Developing a Balanced Scorecard Approach to Diversity Training

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Executive Summary

Given the frequent, but poor implementation of diversity training programs, the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria is exploring how organizations currently address diversity through training initiatives and what measurement tools can be used to align objectives of diversity training with organizational needs. An initial review of the problem led to the following determination: we need to better define diversity, understand the objectives of diversity training, and explore ways to better meet these objectives. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to analyze the implementation of diversity training in organizations as an approach to diversity management.

The study was designed to address the following primary research question: What are the overall objectives of diversity training? The study subsequently addressed the following secondary research questions: How are objectives used to guide diversity-training initiatives? How do objectives meet the diversity management needs of an organization? In addition, the goal of this project was to develop a tool for organizations to use in measuring objectives of diversity training.

To support these objectives, a systematic literature review of studies pertaining to diversity training programs was conducted.

Literature Review

The literature review focused on research on diversity and diversity training. The review included articles from databases of the University of Victoria, government websites, human resources sources, and diversity practitioners.

The first section examined the research on definitions of diversity. The second section explored the different approaches to diversity training. The third section outlined the different paradigms of the ‘how’s’ and ‘why’s’ of diversity training to formulate training objectives. The fourth and fifth sections discussed the benefits and barriers to diversity training, respectively. The sixth section considered the effectiveness of diversity training, and the seventh section explored best practices for effective diversity training. The literature concluded with the provision of a measurement tool for evaluating diversity training.

Methodology

The methodology was designed to evaluate the research question. It consisted of four
stages. In the first stage, a search was conducted to collect relevant studies on diversity training programs. In the second stage, the studies were measured against an assessment criterion to determine whether they would be useful in a systematic literature review. Stage three involved a synthesis of the studies that met the assessment criterion. Finally, stage four consisted of content and comparative analyses of the themes and patterns identified in the studies.

Findings and Discussion

One hundred articles were initially screened in. Of those, 30 met the assessment criterion for further synthesis and analysis. The findings and analysis focused on three categories: study information, training characteristics, and diversity content.

This research found objectives of diversity training to be categorized in five categories: compliance, productivity, learning and growth, organizational culture change, and relationships. In general, it appeared that training would feature multiple similar objectives, rather than multiple varied objectives. Diversity-training initiatives appeared to be guided based on whether the training will build awareness or develop skills, rather than specific objectives.

This research could not determine how diversity-training objectives help an organization meet their diversity management needs as not enough organizations made a connection between these two concepts. These results highlight a discrepancy between what academics and organizations believe to be effective for implementing diversity training, and how diversity-training initiatives are actually implemented. In short, the researcher argues that diversity training will better assist an organization in meeting their diversity management needs if training objectives are developed in relation to broader organizational goals.

Lastly, the Balanced Scorecard measurement tool was adapted in order for organizations to implement diversity training with objectives that meet their diversity needs and address their broader goals.

Recommendations

Options that emerged for the School of Public Administration, or other interested organization, are presented for consideration in any future implementation of diversity training. The first two recommendations relate to diversity training programs, and the third recommendation relates to broader diversity initiatives.
1. Define diversity prior to implementing training, using a broad definition that is agreed upon by faculty. By having an agreed upon definition, UVIC’s School of Public Administration can determine what diversity training program to implement that is inclusive to all students and faculty. As a joint responsibility of faculty members, this recommendation would require the least amount of time and be the easiest to implement.

2. Identify and specify objectives of diversity training before a training program is selected or administered. These objectives should be based on the results of a needs assessment, should be linked to the business goals and strategic objectives of UVIC’s School of Public Administration, and should utilize a measurement tool such as the Balanced Scorecard.

3. UVIC’s School of Public Administration can explore the implementation of additional diversity initiatives as part of a broader approach to diversity management. Pro-diversity behaviours and attitudes included in faculty or student performance evaluations that are linked to opportunities for promotions or awards; incorporating ‘diversity moments’ into classrooms and faculty meetings; and exploring diversity-based mentorships can all contribute to improving the School of Public Administration’s approach to diversity.

Conclusion

The systematic literature review addressed the primary and secondary research questions. The research found that there is varying implementation of diversity training programs, definitions of diversity, and objectives of diversity training. Overall, it is argued that academics and organizations are knowledgeable on what constitutes effective diversity training but are not implementing it accordingly. Flowing from the findings of this research, a measurement tool has been developed and recommendations were provided to the School of Public Administration.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Canadian demographic is constantly evolving. In turn, the demographic of the Canadian workforce continues to change as workplace populations see an increase in women, minorities, ethnicities and ages, for example. The School of Public Administration (SPA) at the University of Victoria (UVIC) is exploring how organizations currently address diversity through training initiatives. Diversity training is one common strategy that organizations use to strengthen diversity and inclusion in the workplace, however, as workplace populations continue to change, additional strategies may be needed. The School of Public Administration is also exploring measurement tools that can be used to align objectives of diversity training with organizational needs. These explorations will be conducted in consultation with existing research.

In general, diversity practitioners have commented that organizations have been found to implement training often minimally, poorly, and with bad execution. The primary reason mentioned for poor implementation is the use of different definitions of diversity. Different definitions of diversity means that diversity training comes out in a variety of different ways. Diversity practitioners have also noticed that organizations that do implement diversity training do so because they have to for employment equity reasons or to have an environment that is accessible to employees and customers, which leads to poor training implementation.

Therefore the problem statement for this research is: Given the frequent, but poor implementation of diversity training programs, we need to (1) better define diversity for the development of such programs, (2) understand the objectives of diversity training, and (3) explore ways to better meet these objectives.

The purpose of this project is to conduct a systematic literature review to analyze the implementation of diversity training in organizations as an approach to diversity management. Specifically, the project will identify: (1) what the overall objectives of diversity training are; (2) how objectives are used to guide diversity training initiatives; and (3) how objectives meet the diversity management needs of an organization. In addition, the goal of this project is to develop a tool for organizations to use in measuring objectives of diversity training. By doing so, organizations can better ensure that their training initiatives will meet their diversity management needs.

The primary question for this research is:

*What are the overall objectives of diversity training?*
This primary question prompts the following secondary questions:

1. How are these objectives used to guide diversity-training initiatives?
2. How do diversity-training objectives help an organization meet their diversity management needs?
3. What measurement tools can be used to assist organizations in developing objectives of diversity training initiatives to ensure their training objectives will meet their diversity management needs?

In addition to answering the questions above, this report will provide the following deliverables to the client:

- **Literature review**: Summary and analysis of literature on: (1) the presence, benefits and challenges of diversity in the workplace; (2) approaches used to address diversity issues and promote diversity; and (3) the continuum of diversity training initiatives and associated best practices.
- **Recommendations**: Present options to adopt to better ensure that training initiatives will meet diversity management needs.
- **Measurement tool**: Develop a measurement tool to assist in developing objectives of diversity training initiatives that meet diversity management needs.

This report is organized into nine chapters. Chapters one and two provide an introduction to the project and relevant background information. Chapter three provides a review of the topic of diversity in the workplace and diversity management initiatives. Chapter four presents the research framework used to guide this research. Chapter five outlines the methodologies used for this project and chapter six provides a summary and analysis of the findings. Chapter seven consists of a further discussion and addresses the research questions. Lastly, chapters eight and nine present options and recommendations to the client, and consist of further conclusions, respectively.
2. BACKGROUND

Client

The University of Victoria (UVIC) provides internationally recognized education to over 20,000 students annually. UVIC has achieved recognition for strong research in areas such as culture, global studies, and Indigenous research. UVIC is committed to fostering a welcoming, equitable, and inclusive environment for students and staff, particularly for women, racialised men and women, persons with a disability, Indigenous persons and sexual and gender minorities (UVic, 2017). As an employer, UVIC has been named one of the best diversity employers in Canada. At UVIC, the School of Public Administration (SPA) offers programming in Public Administration, Dispute Resolution, Community Development and Indigenous Governance. There are approximately 500 students enrolled with the SPA each year, and are exposed to local, national, international and indigenous perspectives throughout their learning.

Project Rationale

Based on results of the 2013 census, women make up 48% of the employed workforce (Statistics Canada, 2013, p. 10); one in five people are foreign-born (Statistics Canada, 2013, p. 6), which expected to increase as the most recent census results are released; 58.6% of people who immigrated to Canada between 2006 and 2011 are of working age (25 to 54) and 4.4% are of older working age (55 to 64) (p. 13). In addition, Canada’s Indigenous population will see increased participation in the labour market as Statistics Canada estimates a 41.9% increase between 2001 and 2017 due to an increase in both population and aboriginal recruitment programs (HR Council, n.d.). Due to the aging baby boomer population and their continuing participation in the workforce, people aged 55 years and older make up 18.7% of total employment (Statistics Canada, 2013, p. 13). Unlike previous labour markets, the diversity of the available workforce has forced public and private sector organizations to modify their approach to human resource management, business strategies and corporate culture (Hanover & Cellar, 1998), and managers must work with decision-making and non decision-making teams of various backgrounds (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998; Agócs & Burr, 1996).

Employees from diverse groups or with diverse backgrounds are three times more likely to leave a workplace than employees from the dominant homogenous group. This may be the result of a variety of reasons, including: not feeling part of the organization, not feeling valued, no opportunity for advancement, and the existence of cultural barriers (HR Council, n.d.). In order to retain valuable employees and have an engaged workforce, workplaces need to minimize these barriers to create and ensure a productive
and diverse workforce. One way for an individual to develop awareness, knowledge of diversity and diversity issues, and play a role in removing barriers is to participate in diversity training delivered by their employer (Betters-Reed & Moore, 1992, as cited in Prasad & Mills, 1997, p. 5).

There are a variety of diversity training programs and initiatives available to help organizations reap the benefits of having a diverse workforce while avoiding the potential pitfalls (Ferdman & Brody, 1996); however, critics of diversity training programs and initiatives have suggested that studies that evaluate the effectiveness of diversity training have not produced substantial empirical evidence to support the implementation and worth of such training (King, Gulick, & Avery, 2010, p. 892). Furthermore, few measurement tools have been developed to evaluate the effectiveness of diversity training. Another challenge to evaluating the effectiveness of diversity training is that organizations that implement diversity training often do not have a definitive goal (Ferdman et al., 1996); this makes it difficult to determine if diversity training has met the organization’s desired training objectives.

Discrepancies exist between what diversity academics and practitioners have suggested regarding effective diversity training, the training that is implemented through diversity programs, initiatives and human resource management, and how training is practically applied in the workplace (Pendry, Driscoll, & Field, 2007; Agócs et al., 1996). In order to address these discrepancies, any organization that implements diversity training should first determine what their training objectives are and how they are going to evaluate whether these objectives have been achieved following implementation (Agócs et al., 1996).

**Legislation and Policies**

In Canada, diversity policies are grounded in two federal legislations: the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Employment Equity Act*. This legislation protects people from discrimination based on the principle of human rights. In the workplace, this legislation outlines the requirement of employers to guarantee equitable treatment of employees regardless of identity.

**Canadian Human Rights Act**

The *Canadian Human Rights Act* was established in 1977 on the principle that all individuals have equal opportunities to live as they want to and are able. These opportunities are entitlements regardless of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, family or marital status, sex (including pregnancy and childbirth), gender identity and expression, physical or mental disability, or pardoned conviction (*Canadian Human Rights Act* (CHRA), 1985). This Act outlines actions in contravention of this
legislation when in relation to one of the grounds of discrimination listed above, and includes: refusing to employ or adversely differentiate against an individual; excluding, suspending, or depriving an individual from an employee organization; discriminatory policies or practices, and harassment (CHRA, 1985). This Act is a foundation for other Acts, such as the Employment Equity Act or Public Service Employee Act, and establishes legal groundwork for federal, provincial and workplace policies, such as harassment, discrimination or duty to accommodate.

Employment Equity Act

In response to the United States’ affirmative action policies and anti-discrimination movements within Canada, Canada created the Employment Equity Act (1986) as a mechanism to achieve equity in the workplace. This Act outlines four groups that shall not be denied employment opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability: women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. This Act applies to all federal departments, as well as private and other public sectors when the number of employees exceeds one hundred (Employment Equity Act, 1995). Similar to affirmative action policies, organizations are required to collect and report data on the representativeness of their workforce, and create plans for targeting hires. However, employment equity requirements extend to creating plans for promotions, removing discriminatory barriers in employment equity policies and accommodating diversity in the workforce. This Act established the requirement for workplaces to increase the diversity of their workforce, however critics note that it does not state how to do so nor address the accompanying challenges of interpersonal and intergroup communications and relationships, such as increased conflict and stress, and decreased retention and job satisfaction (Agócs et al., 1996).

Provincial and Territorial Legislation

Each province and territory has its own legislation to supplement the federal legislation. Provincial and territorial legislation includes specific Human Rights Codes that are used as a foundation for provincial and territorial policies, and to which provincially regulated organizations and non-profit organizations must adhere.

Workplace Policies

Policies are supportive mechanisms that organizations use to promulgate processes that are often in line with organizational values. Workplace diversity is not a legislated item; therefore, it is most commonly addressed in an organization’s policies and procedures. In general, this type of policy communicates a commitment to fostering equal opportunities and removing barriers, reinforces compliance with federal and provincial legislation, and
is integrated with an organization’s values. For example, UVIC has created 11 policies relating to diversity for both students and employees (UVIC, 2017). These policies provide supplemental information to provincial and federal legislation, and establish the processes, responsibilities and accountabilities within the organization in relation to the policy topics. Most policies that address workplace diversity are found within provincial and territorial initiatives, such as British Columbia’s Aboriginal Youth Internship Program and Work-Able Program (British Columbia Government website, 2017).
3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a foundational understanding of diversity in the workplace and diversity initiatives. Specifically, the literature review focuses on: providing an overview of definitions of diversity; approaches used by organizations to address diversity issues and promote diversity; the benefits and barriers of a diverse workforce and diversity training; desired outcomes of diversity training initiatives and their associated best practices; and a measurement tool suited for evaluating diversity training. The review will contribute to defining and identifying the objectives of diversity training in the subsequent analysis.

The literature for this review was primarily acquired through the University of Victoria’s search engine Summon 2.0 and Google Scholar; federal and provincial government and human resources websites were also used. The following search terms were used in different combinations to capture the most relevant research: ‘workplace diversity’, ‘diversity training’, ‘benefits of diversity training’, ‘work force diversity’, and ‘diversity management’. Additional sources were also found within the reference lists of initial sources.

Definitions of Diversity

There are many definitions of diversity. In a survey by Anand and Winters (2008), human resource and diversity professionals reported eight different definitions of diversity, and seventy-one percent of their affiliated organizations did not have an official definition (p. 356). The more common definitions of diversity are usually defined narrowly in terms of recognizable characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, age, and national origin. For example, Schmidt (2004) defines diversity as “all differences among people: race, color, gender, age, nationality… and sexual orientation” (p. 148). However, the scope of diversity definitions is becoming broader to also include personality, education, marital status, lifestyle, beliefs, and life experiences (Wentling et al., 1998; Ollapally & Bhatnager, 2009). An example of such an expansive definition is “individuals with varying perspectives based on different life experiences, cultural or sociodemographic background” (Stewart, Crary & Humberd, 2008, p. 374). Research shows that both individuals and organizations prefer broader definitions (Ollapally et al., 2009) that each person can see himself or herself within. In addition to these definitions, some define diversity simply as it pertains to varied perspectives and approaches to work (Thomas and Ely, 1996).

Applying these definitions to the workplace, diversity can be seen by a workforce comprised of multiple religions, cultures, and skin colours; both sexes, occupying non-
stereotypical roles; different sexual orientations and gender expressions (Green, López, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002; Ollapally et al., 2009); varying behaviour styles (CASMAC, 1996; as cited in Ollapally et al., 2009); and a range of capabilities, perspectives and approaches to work based on a variety backgrounds and experiences (Thomas and Ely, 1996). By defining diversity, individuals and organizations can ensure a common understanding of to whom actions of acknowledgement, understanding, acceptance, value and celebration should be extended (Green, López, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002) in order to achieve inclusion (Ollapally et al., 2009).

**Approaches to Diversity**

Over the past fifty years, organizations have been forced by legislative demands and societal pressures to address an increasingly diverse workforce. Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s the United States implemented equal employment legislation, making it illegal for organizations to discriminate in employment-related matters such as recruitment, termination and compensation. In addition, there were multiple international demands for countries, and therefore organizations, to embrace diversity. For example, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, which Canada ratified in 1981 (UN General Assembly, 1979). In addition to these national and international legal pressures, societal pressures such as changing demographics motivated organizations to address diversity (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 287). In order to avoid potential lawsuits, organizations applied a compliance-and-litigation-avoidance approach in which they trained employees on the relevant legislations and the consequences of discriminatory practices (Anand & Winters, 2008). During this time, the concept of inclusion was understood as removing illegal barriers or unfair obstacles rather than supporting employees.

During the 1980s, organizations scaled back compliance-and-litigation-avoidance approaches due to government deregulations for various policies. For example, the Telecommunications Act slackened restrictions that precluded large corporations from showcasing non-diverse viewpoints in their broadcasting. This deregulation led to telecommunication corporations accumulating homogenous broadcastings (Allen, 2013). Some organizations continued to train their employees on diversity because of the moral imperative or social responsibility to do so (Anand et al., 2008), whereby it is the right thing to do. These organizations believed to have a responsibility to their employees in leveling the playing field by promoting fairness and improving opportunities (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 285). Within this approach, it is morally correct to remove barriers to employment, support employees in achieving their full potential, and have an inclusive workplace.
Following the publication of *Workforce 2000*, which predicted an increase in the number of women and minorities in the workforce, ‘workforce diversity’ became a main focus for organizations in order to ensure business survival. This shifted organizations’ understandings of diversity from providing equal opportunities to gaining competitive advantage and achieving organizational effectiveness (Ferdman et al., 1996). Organizations became motivated to increase efforts made to address employee retention rather than recruitment (Anand et al., 2008; Ollapally et al., 2009), and viewed diversity as a strategic approach to business success and remaining competitive in the labour market (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 288).

During the 1990’s, organizations were encouraged to be sensitive to the needs and differences of others and enhance workplace relationships, with the ultimate goal of incorporating everyone into the workplace culture; however, little consensus existed on how this would be achieved (Anand et al., 2008, p. 359). Beginning in the 2000’s, and continuing today, the concept of diversity has been paired with notions of inclusion, a cultural competency that extends beyond diversity and includes acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing and celebrating differences (Green et al., 2002). This has become integrated with leadership development, core business strategies, and training.

**Diversity Management**

Diversity initiatives are influenced by demographic changes, changes in the global marketplace, a greater level of comfort towards diverse workforces, and the prevalence of organizations servicing a more diverse customer base (Wentling et al., 1998); this results in changes to policy, leadership and HR practices (Ollapally et al., 2009). Human resource departments often formally address diversity in the workplace through a diversity management framework in an innovative effort to include diversity practices within work systems (Ollapally et al., 2009). Diversity management is a voluntary approach that aims to address the ‘how’s’ of accommodating and promoting diversity in the workplace, and is typically seen as complementary to mandatory employment equity policies (Wentling et al., 1998).

Diversity management frameworks can be considered an organization’s overarching approach to accommodating and promoting diversity (Wentling et al., 1998). The focus of diversity management is to improve interpersonal and intergroup communications and relationships in the workplace to decrease conflict and stress, increase productivity and morale, and contribute to job satisfaction and employee retention (Agócs et al., 1996, p. 36). Diversity management is an approach that can achieve organizational culture change, empower employees, and emphasize the contributions that each person brings to the workplace (Wentling et al., 1998, p. 236). Diversity management provides all members
of an organization with the knowledge and mechanisms required to be equal and fair to one another (Thomas and Ely, 1996, p. 80). If organizations engage in discussions on diversity and take responsibility for their employees, a diversity management framework can challenge and affect change on organizational routines and power structures (Agócs et al., 1996, p. 38). Diversity management frameworks are comprised of a variety of programs and initiatives that promote the benefits of differences between employees and stimulate changes in employee and organizational attitudes (p. 36).

**Diversity Training**

One common program found in diversity management frameworks is diversity training. As with the term ‘diversity’, the term ‘diversity training’ also has differing definitions and understandings. The most common defines diversity training as “a distinct set of programs aimed at facilitating positive intergroup interactions, reducing prejudice and discrimination, and enhancing skills, knowledge and motivation of people to interact with diverse others” (Subotnik, 2016, p. 198; Alhejji, Garaven, Carbery, O’Brien, & McGuire, 2016). Diversity training is not the same as diversity management, as training is primarily focused on influencing intergroup behaviour through resolutions to problematic workplace relations and contributing to organizational wellness, whereas diversity management is focused on the larger goal of creating a change in the organization’s system through policies, procedures and culture (Pendry et al., 2007).

Much diversity training involves some type of intercultural training aimed at increasing the ability to communicate with culturally diverse people, along with an awareness of the types of behaviours that should be monitored and adjusted in order to do so (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 284). In addition to intercultural training, diversity training may promote organizational change by emphasizing the employ of diverse cultures. Diversity training and education may build awareness of diversity and diversity issues, and introduce skills for interacting with diverse individuals. Diversity training can highlight the need for valuing diversity, being aware of cultural differences, how to respond when working in diverse teams, learning the culture of customers, and providing the skills necessary to integrate into the workplace (Wentling et al., 1998).

Diversity training is one of the most implemented components of a diversity management framework, with seventy-nine percent of companies currently using or planning to implement diversity training (Wheeler, 1994). The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development found that sixty-nine percent of organizations in the United Kingdom had a diversity policy, sixty-percent of which offered diversity training as part of that policy (Pendry et al., 2007, p. 28). The organizations that offered diversity training reported seventy-eight percent of employees thought it is somewhat- or more-important to have diversity training; thirty-eight percent thought it is crucial (p. 28).
Characteristics of Diversity Training

Given the broadness of the concept of diversity and diversity training, diversity training is now a catchall term (Paluck, 2006) that encompasses a wide range of programs, from one-hour briefings to facilitating organizational change (Ferdman et al., 1996). Training initiatives exist along an instructional-experiential continuum (Paluck, 2006), also referred to as a didactic or experiential approach (Pendry et al., 2007; Ferdman et al., 1996). Typically, instructional or didactic training approaches address individual learning (Ferdman et al., 1996). Human resources courses are the most common form of this training that employees are expected to take. This learning is often taken away by each person and not further shared or given support (p. 296).

On the other end of the continuum, experiential training approaches that involve collective learning are better suited to addressing systemic diversity issues as it creates new, shared norms that are then brought back and spread throughout the organization (p. 296). An experiential approach consisting of active engagement in training exercises is better suited when an organization is working toward a cultural change (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 295). Diversity training may be composed of both instructional, or didactic, and experiential programs; this is usually dependent on whether training is comprised of single or multiple exercises, and whether training occurs over one day, multiple days, or continuously (Paluck, 2006). The type of training that an organization implements is usually dependent on the organization’s broader strategy for workplace diversity and aims to be connected to meeting the organization’s needs.

Within an instructional or experiential training program, the approach taken may be informative and enlightening, or dissonance- and guilt-inducing for the participant (Pendry et al., 2007). Diversity training may be framed as information and require participants to consider others’ perspectives, with the goal of raising awareness of individual biases and historic misdemeanors. This informative and enlightening approach highlights the benefits of a diverse workplace and an organization’s legal responsibilities regarding diversity. Overall, this approach aims to persuade diversity, encourage group relations and adhere to laws (Pendry et al., 2007, p. 30). Diversity training may also be framed in a way to elicit emotional reactions and require participants to take responsibility for wrongdoings, which are typically actions inflicted on non-white, non-male, non-heterosexual peoples. This dissonance- and guilt-inducing approach typically addresses white privilege through the use of in-group/out-group exercises (Pendry et al., 2007, p. 32). In practice, diversity-training programs may incorporate elements of all the above characteristics to achieve particular objectives. In a study by Wentling and Palma-Rivas (1998), 12 diversity experts proposed that the future of diversity training will see training becoming integrated with other types of training rather than be a standalone topic (Wentling et al., 1998).
Categories of Diversity Training Objectives

Diversity training can work to achieve different outcomes or objectives depending on the level of change that is desired and to whom the training is targeted (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 291). Training that is targeted towards an individual can result in objectives that include increased knowledge and awareness of diversity issues in an effort to change attitudes, and the provision of skills in order to change behaviours. These objectives can be categorized as micro, as they pertain to an individual in an effort to reduce biases and change individual behaviours (Ferdman et al., 1996; Hanover et al., 1998). There are macro objectives of diversity training that pertain to groups, and include changes to organizational culture and societal attitudes (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 292). These include: training that is targeted towards interpersonal relationships teaching effective communication skills; training that is targeted towards a group focusing on increasing team building capacities; and training targeted towards intergroup relationships.

Literature on the underlying motivations of diversity training posits different categories of diversity training objectives (Ferdman et al., 1998; Alhejji et al., 2016). Although a variety of different motivations have been theorized, they are typically grouped in threes and speak to business objectives, personal growth objectives, and social objectives. In addition to providing categories of objectives, these motivations are also used to explain why organizations are expending resources to incorporate diversity into the workforce (Thomas & Ely, 1996). The underlying motivations for organizations to incorporate diversity into the workforce can be related to their desired diversity-training objectives, as these objectives can ensure that diversity is incorporated as required by an organization.

Benefits of Diversity Training

A diverse workforce often creates competitive advantage, demonstrates that a workforce is representative of the customer market, and leads to better decisions due to the contribution of multiple perspectives (Ollapally et al., 2009). Workforce diversity promotes creativity and innovation due to a broader understanding of issues and the development of alternative solutions, leading to business advantages (Chobrot-Mason et al., 2012). These business advantages can be seen through increased productivity, better performance and growth of employees, reduced employee turnover, reduced law suits, and lower stress among employees (Ollapally et al., 2009). Overall, diversity training can lead to increased workforce productivity, decreased lawsuits, increased market opportunity, better recruitment, creativity and improved image (Green et al., 2002). For example, the major technology company Apple implemented a diversity training initiative in the 1990’s to address their workforce diversity needs (National Research
Council, 1997). Today, Apple is one of the most successful and sought-after companies to work for.

Furthermore, diversity training provides the opportunity for, and lays the foundation of an organization’s goals for inclusion. As a systematic business strategy, diversity training makes certain that everyone in an organization shares the same advantages. By recognizing the value of inclusion, where all employee contributions are considered, the organization will see more productivity, and new ideas and approaches to achieving better business. Diversity training, especially when the training is part of a larger diversity management framework, can work towards identifying and removing barriers, increasing awareness and skills, developing new competencies, changing systems and rules, and holding organizations accountable to their employees and workplace culture (Ferdman et al., 1996).

Additional benefits include: allowing voices to be heard, providing access to information necessary for individual and organizational success, contributing to productive working relationships with co-workers and management, and providing the chance to contribute and the opportunity to advance professionally (Douglas, 2008; as cited in Ollapally et al., 2009). By investing human and financial resources into diversity training, employees gain skills, increase their performance, and are more likely to stay with an organization that is invested in their development. In return, employees will be better prepared to meet customer and other stakeholder needs (Ferdman et al., 1998, p. 289).

**Barriers to Diversity Training**

There is a high prevalence of organizations implementing diversity-training programs as it sells well and is positioned to impact organizations positively. Despite this and the demonstrated benefits, barriers to diversity training still remain. These barriers range from individual beliefs and biases to organizational culture, many of which can be challenging to overcome.

From an individual perspective, diversity training comes with challenges. Barriers to diversity training may result from negative attitudes towards diversity, leading to a resistance to participate in training or larger diversity management approach because of existing stereotypes and prejudices, stigmas surrounding affirmative action-type policies, criticisms of displayed favouritism towards minority groups, stereotypical job duties for women or visible minorities, and organizational cultures and subcultures (Ollapally et al., 2009). These attitudes and behaviours act as barriers to effective training and harm working relationships, damage morale and decrease productivity. In addition to attitudes of diversity, another barrier to diversity training arises from the different views on
diversity (Paluck, 2006), such as whether there are benefits to diversity or whether organizations should place a vested interest in achieving a diverse workplace.

Another barrier to diversity training may be the differences between espoused beliefs and actual practices (Ollapally et al., 2009); individuals may say they believe in the importance of a diverse workforce and welcome diversity, however their actions and behaviours do not support this. Individuals may become defensive of, or feel guilty for, their beliefs or attitudes when faced with beliefs or attitudes that counter their own (Stewart et al., 2008, p. 380). Although diversity training aims to identify and discourage instances of verbal aggressions, in doing so it can coddle necessary discourse (Subotnik, 2016, p. 200). Political correctness is another barrier to diversity training as it can impede hearing from those who disagree, and does not provide an opportunity to engage in a dialogue (Subotnik, 2016; Stewart et al., 2008).

Barriers to diversity training for an organization lie in the notion of building unity without uniformity; in other words, how does an organization level the playing field without downplaying differences. From an organizational perspective, diversity management frameworks and associated initiatives may lead to, or reinforce, divisions between groups of employees and cause feelings of exclusion (Ollapally et al., 2009). Organizations will typically use a reactive approach to diversity that accepts diversity because it is necessary to do so, rather than a proactive approach to diversity that actively promotes diversity and recognizes its innate value.

Research has found that diversity training alone cannot typically address the following levels of change: organizational change for removing barriers and implementing inclusive policies, and community change addressing pluralism and multiculturalism as a foundation for society (Ferdman et al., 1996). In order to address these types of change, diversity training should be a part of a larger framework. Diversity training and diversity management frameworks that seek to address these levels of change can be difficult to implement in bureaucratic organizations. These organizations have a chain-of-command structure to maintain efficiency. Thomas et al. (1996) state that it can be difficult to promote change to a change-resistant mindset, often found in bureaucratic models (p. 87). There are also challenges with diversity training being incorporated within a business strategy rather than a simpler regulated program (Anand et al., 2008) as this may require greater levels of change.

In addition to individual and organizational barriers, there are also barriers inherent within diversity training programs. Diversity training programs often rely on the assumption that the participants have had previous exposure to other perspectives, apart from stereotypical media portrayals (Stewart, Crary & Humberd, 2008). The multiplicity
of diversity training programs and approaches lead to different impacts, and some may be more suitable than others. For example, impacts related to organizational effectiveness may be more suitable for commercial organizations rather than public or non-profit organizations, which may be better suited for impacts on social justice or learning (Alhejji et al., 2016); however, it can be difficult to know what training is best suited. The impacts of diversity training on an individual are dependent on that individual’s intellectual development and ability to see beyond the rigid dualism of right or wrong (Stewart et al., 2008, p. 377). Similarly, ‘diversity’ can be seen as too conceptual and requires the categorization of people in order to explain how to reach a diverse and inclusive end-state; this can retract from the overall goal of seeing people as people (Subotnik, 2016).

Challenges with the current literature on diversity and diversity training highlight a variety of limitations that cause barriers for diversity training. These studies have found or hypothesized that diversity training may perpetuate racial tensions, heighten stereotypes, and foster new sensitivities and anxieties (Paluck, 2006). A common criticism of diversity management frameworks and diversity training programs is that they are often developed in Western organizations, which can have difficulty in translating to non-Western contexts (Alhejji et al., 2016; Academy of Research, 2008), primarily due to differing cultural attitudes on diversity and the workplace.

**Effectiveness of Diversity Training**

There is no consensus among researchers as to whether diversity training is effective, despite the volume of research on this topic. Empirical studies that do determine a training program to have been effective typically have methodological limitations that limit the validity of these findings (Alhejji et al., 2016), and empirical studies that determine a training program was ineffective often cite the inherent complexity of human behaviour as cause, rather than the training program itself (Academy of Research, 2008). Meta-analyses have found that there is no empirical evidence concluding that diversity training is effective, and therefore implementation of training has limited support (King et al., 2010).

The majority of diversity training literature relies on theory and posits theoretical frameworks for effective diversity training. These frameworks use a multidisciplinary approach, such as educational and psychological theories, to hypothesize what would lead to effective training; however these frameworks are often not empirically tested. This literature often frames effective training in terms of best practices, and highlights the complexity of determining effectiveness given the large amount of influencing factors, such as top management support and role modeling, commitment of resources, inclusion of diversity training in business strategies, and assessing the diversity needs of the
organization (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 294). These factors contribute to the argument that diversity training is not effective in addressing workplace diversity issues.

Overall, meta-analyses have found that diversity training research is published in diverse set of publication outlets, resulting in a variety of different contexts to which research findings are applied. Studies often utilize a narrow range of theoretical perspectives, which limits broader understanding of research results. There are also methodological limitations, including: small sample sizes, poor use of diversity training measures, reliance on self report measures and little longitudinal investigation or outcomes. This also impacts the ability to accurately determine the effectiveness of diversity training (Alhejji et al., 2016). Due to limited training materials, a lack of standardized training content, and the existence of deeply held values by participants, there are unclear conclusions as to what training programs are effective given their inherent complexity (Academy of Research, 2008), and blanket assertions should not be made.

**Best Practices for Effective Diversity Training**

The effects of diversity can be positive, negative or neutral (Academy of Research, 2008, p. 301), and by extension so can the effects of diversity training. Initiatives within diversity management are considered to be effective when they address both systemic and individual barriers (Ferdman et al., 1996, p. 291). Diversity training is argued to be most effective when an organization is committed to having an inclusive workplace and culture. This is strengthened when the training is closely linked to an organization’s business plan and managers are held accountable to diversity in the workplace (Ferdman et al., 1996; Wheeler, 1994; Pendry et al., 2007). Diversity training is also effective when the training is mandatory, the content is comprehensive, and evaluations subsequently occur (Ferdman et al., 1998).

Thomas and Ely (2006) interviewed multiple companies over a six-year period and determined eight preconditions needed for diversity training to be effective and promote learning in an organization. The first precondition is that the organization’s leadership understands the value of a diverse workforce. This includes embodying different perspectives and approaches, and valuing different opinions and insight. The second precondition is that leadership recognizes that expressions of different perspectives present an organization with both learning opportunities and challenges. Third, the organizational culture creates expectations of higher standards of performance, and diversity in the workplace can work to achieve these expectations. Fourth, fifth and sixth, the organizational culture also needs to stimulate personal development, encourage openness, and value employees, respectively; this will help diverse employees feel comfortable to fully participate in the workplace. The seventh precondition is that the organization has a well-articulated and understood mission. This will allow a diverse
workplace to be working towards the same goal and provide a common interest amongst employees. The last precondition for diversity training to be effective and promote learning is for an organization’s structure to be egalitarian and non-bureaucratic. Not all of these preconditions need to be present, however the more that are present, the more diversity training will be effective and promote learning.

Diversity training is argued to fail when there is insufficient support from leadership and a lack of commitment from management and employees (GilDeane Group, 1993). Diversity training that is perceived to be a means to an end is less effective than training that is perceived to achieve a broader purpose (Ferdman et al., 1996). In addition, if diversity training is not integrated into management systems, policies and practices it will be less effective (GilDeane Group, 1993). In order for diversity training to be successful, the skills and knowledge must be transferred to the workplace; unfortunately, transfer rates are often low (Hanover et al., 1998). Three primary factors that contribute to this transfer of knowledge and skills are: work environment, such as reinforcement and feedback from supervisors; modeling behavior from colleagues and management; and organizational climate (Hanover et al., 1998). Diversity as a social responsibility can be a strategic business objective. Structuring diversity training in this way can facilitate employee buy-in and commitment as it frames the training in a particular way (Holladay, Knight, Paige & Quiñones, 2003). Framing, a psychological technique, offers a particular perspective and can manipulate importance to influence subsequent judgments (p. 247).

In a survey of 108 diversity trainers, Curtis et al., (2007) found nine benchmarks of effective diversity training programs: top management support, training that is tailored to the organization, linking diversity to central operating goals, using trainers who were management or organizational development professionals, enrolling all levels of employees, utilizing a broad definition of diversity, addressing individual behaviour, changing human resource practices, and using other organizational development initiatives to impact organizational culture and attitudes toward diversity. Diversity practitioners have suggested that training should be provided in small pieces, described as ‘training moments’ or ‘diversity moments’, whereby information is presented and applied routinely through blended methods.

Due to the scarcity of empirical research, King, Gullick and Avery (2010) conducted a meta-analysis for best practices in diversity training. King et al., (2010) determined organizations need to be actively involved and engaged. This includes obtaining upper management support for diversity and diversity training, management participating in training, rewarding individuals who promote diversity within the organization, incorporating training within other strategic diversity management initiatives, and conducting subsequent organizational evaluations to determine the effects of training.
Most importantly, training should be viewed as a means to continuous improvement (Chobrot-Mason et al., 2012). Managers have a role to play in promoting diversity training, diversity management and organizational change. In order to do so, they must understand what discrimination looks like and its consequences, recognize the value of differences, and promote inclusiveness (Green et al., 2002). Multicultural skills are considered to be one of the skills critical for managerial success. As such, academics and diversity practitioners suggest training focus on enhancing self-regulation and self-awareness of biases and discriminatory behaviours rather than simply increasing awareness of differences among people (Chobrot-Mason et al., 2012).

King et al., (2010) found that diversity training should not solely focus on increasing knowledge and raising awareness of diversity and diversity issues; instead, training should focus on building the competencies necessary to change behaviour, and subsequently attitudes. Researchers posit that cultural competence is a key component of best practices in diversity management in both the individual and organizational levels (Curtis, Dreachslin & Sinioris, 2007; Chobrot-Mason et al., 2012). Increasing cultural awareness can increase discomfort with cultural differences; therefore, diversity-training objectives should seek to elicit behavioural changes rather than just increase awareness and promote attitude changes (Curtis et al., 2007).

As such, diversity training strategies should be based on science, should be appropriately timed, utilize multiple delivery styles, provide real-time support to participants following the training, and involve human resources (Curtis et al., 2007). King et al., ’s (2010) above meta-analysis corroborates Bendick et al.’s (2001) findings. From a survey of 100 diversity trainers, they found the following best practices: linking diversity training to organizational goals and tailoring training to achieve those goals; gaining strong support from management and influencing organizational culture; and addressing behaviours in order to align with human resource practices (Bendick, Egan & Lofhjelm, 2001).

Many organizations approach diversity training as a ‘check in the box’; this limits the effectiveness of training (Chobrot-Mason et al., 2012). It is important that diversity-training programs are not a standalone effort in addressing diversity in the workplace. Instead, diversity training should be understood and implemented as a continuing sustainability exercise, rather than periodically undertaken as an extra assignment. Ultimately, diversity training should be a key component of a strategic approach to organizational performance.

**Evaluating Diversity Training**

Diversity training programs and initiatives assist organizations in experiencing the benefits of having a diverse workforce while avoiding the potential pitfalls; however,
literature suggests the effectiveness of diversity training has not been substantiated by empirical evidence. Literature evaluates diversity training either theoretically, using paradigms, or empirically, using measurement tools.

**Paradigms for Evaluating Diversity Training**

Thomas et al. (1996) and Ferdman et al. (1998) posit paradigms as a way to consider and measure diversity-training objectives. One paradigm is the discrimination-fairness paradigm (Thomas et al., 1996) where there is a dominant understanding that every person should have equal opportunities to employment and be treated fairly, as legally required. This is related to the legal and social pressure paradigm (Ferdman et al., 1998; Alhejji et al., 2016) whereby the objective of diversity training is that an organization be compliant with legislation, avoid conflict, and ensure employees are behaving appropriately (Ferdman et al., 1998, p. 288). This paradigm is measured on an organization’s ability to recruit and retain employees rather than on the conditions in which employees work (Thomas et al., 1996, p. 81). Within this paradigm, leaders in the workplace place emphasis on due process and equal treatment, often resulting in a ‘we are the same and therefore want the same’ assumption (p. 81). This assumption limits an organization’s capacity to influence a cultural change.

A second paradigm is the access-and-legitimacy paradigm (Thomas et al., 1996) whereby organizations accept and celebrate employee differences for their own benefit. In this paradigm, motivations extend beyond compliance and recognize the important influence diverse workforces can have on clients and business outcomes (Thomas et al., 1996, p. 83). This market-based motivation creates the need for diversity in representing client demographics, however once this need is met there is no desire for further learning or understanding (p. 85). This is related to the organizational effectiveness paradigm (Ferdman et al., 1998) whereby the objective of diversity training is to increase organizational outputs, and often sees diversity as a means to an end (p. 289).

A third paradigm is the learning-and-effectiveness paradigm (Thomas et al., 1996), which incorporates the diversity of perspectives into the workplace and work tasks. This paradigm expands on the other underlying motivations by acknowledging and recognizing the value in differences. By recognizing this innate value, employees have an opportunity to learn and grow as individuals, ultimately enhancing their work performance (Thomas et al., 1996, p. 85-86). This is related to the moral imperative paradigm (Ferdman et al., 1998) whereby the objective of diversity training is to achieve interpersonal effectiveness and personal fulfillment (p. 286).
Despite the usefulness of these paradigms, some academics report that diversity training relies on pseudo-scientific theory designed with no empirical evidence, a lack of evaluation, and no follow up. This reliance on theory results in conceptual uses of diversity training rather than instrumental uses, and this limits the application of research findings (Academy of Research, 2008, p. 302). Few studies meet the social-scientific standard for measuring causal effects, and instead measure opinions or behavioural changes using self-reports; this presents an opportunity for findings to be biased as a result of self-preservation or social desirability (Paluck, 2006). In addition, few measurement tools have been developed to evaluate the effectiveness of diversity training.

Literature suggests that an organization that implements diversity training should first determine what their training objectives are and how they are going evaluate whether these objectives have been achieved following implementation. Following from a review of currently used measurement tools, such as self-reports or pre-test/post-test research designs, as utilized within current research, one way to better determining training objectives and subsequently evaluate the effectiveness of diversity training is with the Balanced Scorecard.

The Balanced Scorecard is a comprehensive system for strategy implementation created by Kaplan and Norton (1993) to effectively monitor an organization’s business using both financial and non-financial measures. This framework recognizes four perspectives that impact organizational performance: internal business processes, employee learning and growth, financial performance, and customers. The Balanced Scorecard requires organizations to identify relationships between each perspective and to maximize organizational effectiveness. The Balanced Scorecard has been adapted in other research (Gunn, Cunningham, & MacGregor, 2014) as it can be altered to meet varying research and organizational needs.
The Balanced Scorecard is used as a measurement tool for evaluating organizational effectiveness. As a measurement tool, each perspective is defined based on objectives, measures, targets and initiatives. The Balanced Scorecard identifies the business objectives, the measure and target of each objective, and potential initiatives to achieve these objectives, using four different perspectives in order to determine a comprehensive strategy for an organization in achieving organizational effectiveness.
Figure 2. Kaplan & Norton’s Balanced Scorecard Measurement Tool (1993).

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<tr>
<th>Customer</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Targets</th>
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<td>“To achieve our vision, how should we appear to our customers?”</td>
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Summary

Over the past four decades the literature on diversity has spanned many disciplines and focused on a multitude of theoretical frameworks. This has resulted in different definitions of what constitutes diversity and how to best approach diverse workforces. These approaches have gradually shifted from reactive approaches to more proactive approaches that enable organizations to meet their needs and the needs of employees. Diversity training, often as a component of a broader diversity management framework, is commonly implemented by organizations to address the challenges, and reap the benefits, of a diverse workforce.

From the literature, motivations, objectives, and best practices of diversity training can be categorized by a focus on an organization’s compliance with legislation and policy, the productivity of an organization, the learning and growth of employees, the fostering of relationships and team building, or enacting organizational culture change. Approaches to diversity and diversity training may touch on multiple objectives in varying degrees depending on an organization’s needs and resources. Few measurement tools have been developed for evaluating the outcomes of diversity training programs. A measurement tool that will prove useful to organizations should be focused on the training objectives in relation to larger organizational goals. The Balanced Scorecard is one measurement tool that can easily be adapted to meet this need.

As the implementation of diversity training becomes more widely used by organizations, the research and literature presents barriers and best practices for effective diversity training. The most challenging barriers to overcome often stem from individual beliefs and biases, and organizational culture. Diversity training can address these barriers through raising awareness and acknowledging the presence of biases and discrimination within organizations. Despite the touted benefits of diversity training, there is no consensus within the research as to whether diversity training is effective. Effective training is presented by the literature in terms of best practices. Common amongst
researchers is the recommendation to link objectives of diversity training to the business goals or strategic objectives of an organization.
4. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The expanse of diversity and diversity-training literature has culminated in a plethora of theories, frameworks, concepts and definitions. Definitions of what constitutes diversity range from observable characteristics such as race, age and gender, to unobservable differences in lifestyle, sociodemographics and personality. This has resulted in different ways to approach diverse workforces, including the use of diversity training. Diversity training can vary in terms of the form of instruction used and the engagement of participants, the length of training and whether it is imbedded into other organizational initiatives, the focus on building awareness or skills, and the subject matter.

The paradigms and underlying motivations cited as to how and why organizations implement diversity training can be actualized in terms of training objectives. These objectives of diversity training can be categorized as compliance, productivity, learning and growth, relationships, and organizational culture change. Common amongst researchers is the recommendation to link objectives of diversity training to the business goals or strategic objectives of an organization, and one way to accomplish this is to conduct a needs assessment prior to training implementation.

The field of diversity and diversity training research has identified many benefits and produced a multitude of best practices, however concepts remain vague and varied. Therefore, this research utilizes a bottom up approach in order to explore these concepts as they appear in diversity-training programs. A bottom up approach is a type of inductive reasoning whereby specific observations are used to determine broader generalizations (Berg & Lune, 2012). This research relies on the information from the general literature review to detect common themes and patterns within diversity-training programs through the use of a systematic literature review. These patterns are then used to develop general conclusions and provide recommendations for implementing diversity-training programs.

The elements identified in the literature review that will be further explored in a systematic literature review of diversity-training programs are: definitions of diversity, objectives of diversity training, diversity training characteristics, the use of a needs assessment, and whether training objectives are linked to organizational goals. These elements were chosen based on the researcher’s determination that they would prove most useful for further analysis, and aid in the adaptation of a measurement tool and in the development of recommendations to the client. The research framework for this research is pictured below.
Figure 4. Bottom Up Analysis as the Research Framework

Recommendations

General Conclusions

Systematic Review of Training Program Literature

Elements from General Literature Review

Definition of Diversity
Objectives of Diversity Training
Diversity Training Characteristics
Needs Assessment
Objectives Linked to Organizational Goals
5. METHODOLOGY

The methodology outlined below was designed to address the following research questions:

Primarily, (1) what are the overall objectives of diversity training?

Subsequently, (2) how are these objectives used to guide diversity training initiatives?; (3) how do diversity training objectives help an organization meet their diversity management needs?; and (4) what measurement tools can be used to assist organizations in developing objectives of diversity training initiatives to ensure their training objectives will meet their diversity management needs?

The literature review highlighted the discrepancies amongst the research as a result of inconsistent definitions of diversity, various training topics and content, and differences in the application of training programs (Ferdman et al., 1996; Paluck, 2006; Anand et al., 2008). The literature suggests the importance of utilizing a systematic approach to diversity training (King et al., 2010; Chobrot-Mason et al., 2012) in order for training to meet its intended objectives. Diversity training objectives have been categorized in the literature as they relate to an organization’s underlying motivations to implement training (Ferdman et al., 1996; Thomas et al., 2006), however there is limited literature to establish specific objectives that an organization may want to meet an end-goal. While there is value to research that targets individualized training, given the breadth of this topic it is important to also take a meta-analytic approach (King et al., 2010; Kalinoski, Steele-Johnson, Peyton, Leas, Steinke, & Bowling, 2013; Alhejji et al., 2016) to understand the field of diversity training research. Therefore, no individualized training program was analyzed for the purposes of this research.

The methodology consisted of qualitative research methods, specifically a systematic literature review, with a total of four stages. In the first stage, existing studies on diversity training in the workplace were collected. In the second stage, studies were assessed against an appraisal tool to determine whether they would be included or excluded in this study. The studies that met the inclusion criteria were synthesized based on the diversity training-related content in stage three. Finally, stage four involved a comparative analysis of the studies against the general literature review. The intention was to validate the findings from the systematic literature within existing diversity and diversity training literature.
Methods

The methods used in this research were qualitative, in that these methods provided information related to diversity training through description rather than by manipulation or testing (Berg et al., 2012). A systematic literature review was designed to address the primary and secondary research questions. To complete the systematic literature review, the following were completed: 1) the criteria against which a study was deemed eligible were defined; 2) studies were searched for; 3) studies that met the established criteria were chosen; and 4) the findings were used to answer the research questions (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman & The PRISMA Group, 2009). The findings of the systematic literature review were subsequently analyzed using content analysis, and then comparatively analyzed against the findings from the general literature review.

Stage One – Searching

The purpose of the first stage was to identify and collect existing studies for content and comparative analyses; this was completed using a purposive sampling technique aimed at existing studies that use the term ‘diversity training’ and ‘workplace’. Initial searches refined the topic more narrowly to include other terms such as ‘objectives’ and ‘outcomes’, however the broader search returned a more useful sample. To reduce the sample size within the broader search, the queries were limited to include: 1) journal articles, books, and chapters within books; 2) published in English; 3) peer-reviewed; and 4) full texts that could be downloaded for free.

The search was conducted using Ebscohost, Academic Search Complete, JSTOR, PsychInfo, Google Scholar and Summons. The search returned 38, 235, 1,924, 567, and 36,621 results, respectively. Given database limitations for accessible items, 2,340 items were purposively screened based on title and keywords to determine whether the item was likely to be relevant. This was deemed appropriate as purposive sampling is an effective technique for qualitative research and ensures there is quality data (Tongco, 2007). Due to time and resource constraints, 100 items were screened in.

Stage Two – Appraising

The purpose of the second stage was to determine the studies for further synthesis and analysis. For this stage, an appraisal tool was developed based on Dixon, Woods, Shaw, Agarwal and Smith’s (2004) tool in order to determine which studies were included and excluded based on eligibility criteria. The eligibility criteria were purposively selected to ensure that the research questions would be addressed. The criteria included: 1) the research question(s) pertain to a diversity training initiative and its outcomes; 2) ...
sample, data and analysis are clearly defined; 3) it is empirical research; and 4) the paper provides a useful contribution. In order for a study to be included in the synthesis and analysis stages, all four criteria needed to be met.

Following the general literature review, two additional criteria were used, however studies did not need to meet the criteria to be included. These included: 1) the diversity training is linked to an organizational need; and 2) the diversity training initiative is defined. The rationale behind applying these additional criteria was to assist in developing recommendations to the client. Following the application of the appraisal tool, thirty studies were included for analysis.

**Stage Three – Synthesizing**

The purpose of the third stage was to identify patterns and themes within the results of the systematic literature review (Berg et al., 2012). Content analysis was used to synthesize the studies that were screened in using the appraisal tool. The content analysis focused on three categories: study information, training characteristics, and diversity content. Study information included: the author(s), year of publishing, sample used, research design, the use of a needs assessment, and whether there was subsequent follow up. Training characteristics included: form of instruction, the medium of training, duration, whether training was mandatory or voluntary, and whether the training was awareness- or skills-based. Lastly, diversity content was comprised of: the definition of diversity used, training subject matter, and training objectives. This synthesis was used for further analysis, which is later described in stage four.

**Coding**

**Diversity Definition**

Definitions of diversity were coded as either “narrow” or “broad”. These codes were based on the general literature review, which found that diversity could be defined narrowly as race, gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, and sexual orientation or broadly to also include personality, education, marital status, lifestyle, beliefs, and life experiences.

**Objectives of Diversity Training**

Objectives of diversity training were defined based on the general literature review. The review found training goals, benefits and best practices to be categorized as compliance-based, productivity-based, individual learning- and growth-based, relationship-based, or
organizational culture change-based. Therefore, objectives of diversity training were similarly categorized.

**Form of Instruction**

Form of instruction was coded as being “active”, “passive”, or “both”. Examples of active forms of instruction include role-plays, simulations, and discussions. Examples of passive forms of instruction include lectures, readings, and videos. If a training program used both types of methods it was coded as “both”.

**Training Medium**

Training medium was coded as “instructor” if a person delivered the training, “computer” if the training was provided using a computer or other technology, or “both” if the training program used both mediums.

**Duration**

Training duration was coded as less than 4 hours, 4-8 hours, 8-12 hours, 12-16 hours, and more than 16 hours. For articles that stated duration in terms of days or weeks, it was assumed that each day of training would equal 8 hours and each week would equal five days.

**Needs Assessment and/or Follow Up**

Needs assessment and follow up were each coded as “yes” or “no” depending on whether either was described in the article. ‘Follow up’ was defined as additional training or support provided to participants at a later date, rather than follow up related to measuring or evaluating the effects of a training program.

**Training Type**

Training type was coded as “awareness”, “skills”, or “both”. If the training disseminated information focused on creating awareness or altering cognitive bias, it was coded as “awareness”. If the training disseminated information on changing behaviour or required active participation in exercises or role-plays, it was coded as “skills”. Training programs that used both types of training were coded as “both”.
Training Focus

Training focus was coded as either “narrow” or “broad”. If the training focused on one subject matter, it was coded as “narrow”. If the training focused on more than one subject matter, it was coded as “broad”. While some subject matters, such as multiculturalism, are complex topics, these were still coded as narrow as it is only one subject, rather than multiculturalism and gender, for example.

Objectives Linked to Organizational Goals

Objectives linked to organizational goals was coded as “yes” or “no” depending on whether the training program objectives were explicitly linked to the values, mission or goals of the organization that was implementing the training.

Stage Four – Analyzing

Upon completion of the systematic literature review, additional content analysis was used to identify themes and patterns within the results (Berg et al., 2012). Totaling the prevalence of diversity training characteristics and content, as described in stage three, themes and patterns were identified within the synthesized literature. These patterns were subsequently evaluated using comparative analysis against the general literature review. The results of this comparative analysis were used to answer the research questions, discussed in chapter seven.

Limitations and Delimitations

There are limitations to the systematic literature review. One limitation is that only 30 articles were screened in based on the assessment criteria. This small sample of heterogeneous studies made it challenging to draw useful conclusions. However, as previously mentioned, given the breadth of the field of diversity training, the use of heterogeneous studies is advantageous for understanding the complexity of this topic. The use of a systematic literature review as the methodology was challenging in terms of the limited time and resources available to the researcher.

Additionally, the researcher was limited to free articles or databases available through the University of Victoria. Another limitation is that the literature was mainly pertinent to North America as North American authors wrote the majority of studies, and used North American training programs and participants. Fourth, only studies in the English language were considered. These factors contributed to a limited scope for this research.
Finally, there are limitations in the analysis whereby the use of content and thematic analyses may be subject to researcher bias. Efforts were made to mitigate this limitation through repeatedly numbering possible themes over the course of multiple days until the same themes were identified three times in a row.
6. FINDINGS

The systematic literature review explored how organizations address the topic of diversity training and its implementation. Literature was screened in using an appraisal tool, and was synthesized and analyzed using content analysis. The systematic literature review was subsequently evaluated using comparative analysis in order to identify common patterns and themes that are reflective of the broader literature in this field; the findings of this analysis are presented below. This chapter is organized into four sections. First, it presents a general overview of the sources used for analysis. Second, it provides the results of the systematic literature review. Third, it presents the findings from the comparative analysis between the results of the systematic literature review and general literature review. The chapter concludes with a brief summary. These findings are used to support the subsequent discussion and recommendation chapters.

Source Characteristics

Thirty articles were screened in for analysis. The articles were published in a variety of fields including psychology, health care management, and industrial engineering. The authors were primarily from North American institutions and focused on diversity training among North American participants, except for one study that focused on training implemented for one organization located in multiple countries, and one study that focused on training implemented for an organization in Holland. The articles were published between 1998 and 2017; 1 article was published prior to 2000, 17 articles were published between 2000 and 2009, and 12 articles were published between 2010 and present. Within the articles, participant sample sizes ranged from 31 to 2825 individuals, and the most common study design utilized independent groups in a pre-test, post-test design (17 out of 30 articles).

Systematic Literature Review Results

The intent of the systematic literature review was to provide information relevant to the primary and secondary research questions. It relied on the general literature review to determine the information that would be useful in achieving this goal. Therefore, the systematic literature review focused on the following: definitions of diversity used by training programs, the objectives of training programs, the forms of training instruction, the training mediums, the duration of training, whether a needs assessment or follow up training occurred, the type of training, the subject matter, and whether the objectives of training programs were linked to an organization’s goals.
Diversity Definition

Three studies that evaluated training programs provided a narrow definition of diversity. The studies utilizing a narrow definition defined diversity as including race, gender and age (Holladay & Quinones, 2005); age, gender, nationality, race, and ability (Bush & Ingram, 2001); and gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and ethnicity (Probst, 2003). Collectively, diversity was narrowly defined to include: race, gender, age, nationality, disability, sexual orientation and ethnicity.

Six studies that evaluated training programs provided a broad definition of diversity. The studies utilizing a broad definition defined diversity as including race, gender, lifestyle, and personality (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015); culture, race, ethnicity, family structure, spiritual beliefs, and language (Celik, Abma, Klinge & Widdershoven, 2012); culture and group identity (Hayat & Walton, 2012); culture, socioeconomic status, religion, and race (Roberson, Kulik, & Pepper, 2009); culture, religion, gender, age, sexuality, socioeconomic status, and disability (Hayes et al., 2004); and culture, and native versus non-native nationality (Holladay et al., 2003). Broad definitions of diversity expanded on the aforementioned narrow characteristics to collectively include: lifestyle, personality, culture, family structure, religion or spiritual beliefs, language, group identity, and socioeconomic status.

Twenty-one studies that evaluated training programs did not provide a definition of diversity. These studies introduced the concept of diversity with an assumption that readers would know what the authors meant by the term ‘diversity’; however, as can be seen in the results above, there are many different definitions of diversity used both by academics and within training programs. Many of the studies did not provide a definition of diversity, but discussed diversity in the context of minorities, non-Whites, culture, or multiculturalism. In addition, some of the studies discussed providing a definition of diversity training as a listed objective in the training program, however this definition was not provided in the article.

Objectives of Diversity Training – Compliance

Nineteen articles explicitly stated the objectives of the diversity-training program being studied and 11 articles did not. Of the 19 articles that stated the objectives of diversity training, two had objectives related to compliance. An example of an objective related to compliance is:

“to educate participants on terminology, U.S government policies, and workplace expectations related to...diversity” (Poteat et al., 2017, p. 3).
This research found that these compliance-based objectives built common vocabulary, put weight behind why an organization may be approaching diversity initiatives, created awareness among employees that diversity is a critical element that has been deemed worthy of becoming regulation or law, and placed responsibility on the individual to be compliant. However, introducing diversity training as a compliance exercise can be problematic whereby participants may resist completing it or do it as quickly as possible without paying attention. To avoid this, it has been suggested by diversity practitioners that training related to compliance be embedded within broader objectives and build knowledge about the need to be compliant in an imaginative and creative way. Diversity practitioners have also commented that it can be misleading to equate diversity with compliance; human rights and employment equity and accessibility are reliant on compliance components (i.e. legislation), however diversity is not a compliance exercise. Framing training strictly in terms of compliance can create mixed messaging on the intent behind diversity training and diversity in the workforce.

**Objectives of Diversity Training – Productivity**

Three articles stated objectives of diversity training related to productivity. Examples of objectives related to productivity include:

“*identifying and capitalizing on organizational advantages of diversity*” (Probst, 2003, p. 237).

“*to embrace a range of tools that can be used to create a culture that allows all members to achieve their potential*” (Hayat & Walton, 2012, p. 61).

This research found that there was minimal measurement on the impact of diversity training on organizational effectiveness, and therefore it is difficult to determine what may be specific productivity objectives of diversity training. There is a need for more work in this area in order to show an organization that their diversity solution is having an impact on their business outcomes, one of which may be productivity. Diversity practitioners have reflected that organizations which focus primarily on productivity as a motivation behind diversity or diversity training often do so in terms of the number of diverse employees, and may introduce diversity into a system that is not changing or willing to change.

**Objectives of Diversity Training – Learning and Growth**

Twelve articles stated objectives related to learning and growth. Examples of objectives related to learning and growth include:
“heightening awareness of participant personal cultural lenses and the impact of those lenses on individuals from other groups” (Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2009, p. 74).

“to increase self-awareness of culturally learned assumptions...[and] develop knowledge of and appreciation for...cultures” (Castillo, Brossart, Reyes, Conoley & Phoummarath, 2007, p. 248).

This research found that diversity training could be extremely effective for an individual’s learning and growth, as long as the training has a practical self-development and leadership-development focus. Training objectives that assert blanket statements or facts on inclusive behaviours and attitudes but do not provide direction on how to achieve those behaviours and attitudes have not been found effective. Objectives in which people are encouraged to learn the motivations that drive them from a diversity perspective and help in understanding that people experience the workplace is different ways can increase cross-cultural competencies and lead to inclusive contributions to the workplace.

Diversity practitioners have commented that diversity training objectives that are linked to performance evaluations and other processes for promotions or succession planning, whereby learning opportunities are linked to an individual’s ability to be inclusive and demonstrate inclusive behaviours, can encourage greater adoption; however, this can be challenging for organizations to implement as it requires conscious thought and planning.

Objectives of Diversity Training – Relationships

Two articles stated objectives related to relationships. Examples of objectives related to relationships include:

“recognizing cultural differences...in order to relate to others...demonstrating skills in cross-cultural communication, teamwork and relationship building” (Holladay & Quiñones, 2005, p. 535).

“to improve interpersonal relation skills” (Barker, 2004, p. 222).

This research found diversity-training objectives relate to relationships often framed in terms of intercultural relationships. This relationship-based framing can be more difficult for organizations to grasp as being related to their business as it is often seen as ‘fluffy’. These motivations are better addressed if they are imbedded into learning and growth or organizational culture change motivations and not simply discussed as different people getting along, on which intercultural-type training is usually based. Diversity
practitioners have commented that not everyone in a workplace is relationship oriented; one way to ensure that everyone reaps the benefits of diversity in respect to relationships is to not be so explicit about these objectives. Rather, linking training to business goals, business success, change management, or personal and team development can better address these goals.

**Objectives of Diversity Training – Organizational Culture Change**

Two articles stated objectives related to organizational culture change. Examples of objectives related to organizational culture change include:

“to underscore the role of diversity in the company’s goal to be a world-class organization” (Hanover & Cellar, 1998, p. 110).

“developing optimal organizational interventions for managing and valuing a diverse workforce” (Probst, 2003, p. 237).

This research found diversity-training objectives relate to organizational change as an effective change management process, whereby an organization can reinforce its values, mission and competencies within a more inclusive future state. Typically, diversity training that promotes a change in organizational culture can come across as an organization introducing a new culture with no pathway for employees to follow. As a change management strategy, diversity training allows individuals in the workplace see where their organization is, where it wants to be, and the behaviours required for the organization to reach that end state. Diversity practitioners have suggested that the definition of diversity that is used for this type of training should not be limited, as this can make people end up feeling excluded as opposed to included if they do not see themselves represented in the definition.

**Objectives of Diversity Training – Combination**

Lastly, four of the training programs that were being studied in the articles had objectives from more than one category. Although the different objectives listed above are distinct, there can be some overlap in objectives when applied to training programs, and further research recommendations have highlighted the need for utilizing multiple theoretical perspectives regarding the objectives of diversity training. This can be considered a systems approach whereby organizations seek to achieve three goals: awareness of biases and discrimination among employees in order to improve the work environment; acknowledge the presence of biases and learn the skills required to improve intergroup
working relationships; and to ultimately capitalize on the benefits of diversity to improve organizational performance.

**Form of Instruction**

Five training programs used active forms of instruction, five training programs used passive forms of instruction, 18 training programs used both forms of instruction, and two training programs did not specify the form of instruction that was used.

Passive forms of diversity training instruction included lectures, videos, or fact sheets that supply information and raise awareness on the benefits of diversity, diversity-friendly behaviours, and policies. This didactic approach is better suited when the goal of training is to develop a reciprocal understanding of different cultures by increasing knowledge and awareness.

Active forms diversity training instruction included the practice of communication and intergroup interactions, sharing personal experiences, and role-playing. These are often more personalized approaches that require participation in order to build skills in cultural competency. Cultural competence is comprised of knowledge of cultural differences, increased self-awareness, the development of conflict management and interpersonal communication skills, active feedback seeking, and role modeling (Chobrot-Mason et al., 2012).

**Training Medium**

An instructor delivered twenty-two training programs, three training programs were provided using a computer, three training programs used both mediums, and two training programs did not specify the medium that was used.

Computer-led diversity training included videos or fact sheets that supplied information and raised awareness on the benefits of diversity, diversity-friendly behaviours, and policies. Instructor-led diversity training included lectures, the practice of communication and intergroup interactions, sharing personal experiences, trainer-led group discussions and role-playing.

**Duration**

Six training programs were less than four hours in duration, four training programs were four to eight hours in duration, four training programs were eight to 12 hours in duration, five training programs were 12 to 16 hours in duration, and five training programs were more than 16 hours in duration. Six training programs did not specify the duration.
Needs Assessment and/or Follow Up

Two training programs were implemented following a needs assessment and 28 training programs were implemented without a needs assessment. Organizations that wanted to tailor training to an intended audience and cover appropriate material delivered diversity training following a needs assessment. Designing training in a way that addressed an identified need aimed to be more effective.

Nine training programs provided follow up in the form of additional training or support and 21 training programs did not provide follow up. Providing additional training or combining training with other diversity initiatives demonstrated the organization’s commitment to diversity.

Training Type

Twelve training programs used awareness training only. The literature on learning often cites the concepts of single loop, double loop and triple loop learning; learning is more impactful and can lead to further development the more loops that are involved. The most common diversity training programs, which focus on raising awareness of diversity and diversity issues, are criticized for not even approaching single loop learning (Anand et al., 2008), and therefore not being good training strategies.

In addition, sixteen training programs used both types of training, and two training programs did not specify the type of training used. No training program focused solely on skills, as it is was determined to not be possible to teach skills without creating awareness.

Training Focus

Twenty training programs had a narrow focus, nine training programs had a broad focus, and one article did not specify a training focus. The most common subject matter was multiculturalism (8), followed by ‘diversity’ in general (7), ethnicity/race (7), sexual orientation (4), gender (1), intellectual ability (1), and age (1).

Overall, diversity training taught participants what diversity is and why it is important; the skills required for behaviour changes and subsequent attitude changes; and strategies on how to apply the awareness and skills into the workplace.
Objectives Linked to Organizational Goals

Three training programs linked the objectives of training to the business or strategic goals of the implementing organization, and 27 training programs did not.

Diversity training programs that met specific organizations’ needs aligned with organizations’ strategic plans. Structuring diversity training as a way to achieve a strategic business objective facilitated employee buy-in and commitment as it framed the training in a particular way. Framing, a psychological technique, offers a particular perspective and can manipulate importance to influence subsequent judgments (Holladay, Knight, Paige & Quiñones, 2003, p. 247). Similarly, determining objectives of diversity training in the context of the organization’s business strategy allowed current organizational performance to be measured.

Comparative Analysis Results

The intent of the comparative analysis was to provide information relevant to the primary and secondary research questions. It relied on the results of the systematic literature review, whereby the themes from the results above were evaluated for commonalities. The following common themes were identified following the comparative analysis: definition of diversity, objectives of diversity training, use of a needs assessment, subsequent training, and form of instruction. In total, 13 commonalities were found.

Definition of Diversity

The findings from the systematic literature review suggest that different definitions of diversity are used in diversity training initiatives. The systematic literature review found that six training programs used a broad definition of diversity, three training programs used a narrow definition, and 21 training programs did not provide a definition. Therefore, 24 training programs met the concern identified in the general literature review whereby definitions of diversity should not be limited.

Only four of the articles studied provided both a definition of diversity and the objectives of the diversity-training program, 13 provided the objectives of the diversity-training program without a definition of diversity, and five provided a definition of diversity without the objectives of the diversity-training program. Analysis of these results showed that the desired outcomes of a diversity-training program were more successful when a training program defined diversity and stated the training objectives. Diversity training programs that did not define diversity but did explicitly state training objectives also produced successful outcomes. The training programs that were least successful were those that did not have training objectives, regardless of whether a definition of diversity
was provided or not. This suggests that while a definition of diversity is beneficial for the success of a diversity-training program, it is less important than having explicit objectives. However, and important to note, a definition of diversity may greatly assist in guiding and designing a training program and establishing objectives.

Objectives of Diversity Training

The findings from the systematic literature review suggest that diversity-training initiatives employ a wide range of objectives. Of the 19 articles that stated objectives, results touched on all five categories of objectives, with some focused on only one category and others focused on multiple categories. As discussed in the general literature review, organizations rarely define true learning objectives that will provide useful. It is argued that this can be seen in the systematic literature review whereby only three training programs had linked the objectives of training to the needs of the organization.

Two of the training programs had objectives related to compliance; these objectives were accompanied by objectives from other categories. This is related to the findings from the general literature review that diversity should not be introduced as a compliance exercise, but should be embedded into broader objectives.

Three training programs had objectives related to productivity. Based on the frequency of the benefits of diversity training cited as a means to increase productivity, these objectives were limited within the systematic literature review. This is in line with the general literature review that suggests more work in this area, whereby an organization shows that their diversity solution is having an impact on their business outcomes, one of which may be productivity.

The most common objectives within the articles were related to learning and growth. Of these objectives, the specific topics discussed in the general literature review could be seen: objectives where people learn what it is that drives them or informs them; understanding that different people experience the workplace in different ways; recognizing differences in culture, values, biases, and assumptions; and increasing self-awareness and awareness of others’ cultures.

The general literature review highlighted the potential difficulties in framing objectives of diversity training in terms of relationships, and instead suggested imbedding these objectives within other objectives, such as learning and growth. This could be seen in the systematic literature review whereby learning and growth objectives were paired with objectives on team work, relationship building, improving relationships and interpersonal skills. Another suggestion cited in the general literature review is to frame relationship objectives in terms of a business relationship; no examples could be found in the systematic literature review.
Two training programs had objectives related to organizational culture change, and one of these training programs required participants to create an action plan for inclusive behaviours and attitudes. This is reflective of the general literature review where organizations, possibly through diversity training, should provide employees with a pathway to navigate the changing demographic and culture in the workplace, and support employees in achieving the organization’s desired end state.

Needs Assessment

Within the context of organizational culture change, the general literature review frequently cited that it is important for individuals and organizations to know where they are and where they are trying to get to in terms of diversity. In addition, the general literature review that found needs assessments to be a best practice for implementing diversity training. However, only two training programs analyzed in the systematic literature review were implemented following a needs assessment.

Subsequent Training

The general literature review discussed the need for organizations to implement training frequently, in small pieces, and address diversity on a continuing basis within an integrated learning strategy. Nine of the training programs touched on this suggestion by providing follow up in the form of additional training or support. Similarly, ten training programs were over 12 hours in duration, spread over a number of weeks. While none of these results meet the need as described in the general literature, they do show that some organizations recognize the importance of offering multiple training sessions.

Form of Instruction

The general literature review discussed the importance of blended methods of diversity training delivery, and ensuring that the method of diversity training meets the needs of the training objectives. Blended methods of diversity training could be seen in the systematic literature review; three training programs used both an instructor and computer, and 18 training programs used active and passive forms of instruction.

Summary

Thirty articles were collected that met the following required criteria: 1) the research question(s) pertain to a diversity training initiative and its outcomes; 2) the sample, data and analysis are clearly defined; 3) it is empirical research; and 4) the paper provides a useful contribution. These articles were analyzed based on the characteristics of the diversity-training program outlined in the study, including form of instruction, the medium of training, duration, whether training was mandatory or voluntary, and whether
the training was awareness- or skills-based. In addition, the definition of diversity used, training subject matter, and training objectives were also analyzed.

Definitions of diversity varied between training programs, reflective of the literature in this field. These different definitions may have impacted the type of training used and the desired objectives of such training. For example, training programs that defined diversity narrowly typically only had one subject matter focus, whereas training programs that defined diversity broadly typically had more than one subject matter focus. Similarly, training programs that defined diversity narrowly typically had limited or no objectives. Of the organizations implementing a diversity-training program, organizational concepts of diversity most likely also varied based on the different definitions of diversity used. More than half the articles analyzed in the systematic literature review did not provide the definition of diversity used in the training program. While the training programs may have defined diversity without stating it in the article, the lack of a definition may have contributed to challenges for the training participants whereby they may not have had a common understanding of why, and to whom actions of acknowledgement, understanding, acceptance, value and celebration should be extended.

The general literature review found that diversity training is a catchall term that encompasses a wide range of programs, such as one-hour briefings, trainer-led group discussions, and role-plays. This was confirmed by the systematic literature review with varying types of training, training subject matter, training duration, form of instruction, and training medium. As there was minimal use of a needs assessment, it was difficult to determine whether the different approaches to diversity training were beneficial to the needs of the organization. Common among both the general and systematic literature review was diversity training that involved some type of intercultural training to increase an ability to communicate with culturally diverse people, along with an awareness of the types of behaviours that should be monitored and adjusted. Of the articles that reported objectives of diversity training, most of the objectives are considered micro, as they focused on individual efforts to reduce biases and change individual behaviours; however, a common theme within the general literature review was the need for macro diversity training objectives that address changes in organizational culture.

Most of the objectives of diversity training pertained to paradigms of underlying motivations; primarily personal growth, followed by business outcomes and social change, and some training programs cited a variety of objectives. This is similar to the general literature review findings that cite an integrated learning approach, as well as the need for utilizing multiple objectives of diversity training. Upon review of the training programs, few objectives taught participants what diversity is and why it is important. Objectives primarily focused on building awareness and skills to apply to the workplace.
for subsequent behaviour and attitude changes. There was no reference made regarding the training programs within the systematic literature review being one component of a larger organizational development initiative; however, this concept was discussed in the general literature review.

Only three diversity training program objectives were linked to the diversity objectives, business goals or strategic objectives of the implementing organization. Integrated learning, whereby diversity initiatives are continuous and embedded within organizational policies and processes, was frequently cited within the general literature review. This found effective training to be strengthened when comprehensive training is linked to an organization’s business plan, and is a key component of a strategic approach to organizational performance. The use of a needs assessment was discussed within the general literature review, however the systematic literature review found only two training programs were implemented following a needs assessment. Therefore, it is argued that twenty-eight training programs were implemented without determining whether the training objectives would be effective based on the context of the implementing organization’s business strategy.

Overall, the results of the systematic literature review are partially in line with the best practices outlined within the general literature on this topic; however, the findings also highlight the criticisms by academics regarding ineffective implementation of diversity training initiatives. Therefore, it is argued that academics and organizations are knowledgeable on what constitutes effective diversity training but are not implementing it accordingly.
7. DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to address the following primary and secondary research questions:

Primarily, (1) what are the overall objectives of diversity training?

Subsequently, (2) how are these objectives used to guide diversity training initiatives?; (3) how do diversity training objectives help an organization meet their diversity management needs?; and (4) what measurement tools can be used to assist organizations in developing objectives of diversity training initiatives to ensure their training objectives will meet their diversity management needs?

These questions were addressed through the use of a literature review on the field of diversity, diversity management and diversity training, and a systematic literature review of studies that examined diversity-training programs. The findings and analysis of this research concluded that organizations poorly outline diversity-training objectives in relation to broader diversity management needs. This chapter provides additional analysis by addressing the primary and secondary research questions.

Research Question #1:

What are the overall objectives of diversity training?

The primary research question considered what the overall objectives of diversity training are. This research could not identify definitive objectives of diversity training; instead, this research found individual objectives to be categorized in five categories: compliance, productivity, learning and growth, organizational culture change, and relationships. From the systematic literature review, it was found that particular objectives are more prevalent that others, however the reason for this could not be determined given the multitude of training foci and methodologies. In addition, the low use of needs assessments did not allow for a contextual understanding of why certain objectives were chosen over others.

Based on this research, diversity-training objectives related to learning and growth are the most prevalent. These objectives include items such as raising awareness of biases and assumptions, and learning inclusive behaviours. These objectives were deemed very beneficial by the literature review as self-development can permeate other domains. For example, an objective aimed at reducing stereotypes (learning and growth) may impact intergroup communication (relationships) or organizational policies (organizational culture change). Objectives of diversity training related to relationships are second most...
prevalent, and primarily address communication skills and awareness of cultural differences. The literature review suggests that these objectives may come across as ‘fluffy’ and limit training effectiveness, or may contribute to backlash from employees due to the focus on highlighting differences between people. One way to mitigate these challenges is to not explicitly state these objectives, but instead incorporate them into other categories, such as learning and growth or organizational culture change. Objectives of diversity training related to organizational culture change were not typically cited in the systematic literature review, however appeared to be one of the major objectives in the broader literature. One reason why these objectives were uncommon in the systematic literature review may be that organizational culture change can be challenging due to the effort and engagement required from all levels of an organization, and organizations may be looking for a less-involved approach. Additionally, this research found that training is primarily focused on influencing intergroup behaviour, whereas organizational culture change may be addressed through broader diversity management approaches.

Diversity training can address more than one type of objective; for example, objectives of diversity training related to compliance and productivity were cited only a few times, but in combination with the other categories of objectives. These objectives primarily addressed an increase in awareness of policy and legislation, and the benefits diversity has on organizational effectiveness, respectively. In general, it appears that training will feature multiple similar objectives, rather than multiple varied objectives. While this may be beneficial if an organization is particularly lacking in certain skills, without the use of a needs assessment, the organization may be losing the opportunity to provide a more integrated learning experience.

Overall, this research suggests that objectives of diversity training primarily pertain to an individual’s learning and growth by way of increasing awareness and skills. These objectives may impact relationships, while the organization strives to achieve productivity and maintain compliance. For organizations undergoing change, diversity training may be an effective component to a change management process. In conjunction with the general literature, and in contrast with the systematic literature review, increased efforts should be made by organizations implementing diversity training to specify concrete, measureable, and relevant training objectives.

**Research Question #2:**

*How are these objectives used to guide diversity-training initiatives?*

This secondary research question explored how diversity-training initiatives are guided by training objectives. This research did not determine that objectives are specifically
used to guide diversity-training initiatives, as organizations appeared to implement diversity training with minimal consideration of the outcomes they would like to achieve. Due to the lack of needs assessments and linking training objectives to organizational goals, it was not possible to determine whether a diversity training initiative was tailored to achieve specific objectives; however, there are some inferences that can be drawn from the training methods that were used in relation to the training objectives.

Diversity training programs that sought to address learning and growth related objectives primarily had the following characteristics: an instructor led the training, active and passive forms of instruction were used, and the training aimed to raise awareness and develop skills. These training characteristics were also evident for diversity training programs that sought to address relationship- and organizational culture change-related objectives. Diversity training programs that sought to address compliance and productivity related objectives primarily had the following characteristics: training was administered via computer, passive forms of instruction were used, and the training aimed to raise awareness but not develop skills.

Overall, this research suggests that diversity-training initiatives are guided based on whether the training will build awareness or develop skills, rather than specific objectives. Using this logic, it can be hypothesized that objectives that require skills (i.e. objectives within the learning and growth, relationships, and organizational culture change categories) will guide the characteristics of training to be primarily instructor led with active forms of instruction, whereas objectives that require awareness (i.e. objectives within the compliance and productivity categories) will guide the characteristics of training to be primarily computer led with more passive forms of instruction.

**Research Question #3:**

*How do diversity-training objectives help an organization meet their diversity management needs?*

This secondary research question sought to determine how objectives of diversity training assist organizations in meeting their diversity management needs. Based on the general literature review, organizations have been found to implement diversity training initiatives poorly; therefore, they may have objectives for diversity training but do not explicitly state them or tailor training to meet these objectives, as was evident in the systematic literature review. This makes it difficult to determine if or how an organization meets their diversity management needs using diversity-training objectives.

Needs assessments were found to be an important best practice for implementing diversity training to ensure that diversity training will address gaps within an organization
and provide individuals with a path to achieve the desired diversity-end state. The systematic literature review found that only two of the training programs were implemented following a needs assessment. These results highlight a discrepancy between what academics and organizations believe to be effective for implementing diversity training, and how diversity-training initiatives are actually implemented. This discrepancy may be a result of the barriers inherent to diversity training, the continuous effort and engagement required by both an organization and its employees, and the lack of available financial and human resources. In addition, only three of the training programs linked training objectives to organizational goals. Again, this makes it difficult to determine whether diversity training will assist an organization in meeting their diversity management needs.

As such, this research could not determine how diversity-training objectives help an organization meet their diversity management needs as not enough organizations made a connection between these two concepts. However, if an organization subscribes to the best practice of conducting a needs assessment prior to implementing diversity training, in addition to linking the objectives of training with the broader organizational goals, this question could be better addressed.

**Research Question #4:**

*What measurement tools can be used to assist organizations in developing objectives of diversity training initiatives to ensure their training objectives will meet their diversity management needs?*

Based on the general literature review, the effectiveness of diversity training has not been substantiated by empirical evidence, and few measurement tools have been developed to evaluate the effectiveness of diversity training. Common throughout the literature review, and in contrast to the results of the systematic literature review, organizations should make a focused effort to develop concrete objectives for their diversity training initiatives. In particular, these objectives should be linked to the broader objectives of the organization. This will allow employees to see the value of diversity in terms of organizational success, and see how they can assist in achieving these goals. It will also assist organizations in addressing any gaps between their current diversity culture and the diversity culture they hope to achieve.

One way this can be achieved is with the Balanced Scorecard. For the purposes of this research, an adapted Balanced Scorecard has been developed to create a system for diversity training implementation in order to effectively monitor an organization’s diversity training initiative using both financial and non-financial measures. Kaplan and Norton’s four perspectives that impact organizational performance have been adapted to
categories of diversity training objectives that impact diversity training outcomes, in order to take tentative steps toward a new approach to diversity training.

Based on the literature review, diversity-training objectives can be categorized as follows: productivity, compliance, organizational culture change, learning and growth, and relationships. Productivity encompasses Kaplan and Norton’s financial performance area, as the literature suggests that diversity training can improve productivity in the workplace. Productivity may be less focused on business outputs and instead speak to outcomes such as more ideas or increased time on work-related tasks. The compliance area replaced internal business processes and suggests that diversity training prevents lawsuits and ensures organizations are following proper policy and procedures. The organizational culture change category has been added as a result of the literature review, which suggests that diversity training can change attitudes and behaviours of individuals and organizations. The learning and growth area remains the same and relates to the increase in awareness and understanding of diversity issues. Finally, the relationship area has replaced Kaplan and Norton’s customer area, but continues to address interpersonal and intergroup relationships. This tool also encourages organizations to consider the relationships between each category, and see the impact one category may have on another.

Figure 2. Adapted Balanced Scorecard Framework
The Balanced Scorecard was adapted for this research to include the following five components: outline the specific objectives of diversity training, identify measurable criteria to evaluate diversity training, identify the targets of what is considered successful diversity training, the specific training features, and the broader organizational goal. All of these components should be thought of within the context of each of the five categories of diversity-training objectives to ensure an integrated learning approach that will meet the needs of all training participants.

Figure 5. Adapted Balanced Scorecard for Diversity Training – Productivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productivity</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Training Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are your specific objectives that relate to productivity?</td>
<td>How will these objectives be measured?</td>
<td>How will you determine whether these objectives have been met?</td>
<td>What are the characteristics of the training that is being used to meet these objectives?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This tool would require organizations to state their desired objectives of diversity training in relation to each of the five categories of training objectives identified in this research: productivity, compliance, learning and growth, relationships, and organizational culture change. It is important that objectives be determined to guide, and later evaluate, the training program. The Balanced Scorecard should identify the criteria an organization will use to measure the outcomes of the training program. This will ensure that the organization knows what will be measured before training occurs and can assist in diversity-related needs assessments and gap analyses. Similarly, identifying the targets will determine if a diversity-training objective has been met, and will assist an organization in recognizing the effectiveness of a training program and where adjustments may be necessary. Lastly, describing the features or characteristics of the training program will help an organization see how their objectives will be met, and what features are best suited for a particular objective. For example, to meet an objective related to productivity, the training features might include ongoing computer-based training that presents examples of successful organizations that purposively utilize diverse teams. Each category of objectives, or perspective of the Balanced Scorecard,
should be linked to a broader organizational goal. This will help individuals see the value that diversity training has on an organization’s goals and how each individual can contribute to achieving this goal.

The Balanced Scorecard measurement tool was adapted based on the findings and analysis of this research in order for organizations to implement diversity training with objectives that meet their diversity needs and address their broader goals. The full tool can be found at Appendix A. An additional benefit of this tool is that it can be further adapted for any diversity initiative an organization decides to implement, such as performance indicators based on inclusive behaviours for promotions or objectives of a diversity-based mentorship program.
8. RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to UVIC’s School of Public Administration queries regarding diversity training programs and associated training objectives, this report explored the vast literature in the field and the ways in which organizations can better implement training to meet their desired training objectives. Through the use of a literature review and systematic literature review, diversity-training objectives were identified. The intent was to further identify how these objectives guide training and meet an organization’s diversity management needs, and develop a measurement tool to assist organizations in determining training objectives.

From this research, the following options are presented to UVIC’s School of Public Administration for consideration in any future implementation of diversity training. These recommendations will assist in ensuring diversity training or diversity initiatives are well articulated and implemented according to identified best practices for optimal outcomes. All recommendations are equally important but differ in the amount of effort and resources required to implement; each recommendation will be most effective if supported by top-management within the School. The first two recommendations relate to diversity training programs, and the third recommendation relates to broader diversity initiatives.

1. Prior to implementing diversity training, the definition of diversity used should be agreed upon by faculty and promulgated so that there can be a common understanding on what diversity means. It is recommended that this definition be broad to include race, gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, sexual orientation, personality, education, marital status, lifestyle, beliefs, and life experiences, among others to ensure all faculty and students are reflected within the concept of diversity. This definition should align with the definition of diversity used by the University of Victoria to maintain continuity with the larger organization. A definition of diversity will impact any diversity training program in terms of subject matter focus and objectives; therefore, by having an agreed upon definition, UVIC’s School of Public Administration can determine what diversity training program to implement. As a joint responsibility of faculty members, this recommendation would require the least amount of time and be the easiest to implement.

2. Specific objectives of diversity training should be identified before a training program is selected or administered. It is recommended that these objectives be based on the results of a needs assessment that identifies the current gaps in diversity education and inclusive behaviours within the School. diversity
objectives should be linked to the business goals and strategic objectives of UVIC’s School of Public Administration. For example, one objective of the School is to incorporate local, national, international and Indigenous perspectives throughout student’s learning; therefore, diversity training initiatives should be linked to this broader goal. A measurement tool, such as the Balanced Scorecard, should be used in determining the desired objectives of diversity training. By using this tool it will ensure that diversity objectives are defined according to measurable criteria, outcomes and training features, and are within the context of broader organizational objectives. This will subsequently provide useful information for training evaluations and future training initiatives. It is important to note that this tool be utilized following a needs assessment. This recommendation would require more consideration as it is a more time-consuming and resource-reliant option, but is expected to lead to effective training outcomes and an ability to improve future training.

3. In addition to diversity training programs, UVIC’s School of Public Administration can explore the implementation of additional diversity initiatives. These initiatives could be the responsibility of the School’s Director or an appointed faculty member, and be introduced at the beginning of an academic year; depending on the chosen initiatives, this would be an ongoing process. These initiatives may be part of a broader approach to diversity management. One initiative is to include pro-diversity behaviours and attitudes into faculty or student performance evaluations, and have these linked to opportunities for promotions or awards. This will help in creating an organizational culture that welcomes diversity and encourages inclusive behaviours and actions. Another initiative is to incorporate ‘diversity moments’ into classrooms and faculty meetings. Diversity moments are short and frequent opportunities to introduce the topic of diversity in a variety of forums to encourage continuous considerations for people with different experiences. A third initiative is to explore diversity-based mentorships, whereby student and faculty peers are partnered each academic year and provided opportunities to learn from each other. This may be formal, such as working on particular projects and documenting the mentorship, or informal, such as meeting monthly and providing a network of diverse relationships. These additional initiatives can be bolstered through an ongoing use of diversity training programs. Again, an adapted Balanced Scorecard can be used as a measurement tool for these additional initiatives. This recommendation would require more consideration as it is a more time-consuming and resource-reliant option; however, it is expected that as initiatives are implemented there would be less efforts required for their maintenance.
These recommendations align with best practices identified for effective diversity training programs and initiatives. Based on the analysis and understanding of the information presented in the literature review and systematic literature review, it is recommended that UVIC’s School of Public Administration define diversity, implement diversity training programs with the use of a needs assessment and measurement tool, and implement additional diversity initiatives. This will contribute to improving the School of Public Administration’s approach to diversity.
9. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to determine the overall objectives of diversity training, how these objectives guide diversity training initiatives, how these objectives help organizations meet their diversity management needs, and whether there is a measurement tool that can assist organizations in developing objectives of diversity training. The research provides the client with an overview of the body of literature on the approaches, benefits, barriers, and best practices of diversity training, augmented with a systematic literature review of studies on diversity training programs.

As Canada’s demographic continues to change both in the workplace and community at large, UVIC’s School of Public Administration wished to further explore the subject of diversity training and associated training objectives. Current literature reflects the benefits and barriers of diversity training, and outlines best practices for effective training implementation, however there are discrepancies between what academics advise and what organizations do. Therefore, organizations need to place greater efforts in implementing diversity training.

From this research, diversity training objectives can be categorized by a focus on an organization’s compliance with legislation and policy, the productivity of an organization, the learning and growth of employees, the fostering of relationships and team building, or enacting organizational culture change. Approaches to diversity and diversity training may touch on multiple objectives in varying degrees depending on an organization’s needs and resources; however, diversity-training initiatives appear to be guided based on whether the training will build awareness of develop skills, rather than specific objectives.

Ultimately, academics and organizations are knowledgeable on what constitutes effective diversity training but are not implementing it accordingly. Through the use of a measurement tool, such as an adapted Balanced Scorecard, organizations can implement diversity training with objectives that meet their diversity needs and address their broader business goals and strategic objectives.
10. REFERENCES


Psychology: Research and Practice, 34(5), 555-561. doi:10.1037/0735-7028.34.5.555


https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000097


11. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Balanced Scorecard for Diversity Training Objectives

**Productivity**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Training Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are your specific objectives that relate to productivity?</td>
<td>How will these objectives be measured?</td>
<td>How will you determine whether these objectives have been met?</td>
<td>What are the characteristics of the training that is being used to meet these objectives?</td>
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**Compliance**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Training Features</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are your specific objectives that relate to productivity?</td>
<td>How will these objectives be measured?</td>
<td>How will you determine whether these objectives have been met?</td>
<td>What are the characteristics of the training that is being used to meet these objectives?</td>
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**Learning and Growth**

<table>
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<th>Measures</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Training Features</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are your specific objectives that relate to productivity?</td>
<td>How will these objectives be measured?</td>
<td>How will you determine whether these objectives have been met?</td>
<td>What are the characteristics of the training that is being used to meet these objectives?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Targets</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are your specific objectives that relate to productivity?</td>
<td>How will these objectives be measured?</td>
<td>How will you determine whether these objectives have been met?</td>
<td>What are the characteristics of the training that is being used to meet these objectives?</td>
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<table>
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<th>Organizational Culture Change</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Training Features</th>
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<td>What are your specific objectives that relate to productivity?</td>
<td>How will these objectives be measured?</td>
<td>How will you determine whether these objectives have been met?</td>
<td>What are the characteristics of the training that is being used to meet these objectives?</td>
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## APPENDIX B: Literature Appraisal

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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Record Number</th>
<th>The research question(s) pertinent to a diversity training program and its intended outcomes</th>
<th>The sample, data, and analysis are clearly defined</th>
<th>It is empirical research</th>
<th>The paper provides a link to organizational training materials</th>
<th>The diversity training initiative is externally evaluated</th>
<th>Include/Discard</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reactions to diversity training: An international comparison</td>
<td>Holliday &amp; Guinzones</td>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>The impact of acceptance and commitment training and multicultural training on the integration of attitudes and professional burnout of substance abuse counselors</td>
<td>Hayes et al.</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>The influence of training focus and trainer characteristics on diversity training effectiveness</td>
<td>Holliday &amp; Guinzones</td>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>Enhancing the effects of social orientation diversity training: The effects of setting goals and training mentors on attitudes and behavior</td>
<td>Modernes &amp; Metel</td>
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<td>Beyond communication courses: are there benefits in adding skills-based food vocational training?</td>
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<td>The effects of a diversity training program perspective on positive and negative diversity perceptions</td>
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<td>Stereotype change and prejudice reduction: short- and long-term evaluation of a cross-cultural awareness program</td>
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<td>Process evaluation of a diversity training program: The value of a mixed method strategy</td>
<td>Cebb, Alana, Klings &amp; Weller</td>
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<td>Delivering equality and diversity training within a university setting through drama based training</td>
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<td>Individual and environmental factors influencing the use of transfer strategies after diversity training</td>
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<td>Diversity training in graduate school: An exploratory evaluation of the Safe Zone Project</td>
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<td>Changing hearts and minds: Results from a multi-country gender and sexual diversity training</td>
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<td>Biostat hand diversity initiatives: Examining the impact of diversity programs, policies, personal and group outcomes</td>
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<td>The influence of multicultural training on perceived multicultural counseling competencies and implicit racial prejudice</td>
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<td>The influence of framing on attitudes toward diversity training Environmental factors and the effectiveness of workforce diversity training</td>
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<td>Multicultural training on American Indian issues: testing the effectiveness of an intervention to change attitudes toward native-themed mascots</td>
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### APPENDIX C: Systematic Literature Review

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<th>Allocation</th>
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<th>Training Characteristics</th>
<th>Training Type</th>
<th>Diversity Context</th>
<th>Stability Measures</th>
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<td>Both</td>
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