

# **Advancing Traditional Leadership Theories by Incorporating Multicultural and Workforce Diversity Leadership Traits, Behaviors, and Supporting Practices: Implications for Organizational Leaders**

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*Well-known and respected traditional leadership theories such as Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass 1985, 1989, Authentic Leadership Theory (Luthans & Avolio 2003), and Distributed Leadership Theory (Lumby, 2013) offer insight into the ways that leadership can be applied and practiced in various organizational contexts. These traditional leadership theories are known for underscoring the kinds of traits and behaviors that prospective and current leaders should possess to enhance their leadership abilities and overall effectiveness. However, one area that is absent from traditional leadership theories is a focus on the kinds of multicultural and workforce diversity leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities that organizational leaders should possess to manage human diversity effectively in a variety organizational setting. The aim of this paper is to: 1) summarize the role of three well-known traditional leadership theories; 2) share examples of existing multicultural and workforce diversity frameworks that offer insights for advancing traditional leadership theories; and 3) highlight the benefits of incorporating multicultural and workforce diversity leadership traits, behaviors and supporting diversity practices into traditional leadership theories.*

*Keywords: workforce diversity, organizational leadership, traditional leadership theories, workforce diversity leadership, multicultural leadership*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Changing demographic trends globally over the past decades, along with rising harassment and discrimination cases and complaints in society (Banks, 1989; Thomas, 1992; Cox, 1993; West, 1993; Wentling and Palma-Riva, 1997; Gilbert, 2005; Byrd & Scott, 2018; Kendi, 2019) continue to inform organizational leaders of the need for welcoming, respectful, and inclusive environments for all individuals to thrive in. In responding to this concern, many educational institutions and organizations have embraced the benefits of human diversity by creating multicultural education and workforce diversity frameworks along with policy and practices to help individuals develop the competencies and skills for effectively educating, working with, and leading individuals from diverse backgrounds (Banks, 1989; Thomas, 1992;

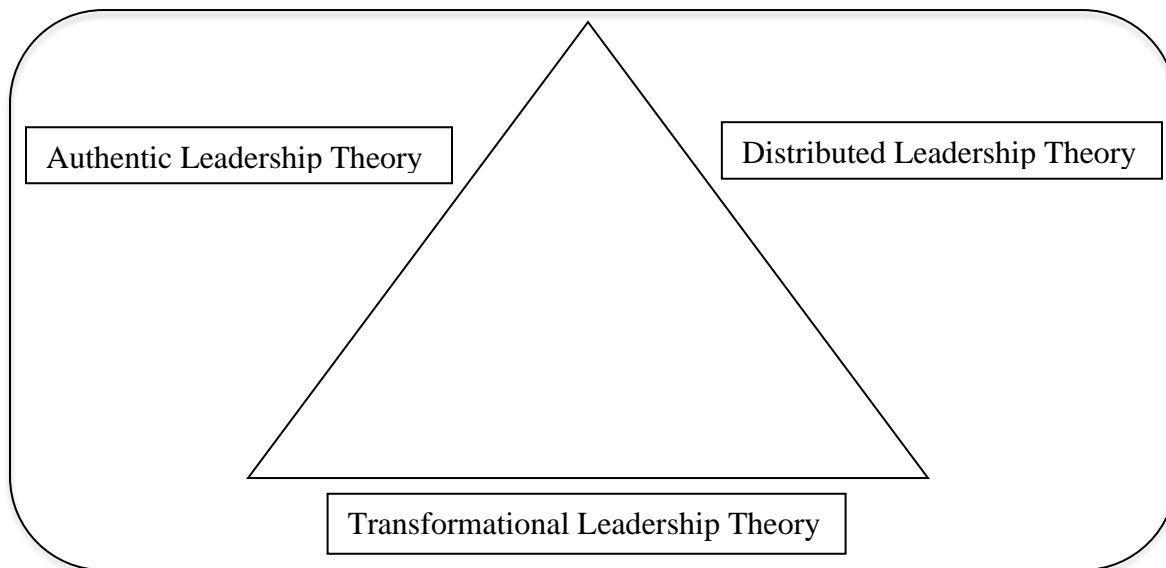
Cox, 1993; Howard-Hamilton, 2000; Petryk, Thompson, & Boynton, 2013; Banks, 2014; Hughes, 2016, Byrd and Scott, 2018; Kendi, 2019).

Yet, despite these efforts, research continues to confirm that numerous problems still confront many minorities, women, the disabled and immigrants in seeking to fully integrate into today’s society. For example, stories of discrimination, racism, sexism, harassment, discomfort, alienation, frustration, and overall lack of success in fully integrating into communities, educational institutions, and organizations persists (Banks, 1989 Thomas, 1991; Cox, 1993, West, 1993; Heymann & Sprague, 2017; Tseis, 2017; Kendi, 2019). In this paper, the roles of transformational leadership theory, authentic leadership theory and distributed leadership theory will be summarized along with examples of multicultural and workforce diversity frameworks that offer insights for advancing the utility of the aforementioned traditional leadership theories. This paper will conclude by highlighting the benefits of incorporating multicultural and workforce diversity leadership traits, behaviors and supporting diversity practices into traditional leadership theories.

### **A SUMMARY OF THREE TRADITIONAL THEORETICAL LEADERSHIP THEORIES THROUGH THE LENS OF THE TRIANGULAR LEADERHIP MODEL**

In a dissertation by Klein (2016), entitled *Understanding the Experiences of Non-traditional University Leadership in Higher Education: A Qualitative Study Using a Triangular Theoretical Approach*, the Triangular Leadership Model, developed by Klein, is introduced and shown in Figure 1. This theoretical “triangle” framework includes: 1) transformational leadership theory, 2) authentic leadership theory, and 3) distributed leadership theory. The author asserts that all three theories are equally relevant and essential for effective leadership.

**FIGURE 1  
THEORETICAL TRIANGULAR LEADERSHIP MODEL KLEIN (2016)**



#### **The Role of Transformational Leadership Theory**

One of the most prevalent leadership theories researched over the past several decades is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership stems from the work of political scientists and sociologists and gained momentum as an approach to studying leadership when Burns introduced the term *transforming* leadership in 1978. *Transformational leadership* is the process in which one person engages another and elevates the level of motivation and morality in both parties (Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2004).

Burns argues by raising the conduct and ethical aspirations, both leaders and followers are transformed (1978). As such, the leader and the follower are connected and reliant on each other to raise performance. According to Burns, “power bases are linked not as counterweights but as mutual support for a common purpose” (p. 20). In turn, transformational leaders are able to identify the needs of followers by satisfying higher ethical and motivational needs in order to engage the whole individual (Burns, 1978). As such, transformational leaders can inspire, motivate, and encourage employees (and themselves) to achieve beyond expectations toward a common goal. Leaders and followers are also able to transcend to an optimal level of achievement based on the greater good of the organization.

According to Bass (1985, 1989), four tenants directly relate to transformational leadership: idealized influence/attributed charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Specifically, *idealized influence/attributed charisma*, defines the level of power, confidence, ideas the leader exudes, and sense of mission. This influence has a strong emotional appeal and can move followers from self-interest to focusing on the common good beyond a level of expectation. It also highlights leadership behaviors and alignment to vision, mission, and purpose, and is consistent with ethical and moral expectations. *Inspirational motivation*, encourages followers to think beyond common expectations and motives to achieve at exceptional levels. Leadership has the ability to instill confidence in followers that the heightened level of achievement is achievable. *Intellectual stimulation*, encourages followers to challenge or question ideas, think innovatively, look for creative ways to solve problems, and ignites intellectual curiosity. *Individual consideration*, allows leaders to identify strengths and needs in individual followers and encourage development, empowerment, and ultimately self-actualization (Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013).

### *Research Findings*

Recent empirical studies in various fields and context have revealed mostly expected results. Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), who hold the top-leadership role within organizations, are commonly studied with relation to transformational leadership. A 2008 study conducted by Jung, Wu, and Chow, used a sample of 50 Taiwanese telecommunication and electronics companies to explore how the CEO’s transformational leadership abilities impacted innovation within the organization. The results demonstrated a direct and positive effect on the CEO’s leadership style and level of innovation (Diaz-Saenz, 2011). In addition to senior leadership research, middle manager studies also reveal similar results. According to Singh and Krishnan, who studied the role of “altruism in the relationship between self-sacrifice” in India in 2008, transformational leadership positively related to follower’s collective identity and perception of organizational performance (Diaz-Saenz, 2011, p. 303). In a military context, Eid, Johnsen, Bartone, and Nissestad (2008), explored the role of personal hardiness in initiating change or growth in a military training activity. Their study found a “significant increase in transformational and transactional leadership styles after the exercises” (as cited in Diaz-Saenz, 2001, p. 303). Additionally, it was discovered the transformational leadership style increased six months after the completion of the exercise.

Research conducted by Basham (2012), addresses the significance and broad appeal of transformational leadership in a business environment and specifically addresses a climate of change within an institution. With reduced government funding and the necessity to adapt to economic and organizational shifts, transformational leaders can instill a sense of encouragement and motivation for change.

### *Application of Transformational Leadership Theory to the Role of Business Leader*

When applying transformational leadership theory to the role, responsibilities, and ‘best fit’ characteristics of business leaders, identifying those leaders who can embrace and drive higher order change is essential. Recognizing the need for change is transactional; institutions and companies that require a new direction, shift in organizational culture, or need to foster performance excellence, benefit from a transformational leader. Those leaders who demonstrate the ability to engage their constituencies beyond the transactional exchange relationship can heighten awareness of the need for fundamental, directional, and process changes (Bass, 1985). According to Bass, “This heightening of awareness requires a leader with vision, self-confidence, and inner strength to argue successfully for what he sees is right or good, not

for what is popular or is acceptable according to the established wisdom of time” (p. 17). Transformational leaders can inspire, motivate, and captivate their followers and provide the direction necessary to enhance organizational performance. With an emphasis on intrinsic motivation and employee development placed in today’s business environment, a charismatic and visionary leader can inspire constituencies, and in this case, internship students, to exceed performance even in a time of uncertainty (Northouse, 2013).

### **The Role of Authentic Leadership Theory**

Introduced initially by Luthans and Avolio (2003), *authentic leadership theory* merged concepts from positive organizational behavior, transformational/full-range leadership, and ethical leadership theories, to depict the type of leadership needed to survive and thrive in contemporary organizational environments. Defining authentic leadership is somewhat complex as scholars accept multiple interpretations or definitions of the term. Most widely accepted is the definition of authentic leadership from a developmental, rather than simply interpersonal, perspective. According to Northouse (2013), *authentic leadership* emphasizes the ability to demonstrate resiliency and ethical transparency, while engaging constituencies across all levels. Authentic leadership is viewed as something that can evolve within an individual and is developed over the lifetime of a leader’s career. In organizations where change is imminent, the authentic leader can provide a foundation of trust and inspiration for followers.

According to Luthans and Avolio (2003), authentic leadership “draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development” (p. 243). A highly developed organizational context provides a clear organizational framework and culture of transparency. In those contexts, leaders and followers feel less vulnerable and are able to pursue the organization’s vision, goals, and objectives. Authentic leaders are “confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, transparent, moral/ethical, future-oriented, and give priority to developing associates to be leaders” (p. 243). Additionally, authentic leaders can engage followers by demonstrating actions and behaviors that reflect their values (2003). Leadership can exhibit behaviors and model the way that followers can embrace and promote throughout an organization. They are guided beyond self-interest and operate from deeper values.

Building on this definition, Kernis (2003), who looks at authenticity and its relationship to optimal self-esteem, claims, “authenticity can be characterized as reflecting the unobstructed operation of one’s true, or core self in one’s daily enterprise” (p. 13). He argues authenticity has four key components which include awareness, unbiased processing, action, and relationship orientation (2003). Most authentic leadership models draw from the work of Kernis and part of his larger theory on self-esteem.

The following tenants are identified as characteristic of authentic leaders: 1) *transparency*, present themselves as genuine and real – showing one’s true self; fostering open communication and relationships with others in doing so 2) *curiosity*, includes a desire to learn, understand, and explore 3) *vulnerability*, which includes self-awareness of strengths, weakness, feelings, and can express these with others; also leads to compassion for others 4) *openness*, possessing the quality of being straightforward in actions and words 5) *honesty*, driven by honorable intentions and moral code. 6) *trustworthiness*, inspiring trust and reliability 7) *humility*, displays humbleness and lack of ego in leadership role; leaders can be confident and humble at the same time, and 8) *‘hot’ relationships*, which encourages the establishment of key relationships where individuals share genuine, real aspects of themselves to each other.

### *Research Findings*

Although the previous decade has prompted an increase in authentic leadership discourse, empirical studies are limited. Most research discussions focused on business environments and explored leadership behaviors and individual perceptions of those behaviors. Qualitative research conducted by George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer (2007) explored how people become and remain authentic leaders. Researchers interviewed 125 leaders, primarily from business backgrounds (half were Chief Executive Officers) and nonprofit organizations. Participants were selected based on their reputations for authenticity. Results from the study did not uncover a consistent trait or characteristic from these leaders, but rather their authenticity evolved from their life stories and real-world experiences (2007). The limited research available also

suggests, “leadership authenticity is in fact a relevant and potentially important issue for followers” (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 356). With an ongoing interest in authentic leadership from the academic and business communities, the research environment is primed for more empirical studies relevant to various types of organizations.

#### *Application of Authentic Leadership Theory to the Role of Business Leader*

Business leadership and executive development programs were the first to embrace the applicability of authentic leadership. With uncertain and challenging times across most industries, authentic leadership is relevant to organizations that need to foster meaningful relationships and genuinely relate with key constituencies (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). This ongoing priority within organizations can provide followers with a “renewed focus on restoring confidence” (p. 316). As companies continue to compete for the best talent, authentic leaders can open the doors to providing the organizational climate and environment for sustained success.

As financial and ethical scandals have surfaced throughout various industries over the past several decades – constituencies are demanding open and honest leadership (Northouse, 2013). Identifying those candidates who are trustworthy and genuine becomes a clear priority for selecting the best-fit leaders. Additionally, those serving in the role need to communicate and demonstrate authenticity and transparency through their actions. According to George (2003), authentic leaders must possess the following characteristics – passion, behavior, connectedness, consistency, and compassion. Not only should leaders possess these characteristics, but continually need to develop in each of those areas. With the demands facing business leaders in today’s unpredictable economic climate, the need to exceed performance with numerous constituencies is necessary and can challenge the leader’s personal authenticity (Bornstein, 2004). Those business leaders who exhibit authentic leadership characteristics can model resiliency for their employees and continue to inspire them during new or challenging times.

#### **The Role of Distributed Leadership Theory**

Distributed leadership has gained prominence within educational management research throughout the past decade and acknowledges leading an organization involves multiple individuals who exert power or influence, transcending formal leadership roles (Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Gosling, Bolden & Petrov, 2009; Lumby, 2013). Occasionally referred to as shared leadership, shared governance, collaborative leadership, or democratic leadership, distributed leadership has taken a prominent hold on framing leadership research in complex organizational environments (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Distributed leadership tenants include: 1) collaboration, 2) open culture, 3) reflective practice, 4) leadership/engagement at all levels, and 5) flexibility. Distributed leadership theory identifies that no “one individual” leader can be solely responsible for success in vast corporate or institutional contexts.

#### *Research Findings*

Those leaders who embrace distributed leadership, must understand the tenants and adapt their leadership style accordingly. According to Gosling et al. (2009), “Distributed leadership is not a replacement for individual leadership” (p. 300). Virtual internship leaders who can engage and foster distributed leadership within their organizations have greater opportunities for succeeding in the role. According to research conducted by Jones et al. (2014), distributed leadership relies on endorsement and support from formal leadership. With a distributed leadership model, “achieving the engagement of a wider group of staff is more effective in implementing change, and...in a more complex world, the skills and expertise of more diverse people are necessary to create successful leadership” (Lumby, 2013, p. 583). The appeal of the distributed leadership model resides in today’s desire for greater collaboration and collegiality, along with the need for collective input and leadership throughout institutions (Bolden, Petrov, & Gosling, 2009).

### *Application of Distributed Leadership Theory to the Role of Business Leader*

Although transformational leadership theory and authentic leadership theory can provide frameworks for understanding the individual leadership characteristics of business professional, using a distributed leadership perspective is also relevant and necessary as a means for identifying leadership success. Leaders who embrace distributed leadership characteristics can provide employees with a sense of increased ownership and engagement in the work process.

### **Triangle Framework Summary**

The triangular framework leadership model that includes transformational leadership theory, authentic leadership theory, and distributed leadership theory, can provide contemporary and practical knowledge to educate business leaders who are interested in application in their workplace environment. These theories can also be enriched with discussion of multicultural and workforce diversity frameworks.

### **EXAMPLES OF MULTICULTURAL AND WORKFORCE DIVERSITY FRAMEWORKS THAT COULD BE UTILIZED TO ENHANCE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORIES**

In a dissertation by Scott (2003), entitled *Giving Voice to Experiences of Adults Participating in a Multicultural Immersion Program*, a literature review of multicultural and workforce diversity frameworks provided examples of their utility in organizational settings. In the focus areas of multicultural and organizational diversity practices examined by Scott in 2003, Thomas (1992), Cox, (1993), Wentling and Palma -Rivas (1997) and Maltbia, (2001) were highlighted as being recognized researchers who have studied extensively contemporary and evolving organizational diversity and multicultural leadership efforts and supporting workforce diversity practices. In Table 1 below the current and evolving organizational practices in the areas of diversity and multicultural leadership, and management are offered by Thomas (1992); Cox (1993); Wentling and Palma -Rivas (1997) and Maltbia, (2001) from distinct perspectives. A discussion of each organizational diversity practice will follow highlighting the core elements and critiques of some of the practices.

**TABLE 1  
ORGANIZATIONAL DIVERSITY:  
CONTEMPORARY AND EVOLVING PRACTICES DEFINED**

<b>Author (s)</b>	<b>Key Concepts</b>	<b>Definition/Description</b>
Thomas (1991)	Managing Diversity	“Managing diversity [a form of leadership for diversity] in organizations] is a comprehensive managerial process for developing an environment that works for all employees” (p. 10).
Cox (1993)	Creating the Multicultural Organization and Leadership – A Focus on Diversity Leadership	“Leadership refers to the need for champions of the cause of diversity who will take strong personal stands on the need for change, and assist with the work of moving the organization forward” (p. 230).
Wentling and Palma-Rivas (1997)	Diversity in the Workforce: A Literature Review Diversity in the Workforce Series Report # 1	“The main focus of this report is to describe in detail the literature on diversity in the workforce to bring about an understanding of the complexity and breadth of workplace diversity issues. The report also intends to provide insights on the trends that have emerged in the field of diversity, and information that can be used to develop new and unique approaches that fit the needs of particular organizations” (p. v).

Maltbia (2001)	The Diversity Practitioners Study	“The researcher was interested in understanding not only the “what” and “how”, “but also the “why” behind the approach that the selected sample of diversity practitioners used to help the organizations address diversity in the workplace” (p. 2).
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### **The Role of Diversity Management**

As corporations continue to become more diverse and global, and diversity remains a core business issue, as previously highlighted, effective diversity management in organizations will also be necessary. According to Roosevelt Thomas (1992), diversity management is a strategy designed to assist organizations in creating “steps for generating a mutual capability to tap the potential of all employees” (p. 10). For Thomas (1992), diversity management is a “new” organizational management strategy that “approaches diversity from three levels simultaneously: individual, interpersonal, and organizational” (p. 12), thus making diversity a core issue of concern within organizations (p. 12). Thomas (1992) views the strategy of diversity management as not only focusing on issues of “race and gender, but all other dimensions of diversity” such as social class, age, disabilities, ethnicity, and military experience (p. 12).

Thomas (1992) also believes that diversity management “is not a quick fix management program” or a group of coordinated objectives aimed to give the appearance that organizational diversity concerns are being addressed (p. 12). Instead, he maintains that diversity management is; 1) a strategy that “calls for more than changing the corporation’s way of life; 2) implementing it takes many years” (p. 12); and 3) the effectiveness of diversity management “depends on the ability [of managers at all levels] to empower the total workforce” (p. 10).

### **The Role of Diversity Leadership in the Multicultural Organization**

According to Cox (1993, p. 241) a multicultural organization is one that seeks to assist all of its workers, regardless of their varying backgrounds in reaching their personal and professional goals, while contributing to the success of the organization. The exclusive characteristics of multicultural organizations offered by Cox (1993, p. 229) consist of the following:

- “a culture that fosters and values cultural differences
- pluralism as an acculturation process
- full structural integration
- full integration of the informal networks
- an absence of institutionalized cultural bias in human resource management systems and practices
- a minimum of intergroup conflict due to the proactive management of diversity”

In addition to the above, Cox (1993) stated that effective “leadership, is needed to convert established organizations into multicultural organizations (p. 231). Below, a summary is provided on Cox’s leadership component needed to effectively guide multicultural organizations.

### **The Role of Leadership Practices in the Multicultural Organization**

Effective leadership is critical in transforming existing organizations into multicultural organizations (1993, p. 230). For Cox (1993), leadership in this context suggests that organizational leaders must become change agents so they can “model” the passion, attitude, and professional conduct needed to transform established organizations in multicultural organizations (p. 229). For example, Cox (1993, p. 230) noted that organizational leaders and change agents of workforce diversity must also demonstrate the following:

- [A]” ommitment of resources (financial and human and resources) towards workforce diversity initiatives.
- Inclusion of managing diversity as a component of the mission and vision of the organization.
- A willingness to change (develop if necessary) corporate-wide human resource management practices, such as performance appraisal and compensation systems.

- A willingness to keep mental energy and financial support focused on managing and valuing diversity for a period of years, rather than months or weeks.
- The establishment of valuing diversity as a core objective of the organization that receives the same priority as other core values such as safety, integrity, and total quality”.

Cox (1993) further highlighted that in addition to having top leadership’s commitment and support for a workforce that is diverse, support and commitment for workforce diversity is also needed at the mid and lower manager levels of the organizations, to ensure that human diversity and supporting efforts are integrated throughout the organization and that human diversity is being managed effectively at all levels of the organization (p. 232).

### **The Role of Diversity in the Workforce: A Literature Review**

In December of 1997, researchers Wentling and Palma-Rivas published a literature review entitled Diversity in the Workforce Series Report 1: Diversity in the Workforce: A Literature Review (p. 4) to highlight existing research on the practice of workforce diversity “and bring about understanding of the complexity and breath of workplace diversity issues” (p. v). Their literature review explored the following themes that relate to this paper: 1) “why organizations are valuing and managing diversity”, and 2) “strategies for managing diversity” (p. 11).

Theme One Why Organizations are Valuing and Managing Diversity. The reasons why organizations are valuing and managing diversity according to Wentling and Palma Rivas findings (1997) is because it will allow them to be more competitive by: 1) appealing to diverse employee groups and drawing on their creative talents; and 2) appealing to a diverse customer base (p. 70) which is an advantage needed to succeed in the today’s diverse marketplace.

Theme Two: Managing Diversity. In this section Wentling and Palma-Rivas (1997) identified that diversity in organizational settings is being managed in a variety of ways (p. 71). Therefore, their research on this topic concluded that there is “no single initiative that is comprehensive enough to solve all diversity issues or to successfully manage diversity in organizations” (p. 71). The also highlighted several diversity management barriers that have hindered the practice of managing diversity in organizations. These barriers include: “stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, harassment, difficulty in balancing work and family, poor career planning and development, lack of organizational political savvy, unsupportive work environments, exclusion and isolation, [having their] qualifications and performance questioned, lack of mentors and backlash” (p. 71).

Lastly, Wentling and Palma-Riva’s (1997) uncovered in their research that diversity initiatives in organizations locally, nationally and globally will continue to thrive due to the fact that society in general is becoming more diverse (p. 71). The authors’ inquiry additionally revealed that diversity training will remain a necessary initiative in organizations of the future at all levels due to the complexities surrounding human diversity issues in general (p. 71).

### **The Role of Diversity Practitioners**

Similar to Wentling and Palma-Rivas’s (1997) study Maltbia’s (2001) research sheds light on what is known about workplace diversity from the perspectives of twelve external and internal diversity practitioners including diversity managers, diversity leaders and chief diversity officers (p. 371) and from his review of literature on workplace diversity (p. 401). An important theme that Maltbia (2001) uncovered was that many of the diversity practitioners stated that gaining and sustaining the personal commitment for organizational diversity efforts from senior leadership was a key factor as it relates to the overall results that diversity efforts will have within the organization (p. 396). Moreover, Maltbia’s (2001) literature review on workplace diversity revealed that the factors supporting the inclusion of diversity efforts in organizations include: 1) having a clear vision and rationale for engaging in the diversity process and 2) the courage to transform the people and organizational systems needed to realize the vision” (p. 401). However, the barriers found in this review of literature that hinder the employment of diversity efforts in organizations include: 1) fear, resistance to change at the individual level and 2) organizational barriers related to systems and practices that are not aligned with the aim of diversity (p. 401).



In Maltbia's (2000) earlier research on this topic he also discovered that diversity practitioners need to engage in self-work, a concept similar to self-awareness in order to develop and maintain the ability to effectively direct others through "the personal and organizational transformation needed to productively work with diversity" (Maltbia, 2000, p.109). The process of self-work can be further understood and applied using two of the learning domains that Mezirow (1991) discussed: instrumental learning and communicative learning.

First, instrumental learning is helpful as it relates to self-work and managing diversity. For example, monitoring the planning and controlling processes related to learning, how to conduct cultural programs for adults, organizational readiness assessment, and training needs assessment generally are used to set the groundwork in the early phases of the diversity process in a specific context. Next, communicative learning is appropriate for understanding diversity, valuing diversity, and leveraging diversity because the emphasis is on the dynamics of learning to understand others.

Maltbia (2000) as well revealed that the concept of self-work parallels Goleman's (1995, 1998) work on emotional intelligence. Goleman explained that personal competence influences how people manage themselves; specifically, self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation that are at the core of this idea of personal competence. Therefore, according to Maltbia (2000), diversity practitioners must have a high level of emotional awareness with respect to how various primary, secondary, and organizational dimensions of diversity affect their performance and how their collective set of values guides what they pay attention to in organizations and, as a result, the interventions they select in the process of doing diversity work. Diversity practitioners also must have the ability to assess their own strengths and weaknesses related to general and specific diversity work (Maltbia, 2000). Lastly, Maltbia (2000) asserted that diversity practitioners must possess the knowledge, skills, self-confidence, and courage to help employees (adult learners) challenge unconstructive assumptions, which often serve as obstacles to accomplishing the goals they seek to meet.

## **THE BENEFITS OF INCORPORATING MULTICULTURAL AND WORKFORCE DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP TRAITS AND SUPPORTING DIVERSITY PRACTICES INTO TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORIES**

In this last section of this paper, the authors and workforce diversity researchers agree and assert that diversity and multicultural leadership and management knowledge, skills and abilities are core competencies that *all organizational leaders* should possess. (Hughes, 2016; Byrd and Scott, 2018). In the last section it is underscored that organizational leaders need to continuously engage in self work including diversity training, reading workforce diversity articles, and attending workforce diversity seminars, to be informed stay and prepared to lead an emergent diverse workforce. Moreover, it was noted that organizational leaders need to know that they have to build accountability into their policy and practices with regard to addressing the lingering issues of discrimination, racism, stereotyping, sexism, sexual orientation and ageism to name a few for the propose of creating a safe diverse and inclusive work environment for employees at all ranks to thrive in.

While a plethora of renowned traditional leadership theories have introduced us to the fundamental attributes, traits, and behaviors relevant for organizational leaders, the majority of them lack the mention of essential organizational diversity attributes that all organizational leaders should also possess. Therefore, as society and the workforce continue to become more diverse, it is critical that all traditional, current and emerging leadership theories incorporate diversity and multicultural leadership practices into their models and frameworks. This must be considered for the purpose of introducing current and emerging organizational leaders to the types of knowledge, as well as skills, and abilities they will need to acquire to effectively lead and manage an evolving diverse workforce.

Comprehending what this review of literature highlighted above makes us aware that creating an organizational "cultural that fosters and values cultural differences" (Cox, 1993, p. 229) requires a commitment from key organizational leaders. This review of literature also provided several perspectives on why the concept of diversity leadership and related issues and concerns should be understood and

managed by organizational leaders today and beyond in our global society. By building upon traditional leadership theories by incorporating diversity and multicultural leadership traits, behaviors, and practices offers organizational leaders a new leaning opportunity to enhance their organizational leadership and management practices.

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