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## A multi-level process model for understanding diversity practice effectiveness

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# A MULTI-LEVEL PROCESS MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY PRACTICE EFFECTIVENESS

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A significant amount of research has been conducted on diversity “best practices” to understand whether they help reduce discrimination, increase managerial diversity, and enhance performance. Regardless, which diversity practices should be used, how they should be implemented, for what purpose, and to what effect remains unclear because of issues related to inconsistencies across outcomes studied within and between diversity practices as well as a lack of integration of micro research and macro research. In this review, we focus on these issues to make sense of the array of research conducted since the turn of the century. We first synthesize key research findings from sociological, firm-level research on diversity management practices with research conducted within the psychological tradition using experimental and within-organizational research designs. The results of our review provide the basis for a multilevel process model through which research findings can more easily be interpreted to uncover when and how diversity practices produce desirable results. We discuss how considering the interplay across levels of analysis is critical for enriching our theoretical understanding of the mediating and moderating mechanisms that link the distal constructs of diversity practices and organizational outcomes. We conclude with implications for future research that emerged from an analysis of the literature through our multilevel process model.

## INTRODUCTION

Diversity and inequality challenges have long been at the forefront of societal concerns and are arguably more critical now than ever before. Between 2010 and 2016, the percentage of Americans who worried a great deal about race relations nearly tripled from 13 to 35 percent (Norman, 2016). In 2015, the World Economic Forum assigned the United States a gender equality score of only 0.74, where the highest possible score of 1 would indicate that women have achieved equality across a combination of economic, educational, political, and health

indices. Unfortunately, these types of statistics are not unique to the U.S. context. Record high levels of international migration have so intensified xenophobic tendencies that the United Nations issued a warning about the threat of growing discrimination (Doyle, 2016). The implications are acutely felt by organizations as these societal biases are easily imported into organizations; if left unchecked, they could exacerbate stereotyping and bias related to social identity, thereby posing legal and economic risks to organizations (Gelfand, Nishii, Raver, & Schneider, 2005). Additional management challenges continue to be introduced by the aging workforce, overlapping generations in the workforce, changing family and parental roles, and evolving legal requirements related to sexual orientation, religion, and disability (Schramm, 2016; Smith, 2016). Unfortunately, knowing exactly what

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organizations can do to meet these challenges is hardly straightforward.

Turning to the literature on diversity management practices does not provide easy answers (Bidwell, Briscoe, Fernandez-Mateo, & Sterling, 2013). Although a significant amount of research has been conducted to try to understand whether these practices help reduce discrimination, increase managerial diversity, and enhance performance, the pattern of results is filled with inconsistencies that severely limit our understanding of which diversity practices should be used, how they should be implemented, for what purpose, and to what effect. When it comes to understanding how to achieve valued outcomes, there is little theory that helps scholars and practitioners integrate disparate research results.

In this review, we aim to make sense of the array of research conducted since the turn of the century. We synthesize key research findings from sociological, firm-level research on diversity management practices with research conducted within the psychological tradition using experimental and single-organization research designs. In our efforts to integrate published research, we first began by organizing research results based on diversity practice type—including affirmative action and equal opportunity (EO) programs, targeted recruiting, diversity training, work-life initiatives, mentoring and sponsorship, and employee resource groups (ERGs)—to try to draw conclusions about what we know about the effectiveness of each of these practices. We quickly learned that this was a messy endeavor because research studies vary widely in the way that they operationalize diversity practices, in particular whether they rely on organizational representatives' espousals of their adoption, case-study analyses of the specific design and implementation of features associated with a practice, or employees' perceptions of the availability and/or effective implementation of the practices. Although firm-level studies that use archival records (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; EEOC reports) and/or single rater reports of diversity practices have been invaluable for providing evidence of covariation between the adoption of diversity practices and organizational outcomes, they say nothing of the unmeasured sources of variance in the way that practices are actually designed and implemented, their alignment with the socially complex organizational environment in which they are embedded, nor about the variance in employee

perceptions and reactions that they might elicit (Gerhart, Wright, McMahan, & Snell, 2000; Wright & Nishii, 2013). By contrast, micro research helps us to unpack some of the "black box" between diversity practices and outcomes by illustrating individual-level variance in people's attitudinal and behavioral reactions to practices, but the outcomes examined vary substantially in terms of bandwidth (or facet specificity), proximity, and levels of analysis.

Integrating results from micro research with those from macro research is further complicated by the fact that employee attitudes are examined as the end states in much of the micro research, and explanations for the processes through which they emerge to shape organizational outcomes are surprisingly lacking. Although we detected some patterns in how practice operationalizations (e.g., espoused adoption) covary with the dependent variables examined (e.g., managerial diversity), they were not consistent enough to yield a simple story about the effectiveness of practices, particularly in light of the wide variety of moderators proposed and found to be essential for understanding the relationship between diversity practices and outcomes. Our attempts to map together the different pieces of the causal chain that link the adoption, design, and implementation of diversity practices with employees' perceptions of and reactions to those practices, and ultimately with aggregate organizational outcomes led to the emergence of a multilevel process model, through which research findings can more easily be interpreted (Figure 1; boxes 1–6). Although a wide variety of moderator variables have been examined, a careful coding of the mechanisms through which they are assumed to impact the relationship between diversity practices and outcomes allowed us to categorize them into a smaller set of moderator types, based on their function (Figure 1; boxes A–C).

We first begin with a brief summary of research findings, organized by diversity practice type. Our goal in this section is not to be exhaustive (see Table 1 for more details), but rather to highlight the myriad of complexities that emerged from our review. We then go into more detail in our discussion of research findings, but this time through the lens of our process model. Here, results are organized not by diversity practice type, but instead based on the different stages of the process model because the process model generalizes across diversity practice type. As we discuss below, consideration of the interplay across levels of analysis in the process model is

critical for enriching our understanding of the mediating and moderating mechanisms that link any one of the diversity practices with organizational outcomes. We conclude with recommendations for future research that emerge from our analysis using this multilevel process model.

## LITERATURE REVIEW: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Overview of Our Literature Review

The two main traditions in the research on diversity in organizations are applied psychology, which has tended to focus on diversity-specific practices, and sociology, which has paid significant attention to the bureaucratization of personnel practices as a means of reducing ascriptive inequality (i.e., biases based on membership in demographic groups that are hereditary such as race, sex, and age). Thus, our review was guided by search terms<sup>2</sup> that covered both the diversity-specific practices mentioned previously as well as the bureaucratization of personnel practices (i.e., formalization, transparency, and accountability). We limited our review to high-impact scholarly journals included within the following Web of Science categories: Management, Organizational Behavior, Human Resource, Sociology, Psychology, Applied Psychology, and Social Psychology journals (i.e., with five-year impact factors greater than 2.5). For practice areas that produced very few empirical articles using these guidelines, we loosened our parameters and cast a broader net. We

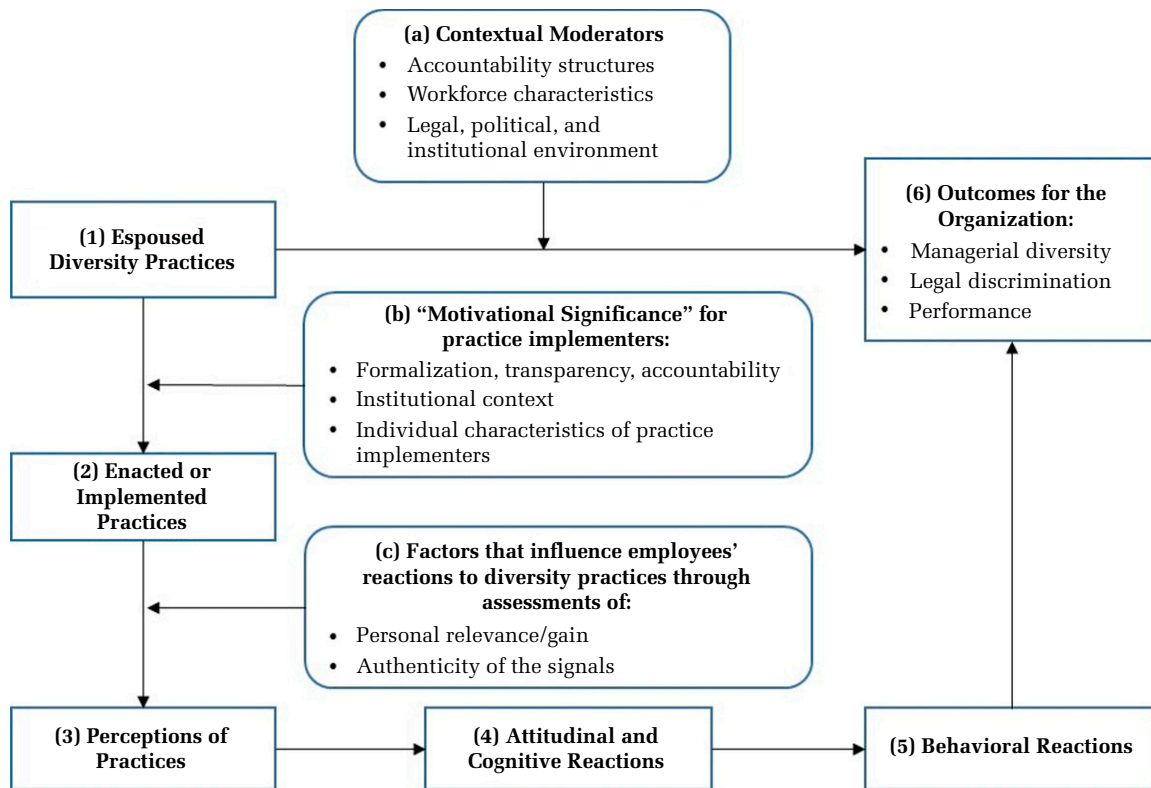
<sup>2</sup> We searched for relevant articles using a combination of search strategies within the ISI Web of Science database. For research on diversity-specific practices, we conducted queries using Boolean operators to combine the terms diversity OR discrimination AND organization together with variants of the most commonly used labels for diversity practices, including: affirmative action, equal employment, equal opportunity, diversity program, diversity practice, training, climate, employee resource group, business resource group, work-life, work-family, mentor\*, sponsor\*, affinity, network\*, metric\*, top management team, leader\*, and accountab\*. To find relevant published research on the bureaucratization or formalization of practices as a means of reducing bias, we used similar Boolean operators together with labels for more general HR practices, including: formaliz\*, transparen\*, performance evaluation, performance appraisal, recruiting, hiring, selection, advancement, and training. In the end, a total of approximately 100 articles were included in our review.

limited our review to empirical articles that offered clear evidence about relationships between diversity practices and outcomes. Theoretical and/or review articles were excluded on this basis. We also excluded most of the articles on diversity climate for this reason. We found that most diversity climate measures collapse employees' perceptions of diversity practices together with their perceptions of what could be considered outcomes of diversity practices (e.g., prejudice, similarity among employees) and/or moderators of their effectiveness (e.g., leadership commitment), thereby obscuring our ability to pinpoint what exactly was being measured and how to categorize it (Dwertmann, Nishii, & van Knippenberg, 2016; McKay & Avery, 2015).

### Preview of Major Themes that Emerge from Our Literature Review

In our review, approximately two-thirds of the dependent variables examined were at the individual-level; the rest were focused on organizational-level outcomes. We found that in some instances, macro-level research appears to provide consistent evidence about the positive outcomes associated with a particular practice, whereas micro research suggests that the same practice may actually be associated not only with the absence of positive outcomes, but even negative ones, suggesting that the design and implementation of practices matter. In other instances, the opposite was true, where despite equivocal findings from macro research, a clearer pattern emerged from micro research. Indeed, we concluded that only one-third of the studies in our review reported results that were clearly consistent with theoretical expectations, about half reported mixed results, and the rest failed to find support for hypothesized relationships. Because the underlying causal mechanisms are often not empirically examined in macro research, and managerial self-reports or proxy measures of diversity practices limit our understanding of how practices are actually implemented, it is difficult to explain why the pattern of results is not always consistent across studies, practices, or target groups (e.g., women versus minorities). Micro research provides some clues when it unpacks the range of employee responses to diversity practices. However, the lack of integration between micro- and macro-level research leaves us with a piecemeal understanding of the effectiveness of diversity practices: neither sufficiently furthers our understanding of the effectiveness of diversity practices by itself, and the findings from the two are

**FIGURE 1**  
**Process Model**



difficult to integrate because of the use of different operationalizations of diversity practices and theoretical foci. In the following section, we provide an overview of the research by practice.

### Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Policies

Affirmative action programs (AAPs) range in the “strength” of their approach to reducing discrimination (Kovach, Kravitz, & Hughes, 2004). The term is often interpreted to refer to the practice of advantaging members of target groups over equally qualified majority group candidates, or in the most extreme cases (only when court-mandated) over more qualified majority group members, in hiring and promotion decisions. Weaker forms of AAPs, referred to as “equal opportunity,” involve the adoption of a broad set of strategies for eliminating overt discrimination in employment decisions. They include the reduction of subjective biases in decision-making through the adoption of accountability measures, written guidelines, and/or practices that reduce managerial discretion (e.g., formal

job tests, written performance evaluations, and grievance procedures). In macro-level research, measurement of AAPs/EO has ranged from the presence of an (ambiguously defined) “affirmative action plan” (Dobbin, Schrage, & Kalev, 2015; Kalev, 2009, 2014), EEOC discrimination charge (Kalev, 2014; Skaggs, 2008, 2009), federal contractor status (Hirsh & Kornrich, 2008), and EO policies (Armstrong et al., 2010). Although macro research overall tends to show that AAPs/EO are associated with a reduction in the representation of White men in management, support for their positive impact on minority representation in management varies across studies and target groups (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev, 2009, 2014; Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006). It is unclear whether inconsistent findings are due to differences in the strength of AAPs/EO reflected in the measurement proxies used across studies or the severity of underrepresentation and/or legal pressures for target groups across organizational contexts (e.g., Hispanic women versus Black men). Research conducted within the micro-domain provides additional clues for why the relationship between AAPs/EO adoption

**TABLE 1**  
**Literature Review Results by Diversity Practice**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Affirmative action (AA)/equal opportunity (EO) policies				
Race/ethnicity	*Evaluative judgments *Stereotype application	*Social dominance orientation (SDO) *Job status of applicant	There is no main effect of labeling an AA beneficiary on evaluative judgments. SDO moderates the relationship such that evaluators high in SDO have lower job performance expectations of beneficiaries although negative evaluations are attenuated when the beneficiary's job status is high.	Aquino et al. (2005)
Gender	*Proportion of female participants *Task performance		More women, particularly strong performers, participate in competitions when AAPs are in place, with no reduction in overall performance of competitors.	Balafoutas and Sutter (2012)
Gender, race/ethnicity & nationality	*Performance rewards		In meritocratic systems without transparency or accountability, evidence of pay bias is found based on gender, race, and nationality among equally performing employees.	Castilla (2008)
Gender, race/ethnicity, & nationality	*Performance rewards		Implementation of accountability and transparency in pay decisions reduces the bias in performance-based rewards between non-U.S. born employees and U.S. born White men.	Castilla (2015)
Gender	*Bonus allocations		Managers in companies that emphasize meritocracy favor men over equally qualified women with monetary rewards.	Castilla and Benard (2010)
Race/ethnicity	*Organizational justice *Organizational attractiveness *Intention to apply		Race-blind AA policies elicit higher organizational justice perceptions than race-conscious policies among Black study participants. Justice perceptions influence organizational attractiveness and intentions to apply.	Cropanzano et al. (2005)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Adoption of equal opportunity and diversity programs		Corporate culture, external pressure in the form of industry prevalence, and internal pressure from female managers are associated with increased adoption of EO and diversity programs (although absence of workforce diversity is not).	Dobbin et al. (2011)
Gender	*Sex-related differences in formalized & less-formalized pay	*Workforce gender composition *Employee gender	A higher proportion of women in a job and lower formalization of pay are associated with lower earnings for workers in those jobs. Women's bonuses are on average 25% less than men's.	Elvira and Graham (2002)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Race/ethnicity	*Stigmatization		Stigmatization (attributions about performance) occur under the illegal form of AA but not the legal form of AA or the EO condition.	Evans (2003)
Race/ethnicity	*Principled objections to affirmative action	*Education level of non-beneficiary	Actual opposition to AA is strongly related to principled objections. Conservatism, individualism, and group-dominance variables are all predictive of principled objections; education level of the non-beneficiary influences the predictive power of these antecedents.	Federico and Sidanius (2002)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Contract negotiations in unionized settings require increase formalization of policies and practices which enhance managerial diversity.	Ferguson (2015)
Race/ethnicity	*Unfairness judgment	*Opposition to equality *Racial/ethnic identification *Meritocracy preference	White evaluators who endorse more egalitarian goals rate the rejection of a White candidate as less unfair than the rejection of an Asian over a Black candidate, whereas a White evaluator opposed to equality perceives it as more unfair.	Gu et al. (2014)
Gender	*Attitudes toward EO policy *Behavioral intentions to promote EE policy		Gender-based EO policies can trigger self-image threat and negative reactions from both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Self-image threats can be mitigated with self-affirmation tasks.	Hideg and Ferris (2014)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Behavioral Intention to Promote Policy *Actual EE-related behavior		Non-beneficiaries who have an instrumental voice in formulating EO policies are more likely to promote the policy. Psychological ownership is the mediating mechanism which facilitates these outcomes.	Hideg et al. (2011)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Occupational segregation by sex and race		EO enforcement is the strongest predictor of sex desegregation in organizations; discrimination charges have a NS impact. For racial desegregation, organizational factors are most influential.	Hirsh (2009)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Sex discrimination charges *Race, color, or national-origin discrimination charges		Workplace opportunity structures that suggest equitable employment practices reduce likelihood of formal discrimination charges. Because they are subject to AA requirements, federal contract establishments have significantly lower reasonable-cause rates than non-contractors.	Hirsh and Kornrich (2008)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Race/ethnicity	*Satisfaction with promotion opportunities *Organizational attractiveness	*Modern racism	Compared with a generally framed EO/AA policy, policies benefiting Black employees are rated as less attractive and less likely to provide satisfying promotion opportunities for White employees; effect is exacerbated by modern racism.	James et al. (2001)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		The presence of an AAP had negative effects for White men, positive effects for Black men, but NS for White or Black women.	Kalev (2009)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity	*Downsizing	Negative effect of AAP for White men, NS for White women, Black men and women. In downsizing organizations, AAPs retain more Black women and men but NS for White women or men.	Kalev (2014)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Presence of AAPs has negative effects for White men, positive effects for White women and Black men, and NS for Black women.	Kalev et al. (2006)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Performance evaluations *Objective performance		AAPs reduce others' evaluations of perceived competence and warmth and performance of beneficiary. AAPs increase beneficiaries' perceptions of stereotyping by others, and reduce self-competence, state affect, and performance evaluations.	Leslie et al. (2014)
Race/ethnicity	*Support for policy *Perceived fairness of policy	*Racial identity	When framed as a loss for White representation, racial identity negatively related to policy support (mediated by perceived fairness), but no effect when framed as gains in Black representation or no change in White representation.	Lowery et al. (2006)
Gender	*Organizational attractiveness	*Gender centrality *Positive affirmative action attitudes *Strong discrimination beliefs	For women with positive AA attitudes, positive relationship between diversity programs for women and organizational attractiveness, but relationship negative for women with more negative AA attitudes. Women with higher gender identity centrality and men with lower gender identity centrality reacted more positively to higher proportions of women in top management.	Martins and Parson (2007)
Gender	*Tournament entry		AA framing increase entries from women and decrease entries from men. AA does not reduce overall performance of tournament participants.	Niederle et al. (2013)



**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Sexual orientation	*Perceived workplace discrimination *Disclose sexual orientation		Employees in organizations that were covered by protective legislation and had written non-discrimination policies including sexual orientation were less likely to perceive discrimination and more likely to disclose their sexual orientation.	Ragins and Cornwell (2001)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Opposition to affirmative action	Education	Conservatives oppose AA for Blacks more than other groups (i.e. women); group-based stereotypes mediate the relationship between conservatism and AA attitudes.	Reyna et al. (2006)
Majorities/minorities, gender, educational background	*Support for AAP *Causality from AA *Adverse effect on non-beneficiary *Procedural fairness		The extent to which those harmed by a selection procedure are identifiable is associated with higher perceptions of harm, less support for the policy, and lower perceptions of fairness for the non-beneficiary; relationships mediated by perception that AA is the cause for the admittance decision.	Ritov and Zamir (2014)
Race/ethnicity	*Perceptions of White disadvantage *Perceived unfairness	*Modern racism beliefs *Collective deprivation beliefs	White participants high in modern racism or collective relative deprivation beliefs perceive White disadvantage in organizations with race-based AAPs, and in turn report lower perceived fairness of selection and promotion policies.	Shteynberg et al. (2011)
Gender	*Female managerial representation		Sex discrimination lawsuit filings, in the context of progressive federal courts, significantly enhance women's managerial representation in both the short- and long term.	Skaggs (2008)
Race/ethnicity	*African-American managerial representation	*Federal court ideology *Percent minority and female judges	Discrimination lawsuits lead to increases in African-American managerial representation. Federal court gender and racial/ethnic diversity and judicial ideology are also influential on managerial representation.	Skaggs (2009)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Self-esteem *Self-competence		The belief that AA is a quota boosts White men's self-competence and shields their self-esteem from negative feedback.	Unzueta et al. (2008)
Race/ethnicity	*Organizational attractiveness	*Prejudice *Equity sensitivity *Self-efficacy	Equity sensitivity, self-efficacy, and prejudice moderate the relationship between recruitment statement type (i.e. AA, EO, or none) and organizational attractiveness. Entitled participants, those high in self-efficacy, and those high in prejudice more likely to have negative reactions to AA.	Walker et al. (2007)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Targeted recruiting Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Recruitment programs for women increase the representation of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian women; Recruitment programs for minorities increase representation of Black men and women.	Dobbin et al. (2015)
Race/ethnicity	*Unfair treatment *Anti-White discrimination *Cardiovascular measures		High status group members (i.e. White and/or male) were more concerned about unfair treatment, expected greater likelihood of anti-White discrimination, and exhibited increased cardiovascular threat profiles when companies exhibited pro-diversity messages.	Dover et al. (2016)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Presence of targeted recruiting has positive impact for White women as well as Black women and men.	Kalev (2014) <sup>a</sup>
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Presence of targeted recruiting has positive impact for White women, Black women and men; negative for White men.	Kalev et al. (2006) <sup>a</sup>
Race/ethnicity	*Perceived racial diversity *Trust and comfort *Estimated salary *Organizational attractiveness		Blacks, but not Whites, evaluate organizations that have more phenotypically stereotypical Black members as being higher in organizational attractiveness and social identity–related trust and comfort, having higher salaries, and being more diverse.	Kahn et al. (2015)
Race/ethnicity	*Inferences about treatment of employees and relationships among employees *Job pursuit intentions	*Ethnic identity	A brochure with a diversity statement, as opposed to no statement, elicits more positive perceptions about the organization's treatment of employees and the relationships among employees as well as higher job pursuit intentions for individuals with higher ethnic identity.	Kim and Gelfand (2003)
Gender	*Organizational attraction	*Gender centrality *Affirmative action attitudes *Discrimination beliefs	Women with high gender identity centrality are attracted to organizations with diversity programs and a higher proportion of women in top management. Women with positive AA attitudes attracted to organization with diversity programs. Women with strong beliefs that gender discrimination exists more attracted to organizations with high proportion of women in top management.	Martins and Parson (2007)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

<b>Diversity Dimensions</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Moderator</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Author Information</b>
Race/ethnicity	*Likelihood of applying to a Job	*Conscientiousness *Description of company *Innovativeness	Black applicants apply to more companies regardless of job description. Conscientious Black applicants are more likely to apply to a company described as innovative than White applicants.	Newman and Lyon (2009)
Race/ethnicity	*Organizational attraction	*Need to belong	White participants who have a high need to belong rate an organization as less attractive when there is a multicultural diversity message compared with a color-blind message.	Plaut et al. (2011)
Age	*Organizational attraction	*Availability of flexible work arrangements *Mentoring/training opportunities	Mature workers more attracted to recruiting ads containing EO statement targeted to mature workers, flexible work arrangements, and mentoring/training opportunities; effect of all three practices together stronger than sum of individual practice effects on organizational attraction.	Rau and Adams (2005)
Gender	*Managerial diversity		Recruitment through informal networks favors men for managerial jobs. Use of open recruitment methods improves proportion of women in managerial jobs.	Reskin and McBrier (2000)
Race/ethnicity	*Time spent viewing website *Recall of website information		Both Black and White participants spend more time viewing a recruitment website with racial diversity cues and have better recall. Relationships stronger for Black respondents and predicted organizational attractiveness for them.	Walker et al. (2012)
Diversity training	*Reactions to training *Cognitive learning *Attitudinal/affective learning *Behavioral learning	*Context *Design *Trainees	Diversity training effects stronger for reactions to training and cognitive learning but also significant for behavioral and attitudinal/affective learning. Time weakens effects on reactions to training and attitudinal/affective learning but not cognitive learning. Context, design, and trainees influence outcomes.	Bezrukova et al. (2016)
Gender	*Team performance	*Diversity	Sex-balanced teams perform worse, but only when there is high participation in diversity training programs.	Ely (2004)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

<b>Diversity Dimensions</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Moderator</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Author Information</b>
Nationality	*Team creativity	*Team diversity beliefs *Team nationality diversity	Diversity training enhances team efficacy and creativity when nationality diversity is high and the team has less positive pre-training diversity beliefs. Diversity training was ineffective or detrimental when there was low nationality diversity and less positive diversity beliefs.	Homan et al. (2015)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Diversity training has a negative impact for Black women; NS for White men, White women, and Black men.	Kalev et al. (2006)
	*Affective-based *Cognitive-based *Skill-based	*Social interaction *Trainee motivation	Diversity training has a positive effect on affective-, cognitive-, and skill-based outcomes; although the magnitude varied among outcomes. Social interaction and trainee motivation variables interact with main effects to influence outcomes.	Kalinoski et al. (2013)
Race/ethnicity	*Experience of ethnic discrimination	*Minority status	Non-White employees perceive less discrimination when there is greater prevalence of diversity training.	King et al. (2012)
Age	*Evaluations of older applicants	*Cognitive busyness	Cognitively busy raters instructed to suppress older worker stereotypes more likely to rate older applicant negatively.	Kulik et al. (2000)
	*Training interest *Training attendance		High-diversity competence individuals pre-training are more likely to be interested and attend training than low-diversity competence individuals. Demographics were not predictive.	Kulik et al. (2007)
Mentoring	*Compensation *Promotions *Intention to stay *Career satisfaction *Job satisfaction *Mentor satisfaction		Career mentoring more strongly related to objective career success outcomes than attitudinal outcomes. Career and psychosocial mentoring have comparable relationships with job and career satisfaction. Psychosocial mentoring more strongly related to mentor satisfaction than career mentoring.	Allen et al. (2004)
	*Retention *Performance-based pay	*Use of reduced-hours program	Employees on reduced-hours program have greater retention and performance-based pay when initially assigned to a powerful supervisor because of improved access to reputation-building work opportunities.	Briscoe and Kellogg (2011)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
	*Attitudinal outcomes *Behavioral outcomes *Health-related outcomes *Career-related outcomes		Protégé perceptions of increased instrumental support and relationship quality are positively related to situational satisfaction, whereas perceptions of psychosocial support are associated with sense of affiliation.	Eby et al. (2013)
	*Career-related support *Psychosocial support		Negative mentoring experiences more common in formal than informal relationships. Negative mentoring results in reduced career-related and psychosocial support.	Eby et al. (2004)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Mentoring has positive impact for Black women, but NS for Black men, White men, and White women.	Kalev et al. (2006)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Job involvement *Self-esteem at work *Propensity to leave the organization		Psychosocial mentoring higher in same-sex and same-race dyads (than cross-sex/race). Psychosocial mentoring predicted increased job involvement and self-esteem at work and decreased intentions to leave.	Koberg et al. (1998)
Age, tenure, education, and functional expertise	*Perceived vocational support *Perceived psychosocial support		Demographic similarity plays a greater role for mentors than for protégés, especially in the beginning of relationship. Deep-level similarity is important for both.	Lankau et al. (2005)
	*Job satisfaction *Role ambiguity *Turnover		Personal learning mediates negative relationship between mentoring and role ambiguity, and positive relationship with job satisfaction. Mentoring also related to turnover.	Lankau and Scandura (2002)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Additional board appointments		Female and racial minority first-time directors receive less mentoring than traditional corporate elite members, which leads to fewer additional board appointments.	McDonald and Westphal (2013)
Race/ethnicity	*Psychosocial, instrumental, and networking support		Graduate students of color with same-race mentors report more psychosocial and instrumental support; relationship mediated by interpersonal comfort and commitment.	Ortiz-Walters and Gilson (2005)
	*Number of promotions *Current annual salary *Career satisfaction		The extent to which an employee received career sponsorship is positively related to salary level, promotions throughout the career, and career satisfaction.	Seibert et al. (2001)
	*Protégé success	*Mentor success *Duration of relationship	Mentoring is beneficial for protégé if mentor is objectively successful in career but harmful if mentor is not successful. Long-term relationships are beneficial for protégés with successful mentors (but harmful with unsuccessful mentors).	Tonidandel et al. (2007)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Perceptions of mentoring	*Duration of the relationship	Gender/race similarity positively related to mentoring received; negative effects of perceived dissimilarity on mentoring received decrease over time.	Turban et al. (2002)
	*Met expectations *Relationship effectiveness *Trust		Met expectations of mentoring mediates the relationship between career and social support behaviors and perceptions of the effectiveness of the relationship and trust.	Young and Perrewe (2000)
Employee Resource Groups Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Employee networking and support groups have positive impact for White and Hispanic women; negative for Black men; NS for Black women, Hispanic men, and Asians.	Dobbin et al. (2015) <sup>a</sup>
Race/ethnicity	*Promotion rates *Psychosocial support		Black managers report slower promotion rates and less psychosocial support than Whites, explained by lower proportion of strong-tie networks.	James (2000)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Networking programs have positive impact for White women; negative for White and Black men; NS for Black women.	Kalev et al. (2006)
Sexual orientation	*Perceptions of workplace heterosexism *Organizational commitment *Decision to disclose sexual orientation		The presence of gay and lesbian resource-support groups reduce perceptions of workplace heterosexism and increase organizational commitment and the likelihood to disclose sexual orientation.	Ragins and Cornwell (2001)
Work–life benefits Gender	*Shareholder returns	*Proportion of women in the firm *Industry	Announcement of work–family initiatives is positively related to share price. Share prices positively affected by announcements of AA awards and negatively by discrimination lawsuits. Industry and proportion of women in the firm also affect these relationships.	Arthur (2003)
Gender	*Firm productivity		Positive correlation between family-friendly workplace practices (FFWPs) and firm productivity disappears once other quality management practices are included. Provision of FFWPs positively associated with proportion of skilled and female workers and better management practices.	Bloom et al. (2011)
	*Performance pay *Attrition	*Initial assignment to a supervisor	Initial assignment to powerful supervisor positively related to performance pay and negatively with attrition for users of work–family programs.	Briscoe and Kellogg (2011)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Gender	*Work attitudes (job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intentions to stay)	*Proportion of women *Percentage of married-cohabitating respondents *Percentage of sample with dependents	*Work-family support policy availability and use associated with more positive work attitudes; stronger for availability. *Relationship between policy availability and work attitudes mediated by family-supportive organizational perceptions; relationship between policy use and work attitudes mediated by reduced work-to-family conflict. *The proportion of women, the percentage of married or cohabitating respondents, and the percentage of respondents with dependents are all significant moderators.	Butts et al. (2012)
	*Job pursuit intentions		Availability of work-life benefits is predictive of anticipated organizational support for job applicants, which predicts job pursuit intentions.	Casper and Buffardi (2004)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Work-life benefits have positive impact for all women and Asian men; negative impact for White men.	Dobbin et al. (2015) <sup>a</sup>
Gender	*Percentage of female senior managers		Number of work-life practices in 1994 positively associated with percentage of female senior managers in 1999.	Dreher (2003)
Gender	*Work-to-family conflict *Job Satisfaction		Use of work-family benefits increased family-to-work conflict for women. Use, but not availability, of work-life benefits is positively related to job satisfaction over time.	Hammer et al. (2005)
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		No significant impact of work-family accommodations on managerial diversity (among sample of downsizing firms).	Kalev (2014) <sup>a</sup>
Race/ethnicity & gender	*Managerial diversity		Work-family benefits have positive impact for White and Black women; negative for White men; NS for Black men.	Kalev et al. (2006) <sup>a</sup>
Gender	*Women in management	*Proportion of women in the organization in 2006	Work-life practices positively related to proportion of women in management but only after an eight-year lag, and only in firms where the proportion of women was at or above the mean in earlier years.	Kalysh et al. (2016)
	*Organizational citizenship behaviors		Perceived work-life benefit usefulness, but not benefit use, was associated with organizational citizenship behaviors.	Lambert (2000)

**TABLE 1**  
**(Continued)**

Diversity Dimensions	Dependent Variable	Moderator	Results	Author Information
Gender	*Gender wage disparities		Gender wage disparities appear to be smaller in countries with developed family-friendly policies until cross-country differences in wage structures are taken into account.	Mandel and Semyonov (2005)
	*Organizational performance *Market performance *Profit/sales growth	*Firm age *Proportion of women in the firm	Range of work–family policies offered is positively associated with organizational and market performance, profit and sales growth; effects are stronger for older firms and firms with higher proportions of women.	Perry-Smith and Blum (2000)
Sexual orientation	*Disclosure of sexual orientation *Perceived workplace discrimination		Availability of same-sex domestic partner benefits (along with a variety of other policies and practices) associated with lower perceived workplace discrimination and greater likelihood of disclosure of sexual orientation.	Ragins and Cornwell (2001)

NS = not significant

<sup>a</sup> The diversity practice was measured as a control in this study.

and the distal outcome of managerial diversity may be mixed. Employees react differently to AAPs/EO depending on their beneficiary status and how the adoption of AAPs is justified (see Table 1 for details).

Research on AAPs/EO that involve the formalization of, and/or accountability for, HR decision-making also fails to provide consistent evidence of positive outcomes, and in fact has been found to relate negatively to managerial representation for some target groups. For research on the formalization of practices, this may be because some bureaucratic reforms more effectively reduce managerial bias by increasing accountability in decision-making, whereas others trigger managerial resistance (Dobbin et al., 2015), and/or because some formalized guidelines for decision-making serve to replicate existing structural inequalities (Kalev, 2014). With regard to research on accountability, inconsistent results may be explained by the range of proxies that have been used, including the presence of a diversity manager or committee, the inclusion of EO goals in the performance evaluation of managers, federal contractor status, and legal oversight of employment decisions (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev, 2014; Kalev et al., 2006). Overall, findings more

consistently support hypothesized relationships when the focus is on enacted practices and more proximal dependent variables that are narrower in bandwidth than managerial diversity (Castilla, 2008, 2015; Elvira & Graham, 2002; Koch, D’Mello, & Sackett, 2015).

### Targeted Recruiting

The goal of targeted recruiting efforts is to increase the diversity of the candidate pool. There are several ways in which organizations can target minority job applicants, such as placing ads in targeted media outlets or by including EO statements in their job ads (Avery & McKay, 2006). Macro research provides support for the positive effects of targeted recruiting on the managerial representation for some but not all target groups (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev, 2014; Kalev et al., 2006). Given the generic way in which targeted recruiting is often operationalized in macro research, it is difficult to know whether group differences represent real differences in the effectiveness of targeted recruiting for improving managerial diversity or measurement error (e.g., variability in the way practices are actually implemented across organizations).



Some research has asked specifically about an organization's reliance on targeted recruiting sources (Kalev et al., 2006), but unless specified, questions about the use of targeted recruiting practices could instead be interpreted by organizational respondents as asking about efforts to tailor recruiting messages to appeal to diverse applicants (Rau & Adams, 2005). The distinction is important as micro research suggests that pro-diversity recruitment messages improve organizational attraction and job pursuit intentions for some applicants but not others, depending on surface-level demographics and deeper-level identity (Kahn, Unzueta, Davies, Alston, & Lee, 2015; Kim & Gelfand, 2003; Martins & Parsons, 2007; Plaut, Garnett, Buffardi, & Sanchez-Burks, 2011; Walker, Feild, Bernerth, & Becton, 2012).

### Training

Diversity training aims to reduce bias and discrimination among employees from different backgrounds (Kalinowski et al., 2013) and to improve collaboration by capitalizing on the different perspectives within diverse groups (Homan, Buengeler, Eckhoff, van Ginkel, & Voelpel, 2015). The results of the effectiveness of diversity training are mixed; whether its *presence* improves, decreases, or has no effect on managerial diversity depends on the target group (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev et al., 2006). When it comes to the relationship between training *participation* and outcomes, results tend to be more encouraging, with evidence of higher unit performance (Homan et al., 2015) and commitment (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001) and lower levels of discrimination (King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2012). However, the extent to which diversity training is associated with positive attitudinal outcomes depends on factors that impact trainee motivation (Bezrukova, Spell, Perry, & Jehn, 2016; Holladay, Knight, Paige, & Quiñones, 2003; Kalinowski et al., 2013; Sanchez & Medkik, 2004).

### Mentoring

Macro research that links the *presence* of a mentoring program with improvements in managerial diversity yields mixed results depending on the target group; although mentoring appears to improve managerial diversity among Black women, the same is not true for White women or Black men (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev et al., 2006). Research that assesses *participation* in mentoring provides more consistent

positive support, although effectiveness has been measured in a wide variety of ways including self-reports of promotions and salary growth (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004), retention (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011), performance-based pay (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011), appointments to multiple boards (McDonald & Westphal, 2013), and career satisfaction (Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001). Overall, micro research shows that employee reactions to mentoring, as well as the more general organizational attitudes that follow, depend on the quality of the mentoring relationship, in particular, the extent of career and psychosocial support provided (Allen et al., 2004; Eby et al., 2013; Eby, Butts, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004; Seibert et al., 2001; Young & Perrewe, 2000). Because mentoring quality is influenced by the demographic characteristics of both the mentor and mentee (Lankau, Riordan, & Thomas, 2005; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005), as well as by communication and interaction frequency (Koberg, Boss, & Goodman, 1998; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000), it is not surprising that findings from macro research on the outcomes associated with program adoption have been mixed.

### Employee Resource Groups

ERGs are voluntary, employee-led groups that are organized around a shared identity (e.g., disability) and whose activities are often aligned with the organization's mission and business objectives in some way (Catalyst, 2016). Macro research does not provide consistent evidence about the positive impact of ERGs and managerial diversity across target groups (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev et al., 2006; Richard, Roh, & Pieper, 2013). However, micro research that has focused on outcomes that are more proximal suggests that ERGs may indeed be valuable for promoting more inclusive perceptions about the organizational culture, comfort in disclosing stigmatized identities and the development of supportive social networks (James, 2000; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).

### Work-Life Benefits

Work-life benefits refer to a range of benefits—such as flexible work arrangements and child- and elder-care services—designed to help employees meet their non-work needs so that they can maintain high levels of productivity and well-being (Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010; Young, 1999). Macro research consistently provides evidence of positive organizational outcomes associated with the

adoption of work–family benefits, including increases in women’s proportion of managerial positions (Dobbin et al., 2015; Dreher, 2003; Kaley et al., 2006; Kalysh, Kulik, & Perera, 2016) and a reduction in gender wage disparities (Mandel & Semyonov, 2005). The adoption of work–life benefits is also positively associated with firm performance (Arthur, 2003; Bloom, Kretschmer, & Van Reenen, 2011; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000), with evidence suggesting that the strength of the relationship increases with the proportion of women in the organization (Arthur, 2003; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). However, micro-level research that has shown that benefit availability is more strongly associated with employee satisfaction, commitment, and intentions to stay than benefit use (Butts, Casper, & Yang, 2012) suggests that macro-level findings should perhaps be interpreted with caution and that more research that directly examines the mechanisms through which work–life benefits are associated with outcomes is needed. On the one hand, benefit availability may enhance organizational outcomes by aiding in the attraction of high-quality talent (Casper & Buffardi, 2004) and by enhancing employees’ contributions based on the principles of social exchange (Lambert, 2000). However, positive outcomes may be attenuated by the fact that use of work–family benefits can reduce performance pay or increase likelihood of attrition (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011). In addition, women who use work–family supports may experience *higher* levels of work–life conflict (Hammer, Neal, Newsom, Brockwood, & Colton, 2005), which could adversely affect their performance and advancement. Notably, this same effect on conflict is not found for men, which may exacerbate inequalities (Hammer et al., 2005).

## Summary

Conclusions about the effectiveness of diversity practices vary across studies and levels of analysis; making sense of the overall pattern is not easy (Bezrukova, Jehn, & Spell, 2012; Curtis & Dreachslin, 2008; Kulik & Roberson, 2008; Seymen, 2006). Operationalizations of effectiveness differ in their focus on individual versus aggregate levels of analysis, as well as their conceptual focus on attitudes, behaviors, numerical representation, discrimination, and/or performance. The relationships between diversity practices—which themselves have been operationalized differently as espoused versus enacted practices—and outcomes also appear to be moderated by contextual and individual-difference

factors. Furthermore, although a wide range of theoretical mechanisms have been invoked to explain the outcomes associated with diversity practices, these mechanisms are often assumed rather than measured, and thus it is difficult to be certain which practices trigger which mechanisms under what conditions and for whom.

## A PROCESS MODEL APPROACH TO INTERPRETING RESEARCH FINDINGS

As revealed by our review, the predominant assumption in macro-level research is that the effect of a practice largely resides in the “what” of a practice and not in its specific implementation or whether employees react as intended to the practice (Ostroff & Bowen, 2016; Wright & Nishii, 2013). By contrast, although micro-level research tends to focus more on some of these nuances (Homan et al., 2015; Lowery et al., 2006), practices are often studied in isolation or in the laboratory using static descriptions of fictitious practices, thereby limiting our understanding of how results might generalize to organizational contexts in which practices co-occur with other practices and interact with the broader organizational features. The difficulty of knowing how to integrate the two bodies of research is nontrivial. How should macro-level findings about the effects of specific practices or their co-occurrence be interpreted in light of results from micro research which suggests that the “how” and “why” of practice implementation must also be considered to understand practice effectiveness? Should null effects associated with certain practices be interpreted wholesale as such, or instead as evidence that sources of lower-level variance in practice implementation and effectiveness combine in ways that lead to the appearance of null (direct) effects? What is still lacking is a framework that synthesizes the disparate research in a way that explicates how organizational-level practices influence employee perceptions, skills and abilities, and behaviors (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Wright & Nishii, 2013), and in turn the process of emergence (Ployhart & Moliterno, 2011) through which employee responses become reflected in aggregate outcomes.

Our overwhelming conclusion after reviewing the literature is that we are left with a piecemeal understanding of the effectiveness of diversity practices at both the individual and organizational levels of analysis, with studies representing a wide variety of the stages of the process through which diversity practices might be presumed to relate to

organizational outcomes. With that said, when we combine the disparate set of research results together, clear evidence of a process model emerges, which we present in Figure 1 and describe next. To start, we discuss the direct path between espoused practices and organizational outcomes as well as the factors that moderate this relationship. Next, we distinguish espoused from enacted or actual practices to account for the fact that not all practices are implemented as intended, nor are they operationalized the same way across organizations. The extent to which espoused practices are implemented effectively and as intended is determined by moderators that enhance or detract from the felt motivation to implement them carefully and reliably. Next in our model come employees' perceptions of and reactions to implemented practices. We assume, as others have (Nishii, Lepak, & Schneider, 2008), that people's interpretation of the personal meaning and consequences of a practice are shaped both by people's self-systems (Mischel & Shoda, 1995) and by relevant cues in the environment (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Depending on how practices have been interpreted by individuals, they elicit different attitudinal and affective reactions. These differ from the attitudinal reactions in the preceding stage in that here, practice-specific attitudes (e.g., support for a practice) are translated into attitudes about the self, others, one's career, or the organization (i.e., no longer about the practice itself). Attitudinal and affective reactions drive behavior (Fiske & Taylor, 2013). Although in theory we expect that relevant behavioral responses include those related to one's self-identity (e.g., disclosure), job (e.g., task performance), organization (e.g., turnover, discretionary behaviors), and coworkers (e.g., discrimination, relationship building), available research involving behavioral responses to practices was very slim. Behaviors in turn interact and emerge in ways that explain organizational outcomes.

Below, we interpret the research findings that emerged across practices through the lens of this process model. They are categorized in Table 2 according to stages in the process model. As will become evident, many of the inconsistencies can be understood by differentiating existing research in terms of where or how they fall within our process model. It is important to recognize upfront that there is variability in the way that constructs are conceptualized and measured in each of the stages of the model and that studies about the same practice involve constructs at different stages, with some empirically assessing mediating and moderating mechanisms and others

simply assuming them. Altogether, we see that there remain significant gaps in our knowledge, particularly regarding underlying mechanisms and the emergence processes through which individual-level attitudes and behaviors impact organizational-level outcomes.

### **Relationships between Espoused Diversity Practices and Outcomes for Organizations**

In evaluating the effectiveness of diversity practices, we begin by examining firm-level research on the relationship between (espoused) diversity practices and the three most commonly cited goals of diversity practices (Gelfand et al., 2005): improvements in managerial diversity, the reduction or elimination of legal challenges of discrimination, and enhanced organizational performance. By far, the most commonly researched organizational outcome variable at the firm-level of analysis is managerial diversity. The overwhelming consensus from research about AAPs/EO, formalization of personnel policies, diversity training, mentoring, and ERGs is that the relationship between their adoption and managerial diversity differs across target groups (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev, 2009, 2014; Kalev et al., 2006). By contrast, the impact of adopting targeted recruiting (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev, 2014; Kalev et al., 2006), work-life benefits (Dobbin et al., 2015; Dreher, 2003; Kalev et al., 2006), and a diversity committee or dedicated diversity staff (Kalev et al., 2006) on managerial diversity appears to be more consistently positive across target groups. There are several explanations for why the adoption of diversity practices does not appear to consistently explain increases in managerial diversity across target groups. If the underlying theoretical mechanisms relied upon to explain hypothesized relationships between diversity practices and managerial diversity are the right ones, then one would expect to see a practice increase managerial diversity for all target groups studied, and yet this has often not been the case. Because these mechanisms are most often assumed rather than assessed empirically, it has not been possible to pinpoint factors (and at what stages of our process model) might explain differential outcomes across target groups. Another key reason, described in more detail, is the independent variable in these studies reflects espoused practices; thus, the actual practices that are implemented across the organizations may vary significantly, as may the motivation to implement them carefully rather than merely symbolically.

In addition to managerial diversity, some research has examined the relationship between diversity practice adoption and firm financial performance. For example, research has found some evidence of a direct relationship between the adoption of work–life initiatives and organizational performance (Arthur, 2003; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). Although there are a number of possible explanations for the observed relationship between work–life initiatives and firm performance, the most commonly cited one is that they enhance a firm’s legitimacy to key stakeholders and, therefore, increase accessibility to resources (Arthur, 2003; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). Other evidence suggests that diversity policies and practices contribute to firm performance above and beyond the effects of high-performance work systems (Armstrong et al., 2010).

Regarding the direct relationship between the adoption of diversity initiatives and legal discrimination, we uncovered surprisingly little research. An exception is research by Hirsh and Kornrich (2008), who show that when employees experience discrimination at work, their choice to file a formal claim is informed by workplace factors that suggest that their experience was unlawful and, therefore, the employer is to blame. They found that the formalization of personnel practices (assessed with organizational size as a proxy) within an organization reduces the prevalence of discrimination charges, presumably because formalized practices signal to employees that the employer cares about minimizing bias in employment decisions.

At first glance, organizational-level research does not appear to offer a clear picture about the effectiveness of diversity practices. Indeed, the ways in which the outcomes of diversity practices are manifested are complex and nuanced. The results of our review suggest that for diversity practices to yield desired outcomes, practitioners and scholars alike need to consider the sources of within-organization variability that we describe in later sections and also understand the contextual moderators of organizational-level relationships, described next.

### Macro-Level Contextual Moderators

Our review revealed three categories of contextual moderators of the organizational-level relationship between diversity practices and outcomes: a) accountability structures that motivate managers to implement practices more carefully and reliably; b) workforce characteristics, including demography

and size; and c) the external legal, political, and institutional environment.

**Accountability structures.** First, with regard to research on how accountability or responsibility structures improve the outcomes associated with diversity practices, Kalev et al. (2006) find training, EO performance evaluations of managers, networking, and mentoring were more effective when accountability structures were in place than when they were absent. Even though the effectiveness of training and EO performance evaluations of managers improved only for White women, networking programs only for Black men, and mentoring programs only for Black women, overall the pattern clearly suggests that accountability strengthens the relationship between diversity practices and managerial diversity.

Similarly, Dobbin et al. (2015) found that for some bureaucratic personnel reforms, although not all, improvements in managerial diversity were stronger in firms with established accountability mechanisms. The two forms of accountability that they assessed—federal contractor status and the presence of in-house diversity managers—appeared to exert independent (i.e., not multiplicative) effects on the effectiveness of practices, although results were better for some target groups than other. In her research on the relationship between formalized rules for downsizing and managerial diversity, Kalev (2014) found that the review of downsizing plans by an internal legal department (though not by external attorneys, or by virtue of being under federal affirmative action oversight) was associated with better post-downsizing representation of female and Black managers. Despite the somewhat inconsistent results across accountability mechanisms and target groups in all three of these studies, overall, the pattern is generally indicative of the reinforcing impact of accountability. The inconsistencies are likely explained by the fact that the presence of organizational responsibility structures was used as a proxy for accountability. It is worth noting that although these accountability structures are assumed to enhance practice effectiveness by making it more likely that practice implementation is monitored, there may be alternative mechanisms through which diversity staff/committees impact outcomes. We return to this point in our discussion of within-organization moderators in sections that follow.

**Workforce characteristics.** Workforce characteristics—including demography and size—represent the second main category of contextual moderators of the relationship between diversity practices and

organizational outcomes. Workforce demographics were most often examined as a contextual moderator for studies on work–life benefits. Kalysh et al. (2016) found that the number of work–life benefits offered is associated with increases in women in management, but only in firms with a gender-balanced workforce. They argue that this is because gender salience in firms with a low proportion of women makes gender role stereotyping more likely; in turn, the adoption of work–life initiatives accentuates feminine stereotypes and role incongruity which negates the potential benefits of work–life initiatives. Similarly, in industries that employed a higher proportion of women, researchers found the adoption of work–family initiatives had a stronger positive effect on shareholder returns (Arthur, 2003) and sales-profit growth (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). The explanation provided in both articles is that the more firms are dependent on female workers, the greater the need to adopt work–family initiatives to gain legitimacy and resources.

However, because these mechanisms are assumed but not measured, alternative explanations cannot be ruled out. It could be that higher proportions of women in the workforce mean more actual users of work–life benefits which increases the potential of leveraging positive outcomes and/or decreases stigmas associated with benefit use (Lambert, Marler, & Gueutal, 2008). Another possibility is that there are more women with external ties to leaders in other firms who serve as conduits of information about how to implement work–life benefits for optimal benefit (Cook & Glass, 2014). Finally, with more women in leadership positions and more users of work–life benefits, the costs to the organization of not implementing benefits in a way that yields positive outcomes will be greater (Arthur, 2003). Thus, organizations with a high proportion of women may be more likely to develop family-supportive organizational values and have more supervisors who engage in family-supportive behaviors (Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011), both of which have been shown to enhance the effectiveness of work–life benefits. Each one of these possible explanations involves within-organization processes, and thus may be more appropriately considered within the context of within-organization moderators within our process model.

With regard to organizational size, researchers have posed conflicting theoretical arguments. Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) argue that because large firms are at the forefront of practice adoption, they are in a more advantageous position to benefit from

increased resources that accrue from demonstrating legitimacy. Although they found that the adoption of work–family initiatives was indeed associated with higher performance, the relationship was not stronger for larger firms. By contrast, Richard et al. (2013) argued that the adoption of diversity practice bundles would be more strongly associated with firm performance for small firms because they are more agile and, therefore, able to adopt practices effectively. Their results supported their expectations. Although there is not yet enough research evidence to clarify the complex moderating role that organizational size may play, our review does suggest that organizational size may have some effect on the relationship between diversity practices and organizational outcomes.

**Legal, political, and institutional environment.** The institutional context within which an organization is embedded also influences the perceived importance of implementing diversity practices effectively. With regard to industry context, Arthur (2003) found support for her hypothesis that work–life initiatives would be associated with larger shareholder returns for firms in the high-tech industry as the highly skilled workers on which they depend for success demand more work–life benefits. She further argues that legitimacy and resource gains for adopting work–life initiatives may not materialize until the initiatives have been institutionalized, suggesting that the timing of practice adoption may moderate the outcomes. In her research, this “post-legitimation” period is marked by the timepoint at which approximately half of the firms in the Fortune 500 had instituted at least one work–family policy. She indeed finds that policy adoption is associated with increased shareholder returns only for firms that adopt them in the post-legitimation period. Work by Chuang, Church, and Ophir (2011) similarly indicates that as the number of firms that adopt a particular initiative increases, more information becomes available to other firms about how to translate legal and societal expectations into practice effectively. The implication here too is that timing of adoption matters, with later adopters having the benefit of learning from early adopters.

Finally, research suggests that an organization’s legal and political environment has important implications for diversity management because it increases the sense of urgency felt among leaders to implement practices effectively. Indirect support for this can be derived from research on the impact of AAPs on managerial diversity to the extent that findings are more consistent when AAPs are

operationalized in terms of the presence of discrimination lawsuits (Kalev et al., 2006). Dobbin et al. (2015) also found that a history of discrimination lawsuits was positively associated with managerial representation for White women, Black women, and Hispanic men, but not other target groups. The absence of positive effects for some of the target groups may be explained by the fact that the data about legal charges were not target-specific. In other words, it is not clear for which target groups the organizations may have been particularly motivated to reduce discrimination. Instead, when research explicitly matches the existence of discrimination lawsuits involving a particular target group with subsequent improvements in managerial representation for that target group (i.e., women in Skaggs, 2008; African-Americans in Skaggs, 2009), results are entirely consistent with theoretical expectations. Other research shows that the felt motivation to respond to discrimination lawsuits by engaging in efforts to increase managerial diversity is longer lasting for organizations that are based in pro-EO legal environments in which it is too costly for organizations to maintain discriminatory employment practices (Hirsh, 2009; Skaggs, 2008). The same is true for organizations based in geographic locations that are characterized by pro-gender equality values as measured by the General Social Survey (Skaggs, 2009), and for smaller firms for which the perceived cost of discrimination charges and settlements may be disproportionately larger (Hirsh, 2009). Although the legal/political environment was not modeled as a moderator per se in these studies, in each case it is assumed to exert significant pressure on organizations to implement and monitor the effectiveness of their diversity practices to demonstrably increase managerial diversity.

Overall, we found that the explanations provided for the mechanisms through which contextual moderators impact the firm-level relationship between diversity practice adoption and organizational outcomes were often speculative. Often, more than one explanatory mechanism seemed plausible. Our discussion of *within-organization* moderators in later stages of our process model (corresponding to boxes B and C in Figure 1) helps clarify how this may indeed be the case.

### Enacted or Implemented Practices

We distinguish between espoused and enacted practices out of the recognition that not all practices are enacted as espoused. It is important to distinguish between the two because it is usually not *that* a diversity practice has been adopted that accounts for

outcomes, but rather the actual design and implementation of it. Common employee complaints about how “management doesn’t walk the talk” suggest that in some cases, the adoption of diversity practices might be merely symbolic rather than substantive (Pfeffer, 1981; Zajac & Westphal, 1994). When the everyday implementation of diversity practices is decoupled from the espoused intent of the practices, they often fail to consistently achieve their goals (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Thus, it is important to distinguish between research that relies on a single organizational representative’s reports of adopted practices and research that uses employee reports of the practices that are actually in place. Not surprisingly, there is a clear macro–micro divide when it comes to the assessment of espoused versus enacted practices.

In line with this reasoning, we saw more evidence of results that were counterintuitive and/or mixed across target groups in studies that relied on espoused rather than enacted practices. For example, for accountability structures, network groups, targeted recruiting, diversity training, formalized personnel practices, and mentoring, support for hypothesized increases in managerial diversity varied across target groups (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev, 2009; Kalev et al., 2006; Richard et al., 2013). In comparison, actual *participation* in mentoring (Allen et al., 2004; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Ragins et al., 2000; Seibert et al., 2001; Tonidandel, Avery, & Phillips, 2007; Young & Perrewe, 2000), diversity training (Homan et al., 2015; Kalinoski et al., 2013; King et al., 2012), and work–life initiatives (Butts et al., 2012), and more specific operationalizations of targeted recruiting (Kim & Gelfand, 2003; Walker et al., 2012; Walker, Feild, Giles, Armenakis, & Bernerth, 2009) and formalization (Castilla, 2015; Elvira & Graham, 2002) produced more consistent findings as expected. It is worth noting, however, that the studies that assessed enacted practices also tended to involve dependent variables that are more proximal than managerial diversity, which could also explain the more consistent pattern of results.

There are three main issues that must be considered carefully when evaluating research that investigates espoused rather than enacted practices. Reports that a particular practice has been adopted within an organization mask: 1) theoretically important variance in the way that the practice is defined or designed across organizations (e.g., goals or content of diversity training and for whom), particularly when non-descriptive, general labels of practices are used in assessment (e.g., “diversity training”);

**TABLE 2\***  
**Research Corresponding to the Different Stages of the Multilevel Process Model**

Relevant Stage of Process Model	Operationalization of Diversity Practice or Moderator	DV (Stage of Process Model)	Operationalization of DV	References	
1	Diversity practices (diversity training, targeted recruiting, mentoring, ERGs, AAPs, work–life benefits)	Espoused adoption of practice	(6) Managerial diversity	Changes in female and minority representation in management following adoption of practices	Dobbin et al. (2015), Kalev (2009, 2014), Kalev et al. (2006)
1	Formalization	Existence or use of “formalized personnel policies,” written guidelines, formal job tests, written performance evaluations, grievance procedures, open job postings	(6) Managerial diversity	Changes in female and minority representation in management following adoption of practices	Dobbin et al. (2015), Kalev (2009), Kalev et al. (2006), Reskin and McBrier (2000)
1	Diversity accountability	Diversity committee or dedicated diversity staff	(6) Managerial diversity	Changes in gender–race representation	Kalev et al. (2006)
1	Formalization	Proxy: unionization	(6) Managerial diversity	Female & racial minority representation in management	Ferguson (2015)
1	Formalization	Proxy: organizational size	(6) Discrimination	Prevalence of discrimination claims in an organization	Hirsh and Kornrich (2008)
1	Work–life initiatives	Adoption	(6) Firm performance	Share prices; Profit/sales growth, perceived performance	Arthur (2003), Perry-Smith and Blum (2000)
A	Accountability (moderates outcomes of diversity practices, formalization)	Presence of AAP, diversity committee, and/or full-time diversity staff, federal contractor status, review by legal team	(6) Managerial diversity	Changes in gender/race representation in management	Dobbin et al. (2015), Kalev et al. (2006), Kalev (2014)
A	Workforce characteristics (moderates outcomes of work–life benefits)	Gender composition of workforce	(6) Managerial diversity	Increases in women in management	Kalysh et al. (2016)
A	Workforce characteristics (moderates outcomes of work–family initiatives)	Gender composition of workforce	(6) Organizational performance	Shareholder returns; Sales-profit growth	Arthur (2003), Perry-Smith and Blum (2000)
A	Workforce characteristics (moderates outcomes of work–family initiatives)	Organizational size	(6) Organizational performance	Sales-profit growth	Perry-Smith and Blum (2000)
A	Workforce characteristics (moderates outcomes of diversity practice bundles)	Organizational size	(6) Managerial diversity	Racial diversity (Blau’s index)	Richard et al. (2013)
A	Workforce characteristics (moderates outcomes of discrimination charges)	Organizational size	(6) Managerial diversity	Occupational segregation by sex and race	Hirsh (2009)
A	Institutional environment (moderates outcomes of work–life initiatives)	Industry context (high-tech vs. not); Institutionalization of initiatives (adoption by more than half of Fortune 500 firms)	(6) Organizational performance	Shareholder returns	Arthur (2003)

**TABLE 2\***  
**(Continued)**

Relevant Stage of Process Model		Operationalization of Diversity Practice or Moderator	DV (Stage of Process Model)	Operationalization of DV	References
A	Legal environment (presumably moderates effectiveness of EO efforts)	Presence of Title VII lawsuit; History of discrimination lawsuits	(6) Managerial diversity	Changes in race and/or gender representation in management	Dobbin et al. (2015), Kalev et al. (2006), Skaggs (2008, 2009)
A	Political–legal environment (moderates outcomes of discrimination charges)	Pro-EO progressiveness of local court system; judicial diversity; Pro-gender equality values in geography	(6) Managerial diversity	Race/gender occupational segregation; Odds ratio of women in management	Hirsh (2009), Skaggs (2008)
A	Political environment (moderates outcomes of discrimination charges)	State and court political ideology; judicial diversity	(6) Managerial diversity	Odds ratio of African-Americans in management	Skaggs (2009)
2	Diversity training	Participation in training	(4) Attitudes (5) Behavior	Cognitive and affective reactions; Perceived discriminatory treatment	Kalinoski et al. (2013), King et al. (2012)
2	Diversity training	Participation	(6) Performance	Branch-level firm performance; Team creative performance	Ely (2004), Homan et al. (2015)
2	Accountability practices	Review of accountability practices in use in an organization	(6) Discrimination	Bias in performance-pay allocations	Castilla (2015)
2	Accountability practices	Meta-analysis of different operationalizations	(6) Discrimination	Bias in performance and eligibility evaluations	Koch et al. (2015)
2	Formalization	Formalization of pay allocations	(6) Discrimination	Bias in pay allocations	Elvira and Graham (2002)
2	Work–life initiatives	Utilization of benefits (meta-analysis)	(4) Attitudes (5) Behavior	Job satisfaction; affective commitment; intentions to stay	Butts et al. (2012)
2	Targeted recruiting	Recruiting message content; messenger characteristics	(4) Attitudes	Organizational attractiveness	Kim and Gelfand (2003), Walker et al. (2009, 2012)
2	Formalization	Nature of the decision-rule used for layoff decisions (performance evaluations vs. tenure)	(6) Managerial diversity	Post-layoff gender/race representation in management	Kalev (2014)
2	Mentoring	Participation in mentoring	(3) Perceptions of practice	Satisfaction with mentoring; Perceived effectiveness of mentoring program; Met expectations	Allen et al. (2004), Ragins et al. (2000), Young and Perrewe (2000)
2	Mentoring	Participation in mentoring	(4) Attitudes	Career satisfaction; Satisfaction with promotion opportunities; Job satisfaction; Commitment	Allen et al. (2004), Raabe and Beehr (2003), Ragins et al. (2000), Seibert et al. (2001)
2	Mentoring	Participation in mentoring	(5) Behavior [intentions]	Intentions to stay/quit; Job learning	Allen et al. (2004), Lankau and Scandura (2002), Ragins et al. (2000)



**TABLE 2\***  
**(Continued)**

Relevant Stage of Process Model		Operationalization of Diversity Practice or Moderator	DV (Stage of Process Model)	Operationalization of DV	References
2	Mentoring	Participation in mentoring; Assignment to powerful supervisor/mentor	(6) Managerial diversity	Self-reported promotions; Retention on path to partnership; Appointment to multiple board positions	Allen et al. (2004), Briscoe and Kellogg (2011), McDonald and Westphal (2013)
2	AAPs	AAP as experienced by respondent	(4) Attitudes	Perceptions of beneficiaries' competence, warmth, and performance	Leslie et al. (2014)
B	Motivational significance—formalization	Extent of central formalization and oversight of different components of pay	(6) Discrimination	Gender bias in base pay, merit raises, and incentive rewards	Elvira and Graham (2002)
B	Motivational significance—transparency, accountability	Transparency and accountability of pay decisions	(6) Discrimination	Bias in reward allocations based on gender, race, and nationality	Castilla (2008, 2015)
B	Motivational significance - accountability	Accountability for decisions made	(6) Discrimination	Gender biases in evaluations	Koch et al. (2015)
B	Motivational significance—accountability	Presence of unambiguous individuating information about competence	(6) Discrimination	Gender biases in evaluations	Koch et al. (2015)
B	Motivational significance—[reduction in felt personal] accountability	Espousal that pay system is meritocratic; diversity structures promote fairness	(6) Discrimination	Gender bias in pay allocations; Perceived validity of discrimination claims	Castilla and Benard (2010), Kaiser et al. (2013)
B	Motivational significance—[reduction in felt personal] accountability	Priming raters to see themselves as objective	(6) Discrimination	Stereotype-based evaluations	Uhlmann and Cohen (2007)
B	Motivational significance—institutional context	Gender diversity in powerful positions in client firms	(6) Managerial diversity	Gender diversity in management	Beckman and Phillips (2005)
B	Motivational significance—institutional context	Progressiveness of local legal environment	(6) Managerial diversity	Occupational managerial segregation; Representation relative to men/Whites	Hirsh (2009), Skaggs (2008, 2009)
B	Motivational significance—implementer characteristics	Minority status of incumbent board	(2) Enacted/implemented practice	Provision of mentoring	McDonald and Westphal (2013)
B	Motivational significance—implementer characteristics	Females who are tokens in high prestige work groups	(2) Enacted/implemented practice	Pro-diversity hiring (of other women)	Duguid (2011)
B	Motivational significance—implementer characteristics	Perceived competitive threat posed by candidate	(2) Enacted/implemented practice	Hiring decisions	Lee, Pitesa, Pillutla, & Thau (2015a, 2015b)
3	Perceptions of mentoring	Mentor's success	(5) Behavior	Individual (protégé) performance	Tonidandel et al. (2007)
3	Perceptions of mentoring	Satisfaction with mentoring; perceived effectiveness of mentoring program; met expectations	(4) Attitudes	Subjective career outcomes, career and job attitudes, and trust	Allen et al. (2004), Ragins et al. (2000), Young and Perrewé (2000)

**TABLE 2\***  
**(Continued)**

<b>Relevant Stage of Process Model</b>	<b>Operationalization of Diversity Practice or Moderator</b>	<b>DV (Stage of Process Model)</b>	<b>Operationalization of DV</b>	<b>References</b>	
3	Perceptions of mentoring	Negative mentoring experience	(4) Attitudes (5) Behavior [intentions]	Psychological withdrawal; Intentions to leave	Eby et al. (2004)
3	Perceptions of diversity climate	Perceptions of fair implementation of practices	(4) Attitudes (5) Behavior [intentions]	Organizational commitment; Turnover intentions	Buttner et al. (2010, 2012), Kaplan et al. (2011)
3	Perceptions of practices	Favorability of diversity program	(4) Attitudes	Assumed coworkers' perceptions of self; Organizational attractiveness	Richard et al. (2000)
3	Perceptions of practices	Support of EO policy; Perceived fairness of AAPs	(5) Behavior [intentions]	Intentions to apply; Intentions to volunteer to support program	Cropanzano et al. (2005), Hideg and Ferris (2014), Ritov and Zamir (2014)
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to AAPs framed as less threatening for non-beneficiaries)	Beneficiary status (race); modern racism and collective deprivation beliefs	(3) Perceptions of EO policy	Support of EO policy; Perceived fairness for non-beneficiaries	Cropanzano et al. (2005), Hideg and Ferris (2014), Ritov and Zamir (2014), Shteynberg et al. (2011)
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to AAPs)	Affirmation of beneficiaries' self-competence; Social dominance orientation, conservatism, individualism, racism, opposition to equality, racial identity, and anti-Black and anti-women affect	(3) Perceptions of AAPs	Support of EO policy; Objection to AAPs; perception of group threat; Support for AAPs	Federico and Sidanius (2002), Gu et al. (2014), Hideg and Ferris (2014), Lowery et al. (2006), Reyna et al. (2006)
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to framing of diversity program as integrative/multicultural)	Beneficiary status (race)	(4) Attitudes	Organizational attractiveness	Olsen and Martins (2016), Plaut et al. (2011)
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to AAPs, AAP framing, AA hires)	Social dominance orientation; entitlement, prejudice, self-efficacy; beneficiary status (race); prejudice	(4) Attitudes	Warmth & competence perceptions of AA hire; Satisfaction with promotion opportunities; Self-esteem Organizational attractiveness	Aquino et al. (2005), James et al. (2001), Unzueta et al. (2008), Walker et al. (2007)
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to espoused motivations underlying diversity program)	Beneficiary status (race, gender)	(3) Perceptions of diversity program	Favorability reactions to diversity program	Richard et al. (2000)
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to diversity cues in recruiting)	Ethnic identity; gender centrality; beneficiary status (race)	(4) Attitudes	Organizational attractiveness	Kim and Gelfand (2003), Martins and Parson (2007), Walker et al. (2009), Walker et al. (2012)
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to diversity training)	Interest in equality	(5) Behavior [intentions]	Intention to attend training	Kulik et al. (2007)

**TABLE 2\***  
**(Continued)**

Relevant Stage of Process Model		Operationalization of Diversity Practice or Moderator	DV (Stage of Process Model)	Operationalization of DV	References
C	Personal relevance or gain (moderates reactions to diversity training)	Applicability of training for trainee's work context	(4) Attitudes (6) Behaviors	Team efficacy beliefs; Unit creative performance	Homan et al. (2015)
C	Personal relevance or gain (explains reactions to mentoring)	Fulfillment of mentees' needs for career and psychosocial support	(3) Perceptions of practice	Satisfaction with mentoring; Perceived effectiveness of mentoring program; Met expectations	Allen et al. (2004), Ragins et al. (2000), Young and Perrewe (2000)
C	Personal relevance or gain (explains reactions to mentoring)	Fulfillment of mentees' needs for career and psychosocial support	(4) Attitudes	Career satisfaction; Satisfaction with promotion opportunities; Job satisfaction; Commitment	Allen et al. (2004), Eby et al. (2004), Lankau and Scandura (2002), Raabe and Beehr (2003), Ragins et al. (2000), Seibert et al. (2001), Young and Perrewe (2000)
C	Personal relevance or gain (explains reactions to mentoring)	Fulfillment of mentees' needs for career and psychosocial support	(5) Behavior [intentions]	Intentions to stay/quit; Job learning	Allen et al. (2004), Lankau and Scandura (2002), Ragins et al. (2000)
C	Personal relevance or gain (explains reactions to mentoring)	Fulfillment of mentees' needs for career and psychosocial support	(6) Managerial diversity	Self-reported promotions	Allen et al. (2004)
C	Authenticity—other practices	Alignment with other diversity practices	(4) Attitudes	Satisfaction; Commitment Organizational attractiveness	Ragins and Cornwell (2001), Rau and Adams (2005)
C	Authenticity—other practices	Presence of responsibility structures	(6) Managerial diversity	Changes in gender–race representation	Kalev et al. (2006)
C	Authenticity—experiences	Supervisory behaviors that support the practice	(3) Perceptions of practices	Favorability reactions to practice	Hammer et al. (2009), Jayne and Dipboye (2004), Kulik and Roberson (2008), Kalinoski et al. (2013)
C	Authenticity—demography	Organizational demography (gender)	(6) Performance	Firm financial performance	Perry-Smith and Blum (2000)
C	Authenticity—demography	Percentage of women and minorities in management	(6) Discrimination	Formal discrimination charges filed by employees	Hirsh and Kornrich (2008)
4	Attitudes—about self	Threat; self-competence			Leslie et al. (2014), Ritov and Zamir (2014)
4	Attitudes—about coworkers	Trust in mentor/partner, evaluations of AAP beneficiaries			Reyna et al. (2006), Young and Perrewe (2000)
4	Attitudes—about job and organization	Job satisfaction, career satisfaction, organizational self-esteem, commitment, psychological withdrawal, organizational attraction			Allen et al. (2004), Eby et al. (2004), Kim and Gelfand (2003), Lankau and Scandura (2002), Martins and Parson (2007), Plaut et al. (2011), Ragins et al. (2000), Seibert et al. (2001), Walker et al. (2007)

TABLE 2\*  
(Continued)

Relevant Stage of Process Model	Operationalization of Diversity Practice or Moderator	DV (Stage of Process Model)	Operationalization of DV	References
5	Behavioral reactions	Intentions to stay/leave		Allen et al. (2004), Eby et al. (2004), Ragins et al. (2000)
5	Behavioral reactions	Job learning		Lankau and Scandura (2002)
5	Behavioral reactions	Job search behaviors		Walker et al. (2012)
5	Behavioral reactions	Hiring intentions		Pichler et al. (2010)
5	Behavioral reactions	Identity disclosure		Kang et al. (2016), Ragins and Cornwell (2001)
5	Behavioral reactions	Absenteeism		Avery et al. (2007)

\*The purpose of this table is to provide examples of the ways in which different stages of the model have been examined in research. Entries in the first column of the table (relevant stage of the process model) do not necessarily correspond to the independent variable in the listed studies, and some studies appear more than once in the table because they involve illustrative examples of multiple stages of the process model.

2) variance in the way that the practice is actually implemented across and within organizations; and 3) whether the practice elicits the mechanism it is presumed to elicit (in particular on the part of managers or implementers).

**Variance in practice design (operationalization) across organizations.** First, with regard to variance in the way that a practice may be operationalized across organizations, Kalev (2014) does a nice job of showing that it is not the formalization of practices itself (which is what is captured in many macro studies that document the number of personnel practices for which organizations have written policies, e.g., Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev, 2009; Kalev et al., 2006) but the nature of the formal rules applied that determines whether biases are perpetuated or negated. She found partial support for her expectation that layoff decisions that were based on performance evaluations would help mitigate the negative impact of layoffs for managerial diversity compared with decisions based on tenure, which exacerbate existing structural inequalities. While this study's strength is in distinguishing between two forms of enacted layoff policies, the clarity of the results may have been clouded by the reliance on a measure of espoused performance evaluations. Specifically, there may be unmeasured variance (i.e., measurement noise) in the design and implementation of the performance evaluations used for layoff decisions across organizations. Another possibility is that the performance evaluations used by companies could have in some cases elicited resistance on the part of managers rather than a true

motivation to be unbiased, which relates to the third issue we discuss in the later sections related to mechanisms (Dobbin et al., 2015).

**Variance in practice implementation across and within organizations.** Our second concern regarding espoused practices is that there is no way to know whether the practices are implemented as assumed, nor which segments of the workforce use the practice. It may be, for example, that network groups are more consistently associated with improvements in managerial diversity for White women than other target groups (Dobbin et al., 2015; Kalev et al., 2006) because women participate more actively in resource groups. Similarly, although it may indeed be the case that individuals who participate in mentoring programs enjoy improved rates of advancement, the odds of finding consistent support for such a relationship are attenuated when espoused measures are used because they capture program existence rather than program participation. Potential noise in measurement is compounded when the outcome variable reflects overall increases in managerial diversity rather than advancement into management specifically among women and minorities who have been mentored. Research that focuses specifically on outcomes associated with mentoring program participation tends to reveal a more consistent pattern of support for outcomes, including attitudes (Allen et al., 2004; Ragins et al., 2000) as well as self-reports of employment outcomes such as pay and promotions (Allen et al., 2004; Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011; McDonald & Westphal,

2013; Seibert et al., 2001). The same appears to be true for diversity training research which shows that participation in diversity training is more consistently associated with outcomes as expected, including unit performance (Homan et al., 2015), a reduction in discriminatory behavior (Bezrukova et al., 2016; King et al., 2012), cognitive learning, and employee attitudes (Bezrukova et al., 2016; Kalinoski et al., 2013).

Another example can be seen in research by Kalev (2009) on the benefits of participating in self-directed work teams and cross-functional training, which as she argues, allow women and minorities to interact as peers with White men. As a result, status differences are neutralized and stereotypes weakened such that both programs serve to enhance managerial representation for White women, Black women, and Black men. By contrast, she argues that because problem-solving teams involve experts who tend to be Whites and men from similar job backgrounds, they fail to expose women and minorities to new people and, therefore, are unlikely to improve managerial diversity. She finds, however, that problem-solving teams do in fact enhance managerial representation for Black managers, although not for White women. That the findings are not totally as expected could, once again, be explained by variation in program implementation across organizations (i.e., problem-solving teams in some organizations actually do involve women, minorities, and people from across job boundaries). Thus, future research that captures greater detail about the ways in which these teams are composed in practice is needed to test the validity of the intended meaning of these programs.

***Ambiguity about whether practices elicit the reactions assumed among practice implementers.***

Our third cautionary note about espoused practices is that they fall short in providing information about whether the practices elicit their presumed response in managers whose responsibility it is to implement them. One example is research by Dobbin et al. (2015), who argue that the impact of bureaucratic reforms on managerial diversity depends on whether they are designed to limit managerial discretion, engage managers in the solution (of improving diversity), or increase transparency and accountability. The results were directionally as expected, although quite mixed in terms of the specific target groups for whom hypotheses were supported. This may be explained by the fact that it is not clear how these practices were actually implemented in practice, in particular whether managers interpret

them as presumed. For instance, some practices were expected to enhance diversity outcomes by improving transparency of decision-making, whereas others were expected to relate negatively to managerial diversity because they trigger managerial resistance by limiting their discretion in decision-making. On the surface, some practices such as internal job postings, job tests, or written performance appraisals for promotion seem like they could trigger both mechanisms; without an assessment of managers' actual reactions to practices, it is impossible to know which mechanism(s) is actually in play (i.e., whether managers perceive the practices as limiting their discretion or enhancing their motivation to be unbiased). Similarly, whether managers see themselves as part of the solution depends entirely on whether they are involved in targeted recruiting; if HR managers are the ones involved in recruiting instead, the proposed impact is likely to be attenuated.

The point is not to criticize these authors' arguments as they are theoretically powerful. In fact, that efforts to formalize practices may elicit backlash is critical to explore further given that it conflicts with arguments made by others about the formalization of practices being an essential tool for reducing bias (Elvira & Graham, 2002; Ferguson, 2015; Reskin & McBrier, 2000). Rather, the point is that our confidence in these arguments, and perhaps also our ability to explain some of the mixed findings, would be greatly enhanced once the construct validity of the measures and proposed mechanisms have been established. To the extent that research continues to rely on espoused accounts of practices and assumptions of managerial reactions, the probability of Type I and Type II errors remains a concern (Wangrow, Schepker, & Barker III, 2015).

**Factors that Influence the Enactment of Espoused Practices**

The symbolic adoption of practices is relatively easy. However, reliable and consistent follow-through is not. We can think of diversity practices, as other management practices, to serve as an important signaling function about what the organization values and the behaviors it expects from its employees (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). According to Pfeffer (1981), managers play a key role in the social construction of reality because it is their responsibility to legitimate the activities of the organization. As "interpretive filters" of practices (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004: 216), managers determine the extent to which diversity practices succeed or fail at achieving their desired

outcomes based on how the symbolic meaning that they attach to the practices influences their implementation of them. When managers perceive that practices are adopted primarily as a means of gaining legitimacy, they are often decoupled from everyday actions and merely serve as “window dressing” with little impact (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991).

The more distinctive a particular practice is in terms of its *motivational significance*, the more managers will attend to the task of implementing it as expected (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Motivational significance depends on whether implementers perceive the espoused practice to be appropriately suited for the attainment of valued goals and whether they expect there to be consequences associated with implementation, either for the organization or for themselves. Here, the focus is on factors that affect the motivation of practice implementers (broadly defined) to behave in ways that support the implementation of pro-diversity goals; we focus separately on factors that influence the reactions of employees as recipients or end-users of diversity practices in the following sections. The contextual factors that influence motivational significance include formalization, transparency, and accountability, the broader institutional context, as well as the individual characteristics of leaders (as practice implementers).

**Formalization, transparency, and accountability.**

Earlier, we referred to the adoption of formalized practices (e.g., written guidelines for selection, rewards, promotions, etc.) as an EO strategy to reduce bias. Here, our focus is on the extent of conformance to a formalized practice through measures like accountability that enhance motivation for follow-through. This is an important distinction because the extent to which enacted practices align with their espousals is ultimately determined by how vigilantly practice implementation is monitored (Reskin & McBrier, 2000). Elvira and Graham (2002) demonstrate this clearly by showing that the extent of pay formalization is negatively associated with the magnitude of gender bias. Castilla (2008) similarly showed that despite the espoused use of a formalized and meritocratic system for linking performance ratings and rewards in the company he studied, weaknesses in the accountability process allowed bias in the allocation of rewards based on gender, race, and nationality to be perpetuated. In a followup study, he illustrates how accountability and transparency together eliminate this bias (Castilla, 2015). In their meta-analysis, Koch et al. (2015) also found that accountability reduces biases.

In the absence of strong accountability mechanisms for ensuring desired practice implementation, the symbolic adoption of meritocratic initiatives might not only fail to reduce biases, but could even backfire and exacerbate them. Castilla and Benard (2010) found that when an organization repeatedly touts its practices as being based on principles of meritocracy, men are more likely to be awarded a higher bonus over equally qualified women. The authors reason this is because managers internalize the notion of being unbiased which frees them to express prejudiced attitudes without worrying about being scrutinized. Uhlmann and Cohen (2007) similarly found that when people are primed to see themselves as objective, they are more likely to act on stereotypic beliefs. It appears that people may also be more likely to perceive that claims of discrimination are less valid when diversity structures are purported to promote fairness (Kaiser et al., 2013). The main lesson across these studies is that the symbolic espousal of meritocracy can exacerbate bias unless the adoption of procedures that enforce accountability validate that espousal, in which case decision makers maintain their motivation to be unbiased. Research by Kulik, Perry, & Bourhis (2000) suggests that successfully reducing bias not only requires implementing accountability measures but, also, providing the cognitive time and space required for individuals to engage in controlled rather than automatic decision-making (Sherman, Macrae, & Bodnehausen, 2011).

**Institutional context.** As we mentioned previously in the section on macro-level moderators, legal and socio-political pressures may increase the sense of urgency felt among organizations to reduce biases to increase managerial diversity (Skaggs, 2008, 2009), particularly among small firms (Hirsh, 2009) and firms based in progressive legal environments (Hirsh, 2009; Skaggs, 2008). Our multilevel process model helps bring attention to the value of thinking explicitly of an organization’s leaders and managers as the ones who translate external pressures into action when it comes to implementing diversity initiatives effectively. In addition to evidence that the motivation to improve the effectiveness of diversity initiatives may be felt more indirectly through institutional pressures from the relevant industrial field, research also suggests that organizational leaders may be influenced more directly through relationships with key business partners. Beckman and Phillips (2005) found that the presence of visible gender diversity within powerful positions in an organization’s client firms motivates

leaders to increase gender diversity in their own managerial ranks (Beckman & Phillips, 2005). This felt motivation to mimic client firms in the promotion of women to senior positions is even stronger when organizations have fewer clients and, therefore, are more dependent on maintaining the favor of client firms.

**Individual characteristics of leaders as practice implementers.** The individual characteristics of decision makers may also influence their personal motivation to promote favorable diversity outcomes. McDonald and Westphal (2013) show that the minority status of incumbent board directors enhances their motivation to provide mentoring to improve the success of first-time directors who are also female or ethnic minorities. However, the influence of demographics on managerial motivation is not always straightforward. Duguid (2011) shows that when women are tokens in high prestige work groups, they may be less motivated to support the selection of other women because they perceive other women as a competitive threat or fear that low performing women could validate negative gender stereotypes. The idea that decision makers' assessments of competitive threat influence whether they are biased in favor or against a role-congruent candidate has been further supported by research that shows that decision makers favor role-congruent candidates when they expect to cooperate with them (i.e., the candidate would help promote the decision maker's own personal goals) but are biased against them when they expect to compete with them (Lee, Pitesa, Pillutla, & Thau, 2015a, 2015b).

Research by Hideg and Ferris (2014) suggests that support for EO programs—among women who may have concerns about suffering from the resulting stigma of incompetence (Heilman, Block, & Lucas, 1992) and men who may feel threatened by programs that could disadvantage them—can be increased by enhancing their self-efficacy. Other research related to affirmative action similarly suggests that stressing that EO initiatives are not at odds with the interests of non-beneficiaries by, for example, emphasizing the benefits of diversity for organizational performance, can help mitigate resistance on the part of non-beneficiaries to support these programs (Leslie, Mayer, & Kravitz, 2014; Richard, Fubara, & Castillo, 2000). Doing so is particularly important when implementers are prejudiced (James, Brief, Dietz, & Cohen, 2001; Shteynberg, Leslie, Knight, & Mayer, 2011; Walker, Feild, Giles, Bernerth, & Jones-Farmer, 2007) or ideologically opposed to hierarchy-attenuating initiatives (Aquino, Stewart, & Reed, 2005; Federico &

Sidanius, 2002; Gu, McFerran, Aquino, & Kim, 2014; Reyna, Henry, Korfmacher, & Tucker, 2006). Indeed, in the absence of counteracting forces in the organizational environment, prejudice on the part of individual decision makers is likely to be damaging for diversity outcomes; even the slightest suggestion of business justifications for favoring majority candidates allows for the expression of prejudice in decision-making (Brief, Dietz, Cohen, Pugh, & Vaslow, 2000). The implication of AA research for the effective implementation of EO programs is clear: the motivation of managers to conform with EO expectations could be jeopardized if they feel that doing so could harm them or other members of their demographic group (Cropanzano, Slaughter, & Bachiochi, 2005; James et al., 2001; Lowery et al., 2006; Plaut et al., 2011; Ritov & Zamir, 2014).

### Employee Perceptions of Diversity Practices

Another reason why diversity practices vary in their attainment of desired organizational goals involves employees' idiosyncratic reactions to practices. Similar to other HRM practices, diversity practices send signals to employees about what is valued, expected, and rewarded (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004), which implies that it is employees' *perceptions* of organizational practices that determine subsequent attitudes and behaviors (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Liao, Toya, Lepak, & Hong, 2009; Nishii et al., 2008; Wright & Boswell, 2002). However, practices can be understood idiosyncratically. Indeed, our review reveals considerable variability in the way that practices are perceived, in terms of how employees understand the intended outcomes of practices (Federico & Sidanius, 2002; Lowery et al., 2006; Reyna et al., 2006), evaluate their effectiveness, and draw inferences from them about the organization's underlying intentions (Kim & Gelfand, 2003; Ritov & Zamir, 2014; Walker et al., 2009). This is a key challenge for organizations because even the most carefully designed practices cannot be expected to have their desired effect unless employee perceptions of, and reactions to, those practices facilitate those outcomes (Nishii & Wright, 2008).

Variance in employees' practice-specific perceptions or reactions can result both from idiosyncratic interpretations of the same experienced practice or from differences in actual experiences with a practice. Mentoring provides a strong example of the latter in that employees' perceptions about the effectiveness of mentoring depend on the nature of the

specific mentoring relationship(s) in which they have been involved (Allen et al., 2004; Ragins et al., 2000; Young & Perrewe, 2000). To the extent that employees have benefited from mentors who invested significant time and energy in developing them, they are likely to respond with positive evaluations of mentoring because they perceive that their employer's intent to support their development through mentoring is authentic and that they have personally gained from mentoring. Similarly, employees' perceptions about the fairness with which practices are implemented within their organization (Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2010, 2012; Kaplan, Wiley, & Maertz, 2011) will also depend on their specific experiences, which in some cases may be determined by demographic characteristics such as race and gender. Finally, research on work-life benefits has also shown that employees' perceptions about the usefulness (Lambert, 2000) or value (Muse, Harris, Giles, & Feild, 2008) of benefits is what predicts their attitudinal and behavioral responses. We describe the mechanisms that influence employees' perceptions of diversity practices in more detail next.

### Factors that Influence Employees' Perceptions of Diversity Practices

Researchers have uncovered a plethora of factors that influence employees' perceptions of diversity practices. They range from surface- and deeper-level individual differences, such as gender, race, ethnic identity, and values (Federico & Sidanius, 2002; Gu et al., 2014; Kim & Gelfand, 2003; King et al., 2012; Walker et al., 2009), to contextual elements, including organizational practices, demography, and leadership (Duguid, 2011; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). These factors divide into two dominant categories based on whether they influence employees' assessments of the *personal relevance or gain* that might be derived from a practice or the *authenticity* or credibility of the signals that are being transmitted to them by the practice.

**Personal relevance or gain.** Assessments of personal relevance and gain are shaped by the way that signals about a practice are interpreted through individuals' self-systems (Mischel & Shoda, 1995). Self-systems comprise individual-difference attributes (e.g., needs, values, goals, past experiences, personality, political ideology), salient identities (e.g., race, gender, etc., and associated (non-)beneficiary status), and role position (e.g., applicant, employee). When the incoming cues are processed

through the self-system, the self-relevant questions of interest include, "what does this mean for me?" and "does this support or hinder my self-interests?" According to signaling theory (Spence, 1973), employees respond to the symbolic value that a practice communicates, particularly in regard to how much the organization values them. In some cases, the mere presence of a practice may be enough to elicit positive employee reactions based on its symbolic value for presumed beneficiaries. This is most clearly seen in research that shows that beneficiaries of EO initiatives tend to react more positively than non-beneficiaries (Richard et al., 2000; Ritov & Zamir, 2014; Shteynberg et al., 2011). This is the explanation that Ely (2004) provided for her finding that the negative relationship between diversity training and branch financial performance was stronger in branches with more men, presumably because men may resent training and their intended beneficiaries. The more people perceive that a practice may harm their self-interests, the more they oppose it (Lowery et al., 2006; Plaut et al., 2011; Reyna et al., 2006). This is why the framing of EO initiatives as serving collective interests such as business goals (Richard et al., 2000), or as promoting EO rather than advantaging minorities (Cropanzano et al., 2005; Hideg & Ferris, 2014; James et al., 2001; Lowery et al., 2006; Shteynberg et al., 2011; Walker et al., 2007) helps to mitigate negative reactions from non-beneficiaries.

Practices that aim to attract a target population do so by communicating that the organization is specifically interested in them; however, they can also elicit negative reactions among non-beneficiaries who interpret the signal as a sign of their diminished value (Dover, Major, & Kaiser, 2016). Similarly, diversity cues embedded in recruiting content are positively associated with organizational attraction for Black applicants but are unrelated (Kahn et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2012) or negatively related to organizational attraction for White applicants (Walker et al., 2009). Some research suggests that deeper-level identity is more influential than surface-level demographics in evaluations of personal gain. For example, Kim and Gelfand (2003) show that ethnic identity, and not race itself, predicts positive reactions to organizational messages about its commitment to diversity. Martins and Parson (2007) also found that pro-gender practices increase attractiveness only among women with high gender centrality.

Evaluations of *personal gain* are also influenced by the perceived alignment of one's values or beliefs



and those of the organization, as communicated by a practice. For example, individuals interested in equality are more likely to see diversity training as valuable and, therefore, are more likely to attend (Kulik, Pepper, Roberson, & Parker, 2007). Martins and Parson (2007) show that applicants who perceive discrimination to be a problem and have positive beliefs about affirmative action are more attracted to organizations that advertise pro-gender diversity programs, regardless of gender. Reactions to AAPs as well as to their presumed beneficiaries are more negative among individuals who score high on social dominance orientation (Aquino et al., 2005; Federico & Sidanius, 2002), racism/prejudice, or collective deprivation (James et al., 2001; Reyna et al., 2006; Shteynberg et al., 2011; Walker et al., 2007) and are opposed to equality (Gu et al., 2014).

Self-interest theory (Thibaut & Walker, 1975) suggests that reactions to a practice are further shaped by the instrumental value a practice offers for the attainment of personal goals. Evaluations of personal gain are differentially influenced by actual experiences with a practice than by practice availability. For example, the positive attitudinal outcomes associated with the availability of work–life initiatives appear, on the surface, to be stronger than those associated with benefit utilization (Butts et al., 2012). This is in large part because the positive symbolic outcomes associated with benefit availability are attenuated by the negative consequences that benefit users sometimes experience; in particular, by higher levels of work–life conflict experienced by individuals who use work–life benefits in organizations that are not clearly supportive of employees' family needs. Similarly, whether or not mentoring is associated with positive attitudinal and behavioral reactions depends on whether it fulfills the mentees' needs for career and psychosocial support (Allen et al., 2004; Eby et al., 2004; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Ragins et al., 2000; Young & Perrewe, 2000). Homan et al. (2015) also show that trainees' positive attitudinal (efficacy) and behavioral (creative performance) responses to diversity training depend on whether it is appropriately suited for improving outcomes in their team as determined by low pre-training diversity beliefs (need) and the presence of diversity within the team (applicability).

***Authenticity of practice signals—as validated by other practices.*** Employees' perceptions of diversity practices are also influenced by cues from the organizational environment that reinforce the *authenticity* of the intended signals communicated by a practice. Our review uncovered three types of

contextual factors as being particularly relevant for reinforcing signal authenticity. The first is the alignment of a diversity practice with other diversity and HR practices that have been adopted by the organization. A diversity practice that is implemented as a stand-alone initiative may be perceived as less credible than one that is implemented as part of a systematic organizational effort that includes multiple, internally consistent initiatives (Bezrukova et al., 2016; Delery, 1998; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Aligning a diversity practice with other practices reinforces the signal, enhances its credibility, and makes it more likely that individuals attribute practice adoption to an underlying internal motivation on the part of the organization (Kalev, 2009; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Rau & Adams, 2005; Yang & Konrad, 2011) rather than more superficial motives for legitimacy.

In support of this, we find that employee reactions to diversity practices are more positive in organizations that have adopted responsibility structures and transparent performance evaluation systems (Alcázar, Fernández, & Gardey, 2013). Similarly, Rau and Adams (2005) found that an EO policy that targets older workers promotes stronger attraction only in the presence of other practices that are important to older workers, such as flexible work and mentoring. Kalev et al. (2006) show that the positive impact of training, networking programs, and mentoring is strengthened in the presence of responsibility structures. Although they argue this is because managers are held accountable for implementation, it is also possible that positive reactions from employees who perceive the diversity practices to be authentically motivated to serve their interests also account for the positive outcomes. By contrast, lack of alignment or corroborating evidence induces cynicism and mistrust about the espoused intentions underlying a practice (Allison, 1999).

***Authenticity of practice signals—as validated by experiences.*** The second contextual factor that influences perceived authenticity of diversity practices is the alignment between practices and cues communicated by leaders. Although the mere presence of a policy can create an initial illusion of fairness (Edelman, Krieger, Eliason, Albiston, & Mellema, 2011; Kaiser et al., 2013), whether or not employees believe the espoused message depends on its alignment with what is enacted by managers (Simons, 2002). Managers play a key role in sense-giving for subordinates (Nishii & Wright, 2008; Pfeffer, 1981); their behaviors (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011) and treatment of subordinates (Nishii & Mayer,

2009) either reinforce or undermine signals espoused by practices. That this is the case further emphasizes the importance of the factors we discussed earlier as shaping the motivation of managers to implement diversity practices effectively (box B in Figure 1).

For example, research has found that employees resist using work–family benefits due to fear of the biases they may endure as a result (Bailyn, 1993; Perlow, 1995). Not surprisingly, then, positive employee reactions to work–family initiatives are facilitated by supervisory behaviors that support employees' family needs (Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, & Hanson, 2009). Related to diversity training, research suggests that employee reactions are more favorable when top leaders support it (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004; Kulik & Roberson, 2008; Rynes & Rosen, 1995) and when trainees are highly motivated because the training is delivered by internal managers (Kalinowski et al., 2013). Similarly, although formally mentored individuals generally report more favorable work attitudes than their non-mentored peers, when mentees have negative mentoring experiences—which are more common in formal than informal mentoring relationships (Eby et al., 2004)—the espoused intention of the organization to support their development through mentoring is invalidated. Such experiences subsequently strengthen employees' intentions to quit (Ragins et al., 2000). Ragins and Cornwell (2001) showed that although the provision of LGBTQ-friendly policies is an important predictor of employees' perceptions of workplace heterosexism, more important is the extent to which they feel that their same-sex partner is invited to company social events; in other words, whether formal policies are embodied by the informal behaviors of leaders.

**Authenticity of signals—as validated by organizational demography.** Finally, organizational demography is the third contextual factor that reinforces assessments of practice authenticity. When employees perceive a practice to be targeted at their demographic group, evidence that members of their group are already well represented helps to reinforce the intended signal of the practice. Perry-Smith and Blum (2000), for example, suggest that the reason why work–family initiatives are associated with better organizational performance in firms with a high proportion of women is because women interpret the availability of work–life initiatives as a more authentic cue of the value that their employer places in them when they can see evidence that women are successful within the organization. Interestingly, Kahn et al. (2015) show that the strength

or authenticity of the intended signal relayed through a corporate website about the organization's commitment to diversity varies as a function of how phenotypically stereotypic the organizational representatives are perceived to be. Specifically, they showed that Black, but not White, applicants perceive an organization to be more attractive, diverse, and likely to offer higher salaries when the Black employees featured on the corporate website are more phenotypically stereotypic (i.e., darker skin tones), with this effect being explained by their higher levels of felt social identity–related trust.

Hirsh and Kornrich (2008) find that the tendency of employees to file formal discrimination charges decreases as the percentage of females and minorities in management increases because visible diversity in management suggests to them that the organization actually values diversity and, therefore, is not to blame for the mistreatment that they have experienced. Finally, work by Avery et al. (2007) shows that the negative relationship between perceptions that the organization values diversity and absenteeism for African-American employees is stronger for employees who have an African-American supervisor. They explain that African-American employees who have a supervisor who is also African-American are more likely to assume that the organization values diversity; when their other diversity-related experiences violate this expectation, they react more negatively.

### **Attitudinal and Cognitive Reactions to Diversity Practices**

Attitudinal reactions that result from more specific interpretations about a practice (Nishii et al., 2008) include attitudes about the self (e.g., self-efficacy), job, or career (e.g., career commitment, satisfaction with career), organization (e.g., commitment, attraction), or others (e.g., attitudes toward AAP beneficiaries). Cognitive reactions represent a change in knowledge or skill and are included here based on their relevance to diversity practices such as training and mentoring. The association between practice-specific reactions and more general attitudinal and cognitive reactions has been examined most commonly in research on mentoring and AAPs. The mentoring literature finds that when employees are satisfied with their mentor and/or their expectations have been met they report increased organizational self-esteem (Ragins et al., 2000), trust for their partner (Young & Perrewe, 2000), job satisfaction, career satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Allen

et al., 2004; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Ragins et al., 2000; Seibert et al., 2001). Negative reactions to mentoring are instead associated with increased psychological withdrawal (Eby et al., 2004). Similarly, AAPs that threaten non-beneficiaries' self-interests are associated with lower justice perceptions (Ritov & Zamir, 2014) and organizational attraction (Plaut et al., 2011; Walker et al., 2007), and negative evaluations of beneficiaries (Reyna et al., 2006).

It is important to note that in many studies, the moderating variables that we have described as influencing individuals' reactions to diversity practices (i.e., factors that inform perceptions about personal gain or signal authenticity) were *assumed* to moderate the relationship between a practice and attitudinal reactions even if the mechanisms were not assessed directly. For example, the effectiveness of targeted recruiting in increasing organizational attractiveness among intended beneficiaries is clearly dependent on the personal relevance of the practice for applicants, as evidenced in studies that have explicitly assessed the moderating role of race (Walker et al., 2012, 2009) and identity (Kim & Gelfand, 2003; Martins & Parsons, 2007).

### Behavioral Reactions to Diversity Practices

Behavioral outcomes of diversity practices include task-related (e.g., job learning), organization-related (e.g., job pursuit intention, training attendance), counterproductive (e.g., absenteeism, turnover intentions), and identity-revealing (e.g., resume whitening, disclosure of sexual orientation) behaviors. With few exceptions, research on behavioral outcomes also included attitudinal measures, providing evidence that individuals' attitudinal and behavioral outcomes are, for the most part, aligned as expected: when individuals have positive attitudinal reactions to diversity practices they display positive behavioral reactions (Aquino et al., 2005; Kalinoski et al., 2013; Leslie et al., 2014; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). For instance, with mentoring, increased job satisfaction and lower role ambiguity coincide with higher intentions to stay (Allen et al., 2004; Ragins et al., 2000) and enhanced job learning (Lankau & Scandura, 2002), respectively. Correspondingly, negative mentoring experiences are associated with higher psychological withdrawal and intentions to leave (Eby et al., 2004). The alignment between attitudinal and behavioral reactions suggests that they both result from initial reactions to diversity practices.

Although attitudes are generally presumed to precede behaviors (Fiske & Taylor, 2013), we noticed an interesting exception. Although both minority and majority employees respond to the presence of diversity cues on a recruitment website by spending more time viewing the website and recall more information, only Black respondents reported higher affective reactions (Walker et al., 2012). Similarly, while exposure to diversity training was successful in making decision-makers less biased in their intentions to hire an applicant, it did not impact attitudinal evaluations about the suitability of a "misfit" applicant for the job (Pichler, Varma, & Bruce, 2010). This suggests that people may display desired behaviors even in the absence of corresponding attitudinal changes. An interesting question is whether observed behaviors are as long lasting as they would be if consistent with internal attitudes, and/or whether attitudinal changes eventually follow behaviors (Festinger, 1962). With only two studies to draw upon (i.e., Pichler et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2012), it is difficult to know whether the fact that both instances involved majority group members' dissonant responses to diversity stimuli represents mere coincidence or is worthy of further examination.

### Emergence to Organizational-Level Outcomes

The research reviewed thus far provides solid support for the relationship between diversity practices and employees' reactions to those practices. Nevertheless, the practical purpose of implementing these practices is often to achieve goals at higher-order levels such as reducing legal or financial penalties due to discrimination, increasing managerial diversity, and enhancing organizational performance. The question is whether these individual-level outcomes emerge to affect organizational-level outcomes in as simple a way as is often inferred. There are numerous possible paths through which individual-level experiences can be expected, over time, to impact these higher-order outcomes, with some being more speculative than others. For example, although they may promote organizational attachment (Butts et al., 2012), whether or not work-life initiatives ultimately contribute to reducing gender gaps in wages and managerial representation remains unclear (Mandel & Semyonov, 2005).

Similarly, although the results of micro research paint a cautionary picture about the negative outcomes associated with AAPs, what remains unclear is whether and how the attitudinal outcomes that have predominated this research impact

organizational-level outcomes. The presumption is that negative reactions hurt organizations by reducing organizational attraction and, subsequently, the available pool of talent. However, this assumption needs to be validated as the difference in favorability ratings in response to AAPs is often small though statistically significant (Cropanzano et al., 2005; Hideg & Ferris, 2014; James et al., 2001). Furthermore, it is unclear whether the negative reactions (most often evident among non-beneficiaries) are strong enough to actually deter job pursuit. It is also worth noting that many research studies examine people's reactions to a form of AAPs that is illegal in most organizations (i.e., preferential treatment) and, therefore, should be uncommon in practice (Unzueta, Lowery, & Knowles, 2008). For example, research by Evans (2003) suggests that the stigmatization of Blacks only occurs when individuals perceive an illegal AAP to be in place. Moreover, in organizations where preferential treatment has been court ordered, whether beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries react negatively is of little consequence because it would not alter the strategies they are required to adopt.

A more practically significant concern is that AAPs may be damaging because they can hurt the performance of the very individuals they are meant to benefit by discounting perceptions of their competence (Aquino et al., 2005) as well as targets' self-perceptions of their performance (Leslie et al., 2014). In addition, there is the risk that presumed beneficiaries may experience interpersonal mistreatment from non-beneficiaries who feel resentful or threatened (Federico & Sidanius, 2002; Lowery et al., 2006; Reyna et al., 2006; Ritov & Zamir, 2014; Shteynberg et al., 2011). However, when examining the impact on the aggregate performance of a candidate pool, experimental research suggests that the use of preferential treatment might not reduce the overall quality of performance. Specifically, research has shown that the adoption of preferential selection policies favoring women increases attraction among high performing women who might not otherwise be interested in competing for entry—in this case into a math competition—thereby increasing the proportion of female candidates while leaving the average performance of the pool unaltered (Niederle, Segal, & Vesterlund, 2013) or even better (Balafoutas & Sutter, 2012).

An example of a form of emergence for which there is sufficient empirical support involves turnover. A number of diversity initiatives, including LGBTQ-friendly practices (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001) and

mentoring (Allen et al., 2004; Ragins et al., 2000), have been found to reduce turnover intentions. Although turnover intentions are only predictive of actual turnover under some conditions (Tett & Meyer, 1993), it is reasonable to expect that practices that explain a large reduction in turnover intentions could be associated with lower collective turnover, which in turn is associated with overall performance (Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, & Pierce, 2013), customer satisfaction, production, and sales efficiency, as well as counter-productivity and error rates (Heavey, Holwerda, & Hausknecht, 2013).

Although the emergent path associated with collective turnover has been established, the emergent processes that produce reliable increases in managerial diversity and organizational performance through new forms of value creation from diversity (not simply a reduction of costs) have not, despite how frequently they are taken for granted. For example, targeted recruiting yields organizational attraction (Rau & Adams, 2005; Walker et al., 2009) and job pursuit intentions (Kim & Gelfand, 2003); however, there are a number of nontrivial inferential leaps needed to link these prehire attitudes to actual increases in managerial diversity. We did find a few studies, however, where diversity practices were associated with self-reported promotion rates, for example participation in mentoring (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011; McDonald & Westphal, 2013; Seibert et al., 2001) and receipt of supportive policies for LGBT employees (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Assuming self-reported promotion rates are reliable, these findings should ultimately be reflected in greater representation of these employees in management positions.

The path to organizational performance involves an altogether different set of assumptions depending on whether higher performance is expected through favorable customer reactions (Thomas & Ely, 1996), an aggregation of individual-level engagement and performance through the principles of social exchange (DeNisi & Smith, 2014) or value creation from the successful leveraging of diverse perspectives (Roberson, Holmes IV, & Perry, 2016). Most studies conclude with the measurement of attitudes with little evidence of tangible behavioral returns (for exceptions see Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Tonidandel et al., 2007). It is unclear whether improvements in employee attitudes or individual performance that result from any one diversity practice are significant enough to be reflected, in the aggregate, in higher organizational-level outcomes.

### Summary of Lessons That Emerge from the Process Model

Given all the sources of variance in managers' and employees' reactions to diversity practices, it should come as no surprise that firm-level research that does not account for within-organization variability has yielded mixed results. To further develop an understanding of the effectiveness of diversity practices, we turned our attention to sources of variability *within* organizations. We started by highlighting the importance of differentiating between espoused and enacted practices, and saw evidence that the actual design and implementation of practices explain considerable variation in outcomes. We further identified important factors that shape the "motivational significance" for implementing diversity practices. We then showed that employees' reactions to enacted practices are shaped by two broad categories of moderators: those that influence assessments of personal gain versus the authenticity of the organizational messages presumed to underlie practices. These practice-specific reactions are important because they predict employees' attitudinal, cognitive, and behavioral reactions toward the self, others, and the broader organization. Finally, the lens afforded by our process made it salient that research linking individual-level attitudes and behaviors to organizational outcomes is almost entirely absent.

### DISCUSSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Our review leads us to draw the following conclusions about what is currently missing, and, therefore, what is needed in future research: 1) an examination of how diversity practices in combination influence effectiveness; 2) better alignment between diversity practice design and what is needed to facilitate the emergence of valued organizational outcomes; 3) careful assessment of the mechanisms that are assumed to account for outcomes; 4) attention to target groups other than women and racial minorities; and 5) more careful consideration of the organizational context within which research is embedded. We discuss each of these in turn.

#### Diversity Practice Bundles

We were surprised by how little research has examined how diversity practices in combination influence outcomes despite what is known from strategic human resource management (SHRM) research about effect sizes from "bundles" of practices

typically being larger than from individual practices (Combs, Liu, Hall, & Ketchen, 2006; Dyer & Reeves, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995). Although some research has involved the simultaneous measurement of multiple diversity practices (Kalev, 2009, 2014; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Richard et al., 2013), including a few studies within the diversity climate domain (Buttner & Lowe, 2015; Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2010, 2012; Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009; Kaplan et al., 2011), the most common approach has been to calculate an average score across the multiple practices assessed. However, the use of averaged scales assumes that all practices included represent a unidimensional construct, which is an oversimplification. An alternative used by some SHRM scholars is to construct additive indices, although doing so may not be preferable because it assumes that each additional practice that is adopted adds value in a linear fashion (Delery, 1998; Wright & Boswell, 2002). Neither approach takes into account the possibility that practice bundles might produce higher-order synergies, nor that some practices may serve as substitutes for each other (Delery & Doty, 1996).

Given the complex causality that we assume underlies the emergence of outcomes associated with diversity practices, combined with the role that contextual factors play in these relationships, we recommend that the most appropriate means of examining diversity practice bundles in future research would be to adopt a set-theoretic approach to examining practice configurations (Fiss, 2007). A configurational approach allows for the examination of synergistic effects beyond traditional interactions involving two or three practices (Rau & Adams, 2005) and accounts for the possibility of equifinality among different sets of configurations even with a relatively small sample size (Fiss, 2007). To aid in the process of conceptualizing diversity practice bundles, we categorized the typical set of diversity practices using the Abilities–Motivation–Opportunity framework from SHRM research (Jiang, Lepak, Hu, & Baer, 2012). As can be seen in Table 3, targeted recruiting, diversity training, mentoring, and possibly also ERGs aim to enhance employees' abilities. Most likely recruiting and training are not substitutes for mentoring or ERGs; however, depending on the way that ERGs are structured, they may provide overlapping benefits as mentoring programs. Accountability and formalization of practices cut across all three categories, suggesting that they may exert a multiplicative rather than additive effect in diversity practice bundles. Of the three, the motivation bundle may be the most generic in that it is influenced by employees' overall

**TABLE 3**  
**Ability-, Motivation-, and Opportunity-Enhancing Diversity Practices**

	Abilities	Motivation	Opportunity Structures
<b>Ability-, motivation-, and opportunity-enhancing HR practices</b>			
Traditional definition	Practices that ensure that the company has appropriately skilled employees.	Practices that enhance employee motivation for their work.	Practices that empower employees to use their skills and motivation to achieve organizational objectives.
Traditional HR practices	Recruitment, selection, training.	Performance appraisal, compensation, incentives and rewards, benefits, promotions and career development, job security.	Flexible job designs, work teams, employee involvement, formal grievance procedures, information sharing.
<b>Ability-, motivation-, and opportunity-enhancing diversity practices</b>			
Diversity-focused	Targeted recruiting to diversify human capital pool Mentoring to provide additional career-related coaching Training for counteracting bias in decision-making Work–life benefits to enhance employment, especially of women Accountability and formalization of practices to reduce bias ERGs if they provide access to mentors and sponsors <sup>a</sup> Targeted leadership and development programs <sup>a</sup> Training on compensatory strategies to fight stereotypes <sup>a</sup> Questioning of dominant assumptions regarding traditional paths to and definitions of leadership <sup>a</sup>	Practices that help individuals feel that their identities are valued and supported (e.g., work–life benefits, non-discrimination policies, mentoring, ERGs) Visible representation of own identity group among leaders (i.e., role models) Fairly implemented employment practices <sup>a</sup> Recognition and affirmation of self-identity as leader <sup>a</sup> Visible leadership commitment <sup>a</sup> Managerial incentives for supporting diversity goals <sup>a</sup> Accountability and formalization of practices to reduce bias	Work-structures that promote cross-boundary interactions and outcome dependence (e.g., self-directed teams; rotational programs) Mentoring (especially sponsorship) Accountability and formalization of practices to reduce bias ERGs if they provide opportunities for leadership and/or project work that expose employees to new learning, visibility, and other employees across roles, levels, and other organizational boundaries <sup>a</sup> Questioning of dominant assumptions regarding traditional paths to and definitions of leadership

<sup>a</sup> indicates practices that were not included in our review.

perception that an organization has invested in them, which is likely derived from all practices rather than any one in isolation, (Boehm, Kunze, & Bruch, 2014).

### Alignment of Diversity Practice Design with What Is Needed for Outcome Emergence

In our process model, we discussed policy-practice decoupling (i.e., of espoused versus enacted practices) as one explanation for why diversity practices are not consistently associated with expected outcomes. However, our review revealed an additional form of decoupling that may explain the persistence of bias despite the widespread adoption of diversity practices, and that is what Bromley and Powell (2012) call means-end decoupling. Even when policies are implemented as intended, they can be ineffective to the extent that they are decoupled from what is needed to achieve the ends (or goals) that are of strategic importance to an organization. More specifically, despite consensus from psychological research that certain features of the socio-relational context—including

shared norms about the value of diversity and development of personalized understandings and interpersonal learning (Nishii, 2013; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007)—are critical for reducing stereotype-based thinking and prejudice, most diversity practices are not focused on transforming the socio-relational context (Green & Kalev, 2008).

This omission is significant because even if diversity practices succeed in enhancing employees' social exchange or psychological contract perceptions, members of marginalized groups may still experience pressures to assimilate to the dominant majority, or worse, mistreatment and exclusion such that their lived experience at work belies the messages underlying diversity practices. This may mean that their self-worth and efficacy suffer (Leslie et al., 2014), they withhold their unique perspectives such that their value to the organization remains hidden (Shore et al., 2010) and fail to receive the positive reinforcement that is so essential for the construction and internalization of a leader identity (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011). The net effect could be that they become

less able to take the risks needed to develop and advance in the organization, under-contribute to value creation, or may even choose to leave the organization. As this example illustrates, proactively shaping the socio-relational context is essential because it represents an “emergence enabling state” (Ployhart & Moliterno, 2011) that determines whether a firm’s diverse individual-level human capital is effectively deployed in the pursuit of organizational outcomes (Roberson et al., 2016). Altogether, the rather grim conclusion that remains is that until practices more adequately reflect what is known from research on workgroup diversity about the impact of negative group dynamics perpetuated by social categorization and status hierarchies (van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004), their ultimate effectiveness will remain limited.

The means-end disconnect is even more stark when the goal is to leverage diversity for its potential performance benefits. Much is known from group diversity research about how synergistic performance benefits are unlikely to emerge from the mere presence of diversity; instead, what is required are shared norms, felt psychological safety, and motivation for sharing diverse perspectives and engaging in information elaboration in ways that yield new solutions (De Dreu, Nijstad, & van Knippenberg, 2008). Diversity practices that focus on enhancing fairness and reducing discrimination do not themselves facilitate synergy or inclusion outcomes (Dwertmann et al., 2016; Nishii, 2013), although they may be necessary preconditions. The critical influence of the more proximal workgroup context highlights the role that managers play in determining diversity and inclusion outcomes that stretch far beyond making unbiased employment decisions. Diversity practices that provide managers with the tools and motivation they need to shape inclusive climates (Nishii, 2013) and design work processes in ways that strengthen social connections (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) and collective identification (van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005), and provide opportunities for cross-boundary interactions (Kalev, 2009) are needed (see Table 4 for examples). Practices also need to be redesigned to be aligned with synergistic as well as bias reduction goals. For example, targeted recruiting might be expanded to include efforts to identify applicants with traits that facilitate synergistic processes, and managers should be evaluated not only for their achievement of EO goals but for engaging in inclusive leadership. With the exception of research by Homan et al. (2015) on team-focused behavioral training on how to engage in effective information elaboration, the

dominant focus of the research we uncovered reflects the pursuit of fairness and discrimination rather than synergistic performance goals (see Tables 3 and 4).

### **Assessment of the Mechanisms Linking Diversity Practices with Outcomes**

We were struck by how seldom the underlying mechanisms assumed to account for proposed relationships with outcomes were actually measured. Relatedly, in many studies, the independent and dependent variables were quite distal, and/or the dependent variables were rather generic (e.g., satisfaction, commitment) rather than facet-specific. The pertinent question that needs to be answered more often in future research is not *whether* disparities exist in employees’ perceptions, experiences, or outcomes, but *why*. Until the multiple possible mechanisms that may account for positive, null, and negative results (particularly across target groups in the same study) are examined, we will be unable to predict with accuracy which practices are best under which conditions and for whom. Our process model provides a framework to guide researchers in thinking through the moderating and intermediary variables that explain the effects of diversity practices. The categorization of practices into ability-, motivation-, versus opportunity (AMO)-enhancing bundles (Table 3) may also aid in the identification of more specific pathways through which the effects of diversity practices emerge; for example, changes in one’s social network ties or exposure to developmentally challenging experiences (rather than increases in commitment) that may result from participation in ERGs. The AMO framework also helps to identify instances where a practice may serve multiple goals (e.g., abilities and opportunities), thereby providing clues as to why its adoption may be associated in inconsistent ways with distal outcomes (e.g., managerial diversity).

### **Research on Target Groups Other than Women and Racial Minorities**

Much of the research we reviewed examined the effectiveness of diversity practices by comparing the reactions of, and the effects on, target groups that differed primarily in terms of race and gender. Although this could be due to the easy availability of these data—especially in macro-level research—the over-generalization of social categories based on broad dimensions presents challenges for both

**TABLE 4**  
**Ability-, Motivation-, and Opportunity-Enhancing Inclusion Practices**

Ability-, Motivation-, and Opportunity-Enhancing Diversity Practices			
	Abilities	Motivation	Opportunity Structures
Inclusion/ synergy-focused	Selecting for inclusion and synergy-promoting competencies <sup>a</sup> Training on inclusive leadership to develop inclusive climates <sup>a</sup> Training focused on competencies required for value creation (e.g., teamwork, information elaboration, conflict resolution) <sup>a</sup>	Visible leadership commitment <sup>a</sup> Inclusive leadership (appraisal and rewards) <sup>a</sup> Inclusive, multicultural organizational values and climate <sup>a</sup>	ERGs if they provide opportunities that expose employees to other employees across roles, levels, and other organizational boundaries <sup>a</sup> Work-structures that promote cross-boundary interactions and outcome dependence (e.g., self-directed teams; rotational programs) Practices that strengthen social connections (critical for exchange and recombination of information for value creation) <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> indicates practices that were not included in our review.

research and practice. First, despite the fact that diversity refers to an infinite number of objective and perceived differences among members of an organizational unit (van Knippenberg et al., 2004), most of the knowledge we have about the effectiveness of diversity practices is derived from a narrow set of visible demographical attributes, with limited direct evidence about how existing findings generalize to other employee subgroups, for example with non-visible identities (e.g., sexual orientation, religion, certain disabilities; Clair, Beatty, & MacLean, 2005). The challenges associated with generalization are perhaps the most evident when thinking about Peter Drucker’s (1995) famous adage: what gets measured gets managed. The measurement of progress against goals for invisible identities is fraught with potential inaccuracies, and taking advantage of what is known from research about, for example the value of pairing demographically similar individuals in mentoring relationships, is much more difficult.

Second, individuals’ reactions to diversity practices are often shaped by deeper-level attributes rather than surface-level attributes (Kim & Gelfand, 2003; Martins & Parsons, 2007). The propensity to study differences in observable surface-level attributes may explain some of the variability in research findings to the extent that such an approach fails to account for the varying activation of people’s multiple identities across different contexts and times (Shemla, Meyer, Greer, & Jehn, 2016). Adopting higher-resolution target groups derived from consideration of *contextually relevant* factors (e.g., group status, diversity beliefs, group identity) that influence the salience of particular identities could help refine

the design of practices and the interpretation of research findings.

**Consideration of the Organizational Context**

Our organization of research results into the various components of our process model helped to clarify when and why context matters for the effects of diversity practices. We urge future researchers to provide as much detail as possible about the organization(s) from which they collect data so that it is possible to interpret findings that may differ across studies due to factors such as organizational size, industry, workforce and managerial demographics, regional context, and the historical context of discrimination lawsuits. Similarly, more information about how practices have been designed and enacted would strengthen the contribution of macro-level research that has tended to rely on generic reports of the presence versus absence of practices.

**CONCLUSION**

Our review revealed that neither the macro nor micro literature provides findings that are consistent enough from which stand-alone conclusions can be drawn. Differences between the two are explained by the fact that both are largely single-level, do not consider cross-level effects, focus on differential outcomes, and often do not integrate the other’s theoretical perspectives. The macro-literature often bypasses the empirical assessments of theoretical mechanisms and relies on lean measures of the presence of diversity practices, whereas micro research offers few



concrete insights about how individual-level attitudes and behaviors impact organizational outcomes. We induced a process model to organize the literature and provide a framework for understanding the underlying mechanisms that explain the effects of diversity practices. Once an organization adopts a diversity practice, a variety of factors influence the felt motivation among managers to implement the practice. Employees' perceptions of the enacted practice are in turn influenced by their assessment of the personal gain they might derive from the practice as well as the perceived authenticity of the signals that the intended practice sends. Employees' practice-specific reactions shape their attitudinal reactions which in turn relate to behavioral responses. How these individual-level attitudes and behaviors translate to emergent, higher-level outcomes is still unclear, however.

We urge future research to more carefully examine the different paths that link AMO-enhancing diversity practice bundles to organizational outcomes, and to incorporate the measurement of more facet-specific rather than generic intermediary outcomes. One thing is clear: more of the same, both in the research and practice of diversity practices, is unlikely to yield substantially different outcomes. Instead, diversity researchers collectively need to do much more to understand the underlying theoretical mechanisms, particularly as they relate to emergence, and explore what can be gained by refocusing diversity practices to more clearly address socio-relational influences on discrimination as well as synergistic performance outcomes.

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