being treated fairly and respected by their colleagues.
- They should feel **connected** to the people they work with and the teams they are part of.
- They should feel that they **contribute** to meaningful work outcomes—understanding how their unique strengths are helping their teams and organizations achieve common goals.

Data. As a baseline for understanding, it's important to have contextual background data on workforce demographics and D&I related statistics. The following figures are a snapshot in time and serve to provide some helpful data to offer perspective. The sources are noted. The intent is to provide a data lens as we explore how to further support D&I in the workplace and move forward. There are two sets of data provided: (1) financial implications for organizations that make D&I part of their organization culture and (2) demographics trends that are and will continue to influence D&I in the workplace.

There are studies that offer data suggesting that D&I has financial implications. Some subscribe to this data, others are skeptical. Reiners (2021) offered the following in a research review:

● Diverse companies enjoy 2.3 times higher cash flow per employee

One study found that over a three-year period, companies with a diverse set of employees notice a significant increase in cash flow, not just overall, but among individual contributors at the company.

● Diverse management boosts revenue by 19%

Another study looked at companies with diverse management teams and found that, on average, they enjoyed a 19% increase in revenue compared to their less diverse counterparts.

● 43% of companies with diverse boards noticed higher profits

Not only is it beneficial to have diverse employees and management, but companies with diverse boards also noticed significantly higher profits.

● Companies with highly gender-diverse executive teams perform significantly better

Executive teams that are highly gender-diverse are found to be 21% more likely to outperform on profitability.

● Plus, companies that are highly gender-diverse notice exceptional value creation.

Gender-diverse companies that are in the top-quartile for gender diversity on executive boards are 27% more likely to have superior value creation.

Additional examples from are metrics from PWC (2021):

● 33% is how much more productive businesses can be with a diverse workforce.
● 85% of companies with a formal D&I program showed an improved bottom line.
● 43% of businesses which have diverse boards are more likely to realize higher profits.

While for some the financial impacts of D&I may be up for debate, we believe organizational capabilities are not. A diverse team operating in an inclusive environment should deliver:

● Higher levels of creativity, innovation and problem solving
● Provide Global mind-set and Cultural fluency
● Win top talent
● Improved Customer orientation, Decision making & Employee satisfaction

The following data sets are provided to provide context for why change is not only eminent but should be guided by skillful leadership.

Figure .1 provides an overview of workplace age demographics Purdueglobal.edu (ret. 2021). Figures 2, 3 and 4 are projections about workforce demographics from the US Census Bureau (ret. July 2019).

Figure 1. Workplace Age Demographics: Generational Segments

Historical point 2015: For the first time in history, there are five generations in the workplace with five different approaches.

- Traditionalists—born 1925 to 1945 = 2% of workforce
- Baby Boomers—born 1946 to 1964 = 25%
- Generation X—born 1965 to 1980 = 33%
- Millennials—born 1981 to 2000 = 35%
- Generation Z—born 2001 to 2020 = 5%
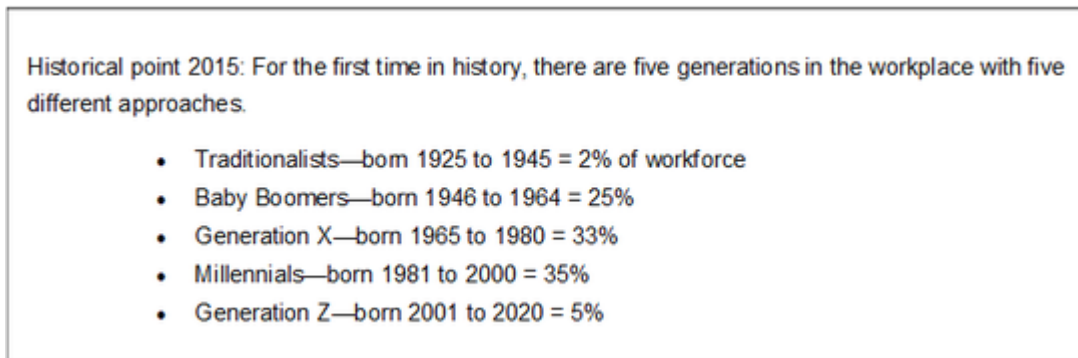
Figure 2. Census Statistics: Race as of 2019

- White: 76.5%
- Hispanic or Latinx: 18.3%
- Black or African American: 13.4%
- Asian: 5.9%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1.3%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0.2%
- Two or more races: 2.7%
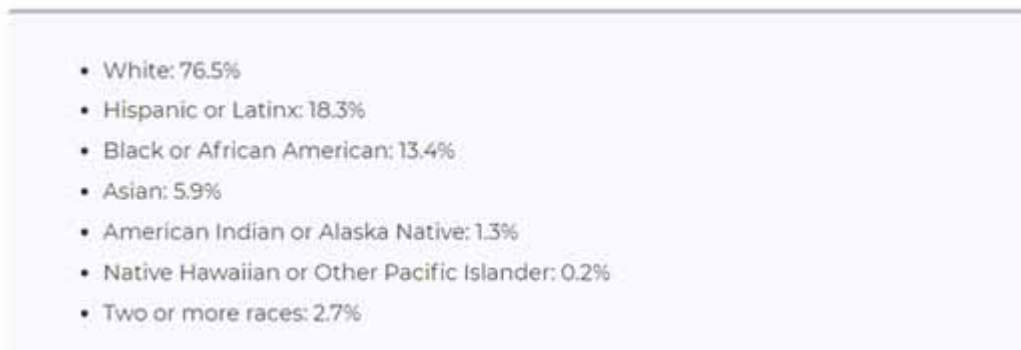
Figure 3. Gender, Age, & Education: Census Statistics as of 2019

- Women make up 50.8% of the U.S. population.
- 58.2% of the civil labor force is made up of women aged 16+.
- 87.3% of people have graduated from high school.
- 30.9% of people have at least a bachelor's degree.
- 8.7% of people under the age 65 are a person with a disability.
- People between the ages of 18 and 65 (working age) make up 38.4% of the population.

Figure 4. Projections for 2025 and beyond

NOTABLE DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE STATISTICS

1. By 2044, groups formerly seen as "minorities" will reach majority status
2. By 2025 Millennials are predicted to make up 75% of the workforce
3. Diverse companies enjoy 2.3 times higher cash flow per employee
4. 43% of companies with diverse boards noticed higher profits
5. Racially & ethnically diverse companies are 35% more likely to perform better

In review of the data, leadership has a lot to consider when thinking about the future of D&I and what needs to be considered as the workplace demographics continue change. The ask of leadership by the 2020 workforce, they are transparent, communicative, and engaging (Dishman, 2015). We pose, it all starts with a conversation.

STARTING PLACE: A CONVERSATION

As we explore this need, a strong sense of belonging became a focal point. Belonging drives engagement and strong employee morale are the key components to employers enjoying the benefits of high performing teams; higher retention rates, productivity, problem solving and creativity – workforce stability and product/service innovation (Herbert, 2020). "Belonging is a key component of inclusion. When employees are truly included, they perceive that the organization cares for them as individuals, their authentic selves," says Lauren Romansky, Managing Vice President, Gartner. "That's good for employees — and ultimately improves business performance" (Wiles, 2020).

If we know belonging as a part of inclusion matters, it's likely frustrating to many leaders who have expended efforts to read that while "U.S. businesses spend nearly 8 billion dollars each year on diversity and inclusion (D&I) trainings that miss the mark because they neglect our need to feel included" (Carr et al., 2019).

D&I in our view can be a fairly simple concept when centered around talent sets. Diversity being the talent portfolio that is strategically built or acquired and inclusion being how good leaders fully actuate that talent to its greatest benefit: connecting with new or changing markets, acquiring the best talent or solving big problems and innovation. Remiss not to mention equity, which is the continued efforts to shore up weaknesses and grow opportunities for people and the company.

Through that lens of belonging, we see opportunity to explore and identify a workable way to help leaders with an approach to D&I rooted in the foundations of simple organizational change, process upgrades and leader/manager commitment to excellence. The result should be an organization more in tune to its employees and customers regardless of their makeup; thus, creating better leaders, better managers, better co-workers.

Exploring the definition of diversity. It starts with an honest conversation about what does diversity mean for your/our organization and why does it matter. Broadening the definition past simply inherent traits or protected classes to include acquired traits such as education, language, social class, social and political views and the benefits of creating a sense of belonging for all employees. Moving into a journey of ongoing discovery at the individual, role and organizational levels, not a just a checklist of predictable actions but an exploration of a renewed mindset around D&I that fosters an evolution to embrace all the benefits of an inclusive mindset with our family, neighbors, community and workplace.

To this point, we have provided perspective based on experience and research about how COVID-19 placed a magnifying glass on societal D&I issues, the importance of belonging, shared data around the changing demographics and the influence this has on workplace culture, exploring the definition of diversity. We have also offered that D&I start with a conversation and pose that it be seen as a journey not a destination. The next section provides a model by which leaders may use to help move the conversation forward.

REFLECT-FORWARD FRAMEWORK

In working with a diverse set of small, medium and large clients over the last ten years and the impact of the pandemic, a group of us, including the co-author, started to frame a model (Larson Demarco & Hall, 2021; Larson DeMarco & Manion, 2021) to support leaders with D&I:

- reflect on the past,
- acknowledge it,
- learn from it,
- understand what may be important to bring forward,
- be clear about what needs to be left behind,
- explore current state to bring past and present together,
- craft a vision and get collective buy-in, and
- take steps forward with a vision in mind that supports holistic, paced change that the organization's cultural cadence can adopt.

A brief background on the development of the model to set context for how and why it is good not only for D&I but any change management process, journey or initiative.

The Birth of a Model - Reflect-Forward Framework. Pieces of the REFLECT-FORWARD FRAME-WORK have been in practice for decades but have gone by a variety of informal names in strategic business planning, change management planning, and leadership development circles. As a result of 2020, and the tsunami of changes experienced in the world overnight, the framework was aptly named "Reflect Forward" by experience thought leaders that work in the field of business strategy and organizational development. The team was waist high in helping business leaders adopt agile mindsets, quickly engage in business scenario planning, and offering guidance on supporting employees through an inordinate amount of change. The help was not only with their day-today tactical businesses but also with a multitude of talent challenges related to health, wellness, remote work, remote culture and D&I. The collective experience of the consultants, key counter parts on service and customer operations develop-

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ment teams, internal and marketplace data brought light to a commonly used framework with business leaders: reflective learning, current state evaluation, and forward thinking, action-based decision-making.

New but Not New: Key Influencers. In addition to the vast experience of team members and marketplace data, the REFLECT-FORWARD FRAMEWORK is further supported by the theoretical constructs, conceptual modeling and application research by John Dewey's (1933) work on reflection as a rationalized process in *How We Think* publication, Chris Argyris and Donald Schon's (1992) research on reflection and professional development, David Kolb's (1983) theory on experiential learning cycle, David Boud et al. (2015) work on the practice of reflection to turn experience into learning, Kurt Lewin's (1951) change management, Svetlana Boym's (2001) reflective and restorative nostalgia work, and Bernard Bass and Ronald Riggio's (2006) Transformational Leadership.

The Pandemic & The Framework. Twenty-twenty, as it played out, was on no one's radar and brought some of the most complex challenges ever experienced by employers around the globe. It didn't stop there; as it wasn't just the workplace that was impacted, it was every part of life. Almost overnight the world started to shift in pandemic response mode. There is no way to accurately describe the array of emotions and the onslaught of changes that were thrust upon the world. That said, people looked to their leaders, both governmental and in the workplace for guidance.

In essence, REFLECT-FORWARD FRAMEWORK was organized and named as an outcome, or a reaction to global change. The formality in naming of a practice and further defining the steps has evolved over decades and quintessentially came to light as a result of catastrophic change. Applicable to almost any change scenario, planned or unplanned, personal or professional, it is providing tremendous help to leaders managing their own feelings and experience with change and serving as a guide to help others.

In addition to helping team members navigate change as productively as possible, REFLECT-FORWARD FRAMEWORK supports people developing a mindset of not getting stuck in "how it was" or "back to normal". A great quote that offers both a chuckle and an important point about taking care of talent, *"Waiting for things to "go back" to "normal", to the way things were before COVID-19 hit is like waiting for our second 21st birthday. It is not going to happen. Now more than ever, taking care of your talent is critical."* (S. Melone - https://www.insperity.com/blog/author/sue-melone/, personal communication, May 3, 2021).

The Why. Research eloquently indicates a theme around reflection and memory; we often remember what we want to remember. Whether our recollection is accurate or not is what reflective learning offers us, especially in the workplace. This is why engaging in reflective learning and engaging in the process with others of what worked well and what didn't is important. We can easily get lost in what we want the memory to be versus a shared reality of what it was and how does it apply to current and future state.

The How. Familiarity like nostalgia can get us accustomed to certain ways and certain beliefs, and depending on the nostalgia it can present opportunity (reflective) or get us stuck (restorative) (Boym, 2001; McDonald, 2016). As noted in the chapter introduction, "familiar situations tend to be safer and more predictable for us" (Boyes, 2021). Familiar doesn't necessarily prescribe to good or bad, as such it's why we need to explore the past with a mindset of reflection. To move forward with a broader and more open mindset, we have to understand what created the current mindset.

The Reflect Forward Framework offers a fairly simple process for both common and very complex situations around helping employees deal with organizational change. The framework triangulates and leverages key elements of change management theory, restorative nostalgia, reflective nostalgia, and transformational leadership to shift from "quicksand" thinking to reflecting with the intention to move

forward and bring only those things from the past that support current state and will benefit continuous learning and growth to benefit future state.

Figure 5. Reflect-Forward Framework Illustration
Source: Stacy Hall Brandt. 2021
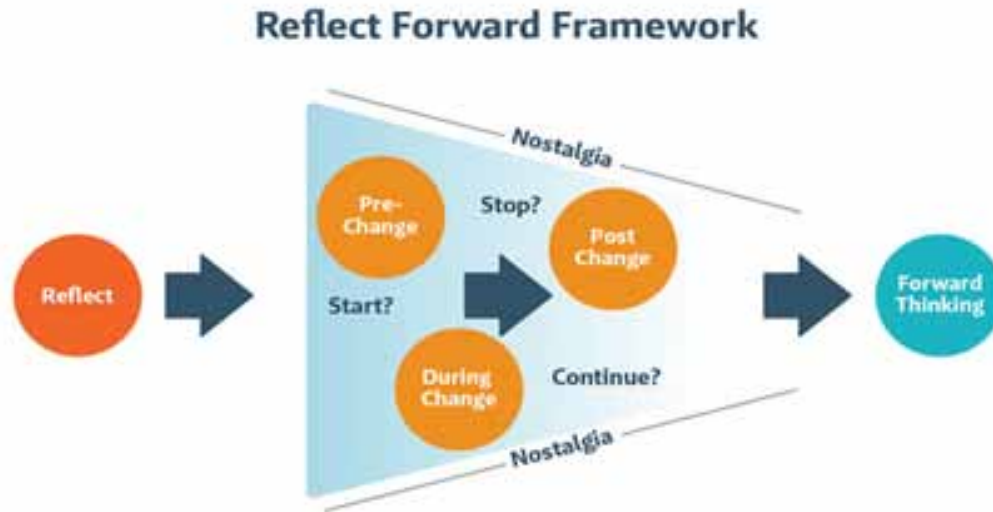
The Framework was developed to help leaders create a heightened sense of awareness around (1) lessons learned from critical incidents, (2) emerging trends around talent management and business performance and (3) ease the facilitation and adoption of change leveraging the social-psychology of nostalgia. In part, the success of the model is predicated on leadership adopting a transformational leadership mindset.

The foundation of the framework starts with the leader's willingness to adopt a on transformational mindset and operate as a transformational leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006); posed as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers that may include developing followers into leaders. Although influenced by numerous researchers, there are three stand outs that build the foundation. Lewin's (1951) change management theory posits the main three stages that every change management process has to go through: pre-change, during change and post-change. Stop, Start, Continue Change Management model (attributed to Agile software development): what is the organization going to stop doing that's not working; start doing to improve; continue doing that's working well; and what is working to some extent that may need minor change to increase benefit? Critical to the model is Nostalgia (Boym, 2001; McDonald, 2016) which encompasses Restorative nostalgia and Reflective nostalgia. Restorative is the "return home" portion, making you want to reconstruct and relive the way things were in the past (Boym, 2001; McDonald, 2016). Reflective nostalgia centers on longing, letting you simmer in those wistful and yearning feelings while accepting that the past is the past (Boym, 2001; McDonald, 2016).

The framework is designed to prompt leaders to shift from quicksand thinking to transformative change thinking while allowing organizational talent to transition from restorative nostalgia to reflective nostalgia in order to ease change and moving forward.

The outcome is creating a culture that provides an individual sense of belonging (Kennedy & Jain-Link, 2021) as well as a collective mindset to help one another. Based on extensive research and assessment of the recent learnings from COVID-19, the triangulation of these elements will not only help the D&I journey, but it also has the potential to transform business results. If we believe that leadership informs culture, and culture drives performance, these elements must be included if we want to have a D&I culture that fosters new level of organizational performance.

It is important that organizational leadership starts with developing and promoting a resilient mindset that is guided through the tenants of transformational leadership as well a mindset of resiliency. The next step is identifying opportunities to increase awareness by understanding the concerns and needs of talent within the organization. Burns (1978) theorized that transformational leadership is a process where "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation." The next step is to ask, what does diversity mean for your/our organization? Based on this question, applying the model serves to help navigate where the organization has been and why, where it is now, and where it has the potential to go.

Let's consider the follow learnings that were, if not all at least in part, attributed to COVID-19 as a way to get started.

- Behaviors that became the norm: succinct direct communication, delegation, trust, and accountability were the elements that drove resiliency and innovation; and, in the best companies increased agility.
- At every level leaders had to find new ways to socialize, manage and lead. We learned that people who had been remote workers had a leg up and there was no proximity bias.
- Exposed or exacerbated the best and worst in leaders, company cultures, and business planning.
- Well managed Communication strategies have become more crucial to energizing, engaging and directing efforts.
- As health and welfare both physical and mental became the forerunner of every conversation as conversations, COVID-19 and social issues have reshaped norms.
- Blur of work and home - we learned about the people – their lives, kids, pets, etc. that created some level of renewed patience and grace in a way we hadn't seen for a long time (i.e., a tolerance for humanness / humanity).
- Renewed the value and appreciation of essential workers that spoke to dedication and talent.
- Increased transparency.
- The focus was on employees first, versus the customer.
- Impending talent transitions. Companies have had to figure out they will need to compete in the future, examining what does the talent philosophy/strategy look like in order to attract the right mix for their talent portfolio of the future. Leadership is looking at who they have, what do they need moving forward?
- People are looking for talent with different traits - ideas tolerance, remote and hybrid are no longer a back-up plan.
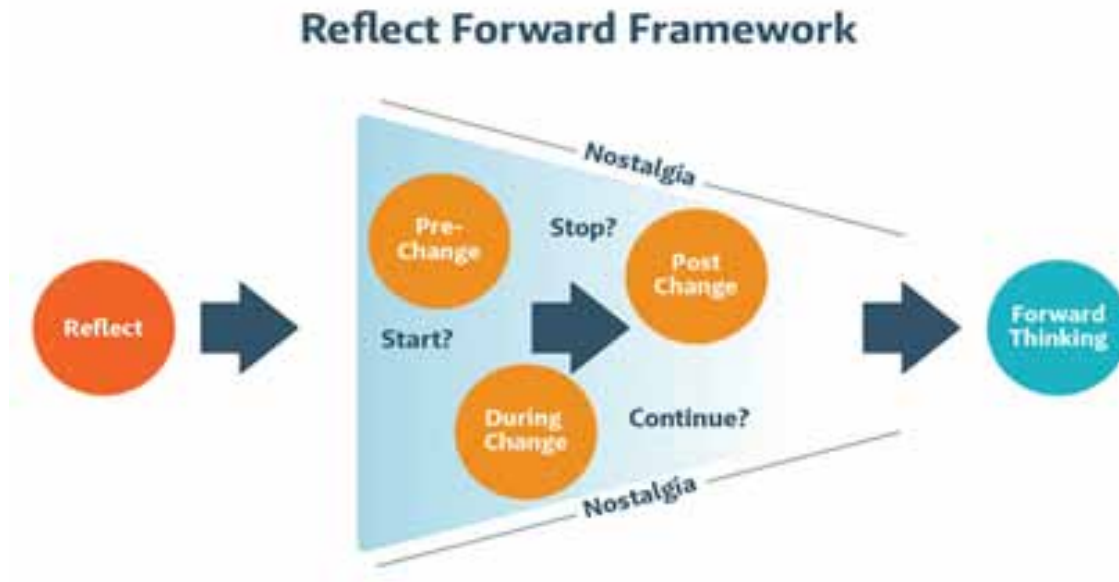
- Brought us to reflect forward - For others waiting on things to get back to normal found themselves struggling and managing to 2019 / pre 2020 standards/norms - where seat time and over "processed" and "procedure" companies could operate in a fairly predictable environment.

Implementing Reflect Forward. Promoting change can be both challenging and rewarding. It is not uncommon to experience resistance. As a result, organizational leaders are often seeking out ways to minimize the resistance and disruption change can create. Presented are D&I application and Work Space vs Workplace during the pandemic. In an effort to demonstrate the versatility of the Reflect-Forward Framework, two examples are provided.

Context D&I: Reflect-Forward Framework

Figure 6 represents the illustration of the Reflect-Forward Framework. Table 1. below represents the Reflect-Forward Framework Template.

Figure 6. Reflect-Forward Framework Illustration
Source: Stacy Hall Brandt. 2021

Table 1. Reflect-Forward Framework Template

Situation/Opportunity/Issue: Increased D&I		
What does diversity mean for your/our organization and why does it matter?		
Reflect, Acknowledge, Learn	*Reflect: What are or did we learn? (leveraging start, stop, continue, change – allow for restorative nostalgia for processing and facilitate reflective nostalgia to move forward)*	Sample: What does diversity mean to us? Why does it matter? What have we done? Why did we think it was working? What did our talent think? Were out efforts giving them a sense of belonging? Were they feeling valued? Did we make sure they understood the impact of their work? Did we listen when they spoke? How do our answers as leaders compare to our talent answers? What are we holding onto and why? What do we need to let go of?
Current State	*Current State: How do we adjust based on learning? (shift from restorative nostalgia to reflective nostalgia in order to facilitate change and move forward; i.e., what do we bring with us from our experience, what do we leave behind, and what do we do differently)?*	Sample: With reflection and answers, what do these answers mean for current state? How do we not let the past hold us back, including traditions or mindsets that may be limiting the potential of our talent? Where are we today and where do we want to be a year from now related to D&I as it relates to our talent, employee brand, communities and customers we serve? How as leaders are we informing culture, and how is that driving performance? Where do we have support for the journey? Where are there obstacles? What are we willing to do to overcome these obstacles? What does success look like of this journey?
Move Forward	Move Forward: How do we as leaders using guiding principles' of transformational leadership to operationalize and foster a resilient mindset.	What vision are we casting to meet the talent needs, business needs, and customer need? How will we create alignment and agreement? What are the steps to move forward with a vision in mind that supports holistic, paced change that the organization's cultural cadence can adopt?
Journey or Destination?	Is it a journey or is there a destination? How do we ensure we have this in mind when we execute?	Journey with milestones demonstrating progress

Created by authors: S. Satterwhite & C. DeMarco

NON-D&I SHORT VERSION EXAMPLE - WORK SPACE VS WORKPLACE DURING THE PANDEMIC

Situation/Opportunity/Issue: Return to Work

How do we return to work safely and align business needs with role type: onsite, hybrid, remote? Reflect: What did we learn?

- Remote, hybrid, onsite – one size does not fit all – employees and businesses
- Managing remote workers and the hybrid workplace is different than in seats in person
- Not where and how people work but a focus on productivity (output) and ability to collaborate (teamwork) in the blended / flex-era world of work

Current State:

- Considerations: state of the pandemic, employee concerns, job type
- Business need and role type – how do we update base on reflection?
- What is our vision for the future related to onsite, remote, and hybrid (post pandemic)?

Forward: How do we adjust based on learning?

- Assess health concerns / risks
- Business drivers for remote, hybrid, in person (i.e., job requirements / needs)
- What flexibility will be required by leadership and by employees?

The Reflect-Forward Framework can be used for addressing a multitude of issues and opportunities related to post-pandemic and social disruption: hybrid workplace, health and safety in the workplace, diversity and inclusion, business scenario planning, etc.

There is no going back to what we once knew as normal; and as leaders we have to be mindful how we help organizational talent work through restorative nostalgia and guide them to reflective nostalgia in order to help them adopt and adapt to change. The pandemic has launched us from focusing solely on our business NorthStar to expanding the realm of possibilities with true continuous learning and growth by flexing quickly and smartly to circumstances that impact business performance and talent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We have data. We have learned lessons. We know things need to change. It is incumbent on each of us as individuals to explore a resilient and transformative mindset to learn from the past and move forward. It is critical, if not essential, that organizational leaders pave the way especially as it relates to creating cultures where talent has a sense of belonging and culture that drives business performance by ensuring all talent is acknowledged, respected, valued and heard. In essence, diversity and inclusion isn't an initiative, it's a journey and the cultural fabric of the business.

CONCLUSION

Over the last several decades, the focus of diversity management has evolved from that of a largely compliance driven, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), and Affirmative Action based vantage point to a dynamic, more critical review of the business impact of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. As the demographics of our population have shifted, so too have our talent marketplace and the resulting demographics of our workforce. Diversity is no longer a "nice-to-have", but an imperative. *Diversity is here to stay*, and we'd better be ready to manage it well in order to remain competitive in our industries.

To build an inclusive culture that leverages every team member and their "passion, commitment, and innovation, and elevates employee engagement, empowerment, and authenticity–you should be willing to break down the narrow walls that surround diversity and inclusion, and limit their reach" (Dishman, 2015). If you don't know where to start ask the demographic that will soon be the largest segment of the workforce (Gen Y & Gen Z), they want to be heard and as a leader, you will benefit from listening.

We close with a proposition. If you lead with a transformative mindset, foster a resilient culture of belonging and value for every team member, recognize the changing workforce and view D&I as a journey, we believe those that stay want to be there and will perform.

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Chapter 7

The Post–Pandemic Horizon of Hispanic SMEs:
An Entrepreneurial Leadership Challenge

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ABSTRACT

The damage to Hispanic small businesses caused by the pandemic has triggered a sense of immediacy that poses a substantial threat to long-term operational viability. Pre-pandemic financial, educational, and social inequities were aggravated by low sales volume, supply chain disruptions, and employee health concerns. Many Hispanic small businesses have temporarily closed or remained in survival mode as they struggle to find relief from loans and subsidies, mainly from banks and government sources. Others are without guidance, training, or professional help as they navigate haphazardly through the inequalities of a post-pandemic era. Yet during times of crisis, leadership is sought, and the pandemic is a significant crisis for Hispanic business owners. A re-education of entrepreneurial leadership concepts proved valuable as a continuing education topic for many businesses. Providing entrepreneurial leadership initiatives and networking are seen as effective remedies to salvage the viability of Hispanic businesses as we traverse a post-pandemic era.

INTRODUCTION

The disproportional devastation of Hispanic small businesses in the wake of the pandemic has surfaced a series of inequities and behaviors that pose a substantial threat to their long-term operational viability and a detriment to US national economic recovery. As an ethnic demographic, Hispanics and Latinos are almost twice as likely to contract COVID -19, close to four times more likely to be hospitalized, and about three times more likely to die from this novel virus (Vaidya, 2020). Expectedly, these demographic statistics also have implications for Hispanic small businesses and the US economy, since one in every four small businesses in the US is Hispanic owned. Among the small business sectors hardest hit are leisure and hospitality, retail, transportation, and construction.

The main effects causing havoc in these businesses are financial hardships, low sales volume, supply chain disruptions, and employee health concerns. Hispanic small businesses have temporarily closed or remained in survival mode as they continue to seek relief from loans and subsidies. Even before the pandemic, Hispanic small businesses were already financially vulnerable, having lower equity to debt ratios and minimal home equity resources available as backup alternatives. Only about 29% of Hispanic-owned businesses applied for government financial assistance. A disproportionate acceptance rate of Hispanic businesses Payroll Protection Program (PPP) further aggravated the situation (Steen, 2021). Many businesses remained without guidance, training, or professional assistance to prepare for and navigate the post-pandemic horizon. This a tragic inequity of enormous proportions (Cavazos, 2021)

During the initial stages of the pandemic, Hispanic business owners presented high levels of anxiety and hopelessness, minimal efforts to respond creatively, and were attempting solutions on their own without consultation or guidance. Yet a cursory visit to some of these businesses a year after showed emerging leadership trends of innovation and higher hopes of survival primarily driven by collaborative efforts with other businesses, financial institutions, and networks. Furthermore, a re-education of leadership concepts proved valuable as a continuing education topic for many of the businesses sampled. Sharing initiatives through social media, digital tools, business support groups, and networking was observed as effective remedies to salvage Hispanic businesses' viability as we wander into a post-pandemic period.

A more in-depth look at the inequities, situational factors, and hardships of Hispanic-owned businesses caused by the pandemic in the US is the next topic of this chapter. Understanding the pre-pandemic contribution of small businesses in general and Hispanic businesses in particular sets the stage to evaluate the degree of devastation and gauge the urgency for entrepreneurial leadership. After looking at the pre and post-pandemic landscape of Hispanic businesses, a literature review on entrepreneurial leadership is offered, followed by a qualitative research project intended to assess the prevalence or absence of entrepreneurial leadership attributes. A qualitative examination of 24 small businesses under pandemic stresses in the Southeastern region of the US confirms the urgency of the leadership qualities among many business owners (Rojas, 2021). Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion on the value of entrepreneurial leadership as a path to recovery for Hispanic businesses.

The Pre-Pandemic Landscape of Small Businesses

After the most prolonged recession experienced in the US (2007-2009) and leading up to 2019, small businesses accounted for 44% of the US economy, with real estate and rental and leasing, wholesale and retail trade, and manufacturing and mining sectors leading the efforts (Doré, 2020). In the early months of 2009, small businesses accounted for almost 60 percent of the net job losses, with the most significant losses reported in the first quarter. But by the end of the year, job losses were about one-third what they had been in the first months of 2009 and optimism was on the rise. In September, the American Express OPEN Small Business Monitor noted that over 50 percent of entrepreneurs were optimistic about the future of their businesses, up 10 percent from earlier surveys during the year. Nevertheless, the report notes that six in ten (63%) do not think the worst U.S. economic woes were over (Amex, 2009).

The Small Business Administration yearly reports from 2009 to 2011 (SBA, 2019) point to an unprecedented growth fueled by this positive economic outlook. *The State of Small Business* (Babson College) and *The Small Business Economy* (SBA, Office of Advocacy, Research and Statistics web site) series of reports collect contributions of small businesses to the economy and major trends over time show that many macroeconomic indicators—such as sales, which slowed from 2005 to 2009—were substantially

increasing over time. Among the key indicators was a dramatic demographics shift over the 2000-2010 timeframe where the increase in Hispanic business owners went up to 86 percent. Especially years 2010 and 2011 showed ample economic growth for small businesses, representing about half of the private-sector economy and more than 99 percent of all businesses. Prevailing indicators of this growth were output, business income, and profits, while business bankruptcies and unemployment declined.

In addition to the SBA-Department of Commerce analysis and observations, public sector research also validated the positive economic outlook and significant economic growth for small businesses during pre-pandemic years. For example, during 2016, the National Small Business Association—the nation's first small-business advocacy organization— surveyed 1,426 small businesses and found that two-thirds anticipated revenue growth for the upcoming years, the highest it's been recorded within a nine-year time frame (NSBA, 2016). A few years after, small business owners broke a 35-year-old record of 108.8 points on the National Small Business Optimism Index produced by the National Federation of Independent Businesses (Dunkelberg, 2018). Figure 1 shows these remarkable rising levels of confidence between 2009 and 2019.

The confidence of small businesses rose as the economic outlook became brighter. In 2018 the National Small Business Association midyear report, of the 913 small business owners surveyed eighty-four percent was confident in their business, and the overwhelming majority (80 percent) were either growing now or expect growth in 2019. The leading small business revenue growth sector for the first half of 2019 was construction (NSBA, 2020).

Figure 1. Small Business Optimism Index
Source: NFIB Small Business Economic Trends, http://www.nfib-sbet.org/

Similarly, the Goldman Sachs *2019 Insights Report* from that year surveyed 2,285 small businesses and confirmed respondents' strong growth in 2017 and 2018 with high expectations for 2019 despite the burdens imposed by labor and healthcare laws, tax compliance, licensing, and patents. The report notes that revenues for 67% of the surveyed businesses increased between 2017 and 2018, and 80% of them expected growth in 2019. As a result, in the fourth quarter of 2019 the United States economy grew at an annual rate of 2.1% (SBA, 2020).

Economic indicators by most reputable government agencies and private associations consistently signaled a substantial and growing contribution of small businesses to the US economy, with some of these indicators at unprecedented high levels. But on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) a global pandemic (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020).

Impact of the COVID Pandemic

In using a hurricane metaphor, the year 2020 was the "center" of the pandemic storm. Initial effects of the virus were being felt as early as January as the first cases were detected in Washington State. By February, a national public health emergency was declared, and air travel was restricted, especially international travel. By March, California became the first state to issue a "Stay-at-Home" order. Also in March, the CARES Act—the most extensive economic recovery package in history amounting to 10% of total U.S. gross domestic product—became law. Efforts to contain the virus and its impact on society dominated the remainder of the year. As the year ended and despite the efforts the US surpassed 20 million infections and more than 346,000 deaths (AJMC, 2021).

The impact of the global pandemic on small business owners across the US during 2020 was devastating. Research conducted during this year shows the level of devastation. Trend data from the Opportunity Insights Economic Tracker in Figure 2 shows the downward trend in number of small businesses operating in the US compared to those operating as of January 15, 2020. The initial impact of COVID during most of the first quarter was minor, but upon the declaration of the National Emergency in March 2020, the number of small businesses dropped 43.8%. Despite a small rebound a few months after (20.9%), the declining trend continued. Even as of Jun 30, 2021, there was still a 47.8% decrease in the number of small businesses operating in the US.

Figure 2. Comparing number of businesses
Source: Opportunity Insights Economic Tracker (https://tracktherecovery.org/)

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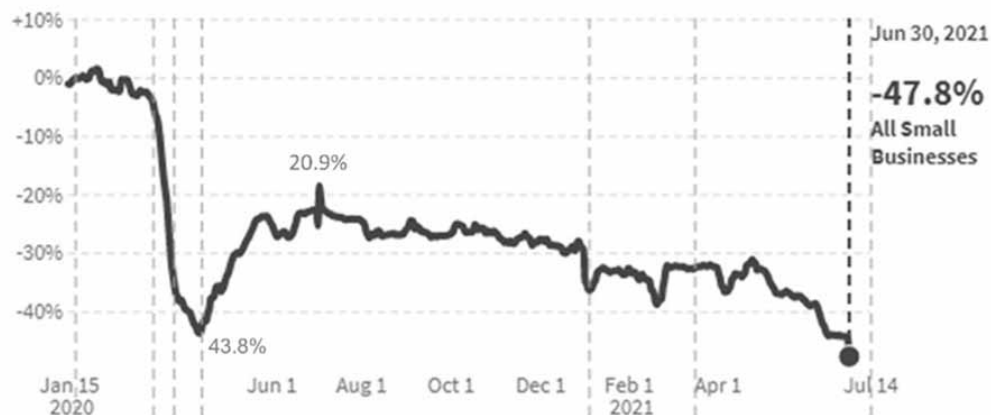
As expected, the negative impact on revenues was also significant and closely tracks the downtrend number of small businesses operating in the US. The Opportunity Insights Economic Tracker in Figure 3 shows that even as of June 30, 2021, revenues for all small businesses were down by 42.5% when compared to the revenues generated in January 15, 2020.

Other studies and analysis from the private sector confirm the appalling consequences of the pandemic upon small businesses. A survey of 1,172 businesses by the National Federation of Independent Businesses found that 92% of small businesses were immediately impacted by low volume of sales, employee health concerns, and supplier disruptions (NFIB, 2020; Rogers, 2020). Another survey of 500 small businesses reported that 90% of them had been adversely impacted, and of those, 43% stated they had been severely impacted (Small Business Majority, 2020). A third survey administered to 224 Latino-owned businesses found that 86% of them reported a negative financial impact, with 66% estimating that if the situation continued for six more months they would very likely have to close. This same survey indicated that the sectors most affected were accommodations and food services, arts, entertainment and recreation, and educational services (Small Business Pulse Survey, 2020).

Figure 3. Comparing small business revenues
Source: Opportunity Insights Economic Tracker (https://tracktherecovery.org/)

The Impact on Hispanic Businesses

Hispanic businesses—the business demographic with the highest growth rate in the US during the pre-pandemic era—was also the hardest hit. Despite the 2007-2009 recession, the number of Hispanic businesses continued growing, eventually becoming one of the most substantial contributors to restarting the US economy (Davila, Mora, & Marek, 2014). More specifically, Hispanic businesses became the sector with the highest number of startups resulting in close to 40% of all minority businesses since 2012 (Toussaint, 2019). As of 2019, Hispanic businesses employed over 3 million people with average revenues of $479,413. Various financial institutions observed a 23% increase in credit applications (Cimini, 2020).

The US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce maintains there are over 4.7 million Hispanic-Owned businesses in the US that contribute each year more than $700 billion to the national economy (USHCC,

https://www.ushcc.com/). Between 2012 and 2018, Hispanic businesses grew 40.2% or more than twice the 18.8% growth rate of other U.S. firms. In 2019, about 1 out of every 7 businesses was run by a Hispanic entrepreneur (Claritas, 2019).

Yet despite the impressive role of Hispanic businesses in the US economy, even before the pandemic, most of the financial structures of these businesses were operating under fragile conditions. Understandably, the credit risks for these businesses were higher since most have been in business for short periods of time, they typically have smaller cash buffers, they have limited sources of equity, and consequently, a limited ability to secure capital. Hispanic businesses have less cash on hand, and even when requesting funding from the Payroll Protection Program (PPP), their loans were approved at about half the rate compared to white-owned businesses. The chances of obtaining a loan from a nationally recognized bank were 60% lower, and only 2 out of ten requests for loans were approved (Orozcolnara, et al, 2021).

These financial distress and insolvency conditions were appalling considering that an estimated 25 percent of Hispanic businesses were temporarily or permanently closed during 2020.

The distribution of Hispanic businesses highly correlates with the geographical locations of dense Hispanic communities. For example, most Mexican-owned enterprises are in the Southwestern regions of the United States, whereas a significant number of Cuban businesses are in Florida. Puerto Rican-owned businesses were abundant in Florida, New York, and Illinois, whereas Dominican-owned businesses were strong in New York. Almost a third of all Hispanic businesses are in the major metropolitan areas, such as Miami, Los Angeles, New York City, Houston, and San Antonio (Oberle, 2006). These exact locations where Hispanic businesses are most concentrated were also within the States most affected by closings due to the pandemic (Ettlinger & Hensley, 2020). As of June 2021, Hispanic businesses in California decreased by 51.9% compared to January 2020, whereas there was a 52.9% decrease in Texas, a 52.4% decrease in New Mexico, and a 46.5% in Florida. The Center Square (2020, April 9) reports that in Florida alone, 32.2% of small business permanently closed and the hardest hit was Michigan with 39.7% closures.

The Impact Beyond the Borders

In examining the pandemic effects of Hispanic businesses South of the US border, the landscape is comparably distressing. Although the pandemic and associated public health controls hurt companies of all sizes, small businesses in Latin American countries were already experiencing increased volatility before the pandemic, with market declines and unstable exchange rates in countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina (Pototschnik, et al, 2020). In Brazil, 99% of the small business sector was severely impacted by the pandemic (Daniel, 2020). In Mexico, an estimated 250,000 small businesses were expected to close, a country where small businesses represented 80% of national economic activity (Mendez, 2020). Surveys from Colombia reported a drop of more than 70% in sales volume and suggested that about 20% of these businesses would permanently close (Gomez, 2020). Ecuador is considered one of the Latin American countries most impacted by the pandemic, resulting in an expected decrease in GDP of 6.5 percent in 2020 (BBC News Mundo, 2020). As the pandemic continues to propagate throughout Latin America, countries continue to salvage their small business sectors from the damaging economic effects of the pandemic (Business Insider-Mexico, 2020).

Understandably, the immediate reaction of Hispanic small business owners in the US and abroad was focused on the immediate financial needs. With a low volume of sales, fewer customers, pending expenses such as the rent, utilities, suppliers, and unable to fulfill payroll, the search for loans, grants,

and other bailouts became a priority. A few were able to cope with the crisis, albeit haphazardly, but the immediacy of the focus had kept business owners trapped within a short-term view. Moreover, planning for this crisis level was not something contemplated in most business plans, so many were caught without contingency options.

Managing the disruption

The disruptions to small business owners in the United States in the wake of the pandemic triggered a sense of immediacy that poses a substantial threat to long term operational viability. The primary forces initiated by the pandemic causing havoc in these businesses are low volume of sales, supply chain disruptions, and employee health concerns. Many Hispanic small businesses remain in survival mode as they continue to seek relief from loans and subsidies, mainly from large banks and government sources.

It seems that in times of crisis, there is an urgency to look for leadership. Yet when conducting consulting activities and coaching small business owners during the 2020-2021 time frame, it became evident to me that an unintended consequence of the pandemic was neglecting crucial operational activities. Some of these overlooked activities include controlled innovation, collaboration with others, and a pathway that would lead to survivability and long-term sustainability. Business owners' reactions to short-term adjustments into a "new normal" led many to change their original business model and stray from their initially envisioned strategy. Moving forward with a new business model without updating the original Business Plan carries the risks of being blindsided to new market dynamics (Bojorquez, 2021). Consequently, there is a need to regain a sense of entrepreneurial leadership.

Although recognized as a cross-cultural construct (Gupta, MacMillan, & Surie, 2004), entrepreneurial leadership as a discipline is still in its infancy (Leitch, C. M., & Volery, 2017). The economic, social, political, and technological turbulence prevalent during and after the pandemic requires a type of "entrepreneurial" leader distinct from other behavioral forms of leadership that can help make sense out of a devastated landscape (Gupta, MacMillan, & Surie, 2004).

A comprehensive review of the literature on entrepreneurial leadership theory is offered by Roomi and Harrison (2011), where they offer four approaches: an approach based upon the convergence of entrepreneurship and leadership, a psychological perspective, a contextual approach, and a holistic approach. The convergence approach is based upon areas of overlap between leadership and entrepreneurship, such as vision, influence, innovation, and planning (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004; Fernald et al., 2005). The psychological approach emphasizes personality attributes, such as being single-minded, thick-skinned, and being a dominating individual (Nicholson, 1998). A second subcategory of this approach looks at behaviors rather than on traits, suggesting that entrepreneurial leaders establish a vision, enact the challenges of communicating that vision, and are instrumental in realizing the vision (Gupta, MacMillan & Surie, 2004). The contextual approach looks are quite normative and highlight inherent competencies and situational conditions to define entrepreneurial leadership. For example, Eyal and Kark (2004) suggest specific tactics for developing entrepreneurial leadership effectiveness. And finally, the holistic approach is where the notions of climate and context overlap with leadership styles, primarily along the lines of transformational and transactional styles of leadership (Kreiser, Marino, & Weaver, 2002; Morris, Kuratko, & Covin, 2008; Wicklund & Shepherd, 2005).

Given the strong inclination to short-term thinking during a crisis, a strategic perspective is necessary. Within the convergence of entrepreneurial leadership, one definition that most adequately aligns with the anecdotal discoveries mentioned during consultations is by Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2001).

They define entrepreneurial leadership from a strategic perspective as "the ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, and empower others to create strategic change as necessary." (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2001, p.489). Despite the importance of contingency plans that are typically expressed in a Business Plan, there is no evidence of any business being able to anticipate the devastation caused by the pandemic. The "envisioning" attribute is relevant since it is deemed essential as a path to post-pandemic viability since pandemic conditions may have altered the business' original business model. Flexibility refers to the willingness to change or compromise. In maintaining flexibility, the business owner demonstrates the strength and drive to continue operations despite obstacles (Pradhan, 2020). Empowering others has an internal and external meaning. On the one hand, it refers to the employees, and on the other, it relates to dialogue with customers and collaborating networks. Networking and dialogue are also considered as sources of innovation and essential to business strategy (Lang, 2020).

If during times of crisis leadership is sought, and the pandemic is a significant crisis for Hispanic business owners, then to what degree is entrepreneurial leadership being applied? A qualitative research project was designed to address this question.

A two-part qualitative research project was conducted in March of 2020 and March of 2021 with graduate students attending an administration course in a college in the Southeast US. The objective was to establish how the data displayed—albeit in various degrees— all of the entrepreneurial leadership attributes defined by Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2001). Data revealing businesses with one or two of the attributes was deemed insufficient to meet the intent of entrepreneurial leadership.

Impressions were collected from 35 internship students working in a comparable small business setting. The 2020 cohort consisted of 22 graduate students, and the 2021 cohort had 13 students. Essentially, data was gathered from 35 different small business settings. Students were asked to post two discussion board assignments, one describing the effects of the pandemic on the small business of their internship and another one on their observations on each organization's capacity to moderate the effects and plan for a post-pandemic future. These small businesses had a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 22 with an average of 12 employees. The impressions were collected on two discussion board postings in an online learning platform for each cohort and analyzed using a keyword analysis (Bourgeault, Dingwall, & De Vries, 2010).-

The results were expected to establish the degree to which exercising entrepreneurial leadership was effective or deficient in navigating the hardships imposed by the pandemic. Yet the key-word analysis from the data found only three small businesses that had adopted all of the Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2001) entrepreneurial leadership attributes.

There are various constraints, delimiters, and limitations necessary to present in order to properly contextualize these outcomes. First, recognizing that qualitative data carries the well-known shortfalls of this type of research, such as objectivity, causality, and statistical representation (Froggatt, 2001). As a delimiter, the data was collected among surviving Hispanic businesses. It is possible business owners that had permanently closed would have responded somewhat differently. The sample size and geographical setting also need to be considered when attempting to generalize the findings. Finally, it is also necessary to recognize that cultural factors may play a role in the data's perception, generation, and interpretation, especially in recognizing the variety of values, traditions, and language nuances that may be missed when using the term "Hispanics" or "Latinos" (Rojas, 2019). Nevertheless, this qualitative research project has some value in demonstrating the urgency and value of entrepreneurial leadership attributes in a post-pandemic era.

A Path Beyond a New Normal

The data showed business owners struggling to find ways out of the crisis, displayed new and unexpected areas of operational rigidness, and found it demanding to dialogue effectively with employees, customers, suppliers, and networks. In fact, those few businesses that worked within supporting networks tended to be more effective than those that attempted to manage the crisis on their own (Malagón, 2021). As expected, the results showed that most businesses were fixated on the immediate, financial short-term survivability at the expense of many other operational essentials. It also validated the effects of deep, structural racial and ethnic disparities on income, health and wealth, and barriers to social mobility in the country.

Naturally, financial concerns remain a top priority for Hispanic businesses during the upcoming years. Their financial structures remain fragile, the credit risks are higher, they have even smaller cash buffers if any, continue to struggle with limited equity sources, and consequently, still have a low probability of securing capital through traditional sources. Hispanic businesses remain wounded and continue to struggle in securing financial resources. Yet, some surveys show that Latino-owned businesses are moving forward — despite many of these financial and social barriers. For example, the Q1 2021 Camino Financial Latino Small Business Credit Survey (2021) shows an 22% uptick in credit trends for Hispanic small businesses when compared to Q4 of 2020. Even more surprising, Hispanic businesses remain optimistic. A survey by the Public Private Strategies Institute consisting of 224 Hispanic and 483 white-owned businesses during 2021 showed a 83% level of optimism, compared to 70% for white-owned. Within this continued landscape of mixed economic indicators, financial uncertainties, and optimism, entrepreneurial leadership skills offer a option towards success as the new normal unfolds (Reimagine Mainstreet, 2021).

In further assessing this lack of entrepreneurial leadership and the urgency to restore long-term thinking and innovation for Hispanic entrepreneurs, a continuing education webinar was prepared and delivered to small business owners. In coordination with the Center for Business Development of a private college in the State of Virginia, the State's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was contacted and was persuaded of the need to educate for entrepreneurial leadership attributes. Accordingly, a webinar on entrepreneurial leadership was prepared in Spanish and delivered to this 350-member network. The outcome of this event reinforced the data from the present study, which emphasizes the need for education, training, and mentoring for entrepreneurial leadership in the aftermath of the 2019-2020 pandemic. Participants were grateful for learning the tenets of entrepreneurial leadership and the urgency of considering a long-term perspective in their recovery and re-inventing endeavors.

The severity of the crisis caught Hispanic businesses unprepared for entrepreneurial leadership, as evidenced by the small businesses surveyed for this research project. Normally small businesses tend to follow the path of their original business plan, which addresses all aspects of the operations, including contingency responses. However, the intensity of the current crisis initiated by the pandemic and the deviation from their original business models in some ways is comparable to the Great Depression-era and making obsolete many aspects of a prior written business plans (Davis, 2020). In a pre-pandemic era, forecasting a global crisis on a Hispanic small business would have been considered an exercise in futility.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The significance of past contributions of Hispanic businesses to the National Economy means the country's long-term revival is inseparable and serves as a motivator for this sector's recovery (Millán, et al., 2020). Hispanic businesses have frenetically sought to survive in a post-pandemic era as their financial stability and growth plans are disrupted. During times of crisis, it seems that leadership behaviors succumb to the pressures of survivability. Even before the pandemic and its aftermath, leadership was considered an attribute lacking in most entrepreneurs (Bonnstetter, 2013). Anecdotal, interview, and secondary data sources such as those provided in the present study suggest this phenomenon's prevalence in a post-pandemic period. There is evidence that short-term financial urgencies are overshadowing long-term expectations. This trend must be reversed if Hispanic businesses are expected to endure and develop. Consequently, entrepreneurial leadership education and training efforts that offer realistic solutions are needed to restore endurance and viability.

The pandemic era—or the so called "new normal"—has affected Hispanic business so profoundly that further research is more important now than ever. Assessing the longer-term effects of operational disruptions, researching for alternative forms of financing that are less biased, analyzing the reactions and recovery by cultural nuances (e.g., Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and others) and by gender, assessing the viability of emerging business models, determining resilience factors in Hispanic businesses, the effects on family versus non-family businesses, and assessing the adequacy of currently available training and education content are just some areas of further inquiry. Furthermore, these research topics are also worth considering for the African American and the Asian small businesses.

In general, the Hispanic population in the United States is uniquely poised to play a more significant leadership role domestically and internationally (Ramirez, 2006). Hispanic business leaders are urgently needed since fostering leadership promotes diversification, offers a broader view of perspectives, and allows better opportunities for success (Facemyer, 2019). Research shows that Hispanic business owners without training may not readily recognize new or imminent business opportunities even though, as a minority, they are more likely to start small businesses (Black, et al., 2014). Effects of deep, structural racial and ethnic disparities on income, health and wealth, and barriers to social mobility still need to be addressed. Cultural biases, ineffective higher education outreach, and poor federal/state policies also remain as challenges for a more diverse and better-formed cadre of entrepreneurial leaders.

Still, training, mentoring, and educating Hispanic business owners for entrepreneurial leadership remains a path out of the commotion created by the pandemic: "In the increasingly turbulent and competitive environment business firms face today, a type of "entrepreneurial" leader is required who is distinct from the behavioral forms of leaders" (Gupta, MacMillan, & Surie, 2004, p. 242). Yet making the time for training and education is difficult when entrepreneurs work between 12-16 hours a day just to remain afloat (Lang, 2020). Networking with Hispanic associations, support groups, and college development centers can heighten a need for education and training, especially during a post-pandemic world, but daily operational demands tend to be a higher priority. However, both strategic thinking inherent to entrepreneurial leadership and the short-term survival of the business are fundamental concerns when responding to a time of crisis (Meristö, 2020).

More now than ever, training, mentoring, and re-education programs for entrepreneurial leadership is expected to play a key role in the re-building and growth of small businesses in a post-pandemic era. The hope is that the results of this and similar studies inspire financial and educational institutions in the US and Latin America to create "Centers of Entrepreneurship Development"—or equivalents—that

address inequities, encourage strategic thinking, collaborative innovation, and much-needed resources for Hispanic small businesses.

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Chapter 8
Constructing Post–COVID–19, Resilient, Inclusive, Diverse, Community–Centered Workplaces

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased fear and uncertainty, creating an intense focus on safety, skewing the relationships between the government, organizations, and individuals. Currently, the onus to deal with the changes has been mainly on individuals. However, the pandemic creates trends and actions that add an equity lens guiding organizations, governments, and businesses. This equity lens promises a better future with more significant workplace equity. This chapter identifies four crucial areas where this is happening: 1) community and civic engagement, 2) trust and transparency, 3) increasing diversity in the communications workforce, and 4) mental health support. The challenge is to make the currently emerging new approaches and processes become part of our organizational lives and our new normal. It is the opportunity to make our positive responses to the COVID-19 pandemic permanent ones, increasing diversity, inclusion, equity, engagement, and health.

INTRODUCTION

The dream of diversity is like the dream of equality. Both are based on ideals we celebrate even as we undermine them daily. …On the other hand, the situation is appalling. It is appalling that Americans know so little about one another. It is appalling that many of us are so narrow-minded that we can't tolerate a few people with ideas significantly different from our own. It is appalling that evangelical Christians are practically absent from entire professions, such as academia, the media, and filmmaking. It is appalling that people should be content to cut themselves off from everyone unlike themselves. (Brooks, 2005, p. 2)

In a recent editorial, Schiavo, Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Communication in Healthcare*, noted the hope that from the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19, society may emerge with "[A] renewed sense of resilience, stronger health, social and communication systems, lessons learned to be implemented, and a stronger feeling of community and caring for each other. …[I]n emerging from this storm, we have countless opportunities for innovation and change" (Schiavo, 2021, p. 1). Bauman (2007) described the common anxiety felt by people today as *liquid anxiety*. When fear and uncertainty increase because social forms are in flux, the individual's heightened focus creates *liquid anxiety* directing emotions into political and public responses. This trend is exacerbated by governmental "deregulation of the social welfare state, increasing neoliberalist tendencies and wealth inequality, and negative globalization" (Borovitskaja, 2021, p. 2). The intense focus on safety has skewed the relationships between the government, organizations, and individuals.

Bauman (2007) provided the example of Black Lives Matter protests and riots in response to prior exclusion and institutional racism. Bauman noted that our world is negatively globalized, placing the responsibility on individuals and national governments. Beck (1999), observing individuals' assessments of risk, provided a related analysis. People are trying to create predictability, a safe world with no catastrophes, and reduce their fear of death. People want to differentiate threats from manufactured uncertainties (Mythen, 2020).

Currently, the primary responsibility has been on individuals, creating anxiety that organizations and the government have not addressed effectively. Change is needed. This chapter will address Schiavo's list of trends and action areas, examining opportunities arising from the pandemic to add an equity lens guiding organizational communications, governmental and business policies, and human resources practices and management actions.

PANDEMIC RELATED OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPROVE WORKPLACE EQUITY

1. Community and Civic Engagement

Community-Based Participatory Research

Racial-ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups, people considered at risk of social exclusion because of physical disabilities, age factors, ethnic origins, lack of housing, or substance abuse, continue to grow in the United States population. Developing accurate understandings of these groups has be-

come a social justice concern. In 2003, the American Psychological Association published guidelines for multicultural research encouraging a variety of approaches. In part, this stated, "culturally-centered psychological researchers are encouraged to seek appropriate grounding in various modes of inquiry and to understand both the strengths and limitations of the research paradigms applied to culturally diverse populations" (American Psychological Association, 2003, p. 389).

Unfortunately, systematic inequalities still marginalize some vulnerable social groups. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is one approach that has had success addressing the racial-ethnic minority status and other sociodemographic group memberships. Two successful applications of CBPR were related to higher educational institutional efforts. Lehan et al. (2020) proposed a plan to engage these groups better within a university setting, while Gittelsohn et al. (2020) described their process for partnering universities and their communities to create more developmental impact from university efforts.

A Plan for Higher Educational Institutions and Others

With the significant presence of international students, 1,095,299 enrolled in 2019 (Institute of International Education, 2019), and considerable diversity in American higher education, supporting their cultural adjustment posed challenges. Lehan et al. (2020) found efforts at institutions of higher learning described by faculty, staff, and administrators as "mostly talk with no meaningful objectives and outcomes" (p. 167). They proposed a three-step process to develop greater diversity and inclusion. Theorist Collins (2015) described minoritized groups as exhibiting the most accurate knowledge of the origins, scope, and social injustice indicators. Lehan et al. (2020) explored the perceptions of minority group educators in a qualitative study. The themes identified were tunnel vision, playing by others' rules, uneven playing fields, marginalization, completing necessary diversity and inclusion work themselves, and taking time out. Described as largely "box-checking" (p. 177), Lehan et al. proposed an "intentional three-step process" to solicit and address all minoritized stakeholder perspectives (p.180). The Lehan et al. process is:

1. Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the current state through broadened discussions and investigations of diversity and inclusion.
2. Define outcomes of interest with consensual action addressing disagreements.
3. Develop a plan involving genuine collaboration and purposeful diversity – and inclusion – related outcomes.

Moving beyond academic communities will also be critical for success with Indigenous communities. Gittelsohn et al. (2020) described strategies for building and enhancing partnerships between Indigenous communities and universities. These were:

1. Supporting Indigenous investigator development,
2. Developing university policies and practices sensitive and responsive to Indigenous community settings and resources, and training for research,
3. Developing community and scientifically acceptable research designs and practices,
4. Aligning Indigenous community and university review boards to enhance the community as well as individual protection (e.g., new human subjects training for Indigenous research, joint research oversight, the adaptation of shorter consent forms, appropriate incentives),

5. Determining appropriate forms of dissemination (i.e., Indian Health Services provider presentation, community reports, and digital stories),
6. Best practices for sharing credit, and
7. Reducing systematic discrimination in the promotion and tenure of Indigenous investigators and allies working in Indigenous communities. (p. 522)

In an interview with Jeffrey Dessources, Director of the Center for Leadership and Engagement at New Jersey City University, Ellis and Martinek explored current events where all current faculty, administrators, and students were "contending with existential, foundational questions about their economic future, their purpose within their communities, and their role in addressing social justice" (Dessources et al., 2020. p. 182). Dessources described his guiding principle as "developing leadership in the community to make education fun and palatable to whoever is part of the community" (p. 183). Students chose graduate school over touring as a hip-hop artist. As an educator, to ensure the students were cared for, Dessources wanted to address the academic silos isolating Academic Affairs from Student Affairs from Administration. Many students see higher education as "kind of corny" (p. 184). Dessources wanted them to see the "really cool stuff" (p. 184). By removing the boundaries, he could have conversations with students across the board to show students they could be an academic, an educator, and be themselves. He noted that the college classroom of today is not much different from one 150 years ago. Dessources believes we need to be prepared to disrupt and dismantle classrooms to make them more culturally responsive. To be ready for the popular conversations that develop out of the ongoing cultural transformation. The understanding that drives the conversations grows out of coalitions. He described his workshop (*Trill or Not Trill*) as an example showing students, we are all in this together. Such efforts can get the foot in the door and create change agents. The goal was to create an alternative institution that will teach the kinds of skills needed by students to be prepared to do battle with institutional hurdles and build culturally relevant programs of study that connect with the students and do not bore them. Programs of study that allow them to learn how they want to.

In a pre-COVID-19 study, Vesperman (2020) found that the shift from face-to-face instruction to virtual instruction required redesigning the course on diversity and equity. Using the action research strategy of Mertler (2018) and the second-generation activity theory of Engeström (1987, 2009, 2011), Vesperman took advantage of the small class sizes, space for acculturation into new literacy environments and practices, cultural and linguistic diversity, and writing as healing to create a hybrid online teaching program. To counter the disadvantages for international students created by the online format, Vesperman created a hybrid online teaching program. He modified his use of collaborative products to use those for which students had the best access. Students wrote short self-reflections assessing learning progress needs and concerns. Semi-weekly check-ins, a weekly newsletter, a suggested study schedule, and a discussion board supported the self-reflections. Students were encouraged to use their writing as a tool to heal and reflect. Finally, students participated in live office sessions and small virtual groups based on their time zones.

Pre-COVID-19 Cukier et al. (2014) developed an ecological model based on their experiences in a large community-based research project to bridge theory and action in critical management studies. The researchers identified a need to advance equality and inclusion, bridging ideological differences between the academics and the community participants. The developed framework allowed scholars, practitioners, activists, and change agents to advance inclusion and equality while increasing understanding between the groups.

2. Trust and Transparency

People's fear and uncertainty have led to a distrust of government, businesses, and other individuals in society. Further, the media airs commercials advising people to call on their neighbors or anyone else they perceive as "breaking the rules," creating further distrust and angst among people of the same and differing cultures. Bauman (2007) explained these fears and anxieties being exuberated by the government and media, describing it as a state of *liquid anxiety*. Many lost their jobs, changed their employer, and adapted to a new way of life. As we approach what looks like an end to the pandemic, a super form of the virus in which the vaccines are ineffective defers relief and promises more lockdowns, more economic loss, and a good chance of certain death. If that is not enough, we continue to move forward. People start going back to work at the brick-and-mortar facilities, trying to adapt to another significant change while dealing with the dysfunction of great economic and family disruption.

Opportunities from the Pandemic

The pandemic has further burdened families by disrupting their schedules and causing liquid anxiety. These problems exacerbate uncertainty, poverty, angst, and disruption already created in single-parent family homes (Motamedi et al., 2017). In single-parent homes, the troubled youth are underdeveloped, vulnerable to future psychological issues, and prone to behavior issues, often leading to legal problems. Add the liquid anxiety caused by the government, media, and pandemic, and all these issues slowly build like a volcano waiting to erupt, placing any progress made in jeopardy.

Emotional Intelligence Program

Government agencies and businesses can help minimize these issues by offering emotional intelligence training programs to enhance returning employees' emotional perception and emotional regulation. For example, the Web-Based Emotional Intelligence Program (WEIT) is geared towards leadership roles to improve their behavior and ability to respond to others by controlling their emotions during conflicts (Köppe et al., 2019). Di Fabio and Kenny (2011) and Hodzic et al. (2018) have shown this program to be effective long-term for those who took it. It was helpful for those who took the training regardless of gender, race, marital status, and culture. Emotional intelligence training has the potential to harmonize relationships between parents or single parents and their significant others, lowering stress, improving sex lives, increasing harmony, and improving health (Sarani et al., 2020).

Applicable at Work and Home

Businesses and government agencies can create a winning solution by offering an emotional intelligence program. A program could lead to better inclusion from self-understanding, better employee cooperation in the ranks, and happier lives (Sarani et al., 2020). Title and position do not make people leaders; to have people follow them defines leaders. Most individuals are leaders to someone, whether their significant other, children, friends, or co-workers. These concepts, when used, help people improve the quality of their lives. When employees have better morale, they get along better are more fulfilled (Garcia et al., 2017).

The heavier burden carried by women affects their mental and physical health, causing subpar performance and unfair bias against them in the workplace (Carl, 2021). Employers can combat this by

ensuring all employees have easier access to mental health services. Such access can provide greater awareness among all employees, reduce the stigma against seeking mental health care, and create an environment fostering real growth in female leadership and career progression (Carl, 2021). The skills learned from mental health care improve women's home lives by lowing stress, supporting closer relationships, improving sex lives, and improving physical health (Milani et al., 2020). These changes often improve the career progression for women and enhance the bottom line of companies by having a more stable and focused workforce (Huang et al., 2021).

Reducing the stigma of seeking mental health care is not enough to support equality in the workplace. Employers must also reduce the stigma against women by educating their employees on gender inequities, institutional sexism, and unconscious bias (Huang et al., 2021). Allowing the workforce to continue in the old ways of doing business means women continue to experience inequality, sexism, and bias (Huang et al., 2021). Allowing the trend to continue hurts women's career progression, causing women to leave the workforce, and this hurts the company's overall performance, resulting in lower profits (Huang et al., 2021).

Investing in the livelihood of women helps everyone involved. Huang et al. (2021) found that women in executive positions were more successful than organizations with only men in leadership positions. To support equality in the workplace, organizations must make a real investment in their female employees by equalizing the pay between men and women performing the same duties (Carl, 2021). U.S. Census Bureau data from 2018 reported on average, women in the U.S. only earn $0.82 for each $1.00 men earn in the same positions (Bleiweis, 2020, Figure 1). The disparity in pay leads to women leaving their careers more often and slows achieving equality between the genders (Carl, 2021). These issues affect both the success of females and the company profits (Huang et al., 2021).

In conclusion, organizations need to support their female workforce by creating a level playing field for women working towards successful careers. This support creates an atmosphere of lower stress among all employees, a happier workforce, and more success for all involved (Huang et al., 2021).

Communication Access and Social Support Networks

People's psychological and emotional needs become acute when the workplace changes and lowers perceptions of psychological safety (Carmeli & Hoffer, 2009; Edmondson, 1999)., The COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the economic recession, negatively affects many people's mental health and creates new barriers for those who have mental illness and substance abuse. The number of adults reporting anxiety or depressive disorders has increased from one in ten in the first six months of 2019 to four in ten in 2020 (NHIS, 2020). Specifically, the impacts include "difficulty sleeping (36%) or eating (32%), increases in alcohol consumption or substance abuse (12%), and worsening chronic conditions (12%)" (KFF, 2020, p. 1). In addition, there are mental health problems associated with working from home (WFH) (Bubb & Daly, 2020). A broader effect is that individuals and groups with low health and media literacy are often disadvantaged worldwide, particularly in low-income countries, neighborhoods, and communities with limited access (Lee, 2021).

A positive outcome from the COVID-19 pandemic is that communication access created a revolution in providing mental health services to clients. Before the pandemic, licensed psychologists delivered 7.07% of their services via telepsychology compared to 85.52% currently (Pierce et al., 2021). Variety in service delivery has also expanded to include combining brick and mortar with virtual services and the degree to which the services include remote leaders in the brick-and-mortar management teams.

Examples of community support include RXVIP Concierge, CareSignal, Needymed, COVID Companion, COVID Connect, and COVID Support Staff (RXVIP Concierge, 2020). Tadmor et al. (2006) found crisis-related surges in health care needs often lead to effective strategies. These "help patients and communities manage acute stress, preserve medical supplies, and maintain the mental and physical health of patients and health care staff" (p. 1176).

Schiavo (2011), Estrada-Portales (2020), and Schiavo (2009) have also shown that high-quality social interactions such as informal discussions between co-workers are crucial for mental and physical health and social connection. Both the requirement to work from home and plans to move to workplaces that support physical distancing are likely to have side effects, including some degree of impairment to individuals' mental and physical health. Affected individuals may display mental health symptoms such as anxiety and depression as they re-integrate into the new working environment. Finally, Lucy (2020) noted that encouraging managers to support their teams to ensure the individuals in those teams were emotionally and mentally navigating the changing waters helped employees feel supported. Lucy also noted the importance of leaders being willing to revise plans as needed. Concluding with three Cs for leaders, Lucy recommended Calm, Clarity, and Communicate (p. 20) were critical actions for leaders to relate to employee fears, uncertainty, and doubts. The presence that leaders show in unpredictable times is key to employee well-being.

3. Increasing Diversity in the Communications Workforce

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019) found significant differences between the number of White professionals and Blacks (African American), Asians, Hispanic (Latino), women, and other minority groups working in health, media, public relations, social science occupations, service provider occupations, education, and training communications. Schiavo (2021) notes that these differences provide opportunities for COVID-19 related responses to promote "the cultural relevance of our communication efforts, improve the representation of historically marginalized communities, implement equity and fairness in our teams, foster creativity, and enhance the effectiveness of and trust in our collective efforts" (p. 3). These objectives could provide a more diverse set of professionals reflecting those communities' needs, preferences, values, and priorities. A report in the Toronto Star exemplifies the achievement of the opportunity. The reporter, MacLeod, noted, "The way companies talk about (diversity and inclusion) probably moved forward a whole generation in the span of a few months in 2020. Workplaces are changing, and there's now an expectation that companies take public stands on these issues" (Dob, 2021). KPMG Canada also addressed diversity and inclusion as critical topics, discussing collaboration using technology and having conversations about cultural change and diversity (Dob, 2021).

U.S. Broadband Policy

Castaneda et al. (2015) explored racial and ethnic inclusion in U.S. broadband policy. They recommended a communication policy to address diversity and inclusion issues in the digital age. They noted that the new U.S. National Broadband Plan is explicit about the inclusion of historically marginalized populations. Since the 1980s, a shift has occurred that has included more marginalized groups. This shift has been pervasive enough that Castaneda et al. felt it could disproportionly benefit those with race and gender privilege. The researchers noted three trends: The previous view of minority media ownership as a public benefit decreases, market terms describe media diversity, and communications policy is rooted

in racial and gender exclusion (p. 141). These changes are significant because they are shaping a future communications landscape that will be more inclusive.

Castaneda et al. (2015) noted that innovation and inclusion are the two great strengths of the United States. Among the groups identified as marginalized were the elderly, the poor, rural dwellers, disabled individuals, and racial and ethnic minorities, specifically African Americans and Latinos. "Some of the solutions for inclusion are reforming universal service, extending access to tribal lands, encouraging technology adoption, underscoring affordability, and demonstrating how broadband is critical for addressing national priorities (e.g., education) and democratic participation for all" (p. 148). Overall, Castaneda et al. were encouraged that the new digital environment will be more inclusive of all people, particularly formerly marginalized groups. An ongoing concern exists since the telephone companies and cable providers are not considering the National Broadcast Plan priorities for racial and ethnic inclusion. McCready et al. (2021) found that social media exposure affected the mental health of students of color who experienced racialized aggressions.

Global Issues for Journalists

Ford et al. (2020) noted, "The failure of news media to include diverse voices is a global issue" (p. 58), and "students and novice journalists need to be trained how to report on marginalized communities" (p. 58). Lehrman (2019) described Maynard's metaphoric description of faultlines as the forces that create social tensions separating people and communities. By replacing race with *ethnicity,* the focus shifts to a global one that includes cultural and linguistic diversities rather than more simplistically on race alone. Collins (2015) described this focus as *intersectionality*, the impact of the intersections of the overlapping systems. Developing awareness of social faultlines in their own lives and the lives of others helps journalists become more accurate and nuanced in their interviews, notes, photos, and other elements that are part of their reporting. These are vital components to being factually correct, audience sensitive, and responsive. To create more inclusive journalism, Gonzales and Ford (2019) suggested: journalists commit to writing stories about under-covered communities, avoid spreading biases by accurately portraying communities, and journalism educators must teach students how to cover underrepresented communities and issues. Ford et al. (2020) recommended the following five strategies for journalism schools, educators, and journalists:

1. Recognizing the role news media have played in marginalizing, and sometimes traumatizing, communities along the faultlines of race, class, gender, disability, generation, and geography because of missing voices, tokenism, and negative stereotypes.
2. Creating a "call to action" for schools that recognizes and builds diversity, inclusion, and equity into all aspects of their work. In their curricula or newsrooms, all journalism schools need to commit to community accountability and power-sharing, based on diversity, inclusion, and equity, in all aspects of their operations.
3. Recognizing that diversity is an ongoing issue interconnected with economics, politics, entertainment, and the environment.
4. Recognizing the impact that the intersectionality of identities has on journalism practices and teaching. Required ongoing antibias education and multicultural competency training for educators, students, and journalists can achieve this.

5. Encouraging and actively supporting students from marginalized groups to become journalists and recognizing communications from such groups in local communities as valued professionals and future sources. (p. 61)

There is also an essential role for journalism educators and newsroom managers. Both groups need to encourage students and journalists to examine subconscious assumptions, biases, and preconceptions reflected in their language and presentation of issues.

Unconscious Bias

An excellent book by Fuller et al. (2020) describes the FranklinCovey Bias Progress Model based on the FranklinCovey work session, *Unconscious Bias: Understanding Bias to Unleash Potential*. Based on the knowledge that everyone is biased, the model provides a powerful mechanism for developing greater self-awareness about the unconscious assumptions that often get in the way of building authentic relationships with others who are different. Identifying bias, cultivating connection, choosing courage, and applying across the talent lifecycle are the four components of the model.

Identify Bias

Identifying bias begins with participants exploring their identities and how their bias influences their identity by exploring experiences, information, education, context, culture, and innate traits. This identification process is a practical step in writing origin stories describing the potential and identified biases and their effects on relationships and decisions. The process works with the identified biases of participants to evaluate whether individuals are simply reactive (damaging), neutral (limiting) or if they are choosing how to react and proceed (high performance). The identification phase continues with exploring the bias traps of information overload, using feelings over facts, the pressure for speed. Phase one concludes with a mindful concentration on the present moment to better understand how to engage others and mitigate bias.

Cultivate Connection

Participants can achieve better performance by connecting and understanding others. Understanding has the benefit of helping people explore, revise, and change their points of view. The goal is to develop belonging, engagement, and equity. A new alignment includes policies and procedures, representing all groups, encouraging empathy and curiosity, and getting to know other people. It also includes building networks to mentor, coach, sponsor, and being a confidant. The greatest challenge here is navigating difficult conversations and having the skills and knowledge to do this successfully.

Choose Courage

Careful courage is described as appropriate when at risk professionally or personally and where safety is low. To develop careful courage, one needs to build a solid foundation of understanding first. The FranklinCovey Bias Progress Model identifies sixteen different strategies for developing the courage to

address bias in the workplace. Four categories describe the kinds of courage needed. These are courage to identify, courage to cope, courage to ally, and courage to advocate.

Apply Across the Talent Lifecycle

The last component of the model is to use it across all phases of the organizational talent life cycle and do so for as long as needed recognizing that change is not likely to happen quickly. A critical insight here is that while human resources law and policy guide the talent lifecycle, leaders' influences and power impact employee experiences at every point. Meaningful change begins with onboarding and includes performance management, succession planning, and persistence to see the process through to a successful conclusion. Employee engagement and retention strategies support the change.

Summary

Research has shown that developing awareness of the biases and issues while developing skills needed to avoid biased perspectives can effectively address discrimination in media and communications. Well-developed actions like taking a stand and being an advocate coupled with the education of researchers, writers, and leaders make a difference.

4. Increases in Mental Health Support

The COVID-19 pandemic generated considerable anxiety from the lack of information and the many unknown and uncertain aspects of the virus. In addition, concerns for marginalized populations led to emergency relief measures for those who did not have adequate housing and often have poor health conditions and experience other barriers to accessing care. Lisbon, Portugal, successfully delivered services and daily clean-up through emergency shelters in local communities (Fuertes et al., 2021). The emergency shelter program was so successful in providing a variety of services and doing so to some clients who would usually refuse to go to a shelter, the Portuguese National Drugs Agency (SICAD) decided to open a managed alcohol program for people who use alcohol (Fuertes et al., 2021). Other researchers found differences between groups with different backgrounds. For example, Jaspal et al. (2020) found that people's religious experience and level of political trust affected their fear, social isolation, and compulsive buying. Christians reported stronger social networks and higher political trust but more fear of COVID-19 than non-religious individuals. Muslims indicated more fear of COVID-19 and more compulsive buying than non-religious people. Non-religious people used more varied information sources than either Christians or Muslims. For all groups, the source of information about COVID-19 was a key factor determining political trust, fear of COVID-19, social isolation, and compulsive buying.

Lacey (2020) identified a particular need for leaders to be compassionate and adaptable in times of great uncertainty and change. Leaders need to be present, strong, calm, and trustworthy while sharing information quickly, compassionately, and optimistically.

Social media has many implications for communication norms, societal well-being, and individual mental health. It influences personal and professional communications by shaping our views and standards in social discourse (Edelman, 2018). One impact is the need to rethink privacy, confidentiality, and professional boundaries (Voshel & Wesala, 2015). Professional standards guide this rethinking. For example, the National Association of Social workers communicates five values: Dignity and the person's

worth, social justice, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence combined with 12 challenges for the organization going into the future (American Academy of Social Work & Welfare, 2016). Another impact is the potential erosion of the standardized ethical foundations of the social service and psychological professions. Ricciardelli et al. (2020) found that "permissiveness of law enforcement's use of social media (e.g., facial recognition programs and true crime podcasts) demonstrates a lack of understanding for how such practices violate constitutional rights (p. 8). Ricciardelli et al. noted that "it is important that social work students and practitioners can understand the process by which information is accessed for validity and reliability so that they themselves can be critical consumers and purveyors of information" (p. 8).

The U.S. Federal Government described guidance for research involving human participants in the Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects, 1978). The principles are respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Three actions help achieve the principles: informed consent, assessment of risks and benefits, and subject selection. Extending these principles to evaluations of social media can improve social, political, and economic equality. The American Academy of Social Work & Welfare (2016) created *Grand Challenges for Social Work* as a significant scientific initiative describing how to accomplish this. The three major areas and thirteen challenges are:

- Individual and Family Well-being
  ○ Ensure healthy development for all youth.
  ○ Close the health gap.
  ○ Build healthy relationships to end family violence
  ○ Advance long and productive lives
- Stronger Social Fabric
  ○ Eradicate social isolation.
  ○ End homelessness.
  ○ Create social responses to a changing environment.
  ○ Harness technology for social good.
- Just Society
  ○ Promote smart decarceration.
  ○ Build financial capability and assets for all.
  ○ Reduce extreme economic inequality.
  ○ Achieve equal opportunity and justice. (Fong et al., 2018; Society for Social Work and Research, 2016).
  ○ Eliminate racism (added in 2020).

In January of 2021, the American Academy of Social Work and Welfare published a report summarizing significant progress in the targeted areas (American Academy of Social Work & Welfare, 2016).

Recent research reveals an exaggeration of crime in mainstream media and that the same media radicalize crime and criminalize race (Odartey-Wellington, 2011). Douai and Perry (2018) describe how this creates "inaccurate public perceptions about the frequency, seriousness, and demographic distribution of crime…" (p. 96). In their content analysis of two Greater Toronto Area newspapers, Douai and Perry found no newspaper catered to Canadian audiences who "live in Canada but who may still be emotionally and culturally invested in their countries of origin" (p. 112). The two researchers also noted that communities served were more imagined and described as voyeuristic news tours. One paper focused

on social justice. The other was sensationalistic in reporting crime. One typical process in current use is self-identified race/ethnicity used for racial and ethnic identification and research. White et al. (2020) studied an alternative, social assignment. Although most of the eighteen studies they reviewed showed positive associations between the social projects as a disadvantaged racial or ethnic group with poorer health, some did not. White et al. felt the approach showed promise and was worth further investigation.

The New Normal: Issues and Responses

The world is fast arriving at what has been called "the new normal." In a 2020 article, Jasgur described *Transitioning to the New Normal*. Since most organizations are working through the transition from Pre-COVID-19 and COVID-19 to Post COVID-19, Jasgur's descriptions of how to address the critical aspects of the transition is helpful. The guidance included preparing for day one, preparing the workforce, new policies and practices, communications, change management, and going beyond day one. The article concluded with suggestions for establishing "permanent hybrid ways of working" (pp. 218-220). Jasgur placed a strong emphasis on robust analysis and significant leverage of analytics, technology, and collaboration. Key areas to focus on were:

- Keeping employees engaged and their well-being,
- Developing healthy interaction within teams,
- Evaluating and supporting collaboration between teams and organizations,
- Improving external connectivity and alignment with customers and suppliers (pp. 219-220)

Collect Better Data

Jasgur (2020) also emphasized the need for the government to implement broad emergency powers and organizations to make plans to respond appropriately. This recommendation, however, is questionable given that the article by Quinn et al. (2021) reviewed 165 research papers finding that the adherence to COVID-19 reporting standards was more flawed than for non-COVID-19 papers. The methodological and reporting issues were judged to "ultimately compromise the utility of the research and may cause harm" (p. 9). Quinn et al. (2021) concluded that "we must not sacrifice research quality in the race to publish data, and it would be [a] further tragedy if current researchers and publishers do not learn from the first wave of covid-19 research" (p. 9). Jasgur (2020) recommended caution until we achieve better data integrity.

COVID-19 Effects on Gender Diversity

The shift to working from home has not affected everyone the same. Pelura (2021) reported that about one-fourth of working women are thinking about "scaling back their career ambitions or leaving the workforce entirely to focus on the children's needs" (p. 2). A severe effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is that 2,651,000 women left the U.S. workforce between March and September 2020 compared to 1,705,000 men, and more have done so since (Gogoi, 2020). In a podcast, Schulte (2019), Director of Better Life, predicted this might set back women's progress in business five or ten years or a generation. Despite these changes, work from home may improve exposure and access to senior levels of leadership, opportunities to secure others' attention in video conferences, better sharing of household respon-

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sibilities, and enhanced skills for multitasking. Liswood (2020), Secretary-General of the Council of Women World Leaders, commented in the World Economic Forum that cognitive diversity would help businesses deal with the crisis. Existing bias can be exposed and addressed in the technology-assisted workplace. Rethinking the workplace and work practices post-coronavirus presents the opportunity to be more inclusive of women.

Broader COVID-19 Effects and Talent Mobility

Meier (2021) noted that the opportunities provided by the COVID-19 pandemic extend beyond gender equality. Meier commented, "The question of diversity and inclusion encompasses all aspects of what makes individuals unique: not only their country of origin and language but also their gender, family status, professional background, education, thinking style, sexual orientation, and generation" (para. 1). Elaborating on the opportunities, Meier described inclusion as a "well-being" (para. 3, #1) issue which creates a broader sense of connection to the community, one that is vital for mobile employees. Remote working brings unique challenges for which organizations need to assist employees in setting up and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Training is necessary to develop virtual skill sets in employees. Compensation packages for virtual workers need to address benefits gaps, financial support, and spousal support. Remote workers and their families may be the target of discrimination and need more care and help to succeed. Finally, mobility will be affected in ways we do not yet know. Still, it will be essential to keep diversity and inclusion in the equation when discussing and planning talent mobility.

Diversity Effects in Science

Less frequently addressed are diversity effects in science. Calaza et al. (2021) reviewed comments from editors of several major journals describing the importance of combating implicit social bias in science. The article summarized evidence of the existence of "implicit bias in the academic community, contributing to strongly damaging unconscious evaluations and judgments of individuals or groups" (para. 1). Countering this implicit bias is key because diversity in science expands points of view, issues, and areas investigated and, in this way, promotes discoveries (Nielsen et al., 2017). Hong and Page (2004) showed that scientists' abilities from different backgrounds to see problems differently was often the key to discovery. That ". . .a random group of problem solvers will outperform a group of the best problem solvers," and "[a]s the group size becomes larger, the group of the best problem solvers becomes more diverse and, not surprisingly, the group performs relatively better"(p. 16389).

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although there are no easy solutions, Post-COVID-19, we can capitalize on what we have learned from the many innovative responses to the pandemic. We can build on creating and using an equity lens with a stronger emphasis on business and governmental interventions and support. An essential part of this is to improve our scientific knowledge about the effects of diversity. Increasing knowledge will necessitate reducing the existing social biases in science while learning to capitalize on the fresh perspectives of scientists from different backgrounds. The following section will provide specific suggestions and reference some successful existing research that can serve as a model for future studies. Following Schiavo

(2021), we can learn to capitalize on differences and emerge with "[A] renewed sense of resilience, stronger health, social and communication systems, lessons learned, and a stronger feeling of community and caring for each other (p. 1)." By being more informed and helping all employees and people live with less anxiety and better health, we can emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic healthier, with fewer biases, and a greater sense of community and belonging.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This final section will indicate some future research directions and provide a few examples of what other researchers have completed and proposed for investigating these avenues of research.

Investigate community-based participatory research as a business and educational process to incorporate racial and ethnic minorities into business and government decision-making and policy development.

The seven-step process articulated by Gittelsohn et al. (2020) described earlier in this chapter combined several effective strategies to use participative action research to guide business and governmental decision-making. Understanding the impact on specific groups is particularly important. Using and evaluating this process could help improve racial and ethnic minority-related decisions and policies.

Challenge schools, colleges, and universities to develop meaningful consensual objectives related to diversity and inclusion for all communities and groups. Include in the goals better relationships with surrounding communities and groups. Translate the objectives into workable plans and monitor the progress.

Descriptive studies can address the challenges of increasing diversity in educational centers. Rojo-Ramos et al. (2021) provided an example of this approach investigating the preparation of teachers for educational inclusion. Francisco et al. (2020) described societal perspectives and their influences on special education. They noted the lack of empirical studies on the effectiveness of inclusion and special education laws. One key recommendation was adopting common definitions, standards, and clear objectives for inclusion programs.

Study the effectiveness of emotional intelligence training post-COVID-19 to support returning employees and further harmonize relationships at work, at home, and in the community.

Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on specific groups is particularly important. For example, Subudhi et al. (2020) found that older adults were suffering more severely from the effects of social distancing. MacLeod et al. (2021) reported the social isolation is threatening to cause extended health crises. They recommended that research investigating the consequences of long-term social recession on the elderly and other affected groups is needed. Three surveys effectively assessed the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral effects of the pandemic, the Questionnaire for Assessing the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Older Adults (QAICPOA), the Fear of COVID-19 Scale (FCV-19S), the Understanding America Study (UAS) COVID-19 Survey. Web-based training in emotional intelligence (WEIT) is another promising approach. Köppe et al. (2019) found that WEIT training increased long term emotional

intelligence of future leaders, and this improvement persisted. Other similar adaptations of emotional intelligence to problems related to diversity and inclusion hold promise for the future.

Investigate the access to communications of all types and the best ways to improve access for all.

Cuilenburg's (1999) quantitative study explored the "Accessibility of communications, [as] the degree to which it is possible to take a share in society's communications resources" (p. 185). Access at each level of society's communication system implies a complex approach with different policy questions and solutions. Investigating the diversity paradox using Hotelling's Law predicted that more diversity in the media market decreases media diversity. Cuilenburg's study tested hypotheses generated from Hotelling's Law. Fierce competition made media more responsive to the majority's wishes and opinions. Moderate competition stimulated divergent confrontation by media supporting "high cognitive performance quality of media for democracy" (p. 201). Studies like Cuilenburg's can illuminate governmental policies on communications, an area where developments in technology and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have outpaced current policies.

Continue the development and support for telehealth and telepsychology, comparing services delivered electronically with face-to-face health-related services. Also, continue developing and studying telehealth initiatives to expand access to health services to those who might otherwise not obtain adequate support. Extend this development to support families as well as individuals.

Tse et al. (2021) used a survey to examine the acceptability and feasibility of telehealth services. Their results indicated telehealth services are acceptable and even the preferred service delivery in some situations. Additional similar studies could develop a clearly defined set of guidelines for optimally applying telehealth services to diverse populations. Examining the health policy changes and their influences will be needed post-COVID-19. Haque (2021) reviewed some of the policy changes made during COVID-19. This list is a good guide for other post-COVID-19 studies.

Continue and enhance efforts to improve the equity of those working in health, media, public relations, social service, education, and training.

Canada's progress was compared to that of the United Kingdom by Blair et al. (2018). The results revealed Canada's success in early learning, childcare, and reproductive health. The least promising outcomes were in health hazard control and child poverty. Van Winkle (2020) reviewed the association and variations between family policies and increasing family life course complexity. Van Winkle's finding that individualism experienced early and later in the life course-related most strongly with complexity concluded family policy reforms could partially account for increasing life course instability and unpredictability. Long-term studies such as Van Winkle's (2020) could help identify policy-related avenues for improving diversity and inclusion in different areas. Sarkar and Stallard (1997) studied trends for students from four groups (Aboriginal, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and women in predominately male occupations). They found increased participation in equity groups in the Applied Science and Technology programs, lower success rates for equity group students, steadily improving completion rates and lower employment rates for equity group graduates. Sarker and Stallard (1997) called for more long-term data on these equity groups.

Study evidence of bias in journalism and among educators. Find effective ways to reduce conscious and unconscious bias.

Studying ideological differences, conscious bias, and unconscious bias in journalists and educators is a challenging area of investigation. Hennigham's qualitative interviews with Australian journalists and the general public confirmed journalists' general liberal positioning and preferences and the "major ideological gulf" between them. The study indicated a need for a more detailed analysis of journalists' values and how these influence the presentation of the news. Research projects will need "to explore the connection between individual journalists' political values and their journalistic output" (p. 99).

Work with organizations and schools to facilitate onboarding, incorporation, and acceptance of employees from all backgrounds.

Rogers' (2020) review of research on organizational socialization found that researchers have not adequately considered diversity and inclusion. Rogers noted the following problems, "From a feminist perspective, they exhibit the error of avoidance or "producing theories of social phenomena that render women's activities and interests, or gendered power relations, invisible" (Anderson, Introduction section, para. 1). From a critical race theory perspective, they typify the error of failing to acknowledge the banal and material expressions of racism that serve the interests of white males over anyone else (Delgado et al., 2017)" (p. 84). Rogers recommended that future research in organizational socialization needs to be more inclusive. She recommended more qualitative, longitudinal, and outcomes-based studies. The investigators doing the new research "need to be transparent about their theoretical perspectives and biases and ground their findings in critical realism" (p. 84). There are risks of the research becoming less relevant since during "the onboarding process, an organization either reproduces the virtuous circle of learning and inclusion (Farnese et al., 2016; Malik & Kanwal, 2018; Qureshi & Evans, 2015) or the vicious circle of subversive racism and sexism (Benschop, 2001, p. 85).

Track the developments of the new normal in the post-COVID-19 world to retain positive effects and outcomes better and reduce negative ones.

Stookes (2021) expressed concern over the *2020 Lean In Women in the Workplace* report that one in four women are actively considering leaving the workplace due to the COVID-19 crisis. While companies have provided some accommodations to the extra burdens on women working from home, Stookes suggests organizations should systematically review "where their people are spending their time and energy and the corresponding 1) business value 2) employee satisfaction associated with those activities" (p. 19). By not addressing the issues, companies face the possibility of reversing decades of gender balance progress. There are other areas of concern; Merrifield (2020) discussed the 2.3% decrease in full-time-equivalent G.P.s in England over the year 2020. The National Health Service in England developed a "People Plan" building on the flexible working changes that emerged during COVID-19. The article noted, "Many practices still face major challenges and a lack of resources…" (p. 14). Zurich Insurance Group and the University of Oxford (2020) conducted two global surveys with business leaders. The report, *Shaping a brighter world of work: The case for a new social contract,* noted a growing need for strengthening the protection for atypical workers (freelancers, gig workers, part-time workers). Millennials and Gen Z workers have shifted from choosing freelancing career paths to seeking job security.

Pressures to adapt to technological change have accelerated, including the need for reskilling. New forms of government and public partnerships are easing pressure on governments regarding health, disability, income protection, and dependent protection. Big data calls for protection with flexibility and continuity across career choices.

Improve data collection in all areas related to the diverse delivery of services and opportunities, including accuracy, analysis, and usefulness.

The pandemic revealed many issues related to data collection and analysis in organizational and governmental data collection. A few examples of recommended changes worth investigating include Dribben et al. (2021), Villarreal-Garza et al. (2021), and Dixon-Woods et al. (2019). The Dixon-Woods et al. study found significant problems with the quality and contextualization of the reported data. They argued for the need to improve the current processes to provide accurate, high-quality demographic data analyzed in the context of social and political determinants of health-related to racial/ethnic minorities.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Communication Access: is when the business or service you are visiting is communication accessible: Staff welcome and treat everyone with dignity and respect. Staff communicate successfully with people with communication difficulties. Communication tools are available to help people get their message across and understand what people are telling them. (Scope, n.d.). https://www.scopeaust.org.au/services-for-organisations/access-and-inclusion-for-businesses/communication-access/

Community: is a group of individuals, whether or not in physical contact, who are aware of themselves as sharing a common ideology, interest, property, or the fact of sharing something in common (English & English, 1958, p. 100).

Community-Centered: activities fundamentally concerned with the relationship between social systems and individual well-being in the community context (Perkins, 2011)

Community Engagement: is active participation in your community and investment in what happens in your community. Engagement includes many different activities, like community service, donations, voting, career work, and more. (Oregon State University, 2021)

Community-Based Participatory Action Research: "Community Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) is a collaborative approach to research that involves all stakeholders throughout the research process, from establishing the research question to developing data collection tools to analysis and dissemination of findings. It is a research framework that aims to address the practical concerns of people in a community and fundamentally changes the roles of the researcher and participants. https://www.labor.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/A-Short-Guide-to-Community-Based-Participatory-Action Research.pdf#:~:text=Community%20Based%20Participatory%20Action%20Research%20%28CBPAR%29%20is%20a,based%20and%20engaged.i%20It%20frames%20research%20to%20be%3A

COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic, also known as the coronavirus pandemic, is an ongoing pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The pandemic was caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Researchers identified COVID-19 in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. (Wikipedia, n.d.). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic

Civic Engagement: Civic engagement means participating in activities intended to improve the quality of life in one's community by addressing issues of public concern, such as homelessness, pollution, or food insecurity, and developing the knowledge and skills needed to address those issues. Civic engagement can involve various political and non-political activities, including voting, volunteering, and participating in group activities like community gardens and food banks. https://www.thoughtco.com.

Diversity: is the practice or quality of including or involving people from different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders and sexual orientations. "Equality and diversity should be supported for their own sakes." (Oxford dictionaries). http://languages.oup.com

Diversity in Communications: In telecommunications, a diversity scheme refers to improving the reliability of a message signal by using two or more communication channels with different characteristics. Cultural diversity affects communication by changing the way different cultures interact in a conversation. Diversity can be the result of different types of communication, making understanding each other challenging. (Graduate Way, 2021)

Emotional Intelligence: the ability to understand and control your feelings and to understand the feelings of others and suitably react to them: Emotional intelligence is as important as academic intelligence (Cambridge Business English Dictionary © Cambridge University Press, n.d.)

Equity Lens: to be deliberately inclusive as an organization makes decisions. It introduces a set of questions into decisions that help decision-makers focus on equity in both their process and outcomes (UofMOIC, 2021).

Inclusion: the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized. People included are those with physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups; "we value and promote diversity and inclusion in every aspect of our business" (Oxford dictionaries. http://languages.oup.com).

Mental Health Issues: During the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals may experience stress, anxiety, fear, sadness, and loneliness. And mental health disorders, including anxiety and depression, can worsen. Surveys show a significant increase in the number of U.S. adults who report symptoms of stress; COVID-19 can result in increased stress, anxiety, and depression among older adults (Mayo Clinic, n.d.).

New Normal: The state into which an economy and society settle following a crisis differing from the situation that prevailed before the start of the crisis (Wikipedia, July 2020).

Onboarding: the action or process of integrating a new employee into an organization or familiarizing a new customer or client with one's products or services: "after the initial onboarding is complete, continue to offer new hires relevant training and development opportunities" (Oxford dictionaries. http://languages.oup.com).

Psychological safety: is freedom of expression, feeling safe with interpersonal risk-taking, and shared beliefs and supports (Kahn, 1990).

Social Media: include websites and applications enabling users to create and share content or participate in social networking. (Oxford dictionaries. http://languages.oup.com).

Unconscious bias: characterizing activity or mental structure [related to discrimination] of which a person is unaware (English & English, 1958, p. 569)

Section 3

Societal and Individual Impacts on the Future of the Workforce

Chapter 9
The COVID-Era Impact on Work-Life Balance

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ABSTRACT

The mission of this chapter is to encourage and provide a model for leaders to lead organizations through a work-life balance (WLB)-centered holistic leadership approach. This approach begins by explaining why it is imperative to lead by considering the totality of each person from a diverse and inclusive viewpoint. The totality of each person includes one's self-care management practices and all roles one plays in life. The apex of this mission is to provide leaders with a research-based practitioner model to create an inclusive culture of organizational health and wellness. The self-care flourished living (SCFL) model coupled with a holistic leadership approach that diversifies to meet individual employee needs will be showcased in this chapter. The result of leading employees through SCFL and a holistic approach will promote living a life of balance through effective self-care.

MISSION

The mission of this chapter is to encourage and provide a model for leaders to lead organizations through a work-life balance (WLB) centered holistic leadership approach. This approach begins by explaining why it is imperative to lead by considering the totality of each person from a diverse and inclusive viewpoint (Ziebarth, 2016). The totality of each person includes one's self-care management practices and all roles one participates in life. Such life roles might include but are not limited to the employee, spouse/significant relationship, parent, sibling, friend, community volunteer, religious practices, and hobbies.

The apex of this mission is to provide leaders with a research-based, practitioner model to create an inclusive culture of organizational health and wellness. The Self-Care Flourished Living (SCFL) model coupled with a holistic leadership approach that diversifies to meet individual employee needs will showcase this chapter. The result of leading employees through SCFL and a holistic approach will promote living a life of balance through effective self-care.

CONCERNS

A concern of the Covid era impact on work-life balance will focus on the lack of effective leadership for the holistic or totality of each person in the workplace. The effects of mediocre promotion and practice of employee preventive health measures coupled with intentional or unintentional work-family conflict practices have been exposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. This illumination has been revealed by numerous research studies that show when individuals are diagnosed with Covid-19 and possess one or more preventable comorbidities, their likelihood of severe complications to include death is significantly higher. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), only 6% of deaths listed Covid-19 as the only cause of death on the certificate (Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021).

Preventable diseases have been the leading cause of death in the United States for decades. A major root cause of comorbidity complications with Covid-19 is obesity (CDC, 2021). Obesity is considered by many researchers and health practitioners as a global epidemic (Vasileva et al., 2018). Preventable diseases related to obesity include heart disease, stroke, type2 diabetes, depression, and certain types of cancers, all of which can lead to a lower quality of life (Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], n.d.). These preventable diseases continue to increase throughout the United States and most of the world. According to the CDC (2021), from 1999-2000 to 2017-2018, the prevalence of obesity in the U.S. increased from 30.5% to 42.4%. In comparison, obesity in the U.S. during the 1950s was approximately 10% (CDC, 2021).

Although preventable diseases and comorbidities affect all segments of the population, obesity, the leading contributor to preventable disease affects socioeconomic disadvantage segments greater than the general population (Egen et al., 2017). Therefore, it is important to examine how the lack of effective self-care and preventable health measures have affected the socio-economic, race, and nationality segments.

Lifestyle choices are one of the leading causes of obesity which are considered to differ by social, economic practices, and culture. For example, children who are not fed a balanced diet and are not encouraged to engage in daily physical activity are more likely to develop childhood obesity (Chavan et al., 2020). Childhood obesity promotes adult obesity, and the data shows one out of six children and adolescents ages 2 to 19 are obese and one out of three are overweight or obese. (Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, n.d.).

Preventive health initiatives have remained in the background of Western medicine for several decades. The Covid-19 pandemic is bringing the reality of ineffective self-care practices to the forefront of needed conversation within the medical community and our workplaces. This Covid pandemic era reveals how imperative health and wellness leadership is needed in our workplaces, families, communities, and nations.

HISTORY OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-life balance (WLB) is a global strategic concern that holistically includes effectively managing the working and non-working roles in life (Chang et al., 2010). Greenhaus et al. (2003) defined WLB as "the extent to which individuals are equally engaged in and equally satisfied with work and family roles" (p. 513). WLB has also been defined by other researchers as the absence of work-family conflict and work-life conflict. However, this researcher does not believe striving for an absence of conflict or being equally engaged in work and family are primary indicators of WLB.

A more pragmatic approach that this researcher fully supports and has adopted as a practitioner is Greenhaus' amended WLB definition which describes WLB as how well one aligns individual behavior with one's priorities in life (Greenhaus et al., 2006). The struggle of figuring out one's priorities in life and aligning their daily behaviors with those priorities is considered a universal struggle currently being supported by researchers and practitioners. How well a person prioritizes their health and family relationships is an indicator of how balanced a person might feel.

Work-life balance (WLB) research in the United States became a source of inquiry in the 1980s following Europe's research that began in the 1970s (Frone, 2003; Smith & Gardner, 2007). Before the 1970s, most full-time employees were predominantly male, and their female partners managed most of the responsibilities of the home and children. Work-life conflict (WLC) and WLB were not concepts researchers were investigating since most households had one full-time employee (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006). Double income working parents started to experience role conflicts and time constraints causing WLC. Researchers discovered WLC and time constraints worthy of study when women became employed in large numbers.

Women were the subjects of study for the first two decades. Researchers began to include men as study participants during the turn of the 21st century when the tasks of managing a home and children became more of a shared responsibility. As of 2012, men began experiencing greater amounts and negative effects of WLC than women (Evans et al., 2013). During this same time frame, men began outpacing women in obtaining professional counseling to help them reduce their WLC and manage their various roles in life (Evans et al., 2013). Regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, and country of employment, employees who work great than a standard 40-hour work week experience the negative effects WLC has on WLB.

Employees in developed nations generally believe working 40-hours per week is the standard workweek. Many countries, such as the United States, have employment laws that require most businesses to pay overtime for all hours greater than 40 per week. Most full-time employees work greater than the standard workweek which exacerbates their WLC issues. For example, during the pandemic, 70% of office employees who switched to working from home say they now work extra hours on weekends (Society of Human Resource Management, n.d.). This increase in working hours is on top of the 47 hours U.S. employees averaged per week, with 21% working 50-59 hours and 18% working greater than 60 hours per week ("Gallup," 2014).

The negative effects of WLC due to working greater than 40-hours per week often surface in physical and mental health issues. These issues are well documented in western and non-western working cultures. For example, burnout in Taipei, (Hu et al., 2016), an elevated risk for coronary heart disease in Korea (Kang et al., 2014), and an increased Body Mass Index (BMI) in Hong Kong (Mercan, 2014). Unfortunately, extreme issues are also prevalent. Employees in Japan experience *Karojisatsu, which* is the taking of one's life due to overwork *Karoshi which* is sudden death from cardiovascular failure due to overwork (Bannai & Tamakoshi, 2014).

Numerous studies correlate the failure to balance one's priorities in work and life to job burnout, unhealthy behavioral choices, and an overall reduction in health and wellness (Binnewies, 2016). Overeating, lack of exercise, and insufficient sleep are all considered behavior choices for employees who work excessive hours. When left unmanaged, these negative effects from one's physical and mental exhaustion can increase employee absenteeism, decrease employee engagement, satisfaction, and productivity.

Many nations and organizations around the world understand the moral importance of prioritizing one's physical and psychological self-care within the WLB model. However, not all leaders within organizations practice the ethical construct of leading and caring for their employees from a holistic perspective

to promote well-being and occupational success. However, the American Psychological Association (APA) is a good example of an organization that provides relevant guidance on how to properly manage effective WLB and self-care practices as an ethical necessity of conducting therapy with clients. Nation and organizational leaders are encouraged to adopt and implement a variety of health and wellness programs, benefits, and family-friendly employment policies.

SELF-CARE AND THE SCIENCE WITH WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Self-care theory is an integral part of an effective and sustainable work-life balance (WLB) experience. Studies have modeled effective self-care practices as the underpinning or foundational support of WLB (Hutchinson, 2019). Since self-care is an essential human function and is needed daily, it is directly related to healthy and unhealthy behaviors (Orem, 1985).

Practitioners and researchers began taking an interest is self-care during the 1980s when their colleagues were researching WLB. A practicing nurse named Dorothy Orem conducted the seminal research on self-care (Callaghan, 2006). Her seminal work concentrated on the physical, psychological, and social-behavioral health practices of the individual. She realized there was an interconnectedness of these three self-care elements. For instance, a thought, which is a psychological decision predisposes the physical self-care action, whether favorable or unfavorable. For example, a decision to select a healthy food choice over an unhealthy food option directly impacts the action of selection. This psychological process manifests itself whether one is deciding on exercise, nutrition, or sleep. Orem also noted that family members and other dependents can also be affected by the caretaker's individual decisions.

Self-care theory is considered complex since the individual is the agent and object of change. The agent of change is the person deciding on a particular action. The object of change is the person whose subsequent action is going to affect. As we know from our daily practices, we can make favorable and unfavorable decisions regarding self-care. The ramifications of those decisions are experienced by the agent. For example, consistent decisions to choose healthy foods and exercise routinely might lend one to sustain normal and healthy body weight. A decision to choose unhealthy foods and not exercise might lead one to sustain an unhealthy bodyweight that can lead to obesity. As of 2021, obesity rates in the United States were 42.4% compared to 10% in the 1950s (CDC, n.d.).

Self-care requisites and self-care agency concepts emerged as researchers continued to develop self-care theory. Self-care requisites are constructs that depict a state a person is in at a given time (Orem, 1985; Orem & Vardiman, 1995). The requisites or needs of a person's self-care is conditional on one's life stage, gender, wellness state, and environmental conditions (Orem, 1985). These self-care essential needs are universal applying to all persons without prejudice of nationality, race, or economic status. Physical needs without actions by the individual can result in the deterioration of health status because of the unmet need. Self-care agency is a construct that describes a person's psychological capacity to select a self-care action and the physical ability to employ the action (Denyes et al., 2002).

Self-management of chronic diseases have their origins in self-care because of Halsted Holman and his colleagues (Lorig et al., 1985). Holman and his colleagues bridged the gap of self-care theory to helpful applications starting with self-help education. These researchers successfully demonstrated the correlation of self-help education to improve the symptoms experienced by arthritis patients (Lorig et al., 1985). The success experienced by arthritis patients performing self-help gave rise to the patient self-management concept of chronic diseases as it is known today. Patients who encounter chronic conditions

experience requisites and actions needed in everyday practice to live with the finest possible quality of life (Bodenheimer et al., 2002). Through the seminal contributions of Holman, self-care theory continued to be an important contributor in the health care industry.

Holman continued to expand self-care through self-help courses in the chronic disease self-management field. During this same era, Orem prioritized her time helping nurses better support their patients through proper self-care (Lauder, 2001; Orem, 1985). Self-care was a needed proactive behavior to mitigate self-neglect. Self-neglect occurs when one fails to provide themselves with proper nutrition and other actions that affect health, well-being, and life (Gannon & O'Boyle, 1992; Macmillan & Shaw, 1966).

Individuals who experienced self-neglect were recognized to be not supplying themselves with the proper amounts of self-care. Self-care theory focused on helping individuals who were operating below average standards to teach them and their practitioners in reaching an average standard. The focus was on building knowledge and application to support people with below-normal behaviors to reach minimal normalcy.

In the year 2000, the then-current self-care theory in the literature was predominately found in the healthcare industry and clinical literature and was often associated with impaired functioning, leading to self-neglect (Barnett et al., 2007; Lauder, 2001). However, the current self-care theory and intervention studies are focused on helping people improve their conditions regardless of their self-care practices. Everyone's decisions in managing the components of self-care have significant positive and negative connections to one's physical and mental health (Allen & Armstrong, 2006; Bodenheimer et al., 2002). The health-damaging and life-shortening ramifications of not attending to self-care are evident through countless empirical studies in health and wellness research (Richards, 2013). Inadequate physical exercise, unhealthy eating habits, smoking, and harmful behavioral choices such as excessive alcohol consumption significantly contribute to the chronic, preventable disease increase in the United States which are the leading causes of death (CDC, n.d.). Mastering one's health and wellness is a fundamental underpinning of self-care theory.

The healthcare community views self-care theory as to how one adheres to medication, diet, exercise, and symptom monitoring (Dickson et al., 2012). Symptom monitoring might appear ambiguous; however, recognizing and acting on various physical or psychological symptoms is vital for the early detection of illnesses. The nursing industry is the leader in self-care suggestions and industry practices that promote healthy living to foster sustainable professional services (Richards, 2013).

Other phases of the self-care theory have developed to include managing the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs to maximize health benefits and caring for others (Canning, 2011; Chittenden & Ritchie, 2011; Tan & Castillo, 2014). Many scholars in nursing, psychology and Christian pastor career fields incorporate self-care as an ongoing critical skill and ethical construct for industry practicing professionals to maximize their effectiveness in helping other people (Goncher et al., 2013). The literature suggests it is imperative to adopt beneficial and sustainable self-care choices in one's daily life to maintain professional services within the nursing, psychology, and Christian ministry fields.

The development of self-care efficacy enhances Self-care theory, self-care requisites, and self-care agen*cy*. Self-care efficacy is a person's confidence level in performing a self-care behavior (Clark & Zimmerman, 2014). Ample opportunities to make healthy decisions concerning physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs are apparent daily. The confidence level one self-assessed on their ability to perform the task describes one's self-care efficacy. Holman's self-help application, Orem's self-care, coupled with Bandura's self-efficacy, appears to create a closed-loop learning and application process.

Ethical Leadership: Leading with Self-Care

Leading the whole person in the work environment is considered an ethical leadership style. It is gaining more attention because of the negative ramifications our employees and communities have been experiencing with poor self-care and work-life balance habits. Leaders have an ethical obligation to begin leading their employees and team members toward greater health and wellness outcomes. There is no better time to begin this type of leading as continuous efforts are made to manage our roles and responsibilities during this pandemic era.

Self-care daily habits of positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to enrich one's physical, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being enable self-care as a conceptual framework to live a life of balance (Charlescraft et al., 2010; Tan & Castillo, 2014). The application of self-care begins with understanding life's situational self-care needs. Once understood, one should apply the self-care agency by selecting and implementing a self-care actionable task. Figure 1 depicts examples of self-care actionable behaviors.

Figure 1. Universal Self-Care Behaviors
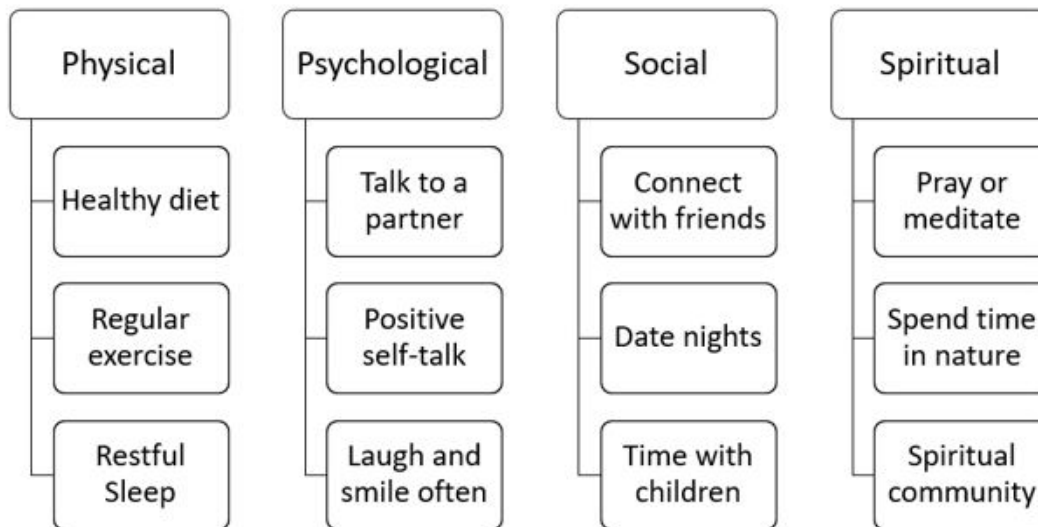
When leaders focus on helping their team members, greater health outcomes will be produced. The more a person helps themselves the more confident they become in continuing in the needed self-care behaviors. Performing positive self-care behaviors each day is imperative to health and wellness. Specific

behaviors might include self-awareness of physical and mental condition, physical activity, healthy eating, risk avoidance or mitigation, and proper use of medications (Webber et al., 2013).

Some researchers have coupled positive psychology with self-care at theoretical frameworks in research. The results of several studies suggest using positive thoughts and behaviors to improve one's physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellness will help reduce stress and balance life (Hutchinson, 2019; Melkus et al., 2015; Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2014). Several studies also position self-care to reduce job burnout because of its' effect on reducing work-life conflict. Psychologists and a few other professions believe self-care is an ethical obligation to one's professional practice and leadership (Wise et al., 2012). It appears appropriate to welcome self-care theory to other professions and leadership since it positively contributes to the agent, organization, and stakeholders. Leaders of organizations have significant opportunities to help their employees through leadership by example and actionable leadership. Actional leadership means taking control of a situation and leading a person by teaching them the actionable tasks of self-care.

Opportunity Met with Action – The Basics

Ethical and actionable leadership opportunities present themselves for often in the workplace than outside of the workplace. It is imperative to recognize the needs of the whole person and act on those needs as a leader when the opportunity comes forth. For example, Matt, a president of a 100-person technology company told this researcher a story that demonstrates how well-being and love for his employees are followed by actionable tasks when opportunities present themselves (Hutchinson, 2016). One of his employees—we will call him Dave—asked him for help. Dave was overweight and knew little about eating a nutritious diet. He also said that he was overwhelmed with the thought of exercising. He asked Matt for advice because he grew to respect him because of the care and respect Matt showed his employees. Matt's response to Dave's request for advice was, "Grab your coat, a pen, and a notepad."

Matt drove Dave to the grocery store. They spent the next two hours going up and down each aisle. He provided Dave with a crash course on nutrition and where the healthy items were in the grocery store. He also recommended food products that Dave should avoid purchasing. After their two-hour shopping adventure, the cart was full, and Matt paid for the groceries. Matt's care and respect continued after they returned from putting the groceries away at Dave's house. Matt placed a phone call to a friend who was an athletic trainer at the gym where all the technology employees received a corporate membership. Matt also recommended several cooking videos to help Dave learn healthy meal preparation techniques.

The example outlined above represents ethical leadership and how one can lead from a holistic perspective. The president of the company was authentically interested in his employee's well-being and health. This genuine care and respect for his employee led him to act. The employee, whose self-efficacy before this grocery adventure on eating well and exercising was exceptionally low. However, thanks to a leader who acted, the employee's self-efficacy, or his confidence level of engaging in healthy lifestyle choices have grown substantially.

SELF-CARE PRACTICES AND SPILLOVER THEORY

How well leaders and employees manage and sustain their self-care needs consisting of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual elements is a contributing factor to one's WLB effectiveness (Chittenden

& Ritchie, 2011; Hutchinson, 2019). The reason for this is partially due to spillover theory. Spillover is recognized as operating bidirectionally with positive and negative attributes between the roles. Spillover can manifest when feelings, attitudes, or behaviors get carried over from one role to others resulting in harmony or conflict (Devine et al., 2006). A positive effect on one's physical self-care might be achieved through proper diet, exercise, and sleep. Similarly, a positive spillover effect on one's psychological and social needs might be realized through quality time spent with one's family. Effective self-care within WLB management can positively impact individuals, organizations, and society through greater attendance, productivity, less stress, decrease healthcare costs, and an improvement in health status (CDC, n.d., Friedman & Westring, 2015).

ETHICAL WORKPLACE LEADERSHIP

Diversity, Inclusion, and leading the whole person might require a servant's heart and a situational leadership style of leading. The whole person includes effectively leading them in their career role, aspirations, self-care practices, family time, and other interests expressed by the employee. Executives generally want employees to embrace the organization's vision, mission, and goals. However, when employees execute on this commitment, it should not be at the expense of their health or family relationships if they want to lead ethically.

Job burnout continues to grow at alarming rates and produces exhaustion and a decline in health status (Bakker & de Vries, 2021). The detrimental aspect of job burnout to the individual is that the negative effects of burnout have already disrupted the self-care management and family relationships of the employee. If one measures a leader's effectiveness strictly by profitability or return on investment, one is turning a blind eye to ethical leadership.

There are a few business areas that practice ethical leadership. For example, practitioners in psychology, nursing, and Christian pastor careers incorporate self-care as an ethical principle to maximize their effectiveness in helping others (Goncher et al., 2013). A parallel cross-over opportunity appears to be available for leaders of all business sectors. Given the drastic health and wellness status of many people in the workplace, leading the whole person to not only be effective at work but in all areas of life to include their self-care appears to be a win-win for all stakeholders. The Self-Care Flourished Living (SCFL) model provides leaders and employees with a mechanism to achieve sustainable work-life balance integration effectiveness.

Self-Care Flourished Living Model

The self-care flourished living (SCFL) model was created from the results of a multiple case study titled Work-Life Balance Attributes of Self-Care with Authentic Leaders (Hutchinson, 2019). The purpose of the model is to help leaders promote self-care as a health and wellness, preferred cultural value that benefits the person and the organization. SCFL as an organizational value and strategy helps leaders lead ethically by considering the needs of the whole person. The model also helps employees understand the importance of using an organization's current family-friendly WLB policies and programs. Figure 2 illustrates the flow of the SCFL model.

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Figure 2. Self-Care Flourished Living
Note. Reprinted from Work-life balance attributes of self-care with authentic leaders: A multiple case study (p 245) by D. Hutchinson, 2019, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. Copyright 2019 by Donald L. Hutchinson, Jr.
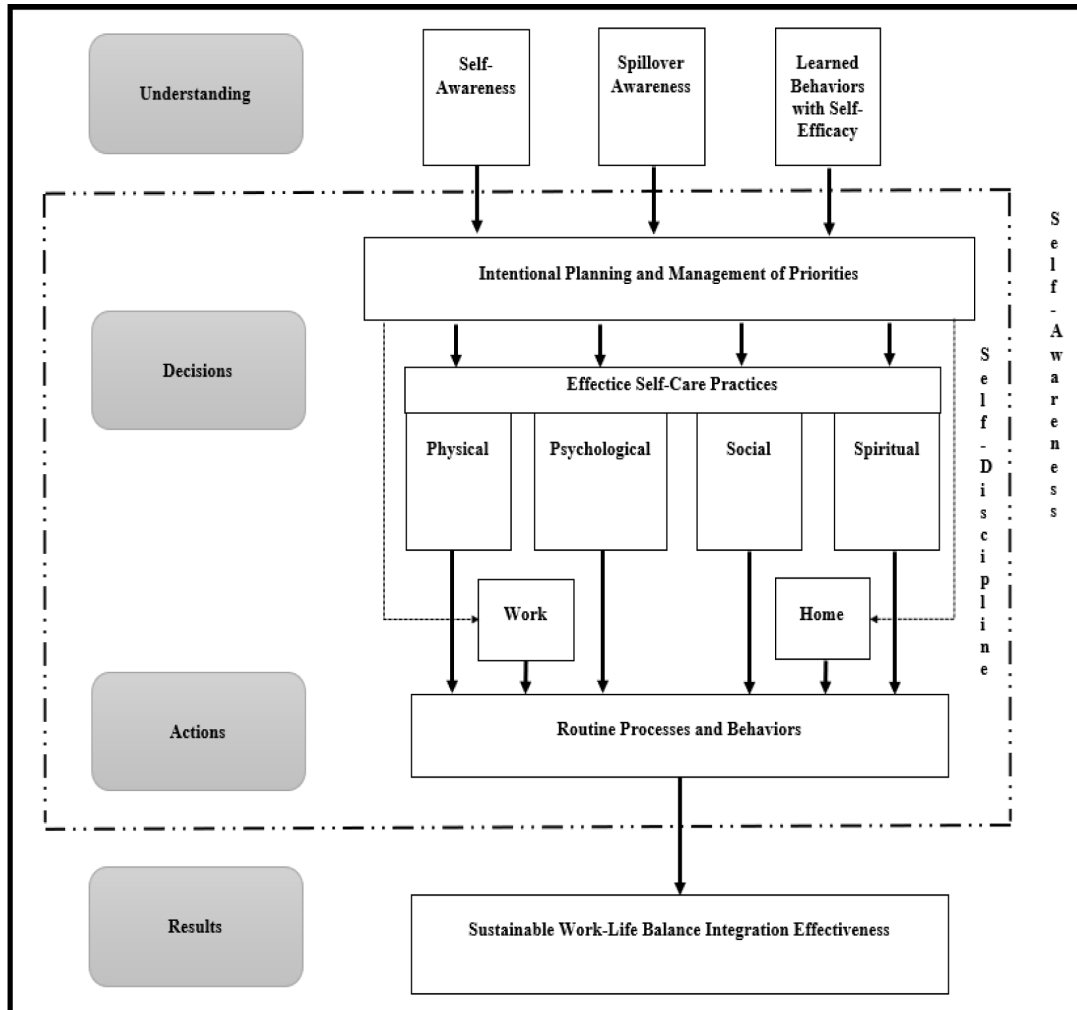
The research study consisted of five authentic leaders whose case studies were independently evaluated, and cross-case evaluated. All five leaders unanimously and firmly confirmed effective and sustainable self-care practices were imperative for them to be successful and effective in their careers and families.

They demonstrated a method of achieving WLB through effective self-care practices by consistently reporting how they handled the management and sustainability of their self-care practices. The findings produced a Self-Care Flourished Living (SCFL) model to help leaders achieve sustainable WLB integration effectiveness. This model places self-care in the superior and top priority position regarding a new method of effectively managing and sustaining WLB.

The Self-Care Flourished Living model (SCFL) illustrates the interconnectedness of the themes from the Hutchinson research study (2019). The large rectangle boxes shadowed in grey are the four hierarchical processes beginning with the rectangle labeled *understanding*. The first phase of the process represents understanding and being mindful of one's self-awareness, spillover awareness, and learned

behaviors with self-efficacy. The three arrows emerging from these elements represent all three themes are needed to proceed to the next theme of intentional planning and management of priorities. The four solid arrows signify that the primary priorities required in this phase are the effective self-care practices of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual. The two dotted arrows represent work and home and are the secondary priorities in this phase. All six priority elements in this *decision* phase are required. This condition is characterized by the six arrows flowing to the routine processes and behaviors rectangle. Routine processes and behaviors are in the *action* phase, represented by the rectangle highlighted in grey. The sizeable, dotted box that encapsulates the decision and action phases represent self-discipline. Exercising self-discipline and the other themes in the decision and action phases leads one to sustainable work-life balance integration effectiveness, represented by the solid arrow flowing from routine processes and behaviors. The large sold box that captures the whole figure represents self-awareness of the efficacy of the SCFL model.

To gain a further and more complete appreciation of the SCFL, each of the elements of the model is explained below in greater detail. Additionally, some examples are given to provide insight into the implementation of the element.

Understanding

The model begins with leaders learning and acquiring a thorough understanding of themselves. The understanding of self is demonstrated through three central themes consisting of self-awareness, spillover awareness, and learned behaviors with self-efficacy.

Self-awareness

Self-awareness is the understanding of one's value and belief systems and how one creates meaning from being aware of what is important in life (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). This central theme to understanding emphasis the inclusion of (a) optimism, (b) mindful of feelings and emotions, and (c) mindful of likes, dislikes, strengths, and weaknesses. These sub-themes offer guidance for others to practice.

An optimistic view of your emotional state can help you gain an understanding of yourself. Noticing how you are feeling and capitalizing on the positive emotional state can be energizing. For example, the mindset of a few of the participants in a study stated, "I'm a pretty positive person, even-keeled person" and "I try to extract all that I can from every moment, every day" (Hutchinson, p. 138, 2019).

A significant component of the understanding theme of this section of the model consists of being mindful of your feelings, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. Being mindful of your feelings and emotions generally consists of being in tune with what you are experiencing. Most of us experience a wide variety of emotions throughout the week. Emotions can often be identified by understanding how one is feeling at a given time. For instance, one method of detecting feelings is to examine the physical experience one is having inside of their body in a non-judgmental manner. For example, one participant of a study stated, "Today is a very typical day for me: positive and optimistic outlook on everything. However, later in the evening I did have some anxiety as I considered possible solutions to a conflict" (Hutchinson, p. 138, 2019).

Being mindful of one's strengths and weaknesses is a choice to become consciously aware of one's skills, talents, and results (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). This mindful assessment is in alignment with one's need to access and provide self-care (Richards, 2015). For example, a participant in a study stated, "One

of my strengths is when it comes to exercise and getting the right amount of sleep, I am very disciplined" (Hutchinson, p. 152, 2019). Another participant demonstrated self-awareness of a weakness of his by journaling in the study that he had a weakness of eating sugary, unhealthy snacks when his work schedule was very busy (Hutchinson, 2019). When one becomes aware of their emotions and feeling which result in harmony or conflict that might get transported over to another role in life is a critical step in identifying spillover (Devine et al., 2006).

Spillover awareness

Spillover can manifest when feelings, attitudes, or behaviors get brought over from one role to others resulting in harmony or conflict (Devine et al., 2006). Leaders and employees who participated in physical exercise, healthier diets, and ridding themselves of unhealthy habits such as smoking experienced positive spillover in other role domains with higher energy and productivity (Friedman & Westring, 2015). How one operates a competent skill, attitude, or resource in one role to spillover and enrich one or more of the other roles is the philosophical underpinning of work-life integration (WLI).

Positive spillover

Positive spillover can best be described by the example's participants in the Hutchinson (2019) study. Participant 003 declared the boost of energy he received from fulfilling his physical self-care need. He stated in the interview during the physical need question, "Well for me it's foundational. You can't sustain a healthy, happy, productive life without having proper nutrition, proper sleep, and certainly on the exercise component, the stamina…certainly energy" (Hutchinson, p. 178, 2019). Participant 004 unequivocally reported his perception and his position on spillover when he stated, "Obviously the relationships with my wife, my kids, and my friends, all have a piece in managing and sustaining the psychological side of things" (Hutchinson, p. 178, 2019).

All participants reported positive spillover by satisfying their spiritual self-care need and experienced positive emotions flowing into their psychological domain and other areas in their lives. Participant 003 declared that he recognized his ability to receive positive emotions from praying and attending a worship service. He stated in the interview when asked about why he sustains his spirituality, "I do it to get my mind right, and my priorities" (Hutchinson, p. 178, 2019). Participant 004 declared that satisfying his spiritual needs was a means of helping him be more effective in all phases of life.

Negative spillover. Many of the negative spillover experiences, perceptions, attitudes of all participants were the antithesis of their positive spillover examples. For example, a participant in the study recognized that unsatisfied physical needs would lead to emotional instability. In our discussion on effectively satisfying her physical needs, she stated in the interview, "I find it harder to control my reaction to things, and my emotions tended to swing more wildly if I haven't gone and had that exercise or if I'm too tired, I tend to react differently" (Hutchinson, p.118, 2019). Another example occurred when a participant did not exercise, they experienced feelings of disappointment.

Learned Behaviors with Self-Efficacy

Learned behaviors were generated by two sub-themes: (a) Manage choices to control outcomes, and (b) behaviors learned from experience. Self-care efficacy is a person's confidence level in performing

a self-care behavior (Clark & Zimmerman, 2014). Opportunities are abundant in daily living to make healthy choices. How confident one is in selecting and performing the self-care task defines one's self-care efficacy. The next step in self-care is to engage and complete the desired task. Conducting positive self-care behaviors consist of healthy choices one makes in daily living (Webber et al., 2013). These choices can range from simple to complex decisions. Specific behaviors might include self-awareness of physical and mental condition, physical activity, healthy eating, risk avoidance or mitigation, and proper use of medications (Webber et al., 2013).

Manage Choices to Control Outcomes

This actionable item was well described in the Hutchinson (2019) study. For example, Participant 002 reported his intention of managing his options when he stated, "So, if I'm exercising my ability to choose, that offers me more control over my life…it is my life, I ought to be able to control pretty much where I'm going with it" (Hutchinson, p. 202, 2019). Additionally, Participant 003 reported his desire to feel happy with positive emotions. He declared his ability to view his experiences in his life's journey through a positive lens. He reported being able to control his joy by choosing to have positive thoughts. He documented in the journal, "Happiness and positive mindset is a choice and I choose to be happy" (Hutchinson, p. 202, 2019).

Behaviors Learned from Experience

This knowledgeable item was well documented in the Hutchinson (2019) study. For example, Participant 001 discussed a time in her life when she was not effectively managing her self-care needs. She reported learning from this experience when she stated, "When I don't take time to exercise, to pay attention to my faith, to eat well, sleep well, I've known there have been times in my career when I wasn't doing a good job at work" (Hutchinson, p. 203, 2019). Additionally, Participant 004 reported his ability to socialize with his spouse after returning from business travel was a learned behavior. He reported past occurrences of feeling irritable when returning from travel and not being very social with his spouse. He learned that he needed a few hours to himself before he could re-engage with the daily routines at home.

Decisions

The decision section begins with the intentional planning and management of priorities. This section of the SCFL Model emphasizes intentionality with planning. This intentionality is usually demonstrated by putting in the time to plan when behavior is needed. The SCFL model emphasizes intentional planning in advance on how and when one will satisfy their physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs. This planning element urges practitioners of the model to put their self-care in the dominant position, over their work and home life. The reason for this is because one's self-care practices will produce spillover. It is imperative to promote positive spillover and mitigate negative spillover. Intentional planning with one's priorities is critical in this decision process.

Managing priorities is the process of deciding which priorities are most important in achieving one's desired outcome. There are times when one needs to prioritize family, work, and other roles in life. The SCFL stresses the importance of prioritizing the management of one's self-care practices because of the spillover effects it has on other self-care roles, work, and family relationships. Therefore, this Decision

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section is about planning with intentionality our desired behaviors for effective self-care practices and then deciding how to manage our priorities when the priorities compete. The model emphasizes the selection of self-care priorities to promote positive spillover and mitigate negative spillover.

Self-care appears to be neglected by most of society since 71% of Americans are either overweight or obese (CDC, n.d.). A healthy physical self-care management practice consists of ensuring one receives the proper amount of sleep, exercise, and nutrition (Chittenden & Ritchie, 2011). The human mind, body, and spirit are nurtured through effective self-care practices. Alternatively, inadequate exercise and sleep, coupled with poor dietary habits was a formula for gaining weight (Watson et al., 2015).

The additional elements of self-care consist of psychological, social, and spiritual needs. Psychological needs such as happiness and joy can be met through a variety of channels ranging from dining with a friend to taking a break from stressful work. Dining with a friend that brings joy and happiness to the parties is also an example of meeting the social need of human beings. Spirituality needs are often satisfied through prayer or meditation which might assist with fulfilling one's psychological need. Failure to meet one or more self-care needs can affect one's professional career and family.

Effective self-care practices are segmented into four categories within the SCFL model and most self-care studies. Fulfilling some needs and neglecting others is not a healthy alternative since all needs require attention and care. When care is neglected, negative spillover occurs which can diminish the effectiveness of the whole person. Below are some basic behaviors of self-care. It is important to note the SCFL model emphasizes including the basics of effective self-care practices into one's daily priorities and behaviors.

Physical needs

Exercise, nutrition, hydration, sleep, and taking prescribed medications are the tenants of one's physical needs. There are numerous sources of information and training on how to effectively manage the tenants of physical self-care. Whether one chooses to walk, run, strength train, or do another exercise activity, the important factor is that it gets accomplished. The same philosophy stands for the other elements of physical care.

Psychological needs

Satisfying one's psychological needs might consist of having a partner to talk to and share your emotions. It might also consist of including some positive emotions from laughter or doing something to attain a sense of accomplishment. Behavior can probably satisfy more than one self-care need. For instance, attending a social event such as a college football game or music concert with your friends is an example of meeting one's psychological and social needs simultaneously.

Social needs

Whether you are spending time with friends, co-workers, or family members, meeting your social need is an important element in the SCFL model. Most people in the world have experienced suffering and negative spillover from not meeting their social needs during the COVID era pandemic. The work-from-home model of conducting business remains a common stance in the workplace by most countries in

the world as of November 2021. The negative ramifications of not meeting one's social needs in the workplace are yet to be determined.

Spiritual

Spirituality needs are often satisfied through prayer or meditation which might assist with fulfilling one's psychological need through positive spillover. Others have noted in the literature that walking in nature is a common practice in fulfilling one's spiritual need, regardless of if the person is purposely trying to satisfy this need. It is noted in the literature that spirituality is associated with greater health status (Tan & Castillo, 2014).

The SCFL model depicts two boxes consisting of work and home that are directly connected to *intentional planning and management of priorities.* Once a person intentionally plans their activities to effectively satisfy all their self-care needs, it is time to shift the planning efforts to work and home. The model is not an absolute, single direction only model. One can include major priorities at work and home in the initial intentional planning stages. However, work and home are depicted below self-care to emphasize the importance of self-discipline in prioritizing one's self-care.

Actions

Once the decisions of implementing intentional planning and management of priorities are implemented, the next step is to act by developing and executing routine processes and behaviors. The routines should focus on meeting one's self-care needs and priorities at work and home. For example, a participant in a study took his spouse on a weekly date, designated Monday evenings as "family night", ate lunch out with friends twice per week, exercised four times per week, and prayed or read scripture each morning (Hutchinson, 2019). The participant stressed the importance of incorporating routine processes and behaviors to satisfy all his self-care, work, and family needs. As noted above in the decision section, self-discipline is a necessary element in executing the desired actions.

Results

Sustainable work-life balance Integration effectiveness is the result of following the SCFL model. This effectiveness is achieved when one aligns their daily behaviors with their priorities in life. Self-care is considered a universal priority. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends effective self-care practices for every county and every economic setting as a critical path in promoting health and wellness (World Health Organization [WHO], n.d.). Once one prioritizes their self-care practices, they are better positioned to produce and experience greater effectiveness at work and home.

The final piece of the model is a continued application of self-awareness. In other words, the SCFL model is not a once-and-done process. One needs to enact self-awareness on a continuous loop to understand their situation, make decisions, choose actions, and evaluate the results. It is with this self-awareness loop that one will find the decisions and actions of the model to become habitual.

SUMMARY AND APPLICATION

Shifting the work-life balance focus from reducing work-life conflicts to life's priorities is imperative for effectiveness in all roles of life. Based on the results of the Hutchinson (2019) study, a new term and model have been coined as Self-Care Flourished Living (SCFL). The new term or phrase places self-care in the superior and top priority position. An opportunity to live a flourishing life is the by-product of effectively managing and sustaining effective self-care practices. The opportunity to maximize one's effectiveness at work and home is also the by-product of prioritizing one's self-care.

The application of the SCFL model should begin with leaders. They should begin practicing effective self-care measures. When leaders lead by example is when they can fully appreciate the benefits of living a flourished life. It is also when they can internalize the benefits for their organization and begin to promote SCFL throughout their department or organization. The SCFL model strongly confirmed and is congruent with the literature that managing and sustaining healthy self-care initiatives produces effectiveness and well-being. These positive effects are in alignment with the presumed beneficial outcomes of WLB.

Incorporate a Diversified SCFL Model Peer Support Team

Peer support teams are widely recognized in the fire service and law enforcement industries to provide well-being assistance. However, the peer support concept applies to most industries and groups of people. Peer supporters are people in an organization who volunteer to provide knowledge, experience, practical help, and best practices to others who are trying to use the SCFL model. This initiative can be created by and sustained by trained supporters and leaders on the SCFL model.

No one has the same self-care and work-life balance challenges; however, many have similar characteristics. For example, married couples have related interests and challenges, parents have children's interests and challenges, physically fit have their interests and physically fit challenged individuals have their interests. It is imperative to build the peer support team with a diversified, peer-represented sample of the organization. For example, it is recommended that all cultures, generations, genders, and races be included on the team. In addition, the employees should come from all departments, teams, and locations. This method of building a cross-cultured, diversified team will provide the members of the organization with a valid sample of their population.

The overarching objective of the peer support team is to guide employees, supervisors, and leaders on how to maximize the effectiveness of actualizing the SCFL model. A common concern among some leaders is that if employees are encouraged to work with peer support to improve their self-care and work-life balance practices, the organization might lose focus on its mission. However, the literature supports this strategic decision and does not support employees becoming greedy and taking advantage of the situation (Nitzsche et al., 2013). Employees are more inclined to tell the peer support team their real needs and how the employee and organization can both benefit. Therefore, task the peer support team to invite all employees to work with the peer support team to discover their self-care and WLB needs. Essentially, the employees, supervisors, and leaders can use the SCFL model as a health, wellness, and work-life balance system.

Train Supervisors on Prioritizing Self-Care and WLB Practices for Team Members

Communicating and training supervisors on the self-care and WLB benefits the organization offers are essential to start the inclusive change needed to uptake usage. Secondly, supervisors should learn how to customize each benefit offering and understand the breadth of their autonomy to make self-care and WLB benefit recommendations and decisions. As the organization progresses and matures away from a 'one-size fits all' benefits management style, the next and most important step is for supervisors to gather and organize the self-care and WLB interests and needs of their direct reports. An evolving trend in the literature is the positive relationship between managing employees as unique individuals and their satisfaction with WLB (Cowart et al., 2014). Individualized attention and appreciation of an employee's individual needs create an environment where leaders are perceived as being ethical (Zhu et al., 2004).

Supervisors need to acknowledge the natural competition of focus and energy organizations and employees engage in with each other. Supervisors frequently consider the team or organizational goals as the single most important priority, while employees, although respect the company and team goals, also strive to meet their personal goals. Supervisors can find themselves competing with the employee's personal goals and interests because they might not intimately know the self-care and WLB interests and needs of their individual team members. Demanding supervisors who push organizational commitment too far might find their employees becoming resentful because their time with family, friends, and wellbeing initiatives are significantly diminished which is correlated with fatigue, absenteeism, burnout, and job quit (Nitzsche et al., 2013). A method to mitigate this competition and help create a win-win solution for the organization, supervisor, and employee is for supervisors to have an intimate knowledge of their employee's self-care and WLB needs and manage accordingly to help the employees meet their needs (Hutchinson, 2016).

Supervisors can begin evaluating how they can help their employees devote more time to their self-care, family, and personal time. They can meet with their employees and take an inventory of their interests and needs such as spouse's name, the number of children, ages, the family's activities such as soccer, football, dance, and other extracurricular activities along with their personal needs such as exercise or leisure time. Table 1 below provides an example of the information that would be helpful to make informed decisions on how to best serve the employee's WLB needs. Table 2 shows a breakdown of specific self-care needs if an expanded need inventory would be beneficial to capture the needed data.

Table 1. Inventory Activity for Supervisors

Employee Dept.	Spouse	Names of Children and Age	Family/children or Employee Activities	Season, Day, and Time of Activities	Employee's Need
James A. Production	Maria	Danielle 13 Thomas 10	Soccer Basketball	Spring – Wed – 4:00 Winter – Tues – 5:00	Leave work by 3:30 on Wed. Leave by 4:30 on Tues.
Mindy Z. Production	n/a	n/a	Exercise class	All – M, W, F 6:30 – 7:30 a.m.	Move start time from 8:00 to 8:30

Note. Reprinted from *Lead with Balance: How to Master Work-Life Balance in an Imbalanced Culture* (p 59) by D. Hutchinson, 2016, Advantage Media. Copyright 2016 by Donnie Hutchinson

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Table 2. Expanded Self-Care Inventory Activity for Supervisors

Employee Dept.	Physical Needs	Psychological Needs	Social Needs	Spiritual Needs
James A. Production	Exercise at lunch needs an extra 15-minutes and will make-up end of the day	Join new hire welcome committee	Join a social committee to organize team events	Use flexible days off to attend worship services, ie. Good Friday
Mindy Z. Production	Exercise before work. Needs a delayed start time	Join Peer Support Team	Participate in collaborative efforts with new projects	10-minute morning break needed for prayer

Knowledge is only powerful when joined with execution. Therefore, supervisors must use the inventory list to proactively engage in conversation and support their employee's self-care and WLB needs. When employees begin to experience the feelings of care and support from supervisors through their words and actions regarding self-care and wellbeing, *perceived organizational support* (POS) is experienced (Eisenberger et al., 1986). When employees obtain valuable WLB effectiveness through the proactive actions of supervisors, POS is present and an intrinsic motive to reciprocate occurs through a greater commitment to the supervisor and organization (Aryee et al., 2005).

A Practitioners Example of Creating Organizational Health and Wellness

It might be helpful to showcase an example of a practitioner and leader who chose to create a culture of wellness within his organization. Creating a culture of wellness is imperative to fostering healthy habits in all business industries. Many believe it is especially helpful in the more stressful industries such as law enforcement and the fire service. Police Chief Neil Gang of the Pinole Police Department in California decided it was time to focus on health and wellness solutions rather than problem awareness.

Earlier in the law enforcement officer (LEO) Gang's career, a fellow squad member who was an academy classmate and friend of Gang's, committed suicide. Gang was left wondering how the situation could have happened, why they didn't see the warning signs, and how they could have prevented it. LEO Asher's death made him realize that there needed to be a significant change. With some time and consideration, Gang began creating a model to bring those difficult conversations out of the shadows and into the open to promote officer wellness.

The Asher Model – A Seven Point Approach to Creating a Culture of Wellness

The Asher Model was developed as a multifaceted approach to the police suicide epidemic with a solution focus approach to a culture of wellness. The model correlates to the seven-point star badge that is worn in the Bay Area and each of the seven points on the star correlates to a point in the proactive approach to employee wellness.

1. Awareness: Creating an environment where "It's OK not to be OK". Open and honest discussions with employees to help bring difficult conversations out of the shadows and into the open.
2. Solution-Focused Approach: Focus on solutions and not the problems. For example, provide employees with a confidential and anonymous wellness app that provides 24/7/365 access to mental health resources.

3. Peer Support: Create a proactive, trained Peer Support Team.
4. Resiliency: Educate and train employees on resiliency, mindfulness, post-traumatic stress, emotional intelligence, yoga, and deep breathing exercises.
5. Healthy Habits: Encourage physical fitness and healthy eating habits. Allocate budget funds to build or update a fitness facility and discourage candy and unhealthy snacks around the department. Remove unhealthy snacks from vending machines and replace them with healthier options.
6. Spirituality: Develop a Police/Clergy Coalition, Chaplain Program, and community outreach programs, such as "Pray with the Police".
7. Family: Involve the families in the new hire's orientation process. Provide access to books on key topics for employees and families.

Gang believed the Asher Model was not the only method of creating a healthy culture when he stated, "I understand our model represents a way, not necessarily, the way, in creating a culture of wellness (Personal communication, Neil Gang, March 3, 2021). The intent of sharing a practitioner and leader's efforts in creating a culture of wellness is to encourage others to do the same. Whether one follows the SCFL model, Asher model, or creates their own, the results are beneficial to the organization and its' members when adjoining behavioral practices with habits of health and wellness.

SUMMARY

Readers understand how preventable diseases contributed to the significant and devasting consequences during the Covid-era. They learned the workplace is an optimal place to lead people by promoting effective self-care practices. Leaders are encouraged to learn how to build and sustain a culture of health and wellness by using the Self-Care Flourished Living (SCFL) model to educate their managers and employees (Hutchinson, 2019). The model encourages and promotes leaders to diversify their leadership style to include caring for the totality of each person. This includes the employee's self-care management practices and all roles in life the employee operates within. When leaders make decisions and create policies that are in the best interest of the whole person, an organization of health and wellness emerges. As a result, Covid-era leaders can produce a positive impact on work-life balance through effective self-care.

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Chapter 10
Unconscious Bias in the COVID–19 Era

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ABSTRACT

Bias, both conscious and unconscious, is defined in many ways. Bias incorporates implicit stereotypes and prejudices, impacts judgments, is displayed in nonverbal behaviors, and may result in a dissociation between what a person believes is right and unconscious beliefs that cause negative actions. Understanding and recognizing the negative impact of unconscious, or implicit, bias during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021 is an important leadership tool. Unconscious bias manifests in many forms. A clear awareness of these forms of bias, learning to recognize the biases, and understanding how to reduce the negative impact of unconscious bias are important to leaders in workplaces upended by the effects if the pandemic. Twelve forms of unconscious bias, its manifestation in the workplace, and the impact of COVID-19 are explored.

INTRODUCTION

Bias is human nature's feeble attempt to help people organize data. The human brain manages only a minuscule percentage of information from the multitude it receives every minute; therefore, most processing is completed unconsciously (Spears & Schmader, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic provided front row seats to experience this unconscious processing which leads to bias, stereotypes, and prejudice. While no one is immune from unconscious bias, it is important to raise awareness, and address this potentially dangerous phenomena. Twelve types of unconscious bias are examined: affinity bias, confirmation bias, attribution bias, conformity bias, halo effect, horns effect, contrast effect, gender bias, age bias, name bias, beauty bias and weight bias. This provides an opportunity to understand each construct as well as explore specific examples that emerged in the workplace during the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Unconscious biases are "quick judgments and assessments of people and situations that are influenced by personal background, experiences, memories, and cultural environment" (Byyny, 2017, p. 2). These judgments potentially affect social interactions (Reiners, 2021a). Summarizing key concepts, Noon (2018) posited that unconscious biases are deeply rooted attitudes and behaviors exhibited by everyone; occur unknowingly; and through social psychological testing are measurable. The COVID-19 pandemic uncovered unique experiences to witness examples of *virus bias* more frequently in the workplace setting. Of growing concern is the belief that behaviors exhibited during the pandemic may have longer-standing repercussions.

Affinity bias

Affinity bias, sometimes called similarity or "like me" bias, occurs when a person sees another person as someone with whom they feel an affinity (Oberai & Anand, 2018). This might be someone who has a similar background or interests. Affinity bias is also seen as a gravitation toward others who look the same (Dalton & Villagran, 2018). A person might be viewed favorably because they are from the same home state or country, or they studied the same subjects in school. Affinity bias is a drawing together of others perceived to be like or similar. It creates a level of comfort that may not be present when around others who do not share similar backgrounds or experiences.

Affinity bias in the workplace occurs when those with hiring authority hire or promote in their own image (Greeley & Larsen, 2019). As with other forms of unconscious bias, affinity bias can be a hidden driver of harmful and detrimental decisions in the workplace (Oberai & Anand, 2018). Organizational leaders who hire those who are like themselves or allow their front-line leaders to hire in this manner negatively impact the diversity, creativity, and innovation of the organization. Left unchecked, affinity bias may lead to uneven performance evaluations and promotions further insulating the organization from creating and maintaining a diverse workforce.

Dalton and Villagran (2018) suggested affinity bias is reduced during the recruitment and retention phases of employment in the following ways. During the recruiting phase, recruitment personnel must ensure the organization has and complies with diversity statements. They must carefully review job postings to remove language that may suggest masculinity or vagueness which may deter applicants, as well as use a personal network to tap into a wide network of professional organizations and diverse communities. During the hiring process, Dalton and Villagran suggested using scripted interviews and a scoring rubric as a way of ensuring all candidates have the same experience, creating a diverse search committee, interviewing a diverse group of candidates, and ensuring there are clear compensation policies. Finally, after ensuring the hiring of a diverse workplace, Dalton and Villagran advocated for organizational leaders to implement practices including cultural awareness training, creating an inclusive work environment, mentoring programs, clear promotion criteria, and regular assessment to diminish the chances of affinity bias.

During COVID-19, affinity bias emerged in numerous workplaces because of the connections built when many employees were left to manage units, departments, or entire organizations with a small team, either as remote workers or as essential personnel. Certain patterns of work production, idea development, or workplace habits became commonplace within these companies. The camaraderie that emerged often provided a buffer against discomfort based on multiple uncertainties in the workers' lives (Rosenfeld

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& Tomiyama, 2021). The deep connections these groups developed to ensure work flowed during the pandemic can sometimes manifest into a like-mindedness that impede change or difference in the office as more organizations return to full employment (Rosenfeld & Tomiyama, 2021).

Confirmation bias

Confirmation bias is a person's propensity to focus only on news that fits and reinforces an individual's political or social perspectives reinforcing the need to seek information that affirms the individual's already held views (Ling, 2020). Confirmation bias occurs once a person forms a belief and this formation becomes resistant to counterarguments. When faced with empirical, contradicting material, it often strengthens the injudicious attitudes or beliefs (Ling, 2020). "Psychological theories of moral and political judgments suggest that people automatically reject information that does not fit their previous beliefs, only engaging in reasoning subsequently when justifying decisions to others" (Kappes et al., 2020, p. 130). Festinger (1957) suggested confirmation bias as a method of maintaining and confirming a sense of self-identity while avoiding cognitive dissonance.

Confirmation bias in the workplace creates a constraint on standards of evidence, necessitating a much more rigorous standard of evidence when information competes with existing beliefs (Kalina, 2020). In a workplace where confirmation bias is widespread, workers focus on narrow accepted beliefs instead of diverse views when seeking to solve problems, and instead of looking outward for dissimilar opinions instead seek information within the organization that reinforces their bias (Kalina, 2020). Individuals with differing viewpoints may hesitate to express these viewpoints fearing retribution (Tobak, 2019).

Intolerance for ambiguity increased during the Covid-19 pandemic, as workers sought confirmation and certainty as a way of reducing anxiety and uncertainty (Jost et al., 2012; Rosenfeld & Tomiyama, 2021). To help workers combat anxiety and uncertainty and lower the reliance on confirmation bias brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, Luippold et al. (2015) suggested four ideas for challenging confirmation bias during decision-making. First, developing three causes for each hypothesis generated; generating multiple causes for an action allows decision makers to pause and consider alternative options before responding. Second, disconfirm a position by finding all contrary information to support a different view. The more contrary information, the greater the chance to reduce confirmation bias. Third, revisit old hypotheses to generate new ideas as to what may be happening. Finally, discuss the ideas with a team of diverse thinkers to gain new perspective. Incorporating these ideas in the workplace may yield different insights and combat the reliance on that which fits well established perspectives.

Attribution bias

Attribution bias occurs when a person erroneously ascribes the causes of their own or others' actions or behaviors (Cherry, 2020). Fundamental attribution theory posited behaviors are caused by internal factors related to self or external to situations not related to self (Heider, 1958). This occurs because humans strive to simplify the decision-making process when trying to judge actions and behaviors.

Errors occurring during the recruitment process and during employee performance appraisals tend to elicit attribution bias. An employment candidate or a candidate for promotion may have a solid record of achievement but due to a manager's bias, the accomplishments are inaccurately attributed to luck, while any negative experiences tend to be attributed to a lack of knowledge, skills, or abilities (Howard, 2020). Further exploration of daily workplace attribution bias shows that the causal factors of internal

and external bias are distinctiveness, consensus, and consistency (Schermerhorn et al., 2010). If the employee's *distinctive* behavior remains the same in different situations, for example poor performance, it is said to be attributed to or caused by the employee or internal. If all employees, as a *consensus*, react the same way, for example having trouble with a new computer program, then the behavior is said to be attributed to or caused by the external situation. If an employee's behavior remains *consistent* over time, for example high performance, then the behavior is attributed to the employee, as opposed to an isolated instance of high performance, which is attributed to the external situation (Schermerhorn et al., 2010).

The pandemic reinforced the negative impact of attribution bias, especially when judging others. When strict mask-wearing and lock-down requirements were implemented, the country's leaders were judged as using communist tactics to gain control over the population; while people ignoring the safety protocols were labeled *covidiots* (Liao, 2020). Even within the medical community, examples of attribution bias abounded, since many patients were automatically assumed to be COVID-positive without seeing definitive test results. "Premature closure is a cognitive error in which the physician fails to consider reasonable alternatives after an initial diagnosis is suspected" (DiMaria et al., 2020, p. 2).

Conformity bias

Conformity bias occurs when people alter opinions or beliefs to become more aligned with a group's viewpoint (McLeod, 2016). This results from "a desire to '*fit in*' or be liked (normative) or because of a desire to be correct (informational), or simply to conform to a social role (identification)" (McLeod, 2016, para. 4). An early investigation of conformity bias occurred in an experimental study involving college students who attempted to determine, first individually and then, after group discussion, the number of beans in a closed jar (Jenness, 1932). Study results demonstrated that once the participants discovered differences of opinion after a group discussion, they were more apt to change their individual opinions to seek conformity within the group (Jenness, 1932). Kelman's (1958) research uncovered three types of conformity: compliance, internalization, and identification. These occur when a person seeks conformity to (a) comply or fit in to a group; (b) the opinions of others are internalized and match the person's values; or, (c) to identify by seeking group membership (Kelman, 1958).

In the workplace, conformity bias might occur in recruitment and promotion efforts, teamwork endeavors, and decision-making activities. This bias promotes dangerous groupthink behavior, "where discussions become echo chambers of the same or similar views, or cultures where decisions aren't properly critiqued" (Howard, 2020, para. 14). A key strategy for overcoming conformity bias is to encourage all employees to think independently and to justify the rationale for their decisions (Smerek, 2020). It is also important to encourage and consider all ideas, opinions, and options and not just defer to those with fervent personalities or those with hierarchical influence within the organization (Sasaki & Royal, 2019).

The life-altering aspects of COVID-19 led to numerous examples of conformity bias, from following or not following social distancing directives; wearing or not wearing facial coverings; to whether to receive the available, emergency-use approved vaccines. Rosenfeld and Tomiyama (2021) noted that workers' intolerance for ambiguity increased during the COVID-19 pandemic leading to increased levels of conformity. Misinformation from a variety of social media outlets, or the *infodemic*, also added to the conformity bias issue (Davenport, 2020). The peer pressure aspect of conformity bias, however, may also work in positive ways. For example, a San Diego college created a volunteer team of peer consultants who "serve as a 'think tank,' meeting weekly …to brainstorm opportunities to improve public health strategies, reimagine campus events and combat any 'adherence fatigue'" (Dean, 2020. para. 9).

Halo effect

Gabrieli et al. (2021) defined the halo effect as "The influence on the global evaluation of a person based on the perception of a single trait" (p. 1). The halo effect is a general evaluation of the attributes of an individual where the whole of the individual is based on a single attribute (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). A person who is attractive may be perceived as intelligent or trustworthy even though there is no way to gauge the intelligence or trustworthiness of a person by simply looking at them (Gabrieli et al., 2021).

Rudolph et al. (2009) suggested the halo effect occurs when errors occur in the judgement process (as cited in Jacobs & Kozlowski, 1985). The halo effect is a skewed tendency to perceive a person as positive. Halo bias may have a positive influence on hiring or promotion opportunities (Prestia, 2019).

The halo effect bypasses our conscious awareness and functions at the implicit level (Verhulst et al., 2010). These positive judgments remain unregistered and spontaneous but are frequently rationalized as competency judgments in adults (Verhulst et al., 2010). The halo effect is commonly seen in performance evaluations. The more measurement dimensions used while assessing performance, the greater the potential for this bias to occur (Yustina & Gudono, 2017).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the halo effect was repeatedly demonstrated when a person with expertise in a specific discipline (perceived as positive) provided advice without having evidential knowledge of the topic. The halo effect may be viewed as a shortcut to building an online reputation by utilizing an established social status from the real world. These social status' may be in the form of a job affiliation or advanced academic degree (Park et al., 2020). Study results showed higher audience votes and larger discussion sizes when a poster exposed the "expert's" academic degree (Park et al., 2020).

As the COVID-19 pandemic began impacting all sectors of the global economy, one unexpected development was the increase in financing in the biopharma sector. Even when removing financing specific to COVID-19 companies, 2020 saw records for the most money raised (Carey, 2020). Adoption of digital technologies utilized to develop vaccines and therapies for the virus numbered approximately 30 in February 2020 jumped to 810 by October 2020 (Carey, 2020). The halo effect was evident in the increasing investor interest in biopharma companies. Nine percent of the venture capital completed in 2020 were from COVID-19 companies, just 11% of the $24.8 billion total across biopharma companies (Carey, 2020).

Horns effect

The horns effect is the tendency to view another person, group, or thing negatively after leaning something unpleasant or negative about the person, group, or thing. This form of cognitive bias has a significant impact on expert decisions (Dobra & Tombazos, 2020). Cognitive bias is a "cognition processes that involve erroneous inferences and assumptions, and those errors or biases often strongly affect our thinking and doing" (Thomas, 2018, p. 109). The horns effect is a cognitive process whereby humans ascribe negative attributes or behaviors based solely on a single aspect of appearance or character and results in treatment of that person in a less favorable manner. For example, a negative first impression may result in an ongoing, distorted impression of the person, or harsher judgement than otherwise warranted, which. may cause someone to continue to look for reasons to continue disliking the other person. A study conducted by Radeke and Stahelski (2020) examined the impact of facial expressions on social perceptions of 12 models. Radeke and Stahelski suggested facial expressions have a strong impact on

how a person is regarded. Smiling provoked positive inferences (the halo effect) while scowling generated negative inferences (the horns effect).

A single attribute can cause a negative bias about a person or product, and "influence subsequent inferences toward unrelated attributes" (Sundar et al., 2014, p. 377). Like other unconscious bias, the horns effect is frequently unintentional and causes significant problems in an organizational setting. The horns bias can lead decision makers to ignore valuable information and focus on a single negative feature. This focus on a single feature leads to a narrowing of perspective and ignoring subsequent features that refute the negative bias against the person, group, or thing.

During the COVID 19 pandemic, the horns effect was demonstrated in the escalation of anti-Asian racism. The COVID-19 outbreak was first reported from Wuhan, China, resulting in many people around the world blaming the Chinese for the spread of the virus. Violent actions, harassment, and possibly shootings have all been blamed on COVID-19. The Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres (2020) stated in Twitter, *the pandemic continues to unleash a tsunami of hate and xenophobia, scapegoating, and scare-mongering*. Blaming others for epidemics is not new, Jewish communities were accused of poisoning wells to spread the Black Death in 14th century Europe; Chinese people were vilified for a plague outbreak in San Francisco's Chinatown in 1900; and, in the 1980s Haitians were blamed for the arrival of HIV/AIDS in the US (Lu, 2021). Cho et al. (2021) considered the factors associated with stigmatization of Asians during the COVID-19 pandemic. The strongest predictors of stigmatization were fear of the pandemic coupled with social media and partisan news coverage, lingering racial prejudice comprised of stereotypical beliefs and emotions toward those of Asian descent, and maladaptive coping (Cho et al., 2021).

Contrast effect

Contrast effect is the act of comparing two or more items causing an overstatement in the performance of one thing in contrast to the other; or, judging performance comparatively instead of judging fixed standards (Reiners, 2021a). Yeates et al. (2013) described contrast effect judgments as the use of normative instead of criterion decision making skills. A study conducted by Yeates et al. suggested when assessing performance, assessors who judged comparatively instead of against fixed standards and assigned ratings for those seen as borderline were biased by prior candidate performance. The contrast effect is evident in the judgments made by assessors at the "good" and borderline levels of performance suggesting assessors use normative instead of criterion referenced decision making skills (Yeates et al., 2013). Lei et al. (2020) conducted a study on facial attractiveness in groups exploring the differences between the contract and assimilation effect. The assimilation effect occurs when characteristics of a group are similar while a contrast effect occurs when characteristics of a group are different.

Unconscious bias theory originates as a two-system theory (Skov, 2020). The human mind processes information in two ways, system one and system two. The first utilizes heuristics for rapid decision making and does not rely on conscious processing. The second utilizes a closer examination of the information and results in a deliberated and reasoned decisions (Skov, 2020). When used, system two overcomes the unconscious bias presented in system one. Judging comparatively can create bias when previous judgements are used as a point of reference to judge the current situation or characteristics of a group (Boyle et al.,1998). Blaison et al. (2017) further suggested human judgement moves toward contextual information (assimilation effect) or in an opposite direction (contract effect).

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Gerken and Beebe (2016) stated the contrast effect occurs, at least in part, because knowledge of all related facts is not necessarily processed depending upon how the facts are presented. Further, the contrast effect occurs more often when automatic evaluations become conscious, rather than unconscious (Enke et al., 2016). During the COVID-19 crisis, reporting was often not based on fact, was highly politically charged, and experts in the field were frequently derided for expressing caution leading the public to make decisions based on normative beliefs instead of factual criteria.

Gender bias

Gender bias is a persistent dilemma leading to negative outcomes (Deihl et al., 2020). Overt discrimination is generally conscious while unconscious bias presents via a "negative or ambivalent demeanor and/or treatment enacted toward social minorities on the basis of their minority status membership that are not necessarily conscious and likely convey ambiguous intent" (Jones et al., 2016, p. 1591). Widely seen as applying to women only, gender bias can also have a detrimental impact on men. Most gender discrimination research exclusively focuses on female discrimination in male dominated occupation and roles (Manzi, 2019). Using congruity models of discrimination, a mismatch between perceived male and female stereotypes and these mismatched perceptions or incongruities lead to gender and job stereotypes resulting in negative expectations in performance leading to both female and male discrimination (Manzi, 2019).

In the United States more than 40% of adults believe men face little or moderate amounts of discrimination (American National Election Studies, 2016). Yavorsky (2019) found hiring practices using early sorting mechanisms discriminates against female applicants in male-dominated jobs and discrimination against males is more prevalent in female- dominated jobs. Early sorting mechanisms discriminate against female applicants in male-dominated working-class jobs while discrimination against male applicants occurs more frequently in female-dominated jobs in white collar and working-class fields (Yavorsky, 2019).

Gender inequity has a negative impact on individuals as well as economies. Porter (2020) found gender disparity in every level in the field of patent law resulting in an estimated loss of 2.7% of the U.S. GDP per capita. Women are less likely to seek commercialization of their inventions and is partially responsible for the negative economic impact noted in the patent gender gap (Porter, 2020). There is however some improvement. Patents with at least one female tripled between 1978 and 1997 but the increase slowed between 1998 and 2016 to with an increase from 15 to 21% (Porter, 2020).

Women are more vulnerable to COVID-19 economic effects. Estimates place female job losses approximately 1.8% higher than males and women are disproportionately present in industries expected to see the greatest decline due to COVID-19. (Madgavkar et al., 2020). Women account for 39% of employment on a global basis and saw a disproportional job loss during the COVID-19 pandemic of 54% (Madgavkar et al., 2020. Existing gender inequalities make women more financially vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic. Female jobs have a higher at-risk rate than male jobs as a disproportional number of sectors impacted by COVID-19 are in those where a larger number of women are employed, among them accommodations and food services, education, services sectors including arts and recreation, public administration, and the wholesale and retail trade. Women may also leave the workforce due to the additional and disproportionately allocated amount of time needed to devote to family responsibilities. This increased amount of time devoted to family is estimated at 30% in India and between 1.5 to 2 hours in the United States (Madgavkar et al., 2020).

Age bias

First coined by Butler (1980), age bias, as the term implies, is a stereotypical opinion based on a person's age or age group. Blöchl et al. (2021) noted there is a difference between subjective age and chronological age, as most people feel younger than their actual age. While unrealistic distortions become detrimental, generally "those who feel younger, compared to those who feel older, experience higher psychological well-being, less stress, fewer depressive symptoms, better physical health, better cognitive performance, and even lower mortality" (Blöchl et al., 2021, p. 360). Young children become aware of the cultural attitudes regarding age and these ingrained attitudes and behaviors remain in later life (World Health Organization, 2021).

The U. S. multigenerational workforce insinuates possible age discrimination and bias at all age levels (Gordon, 2018). Issues related to age bias may lead to lowered rates of job satisfaction, productivity, and employee engagement (McNamara et al., 2016). Unlike other forms of bias and discrimination, ageism appears harder to overcome and resists permanent change (Ornstein, 2005). Statistics show that only 8% of organizations with strategic hiring practices incorporate an age diversity component (Reiners, 2021b).

The COVID-19 pandemic provided clear evidence of unconscious bias. Early transmission of the virus came from working adults traveling as part of job responsibilities (Davies et al., 2020). As the spread of the virus continued to increase, a focus in the workplace concentrated on older workers deemed more at risk for serious illness with COVID-19. While well-meaning, this bias toward a specific age group caused harm since it classified all older workers as vulnerable and further promoted unrealistic viewpoints of aging and worker value, not only during the pandemic, but potentially extending beyond this timeframe (Swift & Chasteen, 2021). By late summer of 2020, Henley (2020) noted that younger adults were just as vulnerable to the virus as older adults. As more information became available, it seemed apparent that age was not the true indicator of COVID-19 risk; underlying health issues were noted to be a more important factor for susceptibility to serious illness (Ayalon et al., 2021).

Name bias

In some situations, the only initially available identifying characteristic is a name. Unconscious name bias occurs when a person's name forms a judgment – possibly on race, gender, or background (American Psychological Association, 2020).

In the workplace, name bias may occur early in the hiring process (Reiners, 2021a). Minority applicants who "anglicize" first and last names tend to receive more initial job interviews than those who have names that send racial cues (Kang et al., 2016). Additional tactics include omitting organizational memberships with names that provide racial cues, for example, *The Asian American Architects and Engineers Association* or *African American Planning Commission* (Luo, 2009). Within any workplace situation, whenever someone else's name does not conform to a person's familiar standards of recognition, name bias may occur.

COVID-19 led to xenophobia and large-scale bias and discrimination against minorities (Amercian Psychological Association, 2020). In a large organization, many coworkers do not know one another on a personal basis. Seeing a name could possibly trigger bias and discriminatory behavior based on COVID-19 statistics. For example: "people from racial and ethnic minority groups were more likely to have increased COVID-19 disease severity upon admission at the hospital compared with non-Hispanic White people……and pregnant people may have an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19"

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(CDC, 2020, para. 5). Asian-sounding names elicited bias and hate crimes heightened from when Covid-19 was referred to as the "Chinese virus." In a report covering March 2020 to February 2021, results indicated that 35.4% of the discrimination incidents against Asians occurred in the business environment (Jeung et al., 2021).

Beauty bias

Beauty bias occurs when people receive preferential treatment due to outward appearances that are considered aesthetically pleasing (Murphy et al., 2020). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission does not view general physical appearance as a protected class, unless related to color (Skrzypinski, 2018). Surprising workplace examples of beauty bias abound. For example, being "good looking" is an actual requirement to become a member of the Chinese Navy, to ensure a proper national image prevails, and the discrimination lawsuit against Abercrombie & Fitch still allowed the company to have retail worker attractiveness criteria if evidence of hiring a diverse workforce occurred (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2019).

While the adage *beauty is in the eye of the beholder* may be true, COVID-19 added a new dimension and encouraged people to view beauty in entirely different ways. Dove beauty brand developed a 2020 ad campaign titled *Courage is Beautiful*. The ad focused on the exhausted-looking, deeply lined faces of healthcare workers after working long hours and wearing protective facial gear for extended periods during the pandemic (Gardner, 2020). The tribute to healthcare workers attempted to change opinions and emphasized how "beauty" goes beyond surface looks.

Another aspect of beauty bias relates to organizational dress codes. Pre-COVID-19 meant going to the office and following the approved dress code. As the pandemic lingered and employees worked remotely from home, employers and co-workers were shocked to see the changes in colleagues. Slob-chic became the new fashion statement, with sweatpants and pajamas as the new norm in remote work attire. In one Zoom court hearing "One male lawyer appeared shirtless and one female attorney appeared still in bed, still under the covers" (Marx, 2020. p. 24). Due to pandemic-related attire mishaps, employers who have remote workers may want to consider having a dress code policy when employees participate in company audiovisual virtual meetings (Smith, 2020).

Weight bias

"The U.S. adult obesity rate stands at 42.4 percent, the first time the national rate has passed the 40 percent mark. The national adult obesity rate has increased by 26 percent since 2008" (Trust for America's Health, 2021, para. 2). Weight bias leads to discriminatory behaviors due to a person's weight. Discriminatory behaviors occur more often toward the obese person, while the anorexic individual appears to be more self-preoccupied with weight issues rather than judging others (Hartmann et al., 2020).

Clode et al. (2016) noted that body image impacts a person's everyday life, including work performance. Study results from a meta-analysis conducted by Rudolph et al. (2009) concluded that overweight individuals routinely experience discrimination from co-workers as well as from organizational leaders who possibly limit hiring and promotional opportunities. From a workplace cost perspective, "weight challenged workers are twice as likely to file workers' compensation claims. Once the claim is filed, the cost of medical care is seven times higher than the claims for non-obese workers" (Bennington, 2010, para. 5).

The advent of COVID-19 added a new dimension to weight bias. Employees experiencing unhealthy stress from forced isolation, working remotely, and closed fitness centers promoted what is now referred to as the *Quarantine 15*, or weight gained during the pandemic (Drillinger, 2021). In addition, obese individuals have a higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness requiring hospitalization and death (Abbasi, 2020). "Forty-two percent of all Americans are at increased risk of serious, possibly fatal, health impacts from COVID-19 due to their weight and health conditions related to obesity" (Trust for America's Health, 2021, para. 8). Individuals who experienced previous discrimination regarding weight and body image issues reported heightened levels of eating disorders and emotional suffering during the pandemic (Pearl & Schulte, 2021).

IMPLICATIONS

Discrimination in any form incurs costly adverse effects. For example, AARP (2020) noted that the U. S. economy lost $850 billion because many workers 50+ were not given opportunities to remain, rejoin, or earn promotions in the workforce, with this number increasing to $39 trillion by 2050. Rose and Flores (2021) posited the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated unconscious bias already prevalent within the workplace setting due to heightened feelings of apprehension, xenophobia, and an unsettling change in overall work dimensions. This same fear and anxiety led to an increase in violence against the workplace groups entrusted to help others in times of crisis: healthcare and frontline workers (Devi, 2020). In the general workplace setting, the impact of pandemic-induced unconscious bias altered all aspects organization operations including employee and customer relations (Kelley, 2020). Left unaddressed, unconscious bias negatively impacts a united sense of leading-edge resourcefulness and ingenuity within an organization (Oberai & Anand, 2018).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The impact of COVID-19 on unconscious bias requires changes to address social, technological, legal, and environmental implications within the workplace to reflect a new normal (Rose & Flores, 2021). It is insufficient only to recognize biases that exclude others; everyone must work collectively to remove these biases from our surrounding environment (Jana & Baran, 2020). Overcoming any bias is not effectively achieved with "helicopter monitoring," or hovering, focused attention during a current problem and then, disappearing until the next incident occurs (Cuellar, 2017, p. 333). It is important to take ownership of unconscious bias and focus on self-awareness as an initial step in the positive change process (Wheeler, 2015). On a cautionary note, Murray (2016) warned that celebrating differences among coworkers may reinforce the concept of "otherness," while focusing on commonalities through social interactions may be the healthier approach to bring people together.

Training programs on unconscious bias behaviors, while a continuing trend, may not be the answer since awareness does not necessarily lead to change (Liesch, 2020; Noon, 2018; Williamson & Foley, 2018). Organizational leaders and HR personnel must comprehensively examine all aspects of organizational operations "including working relationships, assignments, reviewing resumes, job interviews, onboarding, assignment process, mentoring programs, performance evaluation, identifying high performers, promotions, and terminations" (Rose & Flores, 2021, para. 15). Employers who provide a reporting

hotline to report instances of discrimination, as well as a feedback hotline allow all employees to feel empowered and actively involved in the decision-making process to create an organizational culture of inclusion and diversity (Ruiz, 2021). Intergenerational workplace teams and activities which encourage positive collaboration may help reduce bias and change attitudes (World Health Organization, 2021). A possible option presented by Bellomo (2019) suggested that organizational leaders may consider using combined activities like those used as safety check and balance measures in the nuclear industry to confront unconscious bias. These check and balance activities include a combination of education, resources, processes, and accountability measures. As Onyeador et al. (2021) warned, there is no quick fix or easy answer to ensure diversity, inclusion, and equity and the elimination of bias in the workplace. All implemented initiatives and policies require formal employee responsibility and accountability obligations at all levels of the organizational hierarchy.

CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 pandemic focused leader attention on the negative impacts and realities of the damage created by unconscious bias. Bias, both conscious and unconscious, is defined in many ways. Bias incorporates implicit stereotypes. Regardless of how bias is defined, it is important that leaders recognize the many forms of unconscious bias and the impact of not acknowledging the damage that bias causes in the workplace, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic where anxiety and unprecedent change had a profound impact on once daily routines. Leaders combat the impact of unconscious bias by cultivating an awareness of their assumptions, focusing on eliminating bias from promotion, compensation, and assignment decisions, ensuring open lines of communication and proactively interacting with all team members, ensuring newly remote team members are included and have the tools necessary to effectively work, and clearly setting boundaries and expectations.

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Chapter 11
Worker Response to the Rapid Changes Caused by Disruptive Innovation:
Managing a Remote Workforce Without Any Training or Preparation

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ABSTRACT

The rapid global spread of the Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) commencing February 2020 ushered in remote working as a means to stem the virus's spread and continue production. However, not all jobs can be remotely performed, as evidenced in Latin America and the Caribbean, where only 20% of available jobs can be executed remotely. Many managers across Latin America and the Caribbean have no experience with managing remote workforces. Several issues exacerbated the challenges these inexperienced and unprepared managers faced, including the lack of training and the unavailability of internet and communication technologies, especially critical disruptive innovations such as broadband internet. The lack of broadband internet and training on using information and communication technologies hinders diversity and inclusion, as many managers and the workforce at large from Latin America and the Caribbean region could not make contributions to global and national production, which negatively affected the quality of their lives.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid global spread of Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) attracted various measures to promote self-isolation and stem the virus's spread (Chaudhry et al., 2020; Rader, 2021). The practice of working remotely or working from home, or telework, drew global traction and notice. The expedited move into national and international lockdown started in February 2020 to facilitate employees working from home as part of the thrust to minimize the spread of the virus. This sudden shift was unplanned. Many managers in some organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean had no experience with remote-working, as remote-working did not form part of the organizational culture of these corporations. Previously used virtual and videoconferencing platforms or software, especially for globally distributed teams, were never integral to daily work life in many organizations. Even as recently as January 2020, teleworking was not a widespread option and was a privilege in some industries. Typically, remote or telework involved operating one's own online business, being an employed millennial (Valles Santillán & Flores Maciel, 2020), working for a multinational company and stationed away from one's home country, or working for a local company from a local coffee shop or a bookstore cafe. In 2017, only 3.4% of the American workforce teleworked (Valet, 2020).

In a 2019 state of remote work report on U.S. managers on employees (N=1,202; ages between 22 and 65), 62% of remote workers received some or quite a bit of training on how to work remotely while 38% of remote workers received no training on how to work remotely (Owl Labs, 2019). As of September 2019, 30% of respondent managers had previously managed remote workers. While 84% of remote employee managers had received at least some training on managing remote employees, 15% of remote employee managers received no training on doing so (Owl Labs, 2019). By the middle of February 2020 and owing to the escalating spread of the COVID-19 virus, approximately 46% of American employers implemented telework and remote work policies, specifically allowing employees to work from home or work offsite to promote isolation and eliminate where possible, interactions between employees (Valet, 2020). The sudden move to quarantining left some organizations in at least three disadvantageous positions. First, organizational leaders sent home managers and employees with neither experience nor training in remote-working (Parker et al., 2020). Second, the organizations lacked proper systems of ensuring and monitoring employee engagement while employees teleworked or worked remotely (Gurchiek, 2020a; Guyot & Sawhill, 2020). Third, the managers and employees had no corporate-provided information and communication technologies and other capabilities to facilitate remote-working (Gurchiek, 2020a; Guyot & Sawhill, 2020).

Townsend et al. (1998) wrote of a future virtual workplace that would not conform to organizational boundaries, geographical location, and timezones. Instead, using information and communication technologies integral to the functioning of these future or virtual workplaces, the employees would display unparalleled new levels of efficiency, teamwork, and flexibility (Townsend et al., 1998). Townsend et al. (1998) visualized virtual teams as groups of geographically or organizationally dispersed coworkers, assembled using a combination of information and communications and technologies inclusive of Internet/Intranet systems, desktop videoconferencing, and collaborative software, to accomplish an organizational task and rarely if ever, meet in a face-to-face setting. Over time, information and communication technologies' continued growth (Valles Santillán & Flores Maciel, 2020; Zhan et al., 2020) expedited the remote-working exodus for the COVID-19 pandemic. By March 2020, as the global shutdown of workplaces escalated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, working remotely or working from home or telework

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became mandatory at an unprecedented pace. In the absence of face-to-face interaction, the need for broadband internet and virtual or videoconferencing meeting platforms and software became imminent.

Organizations such as Microsoft, Twitter, and FaceBook indicated that they are making employee teleworking options permanent (British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC], 2020), thus confirming the future need for disruptive innovations such as broadband internet, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Google Meet, and Cisco Webex post-COVID-19. Fujitsu, Hitachi, Siemens, J. P. Morgan, Basecamp, Novartis, Coca Cola India, Pinterest, Google, and Verizon are but a few corporations on the long list of corporations inclusive of multinational corporations making remote working for employees either optional, partial, or full-time (Henry, 2021). Virtual teams are the same as distributed teams (Fiore et al., 2003; Jimenez et al., 2017), and the same will be adapted for this chapter. For this chapter, teleworking, remote working, telecommuting, and working from home will be used interchangeably and convey the same meaning.

Despite copious published literature regarding (a) Euro-Asian and Anglo-American contexts but not low-income or developing nation contexts and (b) principally from the Euro-Asian and Anglo-American nations, there is a lack of scholarly literature on Latin and American and Caribbean worker response to the rapid changes caused by disruptive innovation from the perspective of being thrust into managing a remote workforce without any training or preparation. The purpose of this chapter is to (a) highlight Latin American and Caribbean worker response to the rapid changes caused by disruptive innovation from the perspective of being thrust into managing a remote workforce without any training or preparation and (b) suggest solutions and recommendations for alleviating the challenges. The chapter will cover concerns regarding technology unavailability, management and organizational concerns, and training needs. The chapter will also include examining which jobs can be worked remotely in Latin America and the Caribbean and solutions and recommendations for alleviating the challenges managers face while working remotely in Latin and American and the Caribbean during the ongoing global pandemic.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND LITERATURE SEARCH STRATEGY

Christensen (1997) developed and introduced the theory of disruptive innovation more than 20 years ago in the book, *The Innovator's Dilemma*. New start-ups in the computer hard disk and steel manufacturing industries used disruptive innovation to eclipse the already established firms (Christensen et al., 2018). Disruptive innovation received copious recognition and literature reviews, along with extensive debates on its relevance and proper application (Christensen et al., 2018; Nagy et al., 2016; Si & Chen, 2020; Wilson & Tyfield, 2018).

Disruptive innovation is not necessarily radical, cutting edge, or state of the art, but can be an evolving technology where the latest version slowly and permanently eclipsed the older versions (Christensen, 1997; Si & Chen, 2020). Downloadable software such as Skype for Business, Zoom, Google Meet incorporated with Gmail, and Microsoft Teams supplied as part of Microsoft Suite became the more popular disruptive innovations (Azura et al., 2020). These four videoconferencing and virtual meeting software allowed for unlimited and real-time virtual collaborations between employers and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adding Cisco Webex and Go To Meeting to the list of downloadable video conferencing and virtual meeting software, the constant use of these disruptive innovations (videoconferencing and virtual meeting software) will be the new norm for organizational collaboration well beyond post the Covid-19 pandemic era.

Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace remain a growing subject. The Merriam-Webster definition of diversity references the range of differences in human elements or demographics, including race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, professional background, or cultures in a group or organization. Inclusion refers to the recognition and involvement of the inherent worth and dignity of all people who have historically been excluded based on diversity elements or demographics (Ferris State University, 2021). The Latin America and Caribbean region exemplifies the full range of diversity, making the region one of the most ethnically diverse in the world; it is also characterized (a) by high levels of poverty and (b) disparities in earnings among the gender and ethnicities (Churchill & Appau, 2020; Nopo, 2012).

The literature search strategy for the current chapter was essential to identify Latin and American and Caribbean worker responses to the rapid changes caused by disruptive innovation from the perspective of being thrust into managing a remote workforce without any training or preparation. An exhaustive review of the literature leading to data saturation on the chapter's topic resulted in identifying the challenges managers face while working remotely in Latin and America and the Caribbean during the ongoing global pandemic and solutions and recommendations for alleviating the challenges. The literature search process involved conducting searches of key terms and assessing the references associated with the results. The key search terms included but were not limited to *disruptive innovation, Diversity and Inclusion, information and communication technology, Latin America and the Caribbean, pandemic, COVID-19 Virus, COVID-19 vaccine, working from home, teleworking, remote working, training, broadband internet, digital divide, videoconferencing, teleconferencing, online meetings,* and *virtual meetings.*

CASE DESCRIPTION

The focus of this chapter is on the collection of workers in Latin America and the Caribbean who are affected by the lack of access to remote work due to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly the managers who were thrust into managing remote teams without training and preparation. The complexities associated with the management of virtual or distributed teams received various levels of attention (Jimenez et al., 2017; Ocker et al., 2011; Siebdrat et al., 2009). Much of the complexities encompassed the best practices, pros, and cons of distributed teams before the COVID-19 pandemic (Zhan et al., 2020). For example, Siebdrat et al. (2009) advocated that managing remote teams included the tenets of: (a) not underestimating the significance of small distances, (b) emphasizing teamwork skills, (c) promoting self-leadership across teams, (d) implementing task-related processes, and (d) providing face to face meetings. These complexities apply to remote working in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Corporate Diversity and Inclusion are a growing concern requiring constant attention and corporate policies for effective enforcement (Hays-Thomas, 2016). There are new Diversity and Inclusion Forum challenges, with online meetings and conferences now an integral part of remote working. According to Niner et al. (2020) online communication is sometimes associated with decreasing politeness and cultural insensitivity. In addition, actions such as non-verbal cues are becoming more apparent as the use of online videoconferencing platforms increases (Niner et al., 2020).

At the time of authoring this chapter, no published peer-reviewed studies exist on the challenges managers without any training or preparation face while managing a distributed workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean. Latin America and the Caribbean is the world's most unequal region, making it more vulnerable to Diversity and Inclusion issues than other

regions (Azura et al., 2020). For example, women in Latin America and the Caribbean were more affected by the pandemic than men (Azura et al., 2020; World Bank, 2021b). Specifically, more women than men were employed in the sales, commerce, and service sectors which are the three sectors most affected by the pandemic (Azura et al., 2020; World Bank, 2021b).

Only 20% of the jobs in Latin America and the Caribbean can be performed from home (López-Calva, 2020), which could help to explain the absence of literature on the challenges managers without any training or preparation face while managing a distributed workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean. Many employees in the region had their first encounter with remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, a May 2020 survey of 1,192 participants in Uruguay revealed that only 5% of the respondents had experience with teleworking before the COVID-19 pandemic, while 17% who were working remotely during the pandemic were doing so as a direct result of the pandemic (Azura et al., 2020). The remaining 78% did not work remotely at the time of the survey (Azura et al., 2020), which by deductive reasoning, could have in part contributed to the 80% of the total Latin American and Caribbean jobs that could not be teleworked. Azura et al. (2020) further indicated that circa the same period (May 2020), surveys in other countries such as Chile and Peru yielded similar responses.

Technology Concerns

The disruptive innovation is not necessarily radical, cutting edge, or state of the art, but can be an evolving technology where the latest version slowly and permanently eclipsed the older versions (Christensen, 1997; Si & Chen, 2020). For example, as a form of disruptive innovation, the internet in dial-up connection preceded broadband internet for homes. Another example is the mobile phone industry, where there was first-generation mobile analog, digital, 3G, 4G, and presently 5G as the fifth generation of mobile phone technology (Marshall, 2021). The latest versions are faster speeds that slowly and permanently eclipsed the older versions in both the home internet and mobile phone technology cases. In developing nations, approximately 35% of the population has access to broadband internet at home compared to around 80% in developed economies (World Bank, 2021a). This global pandemic heavily affected Latin America and the Caribbean, as it is the world's most unequal region (regarding technology availability), making it more vulnerable than other regions (Azura et al., 2020).

The limited availability and poor quality of home broadband internet remain the greatest hurdle to working remotely in Latin America and the Caribbean. Additionally, the limited or unavailability of broadband internet and videoconferencing capable devices as a suite of information and communication technology tools negatively affects Diversity and Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean (Ortuño, 2020). In 2018, only 56% of the Latin America and Caribbean regions used the internet compared to 20% in 2006 (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020; Ortuño, 2020). Furthermore, less than 50% of domestic households had broadband internet access, with a 27% digital divide between urban and rural areas (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020). According to Ortuño (2020), these figures are low compared to 86.3% in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development member states.

Technology Components

Though personal computers were the disruptive innovation that revolutionized offices in the 1980s and 1990s (Townsend et al., 1998), communication capabilities have evolved to include broadband internet,

intranet, WiFi, smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, near field communication (NFC), improved instant messaging, and cloud storage. There is also downloadable videoconferencing software such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype for Business, Google Meet, and Cisco Webex. Over the years, several grades of home internet and mobile phone capabilities have started from analog to fifth-generation (5G) cellular networks as a disruptive innovation (Suryanegara, 2016). The aforementioned technological components and systems used in various combinations allow for teleworking globally.

Management and Organizational Concerns

The lack of the requisite information and communication technologies in Latin America and the Caribbean exacerbates managers' ability without training or preparation to manage remote workforces and remains an ongoing concern. Furthermore, Diversity and Inclusion diminish with the lack of internet as part of the information and communication technologies, which adds to the difficulties managers without training or preparation face while managing remote workforces. Beyond the expressed lack of information and communication technologies (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020) and the massive job losses due to the pandemic (Azura et al., 2020; Beylis, 2021), particularly for women (World Bank, 2021b); the search for published literature on managers being trained or not, to manage a remote workforce in Latin America and the Caribbean did not yield any results. What may be attributable to massive job losses are: (a) only 20% of Latin American and Caribbean jobs can be performed remotely compared to between 37% (Dingel & Neiman, 2020) and 41% (López-Calva, 2020) in the United States; and (b) the lack of an essential disruptive innovation, such as broadband internet (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020).

For example, according to Inter-American Development Bank [IDB] (2020), in 2018, the director of a school in rural Peru indicated that even though they knew that the internet existed, they never had access to broadband internet and subsequently never used it before. However, as of 2018, 4G broadband internet was being made available to areas in Peru. This case regarding Peru is just one instance that helps to explain the 27% digital divide between rural and urban areas in Latin America and the Caribbean Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020). This digital divide would subsequently increase the difficulties managers without training or preparation would face while managing remote workforces.

How Many and Which Jobs are Feasible for Remote Working or Teleworking?

Dingel and Neiman (2020) and Saltiel (2020) outlined the criteria they used to classify which jobs are feasible for performing from home and which jobs are not. Jobs classified as not feasible for remote working are those that do not require internet and laptop; jobs where employees are involved with heavy lifting, operating heavy industrial equipment, reparation of machinery and other electronic equipment; or where contact with clients is fundamental (Delaporte & Peña, 2020; Dingel & Neiman, 2020; Saltiel, 2020). Remote working is not prevalent in the Latin America and the Caribbean. Azura et al. (2020) posited that while remote working came into existence around 1970, 10 Latin America and the Caribbean countries first attempted to normalize teleworking in 2019. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic Bolivia, Chile, Panama, and Paraguay subsequently passed their respective national telework laws in 2020 (Azura et al., 2020). López-Calva (2020) indicated that, on average, only one-fifth or 20% of the Latin American and Caribbean jobs could be worked remotely. The percentage split ranged from 14% in Honduras to 27% in Uruguay, based on 13 Latin American and Caribbean countries surveyed (López-

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Calva, 2020). In another study involving 23 Latin America and Caribbean nations, Delaporte and Peña (2020) cited that employee remote workability ranged from a low of 7% in Guatemala and Honduras to 16% in the Bahamas and Costa Rica.

THE CHALLENGES FACED BY MANAGERS WITHOUT TRAINING OR PREPARATION WHEN MANAGING A REMOTE WORKFORCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

An extensive search did not yield any published literature specific to the subject of managers without training or preparation managing remote workforces in Latin America and the Caribbean. Globally, the workplace was thrust into remote working without notice as governments initiated immediate work from home and stay-at-home orders to stem the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Many office-based managers and employees were sent home to telework without equipment such as company-issued laptops, company-issued mobile phones, and company-provided broadband internet such as hotspots. The Latin America and Caribbean region had a deficit in installing and using broadband internet (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020; Ortuño, 2020). Many managers and employees did not have broadband internet at home, and none was provided in the form of mobile hotspots. In some Latin America and the Caribbean regions, broadband internet is only heard of but never experienced (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020).

Many employees and managers only worked remotely for the first time, owing to the pandemic (Azura et al., 2020). For example, only 5% of 1,192 Uruguayan survey respondents had experience with teleworking before the COVID-19 pandemic, while 17% who were working remotely during the pandemic were doing so as a direct result of the pandemic. Other Latin American and Caribbean nations showed similar data (Azura et al., 2020). Likely not many organizations had remote working as part of their corporate structure. The pandemic was unexpected, and it came as a black swan (Taleb, 2010). The apparent absence of published peer-reviewed literature on the difficulties of Latin American and Caribbean managers with no training or preparation to manage teleworking employees during the COVID-19 pandemic is not surprising, as the pandemic is sudden, ongoing, and evolving. Additionally, there is little to no understanding of its effect on remote employee management during a global crisis. Consequently, the lack of published literature indicating that some Latin American and Caribbean nations embraced remote working, including training of managers and employees as part of their organizational construct, let alone as a contingency plan, is not surprising.

Azura et al. (2020) wrote of increased downloading of training apps during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the downloaded training apps were for other types of training, not training managers with no training and preparation on how to manage remote teams. According to Zhan et al. (2020), (a) advances in information and communication and technology facilitated the training of virtual work teams, (b) HR training courses could provide an improved understanding of remote working and job performance, and (c) training the management and the workers in remote working will help the company achieve performance goals.

Based on the apparent absence of published relevant literature, the issue appears to be that managers were not being trained and prepared in managing a distributed workforce in Latin America and the Caribbean during the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though only 20% of Latin America and the Caribbean jobs can be worked from home (López-Calva, 2020), managers in Latin America and the Caribbean without

the training and preparation to manage remote workers will experience similar challenges other managers face elsewhere. These challenges include but are not limited to lack of company-issued smartphones; lack of company-issued laptops; either no company paid internet, no internet at home, or poor internet service at home; scheduling and conducting meetings; accounting for employees' productivity; inability to effectively monitor and manage employees' performance, and difficulty to perform team-building exercises and motivating employees.

There appears to be another problem regarding the unavailability, quality, inequality to access, and low use of broadband internet in Latin America and the Caribbean (Fernando Rojas & Poveda, 2017; Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020). According to Garrote Sanchez et al. (2021), the primary hindrance to remote working is the lack of broadband internet access. Broadband internet access is available to 35% of developing nations globally – less than 50% of the Latin American and Caribbean domestic households have broadband internet access with a 27% digital divide between urban and rural areas, compared to over 80% availability in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and other developed or nations (Fernando Rojas & Poveda, 2017; Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020; Ortuño, 2020; World Bank, 2021a).

The digital divide between urban and rural areas in the member nations of the Latin America and Caribbean region not only stems from the lack of access to information and communication technologies but also from the lack of knowledge on the effective use of the internet and communication technologies (Ortuño, 2020). This digital divide or digital fracture results in a distinction between persons who are connected or digitally included, those persons who have access to information and communication technologies, and the unconnected or digitally excluded individuals who do not have access (Ortuño, 2020). The connected or digitally included individuals are usually a portion of the nations' population who uses the available access to information and communication technologies to improve the quality of their lives. Subsequently, the unconnected or digitally excluded individuals without access to broadband internet may also lack knowledge of using information and communication technologies. The unconnected and digitally excluded individuals are disadvantaged, as they cannot access resources that could improve their living conditions.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizational Diversity and Inclusion must be transitioned into teleworking during and post the COVID-19 pandemic era in Latin America and the Caribbean. Broadband internet, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype for Business, Google Meet, and Cisco Webex as disruptive innovations should not be used as a tool to impede the proliferation of corporate Diversity and Inclusion. Instead, these videoconferencing platforms should maintain the route for promoting global growth in corporate Diversity and Inclusion by their inherent design and intended function. The solutions to alleviate the challenges based on best practices are outlined below.

Acquisition and Administering of Vaccination

The virus that causes COVID-19 remains a novel virus. The process of managing, let alone containing the virus, is still an evolving process. The first vaccination was administered in the United Kingdom and the United States on December 8 and 14, 2020, respectively (British Broadcasting Corporation

[BBC], 2020; Loftus & West, 2020), and efforts continue to vaccinate citizens worldwide. Combined, Latin America and the Caribbean nations make the region an area with high COVID-19 mortality cases (Urrunaga-Pastor et al., 2021). On April 12, 2021, the Latin America and Caribbean nations situated in the top 20 countries in the world with the most COVID-19 deaths per country were Brazil in the second position, Mexico third, Colombia eleventh, Argentina thirteenth, and Peru fifteenth (Johns Hopkins University, 2021). The Latin American and Caribbean region is particularly vulnerable to the pandemic due to severe inequality, the area's already inadequate social protection and health care systems, and the structural challenges posed by poverty (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2020).

With the member nations of Latin America and the Caribbean designated as developing economies, the lack of financial resources to acquire COVID-19 vaccines simultaneously as developed nations is a challenge. Some countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region joined the World Health Organization's COVAX Facility to presumably gain swift and impartial access to the World Health Organization's approved for emergency use COVID-19 vaccines once they become available (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2020). The slow acquisition of COVID-19 vaccines nonetheless equates to a slow vaccination of the Latin American and Caribbean nationals at a time when new variants, are resulting in increased cases.

Post originating in Brazil, the Gamma, or P.1 variant (also called the Brazilian Strain) spread faster than the original variant did across other Latin American nations such as Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, Venezuela, Chile, and Paraguay (Chauvin et al., 2021; Fox & Cable News Network [CNN], 2021). On April 22, 2021, the Gamma, or P.1 variant, was detected in the Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago (Ministry of Health, 2021). The Gamma or P.1 variant was also identified in the United States and Asia (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021b; Chauvin et al., 2021).

The author Dr. B. Anthony Brown was in Trinidad and Tobago when the local health ministry announced the Gamma or P.1 variant in Trinidad and Tobago. The infection rate started showing a gradual increase commencing circa March 21, 2021, with 16 new cases and no fatalities. The infection and death rates spiked to a high of 708 new cases on May 21, 2021, and 23 deaths on May 18, 2021 (worldometers, 2021). The population of Trinidad is approximately 1.4 million people. Between February 15, 2020, and April 30, 2021, 169 COVID-19 elated deaths (worldometers, 2021). There were 326 COVID-19 related deaths in May 2021 and 352 in June 2021 (worldometers, 2021). During the spike associated with the Gamma or P.1 variant in Trinidad and Tobago, the government declared that only essential workers should report to work. Teleworking was never part of the corporate structure of Trinidad and Tobago, and organizational leaders sent many managers home with neither experience, training, nor information communication and technology tools required for managing distributed workforces.

Another strain is the B.1.617.2 or Delta variant, which is classified as the fastest spreading and most transmissible variant identified to date (Fox & Cable News Network [CNN], 2021). First detected in India in the last quarter of 2020, this B.1.617.2 or Delta variant is present in 85 countries, including the United States, and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States has classified the Delta variant as a *Variant of Concern* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021c; Fox & Cable News Network [CNN], 2021).

The slow vaccination process will increase infection and mortality rates, inhibit pre-pandemic work practices' resumption, and prolong Diversity and Inclusion issues in Latin America and the Caribbean. The inability to return to the pre-pandemic work practices dictates that managers without training, prepa-

ration, or information communication technology will need the training and tools required to mitigate the challenges they face while managing distributed workforces.

Training

Remote working is not about providing physical tools to managers and employees (Gurchiek, 2020b). They need training on using the tools and, where possible, training and exposure to best practices on managing distributed employees. According to Owl Labs (2019), 62% of remote workers surveyed in the United States received some or quite a bit of training on working remotely, while 38% of remote workers received none. Similar information is not available about workers in the Latin American and Caribbean Region. The few managers in Latin America and the Caribbean who can work remotely require training on managing the distributed workforce in their charge and familiarization using the various information and communication technology components that support teleworking (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020).

Owl Labs (2019) indicated that managers in the United States who were sent home without training and preparation had challenges. These challenges fell in the areas of: (a) keeping employees focused (especially during virtual meetings), (b) fewer synchronous face-to-face interactions, (c) concerns about whether their remote employees are getting their work done, (d) teamwork, (e) building trust between managers and their remote teams, (f) difficulty in assessing and measuring employees' level of engagement, (g) difficulty in assessing and measuring remote teams' levels of production, (h) difficulty in giving remote feedback, and (i) their remote team's lack of access to information. The abovementioned challenges appeared less problematic and seen as norms in physical or hybrid settings before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, given that isolation is a usual practice that drives remote working, the once norm has escalated to an ongoing challenge requiring new ways and systems to manage remote workers. Taking cultural differences into consideration, managers in Latin America and the Caribbean would experience similar challenges.

No set of training may provide managers with all the knowledge and certification to navigate all the challenges that come with managing teleworkers, particularly when managers must respond to the rapid changes caused by disruptive innovation from the perspective of being thrust into managing a remote workforce without any training or preparation. That said, there are best practices, which include but are not limited to: (a) setting expectations early and often, (b) adjusting the length of online meetings accordingly, (c) celebrating success, (d) regularly checking with distributed employees, (e) emphasizing teamwork skills, and (f) supporting employee wellness, that have yielded results (Gurchiek, 2020a, 2020b; Kniffin et al., 2021; Siebdrat et al., 2009). The Society for Human Resource Management website also provides policies on teleworking conduct, tool kits for managing flexible working arrangements, and guides for engaging distributed workforces during the COVID-19 pandemic (Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2021).

Provision of Information and Communication Technology Components

Organizational leaders must provide the requisite information and communication technology components that support teleworking. While the pandemic is a black swan and managers were sent home without preparation, organizational leaders can still, after the fact, provide information and communication technology equipment, such as company-issued laptops or tablets, company-issued mobile phones, and

company-provided broadband internet, such as hotspots. Broadband internet as disruptive innovation is a necessity, not a luxury. The absence of broadband internet at home makes jobs most feasible for a distributed workforce unsuitable for teleworking (Garrote Sanchez et al., 2021), and managing distributed workforces impossible. In addition, electronic mails and videoconferencing tools for online collaboration become unavailable in the absence of broadband internet at home.

The poor quality, limited unavailability, and subsequent low broadband usage set the stage for managers without training or preparation to experience difficulties while managing distributed workforces. The ability for the citizens of Latin America and the Caribbean to participate, compete, and share in the global marketplace so that their respective nations can be represented and included among the worldwide policy and game-changers becomes limited due to the unavailability of broadband internet.

Hosting Online Meetings

Online meetings require more expertise to coordinate and host compared to face-to-face meetings. Electronic requests for meetings must be sent, and sending, accepting, and confirming these electronic requests for meetings will be a first for many managers and remote workers in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially for those who never worked remotely or managed a distributed workforce before the pandemic. Staff needs the training to use the different videoconferencing platforms and establish housekeeping rules or codes of conduct during virtual meetings. Managers in Latin America and the Caribbean who never worked remotely or managed a distributed workforce before the pandemic must learn to use the available tools incorporated in the various videoconferencing platforms to moderate meeting participants, maintain order, and prevent participants from talking out of turn. In one survey, respondents indicated that participants talking over each other was the main challenge in virtual meetings (Owl Labs, 2019). The quality of the broadband internet, such as the internet speed, will often affect the quality of the audio and video of online meetings, which subsequently affects connectivity and streaming (Owl Labs, 2019). Managers or meeting hosts can opt to disconnect the video streaming and use audio.

CONCLUSION

Remote working will remain a viable global option for the near and distant future, especially given emerging variants that are more contagious, more virulent, and result in more breakthrough infections among those who were fully vaccinated (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021a; Syal, 2021). As of April 30, 2021, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States documented 10,262 SARS-CoV-2 vaccine breakthrough infections reported from 46 North American states and territories (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021a).

Factors such as (a) the proximity of the Latin America and the Caribbean region to the United States (with the B.1.617.2 or Delta variant) and (b) the resumption of international travel between other nations (with other variants) and the Latin America and the Caribbean region, could introduce additional variants (separate from the original and the Gamma, or P.1 variant) to the region. The introduction of additional variants in the region coupled with the already low and slow rates or acquiring and administering the SARS-CoV-2 vaccines in Latin America and the Caribbean region compared to other developed nations, would (a) accelerate the infection and mortality rates, and (b) possibly causing the pandemic to persist in the region well beyond sustainable social and economic thresholds. In addition, the longer the Latin

America and the Caribbean region remain under the influence of the virus, the longer the region will take to resume any semblance of normality to allow those who cannot work remotely to return to work physically.

For the way forward, considering (a) the slow rate of vaccination in Latin America and the Caribbean, (b) the threat of new variants, and (c) the threat of breakthrough infections, teleworking may become a (full-time) solution for employment. However, the teleworking solution may only suit the highly skilled workers and those whose jobs lie in the 20% that can be performed remotely in Latin America and the Caribbean (López-Calva, 2020; OECD, 2020). The remote working option is unfeasible for the region's most vulnerable due to (a) the type of work they do and (b) the digital divide that limits workers' ability to access and use information and communication technologies effectively. In the absence of training or preparation, the challenges managers without any training or preparation face while managing a distributed workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean will persist.

Additionally, solutions are needed to reduce the digital divide, thus allowing more nationals in Latin America and the Caribbean to work remotely. At the macro or state level, where possible, the state ministry responsible for telecommunications in each Latin American and Caribbean territory could lobby with their nation's leaders to implement regulatory frameworks for developing infrastructure that supports the development and increased broadband internet usage in rural areas. The individual government could access loans or grants through various global development banks or institutions focused on improving the quality of life in developing nations. Additionally, respective governments could create a partnership between foreign or local telecommunications providers to provide and improve broadband internet access nationwide (Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], 2020; World Bank, 2021a). At the micro level, where the digital divide is an amalgamation of limited access to broadband internet and the lack of knowledge of using information and communication technologies, organizational leaders must provide managers with the requisite training and tools to manage distributed workforces effectively. Solutions regarding broadband internet at the micro level are dependent on the broadband solutions at the macro level. Implementing these solutions can better position countries in Latin America and the Caribbean region to manage current and future pandemic-related workplace issues.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Black Swan: An unpredictable event beyond what is typically expected of a situation and has potentially severe consequences. There are usually no standard operating procedures or contingency plans to manage the event.

Breakthrough Infections: Describes cases where some fully vaccinated individuals have contracted and tested positive for the coronavirus post 14 days after receiving the second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines or the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Broadband: The use of a high-speed internet connection to transmit a wide bandwidth of data based on a minimum of 3 Mbps for upload speed and 25 Mbps for download speed. The higher internet access speeds incorporate multiple categories of technologies such as wireless, cable, DSL, fiber optics, and satellite.

Digital Divide: A social and economic inequality driven by unequal access, the difference in usage, or impact of information and communication technologies. There is a digital divide between urban and rural areas in some nations based on unequal access to, the difference in usage, or the impact of information and communication technologies.

Disruptive Innovation: The innovation that transforms highly sophisticated or expensive products or services, previously accessible to the elite or more skilled segment of consumers, to those that are more affordable and accessible to the general population. This transformation disrupts the market by slowly eclipsing time-hallowed, established competitor(s).

Information and Communication Technology: A suite of electronic tools which enables distributed workforces to work remotely. The suite typically comprises Internet/Intranet systems, desktop or portable computers, mobile phones, videoconferencing, and collaborative software used to accomplish an organizational task.

Latin America and the Caribbean: This is a region of the world comprising 33 countries inclusive of the Bahamas, Caribbean territories, Mexico, and most of Central and South America.

Remote Working: An operational mode that allows professionals to work away from a traditional office environment, incorporating the concept that there is no need for a specific place to execute and complete work-related tasks successfully.

Telecommuting: Commonly referred to as teleworking, implies that employees occasionally work on-site in addition to working remotely.

Virtual Team: A group of individuals who work in tandem from different geographic regions, using a combination of information and communications technologies to accomplish an organizational task. The group of individuals rarely, if ever, meet in a face-to-face setting. Synonyms used interchangeably are distributed teams, geographically dispersed teams, or remote teams.

Chapter 12

Making a Decision to Take or Not to Take the COVID–19 Vaccine:
A Study on Critical Thinking and Information Literacy

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this survey research study was to understand how information literacy and critical thinking skills might play a role in individuals' decision-making process toward taking or not taking the COVID-19 vaccine. The 106 participants, from Brazil and the United States, ranged from a spectrum of diversity in ethnicity, social and educational backgrounds, careers, and ages. Participants answered 21 closed-ended questions in a survey via electronic mail. Pro-vaccine and anti-vaccine groups ascertained that multiple resources were sought which led to informed decisions prior to choosing to inoculation or to forego the COVID-19 vaccine. The primary reasons to take the vaccine were cited as concerns for personal health and concerns for others' health. The 22 participants' central reasons for not taking the vaccine were to wait to see how the vaccine would affect others and a lack of confidence in vaccine efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

Although an education today entails more student interaction with diverse electronic platforms, collaborative projects, and a wider array of resources, students are not necessarily better educated. Learning how to discern between reliable and unreliable information is rooted in early skill building that allows individuals to research and engage in dialogue in a safe learning space. However, the interruption of in-person learning spaces replaced with online modality, to address the Covid-19 concerns of social distancing and the spread of the virus, has created a deficit in fostering communication skills among

students. The digital resources they tune into to learn about current events influence world views and family and colleague networks. A decision to take one of the Covid-19 vaccines affects permissibility to continue working in the public sectors and contribute to society. How do individuals learn to make purposeful decisions that connect them to wise choices and advance interactions with those who think and live differently than they do?

First, higher-order cognitive skills, such as critical thinking, prepare individuals to learn how to think rather than solely what to think. Honing critical thinking skills promotes individuals to tackle upcoming challenges with work colleagues, community and family members, and civic duties as conscientious citizens (Tsui, 2002). An element of thinking critically involves seeking information from an array of resources and including new knowledge into prior knowledge and personal value systems (Bryan, 2014). Thus, continual advancement of knowledge entails veracious reading and research of views contrary to individual value systems. Moreover, how do responsible citizens in this globalized, connected world face the current issues surrounding the Covid-19 virus and the vaccine mandates?

Vaccines and vaccine mandates have been a part of the human experience for decades as scientists have conducted research and proven the capability of saving people's lives with vaccines inclusive, but not limited to, smallpox, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, hepatitis and shingles (Ames, Glenton, & Lewin, 2017). Polio was eradicated in the Western Hemisphere in 1994 (Blume & Geesink, 2000). Vaccines that passed tests in trial research studies and evidenced individuals were protected from contracting life-threatening diseases, reached the public. Historically, the federal and state government, in the US, has required vaccinations for participants in the military, children entering school, and the general public. Vaccine mandates have been an integral part of civic duties, to ensure the population remains safe from diseases that disrupt momentum in society (Ames, Glenton, & Lewin, 2017).

Despite the history of vaccine mandates, the rapidity of the Covid-19 vaccine research and rollout programs worldwide seems to have exacerbated fear that researchers need more time to develop safe vaccines against the virus. The first confirmed case of the 2019 novel virus was on January 19, 2020, to a 35 year-old man admitted to the Snohomish County hospital in Washington, USA, four days after a return trip from Wuhan, China (Holshoe, DeBolt, Lindquist, Lofy, Weisman & Bruce et al., 2020). The speed of information on the seriousness of the virus and the need for vaccines has shaken our daily routines, with frequent updates shifting mask mandates and proof of vaccination to participate in school and work and social event. Troiano and Nardi (2021) ascertained that vaccine hesitancy has been associated with a lack of confidence and trust in the vaccine or provider, complacency, and a failure to perceive a need for the vaccine. Other factors such as employment status, culture, religion, gender, education, age, income, political stance and personal beliefs influenced the acceptance rate for the vaccine, according to a 2020 study where vaccine hesitancy in the era of COVID-19 was evaluated (Troiano & Nardi, 2021).

Consideration of purposeful and reflective thinking and the information individuals access to make decisions on the veracity of Covid-19 and the vaccine aligns with examining how people are reaching these decisions. How have people been affected by the multiple social media forces that permeate lives at home, at work, and in social circles? Does a desire to fit into particular social media groups, such as Facebook and Twitter, and to receive a certain number of followers influence individuals' abilities to make informed decisions and share those ideas with family, coworkers, friends, and neighbors? To understand how information literacy and critical thinking might play a role in the participants' decision-making process toward taking or not taking the Covid-19 vaccine, a survey with 21 close-ended questions (Creswell, 2005) was designed and sent through e-mail to 106 participants in Brazil and in the United States.

PURPOSEFUL AND REFLECTIVE DECISIONS: CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Critical thinking skills involve individuals making purposeful, reflective, and fair-minded judgments about what to believe or what to do when presented with an event deemed critical (Paul & Elder, 2014) and include active learning and discussion, opposed to passive learning (Tsui, 2002). The onset of a crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic caused uncertainty when deciding to take a Covid-19 vaccine. From a scholarship perspective, individuals seek immeasurable amounts of information available from multiple sources and engage in analysis and evaluation, and decide what to do based on facts, while strongly attempting to exclude personal biases or influence of others (Facione & Facione, 2011).

Prior to Covid-19 lockdowns and social distancing guidelines that required business leaders, students, and professionals from diverse backgrounds to work remotely from home, individuals had learned to work and study in shared environments with siblings and parents. Troubleshooting to solve problems was part of how to analyze a situation in collaborative, diverse environments. However, teaching students and workers how to practice critical thinking in diverse contexts has not been an easy endeavor (Seale, 2020), especially as Covid-19 vaccination mandates cause diversions of opinions on the necessity for mandates. Researchers have evidenced that diversity and inclusion drive innovation, which include experiences, thoughts, and opinions, in addition to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and age (McClausland, 2021). However, all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, culture, or native language, must learn to exercise objectivity when making decisions. Does access to a vast amount of information on the Internet cause individuals' critical thinking skills to dull when discerning between resources of misinformation and of high reliability?

INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA ON INFORMATION LITERACY

How do individuals discern between misinformation and reliable resources while navigating the internet, to seek out accurate information on the current number of people infected by the Covid-19 virus or an update on vaccine effectiveness against the Delta and Omicron variants? Developing information literacy skills enables individuals to better discern inaccurate news from accurate news. Information literacy entails, but is not limited to, the ability to evaluate the authority of an article, to strategically search from scholarly resources, to determine why a quote has been used in a text, to select the purpose of a specific citation, and to understand and contextualize relevancy of a passage (LeMire, Zhihong, Balester, Dorsey, & Hahn, 2021). Information literate individuals, generally, seek information from reliable resources, however information literacy skills and critical thinking may overlap due to personal value systems (Bryan, 2014).

Although developing an awareness of information literacy and exercising those skills to filter through misinformation is indispensable for sharpening skills in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, elements of critical thinking, not all students learn about nor engage in information literacy (Lucinescu, 2019). According to Bryan (2014), who conducted a study on the relationship between critical thinking and information literacy among librarians' instruction, the perceived connection between information literacy and critical thinking overlap. Richard Paul and Linda Elder's work (1997), esteemed leaders in the critical thinking field, undergirded Bryan's (2014) study on the connections between each and whether students ask informed questions, seek out diverse resources to make informed decisions and incorporate information into their knowledge base and personal value systems. The results demonstrated a favorable

connection between the Information Literacy Competency Standards (ACRL) and specific elements of critical thinking in the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), which included purpose, implications and consequences, conclusions and view-points, core values, and the process of making decisions implemented at the university involved in the study. Bryan (2014) asserted that students who demonstrated elements of the ACRL competency standards identified the nature and scope of information, accessed information efficiently and with a purpose. Development of information literacy skills tightens the gap for students to build lifelong skills to better discern between information and misinformation, thus elevating abilities to make informed decisions based on a variety of resources from multiple sites, rather than rely on resources that fit views already rooted in personal belief systems.

In addition to Bryan (2014), Gibson (1995) ascertained that core skills of critical thinking, evaluating and synthesis, are integral to information literacy development. Further, to effectively evaluate the authority, relevance, and the resources of an article in digital news or in an academic journal, information literacy (where to look) and critical thinking skills (evaluating) must be exercised (Hogenboom, 2005). Individuals learn to think deliberately about new information, ask inquiring questions (Nappi, 2017), and weigh reliability and believability factors. Information literacy skills require a more holistic skills-base that is tangible, yet require individuals to search, organize, and evaluate information which connects to critical thinking skills and higher-level abilities (Albeitz, 2007).

Further, LeMire, Zhihong, Balester, Dorsey, and Hahn (2021) assessed information literacy skills among first-generation college students to continuing generation college students and although a skills gap existed, a significant difference appeared in two modules; productive persistence and scholarly responsibility to the community, or academic norms. First-generation and continuing-generation students were assessed on college readiness of literacy skills, some of which were cited as the ability to tolerate ambiguity during research, maintain research persistence, experience mindful self-reflections, and identify the scope and meaning of intellectual property. Students who experienced additional support from librarians and professors in information literacy skills were more likely to continue studying, thus increasing student retention and success.

The concept that information literacy is the catalyst for individuals' accessing and assessing reliable and trustworthy information and finally exercising critical thinking skills, deliberately (LeMire et al., 2021), adds depth to the process of what participants in this study researched and from whom they sought information. Did participants research multiple websites and journals regarding available vaccines, the potential dangers and benefits of each vaccine, and how embracing the jab or not might affect their immune system? Did they ask neighbors and trusted professionals for opinions and then decide in favor or against? Or did participants ask only those from personal social circles with opinions that resembled their own? Examining whether information literate skills played a role in decision-making, such as reading articles with contrary views and research on Twitter, Facebook, or other digital resources, for participants at the time of the survey is just one intriguing element, of many, of how individuals operate during a crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

SCOPE

How to identify a solution to problems and create inferences on why the problem exists and how to solve the problem requires objectivity (Facione & Facione, 2011), and includes conflicting ideas, personal experiences, and challenges that create changes (Coats, 2020). Critical thinking is a crucial skill set that

is no longer a fanciful, additional asset, but a skill that students and workers should possess (Seale, 2020), especially now that Covid-19 has challenged individuals worldwide to seek creative ends to continue in the job market, whether online or in person, during turbulent times. To understand how critical thinking might have play a role in information literacy and decisions towards acceptance or not of the Covid-19 vaccine, one hundred and six participants responded to the survey from the 132 participants solicited. One hundred and six participants completed the 21 survey questions electronically. The participants considered close-ended responses (Creswell, 2005) that aligned with their reasoning behind decisions to take or not take the vaccine. Participants considered what ultimately motivated their decisions, whether it was mandatory for job continuity, concerns for health or out of fear for self or family members. Volunteer participants answered 21 questions on a survey that evidenced aspects of critical thinking, such as evaluation, explanation, and reflection (Facione & Facione, 2011; Paul & Elder, 1997). Participants considered whether Twitter, Facebook, digital news sources, journals and professional knowledge gained from physicians or from sources sought out at work, and social media groups were accessed prior to making a decision to take or not take the covid-19 vaccine. The scope of this study was limited to participants in the Federal District in Brasília, Brazil, and to participants in the US, during a specific time (June 15 - July 2, 2021) of the Covid-19 pandemic.

FIELD TEST

Twenty one questions were written to explore how critical thinking and information literacy might influence participants' decisions to take the Covid-19 vaccine or to not take the vaccine. How these decisions affect individuals at work and in society beyond Covid-19 outbreaks were explored to understand the how information literacy and critical thinking skills might affect individuals' decision-making, regardless of social level or ethnicity (Tsui, 2002; Seale, 2020). Critical thinking skills are no longer an idea of a new attribute that individuals should learn. Rather critical thinking skills are necessary for competition in the everchanging job market, to tighten the information literacy gap among students and adults, of all races, social and educational levels (Seale, 2020).

Prior to submitting the survey to volunteer participants, a field study of the survey form was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the survey questions and close-ended answers (Creswell, 2005). The field study ensured alignment of the study question on how critical thinking and information literacy might influence decisions of acceptance or not of the Covid-19 vaccine. Would factors such as job requirement, physician influence, peer influence (neighbors and/or work colleagues) affect participants' decisions? The criteria were for participants to be 18 years or older, English fluent, knowledgeable of the Covid-19 virus, and express a willingness to explore reasons from close-ended responses for taking or not taking the Covid-19 vaccine.

For the field survey, five participants in Brazil, who fit the participant criteria were selected through a convenience sample (Creswell, 2005). Each received an informative e-mail on May 19, 2021 about participant anonymity of responses, contribution to research on information literacy skills, critical thinking skills, the Covid-19 vaccine acceptance or rejection, and the ability to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions. All five field study respondents agreed to complete the initial survey that consisted of 13 questions. The 13 questions were revised to reflect the five participants' feedback, which resulted in a revised survey of 21 questions and close-ended responses.

INSTRUMENTATION

The instrumentation consisted of one researcher who developed the study. The researcher lives in Brazil and has 10 years of experiential background in research, has multiple publications, and teaches Brazilian and international students diplomacy. The second instrument of the study was the survey that consisted of 21 questions and was divided into three parts according to responses. Each part was designed specifically to allow participants who had taken the vaccine or had not taken the vaccine or did not intend to take the vaccine to check the box of resources they used to develop an understanding that would support their decisions. The reason for dividing the survey into three parts was to allow students to answer questions that would only pertain to personal decisions. The participants who had taken the vaccine answered questions regarding why they accepted the vaccine. Participants who had not taken the vaccine yet intended to take the vaccine and their reasons why followed path two. Those who had not taken the vaccine and did not intend to take it, were directed to questions about why they did not intend to take the vaccine. When solicited participants agreed to take the survey, they were provided the Google link to the survey document through an electronic message. No identifying information was included in the survey. When the participants completed the survey electronically, they clicked on submit. Upon submission, the individual data were collected and stored in a response folder that was maintained and secured within the Google form.

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The process of recruiting participants entailed personal invitations sent to a convenience sample (Creswell, 2005). Eligibility criteria for participation for the study included: 18 years of age or older, English fluent, and knowledgeable of the Covid-19 virus, and a willingness to explore reasons for taking or not taking the Covid-19 vaccine. Solicitations were sent electronically to 132 participants known to the researcher. The solicitation began on June 15th with a completion deadline of July 2nd.

Seventy eight participants in Brazil and 54 participants in the US received surveys via Google Forms. A total of 132 participants received electronic surveys with the option to participate. Of the 132 participants, one hundred and six submitted the surveys correctly and were included in the study. Twenty six participants' surveys were automatically omitted from the data analysis due to errors in completing the survey.

The population was made up of Brazil and the United States. The sample population consisted of diverse ethnicities, age groups, and professions within the United States and Brazil. The diversity was reflected through the ethnicities, age, professions, and levels of education. Nine participants (8.5%) ranged from 18-25 years of age, fourteen (13.2%) were between 26-35, twenty one (19.8%) were between 26-50, twenty eight (26.4%) were between 51-60, and 34 (32.1%) participants, the largest group, were 61 years and older (32.1%). Participants were given the choice to identify as either male, female or other. Of the 106 study participants, fifty six (52.8%) identified as female and 50 (47.2%) identified as male, and no one identified as a gender different than female or male. The choices for participants' professions were cited as non-healthcare (34.9%), healthcare professional (9.4%), student (9.4%), other (19.8%), and retired (26.4%). No one identified as unemployed. Finally, the majority of the 106 study participants reported having achieved a college degree, which for this study signified an associate's degree of two years or a bachelor's degree of four years (38.7%), a master's degree (27.4%), a doctoral

degree (16%), a high school diploma (16%), a doctoral candidate (0.9%), and one participant reported to 1.5 years having worked on the doctoral degree (0.9%) (see Appendix A).

DATA ANALYSIS

After completion and revision of the field survey, electronic surveys were sent to 132 participants who fit the criteria;18 years of age or older, English fluent, and knowledgeable of the Covid-19 virus, and a willingness to explore reasons for taking or not taking the Covid-19 vaccine. The surveys were sent via Google Forms, on June 15th with a completion deadline of July 2nd. Of the 132 participants, one hundred and eleven participants returned surveys by the deadline and only 106 were completed correctly. Five participants of the 111 participants were eliminated for failing to tick answers for required questions which automatically invalidated the survey upon submission. Thus, one hundred and six participants explored possible reasons for accepting or not accepting to take the Covid-19 vaccine, in an attempt to comprehend how information literacy and critical thinking skills, accessing reliable resources and recognizing those sources as reputable, might affect decision-making for parents, students, teachers, retired folks, and professionals in the healthcare profession and beyond.

Comparisons of culture between the United States and Brazil were not intended to be identified or measured. The populations of both countries are highly diversified in ethnicity, social and educational backgrounds, belief systems, varied careers, and multigenerational employment (see Appendix A). Therefore, participants' responses were not separated according to country, language or ethnic background. Interpretation of how the data sources were representative of participants' skills in information literacy and the application of critical analysis of the data in making decisions was realized in the participants' response to close-ended responses that influenced decisions to take or not to take the vaccine. Qualitative data were not collected. A survey was solicited via email for understanding how information literacy and critical thinking skills might play a role in participants' decision-making on taking or not taking the Covid-19 vaccines.

Consideration of whether external influences on decision-making during this critical time in history to decrease the Covid-19 outbreak and the deadly variants worldwide, would benefit leaders and stakeholders to tap into how individuals who are faced with pressure react. How do physicians and peer influences, mentioned in the survey questions 8, 17, and 19, affect individuals? How do family, neighbors, or co-workers influence decisions regarding vaccine acceptance, mask-wearing and adherence to social distancing guidelines? Does religion play a role in decision making? Which media data are accessed and found credible by participants that influence their decision-making? Experiences, thought, and opinions, in addition to participants' ethnicity, gender, and age should be considered as foundational for examining how data influence decision-making among diverse groups (Coats, 2020; McClausland, 2021). Although data are shifting as newly identified variants and vaccine efficacy are reexamined by leading scientists and medical experts, the WHO, and other stakeholders, in an attempt to view influencing factors during a specific period and time may ascertain understanding of the shifting vaccination status and beliefs that influence people from diverse professions and cultures. Increasing understanding of how individuals decide and are influenced benefits collaboration among colleagues of diverse belief systems, genders, and value systems at work, school environments, and in the community.

CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATION DATA ON BRAZIL AND THE UNITED STATES

Amid the conflicting messages on vaccination data and availability, educators, parents, teachers, healthcare workers, students, and retired folks have reacted to the vaccine rollout programs differently worldwide. In some countries, vaccine availability has been plentiful, but the acceptance-rate has meant that vaccines have exceeded the expiration date and have been thrown away. In other countries similar to Brazil, vaccination plans have been carefully organized with a three-month space between the first and second dose, and the reinforcement dose. For some, the third month date for the second dose has meant returning later when the vaccine supply for the second dose has been replenished. A reinforcement of the third Covid-19 vaccine has initiated in Brazil. For others receiving a first dose of Pfizer, they have endured up to a seven hour wait in line, at times.

Updates on vaccination data are published periodically by each state's Health Department in 26 states and one Federal District of Brazil. The reputable, G1 Globo website data revealed that roughly *132,586.608* Brazilians have been fully vaccinated as of November 26, 2021 (especiais.g1.globo.com). The state of São Paulo has yielded 81.41% of the population has taken one dose and 74.8% have been completely vaccinated (two doses or a single dose of Johnson & Johnson). Rio Grande do Sul, 77.27% have been vaccinated with one dose and 67.94% have taken two shots. The Federal District, the capital of Brazil, tallied 73.76% who have taken one dose and 63.38% have taken two doses. Of those in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, 71.23% have taken one shot and 69.79% have been fully inoculated. Amapá, a large state to the Northeast, weighed in with 57.37% of the population inoculated with one dose and 36.72% of the population is completely inoculated.

These data reveal that Brazilians are taking the jab, which is promising news as schools begin to reopen for in-person classes, and in some cases, alternating schedules of online and in-person classes remain for the final semester that finishes in December. Indoor policies with continued mask mandates and social distancing measures remain in place. Whether vaccine availability has played a role in Brazilians' receptivity toward taking the vaccine or not would be an interesting element to explore in future research on Brazilians and Covid-19 vaccine receptivity.

Vaccine acceptance in the United States has been polarized by the notion of freedom and personal rights infringement from the government. Current data revealed 57.88% of Americans are fully vaccinated as of November 24th and 10.91% are partially vaccinated. This is a total of 68.69% of the population in the United States as vaccinated (https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations). In contrast to vaccination rates in the US, the data on this site revealed that 75.91% of the total population in Brazil has been vaccinated, with 60.41% as fully vaccinated and 15.87% as partially inoculated. Additional information on current vaccine status and research within the United States may be accessed through the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (https://www.mayoclinic.org/coronavirus-covid-19). As expected, the data are changing daily in accordance to the reports on the latest variant, Omicron, and those who have become ill.

STUDY FINDINGS

Participants answered 21 questions with close-ended responses (Creswell, 2005) on a survey about the Covid-19 vaccine and what external resources may have influenced their decisions to take or to not take

the vaccine. Further, how these decisions affect individuals at work and in social circles beyond Co-vid-19 is of interest as the mandates for social distancing measures, wearing masks indoors, at schools, in enclosed environments, and at work continue to shift worldwide, in accordance to the numbers of Covid-19 outbreaks and new variants. How we react to this everchanging, flow of divergent news affects opportunities at work and within our social circles. Continued awareness of data advancements from the scientific and medical community may encourage adults to exercise critical thinking and access credible sources with the intent to expand community knowledge beyond political or social views to fight this virus collectively.

The intent for conducting this study was to allow insight into how critical thinking and information literacy might influence participants' decisions to take the Covid-19 vaccine or to not take the vaccine. What resources were accessed to aid in decision-making? The survey results reflect only a particular population, time, and place during a larger timeframe. The survey results are not generalizable to the larger population. Questions regarding whether the participants were affected by peer pressure from work colleagues, neighbors, and family associated with their social media groups were answered. Participants' answers were tallied on Likert Scales from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) and onto pie charts, electronically. This facilitated the data collection and data analysis as charts and scales were completed automatically after each participant submitted the survey.

The data analysis charts and scales evidenced that regardless of those who had taken the vaccine and those who had not taken it yet, but intended to, the majority rated their critical thinking and infor-mation literacy at a level 5 on the Likert Scale, which is the highest score. Of 81 responses by those who had taken the vaccine, 38.3% rated a level 5, 35.8% rated their analysis level as 4, and 22.2% as a level 3, and 3.7% at level 2, and no one rated deep analysis of data at level one. In contrast, the 22 of those who did not take the vaccine, 68.2% rated their analysis level of data at level 5, 18.2% at level 4, 9.1% at level 3, and no one rated their critical thinking at a level 2 or 1 (see Appendix B). Each group of participants believed they had analyzed the information thoroughly rating at level five. Regardless of the individual's stance, vaccinated, intended to vaccinate, or did not intend to vaccinate, individuals believed they had taken the initiative to seek out resources and decide purposefully why the vaccine was necessary or not necessary.

The survey was created to allow participants to answer questions according to whether they had taken the vaccine or whether they had not taken it but intended to do so on their scheduled vaccination date. The idea to create three paths for the survey respondents was to ensure they completed the survey by answering questions that related to personal vaccination status and they did not have to repeat questions that were not intended for them. For example, participants who did not take the vaccine and answered no to number six (Do you intend to take the vaccine?) would not be linked to question seven (Which options below best reflect the reasons for you to take the vaccine?) (see Appendix B). The survey results reflected participants' answers who had already taken the vaccine, those who had not taken the vaccine, and those who did not intend to take the vaccine.

Path One: Vaccine Acceptance

The survey results completed by participants on Google Forms yielded the first path was of those who had taken the vaccine and the reasons why. Of the 106 participants, fifty six (52.8%) had already taken the vaccine and 50 (47.2%) had not. Participants did not state whether they had completed the process with the second dose. However, data revealed that the top three reasons of five for taking the Covid-19

vaccine were concerns for health (81.7%), concern for others (48.8%), and a fear of dying (25.6%). The answer that yielded least concern was because of an individual's age (6.1%). Those who had already taken the vaccine were not influenced by their physician (85.4%) as much as they were influenced by personal and professional knowledge (72%), as revealed in question 10 (see Appendix 1). Participants weighed in that they were most influenced by personal/professional knowledge (72%), digital news resources and newspapers (36.6%), and TV network news (35%). The least influencing resources were social media and groups on social media (12.2%) compared to radio announcements and daily news (6.1%).

To address participants' possible realities in Brazil and access to multiple forms of information, the radio was included as an option of an influencing resource for participants. A decree in 1932 initiated a regular nightly news radio cast called, Brazil's Time (A Hora do Brasil), which continues to educate listeners of the local news and events (Gouvêa, 2020) between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. The public news report is comparable to the Public News Radio edition in the United States. Of the 106 participants in this study, twenty eight (26.4%) identified as retired for the category *profession* and 21 (19.8%) identified as *other* under profession, and 16% (17) identified as receiving as high as a high school diploma and 16% (17) as a having obtained a doctoral degree.

The results from this survey revealed that participants, under the umbrella of having taken one of the available vaccines, were confident that they had researched thoroughly various resources and were most concerned with personal health and the health of others. Participants demonstrated a concern for community and how self-decisions could affect their neighbors, family, and colleagues. Seventy (85.4%) participants were not influenced by physicians to take the vaccine, and 12 (14.6%) participants were influenced by their physicians to take the vaccine. Those who took the vaccine 59 (72%) were influenced by professional and personal knowledge. The close-ended response format did not allow for participants to explain what *professional and personal knowledge* signified. The study would have been enriched by including a line for open-ended responses to clarify *professional and personal knowledge*. The category, *other,* in question 7 would have been more data-rich had a line been provided for a qualitative explanation (Creswell, 2005). However, the fundamental point that the vaccines were accessed, and they believed they had sought out reliable information is revealing of participants' perceptions of their information literacy skills and purposeful thinking. In comparison, those participants in the group who had not taken the vaccine and did not intend to take the vaccine revealed on a Likert Scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) that 68.2% had deeply analyzed resources to ascertain to not take the vaccine. In short, participants believed they had made informative decisions regarding the vaccine based on information from professional/personal knowledge sources, digital news, public news radio, and social media resources. Next, path two revealed insights by those who had not taken the vaccine yet but intended to do so, eventually.

Path Two: Intend to Take the Vaccine

For those in Brazil and the United States who participated in this survey, the assigned date and place for the vaccine may not have taken place yet when the survey was administered. The participants were not separated according to ethnicity, language, occupation, gender, nor country, to ensure anonymity for all participants. The second path on the survey was of those who had not taken the vaccine yet intended to take the vaccine and why. Of those 50 (47.2%) participants who had answered no to question 5 of whether they had already taken the vaccine, twenty six (54.2%) intended to take the vaccine. Those who intended to take the vaccine, or already had, asserted they were most influenced by personal and professional knowledge (72%), but less likely to be influenced by their physician (14.6%). Those who had not taken

the vaccine yet intended to take the vaccine affirmed that their job (85.4%) did not require they take the vaccine, with only 8.5% influenced by job requirements for taking the vaccine. Participants who had an option to take the vaccine or not by their employers weighed in at 18.3%. Participants in the healthcare field registered in at 9.4% in this study. Twenty six participants (54.2%) intended to take the vaccine against 22 (45.8%) participants who had decided they would not take the vaccine. Of the 50 who had checked the box as not having taken the vaccine yet, only 48 responses evidenced whether they planned to take the vaccine. Of those 48 responses regarding intentions to take or not take the vaccine, twenty six asserted yes (54.2%) against 22 (45.8%) who checked no for taking the vaccine in the future. Two participants did not complete the answer on whether they intended to take the vaccine or not from the original fifty who had previously stated no (47.2%) (see Appendix B).

Participants on path two overlapped with participants who had already taken the vaccine. On path two, twenty two participants (54.2%) of the 48 participants who not taken the vaccine intended to take the shot. Reasons for not taking the jab for Brazilians could have fallen under the category of not having reached that age group yet or not having the vaccine available. These two reasons were possible in alignment to the current events and the unfolding of the vaccine rollout calendar in Brazil. After President Biden sent supplies of Pfizer to Brazil with J & J vaccines on the way, the vaccine availability allowed for the rollout in Brazil to proceed more quickly (Weiland, July 31, 2021). One participant who added anecdotal information in an email, who is in her early 20s, received the Pfizer shot and waited in line for one hour. Three months from the initial shot, the participant will return for the second dose, which allows insight into a different reality in Brazil compared to the United States. How vaccine availability could influence a person's rejection or acceptance of the vaccine is a factor to worth examining in future research.

Path Three: Do Not Intend to Take the Vaccine

The third path was of those who had NOT taken the vaccine and did not intend to and why. Of the 106 participants in this study, twenty two intended forego the Covid-19 vaccine, regardless of the type of vaccine. Participants who decided to forego the vaccine stated that they were not influenced by physicians (95.2%). The choices selected as influencing factors for not taking the vaccine were listed as waiting to see the effect of vaccine on others (54.5%), a lack of confidence in the vaccine effectiveness (45.5%), and religious reasons (4.5%) weighed in as of less influence. The category *Other* weighed in at 54.5% which tied with waiting to see effects of the vaccine on others. Similar to those in path one and path two, those who did not intend to take the vaccine felt strongly that they analyzed information deeply to conclude that they would forego the jab. On a Likert Scale from 1 to 5, with one the lowest and five the highest, fifteen of the 22 participants rated a 5 (68.2%) for analyzing information and resources deeply, followed by 18.2% scoring a 4, 9.1% rating a 3 and 4.5% a one. Participants believed that they accessed ample resources to take an informative decision, but rated Facebook (70.7%) and Twitter (67.1%) as unreliable information sources, rating each the lowest on the Likert scale a one.

For the third path, the preconception that religious ideas might rate the number one reason, only one person (4.5%) weighed religion as a factor. This group also was influenced by professional and personal knowledge for deciding to not take the vaccine. Also, waiting to see the effects of the vaccine on others (54.5%) and a lack of confidence on vaccine effectiveness (45.5%) were considered the number one reasons available on the survey, which allowed participants to mark several at a time. The category *Other* was a close-ended response and did not allow participants to expound on responses. For the purpose of

maintaining answers in a quantitative format open-ended responses were not included (Creswell, 2005). However, additional insights of why participants would not take the vaccine or opted out until more research trials evidenced high vaccine efficacy would have enriched the data.

Diverse perspectives on the vaccine composition and efficacy, beliefs that the vaccines cause vaccinated people to become bioweapons to the unvaccinated or that unforeseen heath complications would appear later may have been expounded on had additional space been allotted for extended answers of a qualitative nature (Halbrook, 2021). Contrasting views to safety of the vaccine and vaccine efficacy were found on The *Vaccines and Christianity: A biblical, historical, and contemporary examination* (Halbrook, 2021) website, replete with doctors and researchers who affirm that not enough investigation has been done to ensure safety for the public. Whether the primary reasons extend beyond the answers available on the survey, fifteen (68.2%) participants in this group scored themselves at 5, the highest, on the Likert scale for having obtained sufficient knowledge for NOT taking the vaccine. Four (18.2%) participants rated themselves a 4, two (9.1%) participants rated a 3 on the Likert Scale, and only 1 (4.5%) participant rated a 1 on deep analysis prior to taking a decision to NOT take the vaccine.

Thus, the crucial takeaway on decision-making as reflected through the participants' shared knowledge and decisions regarding the vaccine is that participants in each group ascertained to analyzing their decisions deeply before taking a final decision. Regardless of whether participants had already taken the Covid-19 vaccine or had decided to wait to take the vaccine until more research has proven the vaccine as safe, or to forego the vaccine completely, participants ascertained adequate information had been read and considered for their decision-making. Information literacy and critical thinking had taken place prior to final decisions on vaccine acceptance or not. Therefore, examination of the participants through open-ended responses, regardless of vaccination status, and the additional resources accessed beyond the digital resources (Twitter and Facebook), digital news, national public radio news, personal and professional resources, physicians, family and friends, social media groups, mentioned in this study, would be worthy of future research (see Appendix B).

Masks and Social Distancing

Worldwide measures to wear protective facial coverings in public spaces, indoor and outdoor, continue to oscillate according to the Covid-19 vaccination rate; the increase of illness and deaths caused by the mutating virus. Participants in this study considered the importance of wearing a mask and maintaining social distance measures in question 20 (How important is it to wear a mask?) and question 21 (How important is it to practice social distancing?). All of the participants were asked to rate each measure for curbing the spread of Covid-19 on a Likert Scale from 5 as very important to 1 as not important. Those who thought wearing a mask was important and selected a 5 were 66 (63.5%) participants, followed by 4 (3.8%) participants who scored a 4 on the scale, eleven (10.6%) participants rated a 3, followed by 5 (4.8%) who rated a 2, and eighteen participants (17.3%) rated a 1 as not important at all. The survey results for masking and social distancing values did not evidence the vaccinated from the unvaccinated participants.

In contrast to wearing masks to ward off the virus, social distancing was evaluated by 103 participants rather than 106 participants, with 3 failing to answer this question. Collectively, maintaining social distance scored a 61.2% as very important, with 10.7% of participants who rated a level 4, and 5.8% scored social distance measures as a 3, while 13.6% rated it a level one. No one scored this category as a two on the Likert scale. Participants found wearing a mask (63.5%) important compared to maintain-

ing social distance measures (61.2%), but only slightly so. Those who found wearing a mask as least important (17.3%) was higher compared to those (13.6%) who did not believe maintaining social distance measures as essential.

Moreover, wearing a mask was favored by 66 (63.5%) as a protective measure compared to 63 (61.2%) participants who favored maintaining social distance measures. Eighteen (17.3%) participants scored wearing a mask as least important compared to 14 (13.6%) who scored a 1 on the Likert Scale for social distancing measures as least effective.

Overall, the 106 participants who volunteered to share perceptions on making decisions to take or not take the Covid-19 vaccine ascertained that professional knowledge from reputable resources and digital news sites were sought out and personal knowledge played a key role in their acceptance or not of the vaccine. Participants were not influenced by their physicians to take the vaccine (85.4%) compared to those who were influenced (14.6%).

Of those who did not take the vaccine, twenty one participants (95.2%) were not influenced by physicians and only one (4.8%) was influenced by a physician. Further, at the time of this study, the vaccine rollout program in Brazil and the United States reflected that 8.5% of participants who took the shot were required to take the vaccine by employers, whereas 18.3% stated the vaccine as optional, and 73.2% affirmed that no requirement was in place. Currently, worldwide many universities and workplaces require proof of vaccination through a vaccination card prior to returning to the workplace. The uptick of vaccine mandates worldwide is a current source of concern for the vaccinated and unvaccinated. Some believe mandates infringe on personal freedom and rights as citizens, in contrast to those who ascertain mandates are necessary to eradicate the virus and ensure work and school continuity and safety. Could the evolving vaccine mandates worldwide for work, study, leisure, and travel requirements influence the unvaccinated to finally take the vaccine?

CONCLUSION

Critical thinking skills often extend beyond the traditional framework of leading others and being right when deciding to take the vaccine or not. Critical thinking often aligns with doing what is right, rather than being right, and considering the whole which necessitates a careful analysis of others (Seale, 2020). Therefore, consideration of how critical thinking skills (Facione & Facione, 2011; Paul & Elder, 1997) and information literacy influence (Albeitz, 2007; Lucinescu, 2019) individuals' analyses of credible media sources and resources regarding the Covid-19 vaccine is key to leveraging knowledge and working collaboratively in an ever-increasing diverse workplace. Personal experiences, thoughts, and opinions, in addition to ethnicity, gender, and age should be considered when seeking to innovate the workplace among those who are pro-vaccine and those who are anti-vaccine (Coats, 2020; McClausland, 2021). How to work together in an environment where not all individuals are vaccinated for multiple reasons, or where taking the vaccine to continue current employment status has been mandated, continues to challenge us in communities, in schools and universities, and in workplaces.

Individuals must learn to embrace diversity, which extends beyond ethnicity, culture, language and gender. Diversity and inclusion entail leaning into various sources of information that diverge from our perspectives and challenge personal consideration of what to believe or that to do (Paul & Elder, 2014). Those with information literate skills challenge perspectives which ensure individuals recognize and ascertain when misinformation creeps into analysis of data and resources of authority. From a perspec-

tive of scholarship, individuals should seek out diverse resources of available information; and, exercise intellectual and verbal analysis with colleagues and family members of diverse opinions, values, and beliefs, while attempting to exclude personal biases or others' influences (Facione & Facione, 2011). Moreover, avoid seeking out solely those whose opinions and beliefs are in perfect alignment. Rather research and read resources that cause intellectual dissonance (Seale, 2020) to increase self-awareness and extend knowledge.

Finally, the reality of whether individuals decide to take the vaccine or not will affect a prospective return to work and to school and engagement with friends, family, and neighbors as vaccine mandates alter in tandem to illnesses, deaths, and vaccine efficacy rates. A simple solution does not exist for bringing the lens in focus for the vaccinated, the unvaccinated, and those wavering between. However, increased awareness is crucial to understand how accessing credible resources (information literacy), identifying relevance in various viewpoints, and exercising critical thinking could help bridge the gap for individuals on opposing sides of the vaccine mandate. Individuals should reflect on how personal actions and choices affect those in the community, in school, and in the workplace, and of diverse ethnicities, gender preferences, religious affiliations, political stances, and primary language differences.

Limitations of the Study

Although this survey research was conducted in Brazil and in the United States, one limitation of this study may have been that the survey was sent solely to English-fluent speaking Brazilians. Perhaps writing the survey in English and Portuguese would have yielded different responses and included a more diverse social sphere of participants? All of the questions were written with preset answers or close-ended answers. In semi-close-ended questions, the participant would have checked one answer and then created a unique response under the category *other*. For questions 7 (What options below best reflect the reasons for you to take the vaccine?) and 18 (What options below best reflect reasons for NOT taking the vaccine?), the category *other* could have been explored more in-depth by providing additional lines for individuals to create their responses, as opposed to ticking the box *other* without allowing additional responses (Creswell, 2005) as to why participants did not take the vaccine and concerns that prompted participants to take the vaccine. However, the researcher wanted to maintain close-ended answers to reveal numerical results rather than allow extended answers in qualitative form, which would elongate the coding and data analysis process. The intent was to gain insight into the resources accessed and how critical thinking skills may have been used to make decisions regarding vaccine acceptance or not, and whether critical thinking and information literacy were evidenced by the participants of this survey research.

Consideration of the emerging information on Covid-19 worldwide, the variants, and approval of the vaccines and the booster shot in the United States, the study results are related to a specific period (June 15th- July 2nd), place (Brasilia and the US), and time (2021). Next, the study cannot be generalized since two populations were explored and solely 106 participants' answers were analyzed. While some participants returned emails to explain that they would have liked to talk about their answers, adding a space for open-ended survey answers would enrich the data. Unfortunately, this topic of covid-19 vaccines and mandates is a sensitive topic that divides colleagues and family and friends. An optional interview would also have yielded ground for exploring participants' concerns on the reasons for taking the vaccine and for not taking the vaccine. The recommendation for future research on information literacy, critical thinking, and decision-making would be enriched by including a qualitative aspect to a quantitative study.

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Section 4

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Post-Pandemic Times

Chapter 13
The Future of Sport Education in the Post–Pandemic Era

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on the future of diversity, inclusion, and equity in the sports industry after the COVID-19 pandemic. It discusses the changes that athletes may experience and how sports may change as a result of the pandemic. The discussion covers topics such as mental health and the wellbeing of minority athletes. Other issues explored include the increasing popularity of women's sports and the increasing activism among athletes. Further, the chapter addresses the loss of recreational facilities and services and closure of many collegiate sports programs. A special focus of the chapter is on the conditions for Black athletes.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic and many other related and even unrelated changes have impacted the sports industry in a possibly permanent manner. The pandemic is the black swan event for sports that will have long term consequences in ways that we are not yet capable of understanding. These changes impact all aspects of the industry, including sports education. Since we are still in the middle of the pandemic, it is hard to predict what the future will look like to sports education and especially how the pandemic has changed diversity, equity, and inclusion. There are, however, some early indicators on what may be coming. There will be winners and losers, as the changes will not impact everyone equally.

Academia has changed a lot and many observers have noted that higher education is in a sort of a crisis. This may be debatable, but it is certain that there are some significant challenges in the horizon and some of them have already arrived. There have been increasing numbers of college closings and overall enrollment rates have declined. The number of international students has plateaued (Reddin,

2020; NAFSA, 2020). Meanwhile, tuition costs have continued to increase while student loan interest rates have increased (DiPeitro, 2020). College has become unaffordable to many, and ivy level schools have become even more elite. The value of the college degree itself has been debated as the number of college degreed individuals unemployed has increased (Gringlas, 2021). This is certainly worse for some majors than others, and especially liberal arts degrees have been a target of discussion (Benedix & Volk, 2020). Although some authors argue that the pandemic has offered small liberal arts colleges a chance at redemption, it may very well be too late.

Universities and colleges offering degree programs in sports education are not an exception from the general norm. Many sports education programs have experienced some challenges as potential students perceive sports to be interrupted by COVID-19. However, some special mission sports schools may be relatively better off than many liberal arts schools. This is partly because sport industry itself has adapted and shown slight growth even in the middle of the pandemic (Krnjaic, 2020). It is also becoming increasingly professional, and the value of well-trained coaches and managers is being increasingly recognized. Education is valued and it is no longer sufficient to just move up within the industry by sticking around and hoping for the next logical promotion without some education. At the same time, it is not universally agreed that all coaches and sport managers should have college degrees. Many ask whether they really need the general education core courses to be successful. Do they need to learn history and humanities, for example, to be good at their jobs? The answers vary and a case can be made for the need of critical thinking that can be learned from taking a philosophy course, or some other courses. Certainly, a case could be made for the importance of biology and mathematics for coaches. They obviously need to understand biomechanics and some statistics. Strength and conditioning coaches especially tend to like their numbers and charts. Similarly, sport managers do need to prepare budgets and therefore need basic math skills. They also need to write emails and memos for which they need to take English courses (Jobs in Sport, 2017). So, ultimately there is a lot to be gained from liberal arts education. However, it is hard to predict how well all the knowledge gained from these liberal arts courses will generalize and transfer into sport careers. It is much easier to anticipate that specially focused sports education programs in sports management, coaching, and exercise science will be able to prepare students for successful careers, especially post-pandemic.

There are many types of jobs in the world of sport. Many jobs do not require college degrees. A case could be made that a certificate, certification, or diploma would be sufficient to teach the proper skills and knowledge required for many, at least, entry level jobs. These micro-credentials can be cheaper and faster to earn, and they tend to be more practical in terms of the content of the courses (BBC, 2020). Perhaps this is where the future of sports education should be going. Stackable micro-credentials could be structured in a way that sport professionals would be able to gain the exact skills and knowledge they need when they need it. Ideally, these micro-credentials could then also be converted into degree credits in a way that these professionals could at some point pursue academic degrees if they see the need for them (BBC, 2020). In the face of the challenges that the institutions of higher education are experiencing, it may be those who manage to innovate a structured on-demand system of stackable micro-credentials that will ultimately succeed (Marcus, 2020). This may not be the case with all industries and fields, but it seems that it would be a suitable model for the world of sport. Higher education industry needs to be re-structured and made more affordable, and stackable micro-credentials could be at least a beginning of a solution. Cost is especially an issue to lower socio-economic families, and unfortunately these often consist of the minority population. Many youngsters from minority families are not as academically prepared and financially able to obtain a college degree (Mitchell, 2019). Micro-credentials could be a

solution for them. With a stackable certificate in hand, they could get into an entry level sports job and apply the credits they have earned towards a college degree later when they are ready for a four-year degree.

Increasing Diversity in Sports

Diversity is an important issue in the post pandemic sports industry and sports education. As we watch the anti-racism protests unfold in the news, we may wonder what the impact of all of it will be on sports. This is a sensitive topic with a lot of history to be explored. One can immediately remember famous black athletes such as Muhammad Ali, Colin Kaepernick, Jackie Robinson, Jesse Owens, and Serena Williams. However, this brief discussion will not address these specific athletes in detail, and how they changed the world. Instead, it will focus on sports organizations and especially on the inclusion of black employees in the light of the current events surrounding the black community.

Increased diversity results in several organizational benefits. For example, it increases innovation and creativity. It also improves employee retention. Diverse employees do not tend to stay in organizations that do not have diversity, and the existence of diverse viewpoints promotes communication that leads to new perspectives. Diverse workforce helps to serve diverse customers. It is difficult for non-diverse organizations to understand the needs and preferences of diverse clients. This applies especially well into the diverse world of sports. Sports organizations must learn how to manage diverse players and staff, and sports education must prepare future professionals by providing the necessary cultural sensitivity training.

Diversity is clearly beneficial, but it can also lead to increased organizational conflict. Diverse viewpoints can cause disagreements and misunderstandings. Cultural and racial diversity contributes to these clashes. When conflict is properly managed, it can become a catalyst for productivity and improved performance. However, when it gets out of control, it can lead to lawsuits and dysfunction. Managing conflict is an ongoing effort but it should not be viewed negatively. Functional conflict is, in many ways, very positive and even necessary at times. There have been many examples of conflict caused by diversity in sports. Black athletes, for example, have faced racial discrimination many times in the history of sports. They still do, although not as much as before. Positively resolved conflict has been necessary to improve their lives.

Diverse organizations are typically able to attract talent better. This is especially important in the sports industry since so many athletes tend to be black. Without black members of the management and coaching team, it could be more difficult to manage black athletes especially right now. It is difficult for non-blacks to understand the anger of the black community right now. Black managers and coaches can relate better and create a supportive environment. White managers and coaches may struggle to see past their white privilege and are unable to understand the reasons behind the anti-racism protests that have occurred during the pandemic era. There protests are significant as they have been some of the biggest worldwide protests the world has ever witnessed. They have forced the sports industry to face the issue of race like never before. As a result, the issue cannot be ignored in the post pandemic era.

Ultimately, sports organizations must find a way to address the current issues of institutional racism. They should get past controversies such as the kneeling of Colin Kaepernick and find ways to be more constructive and supportive. Additional black athletes, and white allies, are likely to use their platforms to advocate for their communities, and this may cause dysfunctional conflict if not managed properly. It is better to be proactive rather than reactive. The current protests are a result of 400 years of suppression, and it is unlikely that these complex issues will be resolved quickly. Understanding the context and being

proactively supportive is important. Sports education programs can provide at least a partial solution by offering courses that teach the history of racial injustice and by being inclusive as a learning community.

It is not sufficient to merely hire black managers and coaches. Organizations must focus on inclusion and ensure that everyone can contribute equally. Society for Human Resource Management defines inclusion separately from diversity as "the achievement of a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the organization's success." It is not enough to just hire a diverse workforce and meet the affirmative action requirements. Diversity must be embraced by creating inclusive organizational cultures. This requires proper access, attitudes, and communication. It demands partnerships and creation of policies. But first of all, it is an intentional choice. It does not happen by an accident. Sports organizations could make this intentional choice to embrace diversity. Similarly, sports education programs should make this choice by hiring diverse professors and staff.

Sport is Not Immune to Recession

Földesi (2014) argues that sport is not immune to recession. While sport may not face the same struggles as other industry, it does suffer in other ways. Mega event sport appears to relatively untouched from the outside looking in. However, large event sports are still in need for money for host cities to provide state-of-the-art facilities, hotels, and other forms of entertainment. In times of recession, corporations are less willing to provide sponsorships. For events such as the Olympics, citizens vote on bids and many are rejecting their government providing funding towards these events, as the ROI appears to be short-term, if at all. Locals prefer to see their money spent on healthcare and other concerns that focus on the needs of society. Grassroots sports are impacted more heavily (less recession proof). Support for sports come from sources of household spending, volunteer workers, private funding, and local authorities. The percentage of funding from each source varies by country; however, there appears to be an overall trend that less spending is occurring on all fronts in times of a global crisis.

Although less spending is occurring, it is important to mention that sport sees a less significant impact than some other industries. Gratton and Kokolakakis (2012) suggest that this has been evidenced in the 1980s and 1990s. Further it is indicated that the type of sport may be significant in how hard it is hit by recession. It has been noted that individuals of retirement age are likely to continue spending on sport, while sports deemed expensive and require more expenditure to participate have seen a significant drop in participation compared to those that do not require significant out-of-pocket expenses.

Innovation Aids in Sport Persistence

In this time of change and turbulence caused by the pandemic, natural disasters, social unrest, and political tension, we all need some stress release. Sport has usually provided much needed entertainment and helped with our tensions. Now, however, enjoying sports has become much harder and the current challenges have threatened the entire sports industry. Many teams and leagues have cancelled their seasons and even the Olympics have now been postponed. Mass gatherings are not possible and there is no immediate release in sight. It is easy for people to feel pessimistic. It is easy to think that our favorite pastime is gone. Aspiring sport professionals may feel discouraged to pursue their dreams and athletes may consider other passions.

Humanity and all its expressions have always found ways to survive. Sport is an expression of humanity. It is a manifestation of our competitive spirit and desire to achieve. Sport has been around since the beginning of humanity and will likely survive as long as humans exist. There will always continue to be a need for sport to serve as stress release and entertainment. However, sport will evolve like everything else around us. Many new forms of sports may emerge from this evolution. Some current sports will not be as sustainable as others will in the new normal. The ways we play and enjoy sports will change. For example, e-sports will almost certainly become a much more mainstream sport. It is possible that, in the future, we will enjoy even more televised sports rather than attend in-person. Stadiums could become venues that allow even better audio and video broadcasting. In boxing, for example, Showtime has been quite successful in broadcasting fights without any audiences present in the arena. Football, baseball, and basketball leagues and teams have played successfully without live audiences. These are just early signs of the evolution that will likely happen. We cannot see yet what the new normal will be because we have just started. We cannot imagine and visualize what we have never experienced before. However, with some hope and positivity, we can change and evolve. We can innovate and find new ways to enjoy sports. There is a future in sports for all of us. We just must be brave and dare to think differently.

The change is already starting with the home fitness equipment. While gyms may be the victims of this newfound success, fitness itself will survive. In evolution, there will always be winners and losers, so to speak. Some business models will not survive while others will. Sport professionals will almost certainly create new business models to sustain the industry. Sport will find a way. Athletes will find new ways to compete, and teams will find new ways to train. It will all happen one way or another. This is because humanity always finds a way. All expressions of humanity, including arts and literature, have found a way. Sport will too. This is the time for brave new sport professionals to go back to school to learn new models and develop new paradigms. This is the time for entrepreneurial thinking and innovation like never before. This is an opportunity to be part of the new solutions and new trends.

There will be some unique opportunities for the members of minority populations to get involved in sports after the pandemic. In many ways, the pandemic has brought racial tensions into light and people's awareness. It has also highlighted some of the needs of the minority communities. It may be too early to tell at this point, but it appears that some increased funding will be available for minority students. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) have received some additional funding and the Cares Act has given some relief to many struggling students.

Sports will survive but not everyone will survive equally well. Some sports are more diverse than others. For instance, boxing, basketball, and football are much more diverse than swimming, tennis, and skiing. Business models for all sports are different, and all of them are impacted by the pandemic differently. Individual sports are less impacted than team sports, for example. Some sports require large stadiums to be profitable and others are easier to manage while socially distancing. Luckily the sports that involve black athletes more than others also tend to be the most popular sports. They are likely to continue to be successful. Boxing, basketball, and football are doing quite well regardless of COVID-19. It is possible, however, that there will be even less access for black athletes to sports that they are already underrepresented in.

The Fight for the Survival of Women's Sports

Women's sports were projected to bring in revenues amounting to more than $1 billion USD. The rise in interest in women's sport was ongoing since 2018 with the most popular sports being viewed were

soccer, cricket, basketball, and tennis. An increase could be seen in live event attendance, rights, and TV coverage revenues. Likewise, prize money in some sports such as cricket were on track to addressing the gender pay gap (Falkingham, Oxley, Thompson, 2021). However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic stopped the growth potential of women's sports dead in its tracks. Female athletes were faced with job loss, pay cuts, and lack of mental health assistance. According to the Football Players Worldwide union (FIFPRO, 2020), women players from 40 percent of the 62 countries surveyed received no mental or physical health support. It was also reported that 69 percent of countries' communication with players was perceived as poor or very poor, while more than one fourth of countries did not include women's clubs in their return-to-play protocols. On the other hand, many male athletes were allowed to return to the game several months earlier (FIFPRO, 2020). Not only had the concerted efforts to provide equality for pay had stalled, but there was now a gender play gap with many major tournaments being pushed back to 2022. However, this is not the first-time that women's sports have faced adversity as its heritage has been stark with mixed messages.

Women in Sport: The Beginnings

In the nineteenth century, sport was perceived as a risk to women's fertility. This perspective ensured that there were very few sporting outlets available for women and the ones that were deemed acceptable required elaborate outfits to ensure feminine standards were upheld. Likewise, these sporting opportunities were restricted by race and caste. Elite women's colleges and country clubs that catered to the wealthy of the Gilded Age allowed for ladies to participate in croquet, bathing-beauty swimming (minority prohibited), tennis, and archery. The goal was to ensure that ladies did not over-exert themselves, appear aggressive, or become competitive. All of this was backed by scientific reasoning. Since the times of Aristotle, women were said to be governed by their reproductive systems. Women were deemed as having a restricted amount of energy with majority of their available energy being utilized in monthly hormonal expenditure. Too much energy being used in activities such as studying or other activities that might require more energy expenditure were viewed as dangerous, unladylike, and may render a lady infertile. During the nineteenth century, it was not uncommon to see campaigns against higher education for women and sport which played out well into the 20th century (Morris, 2012). One could say they are still playing out.

Tough enough

It is important to mention that while the medical authorities in the past were extreme in their claims that education and exercise would cause women to become infertile, there have been instances where women have struggled to conceive due to what is known as relative energy deficiency in sport (RED-S) formally known as female athlete triad. RED-S is known to commonly impact physically active females, which may be brought on by inadequate caloric intake which may or may not be caused by an eating disorder. The inadequate energy levels may cause amenorrhea and low bone mineral density.

The human body is amazing in its adaptation to the demands that an individual may place on it. When the body believes that there is disparity between energy expenditure and energy intake, estrogen production decreases and menstrual periods stop. This phenomenon is common among athletes but has also been seen in sedentary females. Likewise, a female athlete may not realize she is not providing her body with enough nutrition to satisfy its energy demands. So, an eating disorder in this sense can

very well be unintentional. Claims that too much exercise or physical activity without discussing the disparity between energy expenditure and energy intake is misleading and cause people to believe that exercise is ultimately bad for them (Shalala, 2020). A ripple effect is then created where sedentary behavior is chosen by women even though the health benefits of staying active have been well-researched and documented. This fuels misinformation and contributes to the mentality that women are fragile and aren't tough enough to engage in sports that are of moderate to high intensity levels.

The claims of the nineteenth century, that women didn't have what it takes to be athletic were extremely debatable since many women during that time had to be tough to survive being a mother, child brides, factory workers, sharecroppers, mill hands, etc. Women had to have physical endurance to run a rural household with chores including, but not limited to totting a child around and giving birth, chopping wood, tending to animals, and dressing slaughtered game. Likewise, their female city counterparts endured unsafe industrial working conditions and held jobs comparable to brick laying. They worked long hours alongside their children prior to the protections of the Federal Labor Standards Act. From this era, the first female baseball league was formed known as the All-American Girls Baseball League (Morris, 2012).

A movement

It wasn't until 1972 that women were officially allowed to participate in the Boston Marathon. In 1967, the first woman entered the Boston Marathon, Katharine Switzer, did so by disguising her name as K.V. Switzer and although a race official tried to eject her mid-race, she went on to complete it. What was learned during that time was that women were not deficient of stamina or endurance. The women's marathon became officially apart of the Olympics in 1984 (Mervosh and Caron, 2019). Further, history was made in the progression of women's sport when tennis star Billie Jean King, made gender equality headlines by beating male tennis champion Bobby Riggs, who ranked World No. 1 for three years. Later, King founded the Women's Tennis Association and led the movement for female players to earn equal prize money in tournaments that featured both male and female competitors. Years later in 2007, tennis champion Venus Williams made headlines by further shedding light on the pay inequity of female tennis players. The backlash that was received due to these inequities caused Wimbledon to eventually cave and award women athletes equal prize money as their male counterparts. Ten years later, the United States was still fraught with inequity in women's pay, while some sports had embraced the need to provide women with their fair share, still some organizations had not caught up. The year of 2017 marked a year of substantial push towards equal pay for female athletes. That year the Women's National Hockey team announced it would be boycotting the world championship; female big-wave surfers Moller, Kennelly, Alms and Valenti spoke out against unequal pay in their risk-taking sport, and female soccer player Ada Hergerberg quit the Norwegian national team in protest of unequal pay (Mervosh and Caron, 2019). There are many stories like these that repeatedly highlight how women appear to be less valued in sport than their male counterparts. While there are times that women's sports are increasing in popularity, challenges arise to show that there is still a way to go when it comes to gender equality.

Hope for Women's Sports

It appears likely that women's sports have been boosted by the pandemic. COVID-19 revealed the traditional inequities between men and women in sports (Solomon, 2020). This was partly brought up

by the women's national soccer team filing a lawsuit for unequal pay. This is also evident by looking at the massive overinvestment in men's basketball and football among the nation's universities. There has been an increasing recognition in the sports industry that women's sport provides opportunities in increased profitability and branding. It has also provided an alignment with activism. While this activism is somewhat controversial and may have alienated some fans, there is also some evidence that it has also attracted new fans. Examples of women's sports gaining attention are basketball (WNBA), gymnastics, soccer, and even some combat sports like mixed martial arts and boxing. Women's sports appear to be a good investment during times when men's aren't, and they only appear to get bigger. The only possible challenge to this could be the controversial issue of the inclusion of transgender athletes. Some view it as a threat to women's sports as we know them while others support full inclusion. No matter what the actual outcome of this will be, there is no doubt that the mere controversy hurts women's sports. This is unfortunate as women have gained a lot in sports. For example, most of the Team USA members in Tokyo Olympics 2020 were women. In the last Olympics before Tokyo, women earned more than half of the American medals. Yet, women are not supported at the same level as men and do not receive equal rewards. Perhaps, the time is now to change all that. Just maybe the pandemic has opened the window for women's sports.

The "me too" movement has also brought by some difficult issues in women's sports. It has brough sexual abuse and harassment of women into awareness of the public. Many athletes and sports industry professionals have stepped forward with their painful stories. Some have gotten justice, but others are still fighting. It is likely that this trend will only continue and change sports for the better in the future. Women deserve the same respect and treatment as men in sports. Perhaps this is another area that sports professionals should discuss in their courses in the future.

Athlete Activism Over Race Will Continue

One cannot think about 2020 and ignore the increased activism among athletes. What started with Colin Kaepernick has evolved into a worldwide movement. Now, even some members of foreign teams kneel or protest in some other manner. Some are praised while other face backlash. No matter how one feels about this phenomenon, it appears that athlete activism, particularly over race, is here to stay. College athletes, WNBA players, Olympians and others continue to use their voice. We do not yet know what the consequences are for fan engagement, sponsorships, relationships within teams, athlete health and welfare, sports industry revenues, and society in general. There is a need for sports professionals such as coaches and administrators to consider some basic training in social and cultural competence as athletes are no longer asking for a permission to speak up (Solomon, 2020).

Athlete activism is not a new phenomenon, but it has not been well understood and taught in sports education programs. The pandemic has opened educators' eyes and they should keep them open in the future. Whether they agree with the activism or not, it will not go away before real changes start happening. The pros and cons of protests and their escalation into riots should be discussed. There are appropriate and inappropriate ways to protest and have one's voice heard. The differences between them should be discussed in higher education.

Athlete Health Becoming into Focus

Prior to COVID-19, the health and wellbeing of college athletes was largely ignored. Now, due to the health implications of coronavirus, schools have been forced to pay attention to student athletes' ability to perform. However, this improvement may be short lived unless college sports programs start to implement scientifically based public health measures and develop systematic oversight to protect athlete health. It is important to remember that new viruses will come, and everyone should be more prepared to face them in the future. This is an opportunity for universities and colleges to pay attention to the health and wellbeing of college athletes and make it a permanent culture in their campuses. This will ensure the future success of their athletic programs.

Mental health of athletes has also become an important area of focus. While we have known about the mental health struggles of many athletes in the past, Michael Phelps being one of the most recent examples, the pandemic has brought never before seen challenges to athletes. Lockdowns and social distancing guidelines have made practicing hard or impossible, and many sporting event cancellations have delayed the careers of athletes. Many athletes have experience stress and isolation that they have not previously faced. In some ways, this has been harder for minority athletes, especially those from lower socio-economic communities where mental health services are not sufficient (Peter, 2020). However, even elite professional athletes have suffered since the sports industry is not traditionally focused on the mental health and wellbeing of athletes. Olympic athletes are especially in danger of stress and pressure. The pandemic era Tokyo Olympics have shown how detrimental the lack of support and social isolation of athletes has been. Olympic athletes have not been able to socialize among others inside the Olympic village or leave the village to sightsee due to the social distancing guidelines. Simone Biles has become a symbol of this tragedy. However, she is not the only one (Knight, 2021).

Equity in Youth Sports

Decreases in recreational spending will most likely impact lower socio-economic communities more severely. This may increase the gap between the haves and have nots. Some families have the means to finance athletic activities of their children by hiring private trainers and organizing their own travel teams. However, some other families have been forced to cut down on their children's sport activities due to financial challenges brought by the pandemic.

Economically disadvantages minority athletes will almost certainly be negatively impacted as funding for public sports activities and facilities is cut off. The economic downfall that has resulted from the pandemic has caused severe budget cuts in many cities and municipalities. Funding has been focused on the COVID-19 recovery efforts and healthcare facilities. Sports and recreational facilities are never the top priority during economic hardship. They are, however, very important in the development of youth. For many minority youths, sports are an outlet and a way to stay off the streets. Sport is also one of the only "tickets" to college education and wealth. Without basketball courts and football fields, this dream is not possible. When young people have no access to sports, they are also less likely to seek sport industry as a career field. They are less likely to seek entry into sports education programs. The resulting downturn in the enrollments of these programs is inevitable if this trend continues.

Cutting College sports Other Than Football and Basketball

The pandemic has causes severe budget cuts in the athletic programs in universities nationwide. With the cancelled seasons and loss of ticket revenues, layoffs of staff have been inevitable. Some of these layoffs and program closures will likely be permanent. The budget cuts have impacted sports other than football and basketball more seriously. Many already underfunded sports are now in danger for disappearing completely. When there are less sports available in colleges and universities, athletes have less opportunities for athletic scholarships. Since poorer minority families rely on these athletic scholarships for their children to have access to higher education, they are obviously disadvantaged.

Cutting college sports programs can be very detrimental to some sports. If these sports disappear, sport industry will be less diverse and less successful as a whole. This makes our entire society poorer. Sport is an expression of humanity and when we lose sports, we lose part of our civilization. The 2021 Olympic Games in Tokyo had the most disciplines of any Olympics ever, with 33 different sports competing for 339 different gold medals overall. Not all these sports are played in colleges, but many are. Together with the losses of sports due to decreased recreational spending, college budget cuts will cause even more sports to be lost. With less sports, there will be a need for less sports professionals. This will lead to less need for sports education. From the systems perspective, everything is related to everything else in the system of sports.

Online Learning Becoming Necessary

As a result of the pandemic, sports education has changed forever. While online education itself is not a new phenomenon anymore, COVID-19 made it a necessity (Adedoyin & Soyan, 2020). Many sports programs have been challenged because sport is typically a hands-on field. Internships and practicums, for example, have been difficult to complete. Luckily, technology has been able to assist with these challenges. Software like Dartfish have been instrumental in allowing students to analyze sports activities without face-to-face interaction. Also, certain laboratory experiences have been re-created via simulations (Jerym, O'Neill, & Coughlin, 2020). Many universities have rushed to create online courses resulting in poor quality and excessive use of Zoom or other such platforms rather than a proper use of learning management systems and course development tools (Kamenetz, 2020). This may have, at least temporarily, damaged reputations of online programs who utilize professional instructional design methods and have created quality online courses over time. On the long term, quality issues will be resolved by those who must play catch up. Online education is here to stay. More and more of the sports education programs will continue to be moving online and technology is going to continue to solve problems with practical applications.

Online education has, at least theoretically, the potential to make sports education more accessible to all. It will also be more equitable and inclusive. The only challenge may be the lack of reliable Internet connection by students in lower socio-economic classes. Online education has also provided access to more diverse range of professors. It has also resulted in an increasing use of adjunct and part-time faculty. In some schools, approximately 95% of all courses are taught by adjuncts. The pandemic has caused a lot of layoffs in higher education and made full-time teaching opportunities even rarer. This is especially true in online higher education. So, ultimately the pandemic will likely have a negative impact on online programs as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The Special Struggle of Black Athletes

Regardless of some of the recent successes in race relations, the pandemic has been difficult for many black athletes. Those who have succeeded, face enormous expectations. Simone Biles, for example, recently withdrew from Olympic competition to concentrate on her mental health (Knight, 2021). She followed the example of Naomi Osaka (Reuters, 2021). At the same time, Tiger Woods has experienced challenges, and his future career is unknown (Diaz, 2017). Even Serena Williams has spoken out about her struggles (Gillespie, 2018). While there have been many white athletes that have suffered during the pandemic as well, in some ways the situation is harder for black athletes. Some of them come from challenging backgrounds and have a lot more to prove. That is, some of them are the "firsts" among blacks to reach such levels of success. The entire black community, and sometimes the world, looks up to them with often unrealistic expectations. Mental health stigma can also be harder to overcome in the black community (Gillespie, 2018). Especially in the lower socioeconomic black communities, mental health services are scarce. Meanwhile, depression and anxiety, for example, tend to be much more widespread in these communities. The pandemic has been stressful to everyone, but it has hit people in these communities worse than anyone else. Even the vaccination levels are lower in these communities which means that their struggle is far from over. There may not be a post-pandemic era for them anytime soon.

The US has a long history of difficult race relations and institutional racism. The historic protests of 2020 have opened the eyes of many. Black Lives Matters now has over 40 chapters globally and they are a household name (BLM, 2021). While there are many sports fans who do not support their cause, there are also many that do. Many athletes have chosen to show their support by having anti-racist statements in their helmets or shirts. They have chosen to take a knee or raise their fists (Khalid, 2016). Some have withdrawn from games or entire seasons. Many white athletes have become allies and shown their support putting their careers in danger. In many ways, these protests have worked. There has been a visible shift in awareness and the sports business is starting to respond to it. Many major sports companies like Nike have released anti-racist advertisements and made supporting statements (Nike, 2021). Sport teams like Indians and Redskins have changed their names (Wrap Staff & Welk, 2021). Progress may be slow, but it is happening. Athletes have found themselves in the middle of this movement. Some may embrace it and others may find it stressful. Many athletes never sought to become activists and to be placed in such a spotlight. This role has been forced on them by the society. It is up to each one of them to decide how they react to it.

There is no way to predict the future, but it is fairly clear to most people that something seismic has happened during the pandemic. The world will not be the same after it is over. Sports will survive but will not be the same. The lives of black athletes will likely be different in the future. In many ways they will be improved but for some the struggle will certainly continue. World will be even more unfair and uneven in some respects. During the pandemic, the wealthy have become wealthier and the poor poorer. We are more divided than ever. At the same time, conflict in itself is not bad. It can be a source of creativity and progress. With any luck, we may come out of this as a better world.

CONCLUSION

Nelson Mandela (2000) once said, "Sport can create hope, where there was once only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of

discrimination." (1:34). Sport is a cultural practice that has demonstrated its importance in inspiring hope and providing refuge to address inter-ethnic relations and social cohesion in a nation. Sport can be used as a tool for peace and compromise at all levels regardless of if they are political, racial, social, and religious (Anastasovski et al., 2016).

According to Wolff (2011), sport has the ability to convey messages that otherwise wouldn't be possible. During the 1995 Rugby World Cup, then President Mandela used sport to mend a broken nation after the downfall of apartheid. At the time Rugby held two different identities. For white Africans, rugby was a sport of honor and pride; however, for the black Africans, it represented segregation and humiliation. Mandela recruited Springbok Captain Francois Pienaar and the team to represent a symbol of peace for all races across South Africa leading up to the world cup (Effron, 2013). The 1995 Springbok win represented more than just a trophy, but a united nation. Sport cannot be viewed in a vacuum. It represents the social situation and context of a society. Majority of societies are made up of individuals from differing backgrounds and classes. The social divisions allow for an environment where individuals can impose restrictions on specialized activities such as sport (Anastasovski et al., 2016). Masteralexis, Barr, and Hums (2015) notate that historically; the groups with the most power set the rules of participation and typically were the beneficiaries. This mindset falls in line with the treatment of black African athletes in South Africa. During an apartheid South Africa, white athletes, suppressing the black athletes, dominated the largely black sport of Rugby. Intercultural conflict and racial tolerance will eventually be brought to the forefront in the sports arena.

Significance of Ethnic and National Identity

The social impacts of sporting events such as the World Cup and Olympics have been a focus of research over the past decade. Specifically, as they relate to the social impact that they have for the nation hosting the event. A consensus among researchers has been reached that organizing mega-sporting events does create a temporary psychological impact on the host nation residents. Although there is a temporary change, the construct of national identity is stable and does not change due to a country hosting a mega sporting event. Heere, Walker, Gibson, Thapa, Geldenhuys, and Coetzee (2016) found that while national identity remains constant during mega-sporting events, the opposite is true when it comes to ethnic identity. The importance of ethnic identity decreases in individuals when mega-sporting events are held within a nation with a diverse population such as the United States and South Africa. Essentially, they become less aware of their differences and the ethnic identity construct decreased its significance as a predictor of community citizenship, views on safety and trust, their diversity tolerance, their social networks, and their belief of value of life in the host country.

Phinney et. al (2001) argued that national identity and ethnic identity should not be viewed as related to each other and instead studied as independent variables. If one is to follow his example, the focus of host governments should be on decreasing ethnic identity rather than promoting nationalism. This would in turn increase social cohesion within the host nation (Heere et al., 2016).

Unity and sports

Throughout the world, communities host sporting events as a means to attract tourists and promote economic development; however, the benefits could have even greater significance. Sport offers a way for people to connect to their basic humanity. Although sport is competitive by nature, it is also cooperative.

Individuals work together to achieve a collective mutual goal. It allows everyone to participate in the endeavor in order to be successful (Wolff, 2011).

Events that encompass sport, culture, tradition, and entertainment stimulate the growth of social networks, increase social capital, and ultimately extract social value. Communities choose events that highlight their cultural characteristics. Ziakas and Costa (2010) suggest that hosting events such as sport is a ritual process. They are meant to revitalize the symbolic foundation of the community. In essence, sport assists in group and place identity, affirming or contesting social order, and promote social networking (Ziakas & Costa, 2010).

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Chapter 14
Impact of Artificial Intelligence as Part of an Organization's Diversity

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ABSTRACT

The aftermath of the global pandemic in 2020 brought many public and private organizational leaders to the whiteboard, and with a dry eraser in their hands, human leaders were expected to produce solutions, but only a few managed to write the new blueprint to protect millions of employees, customers, and students from the life-threatening COVID-19 virus. Subsequently, artificial intelligence was adopted as part of the solution to the unprecedented organizational disruptions. Nonetheless, leaders appeared to have overlooked the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity. This chapter provides an expansive review about artificial intelligence and diversity in the context of cultural identity, economic power, social demographics, and ethnographic communication currently not included in organizational diversity and inclusion programs.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the social movement to increase understanding regarding the construct diversity, many organizations' leaders remain uninformed, and consequently, these organizations forgo significant opportunities and benefits when they do not recruit and hire diverse talent (Catalyst, 2021). Diverse talent comprises of cultural identity, economic power, social demographics, and ethnographic communication, yet many companies' diversity and inclusion programs remain devoid of comprehensive understanding about the meaningful and historical context of diversity.

During the 2020 global pandemic, socially overt systemic issues surfaced, exposing the financial depression experienced by millions of people who lost their job in the United States (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). Specifically, women with school age children were severely impacted, ethnic minorities from diverse socioeconomic communities, and young adults with or without college education

and insufficient savings. To ensure continued workplace production, however, companies with economic power were in position to acquire technologies equipped with artificial intelligence designed to automate work functions (Forman, Glasser, & Lech, 2020). Thus, organizations' management leaders as well as human resources professionals have the shared responsibility to review and consider the full context of artificial intelligence and its impact on diversity in the workplace.

Leaders around the world were expected to provide organizational solutions to address the economic impact of the global pandemic and to prevent employees from losing their source of income, yet the process of identifying the most viable solutions in an unprecedented timeline challenged the intellect and experience of most executives in corporate and government institutions (World Economic Forum, 2019). The objective of this chapter provides readers with a socioeconomic context about the impact of artificial Intelligence as part of an organization's diversity.

BACKGROUND

Private organizations relied on government to produce safety solutions and workplace guidelines for managing their business and employees amidst the global pandemic of 2020 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). While most of the solutions issued by government were adopted by private businesses, there were other companies actively working to provide artificial intelligence solutions to address the human factor and the source of threat (International Federation of Robotics, 2021).

For example, Hanson Robotics, an artificial intelligence developer company located in Hong Kong, received thousands of orders to mass produce and launch one of its most sophisticated humanoids, named Sophia, to work in customer service jobs (Science and Technology, 2021). The image below illustrates Sophia, the social humanoid, built and activated, April 19, 2015, in Hong Kong by her creators, Hanson Robotics.

Figure 1.
Source: Sophia, a humanoid robot. Microsoft Bing.Com/Images.
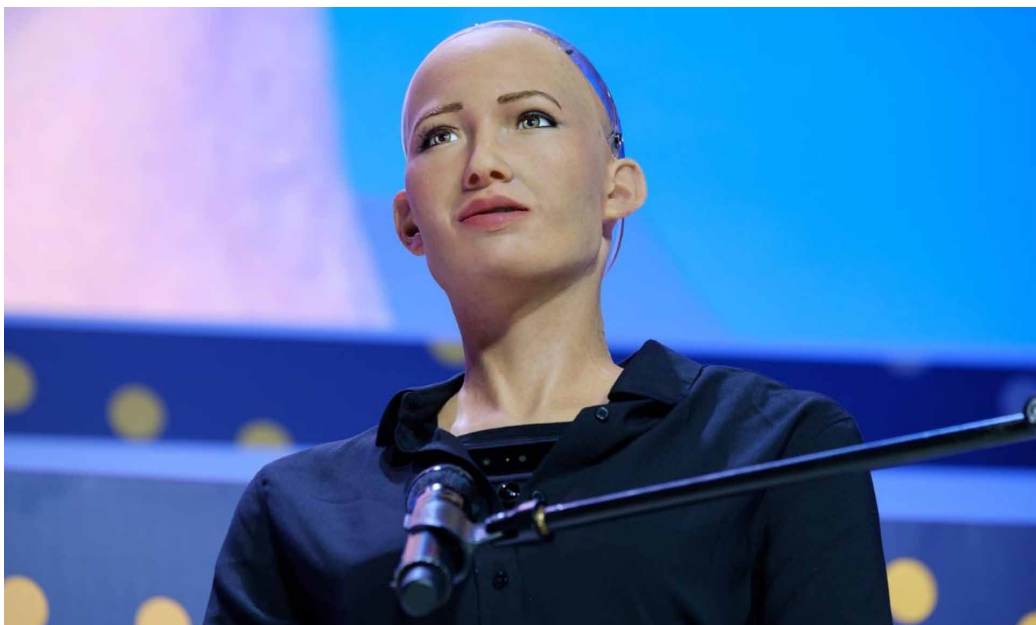
Humanoids will continue to join organizations, not to replace human employees and take their jobs, but to protect and assist them with tasks no longer suitable for humans when faced with life threatening infectious diseases (International Federation of Robotics, 2021). COVID-19 triggered businesses to shutdown overnight, causing billions of financial losses worldwide. Only essential workers were called to duty in person and had to work long hours to meet the physiological needs of humans (NCSL, 2021). Many of these essential workers worked at grocery stores and hospitals.

During the global pandemic, there was limited discussion concerning diversity initiatives for essential workers. Simultaneously, worldwide organizations acquired and implemented artificial intelligence systems to manage employees' remote workspace, clients' services and products delivery, and students' virtual learning (Forman, Glasser, & Lech, 2020). One of the greatest implications of adopting artificial intelligence in the workplace is that many human employees require affective support to help them cope with their heighten stress levels during the implementation of change initiatives (Jimenez, 2018).

Fundamentally, organizations' managers tasked with managing people's responsibilities, performance, and compliance, are equally responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of human employees (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Nonetheless, when more than 25 million people lost their job in the United States (USA Facts, 2021), a surge of mental health issues emerged, resulting from the emotional and psychological uncertainty experienced by men and women of all ages. The uncertainty of a shattered future and opportunity for gainful employment contributed to mental illness, particularly for people with asset poverty, including college students (Son, Hegde, Smith, Wang, & Sasangohar, 2020).

Accordingly, researchers found that millions of students experienced increased stress, depression, anxiety, and hopelessness when they were abruptly interrupted from their academic life and had to undergo quarantine from friends and family. Students who held jobs to help them pay for college found themselves unemployed, and without the ability to file for unemployment because of their part-time work status and lack of employer's benefits (Aucejo, Araya, French, & Zafar, 2020). Consequently, students returned home to live with their parents.

Millions of parents also experienced mental health issues when their employers laid them off or terminated their employment indefinitely. The loss of income and employment for working parents contributed to mental and emotional breakdown (Giorgi, Lecca, Alessio, Finstad, Bondanini, Lulli, Arcangeli, & Mucci, 2020). Most organizational leaders were focused on mitigating financial losses and reducing the total number of employees to cut down on payroll, total rewards, including 401K as well as other retirement plans. While many white-collar employees were concerned about losing their benefits, another group of employees were trying to qualify for public benefits when their employers' or privately owned business shutdown (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). Consider the data in Figure 2 and review the group of employees impacted by the global pandemic.

Figure 2.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment Situation Summary.

Employment change, December 2019 to December 2020, and median weekly earnings by occupation.
Bubbles are sized according to total employment in 2019.
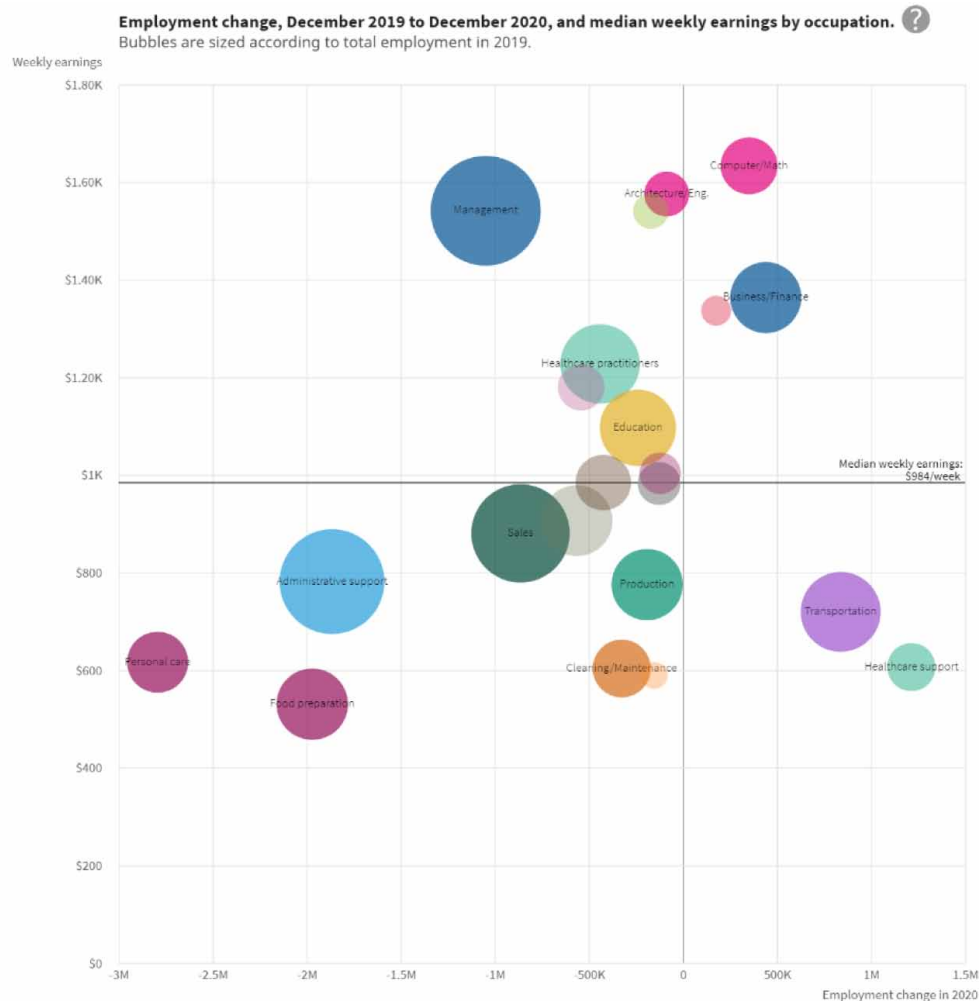
In effect, COVID-19 is deemed the catalyst of economic disruption, social chaos, organizational workforce discrepancies, and technological acceleration. In efforts to restore economic and social equilibrium, public and private organizations' leaders engaged in unprecedented actions, leveraging the influence of technologies (Science and Technology, 2021). Prior to the global pandemic, in the United States fewer than 10 percent of employees worked in virtual office environments; that is approximately 9.8 million people holding corporate management highly paid positions while more than 90 percent, or about 131 million people remained bound to brick and mortar workplaces (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Thus, consider the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity in context of industries that are structurally unable to deploy enabling technologies because their services must be provided in person. Some of the technologies adopted by retail service centric companies include data analytics to best coordinate and deliver products or services (Bartika, Bertrand, Cullen, Glaeserd, Lucac, & Stanton, 2020). For example, traditional grocery shopping quickly transitioned and added

online systems to take customers' orders and to deliver customized requests via *curbside* managed by human employees.

Curbside is a service that resulted and exploded globally due to social distancing guidelines to prevent people from going inside the stores, restaurants, or business facilities (International Federation of Robotics, 2021). These newly developed services generated employment for college age youth. However, the implications of using data analytics, as a form of artificial intelligence, rendered the necessity for human capital competencies among essential workers such as grocery store clerks, restaurant waiters, and all other entry level jobs involving human employees.

At the time of writing this chapter, the United Nations' number one goal is to end poverty in all its forms everywhere by the year 2030 (United Nations, 2021). Nonetheless, the global pandemic accelerated the decline of economic progress that had been accomplished by nations' leaders committed to lifting their citizens out of poverty. In 2020, more than 71 million people experienced financial depression and deep levels of poverty. Among these people are two out of three young workers and the elderly population who may be limited from receiving any form of social protection from their family or government (United Nations, 2021). Subsequently, the opportunity for economic prosperity for millions of people becomes a farfetched reality.

Conversely, thousands of employers claimed to be unable to find workers. According to economic theories, unemployment is influenced by labor market activity (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). In other words, labor demand means that employers are willing to hire a certain number of people for a specific price. On the other hand, labor supply is the total number of people willing to sell their labor for an agreed amount of compensation. The global pandemic disrupted organizational structures and the way employees work. Economists agree that job seekers who are unsuccessful in their job search become discouraged and stop looking for work.

IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON ORGANIZATIONAL DIVERSITY

Like most private and public companies, many administrators from K-12, colleges, and universities were unprepared to quickly adopt and learn the new technology tools deployed to facilitate students' distant learning. Before the global pandemic of 2020, traditionally, worldwide employees worked within the boundaries of their organization, and millions of students attended school in person. Artificial intelligence in the form of computer systems that facilitate speech recognition and access to tools for employees with disabilities such as those who are visually impaired is fundamentally critical.

Organizations that adopt artificial intelligence in their workplace to enhance levels of human performance provide employees, with special needs, opportunities to complete tasks and relieve them from potential physical or psychological harm (Asatiani, Malo, Per Rådberg Nagbøl, Penttinen, Rinta-Kahila, & Salovaara, 2021). Some manufacturing companies, for instance, have implemented Human Robot Collaboration (HRC) to accelerate output, efficiencies, and productivity. The KUKA Robotics is a German company but owned by the Chinese company Midea Group that designs solutions for manufactures by deploying industrial robots to collaborate with humans to produce flexible production.

As of 2020, in the United States, there were fewer human employees working in manufacturing positions, increasing the need to acquire artificial intelligence such as robots to occupy the vacant roles (Dowell, 2020). In effect, organizations' investment in artificial intelligence may help ensure continuity of products and services consumed by customers, but consequently, diversity and inclusion programs

will need to be rewritten to ensure robots rendering human labor are recognized as diverse essential workers. Sophia, for example, a social humanoid became a Saudi Arabia citizen in 2017. She was also the first humanoid to be appointed United Nations Development Programme champion.

Therefore, the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity must be examined from a social learning theory as outlined by Albert Bandura (1977). Bandura's social learning theory explains the importance of diverse modeling to promote innovation. With the proliferation of technological developments worldwide, organizations are challenged to innovate, adopt new technologies, and run the risk to become extinct by the end of 2030. In the United States, 2020 was a year of deep financial losses when dozens of national and international companies filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy (Clifford & Wahba, 2020).

Between 2000 and 2020, there were dozens of startup tech companies built by young entrepreneurs in their 20s and 30s. Some of them are globally known such as Uber, Square, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. While most people refer to technology to nearly everything that is digital or connected to the Internet, computer scientists, however, are more specific with their definitions (Tianlong, Xiaohan, Wuyang, Zhangyang, & Wang, 2021). For example, computer scientists explain that one of the functions of algorithms is to optimize solutions and provide users with personalized preferences. Genetic algorithms were developed by observing the natural processes of nature as explained in Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection in his work published in1859.

Nearly everything artificially created by scientists is inspired by observation of the natural ecosystems that nature produces. The human and animal brain, for instance, is the natural model that inspired scientists to develop the Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs). Figure 3 Artificial Neural Network (ANN), as illustrated in the image below, facilitates communication between one connection to another just like the human brain's neurons engage in the same processes when sharing information.

Figure 3.
Source: Artificial Neural Networks. Microsoft Bing.Com/Images.
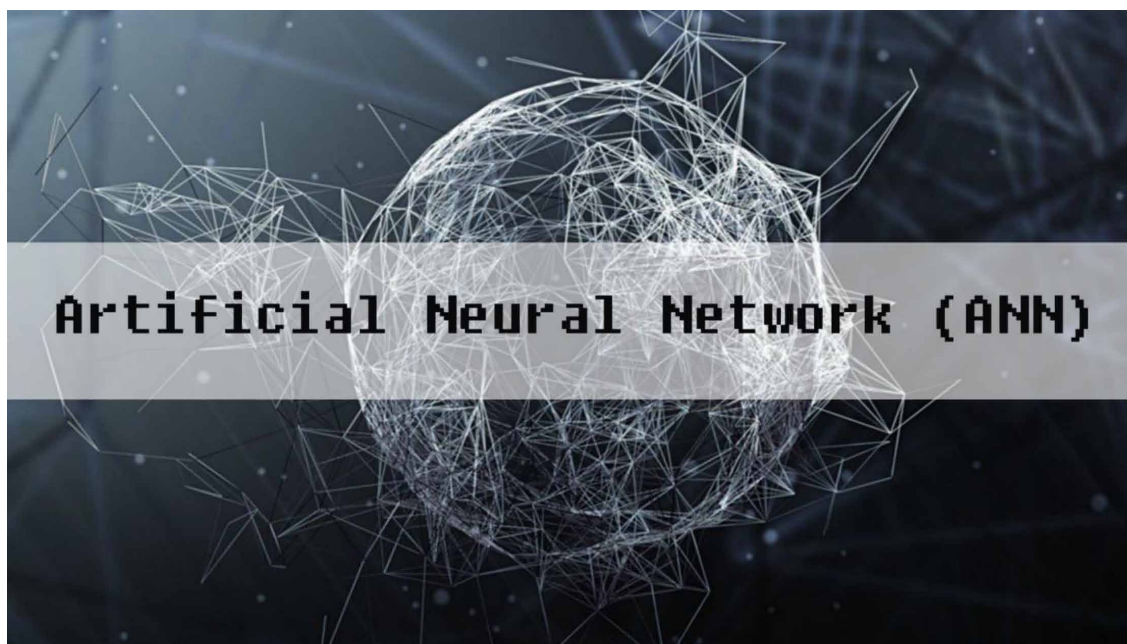
For computer scientists, the identical reproduction of the natural neurons remains a challenge, yet each day younger computer scientists discover ways to improve and develop the blueprint of artificial intelligence (Chakrabarty, Saakyan, & Muresan, 2021). The importance of technological breakthroughs on a particular technology has the potential to exponentially reach significant milestones before the year 2030 (Science and Technology, 2021). One of these technological breakthroughs, for example, is to teach machines such as robots or humanoids how to feel and interpret natural stimulation and respond or react to the internal and external forces in the natural environment. Figure 4 in the image below illustrates how this neural connection may be developed.

Figure 4.
Source: Simulation of A Neuron. Microsoft <u>Bing.Com/Images</u>.

Computer scientists want to teach machine learning to behave, communicate, and reason like humans do in their natural environment (Chakrabarty, Saakyan, & Muresan, 2021). Therefore, unlike machine learning that is programmed to perform predictable actions, humans (Bandura, 1977) are stimulated by their environment, causing them to behave in unpredictable ways because humans' experiences shaped them, and for organizational leaders, human resources professionals, and people managers, employees' diverse behavior remains a challenge, given the diversity and complexity of the human brain and employees' demographics (Jimenez, 2018).

Human behavior changes continually as the person matures and encounters new experiences (Skinner, 1961; Smith & Woodward, 1996). Each experience derives positive or negative learning that alters the

person's behavior. However, with machine learning, computer scientists have not successfully taught the machine to derive knowledge and decision making from natural experiences in the way humans do. With the help of scientists, machine learning continues to evolve, leading to the acceleration of new applications enhanced by algorithms designed to facilitate accurate decision making in nearly every industry.

For example, machine learning is used to fight the spread of COVID-19 through the application of algorithms and automation systems making it possible to manufacture, package, and ship millions of vaccines around the world (International Federation of Robotics, 2021). Accordingly, artificial intelligence and related technology have significantly contributed to the containment of the deadly virus; at the time of writing this chapter, globally, approximately 362,242 new confirmed cases were reported, averaging about 400,684 every seven-days.

The International Federation of Robotics' active contribution to worldwide technological advancements published the images of four robots designed to accelerate the production and packaging of COVID-19 vaccines and other related products, rendering machine-like production output. Every product involved in the fight of the global pandemic is manufactured and packaged by highly efficient and intelligent machines like the one shown below in Figure 5 (International Federation of Robotics, 2021).

Figure 5.
Source: Industrial Robots / Robots and COVID-19. International Federation of Robotics.

The ability of intelligent machines to work at a superior speed than human employees is possible because machines are designed mathematically to predetermine input and to generate expected output without reaching physical and psychological burnout like most humans and animals do in their work environment (Tianlong, Xiaohan, Wuyang, Zhangyang, & Wang, 2021). Keep in mind that machines are created, operated, updated, and monitored by human employees. What is important to consider is that artificial intelligence serves the role of improving humans' existential quality of life by freeing humans from monotonous manual work.

The proliferation of emerging technologies requires human employees to learn, understand, synthesize new knowledge, and engage cognitive capabilities to oversee the robots' productivity and take corrective action if robots fail to render the expected output or require technical maintenance (World Economic Forum, 2019). During the global pandemic, healthcare organizations obtain enabling technologies such as expert systems to solve complex problems. The healthcare industry was unprecedently challenged with a surplus of patients and a deficit of medical staff amidst the global pandemic.

Expert systems enabled doctors to evaluate patients' illness and diagnose accurate results (Alhasan & Hasaneen, 2021). The impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity significantly requires understanding about its benefits and limitations. Consider human employees who have worked for their organization a lifetime using years of experience to get the work done. Some of these human employees currently range between 60 and 70 years of age. For example, Figure 6 below illustrates employment years for generation baby boomers. According to U.S. Census Bureau 2020 data, a gray tsunami is scheduled to shift the United States population when approximately 73 million baby boomers reach their senior years.

Figure 6.
Source: Baby Boomer Employment. Advisorperspective.com.
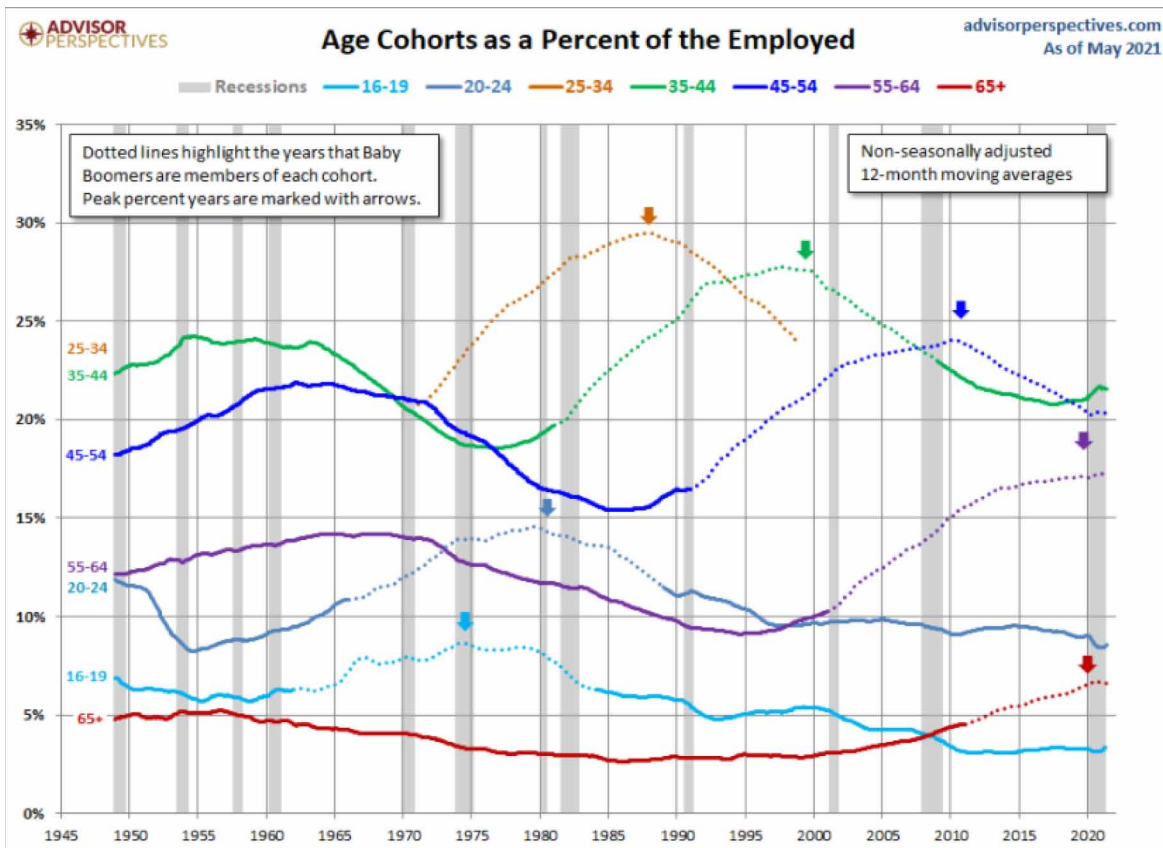
To be clear, the baby boomer population was born between the years 1946 and 1964. It is estimated that by the year 2030, the youngest baby boomers will be 65 years old. Hence, consider the imminent change in the workforce as shown below in Figure 7. A younger, more educated, and diverse workforce is already emerging.

Figure 7.
Source: U.S Census, 2000 and 2010; U.S Census Bureau national population projections, 2012.

National Growth Will Even Out the Generations

By 2030, the United States will have twice as many people 60 and older as in 2000—but people in their 20s and 30s will still outnumber older Americans
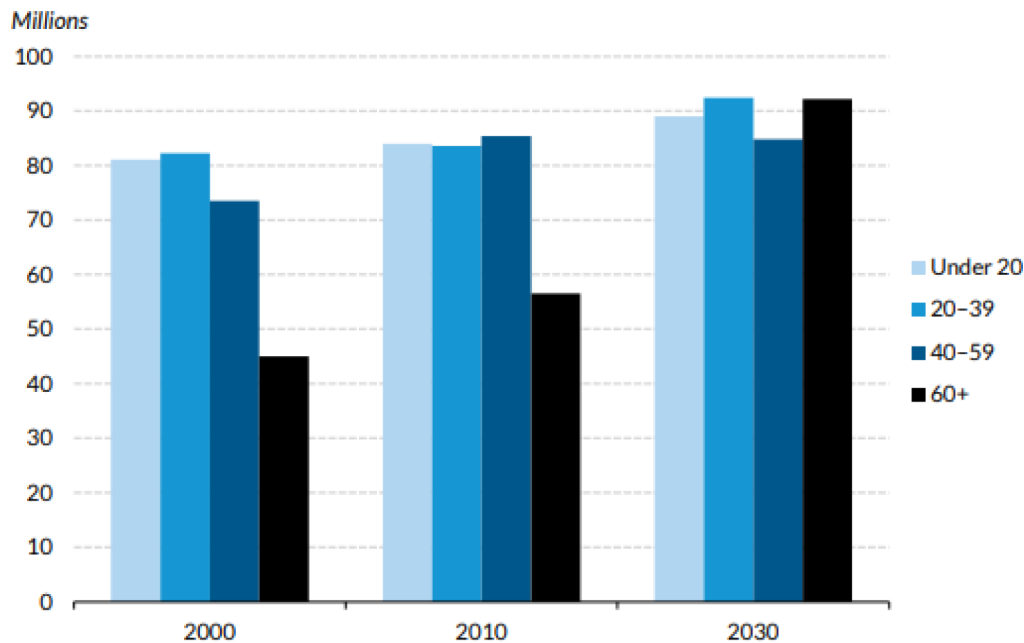
Organizations' employees age demographics in 2021 ranges between 16 and over 65 years old with the median age of 42.5 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). These employees are classified as baby boomers, gen X, Y, and Z. Each generation of employees renders a unique opportunity for organizations' human resources professionals and people managers to review recruiting, selection, hiring, and development best practices as well as total compensation plans to attract candidates that will propel the company's business priorities.

In context of the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity, decision making leaders within the company are presented with a blueprint to take an intelligent and objective look at their business short-and-long term strategies and realize alignment to avoid organizational decline between now and 2030 (Asatiani, et al., 2021). The sooner organizations' leaders establish their present and future business strategies, the more likely it is that they will be in position to mitigate operational and human capital deficiencies. The new business strategies cannot exclude the impact of artificial intelligence proliferation and the complexity of human employees' diverse characteristics.

For example, currently not included in organizations' diversity and inclusion programs are four dimensions of human employee diversity comprising of cultural identity, economic power, social demographics, and ethnographic communication. Generally, most organizations have adopted similar guidelines involving diversity and inclusion programs to manage their human employees. Seldom organizations' Chief Diversity Officer incorporates theoretical knowledge rationalization in managing diverse groups of employees.

Presently, most organizations' people managers in the United States remain untrained about how to effectively manage a diverse team of human employees (Jimenez, 2018). Cultural identity, for example, consists of more than a person's racial background. Frequently, human employees are grouped by common nominal demographics such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, and sexual orientation just to mention a few. However, all these obvious differences do not determine the essence of human employees' diversity. It is important to understand cultural identity in context of Social Dominance Theory.

Essentially, the Chief Diversity Officer and people managers continue to maintain the organization's status quo by classifying human employees into groups according to their demographics. The persistence of human employee classification only reinforces exclusive practices that highlight differences rather than similarities. For example, the development of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) facilitates human employee diversity stereotypes by nature of homogeneous acknowledgment. The organizing of groups of people by their unique preferences invalidates the intention of inclusivity.

Humans are social beings socialized to build associations that validate their individual identity for approval and status within the group (Bandura, 1977; Smith & Woodward, 1996). Hence, cultural identity is significant in the life and experiences of any human being. For this reason, organizations' leaders in charge of managing human employees ought to examine the implications of cultural identity within the organization to ensure human employees are not arbitrarily perpetuated into sub-groups because of their demographics. For example, when adopting diversity and inclusion programs, there should not be social dominance within any diverse group.

Social dominance is seldom challenged in organizations because of established cultural norms. Most organizations engage in social dominance when human employees are placed in power position because of their senior years as compared to junior human employees. As well, gender remains a social dominance in organizations, subjecting the opposite sex to abide to the cultural norms. The social status that is given to human employees because of their age or gender perpetuates the cycle of exclusivity. Therefore, human resources professionals' best practices must be examined and updated to ensure that those managing human employees disengage from social dominance actions.

The subtleties of social dominance often are overlooked because of cultural and social conditioning. Social dominance theory serves to create awareness about unquestioned behaviors in the workplace. To ensure equitable best practices in a post-pandemic business environment, organizations' leaders must engage in removing persistent barriers that result from hierarchical structures in society and groups, and human resources professionals are responsible for disrupting socially constructed norms that categorize diverse human employees into sub-groups.

Human employees can no longer be seen as commodities in the workplace and classified as if they were Lego toys. Fundamentally, the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity renders broad opportunities for human employees' cultural identity when their core competencies are appropriately cultivated within the company. For example, Figure 8 below illustrates the proliferation of artificial intelligence in some of the most economically developed countries. It is imperative that

organizations' people managers prepare human employees to welcome the collaboration of robots as their colleagues.

Figure 8.
Source: Oracle & Future Work AI@Work Study 2019

India	90%
China	88%
Singapore	84%
Brazil	79%
Japan	76%
UAE	76%
Auz/NZ	59%
US	57%
UK	55%
France	52%
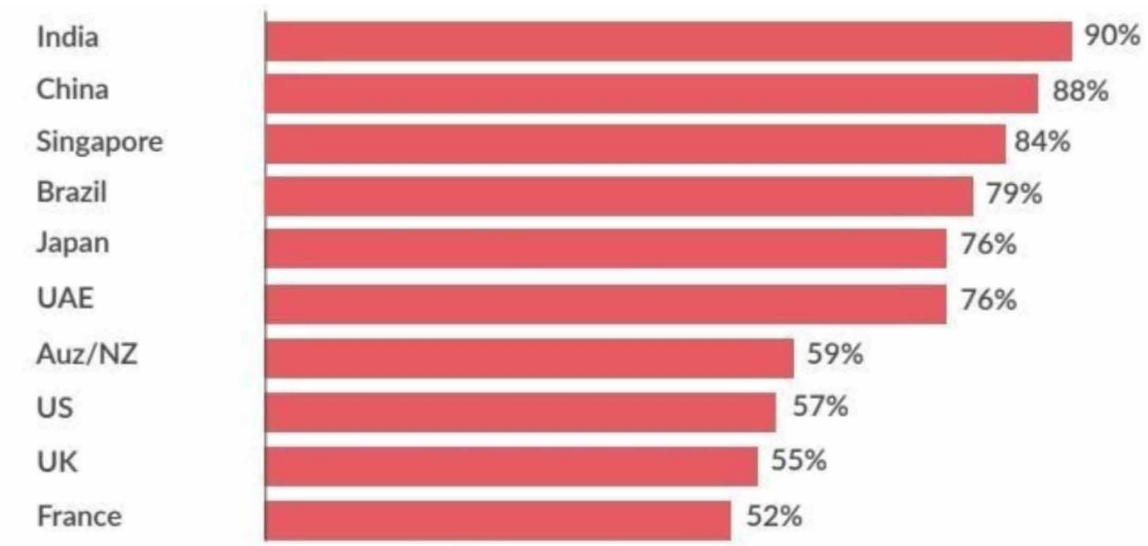
Proportion of respondents who believe robots will one day replace their managers

Image: Oracle & Future Workplace AI@Work Study 2019

Additionally, with the acceleration of technologies and automation systems, human employees are presented with the opportunity to upskill and develop new core competencies that will help organizations remain competitive and sustainable in a highly digitalized global market economy (World Economic Forum, 2019). However, organizations with limited financial resources are at great risk of economic and human capital decline.

The economic power of organizations is attained by the capacity and intellectual capabilities of their human employees and technical output of modern technologies. Therefore, human employees from diverse backgrounds and with relevant capabilities are more likely to ensure organizational success amidst the technological revolution taking place at an accelerated rate. It has been said that what took 100 years to innovate and improve societies will happen in only a decade. By 2030, computer scientists believe that artificial intelligence will work side by side with human employees and enhance managers' administrative responsibilities (World Economic Forum, 2019).

In context of the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity, economic power poses disparities for women in the workplace. Thus, human resources professionals are encouraged to critically consider the implications of artificial intelligence in the workplace where women hold roles and responsibilities that traditionally accentuate their gender. In 2021, millions of women around the world had not returned to work because they are their family's caregivers and support system for chil-

dren's remote learning, given that many schools do not have the physical infrastructure to safely resume classes to full capacity (Catalyst, 2021).

Consequently, women are penalized for their gaps in employment. Economists explain that women are penalized for motherhood choices as they often depart from work or take family medical leave when daycare is not affordable (Budig & England, 2001). Historically, women have received lower salaries than their male counterparts across social demographics. The United States remains one of the nations where women do not have access to maternity paid leave (Catalyst, 2021). Consequently, the global pandemic impacted women's careers in unprecedented ways.

Women who worked in hospitality rendering functional services experienced greater economic setbacks (USA Facts, 2021). Therefore, industry's leaders need to evaluate their recruiting, selection, hiring, and talent development best practices to ensure women available to work are not inadvertently disqualified from equal employment and fair compensation. Women who receive equal employment opportunities and are fairly compensated disrupt the cycle of poverty in their family, communities, and society. Governments worldwide are socially and economically responsible for the wealth of their country and the welfare of their citizens (World Economic Forum, 2020).

The provision of policies that promote economic power for citizens serve to address social inequalities not only for women in the workplace but for emerging new generations. Organizations' leaders are accountable for ensuring women are developed, promoted, and provided with the right access to resources to remain skilled as artificial intelligence absorbs many of the administrative functions completed by women (Bourgault, Buvinic, Kenny, O'Donnell, & Yang, 2021). The principles of economics are undeniable when organizations prosper because of their human employees' output, and subsequently economic activity increases along with consumers' confidence and purchasing power.

In 2020, the United States experienced thousands of people from every background in collective protests, against racial injustice, leading to global awareness about the systemic issues that have kept many ethnic minorities in vulnerable positions (United Nations, 2020). These protests have contributed to legitimizing the social status of marginalized communities in the United States. Accordingly, organizations' human resources professionals are charged with revising their diversity and inclusion programs to ensure equity for millions of Americans who have been historically denied of equal opportunities in the workplace. The emerging trends cannot be overlooked by public and private institutions. Figure 9 below illustrates the current and emerging diverse population in the United States.

Figure 9.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 National Population Projections

Projections of the Older Adult Population: 2020 to 2060

By 2060, nearly one in four Americans is projected to be an older adult.

	Millions of people 65 years and older	Percent of population
2016	49.2	**15**
2020	56.1	**17**
2030	73.1	**21**
2040	80.8	**22**
2050	85.7	**22**
2060	94.7	**23**
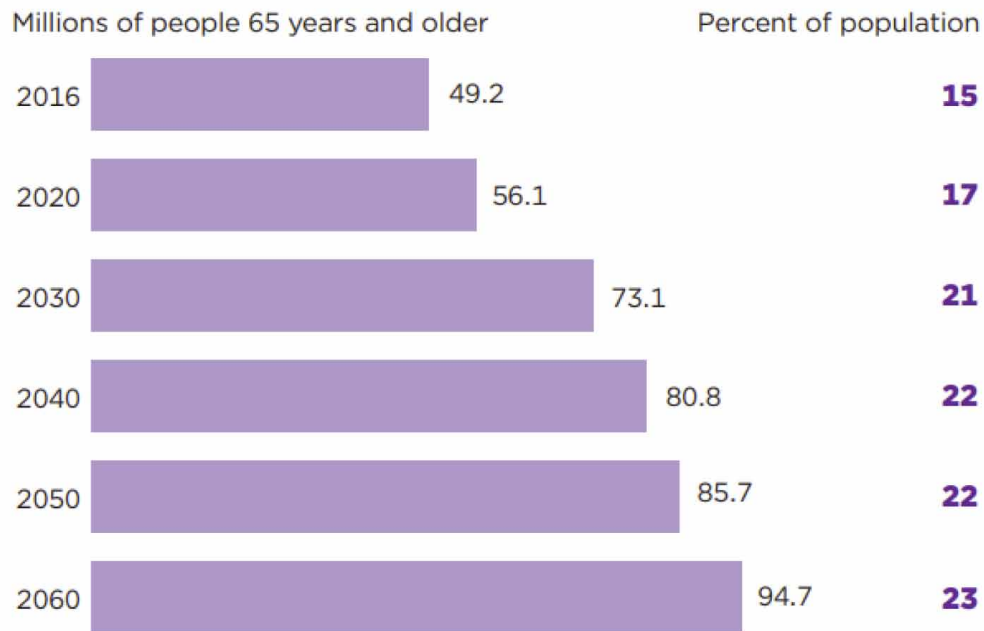
Understanding the significant changes of social demographics is critical in helping organizations' people managers to effectively manage diverse human employees. Moreover, it is projected that by 2025, investment in artificial intelligence will exceed 232 billion U.S. dollars (ITU, 2018). Fundamentally, organizations' leaders will be increasingly challenged to be nimble, transformative, and rapid learners to ensure continued business success amidst the rapid morphing of technologically driven global markets

and changing demographics. The impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity, therefore, cannon be underestimated. Figure 10 below illustrates the ongoing social demographic shifts.

Figure 10.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 National Population Projections, 1940-2012

Dependency Ratios for the Population: 1940 to 2010, Projected Ratios 2020 to 2060

By 2020, there are projected to be two dependents for every three working-age adults.

	Youth dependency	Old-age dependency	Total dependency
1940	49	11	60
1950	51	13	64
1960	65	17	82
1970	61	17	78
1980	46	19	65
1990	42	20	62
2000	41	20	61
2010	38	21	59
2020	37	28	64
2030	37	35	72
2040	36	37	73
2050	35	38	73
2060	35	41	76
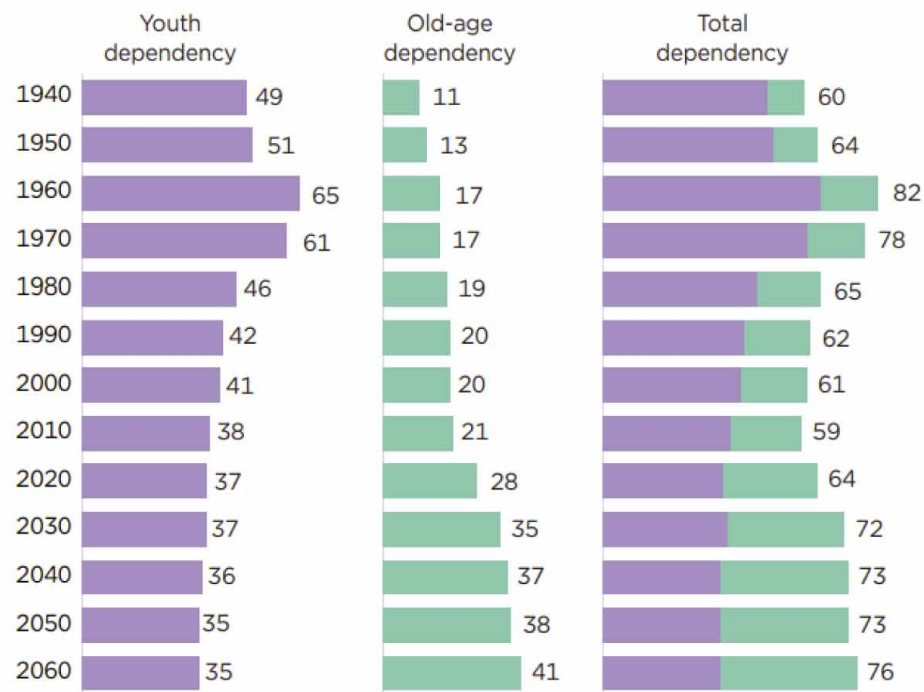
Note: Dependency ratios are a measure of potential burden on the working-age population.
Youth dependency ratio = (population under 18 / population aged 18 to 64) * 100.
Old age dependency ratio = (population aged 65 and older / population aged 18 to 64) * 100

Population Estimates

The impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity may present socioeconomic risks when human employees from diverse social demographics are dominant in one group such as low-income communities, minorities, and single parents who may not have the available resources to develop new skills to qualify them for employment opportunities, leading to a distinct discrepancy in equity between the haves and the have nots (United Nations, 2021). Furthermore, human employees who have spent more than 20 years in the workplace may experience greater challenges than human employees who are just beginning their careers.

For example, human employees between the age of 20 and 30 may have been socialized to play with technologies since birth, helping them to experience technology as ubiquitous in their daily life (Clark, Judge, & Picton, 2021). Conversely, human employees who became exposed to technology in their adult years may experience peaked levels of uncertainty as they learned that their work responsibilities will be automated or embedded with artificial intelligence (Statista, 2021). Organizations' people managers, nonetheless, are in a critical intersection to unlearn traditionally held beliefs about controlling the workplace environment to influence human employees to produce output.

In the 21st century, people managers are expected to think, behave, and make decisions that are strategic, transformative, and collaborative to ensure human employees comprised of diverse backgrounds, culturally and intellectually, are included in the organization's business strategic goals (House, et al., 2020). Changes in social demographics has and will continue to disrupt internal and external business environments. The current and future people manager, including human resources professionals, will need to learn to speak a culturally and socially diverse language to avoid engaging in inequitable actions.

Most organizations' diversity and inclusion programs superficially discuss cultural and social differences but do not interpret the implicit and explicit variation of how human employees communicate, the symbolic meaning of the spoken words, and how cultural and social identity is deeply embedded in ethnographic communication (Hynes, 1964). Human employees are expected to be proficient communicators, exhibit effective interpersonal relationships, and comply with the organization's cultural norms.

However, human employees have been culturally socialized since birth through their family traditions, beliefs, values, language, and symmetrical perspectives (Hynes, 1964). Thus, if the organization's Chief of Diversity Officer desires to lead effectively and successfully transform the human employee experience within the walls of the modern enterprise, previous diversity and inclusion programs must be radically revised to ensure that ethnography of communication framework is included.

Human employees cannot be classified as if they were a basket of different fruits where apples go with apples, and bananas go with bananas, and grapes go with grapes. This is an absurd way of understanding diversity in most organizations, and unfortunately, these practices have only perpetuated human employees' differences, profiling them as people of color, people of ethnic populations, and people of homogenous sexual preferences. Additionally, as implementation of new technologies are deployed, people managers must pay close attention to the affective responses, verbal, and non-verbal communication of all human employees (Jimenez, 2018).

Furthermore, people managers must develop cognitive and theoretical understanding about the social and cultural asymmetrical status among human employees in context of ethnography of communication to prevent arbitrary biased behaviors. The global pandemic created unprecedented challenges but also revolutionized opportunities for every private and public organization (Forman, et al., 2020). The year 2021 has been established as a year of renewed hope, vision, and collective effort to rebuild, innovate, and transform how people live, work, and relate to each other during social and economic adversity. Thus, the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity will continue to provide both challenges and opportunities for leaders in every industry, but only those who embrace, adopt, and remain nimble will take the lead in the new technological revolution where artificial intelligence will be ubiquitous, influencing the life of most human beings.

Artificial Intelligence Challenges and Opportunities

Human employees working with artificial intelligence to foster improved performance render new capabilities within their organization. By experiencing improved ways to complete tasks and produce higher levels of output, without the physical or psychological burnout that results from extended work hours, human employees will gain access to maximize their scarce resource—time, and therefore, invest it in activities that enhance wellbeing and overall lifework balance. Emerging human talent such as the Z generation are technology users and intellectually adept to exist in a virtual space of communication, ecommerce, learning, and relationship interactions (Aucejo, et al., 2020).

To attract emerging human talent, organizations' comparative advantage must include boundaryless and innovative access to resources that allow human employees to accomplish their work supported by artificial intelligence systems. For more than a century, organizations' executives worldwide have continued to engage Frederick W. Taylor's scientific management theory to measure and control employees' performance.

However, it is imperative to revise management and leadership best practices, philosophies, behaviors, and traditional hierarchical structures to ensure emerging human talent is inspired and supported to innovate and to serve as transformational catalysts for technological breakthroughs designed to advance society's prosperity while satisfying their organization's business priorities. The future of work demands collective intelligence and collaboration between human employees and robots created with capabilities currently undeveloped by humans (Clark, et al., 2021).

Accordingly, a younger, more educated, technology adept, and diverse workforce is already emerging, but the inclusion of artificial intelligence is necessary to help every organization remain competitive in a computer-generated market economy, accelerated by the 2020 global pandemic. Organizations neglecting to innovate and acquire artificial intelligence to support human talent capabilities will fast-track their business life cycle's extinction.

Business Implications and Considerations

The oil and gas industry, for example, will continue to be challenged until newly redesigned business solutions are developed and implemented to serve the emerging markets with environmentally conscious preferences for clean air and socially responsible products that exceed customers' experience. In like manner, technology companies will be required to frequently upgrade artificial intelligence models and security measures to mitigate the threats of highly advanced anonymous groups of cyber attackers and worldwide technocrats' intrusion. To best understand artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity, stakeholders need to comprehend the psychology of human behavior.

Oftentimes, human employees are evaluated by subjective metrics to determine their value and contribution to the organization. Employees rendering low output are classified in the performance hierarchy as average. Most people managers, then, reference human employees' performance evaluation results to determine the employees' next steps for improvement. During the 2020 global pandemic, reputable organizations leveraged human resources best practices to streamline their workforce and to provide early retirement packages for those qualified employees. Many employees were not so lucky and were terminated because of low performance. Human diversity, in this context, comes to question because artificial intelligence has and will continue to outperform human employees.

Management Requirements Moving Forward

Researchers in the field of human psychology have rendered empirical contributions to explain human behavior, their evolutionary stages, and their limitations (House, Patricia, Clark, Tanya, Senay, Crittenden, & Silk, 2020). Nonetheless, most organizations' people managers have retained expired human resources manuals that outline how to discipline human employees when they do not comply with the company's performance expectations. The global pandemic of 2020 shed new light about organizations management practices and the treatment human employees received when they were classified as non-essential in their position. In the United States, 25 million employees lost their job.

However, human employees working in the hospitality industry were greatly impacted because their services were rendered in person to customers. Human employees working in hotels, restaurants, bars, movie theaters, coffee and bakery shops, beauty salons, and massage spas, for example, were jobless overnight. Many of these human employees were women. Not only they lost their paid jobs, but they also found themselves assuming non-paid jobs they had not prepared for prior to the global pandemic. When schools closed, teachers were without the digital tools to teach their students, but with the implementation of artificial intelligence systems, and with the help of the student's parent, teachers managed to deliver their distant learning curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Fundamentally, the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity renders disproportional benefits for humans with limited knowledge and training on technologies. For example, many parents from low-income demographics were unsuccessful in helping their children with their online school curriculum. Despite the schools' parenting training programs, across the United States, thousands of school age students ceased attendance because they found it difficult to learn and complete assignments through virtual classes. Another group of human employees that continued to work despite the threat of COVID-19 spread were residential refuse collectors. Therefore, the waste management industry has opportunities to adopt artificial intelligence to relieve human employees from jobs that humanoids may do. Most residents may seldom consider the workers riding the trash truck several times per month to ensure their community remains cleared from waste. Notwithstanding, the future technologies designed to promote healthy ecosystems and streamline efficiencies, as well as recycling may soon be part of most residential and commercial buildings. Artificial intelligence, when designed and adopted, may be required to be accessible and cost effective for all organizations. Artificial intelligence developers may need to consider organizations' human employees' cultural identity, economic power social demographics, and ethnographic communication within the realm of cultural diversity to prevent unintended consequences such as perpetuation of inequalities. In other words, when new technologies replace manual work completed by human employees, organizational leaders need to consider the affective reaction of employees and establish contingency strategies to support employees whose job was replaced through the automation of artificial intelligence systems. Accordingly, the impact of artificial intelligence as part of an organization's diversity requires political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental analysis to fully evaluate and understand the benefits and the implications within the internal and external organization's stakeholders.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Affective Support: Intentional and empathetic dialogue to dispel uncertainty and to help establish a sense of employment safety.

Diverse Talent: Human employees within four dimensions comprising of cultural identity, economic power, social demographics, and ethnographic communication.

Essential Workers: Human employees assigned to businesses to satisfy human physiological needs.

Humanoids: Human like machines designed to assist or protect human employees.

Human Employees: Human beings with intellect, emotions, and behaviors as well as specialized yet limited capabilities.

Lifework Balance: Activities comprising of personal rewards as well as a sense of self-actualization.

Technocrats: Pluralist groups with ideals about controlling the creativity of artificial intelligence innovators.

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Chapter 15

Virtual Human Services Delivery:
Lessons for Equity, Leadership, and the Future

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 impacted how families live, learn, work, and connect, especially for those living at the margins, coping with poverty and other stressors. The rapid shutdown across the country disrupted human services and in-person operations for public benefit programs. State and federal leaders had to pivot to virtual human service delivery (VHSD) to meet the rapidly increasing need for food, housing, health, and economic supports. This shift revealed existing gaps in systems yet drove opportunities to address eligibility and access challenges quickly. Virtual human services worked well for many individuals and families but not all. This chapter highlights the importance of an equity lens in determining who does and does not benefit from VHSD. Insights and lessons learned from virtual operations for policy and practice are discussed as emerging technologies continue to impact workforce and client experience into the future.

INTRODUCTION

As COVID-19 moved through states, families, schools, jobs, education, and health systems were profoundly disrupted. Especially for those living at the margins, coping with poverty and other stressors, social distancing requirements caused enormous physical, emotional, and social upheaval. Data from COVID's impact highlight the dramatic economic and health disparities among Black, Hispanic, Native American, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander populations (Meade, 2021; Simmons, et al., 2021).

The rapid shut down of social services nationwide catapulted human service delivery systems into full virtual operations. Virtual human service delivery (VHSD) refers to the application, communication, and delivery processes of human service programs through phone, video call, text, email, website,

and/or a phone or computer application. State and federal leaders had to rapidly shift their leadership styles, increase collaboration, and meet spiking needs for food, housing, health, and economic supports.

Prior to the pandemic, U.S. Census data (2015) showed that about 21 percent of Americans or about 52.2 million people participated monthly in government assistance or safety net programs. The federal government provides funding for states, communities, and/or organizations to administer programs for individuals and families needing:

- **Food**: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps) provides eligible people with benefits cards, used like debit cards, to buy food at authorized grocery stores and farmers markets. Other food aid programs include healthy food to pregnant women, new mothers, and young children; free or low-cost meals to children at schools and daycare centers; and, food packages and farmers market coupons to seniors.
- **Financial Assistance:** Welfare or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) provides cash for a limited time to low-income families working toward self-sufficiency. TANF may also offer non-cash benefits such as childcare and job training.
- **Child Care and Early Learning:** Home-based and center-based childcare for low-income working families is supported through the Child Care and Development Fund to support high-quality early care and afterschool programs. Federal government also funds individual, community-based Head Start programs that offer early learning and other supports to low-income families.
- **Healthcare:** Medicaid provides free or low-cost health benefits to individuals and families and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) offers free or low-cost medical and dental care to uninsured children up to age 19 whose family income is above Medicaid's limit but below their state's CHIP limit.
- **Housing and Heating:** the subsidized housing, vouchers and public housing programs help low-income people and those with disabilities get private or government owned rental housing. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps low-income households pay energy bills.

Of those receiving benefits through programs with varying income eligibility requirements, 33.5 percent were unemployed, and 43 percent stayed in assistance programs between 37 and 48 months. These numbers show a considerable portion of the population is striving to gain financial independence while navigating policies, rules, and systems that often seem complex and burdensome, especially for those at or below the poverty line struggling to make ends meet (Zimmerman, et al., 2021; Hauer, 2020; Griffen, et al., 2019). Ideally, people should access support systems seamlessly without navigating burdensome and redundant processes. Siloed funding and misaligned program rules have created challenges adding unnecessary complexity for human service customers, staff, and systems.

As states pivoted to virtual operations, they confronted the gaps and weaknesses in systems, such as outdated technology and lack of information sharing across-agency. Legacy data and administrative systems over time have created silos that inhibit collaboration, prevent information sharing and ultimately slow innovation and improvements that would greatly benefit the customer (Benton, et al., 2021). Lack of communication and coordination cross-agency as well as budget constraints have hindered state governments from making the best use of data and human resources to support equitable service delivery. When the only option is in-person services, many are left behind from the benefits of programs, such

as individuals with disabilities, with transportation or childcare challenges or those without flexible working hours to schedule appointments or attend required meetings.

COVID-19 required immediate action and therefore, drove remedies to address these longstanding challenges in agency operations, culture, and leadership. The federal government granted flexibilities and waivers across numerous programs, allowing for, and supporting state policy and operational changes to meet the increasing demand for economic, food and housing supports. Human services leaders reported benefits to clients as well as the workforce from these new ways of operating (American Public Human Services Association, 2021). Virtual human services delivery, however, worked well for many but not everyone, like those with modest literacy in technology or English. Currently many national, state, and local stakeholders are documenting and identifying which human services appear to be effectively delivered remotely, how to best deliver them, and under what conditions they work well. It is critical to capture both the gains and losses of VHSD to improve systems for all, moving forward.

This chapter captures insights and lessons learned from VHSD under COVID-19 and highlights where virtual options may assist in addressing disparities in human service delivery. Included are suggestions for policy and practice to improve outcomes with emerging technologies. The need for an equity lens is discussed in assessing the use and impact of current and emerging technologies on both workforce and client experience.
The author seeks to:

1. Enhance understanding of the scope of state policy, operations and practice changes that occurred in the shift to virtual human service delivery (VHSD) under COVID-19.
2. Increase understanding of the importance of an equity lens to determine who benefits from VHSD and who does not.
3. Increase understanding of insights and lessons learned that are applicable to current and emerging technologies on workforce and client experience in human services delivery.

BACKGROUND

The American Public Human Services Association (2021) as well as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Benton, et. Al., 2021b; Zimmerman, et al., 2021) conducted national scans and in-depth interviews with state human services agency leaders to identify the most impactful policy and practice shifts in response to the public health emergency disruptions caused as a result of response to the COVID-19 virus. The author was directly involved in interviewing state human service leaders in New England with colleagues involved in the Whole Family Approach to Jobs initiative, a private-public partnership to disrupt poverty by putting families in the center of policy, systems reform and program design (Zimmerman, et al., 2021; Hauer, 2020; Griffen, et al., 2019). From the onset of the pandemic, state partners across the region joined weekly meetings to learn from each other's efforts, request policy changes and incorporate lessons and best practices across systems as they emerged. Insights from this work as well as other reports from the federal government and national organizations have contributed to this discussion.

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Flexibilities and waivers

Federal flexibilities and waivers to human service program regulations were granted to states under CO-VID-19 allowing them to shift to virtual services and continue operations of essential programs under limited capacity. This organizational shift required significant funding for tools and infrastructure to deliver services as well as a cultural change in state agencies serving families and individuals.

As families lost jobs and income food assistance became imperative. Individuals and families no longer had access to traditional outlets for food distribution (community agencies, food pantries) or school-based meals as applications for SNAP benefits rapidly increased. The federal government responded to states' requests for flexibilities in rules and regulations in four areas (Bresnahan, et al., 2021):

1. Certifications and interviews - waivers pertaining to extension of certification periods, adjustment of periodic reporting, and adjustment of interview requirements
2. Applications and case resolution - adjustment of telephonic signature requirements, changes to administrative hearings, suspension of overpayment claims collection, and technology enhancements for client application processes
3. Food assistance and purchasing - emergency allotments and the Online Purchasing Pilot
4. Communications and customer engagement - methods of communicating pandemic-related shifts in program administration to clients, and waivers and adaptations in SNAP Outreach, SNAP-Ed, and SNAP Employment & Training (E&T).

Human service leaders identified other helpful flexibilities granted across various benefit programs (TANF, Child Support, Child Welfare, LIHEAP, Child Care, Medicaid), such as the use of telephone, app-based or online eligibility interviews for cash assistance; streamlined application processes (telephonic signatures, and self-attestation); Medicaid waivers for telehealth appointments, and funding flexibilities allowing the state to purchase phones, tablets or computers for clients and staff. Many leaders expressed the need for federal policy that allows for automatic triggers of waivers across many benefit programs so states can more efficiently respond to a rapid uptick in demand (Bresnahan et al., 2021). A state leader in New England noted,

It would be great if there were some sort of standing provision that allowed states to make exceptions to certain rules and reporting requirements during a state of emergency, instead of having to ask for forgiveness on the back end (Zimmerman, et al., 2021, p. 13).

Prior to the pandemic, in many states the use of some virtual processes was underway but in varying and limited ways. States had to rapidly expand the capacity of employees to work from home. This required expansion of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), equipment for staff to perform essential work duties remotely (tablets, cellphones, hotspots and webcams, computers, software, etc.). Innovative partnerships helped bridge digital needs in communities. For example, agency parking lots were utilized as Wi-Fi hot spots and non-profits provided refurbished computers to low-income families for free or at affordable prices (Meminger, 2021).

In Mississippi, for example, all 82 county offices shut down overnight. Leadership immediately purchased over 400 cell phones so human services staff could work remotely and conduct phone interviews

for people applying for benefits. Their IT team worked to connect a 35-year-old eligibility system to the Cloud so staff could get remote access to the eligibility and

case management system. They instituted a unified case management model where SNAP staff from any county could help process applications. When applications were surging in one county, staff in other areas could help support that workload. During a peak surge, the state's adapted virtual services operations allowed staff to process more than 60,000 new SNAP applications in a single month (APHSA, 2021).

Interviews with state human service leaders revealed that prior to COVID-19, the belief that clients had to apply in-person was paramount. One Commissioner commented:

A big upgrade was the ability to have people apply for our economic assistance programs online and by phone. We had talked about it for 3 years and did nothing because we thought we had to "look into the whites of their eyes." But the whites of their eyes had nothing to do with whether applicants were meeting eligibility criteria or not. So that was a huge family and staff-centered change that we are absolutely going to keep in place (Zimmerman, et al., 2021, p. 15).

Streamlining operations

As states shifted operations from in-person to virtual formats, they streamlined application processes, changed documentation requirements, and the workflow for many staff. Many leaders reported surprise that staff were able to accommodate changes so rapidly, citing teamwork, willingness to work long hours, and the desire to meet increasing needs of families. As a result, application times for various benefit programs reduced significantly, and families were able to get necessary supports sooner. A Commissioner from the northeast remarked,

Before COVID-19 we had backlogs and struggles to keep up with initial eligibility applications and recertifications. Now, we are handling more people in the system with fewer delays and more timely service. I never anticipated this when we shifted to a work at home model (Zimmerman, et al., 2021, p. 15).

Improvements from document uploads, electronic or verbal signatures, phone applications and automated as well as live customer support contributed to greater efficiencies despite increasing number of applications in many benefit programs. Some states also leveraged machine reading, intelligent scanning and/or robotic process automation to streamline case processing (APHSA, 2021). Prior to the pandemic in Maine, for example, it took an average of 29 days for households to access benefits. During the pandemic, they reduced the processing time by 72% and access to benefits were 50% quicker than before COVID-19 (Zimmerman, et al., 2021).

In some states, financial support programs (SNAP, TANF and Medicaid) were able to see efficiencies by integrating applications across program. Programs that include supports for workforce participation promoted virtual employment and training opportunities. Methods that states used to support employment and training (E&T) services in the SNAP program include: sending workbooks and paper packets, offering pre-recorded courses on essential skills for employment, telephone based tutoring, SMS text or app-based programming, online meetings and virtual reality trainings. Most states saw higher engagement from participants in the E&T programs than prior to the pandemic (APHSA, 2021).

Leaders recognize these virtual shifts represent a more efficient way of delivering services that can be woven into a hybrid service delivery format that allows for greater responsiveness to shifts in

customer demand. VHSD also became a driver for agencies to shift from a compliance culture toward a more integrated, customer service culture. Virtual services allow individuals and families more options, increasing their agency to manage applications and to attend required meetings. Staff in different program areas had to coordinate services in new ways. Case managers in Vermont's TANF program for example, received training to help families look for housing, fill out applications for furniture and security deposits and follow up with support to ensure they were stably housed. Prior to virtual operations, staff in one program were not routinely coordinating with staff in other programs. A manager for TANF program in New England observed,

Providing housing case management services to families has been an opportunity to streamline these needed supports, so families can work on multiple things with one case manager, including housing, employment and other obstacles to employment (in Zimmerman, et al., 2021 p. 8).

VIRTUAL HUMAN SERVICES DELIVERY: WHAT WORKED FOR WHOM?

Trends in VHSD adoption across states show that the benefits extended to many -- clients, staff, and systems. People living in rural areas with greater distances to travel to in-person services benefitted virtual options such as, the expansion of telehealth visits covered by Medicare, Zoom court appointments and online applications for food or cash assistance.

For some of the most vulnerable populations – for example, those living in homeless shelters, migrant seasonal workers, refugees utilizing in-person English language classes or families receiving coaching to overcome interpersonal violence -- VHSD made it more challenging to access necessary supports. For those with limited broadband, low technical literacy, or other disabilities, VHSD made access to services more challenging and limited. (Benton, et.al, 2021c; Zimmerman, et al., 2021; Institute for Research on Poverty, 2020). An equity lens, therefore, is critical when considering who does not benefit from VHSD and how negative impacts can be prevented or eased.

The elderly and individuals of all ages with limited digital literacy often struggled when interacting with online systems. Staff reported that providing supports for those with cognitive impairment or memory loss, was often more time-consuming when compared to in-person services. Migrant or seasonal workers with limited access to technology need to be able to find supports or speak to program staff often during unusual hours. Some staff reported client concerns that conversations with social workers might be more easily recorded and accessed on Zoom. Leaders expressed concerns about the undocumented who may be hesitant to access services due to increased privacy concerns. In Maine, a human service leader wondered who might be missing opportunity due to the lack of in-person services:

I know we are processing and getting services out the door more timely, but I'm unsure who is being left behind. The majority coming into the office were people of color and New Mainers. How are they navigating online processes without the translation and interpretation they were getting in-person at the office? Virtual processes have benefitted many in Maine, but I wonder where people are being lost in changes to our delivery system (Zimmerman, et al., 2021, p. 19)?

For women experiencing or at risk of domestic violence, use of virtual services was mixed. Having access to domestic violence service providers online, by text or app made it easier for some to get sup-

port. For women living in close quarters with abusive partners who could monitor their online activity easily, however, using online services was riskier (Prendergast, et al, 2021). Staff serving those at risk of violence in home visiting programs underscored the need for individualized safety-focused services taking into consideration the unique circumstances of individuals and families (Benton, et.al., 2021c).

Substance use under the pandemic rose significantly. The Center for Disease Control (Czeisler, et al., 2020) found 13% of Americans reported starting or increasing substance use as a way of coping with stress or emotions related to the pandemic's social restrictions. Groups at greater risk included young adults, people of color, essential workers, and adult caregivers. Programs to assist people in recovery from substance use disorder shifted to online meetings increasing access and meeting spiking demand. Telemedicine appointments were widespread and the reimbursement of costs from insurers including Medicaid, made it easier for people to access care and treatment for behavioral health, including substance use disorder. A recent review of research on the effectiveness of telemedicine and virtual services for people who use opioids however, found persistent racial disparities in service effectiveness and recommends more targeted interventions for racial and ethnic minority populations (Alexander, et al., 2021).

Customer-centered services

Researchers found that VHSD's top benefit was a greater customer-focus with individualized service planning that considered the family's unique circumstances, resources, preferences, and service needs (Benton, et.al., 2021a, Zimmerman et al., 2021). This was due to many factors brought together under COVID-19 emergency orders. First, collaboration among state leaders was mandated and leaders from various agencies met frequently. Emergency funding strengthened resources for benefit programs, required data sharing, and expanded outreach and communication strategies. There was also more frequent communication between state leaders and local partners to troubleshoot how to best get messages and resources to individuals and families at home (Zimmerman, et al., 2021, Institute for Research on Poverty, 2021).

Under state emergency orders, many states adopted a unified command structure that brought together leaders from human services, emergency, health, and economic agencies on a regular basis. This collaboration and frequent communication "at the top" allowed human services leaders to work more effectively with other stakeholders and community partners to support a coordinated state response. Equally important, these relationships helped to create and distribute messages and communication strategies to inform families of how to access key supports. Coordination at the governor's office level offered opportunity for greater state systems alignment and faster results in responding to emerging critical needs. Many of these newly established or expanded state interagency efforts continue.

In Connecticut, due to its unified command structure, awareness of childcare's role in family economic and social stability increased dramatically among state agencies. The command structure brought childcare into the forefront of emergency operations for the first time, establishing new partnerships between workforce agencies and the childcare system. The private sector stepped in to raise $4 million to support emergency workers use of childcare. The Office of Early Childhood strengthened its existing a childcare business technical assistance (TA) network and quickly set-up front-line worker and hospital worker childcare options (APHSA, 2021; Zimmerman, et al., 2021).

Human service leaders also reported increases in the frequency and quality of communication among staff and participants. Partly due to increased needs of clients, but also due to increased options for communications and ease of access (telephone, app, online, Zoom, etc.). Families benefitted from flexible meeting times as they were able to attend without having to schedule childcare and transportation.

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While VHSD lacks some important aspects of in-person relating, many staff reported that building rapport with some families was easier online and for others, a bit more challenging. Some noted that if services were started in-person and then moved online (or telephone), maintaining rapport and trust was easier. Human service program leaders reported that program orientations and some required trainings may work better online, especially if the learning allows for self-paced content and offers multimedia content (Benton, et.al., 2021a). They also noted that professional development trainings and staff meetings worked well, once all staff had the needed technology to work from home (laptops, tablets, phones, etc.). Leaders noted the cost-savings from conducting staff trainings and conferences virtually.

Within child welfare agencies, staff held virtual visitation and home inspections as well as required court hearings and appointments. Where broadband was not an issue, staff often remarked on increased participation by families in required meetings because of the ease of access and flexible scheduling (APHSA, 2021). Staff in some agencies reported that it was easier for family members or caregivers to join appointments, workshops, support groups and trainings virtually, enhancing awareness of and response to the child's needs (Benton, et al, 2021a).

Although disruptive, VHSD gave rise to greater individualized service planning for families and individuals under a time of increased need. VHSD is not a panacea for access issues and works well for many, but not for all. An equity lens spotlights who is missing from these benefits and helps leaders to think through what can be done to allay these barriers. VHSD can create cost savings for state human service systems, allowing resources to be shifted to supporting in-person functions that build-upon whole family approaches (Hauer, 2020). VHSD bolsters system efficiencies, reducing administrative tasks with online applications, streamlining processes, and giving families many access points to apply and manage benefits (Benton, et al, 2021c).

PROMISING TRENDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis and understanding of what worked well under the shift to VHSD continues among state and federal leaders, community organizations and agency staff. Some states have begun to resume in-person services and some are keeping a hybrid approach long-term to continue the benefits and flexibilities for individuals and families. States should continue to learn from within their agencies, from their customers and from other state's model policies and practices to grow the benefits of VHSD and ensure an equitable social and economic recovery for all groups impacted by the pandemic.

Leadership

Human service leaders across the nation expressed genuine surprise at the agility of their workforce and productivity under virtual operations (APHSA, 2021; Zimmerman, et al., 2021). Many shared that their leadership style adapted to promote greater trust and flexibility for staff, relying less on compliance and in-person supervision throughout the system.

Building upon a human centered design approach, leaders need to take the lessons under VHSD forward as they continue to mitigate disparities in human service delivery, stressing outcomes over outputs of human service systems. Agency reforms suffer within a culture of compliance due to complex regulations of each separate system often serving the same family.

Transformative leaders promote inclusion, incorporating more voices and thereby addressing the inequitable distribution of power (Shields, 2013; 2014) By engaging partners vertically from federal to state, and horizontally -- within and between states -- actions related to shared interests can move quickly and foster tangible results. States should spotlight lessons in communication networks that were newly established or strengthened in VHSD. Getting messages out to communities and families was often mediated through community organizations who acted as trusted messengers, reaching families by text, phone, or website. Rapid feedback loops about what works well and who is being left out, assisted many state leaders to adjust their outreach strategies and inform requests to the federal government for flexibilities.

Transformative leadership practices acknowledge that for deep and equitable change to occur in complex systems, knowledge and practice frameworks perpetuating inequality need to be deconstructed (Shields, 2010; 2014). Under COVID-19, the necessity to collaborate at the state and federal level promoted transformative changes. Other insights from efforts to address poverty holistically (Hauer, 2020) into everyday operations can be used by hybrid systems. These include learning from diverse stakeholders, elevating parents with lived experience as consultants, leveraging opportunities for people on the margins, honoring shared values and the context within each state, and facilitating understanding vertically from the states to the federal government. As one New England commissioner noted:

We are not going back but planning forward. The path is about how we are maintaining responsiveness and productivity currently and into the future. How do we envision a future that leverages innovations that we have built now into the system? (in Zimmerman, et al., 2021, p. 24).

The Institute for Research on Poverty (2021; 2020) found key takeaways from VHSD, especially from telehealth and remote home visiting programs relevant for fully virtual operations and hybrid systems. Practices include:

- Keeping the client and family experience in the center of service design. This approach recognizes the importance of context and the importance of addressing inter-related needs, where possible.
- Working to lessen the technology divide to reduce exacerbating disparities when in fully virtual operations.
- Capturing information early regarding client's digital literacy and technology capability and fill-in the gaps where necessary to reduce inequities in VHSD.
- Choosing communication options that work best for each situation to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
- Building teams of technology-oriented staff with mission-oriented staff to strengthen an intuitive workflow and solve problems quickly.
- Creating trainings for staff that can build technology skills and adapt easily between in-person and online engagement with individuals and families.
- Incorporating participant feedback early and in all phases of VHSD. Include views from a wide range of customers in ways that promote cultural competence.
- Budgeting for adequate funding and evaluation to inform and support hybrid service delivery models incorporating in-person and virtual elements tailored to participant preferences and needs.

Expanding Broadband and Modernizing Technology

In rural areas, people with limited access to broadband lacked access to many virtual services under the pandemic. This disparity can only be addressed by expanding broadband internet so all Americans can be connected to key supports and information under normal conditions and especially in emergencies. The recent bi-partisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (2021) makes significant investments in broadband expansion which will increase access to virtual services in employment, healthcare, learning, mental health and other individual and family supports. The legislation also seeks to reduce unequal access to digital services by funding programs for digital inclusion (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2021). Human service programs at the state, county and local level should continue to upgrade technologies and ensure information is shared in different languages.

Some states would like the federal government to provide resources and guidance to help modernize their technology infrastructure. Others are working with private sector partners to explore options (Center for Digital Government, 2021). Data systems undergird the state's ability to analyze state and local need and offer flexible and nimble responses, especially in emergency situations or to bolster prevention efforts. States would benefit from an automated, near real-time means to collect upstream indicators of social health and economic mobility of families so that it can be shared between and among multiple stakeholders, including federal, state, local, and tribal health and human service leaders (Bresnahan, et al., 2021; APHSA, 2021).

To assist states efforts areas of federal technical assistance might include: a) building mobile-friendly applications; b) supporting use of artificial intelligence tools to streamline case review functions; c) increasing means for online purchasing, d) understanding risks and benefits of cloud-based solutions, and; d) expanding mobile and virtual EBT benefit applications. Federal policy can also address misaligned rules and eligibility requirements across benefit programs to buttress modernization efforts, increase access and align services (IRP, 2021).

Cloud-based solutions would require some states to do a comprehensive overhaul but may provide both short and long-term efficiencies, mitigate disparities and increase transparency, and accountability. Advocates for cloud-based services point to the benefits of enterprise performance management, improved financial reporting and data sharing (Center for Digital Government, 2020) such as: reduced IT costs, increased program and system responsiveness, remote workforce recruitment and retention and overall greater collaboration and data sharing that will benefit vulnerable populations most. Georgia's human services agency, for example, linked into the state driver's license system for SNAP verification, eliminating a piece of documentation to streamline access to benefits. A family that depends on on food assistance (SNAP benefits) may also rely on free or reduced-cost lunches for their children or require affordable housing (APHSA, 2021). When there is a "one-stop" or universal benefits application connected to various state programs, data can be consolidated in a central system. This allows administrators across various government programs to better understand the needs of those they serve, track participation in program requirements and connect them with other available services (Center for Digital Government, 2020).

Increasing Federal-State Collaboration

Human service leaders will continue VHSD under hybrid systems to build on the benefits and mitigate challenges for programs and populations. Ongoing and strengthened lines of communications between

community, state and federal levels enable states and communities to respond quickly to future emergencies and bolster efficiency and flexibility in regular operations. COVID-19 has underscored the critical voice of communities to offer real-time information and states' capacities to innovate rapidly.

Federal programs should focus on providing high quality technical assistance (TA) to states as various models of VHSD emerge and build the evidence based on promising practices and lessons learned (Benton, et al., 2021c; Center for Digital Government, 2020). Federal staff and contractors providing virtual TA should model best practices that offer built-in opportunities for interaction and various means of synchronous and asynchronous learning. Virtual reality, for example, has been used effectively in training and retaining child welfare caseworkers through immersive, scenario-based learning. Insights from the telehealth field show leaders need to be thoughtful in their deployments of remote technologies and plan for continual training for staff in order have the best outcomes for all clients (IRP, 2021). Virtual TA seems to work best when it responds to the unique needs of recipients and prioritizes usability and interaction over sophistication. (Abazeed & Benton, 2020). One human service commissioner concluded,

How do we alter the system to encourage the kind of collaboration we need to come out stronger at the end? The benefit to our system is in helping us learn more and make the whole greater than the sum of its parts (in Zimmerman, et al, 2021 p. 14).

KEY QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Human services programs can build assessment strategies throughout the VHSD process to determine what is working, for whom and how to improve operations and processes. Studies on telehealth and remote home visiting show that data collection and rapid learning cycles from virtual services are key. Researchers Benton & Vandenberg (2021) note that besides typical outcomes, programs can measure new outcomes, such as provider-participant relationships, client technology literacy and overall satisfaction with the processes. Research questions here are important to VHSD as it is a new and emerging field:

1) What are the most effective virtual education and training services to support workforce preparation, participation, and retention?
2) What are best VHSD practices for human service program delivery for populations who have historically faced barriers to service?
3) How does virtual human service delivery adaptations impact program fidelity? Do clients remain engaged in program requirements?
4) Which virtual service delivery platforms and methods work best for programs, and families in varying circumstances?
5) How to strengthen privacy rights and allay privacy concerns of vulnerable populations, such as the undocumented to remove barriers to eligible program participation?

CONCLUSION

Virtual services offer an important tool in the toolkit of programs and systems to reach populations at risk in a crisis and after for essential economic and social support services. For deep and equitable

change to occur in complex systems, knowledge and practice frameworks perpetuating inequality need to be deconstructed (Shields, 2013, 2014; Hauer, 2020) and the shift to virtual operations has boosted that process, offering possibilities for structural and ongoing changes that will improve outcomes for individuals and families striving for economic mobility and social well-being. More efforts are needed to expand communication and program delivery options for groups that did not benefit as much as others from the shift to VHSD, especially for people who lack Internet access or technology skills, people with visual and cognitive disabilities, those at risk for domestic violence, those who lack English language ability, people fearful of deportation and those in mixed status households, people living in unstable housing situations and others.

Leaders need to embrace the expanding role of technology in transforming operations and agency culture to drive the best outcomes for all. Keeping an equity lens in the forefront of new technology integration is critical to mitigating unexpected negative impacts, especially for those with limited access to virtual options – people living in rural areas with limited broadband, those who are most comfortable with in-person services for safety, cultural or other reasons, people with visual or cognitive disabilities, and those with limited English language ability or technical literacy. Key elements will be to gather diverse stakeholders, keep in touch with client experience, and drive innovation through staff training and individualized customer support. The coming wave of automation processes, like virtual assistants, digital workers, Artificial intelligence, and robotics, offer unique opportunities to enhance training, address inequities and adapt to family need and social conditions. Automation will allow leaders to shift resources – staff, funding and technical – from routine tasks to more complex activities that bolster outcomes, reduce disparities, and strengthen communities. The future of human services is an integrated, whole family, customer-centric approach, informed by real-time data, where individuals design their support options, collaborate with mentors and coaches, increase their agency and social capitol, and ultimately find a path to economic mobility and social well-being.

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Chapter 16
Women and Work During the COVID–19 Global Pandemic:
Challenges, Intersectionality, and Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted women's lives. Many already juggled two full-time jobs, that of employee and that of primary homemaker and caregiver; the pandemic exacerbated these challenges. Unprecedented numbers left paid employment altogether, some by choice, some by necessity, and others by jobs that disappeared. Disruptions may have lasting consequences for gender equality in the workplace. The pandemic exacerbated existing barriers in the workplace, augmented by the intersection of gender and race/ethnicity that contributes to challenges women of color and immigrant and migrant women face. The chapter covers how the pandemic has exacerbated barriers and challenges, how it affected women's labor force participation and work and home lives, and the economic and social consequences. The chapter also covers new challenges and opportunities and current and emerging research and policies. The chapter concludes with consideration of implications for supports and policy and recommendations for further research.

INTRODUCTION

Women, particularly women of color and mothers of young and school-age children, have had their lives disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, many women already juggled two full-time jobs, that of employee and that of primary homemaker and caregiver, while earning less than their male counterparts. The pandemic exacerbated the challenges associated with these demands and inequities, particularly for single mothers and women of color, many of whom did not have the option of working from home and caring for their children. Daycare and school closures meant many children could no longer attend daycare or school. These women – first responders, health care personnel, and other essential workers - had to scramble to find safe alternatives for their children's care while they went to the physical workplace. Women who were able to telecommute bore the brunt of childcare responsibilities, even in two-parent families. Unprecedented numbers of women left paid employment altogether, some by choice, some by necessity, and others by jobs that simply disappeared. Disruptions caused by the pandemic may have lasting consequences for gender equality in the workplace. The pandemic exacerbated existing barriers in the workplace, augmented by the intersection of gender and race/ethnicity that contribute to challenges women of color and immigrant and migrant women face.

The chapter objectives are to review of how the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the barriers and challenges women of diverse socioeconomic, racial/ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and parenting or immigration status face in the workplace; explore how the pandemic has affected women's labor force participation and work and home lives, and the economic and social consequences for them and their families. The chapter will also focus on how the pandemic has created new challenges for workplace gender and racial/ethnic equality and identify opportunities that may arise from the pandemic, followed by a review of current and emerging research and policies. The chapter concludes with consideration of implications for supports and policy and recommendations for further research.

BACKGROUND

The SARSs Corona Virus-2 (COVID-19) pandemic persists despite growing vaccination rates, leading to uncertainty about where the pandemic is heading (Mallapaty, 2021). The United States has had more than 35 million diagnosed cases and more than 614 thousand deaths attributed to COVID-19 (New York Times Interactive, 2021). Despite breakthrough infections occurring among the vaccinated, the World Health Organization (2021) has called for a moratorium on booster shots until October 2021 to address a global disparity in vaccinations. The Delta variant may impede the once-hoped resumption of a return to a "new normal" school and work year. Women are bearing a disproportionate burden of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, at work and at home.

Women, particularly women of color and mothers of young and school-age children, have had their lives disrupted. Prior to the pandemic, many women already juggled two full-time jobs, that of employee and that of primary homemaker and caregiver (Hochschild, 1989; Hochschild & Machung, 2012; McKinsey & Company, 2020). The pandemic exacerbated the challenges associated with these demands and inequities, particularly for single mothers and women of color, many of whom did not have the option of working from home and caring for their children.

The pandemic disrupted the supports on which working mothers depended – childcare and school (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Daycare and school closures meant many children could no longer attend

daycare or school. First responders, health care personnel, and other essential workers had to scramble to find safe alternatives for their children's care while they went to the physical workplace. Black and Latino workers, despite suffering from major upticks in unemployment, have been disproportionately overrepresented among workers who cannot work from home (Ballesteros, 2020).

Table 1. Top 10 Occupations Employing the Largest Number of U.S Women in 2019 (N=79,457,808)

Occupation	No. female employees	% employed women
Teacher	4,364,262	5.49
Nurses	3,808,657	4.79
Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides	3,058,071	3.85
Secretaries and administrative assistants	2,618,644	3.30
Cashiers	2,362,581	2.97
Customer service representatives	1,909,145	2.40
Retail salespersons	1,658,665	2.09
Managers, not otherwise categorized.	1,627,361	2.05
Waiters and waitresses	1,515,247	1.91
First-line supervisors of retail sales workers	1,464,164	1.84
Total	24,386,797	30.69

Note: Women's Bureau Data, U.S Department of Labor, 2019b

Table 2. Top 10 Female-dominated Occupations and Earnings in 2018 in the United States

Occupation	% female workers	Women's median earnings	% of men's median earnings
Preschool and kindergarten teachers	97.3	25,984	83.8
Childcare workers	94.5	22,342	81.9
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive	93.9	37,442	88.6
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants	93.3	60,122	101.4
Dental assistants	92.4	33,828	95.6
Medical assistants	91.6	31,668	85.8
Medical records specialists	91.0	41,377	101.0
Receptionists and information clerks	89.5	30,003	92.5
Veterinary technologists and technicians	89.3	30,766	98.5
Hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists	89.2	26,893	74.4

Note: Women's Bureau Data, U.S Department of Labor, 2019a

Table 3. Occupations in Which Women Comprise the Majority of Workers in 121 Countries

SCO-08 Occupation	% female
53 - Personal care workers	88
32 - Health associate professionals	86
91 - Cleaners and helpers	74
41 - General and keyboard clerks	71
22 - Health professionals	69
23 - Teaching professionals	68
42 - Customer service clerks	66
44 - Other clerical support workers	61
94 - Food preparation assistants	60
51 - Personal service workers	56
34 - Legal, social, cultural and related associate professionals	52
33 - Business and administration associate professionals	52
52 - Sales workers	52
75 - Food processing, wood working, garment and other craft and related trades workers	51
51 - Business and administration professionals	51
43 - Numerical and material recording clerks	51

Note: ILO's (2020) Weighted average of latest available data on 121 countries reflecting 63% of global employment; excludes data for China and India

Women comprised the bulk of frontline workers who provided health care, childcare, and similar essential services during the pandemic (Rho et al., 2020). Women comprise about 70% of global health and social care workers, often on the frontlines, with frequent overrepresentation of migrant women and marginalized racial and ethnic groups (Boniol et al., 2019). Women are 64% of all workers in front-line industries, as defined by the Center for Economic and Policy Research; this proportion includes 77% of health care workers, and 85% of workers in childcare and social services (Rho et al., 2020). One important contribution to women's concentration in these sectors is the intersectionality of their social identities, including their biological gender, gender identity, their race and ethnicity, their class, their religious affiliation, and their sexual orientation, which interact with each other and institutional factors of oppression and advantage within the workplace (Crenshaw, 2017).

Women were already doing a higher share of working in the care economy, performing unpaid care work prior to the pandemic (Power, 2020). The pandemic led to an increase in unpaid care work resulting from having children home from school, increased needs of elders, and decreased access to health services (United Nations, 2020). Male and female respondents to UN Women (n.d.) surveys reported a significant increase in the amount of domestic work and unpaid care due to the pandemic. Women and girls provide three quarters of daily, in-home domestic work and care globally (Moreira da Silva, 2019). For many women, this care occurs during the "second shift," performed after the end of their paid workday (Hochschild, 1989; Hochschild & Machung, 2012). According to Power (2020), feminist economists pointed to the "third shift," the emotional care work that falls mostly to women. According to Pew Research Center surveys, even before the pandemic, women reporting carrying a greater care load than their male partners in terms of parenting and household responsibilities (Barroso & Horowitz,

2021). Prior to the pandemic, women performed almost triple the amount of unpaid care and domestic work as men globally (UN Women and UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). This unpaid care work falls more often to women, whose labor force participation is more often part-time, flexible, and generates lower income (Fortier, 2020; United Nations, 2020).

Power (2020) referred to the response to the pandemic as gender regressive. The pandemic exacerbated existing gender inequalities (Fortier, 2020; Power, 2020), particularly in terms of caregiving, due to gender roles and lower priorities placed on women's jobs. Community-based and institutional childcare and school were integral supports in dual-earner families, enabling both parents to work in the paid economy. When daycare centers and schools closed, most often women were the ones in dual-employed couples who stepped up to assume caring for their infants, toddlers, and young children suddenly at home (United Nations, 2020).

Women who telecommuted during the pandemic bore the brunt of childcare responsibilities, even in two-parent families (McKinsey & Company, 2020). In October 2021, mothers working from home who participated in a Pew Research Center Survey were more likely than fathers to report a heavy load of childcare responsibilities; 57% of mothers with children 0-11 reported having some difficultly managing childcare responsibilities during the pandemic (Barroso & Horowitz, 2021). A survey of 1,160 households in the United Kingdom whose parents shifted to telework during the 3-week government lockdown from May 22 to June 15, 2020 revealed that while mothers bore more responsibility for housework, childcare, and education tasks, fathers' share increased during the lockdown (Chung et al., 2020).

Women had to radically adjust their allocation of time between home and work responsibilities to meet increased home care demands while continuing to work full-time from home (Igielnik, 2021), often resulting in time poverty (Azcona et al., 2020) and the blurring of lines between work and home (McKinsey & Company, 2021). The demands of the first, second, and third shifts result in feeling that one is always on duty (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Women's increased responsibilities at home during the pandemic increased challenges at work (Barroso & Horowitz, 2021).

The pandemic and lockdowns disrupted the workplace as well as the home. Whether by job loss or out of necessity, women's labor force participation during the pandemic fell to its lowest rate since 1988 (Ewing-Nelson, 2021). Unprecedented numbers of women left paid employment altogether, some by choice, some by necessity, and others by jobs that simply disappeared. According to Madgavkar et al. (2020), women's jobs were almost twice as vulnerable as men's. Although women comprised 39% of global employment, 54% of all job losses affected women. These statistics reflect women's disproportionate burden of unpaid care (Madgavkar et al., 2020).

Layoffs and furloughs affected women – particularly women of color – more often than men, which has consequences economically and for career advancement (Barroso & Kochhar, 2020; Frye, 2020; McKinsey & Company, 2020; Saenz & Sparks, 2020). Many working women were struggling financially prior to the pandemic, making them more vulnerable to its effects (Ewing-Nelson, 2020a). The preponderance of women in part-time work (Ewing-Nelson, 2020b), low-paid positions (Tucker & Vogtman, 2020), and/or tipped jobs (National Women's Law Center, 2019) made them vulnerable to job losses in retail, restaurants and hospitality, and other service sectors (Ewing-Nelson, 2020a; Solidarity Center, 2020). Women of color work in many industries with the highest pandemic-related job losses, such as hospitality, food service, health care, retail, and social assistance (Frye, 2020). Pandemic-related job loss was highest for women of color and Latina immigrant women (Saenz & Sparks, 2020). Research by the Pew Research Center showed a larger decrease in employment of unpartnered mothers compared to other parents (Barroso & Kochhar, 2020).

Disruptions caused by the pandemic exposed institutionalized vulnerabilities of women and girls socially, politically, and economically, and may have lasting consequences for gender equality in the workplace (Azcona et al., 2020). Feminized work sectors were the hardest hit, affecting women in informal and formal work across the globe (ILO, 2020a). The greatest job losses were for workers in low-wage occupations in the service sector. The impact on the U.S. labor market reveals the effect on American women. More women quit the workforce than men the first year of the COVID-19 recession, with Black and Hispanic women accounting for a disproportionate share (Kochhar & Bennett, 2021). A LeanIn (2020) survey revealed that twice as many Black women (54%) reported financial consequences of the pandemic compared to White men (27%). A disproportionate share of Black and Hispanic unpartnered mothers suffered job or income loss during the pandemic (Barroso & Kochhar, 2020). Mothers of color face a triple economic disadvantage based on gender, race, and motherhood, resulting greater financial challenges, in fewer resources to support them during the pandemic, and higher stress (Azcona et al., 2020).

For women who remained employed during the pandemic, the loss of leisure time and added stress of juggling work demands, childcare, and online learning while schools remained closed (Burdorf et al., 2021; Kochhar, 2020), work-family conflict (Chung et al., 2020), and the increased care burden and blurring of lines between work and home responsibilities has many of them rethinking their careers (McKinsey & Company, 2020). According to McKinsey & Company's (2020) "Women in the Work-place" report based on a survey of 317 U.S. and Canadian companies, one in four women were thinking about rethinking their career goals or leaving the workforce altogether.

Through a longitudinal analysis of couples in the United Kingdom and the United States during the pandemic, Qian and Hu (2021) examined changing work patterns of couples. The analysis indicated growth in one-worker families in the United Kingdom, typically with the partner with the highest education remaining in the workforce, and similar but lower growth in the United States. Couples in the lowest quartile of income pre-pandemic in both countries had the highest increase in unemployment for both partners and the lowest increase in one parent remaining in the workforce (Qian & Hu, 2021). Chung et al. (2020) surveyed households with parents whose work shifted to home during the U.K. government lockdown that began in May 2020. Mothers reported high levels of family-work conflict, including difficulty in finding sufficient time and space to work (Chung et al., 2020).

The pandemic exacerbated existing barriers in the workplace, augmented by the intersection of gender and race/ethnicity that contribute to challenges women, particularly mothers, single mothers, women of color and immigrant and migrant women face (Frye, 2020). COVID not only exposes but also increases women's inequality (Azcona et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated women's pre-existing socioeconomic hardships (Fortier, 2020). Women of color, who are more likely to be essential workers and single parents, had higher and more prolonged childcare burdens during the pandemic, along with increased unpaid care responsibilities for other family members (Frye, 2020). Systematic oppression of the multiple and intersecting identities of Black and Latina mothers resulted in differences in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Pavetti & Robinson, 2020; Power, 2020; Sharma et al., 2020). The increased the care burden Latina mothers affected their levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and overall emotional wellbeing (Hamel & Salganicoff, 2020; Hibel et al., 2021a, 2021b; Power, 2020).

Women's increased care burden during the pandemic also affects their paid work, including productivity, which has consequences for their career progression and future economic security (Barroso & Kochhar, 2000; Power, 2020), particularly for women of color. The consequences exacerbate institutionalized race and gender inequalities, as discussed in the following sections.

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the barriers and challenges women of diverse socioeconomic, racial/ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and parenting or immigration status already faced in the workplace and in caring for their families. The continuing pandemic and the surge of the Delta and Delta + variants engender continued instability in the economy, the job market, and the ability of women to juggle their multiple work, financial, and care responsibilities. Addressing these barriers and challenges necessitates considering the intersectionality of multiple barriers, formed by institutionalized gender, racial, ethnic, class, migrant or immigrant status and other biases (Frye, 2020).

Women have experienced a disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on their health, employment, care responsibilities, and economic well-being on top of existing workplace biases. Black, Latina, Asian, immigrant, LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities face distinct challenges. For example, Black women who are an "only" in their position or department report perceiving greater scrutiny, increased performance pressure, and having their performance reflect on others like them (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Women in senior positions, especially "onlies," also experience increased scrutiny and performance pressure, particularly given the increased care burden during COVID (Igielnik, 2021).

Impact on Work and Home Lives

Women's increased care responsibilities exacerbated persistent bias in the workplace. One such bias is that women with children are less invested in and committed to their work than childless women and fathers (Correll et al., 2007). Mothers who opted for flexibility in their work to meet family obligations fed that negative perception, despite evidence of equal productivity (Chung & van der Lippe, 2018; Craig & Churchill, 2021). The pandemic and explosion in work meetings by videoconferencing made mothers' care responsibility more visible, which may increase bias. Mothers reported concern that their caregiving would lead to negative performance appraisal and were hesitant to share the challenges of work-life balance during COVID with their coworkers (Igielnik, 2020; McKinsey & Company, 2020).

The pandemic has reshaped women's work and home lives, augmenting their care responsibilities in multiple spheres –child, family, and emotional care, supervising homeschooling during school closures. Women in three groups report facing distinct challenges – mothers, senior-level women, and women of color (McKinsey & Company, 2020). More working Black and Latina mothers than White mothers have full responsibility for all childcare and domestic duties. They are more likely to be the only wage earner or employed in a sector where working from home is not possible. These challenges may push women to downshift their careers or leave the workforce entirely, based on certain predictive factors (McKinsey & Company, 2020). These factors include lack of work flexibility, a feeling of always being on, increasing care burdens, worry about negative perceptions of their job performance due to care responsibilities, and the inability to be their authentic self at work.

The blurring of work and home and feelings of never escaping work demands affect mental health, engender stress and anxiety, and lead to burnout. McKinsey & Company estimate that up to 2 million women are thinking about a temporary leave from work or quitting paid work entirely in response to the challenges of working during the pandemic, many citing childcare as the major reason. Such a large exodus of women from the labor force will have a long-term impact on the pool of available talent and women's gender equality in the workplace. The exodus will also affect women's advancement to

leadership, reversing recent gains in in corporate American, particularly in senior management, despite persistent underrepresentation, especially for women of color (McKinsey & Company, 2020).

The pandemic has increased the stakes for women in senior-level positions, who have historically been held to a higher level of performance than men (Brescoll et al., 2010; Rosette & Livingston, 2012). Thus, more senior women than men think about career downshifting or opting out of the workforce due to COVID responsibilities, with almost 75% citing burnout (McKinsey & Company, 2020). The exodus of senior women will have negative consequences for the leadership pipeline and the availability of women to mentor other women as they aspire to leadership positions.

Effects on Health and Mental Health

The COVID-19 pandemic likely expanded gender differences in health risks and implications, widening existing health disparities between women and men (Connor et al., 2020). Although women use more preventive health care services, they tend to have worse outcomes for chronic health conditions such as asthma and diabetes and acute conditions, such as heart attacks. Intersecting identities such as age, race and ethnicity, geographic location, education, socioeconomic and immigrant status, disability, and sexual orientation compound health inequities (Connor et al., 2020).

The pandemic increased burnout and mental health concerns for all adults (Ettman et al., 2020; Sriharan et al., 2020). A McKinsey & Company (2020) survey of a diverse sample of employees revealed that three quarters of mothers in advanced and developing countries, compared to 69% of fathers, are dealing with mental health issues. The mental health crisis is likely to continue in this fourth wave of the pandemic and beyond, as new lockdown orders occur in many countries. The latest *Stress in America* poll revealed negative consequences of prolonged pandemic stress, such as weight gain, increased alcohol consumption, and other behavioral changes (American Psychological Association [APA], 2021; Canady, 2021). More than half of essential workers reported relying on unhealthy behaviors during the pandemic, with 29% indicating a decrease in mental health. Three quarters would have liked to have received more emotional support. LGBTQ+ women reported mental health as a major challenge during the pandemic at a rate almost twice that of other employees (McKinsey & Company, 2020).

The impact of the pandemic on the mental health of pregnant and parenting women and front-line workers is particularly concerning. Hessami et al.'s (2020) meta-analysis of eight studies involving almost 8,000 women suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased anxiety among pregnant and perinatal women. During the pandemic, pregnant women experienced an increase in anxiety, depression, and negative affect compared to non-pregnant women, and a larger decrease in positive affect (López-Morales et al., 2021). Forty-seven percent of mothers with children engaged in remote learning reported worsening mental health, compared to 30% of fathers (Canady, 2021). About a third of parents reported seeking out mental health services, compared to 12% of persons without children; almost a quarter of parents reported a mental health diagnosis compared to 9% of childless respondents.

The latest *Stress in America* poll also revealed undesired emotional and physical effects of the pandemic on people of color. More Black respondents were uncomfortable returning to life as it was prior to the pandemic (54%), compared to 48%, 45%, and 44% of Hispanic, Asian, and White adults, respectively; Black adults (57%) were also more uneasy than other adults to readjusting to interpersonal contact after the pandemic, compared to 50%, 51%, and 47% of Hispanic, Asian, and White adults, respectively (APA, 2021; Canady, 2021). More Hispanic and Black adults reported changes in sleep patterns, physical activity, and weight, compared to White and Asian adults (APA, 2021, Canady, 2021; Cleaveland & Wasliin,

2021). For Latina mothers, the pandemic exacerbated ongoing stressors related to their minority and immigrant status, increasing their risk for future mental health disorders (Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2021). These statistics indicate disparate impact and support the need for solutions and recommendations that address the intersectionality of gender, race, pregnancy and parenting, ethnicity, and other identities to support the unique needs of these workers.

In an Issue Brief, the Kaiser Family Foundation (Panchal et al., 2021) addressed long-term implications of the pandemic on mental health and substance abuse, particularly for groups already at risk of new or intensified mental health challenges and/or barriers to access to treatment, such as parents, persons of color, and essential workers. Opposition to vaccines and vaccine mandates and the need for continued precautions against infection despite vaccination efforts (Panchal et al., 2021), coupled with worker shortages and increased cost/lower supply due to supply chain issues, indicate that mental health and substance abuse will continue to be a concern in the long-term. Historically, the effect of disasters on mental health is more durable than the physical effects, indicating that the current elevated state of mental health issues is likely to continue even beyond the current pandemic's lifecycle (Panchal et al., 2021). Thus, women will likely continue to experience higher mental health challenges post-pandemic, exacerbated by intersectionality.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following solutions and recommendations reflect the barriers and challenges described above, which reflect the exacerbation of preexisting issues and biases affecting diverse women and mothers. To be viable and have the potential for meaningful impact, the intersectionality of gender, race, ethnicity, and other identities must inform government and corporate responses to the pandemic that address gender regressive impacts. Governmental and corporate leaders must address this disproportionate impact through reactive and proactive approaches that encompass gender equity and lead to greater gender equality in the workplace and at home for women in the labor market.

Policy Solutions

Public sector policies must reflect recognition of the disproportionate effect of COVID on many aspects of women's lives and promote gender equitable solutions to address gender inequality (Fortier, 2020; Power, 2020). According to Azcona et al. (2020), a gender aware solution necessitates providing women in the workforce with increase support and social protection. These supports include gender responsive social systems to improve women's income security and expanded access to affordable and quality childcare. A gender aware solution also requires reversing institutionalized and entrenched inequalities, such as women's heavier care and domestic burden, lower pay, and devaluation of women's work. Madgavkar et al. (2020) recommended several interventions for policy and business leaders to reverse the disparate impact of the pandemic on women within the national context of each country. These recommendations include addressing unpaid childcare, digital and financial inclusion, and attitudinal biases.

Governments need to enact social protection measures that are more gender sensitive (Azcona et al., 2020; Hidrobo et al., 2020, ILO, 2020b) and take into account women's economic realities (Frye, 2020). These measures include providing paid leave for primary caregivers and greater flexibility, along with childcare services for essential workers during lockdowns. Applying a gender lens to designing

fiscal stimulus programs will help to meet the needs of women in the workforce, particularly vulnerable women disproportionately affected by job loss, low wages, increased unpaid care and household work, and inadequate childcare. Relief measures should include immigrant workers.

The United Nations has as one of its goals recognizing and valuing unpaid care work and domestic work through infrastructure, services, social protection policies, and promoting shared family responsibility, reflected in the Triple R Framework to recognize, reduce, and redistribute this work (Elson, 2017) Policy making and analysis must include recognizing unpaid care work. Public investment in infrastructure can reduce the amount of care work. Redistribution of care work will lead to greater balance between families and society and between women and men. According to Folbre (2006), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) added reward for care work, including care work that take place at home. Policymakers should also support more equitable sharing of care work (UN Women, 2020).

To be effective, policy solutions must address the challenges women of color experience (Frye, 2020; Garcia et al., 2020). Frye (2020) recommended seven priority steps for policy makers to ensure that interventions to address the pandemic are responsive to their needs. These steps include expanding work family policy and protections for caregivers; providing essential workers with the supports they need; increasing wages and incorporating measures to reduce wealth disparities; increased enforcement of worker protections, including anti-discrimination; instituting measures for greater accountability focused on industry sectors; collecting comprehensive data on COVID-19 cases and deaths; and broadening access to employment and training programs.

Corporate Solutions

In 2020, almost a third of women workers in the United States were mothers (Christnacht & Sullivan, 2020). Leaders cannot afford to ignore the challenges working mothers faced during the pandemic and will continue to face as the Corona virus continues to mutate. Epidemiologists predict future pandemics, which will have similar consequences, particularly for women who work part-time, seasonally, in the health and service sectors, and in the informal economy (United Nations, 2020). Thus, corporate America should take a proactive role to build a workplace and organizational culture that is equitable for all working women, especially mothers and women of color (Huang et al., 2021). Organizational support and response measures should offer more social protection for low-income workers, flexible work, paid care leave, and access to quality childcare, particularly in an emergency such as a pandemic (ILO, 2020).

To counter the growing numbers of women who are considering leaving the workforce, downshifting their career, or leaving the workforce altogether, corporations need to institute gender informed efforts to retain the women most affected by the pandemic, McKinsey & Company (2020) suggested that companies should target or increase their efforts in six areas. These areas are making work more sustainable, resetting norms around flexibility at work, adjusting performance criteria, minimizing gender bias, adjusting policies and programs to improve support for employees, and strengthening employee communication. Company childcare policies can help to mitigate the care burden mothers experience (Huang et al., 2021). Rethinking corporate positions on remote work may help to relieve some of the stresses and tensions that are driving burnout among women workers with children. According to recent survey data, employees with young children were more likely than others to prefer primarily remote-working models and flexible work locations, with fewer than 1 in 10 wanting to return on-site full time, (Alexander et al., 2021). Companies must also adopt an intersectional approach to address the unique and distinct challenges of Black women in the workplace and foster an organizational culture in which Black women

feel supported and valued (McKinsey & Company, 2020). These same recommendations can improve workplace retention of other women of color and mothers. Corporate leaders can also implement steps that promote the return of mothers to the workforce. These steps include adjusting the hiring process, creating returnships, and implementing on-ramp programs (Huang et al., 2021).

Kipnis and Rana (2020) recommended six actions for private sector leaders across the globe to take promote gender equality, based on analysis of data from multiple international surveys and interviews. These actions align with suggestions above for retaining female works, providing support to meet increased care demands, ensuring respectful workplace cultures, supporting the mental health and well being of employees, addressing the digital gender divide, and increasing access to finance and markets for women entrepreneurs. Corporate leaders can play a critical role in helping women address and overcome the disparate impact from barriers and challenges of the pandemic in a way that will support greater gender equity in the workplace.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

A multidisciplinary approach to promoting diversity and inclusion in the COVID-19 era workplace necessitates considering the impact of the pandemic on diverse women from the lens of intersectionality. Any efforts to address the disparate impact of COVID-19 on women and their diverse identities must involve solutions designed with gender equity and gender equality as the goals. Since the pandemic begin, many researchers have focused on the various impacts of the pandemic and promoted solutions, with new reports, journal articles, and other publications appearing regularly. The body of evidence is growing at the same time that the Corona virus is mutating and causing new lockdowns and other measures. As new evidence becomes available, the body of knowledge will inform and support effective solutions. That said, the body of data is not yet sufficient to understand fully the effect of COVID-19 globally by gender, race, age, ethnicity, immigrant and migrant status, disability, sexual orientation, partner status, and other characteristics (Azcona et al., 2020). As the virus mutates and the pandemic is prolonged, new challenges and barriers will emerge for women in the workplace and those who aspire to return to work.

Madgavkar et al. (2020) identified the need for additional research on the connections between women in society, at work, and economic growth, especially the contributors to women's job loss and recovery. The results can inform policy and practice in government and organizations. According to Azcona et al. (2020), one important need is for scientific studies and inclusive research on gender and the impact and response to the pandemic, and more support on the national level to integrate a gender perspective into pandemic research and policymaking. Data on the disparate impact of the pandemic should inform prevention, response, and policy (UN Women, n.d.). Additional study of local-area economic impacts, particularly on women of color, can generate data to help policy makers address disparities through an equity informed approach (Saenz & Sparks, 2020). Understanding the impact of the pandemic on diverse groups of women is critical to parsing out differential impact and informing policies to address the consequences. For example, research can address a knowledge gap and inform addressing the mental health consequences and implications for Latina women and their families (Hibel et al., 2021b; Wenham et al., 2020). Burdorf et al. (2021) identified a gap in knowledge about the long-term effects of the pandemic on workers' health and mental health, with implications for further research on COVID-19 and occupational health. The results will have implications for preparedness and response. One area is how COVID changes where people work, how they work, and when they work, and the impact

on workers' health and especially mental health. Another area needing additional research is how the pandemic exacerbated social inequalities and vulnerable groups. Greater understanding of the impact of the pandemic on diverse women, generated by additional research on the intersection of gender with life-stage, ability, family composition, and other demographic characteristics, is essential addressing the unpaid care burden and promoting gender equity in the workplace (Power, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the lives of women, particularly women of color and mothers of young and school-age children. The pandemic led to disparate impacts for women, particularly for mothers of young and school-age children, women of color, women in front-line positions, and women who care for others. Women bore and continue to bear a disproportionate burden of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, at work and at home in terms of care burden, job loss, economic consequences, and stress and burnout. The pandemic exacerbated preexisting inequalities and the challenges associated with competing demands. The pandemic created new challenges for workplace gender and racial/ethnic equality, as many women are considering leaving the workforce or are thinking of downshifting their career. The persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic is creating uncertainty about where the pandemic is heading (Mallapaty, 2021) and when, if, and how its effects will diminish. The time is ripe to create new and innovative government and workplace policies initiatives based on a consideration of gender and intersectionality to provide equitable solutions to address disparate impact and improve equality for diverse women in the workplace.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Breakthrough Infections: Describes cases where some fully vaccinated individuals have contracted and tested positive for the coronavirus post 14 days after receiving the second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines or the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Buren of Care: The physical, emotional, and economic challenges family caregivers experience.

Care Economy: The informal and formal work provided in childcare; early childhood education; and health, disability, long-term, and elder care.

Digital Divide: A social and economic inequality driven by unequal access, the difference in usage, or impact of information and communication technologies. There is a digital divide between urban and rural areas in some nations based on unequal access to, the difference in usage, or the impact of information and communication technologies.

Disparate Impact: A situation that occurs when systems, practices, policies, or institutions affect different groups disproportionally.

Gender Bias: The tendency, implicit and often unconscious, toward preferring men over women in the workplace in terms of expectations, opportunities, benefits, and rewards.

Gender Equality: The equal enjoyment by women and men of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources, and rewards.

Gender Equity: The fair and equitable treatment of women and men regarding their rights, responsibilities, benefits, and opportunities, considering their respective needs.

Gender Inequality: A legal, cultural, or social situation where gender determines disparate opportunities and rights for women and men, characterized by unequal access to or benefit of rights and assumptions of stereotypical culturally and socially defined roles.

Gender Stereotype: A preconceived notion about women's versus men's attributes, characteristics, and roles and responsibilities.

Intersectionality: A framework for considering women's overlapping identities, roles, and experiences to understand the barriers, challenges, obstacles, and opportunities they face.

On-Ramp Program: A training program, usually short-term, to help adults develop job skills for existing jobs with a need for skilled workers.

Only: A person who is the only one of their gender, race, immigration or disability status, or ethnicity in an organization, department, or job category.

Pandemic Stress: The chronic emotional and physical toll that people experience from the increased burden of care, uncertainty, anxiety, and sleep disturbances, and other reactions to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Remote Work: The work performed away from a traditional office or organizational or institutional setting, often performed at home.

Remote Working: An operational mode that allows professionals to work away from a traditional office environment, incorporating the concept that there is no need for a specific place to execute and complete work-related tasks successfully.

Returnship: A structured program that helps adults return to the workplace after some time away.

Second Shift: The unpaid housework and childcare that women who work outside the home do each day when they return from their paid employment.

Telecommuting: Commonly referred to as teleworking, implies that employees occasionally work on-site in addition to working remotely.

Work-Family Balance: The active engagement of a family member in their work and family lives, integrating and meeting their responsibilities in both spheres.

Work-Family Conflict: The tension that arises between incompatible demands between family and work responsibilities and obligations, which may result in competing obligations and diminished participation in one sphere to meet the demands in the other sphere.

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About the Contributors

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Carlos Tasso Aquino is an accomplished senior executive and professor, combining a PhD and two Post-Docs with over 20 years of experience in leading companies and higher education organizations. His experience and network in the Business arena transcend boundaries and include expertise in teaching, consulting and development. Along his career, Carlos has been developing partnerships in the US, Canada, Latin America, and Europe. He is well-traveled and multilingual, being fluent in Portuguese, English and Spanish. Carlos has more than 10 years of experience in Diversity and Inclusion and currently serves as the Interim Chief Diversity Officer at Gettysburg College, PA, USA. Dr. Aquino was the speaker and moderator in more than 30 events in the US and abroad, and published many articles and 3 books in D&I: Diversity and Inclusion in the Global Workplace (2017), Effective and Creative Leadership in Diverse Workforces (2019), and Diversity and Inclusion in Latin American and Caribbean Workplaces (2020). Carlos is currently the co-editor in a new book for IGI Global Publisher (Multidisciplinary Approach to Diversity and Inclusion in the COVID-19 Era Workplace). He also previously authored a book on Andragogy and Adult Education, published by Pearson Brazil in 2008.

* * *

Susanne Beier emigrated to the US with her mother and step-dad when she was 13. She knew how to say, "Thank you" and "Good Night," which was the only English she knew at the time. It was quite an adventure!!! Dr. Beier lived in Washington State (Tacoma area) and New Jersey ("Central Jersey" near the "City"—New York City, that is:-), prior to moving to Pennsylvania. She is fluent in both German and English and finds fun to switch languages back and forth:-) Dr. Beier earned her PhD in Human Services, Walden University and a Master's Degree in Counseling/Psychology from Rutgers University, N.J. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. She is also a Diplomate Disability Analyst and Diplomate Forensic Counselor (specializing in adolescents and child custody evaluation). In addition, she is a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC) and Master Career Counselor (MCC). On a personal note: she loves to travel enjoy paintings (oil, oil pastels).

B. Anthony Brown received his Ph.D. in Management With an Emphasis in Leadership and Organizational Change from Walden University in 2020. In 2021 he was hired as a Maritime Consultant at Blue Ocean Marine (BOM) Limited based on his over 30 years in the Maritime Industry where he also served as Captain on passenger and cargo ships, as well as Marine Superintendent and Chief Operations Officer for land-based corporations.

Seterra Burleson is a doctoral student in the Industrial-Organizational Psychology program at Old Dominion University. She is currently working as a research assistant in the Career Development Lab under Dr. Debra A. Major has contributed to several grant-funded projects concerning the career development and persistence of women and other underrepresented groups in male-dominated career paths, such as those in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). In her recent publications and conference presentations, she has explored topics of professional identity development, professional development activities, servant leadership, prosocial identity, anticipated and experienced work-family conflict, implications of remote work, newcomer experiences, incivility, self-efficacy, and occupational and major embeddedness. She conducts research to inform organizational initiatives to improve employee engagement, belongingness, and wellbeing in a way that supports organizational goals and values. She is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer who served in Perú prior to entering her graduate studies.

Cindy DeMarco has more than 25 years of leadership and consulting experience within various industries including finance, banking, non-profit, legal and technology. She's held various leadership and faculty positions within higher education. Cindy's early career centered on human resources management. She shifted to organizational development with a track record of success guiding executives in business strategy, leadership development and organizational change. She's published in both popular press and scholarly journals on virtual learning, leadership and organizational behavior. She's particularly skilled at aligning leadership teams on plan execution and focus on the achievement of results through cascading organization-wide goals. Understanding leadership informs culture and culture drives team member performance, Cindy facilitates leadership commitment to foster a high-performance team culture that delivers on goal-driven results. She built a business from the ground up from 2003 – 2011, where she served as a CEO for more than seven years. When not collaborating with her strategic consulting team, she supports internal Insperity middle market initiatives and select client engagements. She is currently the Manager of Strategic Consulting Services at Insperity. She has a Doctorate of Education from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and holds organizational development and business certifications (FMI executive coaching, LeadRight, AMA - Accounting & Finance for Leaders). Cindy has successfully completed the Post-Merger Integration Module (15 Hours) - Institute for Mergers, Acquisitions and Alliances (IMAA).

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Pamela Ann Gordon, PhD, resides in South Florida and earned her doctorate in Business Administration with a specialization in Management from Northcentral University. Her three master's degrees are in Human Resource Management from Nova Southeastern University; Organization and Leadership from Capella University; and an MBA with a specialization in Marketing from Nova Southeastern University. She has 22 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry at GlaxoSmithKline, with 17 of those years in corporate management/leadership positions. She has more than 17 years of online teaching experience and enjoys supporting doctoral students. She is a staff faculty member at University of Phoenix in the College of Doctoral Studies. Her research interests are in the areas of management, organizational behavior, marketing, and human resource management. Dr. Gordon has numerous academic journal article publications and served as co-editor for several scholarly book publications. She is a member of Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society in Business Administration; Delta Sigma Beta National Honor Society in Business, Management and Administration; and, a lifetime member of Delta Sigma Pi.

Keri L. Heitner is a research psychologist, consultant, and contributing faculty in the PhD in Management Program at Walden University. Her work involves applied research, evaluation, and program development about diversity and inclusion; career advancement and re-entry; service delivery research and development in health, mental health, and the government and nonprofit sectors; and entrepreneurship. She is also a writer, editor, methodologist, and curriculum developer.

Donnie Hutchinson, DM, is an internationally recognized speaker, author, and researcher on implementing self-care strategies to promote work-life balance. He is the host of The Get Balanced Podcast with Dr. Donnie and spends most of his time conducting his Work-Life Balance Transformation workshops. This evidence-based workshop teaches you the knowledge, then takes you step-by-step with execution strategies and tactics to become more effective and thriving at work, home, and in all roles in life. He's also an Army National Guard veteran and adjunct professor, where he teaches executive leadership classes at the University of Dayton. He's a former business executive where he led the organization in recognition as the 25th fastest growing company by Inc. 500. For the past five years, Donnie has been the work-life balance trainer and presenter at the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF/ALTS) annual conferences and has delivered numerous workshops and webinars for EMS, local fire districts, and state organizations. He also works with private businesses, medical staff, and the government sector. Donnie wrote Lead with Balance: How to Master Work-Life Balance in an Imbalanced Culture (Advantage) and co-authored a university textbook called Diversity and Inclusion in the Global Workplace: Aligning Initiative with Strategic Business Goals. His chapter on work-life balance addresses generational and cultural differences in managing employee work-life balance friendly policies. He is an active and proud father of four children and resides in Dayton, Ohio, with his wife, Marlene.

Grace Journey runs a woman owned small business and is CEO of a life coach business. Advanced Facilitator at diverse Universities including formation of research teams to perform and publish research at tier one national, international conferences and peer-reviewed journals. Career path reflects meaningful work with authentic, spiritual and ethical leadership among evolving diversity and inclusion. As an independent contractor, business management includes certified life coaching, corporate training, workshop/curriculum development, professional writing, and publishing in peer reviewed journals. Currently, immersed in expanding into Federal Government Contracting for Women Owned, Historically

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Debra A. Major, Professor & Eminent Scholar at Old Dominion University (ODU), earned her Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Michigan State University. Her research broadly focuses on how people successfully enact their careers and overcome barriers to career success. Dr. Major's current research focuses on work-family conflict and coping and the barriers encountered by women and ethnic minorities pursuing educational and career pathways in science, technology, education, and mathematics (STEM). Her work has received continuous funding from the National Science Foundation for over 15 years, and she has led numerous multidisciplinary and multi-institutional research teams. Editorial board service includes Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Organizational Behavior, Journal of Management, Journal of Business and Psychology, Career Development Quarterly, and Journal for Occupational Health Psychology. Dr. Major was appointed ODU's inaugural Provost's Fellow for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion and has served as Associate Dean for the College of Sciences. She leads ODU's strategic initiative in broadening participation in STEM-H. Dr. Major is fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science, and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

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Robert Robertson is the President of the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute in Nassau, The Bahamas. In 2016, Dr. Robertson was named a Fulbright Scholar by the US Department of State; and, an Emerging Leader in the America's by Global Affairs Canada. He holds a Master of Studies in Public Policy Law (Vermont Law School); Master of Public Administration (Dalhousie University, Canada); Doctorate in Management and Organization (Stirling University, Scotland); Post Graduate Diploma (University of London, England); Graduate Diploma (London School of Economics); Executive Certificate, Innovation and Strategy (Massachusetts Institute of Technology); and Executive Certificate Leadership and Negotiation (Harvard Law School). Dr. Robertson has more than twenty five years of experience leading award winning organizations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. His work experience includes teaching in Slovenia, Kazakhstan, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Canada, the US and the Caribbean.

Ronald (Ron) Rojas is a skills development practitioner, educator, and business owner since 1999, specializing in personal development, entrepreneurship, technology, and formal research. With his doctorate in Business Administration, he has conducted workshops on mentoring, ministry leadership, development of pastoral competencies, diversity, and inclusion, and has designed organizational development projects for non-profit and educational entities. His experience in electronic manufacturing as a quality and reliability executive for Intel Caribbean /Intel Puerto Rico included teaching quality assurance methods, continuous improvement working groups, organizational culture, and process control techniques. He has conducted workshops and seminars in Puerto Rico, multiple locations in the USA, Costa Rica, China (Huaibei), Nassau, Bahamas, and Italy (Santa Croce, Rome). With his 18 years in higher education, he was the Director of Management & Marketing at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (Ponce) and has conducted projects related to distance learning, entrepreneurship, business plan development, and leadership skills, classroom management, and research methods. Currently, he is a faculty at the Institute for Pastoral Studies (IPS) Doctorate in Ministry program at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, IL, and at Schiller International University. He is also a consultant for Mundelein's Tolton Teaching Parish Program and has authored nine books. He is currently living in Tampa, Florida (USA).

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