**EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION OF LEADERSHIP IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE ORGANIZATION: QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY**

A dissertation submitted

by

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Approved by:

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to understand employee perception of leadership through their lived experiences in a culturally diverse organization. This study aims at examining leadership in a culturally diverse organization by conducting semi-structured interviews. The employees with subject backgrounds were the participants who were having an experience of effective and ineffective leadership. The employee’s interviews were documented, and recorded along with a direct description of the experiences with certain leadership, treating them as a tool to find out the impact of effective and ineffective leadership in a culturally diverse organization.

(from the Dissertation Checklist):

**Abstract**

\_\_🗸\_\_\_ Consists of one double-spaced page or less

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a concise description of the study, a brief statement of the problem,

statement of purpose or importance, and a brief summary of methods and procedures

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a summary of sample size, findings, and implications (dissertation only)

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

**Background**

Research demonstrates that there is a relationship between organizational leadership and diversity, collectively having an impact on an employee’s performance; however, there is a limited understanding of the concept of cultural diversity in an organization. (Lambert, 2016). On the other hand, there is limited research on effective and ineffective leadership in a culturally diverse organization relating to the functioning of the employees, their ability to communicate, interact and respect the cultural variation within an organization. (Lambert, 2016).

**[no initial heading]**

\_\_\_\_\_ Introductory paragraphs introduce the general topic area.

**General Statement [**or **Background of Study]**

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes a practical problem and the need for it to be addressed

\_\_\_\_\_ Supports the existence and impact of the practical problem with documentation

**Problem Statement**

Employee’s performance in an organization is a product of different supporting components, such as environment, freedom, leadership and the importance of expertise. Leadership holds a significant space in defining the relationship between culturally diverse organization and the employee's perception of effective and ineffective leadership. Leadership facilitates differences in the employees' ability to communicate, interact, and respect the culturally diverse employees. The general problem is that leaders in many culturally diverse organizations do not generate an effective leadership practice for their employees, ultimately resulting in a lack of communication, interaction, and inappropriate behavior. A culturally diverse organization requires effective leadership that substantiates the value of communication, performance, and an overall ability to demonstrate a competent system. (Grissom, et, al. 2018). The specific problem is that ineffective leadership in a culturally diverse organization results in employees' inability to communicate effectively, interact and share a mutual respect that is necessary to avoid a hostile work environment. It has been asserted that the employees fail to impart the real crux of professionalism because of the unavailability of adequate leadership and heed to cultural diversity. (Gilley, et, al. 2015).

Palthe (2014) suggests that the ability to effectively lead culturally diverse employees should focus on the importance of understanding the interaction between the employee, organizational culture, and the individual’s cultural aspects that have an impact on the achievement of tactical, operational and strategic goals of an organization. An employee's perception of leadership in a culturally diverse organization relies on the strengths of the leaders' as it can influence both employee's abilities and organizational components, such as communication, culture, involvement, and experience (Gilley, et, al. 2015).

**Statement of Problem**

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies a general research problem that will address the practical problem. What do

you want to know that you don’t know (that nobody knows) that will help to solve the

practical problem?

\_\_\_\_\_ Focuses in on a specific research problem that the study proposes to address

\_\_\_\_\_ Clearly and logically demonstrates how the focus of the study is an important

problem, worthy of study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Impact of the research problem is fully documented and supported.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses how the research study represents a unique approach to the research

problem, adds to the research literature, and contributes to practice in the field.

\_\_\_\_\_ Explains how the study proposes to address the specific research problem

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to identify employee perception of effective and ineffective leadership in a culturally diverse organization. How ineffective leadership is responsible for generating inappropriate interaction in the workplace, taking into account the fact that employees perception varies with experience. Inappropriate interaction in the workplace can ultimately result in miscommunication, inappropriate interactive behavior, and violence in the workplace (Alvesson, et, al. 2015). The focus of this study will be on the culturally diverse employee's perception of ineffective leadership through a shared experience of the employees who are a diverse population and work for the same culturally diverse organization. The participants will include ten employees who have experienced effective and ineffective leadership within a culturally diverse organization; these participants will be interviewed and recruited for the study. The participants will convey their experiences with both effective and ineffective leadership; where the impact of effective leadership can be traced in terms of professional interaction, taking into account communication, interaction, and teamwork. Side by side, the experience of the participants will act as a guide to know the circumstances of ineffective leadership, taking into account the impact ineffective leadership can have on the organizational goals and the capabilities of employees. The participants from culturally diverse background have worked with leaders, such as Supervisors, Managers, and Administrative Team Leaders who have displayed both effective and ineffective leadership practices. For instance, the employee's experiences with ineffective leadership have led to a lack of communication, miscommunication, verbal altercations, and an inappropriate reprimand from subordinates.

**Purpose of the Study**

\_\_\_\_\_ Provides a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall purpose of the study

\_\_\_\_\_ Connects the **Purpose of the Study** as addressing the specific research problem

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a single-sentence Purpose Statement that succinctly describes the focus,

methodology, population, and geographical location of the study

Ex: *The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand the experience of*

*Generation X women in the Los Angeles area who desire to obtain their first executive*

*position in the financial services industry.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Briefly defines and delimits the specific area of the research

\_\_\_\_\_ Foreshadows the hypotheses to be tested or the questions to be raised as well as the

importance of the study

\_\_\_\_\_ Clearly identifies and defines the central concepts or ideas of the study

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the unit of analysis in the study

\_\_\_\_\_ Justifies the general method of inquiry used in the study: qualitative, quantitative, or

mixed method

For a quantitative study:

\_\_\_\_\_ Specifies at least two variables and a conjectured relationship between them to

describe what will be studied

For a qualitative study:

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the phenomenon, situation, or factors of interest

\_\_\_\_\_ Indicates and justifies which qualitative methodology will be used

For a mixed methods study:

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the specific type of mixed method design--explanatory, exploratory,

or triangulation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reflects whether the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study are

sequential or simultaneous

**Importance of the Study**

Effective leadership practice implemented by leaders will ensure the progression of organization by building relationships that will create a positive and collaborative working environment. Leadership practice motivates teamwork that ultimately promotes interactive competence among employees despite a culturally diverse environment Onkham (2015) suggests that the attribute of leadership is a significant factor in the successful functioning of an organization. Usually, diversity has a negative effect on the interaction aspect of the functioning process of a group of employees, because of a range of conceptions, attitudes, and assumptions. (Moreland, 2015). The significance of this study is that it will highlight the importance of effective leadership taking into account the fact that diverse organizations are more applicable of applying changes in an effective way making the environment suitable for the diverse employees as well, adhering to certain major aspects such as values, culture, work performance, and experience. The leadership of culturally diverse employees within an organization has to establish a sense of urgency for the functioning and overall operation of the entire organization. Effective leadership involves strategic direction for combining the mission, vision, policy, and values of the organization with the employees which enables the leaders to provide the employees with clear organizational objectives and goals. Mosca, Puches, and Buzza (2015) suggest that goals and objectives set by leaders are held by an organization’s understanding and ability to communicate to all their employees who play a major role in the attainment of these goals.

The theoretical framework is deep-rooted in psychology pertaining to culturally diverse employee’s and their behavior under the directions of a particular leadership. In this framework, the lack of effective leadership for employee's interactive behavior can lead to problems for both the overall operation of an organization and the interactive behavior among those diverse cultural employees. Leadership influences organizational behavior and employee interaction making it a key to the success of an organization. The research highlights that one of the aspects of effective leadership can be traced in terms of a positive employee interaction (Goncalves, 2015). The effectiveness of leadership enables the operation of an organization to be successful regarding leadership and employee followership. The role of a leader and a follower are necessary for the success of a culturally diverse organization.

**Importance of the Study**

Answers the following in a logical, explicit manner:

\_\_\_\_\_ What is the importance of this research?

\_\_\_\_\_ What will contribute to theory and practice in the student's field of

specialization?

\_\_\_\_\_ What are the implications of the research?

**Methodology**

The methodology selected is a qualitative case study that will explore culturally diverse employee’s experience in a culturally diverse organization with both effective and ineffective leadership. Ten employees for Staten Island Developmental Disabilities Service Office (S. l. D. D. S. O). With culturally diverse backgrounds that have experienced effective and ineffective leadership in a culturally diverse organization is the subject of the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with these ten employees who have participated in the study by sharing their experience with effective and ineffective leadership in a culturally diverse organization. Five of the culturally diverse employees have shared their experience with effective leadership, and five culturally diverse employees have shared their experience with ineffective leadership. The process of data collection comprises of the compilation of the behavioral patterns, involving communication, interaction categorizing, and the interpretation of the participating employees experience. Moreover, the past record of the organization was also used to know the feedback employees have given about the culturally diverse environment in an organization.

**Overview of Research Design**

\_\_\_\_\_ Briefly describes the general methodology and design, including data collection

method, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis, with

references to more detailed discussions in Chapter III

\_\_\_\_\_ Shows how the particular research design is the most appropriate to address the goals

of the study

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework is deep-rooted in psychology pertaining to culturally diverse employee's interactive behavior under the direction of effective and ineffective leadership. Goncalves (2015) imply organizational behavior involves a variety of techniques to gain and use leadership power in an organization when managing organizational behavior among culturally diverse employees. In this framework, the lack of effective leadership for employee’s interactive behavior can lead to a number of problems for both the overall operation of an organization and the interactive behavior among those culturally diverse employees.

The quality of effective leadership exchange with employees has significant influence for leadership effectiveness. (Mahsud, Yukl & Prussia, 2015). As long as leadership influences the organizational behavior and employee interaction is understood, the success of leadership can be effective regarding a positive employee interaction. (Goncalves, 2015). The effectiveness of leadership enables the operation of the organization to be a success regarding leadership and the employee's followership. Though a good leader is obviously significant to the success of an organization, being a good follower is correspondingly significant to the success of an organization. (Hurwitz & Hurwitz, 2015). An understanding of the role of a leader is a necessity in a culturally diverse organization, however; one cannot deny the dependency of success on the follower as well. The subject matter adheres to the leadership and it’s perception in a culturally diverse organization.

**Theoretical [or Conceptual] Framework**

\_\_\_\_\_ Places the study within a particular theoretical area in the field under investigation

\_\_\_\_\_ Situates the study among other research studies within the theoretical area

\_\_\_\_\_ Briefly summarizes enough relevant research literature (historical, seminal, and

current) to situate and justify the study based on its contribution to the existing body

of research, referencing the more detailed discussions in Chapter II

\_\_\_\_\_ Articulates the theoretical base (quantitative only) or the conceptual framework

(qualitative only) to show a connection to a certain body of literature. (mixed method--

address both theoretical and conceptual framework)

**Research Questions**

Employee’s perception of leadership in a culturally diverse organization will explore the relationship between effective and ineffective leadership in a multi-cultural organization, taking into account that a lack of leadership creates a negative interaction, miscommunication, and distorts the ability to function effectively within an organization. Mosca, Puches, and Buzza (2015) suggest that if organizational leadership is going to create efficiencies to survive, they must use methods for operating a new diverse workforce. The following research questions will guide the proposed qualitative case study:

RQ1: Why it is necessary for the employees to be aware of the perception of leadership in a culturally diverse organization?

RQ2: Why is leadership a significant factor for employees in a culturally diverse organization?

RQ3: How does effective leadership’s perception is related to the cultural diversity of the employees and the organization

RQ4: How do employees' perception of ineffective leadership relate to the cultural diversity of the employees and the organization?

**Research Questions [and Hypotheses]**

\_\_\_\_\_ Clearly presents specific research questions and sub-questions to be addressed,

referencing the more detailed discussions in Chapter III

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes research hypotheses for each research question and sub-question

(quantitative only)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes research questions that are identified for the qualitative and

quantitative phases (mixed method only)

\_\_\_\_\_ Questions and hypotheses are elaborated on in a discussion format, not simply listed

\_\_\_\_\_ Connects the research questions to the **Statement of Purpose**, showing how these

questions will address the goals of the study

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms defined will provide an understanding of the concepts presented in this research study:

*Diversity*: Diversity is defined as “a wide range of people who are different in terms of a range of variables such as ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic background, race, political beliefs, ideologies, sexual orientation, and disabilities” (O’Neill, 2018, p. 9).

*Leadership*: “Leadership is the ability to influence and interact with others moving them towards the direction of a common goal” (Onkham, et *al*. 2015, p. 885). Alvesson and Blom (2015) reported that "the message emerging from many influential leadership studies is that leadership is a good thing, and employees generally benefit from and desire it."

*Cultural Diversity*: “Cultural diversity does not just imply geographical diversities: it embraces employees from different economic backgrounds as well as diverse industry experiences” (Mukherjee, 2016, p. 79).

*Effective Leadership*: Onkham, Elattar, and Rabelo (2015) reported that “effective leadership reflects the type of adaptive leadership which refers to leaders who can coordinate, self- manage, and adapt to changes in circumstances by engaging and interacting with other” (p. 891).

*Ineffective Leadership*: Ineffective leadership is defined as a leadership lacking the competence to make others follow him as well as the unethical traits such as abusive interaction and “such abuse may include violations of personal privacy, general rudeness, or displaced anger” (Meltzer and Liu, 2016, p. 198).

*Multicultural Organization*: Multicultural organization is defined as to “provide equal opportunities to people coming from different economic & cultural backgrounds, varied geographies, diverse genders, different generations, as well as those who are specially-abled” (Mukherjee, 2016, p. 79).

*Managing Diversity*: Managing diversity is defined as “a complete understanding of the benefits that come with diversity and the challenges it presents” (Mathur, 2017, p. 48).

*Cultural Competency*: "Cultural competency means that a person or organization has the knowledge, understanding, and skills to embrace diversity and to work with people from diverse backgrounds" (O'Neill, 2018, p. 9).

*Culture*: Culture is defined as "an ever-evolving phenomenon" shared by individuals with the same nationality, origin, language, or creed (Ozgen, et *al*.2015, p. 47).

**Definition of Terms**

\_\_\_\_\_ Defines important terms as used in this study, especially those that may otherwise have multiple meanings

\_\_\_\_\_ Uses citations to support the origin of the definitions

\_\_\_\_\_ Defines important technical terms that may be unknown to a reader

\_\_\_\_\_ Operationalizes key variables or constructs

**Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

**Assumptions**

An understandable assumption of this study is that the participants might have a variety of perceptions of leadership in the workplace. They may feel like the organization's interest in their response to the interview could have a negative impact on their participation. The fact that the participants have nothing to gain from their active participation in this study and it might create a difficult time obtaining a reliable or valid response to the interviews. The significance of a case study design requires the researcher to base the research study questions on structural and meaningful experiences of the participants to gain their trust. An open mind is required for the researchers’ intentions to be perceived as unbiased, trustworthy, and genuine to the participants being interviewed.

**Limitations**

 The interview process has its limitations. Interviewing participants for a research study will have limitations that are based on time, analysis, and a collection of the participant's responses to the questions. An understanding of the research study questions regarding the participant's experience might cause resistance and interpret invalid responses. The participants might feel a tremendous amount of pressure understanding the questions and responding to the questions.

**Delimitations**

The perception of leadership in a culturally diverse organization has changed to a sound practice of awareness, adaptable methods of operation and a diverse workforce (Mosea, et al.2015). However, the guidelines for effective or ineffective leadership are not profoundly explicit in various scenarios; such as managing employees in a culturally diverse organization. The demand for leadership in an organization has increased the pressure for the purpose of effective leadership (Onkham, et al. 2015).

**Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes the scope and bounds of the study (delimitations--boundaries researcher has

set)

\_\_\_\_\_ Addresses major limiting factors in the study that could possibly affect the results (If

limitations are considerable, explains why the study is being conducted.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Articulates assumptions about facts that are not actually verified

\_\_\_\_\_ Addresses potential weaknesses of the study

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses the generalizability of the study findings

Summary

**Summary**

\_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes key points of the study

\_\_\_\_\_ Gives an overview of the content of the remaining chapters in the study, bridging to

Chapter II

**CHAPTER II- LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Introduction**

 Employee perception of leadership in a culturally diverse organization has been studied in a number of ways; still, there are sections that are unaddressed (Alvesson, et, al.2015). However, despite the broad range of research into leadership in a culturally diverse organization, still more research is required in the field of leadership because it varies with the passage of time. (Mathur, 2017). Although it is the responsibility of managerial leadership to lay out the blueprint for an effective balance with employee interaction, communication, initiative, and policy that requires an alignment of cultural diversity and mutual respect for organizational ethnicity, still there are significant gaps in the understanding of the culturally diverse organization. (Muhkherjee, 2018) An understanding of the perception of leadership in a culturally diverse organization and the challenges that manifest form the foundation for determining the interaction, communication and development of consequence among the diverse employees’ in the workforce is a major subject but it is often neglected in the exegetical analysis of the perception towards effective and ineffective leadership. (Mathur, 2017).

 Leadership in many culturally diverse organizations do not generate an effective awareness of the significance of having a competent workforce or strategies for a competent cultural and diverse organization is implemented in their policy (O’Neill, 2018). This chapter is dedicated to presenting a literature review conveying employee perception of leadership in a culturally diverse organization regarding employees’ experience with effective leadership, ineffective leadership, cultural diversity, communication, interaction and an understanding of the importance of cultural competence. Grissom (2018) reports that diversity and inclusion in the workplace is a broad topic that covers leadership, bias, culture, and inclusiveness that can be helpful in creating a change in the culturally diverse organizations with these issues. The resources in this literature review will present the history of leadership in a culturally diverse organization that will answer the research questions for the chosen topic.

**Introduction**

\_\_\_\_\_ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the dissertation, and the

organization of the chapter

\_\_\_\_\_ Frames the review by restating the topic and research questions

**Search Strategy**

The articles selected for the research of this literature review were obtained from various scholarly journals, peer-reviewed articles, books, and organizational resources. The databases used for conducting the research for this study were: ProQuest, Human Capital, BusiDate, PsyArticles, and Wiley Online Library. The use of keywords to identify the research in this literature review included leadership, effective leadership, ineffective leadership, cultural diversity, organizational leadership, and employee perception. I used the abstracts and titles to identify the theoretical writing that can prove helpful in my work. In order to maintain the credibility of information, it took into consideration, not to use resources older than five years.

**Search Strategy**

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes the strategy used to collect relevant literature

\_\_\_\_\_ Indicates which search engines were used

\_\_\_\_\_ Lists which search terms were used

\_\_\_\_\_ Indicates strategy for identifying historically seminal (classic) studies and theorists’

writings

\_\_\_\_\_ Justifies most appropriate time interval for current sources (last 2–3 years? Last 5

years?)

\_\_\_\_\_ If applicable, explains the lack of currency of the most recent publications

\_\_\_\_\_ Reviews strategy for focusing in on empirical research that most closely resembles the

current study

**Literature Review**

The need to understand an employees’ perception of effective and ineffective leadership will determine how one employee’s experience of an effective leader may be another employee’s ineffective leader. (Meltzer & Lui, 2016). The ability to lead is to influence those being led toward a common goal set through interactive balance.

**Summary**

**CHAPTER III- METHOD**

Literature Review

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