Communicatively Co-Constituting Pathways of an Inclusive Workplace:

A Participant-Driven Methodology

by

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ABSTRACT

In this study, I explore how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. I use a participant-driven methodology to understand how employees with diverse social identities envision characteristics of an inclusive workplace. I then use Interpretive Structural Modeling (Warfield, 1976) to understand how participants perceive the relationship among the key characteristics. The results and analysis suggest one particular pathway for creating an inclusive workplace. First, having a diverse workforce across all levels of the organization and an environment of psychological safety increase the likelihood employees would then commit to inclusion. After establishing a genuine commitment, employees would more likely enact intercultural empathy and advocate for an inclusive organizational infrastructure. Based on these findings, I offer metatheoretical, theoretical, and methodological contributions that, when taken together, work to reimagine how people can organize around diversity and inclusion. More specifically, I add to the conversation of engaged scholarship, communication as constitutive of organizations and diversity management studies, and Interactive Management. I then offer three practical implications organizational leaders can use to inform future organizing efforts: intentional hiring practices, creating an environment of psychological safety, and educational programming. I conclude by offering limitations and future directions for researchers and practitioners.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to the employees at Valley Ridge. I hope this study serves as a

springboard for creating inclusivity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> It gives me actually more compassion for an organization who's trying to be more
> diverse and inclusive—knowing that all of these things are in play and they might
> happen in different orders, or people think they happen in different orders. Um, so
> it gives me more compassion for an organization that's trying and also helps me
> to think about, okay, what can I do in my…department, you know? Like how can
> I, you know, talk to my personal leader, or you know, be as a leader? What can I
> do if I really believe these things? How can I put those things into play tomorrow,
> you know? (*Employee reflecting on the complexities of creating inclusion in her*
> *workplace)*

Organizations are faced with the question and project of how to weave diversity

into its core of existence (Ahmed, 2012; Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008). The present study

is a case study of one particular organization interested in creating an inclusive workplace

that embraces diversity. Before continuing, it is important to distinguish the difference

between diversity and inclusion. In this study, I use diversity as a noun and inclusion as a

verb (Gailliard, Gibbs, & Doerfel, 2020). At times, I also refer to inclusion as an

adjective describing a workplace (i.e., inclusive workplace). Rather than focusing on

diversity as a noun, I am interested in the co-construction process of inclusion that can

encourage equity (i.e., inclusion as a verb). In other words, I pursue the question of how

organizations might use inclusive organizational decision-making to co-envision

pathways for creating an inclusive workplace.

At the same time, I am not interested in plurality. Plurality, disguised as inclusion,

has adverse effects that reproduce the status quo (Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008). As such,

this study seeks to center the voices of employees who compassionately advocate

diversity and inclusion through "a paradigm of evolution, innovation, and confrontation"

(Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008, p. 54). More specifically, this study is a questioning process

with the goal of getting answers from employees who have the potential to inform leaders on how to create an inclusive workplace.

In this chapter, I first detail the particular organization for this study. I then situate the current project in the framework of engaged scholarship and position myself as a co-investigator. More specifically, I situate myself as a researcher with dominant group identities doing diversity and inclusion work. Finally, I conclude with an overview of the dissertation study.

Context of the Study

The context for this study is a healthcare system that serves its local and global communities. From here on, I will refer to this medical center as "Valley Ridge." Recently, Valley Ridge's Office of Diversity and Inclusion has led efforts to create a civil and inclusive workplace for its employees in general and also specifically for historically marginalized employees. To achieve this goal, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion has invited consultants to give workshops and public lectures on how to create an inclusive workplace. The present study supplements current efforts by taking a participant-centered framework—one that embraces the collective intelligence of its own employees. Such an approach, however, demonstrates vulnerability by organizational leaders. Therefore, getting access to Valley Ridge for research required time and relationship-building.

My relationship with Valley Ridge began when I facilitated a panel on mindful communication for one of its regional hospitals. After facilitating the panel, I emailed Debra (pseudonym)—a director of diversity and inclusion—asking if there was a way to shadow, intern, or visit her and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Within a few weeks, Debra offered a 10-week internship in which I would work closely with her on

various projects. Over the 10-week period, Debra and I got familiar with each other and dreamed about the possibility of working on an original study out of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. As I exited the internship program, Debra expressed Valley Ridge's newest initiative—to address incivility and promote inclusion among its employees.

To address their new initiative, Debra and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion invited consultants to speak on the topic of (in)civility and diversity management. Up to the point of this dissertation, outside consultants have deposited information into Valley Ridge as if it were a container (Miller, 2008). Whereas the consultants offered decontextualized knowledge of (in)civility and diversity, the current study sought to build context-specific knowledge rooted in employees' experiences. I detail this process of negotiating access for two main reasons. First, collaborating with organizations requires trust developed over time. Second, such trust enables a collaborative process for designing, implementing, and analyzing research for building contextual knowledge. To further situate this project's development, I turn to the concept of engaged scholarship.

Engaged Scholarship

Engaged scholarship is viewed as a form of inquiry between academics and practitioners that leverages their different perspectives to generate useful organizational knowledge. (Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008, p. 251)

Engaged scholarship as research highlights practical problems, develops a reflexive bridge between scholars and practitioners, and co-develops knowledge among stakeholders. (Putnam & Dempsey, 2015, p. 11)

The benefit of such research is that it [engaged scholarship] addresses pressing issues in our society and communicates and shares possible solutions directly with the public. (DeWine, 2005, p. 196)

The current study falls under the umbrella term *engaged scholarship*. As demonstrated by the quotations above, engaged scholarship is invested in the co-creation of knowledge among scholars and practitioners to address pressing social issues. At a 10,000-foot view, engaged scholarship can be understood by three main tenets: a) committing to using academic resources for practical change, b) engaging both academic knowledge and practitioner experience, and c) maintaining a focus on the communicative process of knowledge production (Dempsey & Barge, 2014). At a ground level, engaged scholarship can manifest in a number of ways (Putnam & Dempsey, 2015); three of which I draw on for this study: applied communication research, collaborative learning, and participatory action research.

Applied communication research places less emphasis on the co-production of knowledge and a high emphasis on translating research findings for a non-academic audience (Frey & Cissna, 2009). More particularly, the goal of applied communication research is to provide actionable steps for stakeholders when confronting an issue in a particular context. Contrary to applied communication research, collaborative learning research places emphasis on the process of co-planning projects, co-analyzing data, and co-writing reports (Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008). Additionally, learning is a key component for co-researchers and participants throughout the entire research process. Finally, the current study draws upon participatory action research—a methodology rooted in the ethic of conducting research with participants seeking to improve local, contextualized issues (Greenwood, Whyte, & Harkavy, 1993; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). This study uses participatory action research by employing a research design

rooted in data collection and analysis with participants for understanding pathways for creating an inclusive workplace at Valley Ridge.

The current project maintains traces of applied communication research because I seek to co-create data and findings that can be used in practice at Valley Ridge. The current project also draws from collaborative learning research by valuing the mutual process of learning among participants, Debra, myself, and my dissertation committee. Finally, the study draws from participatory action research by involving participants, their experiences, and their perceptions when investigating pathways for creating an inclusive workplace at Valley Ridge. When taken together, applied communication research, collaborative learning research, and participatory action research were central components for how I framed the study to Valley Ridge gatekeepers.

My Positionality

Rather than speaking *for* their participants, engaged scholars should speak along *with* their many stakeholders (Alcoff, 1991). This becomes especially true when investigators maintain social identities of power and privilege, such as myself as a White heterosexual, cis-male in his late 20s. In this study, I embrace the axiological assumption of commonalities—a relational, systems-based approach rooted in a framework of interconnectivity (Keating, 2013). In other words, everyone who experiences marginalization and/or privilege are bound together in the same structures that create marginalization and privilege. The participants of this study, my faculty committee, Debra, and I all entered the study from various standpoints. Yet our interconnectivity is what brings us to the study seeking answers to the question of diversity and inclusion (Ahmed, 2012; Rodriguez & Chawla. 2008).

Although I may not share the same standpoints as participants of this study, we are ecologically bound together through interconnectivity (Keating, 2013; Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008). I attempted to practice critical self-reflexivity throughout the study from research design to data collection to data analysis. For example, participants provided the data, and the data was curated by my committee and me—keeping as close to the participants' contributions as possible. One way I did this was by designing a grounded methodology that developed findings from participant contributions and feedback. As shown in Chapters Three and Four, the methodology and findings rely heavily upon participant input and feedback.

Dissertation Preview

As an engaged scholar, I am tasked with two goals. The first is to collaborate with Valley Ridge leaders in designing, implementing, and carrying out a research project on the topic of inclusion in the workplace. The second task is to produce a dissertation and subsequent studies that build theory in communication studies. The two tasks merge through the current project, which incorporates academic knowledge, practitioner experience, and participant voice. In what follows, I first review relevant scholarly literature from communities that might find the current study interesting and significant. I then offer a detailed description of the qualitative methodology used for this study. Next, I analyze the data and offer theoretical, methodological, and practical implications. Finally, I offer conclusions and future directions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A goal of engaged scholarship is to offer practical solutions to complex problems in the world (Dempsey & Barge, 2014). As expressed by engaged scholars, oftentimes theory emerges through the process of engaging contemporary social issues (Ashcraft, 2002; Seibold, 2005). Debra, a director of Diversity and Inclusion at Valley Ridge, had already identified "inclusion" as Valley Ridge's pressing social issue. Finding a specific body of literature to engage, however, was challenging due to the sparsity of diversity management literature through a communicative lens. As such, I constructed Figure 1 to situate this study within organizational communication scholarship.
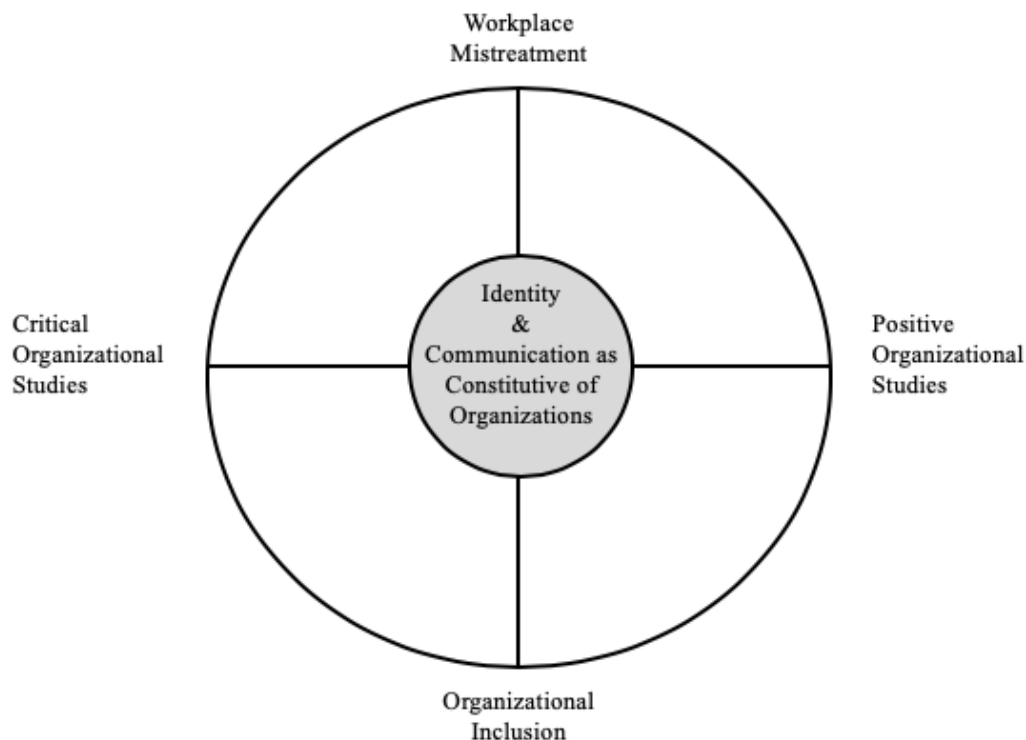
Figure 1. Literature review overview. Relevant pools of organizational communication literature.

On the periphery of the study are the following pools of literature: critical organizational studies, positive organizational studies, workplace mistreatment, and organizational inclusion. At the core of this study rests two specific pools of literature, identity and communication as constitutive of organizations. While the periphery literatures are present, they are not the main focus of this particular study. Meanwhile, research in identity and communication as constitutive of organizations join together through an emerging area of research for organizational communication—diversity management studies. In what follows, I situate the current study's theoretical grounding in each body of literature present in Figure 1.

Workplace Mistreatment

Over the past few years, Debra expressed an increase of damaging communication directed toward historically marginalized employees, especially from patients. When occurring in the workplace, abusive communication falls under the umbrella term *workplace mistreatment*, which is also referred to as *interpersonal mistreatment* in the workplace. Interpersonal mistreatment can be defined as an "antisocial variety of organizational deviance, involving a situation in which at least one [individual] takes counternormative negative actions, or terminates normative positive actions, against another member" (Cortina & Magley, 2003, p. 247). McCord, Joseph, Dhanani, and Beus (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of varying forms of workplace mistreatment. Within their meta-analysis they identified key terms that are often used to describe interpersonal mistreatment. Among the terms are *harassment* (typically demographic-based abuse), *bullying* (repeated attacks toward one person), and *incivility* (behaviors with an ambiguous intent to harm others). Before beginning a study about

inclusion, I find it necessary to differentiate various forms of workplace mistreatment that might prevent inclusion from occurring.

Organizational communication scholars have studied workplace bullying (Lutgen-Sandvik & Tracy, 2012; Tye-Williams & Krone, 2015), harassment (Cowan, 2011), and discrimination (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, et al., 2008; Tracy & Rivera, 2010). Under-explored in the field of communication is incivility, which can be defined as "low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others" (Anderson & Pearson, 1999, p. 457). Subsequent research in the field of management and organizational behavior has attempted to measure how employees experience and interpret uncivil communication (Hershcovis, Ogunfowora, Reich, & Christie, 2017; Taylor, Bedeian, Cole, & Zhang, 2017). While management scholars have continued to study (in)civility, communication scholars have been more hesitant.

The term *civility* has been used in different ways to mean different things. For example, critical-communication scholars have critiqued civility as a mechanism to "effectively silence and punish marginalized groups" (Lozano-Reich & Cloud, 2009, p. 223). However, amid this critique, management scholars have continued to pursue the study of civility in organizational contexts (Porath, 2011, 2016). Civility, like incivility, is oftentimes ambiguous and determined by the recipient of a message (Porath, 2016). As such, the current study moves beyond the ambiguity of civility to understand how organizations and their employees can actively create a workplace of conscious inclusion. In making this move, I acknowledge these competing discourses surrounding civility.

9

However, the current study does not contribute to these ongoing conversations directly. Additionally, I make the decision to move beyond organizational mistreatment as the central focus. Rather, I take a positive organizational approach to identifying ways to create inclusion (see section on positive organizational scholarship). I now briefly turn to a burgeoning area of organizational communication scholarship aimed at creating organizational inclusion.

Organizational Inclusion

In 2017, a group of communication scholars gathered at the 103rd meeting of the National Communication Association. The focus of the preconference gathering was to address inclusion in organizational research, pedagogy, service, and community engagement. One particular outcome was an edited book titled *Building Inclusiveness in Organizations, Institutions, and Communities: Communication Theory Perspectives* (Doerfel & Gibbs, 2020). A goal of the book is to take inventory of research on inclusion and exclusion in organizational contexts. The following are some topics covered within the edited volume: instituting participatory research graduate certificate programs (Parker, Holland, Dennison, Smith, & Jackson, 2020), financial inclusion (Vallée, 2020), and increasing diverse stakeholders' input (Mitra, 2020). One specific chapter aims to understand how organizations can create the being of inclusion (Tracy, Razzante, & Hanna, 2020). I spend the rest of this section reviewing literature that speaks to ways employees can create the being of inclusion.

Inclusion can occur in various forms at macro-, meso-, and micro-levels (Ferdman, 2017). Macro-level practices of inclusion are ones that express lofty rhetoric of inclusion with hopes of changing an organization's culture and, subsequently, people's

behavior. For example, organizational leaders might promote "inclusive excellence" (Bauman, Bustillos, Bensimon, Brown, & Bartee, 2005) with hopes of changing employees' perceptions and practices of inclusion. Additionally, macro-level manifestations of inclusion occur when organizations advocate the need for diversity "to be embedded in the symbolic and cultural fabric of the institution" (Williams, 2007, p. 12). In offering such rhetoric, organizational leaders might hope that employees assume diversity as a value of their own, which would lead to changed behavior. However, without action, these macro-level messages become what Ahmed (2012) calls, "institutional speech acts" (p. 54). Institutional speech acts serve a macro-level function but may fail to manifest in meso- and micro-level practices. Moving to the meso-level, one can see how organizations might follow through on institutional speech acts toward creating inclusion.

Meso-level practices are spaces where inclusion can manifest through educational literature (brochures, flyers, videos, etc.), trainings and classes, or a calling for councils and sub-committees. However, one concern that arises, especially in higher education, is the need for organizational rewards for taking part in such "extracurricular" service (see Fryberg & Martinez, 2014). Without organizational recognition, diversity and inclusion efforts may take on an "additive" function to the work employees already do. As such, organizational leaders either need to change hiring practices to make diversity and inclusion inherently valued or at least reward participation in diversity and inclusion meso-level practices.

Finally, inclusion can also manifest at the micro-level through interactions and personal change. For example, organizational members can increase awareness about

anti-Black racism through perspective-taking or strong and thoughtful leadership (Opie & Roberts, 2017). Additionally, in the context of creating an inclusive campus environment for dialogue, students, faculty, and staff can listen to others' experiences as a means to cultivate empathy and self-reflexivity (Broome, Derk, Razzante, Steiner, Taylor, & Zamora, 2019). Finally, organizational members can create inclusion by actively disrupting exclusion when it occurs. Whether actively confronting bullying (Bowes-Sperry & O'Leary-Kelly, 2005) or oppressive ideologies in discourse (Razzante & Orbe, 2018), organizational members can create an awareness for why certain communicative behaviors breed exclusion.

Research on organizational inclusion is still young. However, there are similarities with research in positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003). One common goal of organizational inclusion and positive organizational scholarship is to create workplaces where employees can flourish as human beings. As such, I turn my attention to how the two scholarly communities might coalesce to inform macro-, meso-, and micro-level practices of inclusion for its employees.

Positive Organizational Scholarship

As a field of study, positive organizational scholarship (POS) seeks to promote human flourishing and thriving (Cameron & Caza, 2013), meaningful work (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003), positive connections (Heaphy & Dutton, 2008), resilience (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003), and compassion (Frost, 1999). While these various threads constitute positive organizational scholarship, I focus primarily on the concept of "meaningful work."

12

Meaningful work means different things for different people. For example, Broadfoot and colleagues (2008) note that meaningful work is a highly contested phrase, "which often stems from the raced, classed, and gendered assumptions guiding our practice" (p. 152). "Meaningful to whom?" is a critical question positive organizational scholars should ask when engaging such work. Additionally, "as communication scholars, we need to dig deep into social construction as the generative force underlying the categories of race, class, and gender as important political concepts" (p. 156). The main contribution of Broadfoot and colleagues' assertion is that engaged scholars need to consider the multiplicity of voice, especially marginalized voices, when making organizational decisions surrounding ambiguous key terms (i.e., meaningful work or inclusion). In the context of appreciative inquiry, the current study seeks to understand how keywords like meaningful work, appreciative, and inclusion are socially constructed by historically marginalized groups. Heeding Broadfoot and colleagues' (2008) warning may prevent the current study from using inclusion, like civility, as a means to further exclude marginalized groups (see also Lozano-Reich & Cloud, 2009). Before continuing, it is important to address criticisms of positive organizational scholarship.

Fineman (2006) critiques positive organizational scholarship on four bases; positive organizational scholarship a) seems to aim for a universal moral quota, b) separates the positive from the negative rather than holding them in tension, c) is culturally bound, and d) might even stigmatize those who embrace the negative. He further adds that "the positive critical quest thus becomes one of balancing the privileged position of the researcher with the grounded realities of those who are participating in a critical inquiry" (p. 282). Fineman's (2006) warnings should not be taken lightly. As

previously mentioned, considering the warnings of positive scholarship may prevent the current study from falling into the trap of further excluding historically marginalized groups. To further explore this concern, I turn to critical organizational scholarship and literature on democratic practices of organizational leadership.

Critical Organizational Scholarship

Critical organizational studies can be divided into two distinct research trajectories: a) control – resistance and b) how organizations are implicated in larger conversations of democracy (Mumby, 2014). Organizations, and the people who make up organizations, do not live within a social vacuum. Rather, people bring with them varying ideological assumptions regarding inclusion and exclusion. As such, organizational leaders need to be aware of their audience before advocating visions of organizational inclusivity. More specifically, leaders take part in "culture engineering" when they force employees into a vision statement that fails to reflect employees' thoughts (Fleming & Spicer, 2003). As such, developing organizational inclusivity requires inclusive strategies that embrace employees' voices.

Employee voice can be defined as the "discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, concerns, or opinions about work-related issues with the intent to improve organizational or unit functioning" (Morrison, 2011, p. 375). Depending on the standpoint of an employee, they may or may not voice their opinions, suggestions, or concerns, which thus results in silence. Furthermore, Morrison (2011) defines employee silence as "the conscious withholding of information, suggestions, ideas, questions, or concerns about potentially important work—or organization-related issues—from persons who might be able to take action to address those issues" (p. 377). In other

words, if organizations are interested in employee input, leaders need to create workplaces where employees can feel compelled, and empowered, to share their input. As such, efforts to create democratic spaces for employee voice becomes essential.

Themes from the Periphery

Up to this point, I reviewed peripheral bodies of literature that frame the current study as workplace mistreatment, organizational inclusion, critical organizational studies, and positive organizational studies (see Figure 1). Before moving to the bodies of literature at the core of this study, I find it helpful to review key themes across each section of previously covered literature.

First, when engaging varying stakeholders' concerns, researchers and practitioners need to practice self-reflexivity in the research design, analysis, and implementation of inclusion efforts. Self-reflexivity may prevent culture engineering and encourage critical questions along the way. Second, research methods need to account for the many voices present in an organization, especially when those employees experience marginalization. Embracing multiple voices in organizational decision-making allows scholars and practitioners to embrace competing interests. Finally, meaningful and inclusive work may manifest when organizations seek employee input, especially when making decisions regarding diversity and inclusion practices. I attempt to practice self-reflexivity by designing a study largely driven by participants themselves. To a certain degree, a participant-driven methodology brackets my assumptions of inclusivity from informing data collection and data analysis.

In order to refine the focus of this particular study, I turn to two specific pools of literature: identity and communication as constitutive of organizations. These two core

pools of literature offer a framework for understanding how organizations can actively

organize around employees' input when identifying inclusive communicative behavior.

Identity in Organizational Contexts

Various approaches exist to studying identity in organizational contexts. Critical

management studies scholars use the term *gender and diversity* to express relations of

power, communication, and identity like gender, race/ethnicity, nationality, sexual

orientation, among others. (Ashcraft, 2011). Additionally, within communication studies,

scholars have taken a feminist approach to examine sex- and gender-relations at work

(Acker, 1990; Ashcraft, 2005; Buzzanell, 1994; Parker, 2001). Finally, other scholars use

the term *difference* to frame research associated with the social construction of identities,

such as race, class, ability, gender, sex, and more (Allen, 1995, 2007, 2014; Ashcraft,

2011; Parker, 2014). Depending on the goal of the research, one might favor one term

over others.

Although the current study embraces the social construction of difference, I

examine one particular approach in *diversity management*. Diversity management

research is an area of inquiry that draws from human resource management (Alcazar,

Fernandez, & Gardey, 2013; Bell, Özbilgin, Beauregard, & Sürgevil, 2011; Scott,

Heathcote, & Gruman, 2011), innovation management (Bassett-Jones, 2005), and

organization and management studies (Cox & Blake, 1991; Francoeur, Labelle, &

Sinclair-Desgagné, 2007). This is important given that scholarship in positive

organizational studies advocates innovative approaches to solving problems in the

workplace. Critical scholarship lies at the core of diversity and management studies

(Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012), which is significant because diversity management also

attunes to critical-organizational approaches of power, control, and voice. As such, adopting "diversity management" offers an entry point to examine how organizational leaders can cultivate diverse employees' input. There exist two particular subfields of diversity management research: radical-critical approaches and constructive-critical approaches. I review each of these approaches to further situate diversity management's appropriateness for the context of this study.

A radical-critical approach is one where "scholars fundamentally contest the business rationale of diversity management and the underlying assumptions that human diversity would be *manageable*" (Trittin & Schoeneborn, 2017, p. 308, italics in original). Contrary to a radical-critical approach lies a constructive-critical approach, which advocates for "diversity management programs that foster the inclusion and social representation of individuals within the organization in order to fight inequality" (Trittin & Schoeneborn, 2017, p. 308). Diversity management literature generally, and a constructive-critical approach specifically, resonates with the current study to identify ways to build an inclusive workplace based on employee's input.

Most research framed as diversity management falls outside the field of communication. However, one recent theoretical essay articulates how diversity management and communicative approaches might unfold through communication as constitutive of organizations (Trittin & Schoeneborn, 2017). Trittin and Schoenborn theoretically bridge diversity management with communication as constitutive of organizations. As such, in order to get to a communicative approach to diversity management, I first review communication as constitutive of organizations theory and literature.

Communication as Constitutive of Organizations

There currently exist various schools of communication as constitutive of organizations (CCO) scholarship: the Montreal School (Cooren, 2018; Cooren, Taylor, & Van Every, 2006), the Four Flows Model (McPhee, 2015; McPhee & Zaug, 2000), the Social Systems Approach (Luhmann, 2003), and the Boulder School (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009). Each school addresses three fundamental questions about organizations and communication: a) the ontological question, What is an organization?; b) How does communication and influence scale up and down micro-, meso-, and macro-levels; and c) Who, or what, has agency? (Putnam & Nicotera, 2010; Schoeneborn, & Vasquez, 2017). Each school has their own approach to answering these questions. What follows is a brief description of the four schools of thought. More specifically, I draw from Schoeneborn and Vasquez's (2017) review of CCO scholarship.

The Montreal School approach to CCO draws heavily from actor-network theory, continental philosophy, and pragmatist philosophy (Cooren, 2018; Cooren, et al., 2006;). What distinguishes the Montreal School from other approaches is its focus on Bakhtin's (1984) ideas of polyphony and ventriloquism as a way to frame how organizational values speak through human actors. Polyphony can be defined as many voices within one. For example, the current study creates a model for inclusive communication that comes from one voice—the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. However, this study is polyphonic because it centers many employee voices in the research design (as described in Chapter Three). Drawing from employees' own experiences of inclusion can inform the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's model of inclusive communication.

The Four Flows Model (McPhee, 2015; McPhee & Zaug, 2000) draws heavily from Giddens' (1984) structuration theory. Organizational scholars focus on four specific flows of communication that, when taken together, inform how communication constitutes organizing processes. The four flows consist of: membership negotiation (interaction among members), self-structuring (self-reflexive decision-making), activity coordination (negotiation of tasks and roles among members), and institutional positioning (considering the organization in the context of larger social and political milieu). Building on structuration theory, these four flows are the means through which human actors enact agency in the reproduction, maintenance, or transformation of organizational ways of being. The current study does not explicitly use concepts from the Four Flows Model.

The Social Systems Approach to CCO draws heavily from Luhmann's (2003) sociology of organizations. Luhmann's work stems from ideas present in biological systems theory. More specifically, Luhmann (2003) draws on Maturana and Varela's (1991) idea of *autopoiesis*—the notion that a cell can reproduce itself in relation to its external surroundings. Additionally, the social systems approach focuses specifically on *decisional communication*. Decisional communication occurs when an organization meta-communicates about problems and, through their meta-communication, learns to adapt to pressing organizational problems. Decisional communication is part of the autopoietic process where internal decision-making processes propel future organizing efforts. Through a process of continual internal decision-making, organizations are able to sustain and reproduce themselves in response to their external environments.

The current study draws heavily from autopoiesis and decisional communication by addressing Valley Ridge's desire to create a more inclusive workplace. Currently, Valley Ridge has brought in outside consultants to give lectures and host workshops for all employees. By taking an autopoietic approach, the current study attends to employees' insight from within the organization. The current study also embraces decisional communication by guiding the Office of Diversity and Inclusion initiatives based on insight from employees with a diverse range of standpoints. In line with Luhmann's approach to CCO, my research is designed to help Valley Ridge draw from the collective intelligence of its own employees for decision-making.

Finally, the Boulder School (Ashcraft et al., 2009) represents an approach that incorporates CCO sensibilities without labeling itself as one of the three main schools of thought. The Boulder School places an emphasis on organizing practices surrounding organizational identity, professional identity, and social identity. More particularly, scholars draw attention to the influence of power, hegemony, and democratic processes when dealing with tension of control – resistance in organizing efforts. The Boulder School also focuses on how the materiality of bodies constitute, and are constituted by, organizations. The current study draws from the Boulder School by attending to the materiality of diverse employees' bodies, experiences, and standpoints.

In sum, I do not claim to align this study with one particular school of CCO. Rather, I draw from various approaches to help situate Valley Ridge's efforts. First and foremost, Valley Ridge is interested in addressing inclusion as a core value of the organization. The current study embraces a Social Systems Approach to CCO where decisional communication is generated from within through employee voice (Luhmann,

2003). Additionally, the content of this study aligns with the Boulder School in which identity and the materiality of bodies are central in decisional communication regarding diversity and inclusion. When advocating for inclusion, historically marginalized employees' voices should be considered (Broadfoot et al., 2008). As such, I also draw from the Montreal School's use of polyphony (Bakhtin, 1984; Cooren, 2018). That is, Valley Ridge's unifying vision for inclusion is based on many voices.

As mentioned before, Trittin and Schoeneborn (2017) have begun to theorize diversity management studies through the lens of communication as constitutive of organizations. Their theoretical essay is a call for communication scholars to attend to diversity management studies through communicative approaches generally and CCO specifically. This dissertation is designed to answer Trittin and Schoenborn's (2017) call by conducting an empirical study to ground Valley Ridge's organizing around inclusion in the voices of employees with a diverse range of standpoints. The following section will present the research questions that guide this study.

Research Questions

Engaged scholarship aims to offer practical solutions to complex social issues in the world (Dempsey & Barge, 2014). Those who adopt engaged scholarship embrace the tension between developing theoretical knowledge and offering practical solutions to pressing issues. One goal of this study, through collaborative learning, is to co-create new theoretical knowledge with employees on the topic of inclusion in the workplace. As Broadfoot and colleagues' (2008) previously asserted, meaningful work is conceptualized differently based on various standpoints. In following the same logic, characteristics of an inclusive workplace may emerge differently from various standpoints. As such,

21

participants of this study maintain various standpoints based on race, sex, sexual orientation, age, education level, and occupation.

A second goal of this study, through applied communication research, is to use this emergent theoretical knowledge to improve Valley Ridge's workplace. Data collected offer organizational leaders insight into how their employees perceive the pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. As such, drawing on the literature from CCO, particularly the call to ground inclusion efforts in diverse standpoints, this study seeks answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: What pathways do employees envision for creating an inclusive workplace?

This first research question contributes to the theoretical conversation of inclusion, identity, and CCO. Rather than offering abstract institutional speech acts about inclusion, organizational leaders should root such messages in employees' experiences of inclusion. Furthermore, the current study grounds organizational decision-making within the micro-level discourse of employees who advocate inclusion from various standpoints. Offering a platform for employee input will open pathways for understanding between organizational leaders and employees. Furthermore, micro-level discourse can scale up to inform meso-level and macro-level messages around inclusion. As such, this study also seeks answers to the following practical question:

RQ2: How might these pathways inform the meso- and macro-level planning around inclusion?

The second question aligns with engaged scholarship's aim to practically solve complex social issues. Prior to this study, Valley Ridge leaders brought in consultants to offer workshops and public lectures for how leaders can create inclusion. However, by

22

seeking input from their own employees, leaders can engage decision-making processes through autopoiesis. That is, they can draw insight from their own employees to create context-specific strategic planning. As such, this study serves as a building block for gathering insight that can be used in creating a specialized plan of inclusivity at Valley Ridge—a plan that comes from employees, for employees.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

A main goal of this study was to identify how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for developing an inclusive workplace. Additionally, Valley Ridge leaders wanted to use employee input when making meso- and macro-level changes. In order to answer this question, Debra and I decided to implement a modification of Interactive Management and Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM; Warfield, 1976, 1994). Interactive Management is a process for solving complex problems through systems-based thinking. Interactive Management consists of a series of steps, with one component being the use of ISM.

Interpretive Structural Modeling is a software-based method that shows participants' relational thinking among varying ideas, factors, or variables. ISM has been adopted in a variety of settings over the past 40 years. More specifically, scholars and practitioners have used ISM for designing a national agenda for pediatric nursing (Feeg, 1988), improving the acquisition process for the U.S. Department of Defense (Alberts, 1992), understanding large-scale system issues (Christakis, 1987; Christakis & Brahms, 2003), designing well-being measures for policy makers (Hogan et al., 2015), and understanding the role of the marine ecosystem in society (Domegan et al., 2016). ISM has also been used for designing peacebuilding efforts in Cyprus (Broome, 2004), increasing government participation in Native American tribes (Broome, 1995), and creating an inclusive college campus at a large university in the southwest (Broome et al., 2019).

Although originally designed for small groups (Warfield, 1976, 1994), ISM has also been incorporated in one-on-one interviews (Brenneman, Alberts, Broome, Chatziefstathiou, & Martin, 2017; Broome et al., 2019; Chen, Broome, Martin, & Romero, 2016; Valianos, Broome, Baldwin, & Martin, 2014). This study used ISM for one-on-one interviews for several reasons. First, employees had limited time away from work, and one-on-one interviews created more flexibility with employees' busy schedules. Second, group interviews require participants to be open and forthright with their co-participants. While openness is desired, some participants may have felt the need to censor themselves, especially when sharing information with someone of higher authority. One-on-one interviews eliminated any immediate social pressures from colleagues. Finally, exclusively using one-on-one interviews enabled consistency across all data collection.

I begin this chapter by describing the employees who took part in this study and how they were identified for the sample. I, then, delineate each of the five steps of Interactive Management and detail how I collected and analyzed data along the way. I conclude the chapter by offering data that demonstrates how employees identify pathways for creating an inclusive workplace.

Participants and Sampling Methods

For this study, I recruited participants from Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and Diversity Councils (DCs). ERGs consist of employees who maintain historically marginalized social identities (Douglas, 2008). Valley Ridge has various ERGs that raise awareness about employee needs based on race/ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and religion, to name a few. As such, when co-creating a vision for

organizational inclusion, members of ERGs become instrumental sources of insight due to their dedication toward diversity and inclusion initiatives (Meisenbach & Hutchins, 2020). DCs, on the other hand, are strategic communication planning committees that host events to develop all employees' cultural intelligence and competence. One does not need to maintain an historically marginalized social identity to be a member of a DC, yet members tend to maintain standpoints of cultural awareness.

I specifically drew from ERGs and DCs for several reasons. First, Valley Ridge leaders identified a need to create a workplace built on inclusion. I employed *purposeful sampling* (Tracy, 2020) to draw from employees who already advocate inclusion (Kaplan, Sabin, & Smaller-Swift, 2009). Second, ERGs and DCs offered a *convenience/opportunistic sample* (Tracy, 2020), in that a group of 253 employees were already identified in a common Valley Ridge Listserv. Finally, and perhaps counterintuitively, ERGs and DCs also offered a *maximum variation sample* (Tracy, 2020). While I drew heavily from employees who maintain historically marginalized identities, these employees also maintained social identities with privilege (e.g., a White woman who is a part of the women's ERG). By selecting participants from ERGs and DCs, I gathered data from those who experienced marginalization and also with those who worked consciously to create inclusion. After determining the sample, I then modified Interactive Management to fit Valley Ridge's organizational culture and needs.

Five Steps of Interactive Management

Interactive Management is typically used in small-group settings (Warfield, 1976). However, I needed to adapt the methodology to fit Valley Ridge's organizational culture and needs based on their Institutional Review Board (IRB) and legal department.

In what follows I detail the five steps that constitute the Interactive Management. Along the way, I detail how I adapted the methodology to meet Valley Ridge's demands.

Step One: Identify a Set of Ideas

The first step of ISM is to generate a set of ideas related to the topic of study—in this case, ways to create inclusion. The generation of ideas can manifest in a variety of ways. For example, Warfield (1976, 1994) originally used small group techniques like idea writing and nominal group technique to generate and identify a set of 10 to 15 ideas. Additionally, researchers have generated ideas from relevant literature (Chen et al., 2016; Valianos et al., 2014) and from one-on-one interviews (Brenneman et al., 2017). For this study, I generated ideas from a qualitative survey sent to 253 employees of ERGs and DCs (see Appendix A). In all, 67 employees completed the survey, which generated a total of 255 characteristics of an inclusive workplace. Below (see Table 1) is the voluntarily reported demographic information of the 67 participants. These data are representative of the Valley Ridge employee population.

Table 1

Demographic Information for Survey Participants

Survey Demographic Data	
Race	n
Black/African American	12
American Indian	0
Asian/Asian American	3
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	4
Hispanic/Latinx	8
White	32
Multi-racial	4
Prefer not to say	4
Sex	
Female	49
Male	15
Prefer not to say	1
Sexual Orientation	
LGB+	9
Straight/Heterosexual	43
Prefer not to say	2
Education Level	
Graduated high school	2
2-year technical degree/associate	4
Bachelor's	15
Master's	27
Advanced degree (MD, JD, PhD)	13
Prefer not to say	1
Job Position	
Non-Clinical/Business professional	31
Executive Leadership	4
Other	8
Clinical	13

The survey asked participants to generate characteristics of an inclusive workplace in response to the following guiding question: "In your experience, what are the key characteristics of an inclusive workplace?" In asking this question, I wanted participants to ground their responses in concrete experience, rather than philosophizing. As such, prior to posing the question, I offered a scenario that encouraged participants to reflect

back on their previous experiences. After presenting the scenario and question, participants were then encouraged to offer one characteristic at a time of an inclusive workplace—with the potential to offer eight characteristics. The following are sample responses provided by employees: the ability to pump, empathy as a cultural norm, a non-judgmental environment, and policies that promote inclusiveness. Participants were then encouraged to clarify their named characteristic with a definition or an example that highlighted the characteristic's meaning. After synthesizing the 255 characteristics named in the surveys, I was then tasked with condensing the 255 characteristics into 12 to 15 factors to be used for the ISM interviews in step three.

To condense the 255 characteristics into 12 to 15 factors, I first engaged in what Saldaña (2016) calls tabletop categories. More specifically, I printed and cut out each characteristic on individual pieces of paper, spread them on a table, and grouped similar characteristics—from which I created a total of 14 categories. I then named each category in line with process coding (Charmaz, 2008) and descriptive coding (Wolcott, 1994) to capture the content and action of creating inclusion.

After creating the 14 categories, I workshopped the titles through a process of crystallization (Ellingson, 2009). More specifically, I worked with my faculty co-advisor, Dr. Broome, and Valley Ridge on-site coordinator, Debra. Dr. Broome offered feedback on the categories based on his previous experience using ISM, and Debra offered feedback based on her experience of working at Valley Ridge. When workshopping names of these categories, we iteratively returned back to the 217 clarifications offered by participants in the survey. Through this iterative and crystallized process, we attempted to capture the essence of the 255 characteristics in the 14 categories (see Table

2 below). These categories—or *conditions of inclusion*—were then used for the ISM

interviews in step three.

Table 2

14 Conditions Used for the ISM Interviews

#	Conditions	Clarification
1	Being validated for who I am	Being in a workplace where I can be my authentic self and be recognized as my authentic self
2	Offering programs that promote inclusion	Continuing education, speaker-series, Employee Resource Groups, opportunities to talk with other caregivers, and more.
3	Displaying respect for others' religious, political, and personal differences	Having an environment in which people can have differing opinions but demonstrate respect and acknowledgement and, if necessary, make accommodations
4	Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion	Intentional action of creating conditions that support inclusion
5	Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization	Being able to listen to the needs and concerns of others
6	Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace	Having policies that reflect the cultural needs of our caregivers
7	Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation	Embracing each other's cultural differences for personal and enterprise growth
8	Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization	The presence of diverse people across the enterprise (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.)
9	Being open-minded to different ideas	Recognizing that others may not share the same ideas as me
10	Decision-making that includes minority voices	Including the experiences of minorities to help shape fair policy
11	Supportive and caring organizational culture	Change may be uncomfortable, yet a supportive organizational climate increases my willingness to be vulnerable
12	Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization)	Knowing that the organization is committed to fair treatment (within and beyond the organization)
13	Being free to ask questions without being judged	Being invited to share thoughts and opinions without judgements
14	Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team	Teamwork enables us to provide the best care for patients and colleagues

Step Two: Design ISM Relational Question

Although knowing the top 14 conditions alone is valuable in its own right, I decided to use ISM to show how participants perceived the relationship *among* the 14 conditions. For this study, I was interested in understanding which conditions participants perceived as being most supportive in creating inclusion; the ISM software program is one tool that helps answer that question.

It is important to note that ISM does not determine which conditions are most important, as all conditions are important. Rather, the software program shows how participants perceive the relationship among conditions and which conditions increase the likelihood that other conditions would manifest. Another way to think of the software program is through the metaphor of a brick wall. When building a wall, foundational bricks are needed before stacking more bricks on top. ISM helps determine which bricks participants perceived to be foundational and which bricks benefit from having support below.

Because I was interested in a positive supportive relationship, I used the following context statement to identify pathways for building an inclusive workplace: "In the context of building an inclusive workplace for employees, does [condition 1] significantly support [condition 2]?" (see Appendix B for a sample question as it appears in the ISM software). After identifying this context statement, the next goal was to structure the relationship among the top 14 conditions through ISM interviews.

Step 3: Structure the Set of Ideas through ISM Interviews

The third step of ISM was to conduct interviews with employees. At the end of the survey, participants had the opportunity to self-select into one-on-one interviews.

31

Table 3 represents the demographic information for interview and member reflection participants. Interested participants sent Debra an email, and she then coordinated a time for all three of us to meet via Skype for Business (I elaborate on Debra's role as co-investigator later). No official recommendation exists for how many ISM interviews are needed to ensure qualitative quality. Based on recent research using the same methodology (Broome et al., 2019, 20 interviews; Brenneman et al., 2017, 17 interviews; Chen et al., 2016, 18 interviews; Valianos et al., 2014, 15 interviews)—as well as insight from researchers studying how quickly interviews lead to saturation (Guest, Bounce, & Johnson, 2006)—we conducted 19 interviews with the hope that at least 12 of them would yield important data. I further address the question of saturation and how many ISM interviews is enough in the future directions section in Chapter Six.

Table 3

Demographics for Interview and Member Reflection Participants

Code	Race	Sex	Education Level	Other salient to participant
001	Hispanic/Latino	M	Bachelor's	Immigrant
002	White	F	Advanced degree (MD, JD, PhD, etc.)	
003	Black	F	Master's	Non-denominational Christian
004	White	F	Associate's	
005	White	M	N/A	
006	Multi-racial	F	Bachelor's	Jehovah's Witness, Deaf
007	White	M	Master's	Single
008	Hispanic/Latina	F	Master's	Latinx support groups
009	White	M	Master's	LGB+
010	White	F	Master's	
011	Black	F	Master's	16 years at Valley Ridge
012	White	F	2-yr. technical degree	Student enrolled in RN to BSN then to MSN program
013	Black	F	Bachelor's	
014	Black	F	Master's	
015	White	M	Master's	
016	White	F	Bachelor's	LGB+
017	White	F	Advanced degree (MD, JD, PhD, etc.)	
018	White	F	Bachelor's	LGB+
019	White	F	Associate's	

Note. Bolded participants also took part in member reflections.

Introducing ISM to participants. As an interview process, the ISM software asks relationship-based questions. For the current study, I was interested in how conditions of inclusion related to one another. To achieve this end, I purposefully used the term *significantly support* as the relational link between two conditions of inclusion. The term "support" encouraged participants to think about the positive influence from condition 1 to condition 2. The term "significantly" encouraged participants to have a clear understanding of how the positive relationship exists. A clear understanding was needed because I collected open-ended rationales after "yes" responses.

Before the interview, Debra and I created and dispersed an interview overview document (see Appendix C). The goal of the interview document was to introduce the interview method, show how we identified the 14 conditions, and offer clarifications and definitions for each condition. We also notified participants that interviews would be conducted via screen-share and that they needed access to Skype for Business. Screen-sharing allowed participants to see the ISM software as I controlled the software program from Tempe, Arizona. Even with this notification, five of the 19 interviewees did not access screen-share, which resulted in conducting the interview via phone call.

Before interviews began, Debra would welcome participants, offer a brief explanation of how this research study fits with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and ask for verbal agreement to take part in the study. She would then stay online for the interview per requests from the Valley Ridge IRB and legal department. Debra's presence may or may not have impacted participant responses. No data existed to suggest whether her presence encouraged or deterred participants from sharing.

After gaining verbal agreement, I then led participants through the process of how we condensed the 255 characteristics into 14 conditions. I then previewed how the ISM software would work. This preview was important to help frame the difference between supportive relationships from significantly supportive relationships. As such, I encouraged participants to think of the questions as a Likert scale—1 being not significant and 5 being a significant relationship. I then encouraged participants to say "yes" if there was a 5 out of 5 significant relationship. We then started the interview after answering any remaining questions from participants.

ISM interview. Once the interview began, I used the list of 14 conditions in Table 2 and asked participants to determine if condition 1 (being validated for who I am) significantly supported condition 2 (offering programs that promote inclusion). If it did, I then asked participants to share a story or a rationale for why they saw the supportive relationship. I only recorded their answer as "yes" after they offered a rationale. Sometimes a participant would say "yes," begin to offer a rationale, and—through their talking—realize that the relationship was not significant, which resulted in a "no" response. If condition 1 did not support condition 2, I recorded "no" and moved to the next question.

I asked for further explanation of "yes" responses to collect participants' rationales to help in interpreting the structure produced by the ISM software. "No" responses meant participants failed to see a positive relationship, and as a result, I did not ask for rationales for a non-existent connection.

If participants were confused about the meaning of the two ideas, I first directed them to Table 2, which offered definitions and clarifications. If participants were still uncertain, I then encouraged them to rank the question from 1 (not significantly supportive) to 5 (significantly supportive). For example, sometimes participants began to rationalize how a connection was present, yet the connection was not significant. As such, I reminded them that we were only interested in 5-out-of-5 "yes" responses. Asking the question this way helped participants visualize the relationship as a Likert scale. This strategy also helped participants distinguish significantly supportive relationships from somewhat supportive relationships. If the participant continued to struggle with a question, then I reminded participants that, when in doubt, a "no" is the best answer. I

made this recommendation because uncertainty is indicative of a relationship that is not significantly supportive.

After answering "yes" or "no," the ISM software moved us to the next question. The ISM software uses a mathematical algorithm to determine subsequent questions. This is important because not all participants were asked the same questions in the same order. Although every participant started with the same question (i.e., Does condition 1 significantly support condition 2?), subsequent questions were determined by how participants answered previous questions. As a result, over the course of each interview, the number of questions varied. The reason for such variability is due to the ISM algorithm, which was designed so participants could continue through the relational questions of each condition in the fewest number of questions possible.

More specifically, the ISM algorithm worked through 210 cells in a 15x15 matrix ($n*n-1$). Due to the inferential design of the algorithm, the software completed 70 to 80% of the 210 cells based on participants' previous answers. As such, each interview consisted of approximately 40 to 60 questions and averaged 46 minutes with a range of 26 to 60 minutes. After completing the questions, the ISM software created a structure (flowchart) that demonstrated how each participant perceived the relationship among all 14 conditions.

Below is a sample ISM structure from participant 002 with an example interpretation. I present all 19 ISM structures in Appendix D with introductory paragraphs to provide a sense of who the participant was and how their standpoint informed their structure. In the analysis section of this dissertation, I chose to analyze all structures collectively as gestalt as opposed to interpreting each structure individually.

Sample individual ISM structure. Participant 002 was a White woman who self-identified as a Pollyanna and was quick with her responses. Debra identified this participant as a leader within the organization who worked closely with policy. Her close connection with policy was reflected in her comment that "policy is going to drive behavior." This sentiment was also reflected in her ISM structure below.
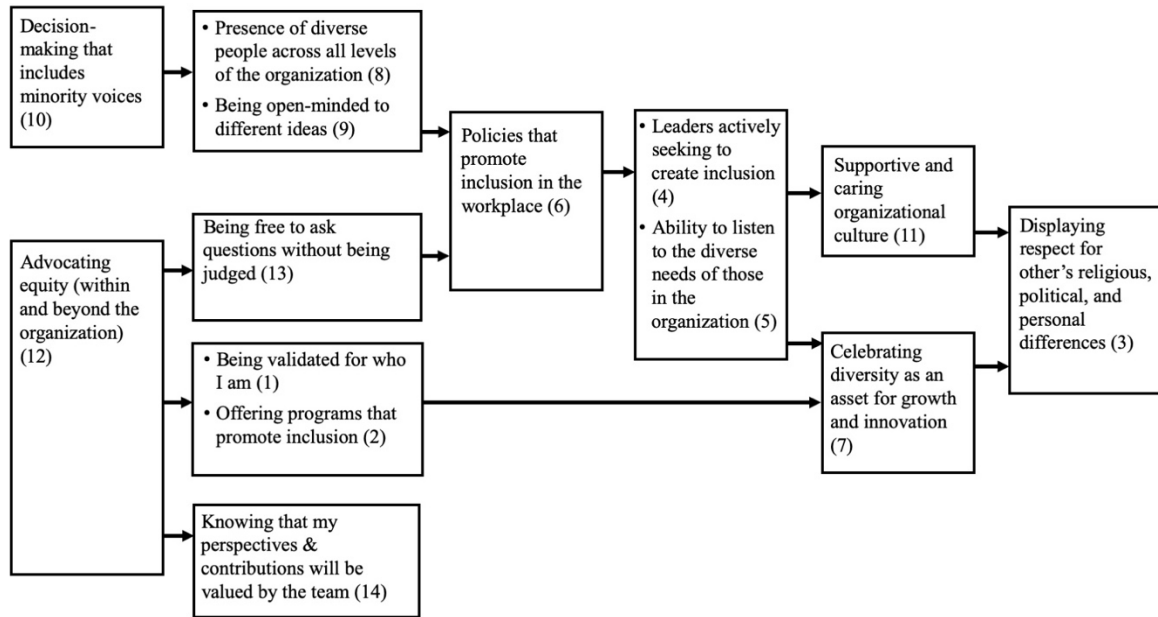
Figure 2. Sample ISM interview structure. Arrows indicate the flow of support from one condition to the next.

When asked if policies that promote inclusion in the workplace significantly support the ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization, participant 002 responded quickly that "policy drives behavior." This comment—and way of viewing the relationship between macro-level policy and micro-level behavior—is reflected in her ISM structure. More particularly, conditions C10 (decision-making that includes minority voices) and C12 (advocating equity [within and beyond the organization]) are two meso- and macro-level conditions of inclusion that she perceived

provided the greatest support for subsequent conditions. Meanwhile, C6 (policies that promote inclusion in the workplace) landed in the middle of the ISM structure, which signifies that that condition is a crucial conduit for connecting conditions on the left to conditions on the right.

Additionally, when asked if advocating equity within and beyond the organization significantly supports the ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization, 002 responded by saying, "Yes. If you are pushing equity, you're gonna hear issues from all sides and that will help inform your opinion on your work to advocate better." As such, it is not only important to advocate change for change's sake. Rather, in advocating equity, leaders create space for employees to express their input, which increases the chances their input would be used to inform future advocacy efforts.

At the end of her interview, I showed 002 the structure she created. Her response was in agreement with the two items on the left, "I totally agree with the two left boxes there." She then went on to add that she did not see inclusion anywhere in the structure—to which I explained that these conditions, collectively, are a pathway for creating an inclusive workplace.

Post-ISM interview reflection. Immediately following the interview, I presented the ISM structure back to participants for immediate feedback. The feedback served as a learning opportunity for participants to see a visual representation of how they perceived the relationship among the fourteen conditions. This also offered an opportunity for participants to comment on how accurate (or not) the software program represented their overall thinking. To gather feedback, I first led participants through a "walk" of the flowchart.

A walk first began by identifying a condition on the left side of the flowchart. I then drew the participants attention to all the subsequent conditions supported by that first condition. One can trace the pathway(s) of support by following the connecting lines among conditions. Along the way, there may have been certain conditions that fell within the same box; this is called a "cycle." Cycles show which conditions mutually support one another. Seeking such immediate feedback allowed participants to trace through various paths and offer meta-communication about their relational thinking. Feedback also offered an opportunity to learn more about their perceptions of what pathways have the potential of creating an inclusive workplace.

Step 4: Creating an ISM Metastructure

To create the metastructure of all interviewees' individual structures, I used a specific formula that considers the location of each condition across all the structures; see Appendix E for a detailed report that calculates the average influence scores of each condition. In all, Debra and I collected 19 individual structures from the one-on-one interviews, five of which were conducted via phone rather than screen-share. I decided not to include the five phone-call interviews in the aggregate metastructure due to participants not having full access to the ISM software. I made the decision to focus solely on the screen-share interviews because visually seeing the ISM software and questions adds an extra layer of spatial representation that may not be present for participants via phone call.

Reducing the number of interviews from 19 to 14 initially raised a concern of whether 14 interviews would be enough. An additional concern was whether removing the five phone-call interviews would impact the overall layout of the metastructure. In

creating the metastructure, however, I discovered the average influence scores of each condition—scores used to create the metastructure—leveled out and reached consistency after 10 interviews—something that aligns with researchers who argue that 12 interviews may be enough to reach saturation (Guest et al., 2016). This consideration was also made in light of past ISM research that has found valuable results with 15 interviews (Valianos et al., 2014). Additionally, removing the five phone-call interviews did not significantly change the layout of the metastructure. This insight offers room for future research, a matter I explore in Chapter Six.

I created the following theme-based metastructure that collectively synthesizes the structures of all 14 screen-share interviews. More specifically, I used a formula to calculate the average influence score—in brackets—of each condition (see Appendix E). Once grouped together by average influence scores, I worked with Dr. Broome and Debra to identify representative thematic titles. After identifying thematic titles, we then reorganized the two following conditions to better align with the thematic titles: C1 (being validated for who I am) and C2 (offering programs that promote inclusion). The decision to move the two conditions makes this a theme-based metastructure rather than a metastructure based on average influence scores alone.

Theme 1 **Diverse Workforce** INF = 7.86	Theme 2 **Receptive Organizational Climate** INF = 4.29	Theme 3 **Commitment to Inclusion** INF = 3.63	Theme 4 **Intercultural Empathy** INF = 1.75	Theme 5 **Inclusive Organizational Infrastructure** INF = -0.22
• Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization (8) [INF = 7.86]	• Being free to ask questions without being judged (13) [INF = 5.79] • Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team (14) [INF = 5.50] • Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion (4) [INF = 5.50] • Being validated for who I am (1) [INF = 0.36]	• Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation (7) [INF = 3.86] • Being open-minded to different ideas (9) [INF = 3.79] • Decision-making that includes minority voices (10) [INF = 3.43] • Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization) (12) [INF = 3.43]	• Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences (3) [INF = 1.79] • Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization (5) [INF = 1.71]	• Offering programs that promote inclusion (2) [INF = 1.64] • Supportive and caring organizational culture (11) [INF = -0.43] • Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace (6) [INF = -1.86]

Flow of Perceived Support ⟶

Figure 3. Theme-based metastructure. The abbreviation, INF, stands for influence score.

The metastructure represented in Figure 3 is a key finding that I elucidate in Chapter Four. After creating the metastructure, Debra and I once again engaged participants to get their feedback through focus group member reflections. In what follows, I describe the purpose of the member reflections and detail how the reflections were conducted.

Step 5: Member Reflections

After creating the metastructure, I once again engaged participants in focus-group member reflections. The main goals of the focus-group member reflections were to share tentative results and to gather feedback. Presenting the results back to participants was beneficial for several reasons. First, it offered participants the opportunity to learn how they and their colleagues collectively envision a pathway for creating an inclusive workplace. Second, it offered participants the chance to amend the metastructure if they

41

desired. Finally, it offered Debra and me an opportunity to hear how employees meta-communicated about their results.

Member reflections were conducted via focus groups and dyadic interviews for two reasons. First, I found it helpful to have multiple people from different organizational positions and demographics together when commenting on the metastructure. Such diversity of standpoints added value to interpreting the data. Second, this method of data collection allowed for quick feedback among many employees, whereas group ISM interviews would have taken more time than allotted by participants' work schedules.

Prior to conducting the member reflections, Debra and I created a focus-group member reflection overview document (see Appendix F). In the document, I briefly detailed how I created the tentative metastructure, offered a brief tentative analysis, and shared the questions I would ask in the member reflections. Debra then sent each participant the overview document and informed consent several days before the focus group. From the 19 ISM interview participants, 12 volunteered for the member reflections, which resulted in three focus groups and one dyadic interview (see Table 3 for participant demographic information). All member reflections were conducted virtually via Skype for Business on which Debra presented the questions and metastructures on a PowerPoint slide.

A typical member reflection would begin with Debra welcoming participants and asking for verbal agreement. I then asked some guiding questions before overviewing any of the results: a) What does an inclusive workplace mean? b) What does it look like?, c) What are the advantages of an inclusive workplace? d) Are there any disadvantages? Asking these questions offered the opportunity to gather responses not filtered through

lens of the findings I was about to report. I then walked participants through the metastructure and the cyclical figure and then offered a tentative interpretation of the results. After addressing initial reactions, I then asked the remaining questions: e) What else, if anything, needs to be present to create an inclusive workplace?, and f) What other factors contribute to the value of inclusion at Valley Ridge?

The four member reflections averaged 46 minutes per session and created a total of 69 single-spaced pages of transcripts. I also recorded five pages of post-member reflection notes to document my initial reactions. Once again, the two goals of the member reflections were to share tentative results and to gather feedback. I considered the feedback gathered in these member reflections as I interpreted the collective metastructure. In what follows, I explain how I analyzed the metastructure using participants' qualitative responses.

Method of Data Analysis

Mixed-methods research collects both qualitative and quantitative data within the same study or across a series of studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Interactive Management, as a methodology, collects qualitative data throughout the research process—from generating ideas to structuring ideas through ISM to gathering member reelections. However, quantitative data exists when synthesizing individual ISM structures into the aggregate metastructure (see Appendix E). As such, to analyze the quantitatively constructed metastructure through qualitative responses, I adopted a modification of mixed-method sequential explanatory data analysis (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006).

Mixed-methods sequential explanatory design has two distinct phases of data collection. Researchers first collect quantitative data to answer a hypothesis or research question. They then conduct another study that uses qualitative data to illuminate the quantitative findings. I deviated from mixed-methods sequential explanatory design in that I collected data simultaneously—as opposed to sequentially. For example, at the end of the ISM interview, participants generated a structure that unveiled how they perceived the relationship among the 14 conditions. Throughout the interview, however, participants shared qualitative responses for how one condition significantly supported another condition. Therefore, participants simultaneously produced data—ISM structure and qualitative responses.

Although the design of the study was concurrent, the method of data analysis was sequential. For example, in order to generate a metastructure, I needed to first calculate the average location of each condition across all 14 interviews (referred to as the average influence score in Appendix E). After creating the theme-based metastructure, I used qualitative responses to explain, illustrate, and elucidate the quantitatively constructed metastructure. In other words, the metastructure tells us how conditions collectively relate to one another. The rationales, however, show how a participant qualitatively perceives the supporting relationship from one condition to another. conditions. From here on, I refer to these qualitative rationales as *linkage rationales* because they illustrate the thinking process behind participants' responses to ISM questions. In the following section I articulate how I gathered linkage rationales that would then be used to explain, illustrate, and elucidate the metastructure.

Linkage Rationales

There exist three forms of linkage rationales. First, *general linkage rationales* show how one condition relates to another condition, no matter where in the metastructure. Second, *adjacent linkage rationales* show how a condition relates to another condition in the immediate subsequent or immediately preceding theme. Finally, *intra-thematic linkage rationales* show how a condition relates to another condition within the same theme. In the next chapter, I use adjacent and intra-thematic linkage rationales to explain, illustrate, and elucidate the metastructure through participant's responses. In what follows, however, I detail the three steps of identifying general, adjacent, and intra-thematic linkage rationales.

Step one—identify general linkage rationales. In this first step, I filtered through the 382 pages of interview transcripts to find general linkage rationales. General linkage rationales show how one condition relates to another condition, for example C13 (being free to ask questions without being judged) and C6 (policies that promote inclusion in the workplace). During the ISM interview, I asked participant 002 if being free to ask questions without being judged significantly supported policies that promote inclusion in the workplace. She said "yes" and continued by providing the following general linkage rationale: "If questions can be raised about equitable treatment or opportunities that it prompts, you look at what your organization has in writing in terms of supporting diversity and equal opportunities." My first step on analysis was to identify all "yes" responses (i.e., general linkage rationales).

To find the general linkage rationales, I first uploaded all the interview transcripts to MAXQDA—a qualitative data analysis computer software program. MAXQDA has a

search function where I typed in one condition at a time to see where it appeared throughout the interviews. What appeared were all the questions in which participants related that particular condition with another condition. After locating all mentions of that specific condition, I then had to identify whether each instance significantly supported or received support from the other condition. In all, 1,055 segments of text were coded. The 1,055 segments of general linkage rationales were still too much data to work through, so I implemented another step of analysis.

Step two—identify adjacent and intra-thematic linkage rationales. The first step allowed me to analyze each "yes" response, no matter where the conditions fell within the metastructure. Although this was helpful data, I needed to refine the scope of analysis. The goal of this second step was to identify moments when one condition supported conditions in the subsequent theme (adjacent linkage rationale) or within the same theme (intra-thematic linkage rationale).

Adjacent linkage rationales were the "yes" responses between conditions in subsequent themes. For example, an adjacent linkage rationale was identified by the "yes" response between conditions in Theme 4 (C3 and C5) and conditions in Theme 5 (C2, C11, and C6). These are adjacent linkage rationales because they examine the linkage rationales between adjacent themes only.

Intra-thematic linkage rationales were the "yes" responses among conditions within the same theme. For example, an intra-thematic linkage rationale was identified by the "yes" response among conditions in Theme 5 alone (i.e., among C2, C11, and C6).

These are intra-thematic because they all fall within the same theme. In all, I identified 85 adjacent linkage rationales and 82 intra-thematic linkage rationales.

Step three—use linkage rationales to explain metastructure. The third and final step was to use the 167 adjacent and intra-thematic linkage rationales to explain the metastructure. In order to do this, I first uploaded the linkage rationales back into MAXQDA for elaborative coding (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Elaborative coding is used in a series of studies where theoretical constructs from the first study help to elicit "meaningful units" from subsequent studies (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 105). When applied to this study, I first formulated the theme-based metastructure. I then coded for linkage rationales using the metastructure. The linkage rationales were then used to explain, illustrate, and elucidate the metastructure through participants' responses (see Chapter Four).

Summary of Methodology

The goal of this study was two-fold. First, a theoretical goal was to understand how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. Second, a practical goal was to understand how leaders could use employee input in their meso-level and macro-level communication about inclusion. In order to answer my research questions, I used a modification of Interactive Management (Warfield, 1976). The modified design produced various types of data across three phases of data collection—survey, interviews, and focus-group member reflections. Table 5 reflects all data collected throughout the study.

The data I collected in the qualitative survey was coded through table-top categories (Saldaña, 2016) and process coding (Charmaz, 2008) to create the top 14

conditions of an inclusive workplace (as shown in Table 2). I then conducted 19 one-on-one interviews via ISM (Warfield, 1976), 14 of which were used to create the metastructure in Figure 3. At that time, I presented findings back to participants in member reflections to gather participant feedback.

After collecting interviews and member reflections, I then analyzed the metastructure using linkage rationales through a modification of mixed-methods sequential explanatory analysis (Ivankova et al., 2006). Linkage rationales are participant responses for how one condition relates to another condition. There exist three forms of linkage rationales. First, general linkage rationales show how a condition relates to another condition, no matter where in the metastructure. Second, adjacent categorical linkage rationales show how a condition relates to another condition in the subsequent or preceding theme. Finally, intra-thematic linkage rationales show how a condition relates to another condition within the same theme. In the next chapter, I use linkage rationales to explain, illustrate, and elucidate the metastructure through participants' responses.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This engaged research study aimed to understand how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. In the previous chapter, I articulated the research methodology used to answer my research questions. More specifically, I used a modification of Interactive Management (Warfield, 1976). Interactive Management is a grounded methodology that uses a series of steps to collect and analyze data. In this chapter, I revisit earlier findings by sharing what they mean and how they contributed to further analysis. I conclude with an in-depth analysis of the metastructure using linkage rationales.

14 Conditions of an Inclusive Workplace

The first step of the study collected 255 characteristics of an inclusive workplace via a qualitative survey. I then themed the 255 characteristics into 14 conditions that contribute to an inclusive workplace (see Table 2 re-presented below). In themselves, the 14 conditions are key findings; they represent the key blocks for building an inclusive workplace. I then turned to Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) (Warfield, 1976) to conduct one-on-one interviews to understand how participants perceived the relationship among the 14 conditions.

Table 2

14 Conditions Used for the ISM Interviews

#	Conditions	Clarification
1	Being validated for who I am	Being in a workplace where I can be my authentic self and be recognized as my authentic self
2	Offering programs that promote inclusion	Continuing education, speaker-series, Employee Resource Groups, opportunities to talk with other caregivers, and more
3	Displaying respect for others' religious, political, and personal differences	Having an environment in which people can have differing opinions but demonstrate respect and acknowledgement and, if necessary, make accommodations
4	Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion	Intentional action of creating conditions that support inclusion
5	Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization	Being able to listen to the needs and concerns of others
6	Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace	Having policies that reflect the cultural needs of our caregivers
7	Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation	Embracing each other's cultural differences for personal and enterprise growth
8	Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization	The presence of diverse people across the enterprise (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.)
9	Being open-minded to different ideas	Recognizing that others may not share the same ideas as me
10	Decision-making that includes minority voices	Including the experiences of minorities to help shape fair policy
11	Supportive and caring organizational culture	Change may be uncomfortable, yet a supportive organizational climate increases my willingness to be vulnerable
12	Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization)	Knowing that the organization is committed to fair treatment (within and beyond the organization)
13	Being free to ask questions without being judged	Being invited to share thoughts and opinions without judgements
14	Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team	Teamwork enables us to provide the best care for patients and colleagues

Theme-Based Metastructure

After collecting 19 interviews—14 of which were used in further analysis—I created a theme-based metastructure that synthesized the overall perceptions of the interview participants (see Figure 3—re-presented below). Figure 3 alone is a key finding of the study because it shows how participants collectively perceive the flow of support among the 14 conditions. That is, rather than having the bricks alone (i.e., the 14 conditions), the metastructure shows one blueprint for how to assemble the blocks in order to build an inclusive workplace based on the perceptions of participants.
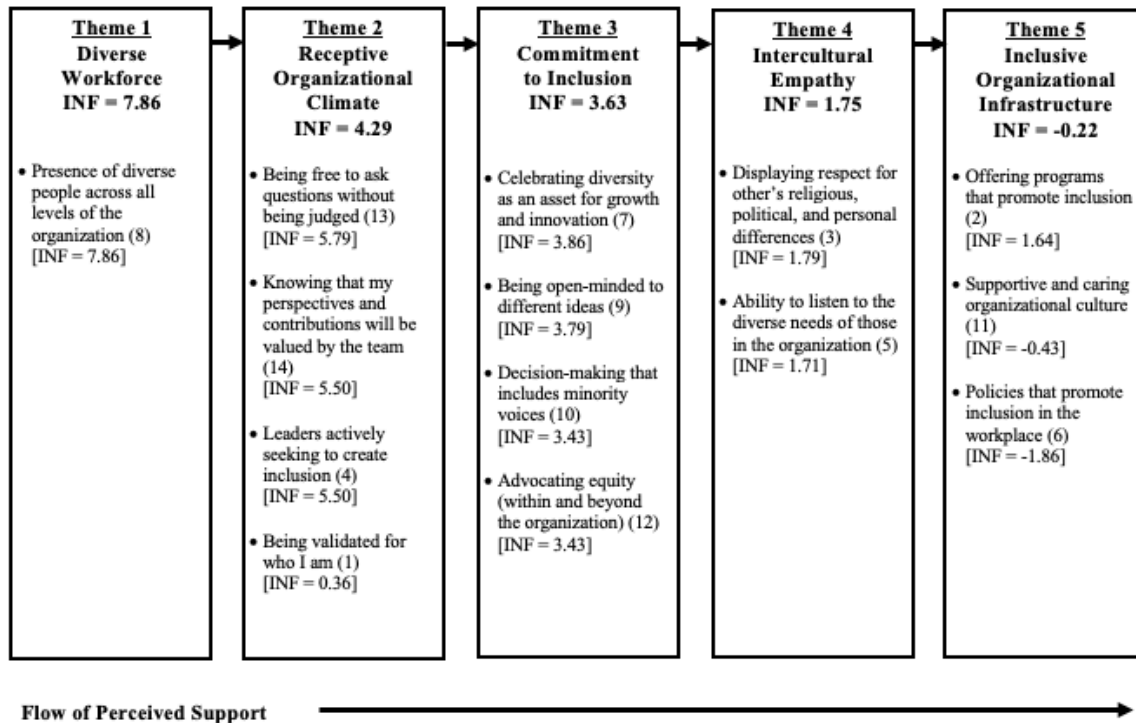
Theme 1 Diverse Workforce INF = 7.86	Theme 2 Receptive Organizational Climate INF = 4.29	Theme 3 Commitment to Inclusion INF = 3.63	Theme 4 Intercultural Empathy INF = 1.75	Theme 5 Inclusive Organizational Infrastructure INF = -0.22
• Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization (8) [INF = 7.86]	• Being free to ask questions without being judged (13) [INF = 5.79] • Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team (14) [INF = 5.50] • Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion (4) [INF = 5.50] • Being validated for who I am (1) [INF = 0.36]	• Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation (7) [INF = 3.86] • Being open-minded to different ideas (9) [INF = 3.79] • Decision-making that includes minority voices (10) [INF = 3.43] • Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization) (12) [INF = 3.43]	• Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences (3) [INF = 1.79] • Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization (5) [INF = 1.71]	• Offering programs that promote inclusion (2) [INF = 1.64] • Supportive and caring organizational culture (11) [INF = -0.43] • Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace (6) [INF = -1.86]

Flow of Perceived Support ⟶

Figure 3. Theme-based metastructure

Valley Ridge participants perceive the process of creating an inclusive workplace as a flow of support from Theme 1 to Theme 5. The foundational block for creating an inclusive workplace is Theme 1, a diverse workforce. In sum, the presence of a *diverse workforce* will support building a *receptive organizational climate*, which will make it

51

more likely that the organization will develop a genuine *commitment to inclusion* that leads to a greater enactment of *intercultural empathy*, all of which makes it possible to build an *inclusive organizational infrastructure*. Although the 14 conditions and the metastructure are key findings in themselves, I turn to linkage rationales to help explain, illustrate, and elucidate the metastructure through the participants' comments.

Metastructure Analysis Through Linkage Rationales

The individual ISM structures showed how each participant understood the relationship among the 14 conditions (see Appendix D). The metastructure then showed a representation of how the participants collectively understood the relationship among the conditions. The next step I pursued was to add another layer of analysis that explains the metastructure through the participants' comments themselves. After all, participants already provided qualitative responses for how they understood the relationship between and among conditions. As such, when writing, I tried piecing together rationales to share the larger narrative of what participants were saying about how one condition related to other conditions.

Logistically, I refer to participants by their code number. Although I decided not to incorporate phone-call interviews when computing the theme-based metastructure, including their qualitative responses were invaluable to understanding how participants perceived the relationship among conditions. Second, because this study is framed under collaborative learning and participatory action research, I wanted to make sure all participants' comments were incorporated into the narratives across the five themes. Below, I offer those narratives.

Diverse Workforce

According to the perceptions of employees, a diverse workforce across all levels of the organization has great potential for creating an inclusive workplace. In other words, seeking a diverse workforce increases the likelihood that employees would work to create an inclusive workplace. As demonstrated in Figure 3, a diverse workforce is represented by one condition, C8 (presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization). This condition is presented as its own theme due to its high average influence score of 7.86—with the next highest score being 5.79. With the score being an outlier from than the rest, I decided to place it as its own theme. As illustrated below, participants perceived a diverse workforce across all levels as a key factor in creating an inclusive workplace.

Creating a diverse workforce begins with intentional hiring practices. One participant reflected on a message she heard from a former Valley Ridge CEO, Dr. G, "I've been present when Dr. G talked about how they intentionally try to hire all diverse leaders and diverse people in different roles" (016). While intentional hiring practices is a good start, the process of creating inclusion requires effort to retain diverse employees. This point is emphasized by another participant:

> I think when you have diverse people all at all levels of the organization, in order to keep that environment cohesive, in order to keep it going or to keep it smooth, leaders have to look for opportunities to create inclusion because everybody is so different from each other. So you would have to look for those opportunities to make sure that, because we are so different, we have to look for ways to kind of mend together. I think it forces you to think about it more versus not having

53

diversity, you know you don't have to worry about inclusion if everybody is the

same. (014)

While extra effort is needed to retain diverse employees, the mere presence of a diverse

workforce across all levels of the organization does send a message regarding

representation.

Employees articulated a sense of validation upon seeing a diverse representation

of employees, especially at upper levels of the organization: "I do think that just having

the presence of diverse people across the organization…allows for being validated for

who you are" (013). This participant further noted that "the more diverse people you have

in more places, then the more consistently you are validated for who you are, no matter

where you go…If there's a lack of diversity there you may retreat a little bit." By having

a diverse representation at various levels of the organization, employees can visualize

themselves at different levels of the organization:

> If there's someone like me who is at all levels of the organization, it lets me know
>
> that the organization sees me at one level today. But with my own personal
>
> growth…they could see me as a potential higher up. They can see me as
>
> somebody sitting in the suite. They can see me as a clinical or non-clinical
>
> employee. And it would validate who I am because they see me outside of just
>
> this box. (014)

This sentiment is echoed by another participant, "I think when you can see across the

organization and see a diverse pool of people, some of them may or may not be like who

you are. That definitely validates who you are" (010).

As demonstrated through these comments, participants tell the story of how a diverse workforce (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.) is both a great starting point and also not enough. While a diverse workforce does not inherently create an inclusive workplace, participants viewed it as being a fundamental building block. In the next section, I cover the need for a receptive organizational climate as another instrumental building block for creating an inclusive workplace as perceived by participants. More specifically, I offer excerpts from interviews to highlight the barriers and breakthroughs for combating the status quo.

Receptive Organizational Climate

According to the perceptions of employees, a diverse workforce (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.) increases the likelihood that employees would work toward creating a receptive organizational climate for engaging difference. I used the label "receptive organizational climate" to encompass four conditions: C13 (being free to ask questions without being judged), C14 (knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team), C4 (leaders actively seeking to create inclusion), and C1 (being validated for who I am). As illustrated below, participants perceived a receptive organizational climate as a key factor in creating an inclusive workplace.

"If you don't feel like you can ask questions, you're, you're not in a safe environment" (004). While it may seem as though people should be free to express opinions and perspectives freely, this is not always the case. As noted by 011, expressing concerns that challenge the status risks material repercussions like being treated unfairly. Fear, then, becomes a barrier to creating a receptive organizational climate. When fear is removed, "people feel more free… to ask questions without fear of being negatively

judged because leaders are actively seeking to be inclusive of ideas and diverse opinions"
(013). Leaders, as noted by 006, have power to reshape a climate of fear into a climate of
trust and respect: "leaders who actively seek to create inclusion will provide an
environment of respect" (006).

Trust and respect become essential factors in developing a receptive
organizational climate where people can ask questions without being ridiculed, silenced,
or judged. "You're not going to feel free to ask questions without being judged unless
you trust. So you're going to feel that your contributions are going to be valued because
that trust has been gained" (018). A receptive organizational climate built around open
conversation and dialogue increases the likelihood that people can learn from one
another: "Not being afraid and feeling like you have a partnership and you feel safe
within the organization to ask those questions to get better educated. So that promotes
equity" (004).

Open conversation and dialogue feeds into the larger narrative of fostering a
receptive organizational climate for collaborative learning and informed decision-
making. When employees perceive that they and their ideas are validated, then they take
an increased sense of investment at work: "It's the fact that they [colleagues] will listen
to my ideas, especially if I'm really a part of an inclusive team…I think that builds that
relationship where I'm able to be open-minded when other people have different ideas"
(014).

Participant 014's comment hints at the reciprocal relationship trust has in creating
a receptive climate rooted in collaboration. This sentiment is echoed by another
participant: "When you're able to open up and speak in a team, it really does create more

innovation and creativity and everything—problem-solving, um, and just more collaboration" (008). And from another participant, "When everybody's comfortable to share their views without judgment, I think it helps everybody understand that not everybody thinks the same way as you. So it helps our workforce being more open-minded in that way" (001). And yet another participant said that to be in an "environment where if you're taking the time to listen to those opinions and not judge them, but to really hear them, that shows to me one of the ways…that they value everybody's contribution" (017).

As demonstrated through these comments, participants tell the story of how a receptive organizational climate needs to continually combat siloes, silence, and fear. Whereas siloes, silence, and fear have a negative spiraling effect, Valley Ridge employees see the building blocks for resisting the negative spiral through trust, listening, and collaboration. As 008 noted, "When you are more open-minded to different ideas and thoughts, it creates growth not only for the leader, but it creates growth for individuals." This comment hints at the need for mutual commitment from leaders and employees in working together to combat the negative spiraling effects of siloes, silence, and fear. In the next section, I build on the theme of commitment as a driver and supporter for collective transformation.

Commitment to Inclusion

According to the perceptions of employees, a diverse workforce (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.) and a receptive organizational climate for engaging difference increase the likelihood that employees would commit to inclusion. I used the label, *commitment to inclusion* to encompass four conditions: C7 (celebrating diversity as an asset for growth

and innovation), C9 (being open-minded to different ideas), C10 (decision-making that includes minority voices), and C12 (advocating equity [within and beyond the organization]). As illustrated below, participants perceived the commitment to inclusion as a key factor in creating an inclusive workplace.

A commitment to inclusion can be developed individually and organizationally. Individually, having an open mind is a great starting point: "If you're not open-minded, you're not going to listen. And if you're not going to listen and you have your mindset in a particular way, you're not gonna display respect for whatever diversity that you see" (018). This is especially true "because, if you aren't open-minded, if you're closed minded, you're not going to be listening to anybody and their needs" (007). Whether one is an employee, manager, or executive leader, fostering an open mind to difference cultivates the intention to become more inclusive.

At the organizational level, commitment is demonstrated through leaders' actions: "I guess it goes back to the actions. Seeing the action shows me that there is that underlying support and respect" (017). At Valley Ridge, inclusion is advocated at the executive leadership level from the current CEO, Dr. J: "If we have an organization that celebrates diversity as an asset, which is what Dr. J had been doing, I think this would support managers trying to keep everything fair and equitable for all the employees" (001). Managers who also commit to inclusion seek input from diverse employees:

> Sometimes minorities may have a feeling that that their voice won't be heard. So good leadership is taught to seek out minorities and include them on committees. And I see that done over and over again with the Valley Ridge, especially the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, trying to get a sample of or a representative of

the minority groups at the table and know that their voice matters and their voice

makes a difference. (004)

Another participant shared her experience of being invited to the table for decision-

making: "I'm a minority, and I'm asked to be at the table to help some of the decision-

making and the policy development at the organization" (011). She continued, "I feel like

that organization is celebrating the diversity among their employees and feel like it's a

positive thing for the organization."

When organizational leaders commit to inclusion, it sends a ripple effect that

causes employees to sense the value of inclusivity. As one participant noted, celebrating

diversity as an asset for growth and innovation "creates kind of a desire for it and an

understanding and an appreciation for it" (009). He continued to note that establishing

diversity as an asset for growth and innovation "will make it so that people are a little bit

more open-minded to different ideas, if they see the value in different ideas rather than

being siloed in their own." Furthermore, 004 noted that "being open-minded is a learned

skill, but [Valley Ridge] promotes that." She continued by pinpointing ERGs and DCs as

specific places where commitment is fostered: "People getting together and discussing

various ideas, it promotes growth and an innovation. And when you're in that setting, you

get accustomed to being open-minded to different ideas."

As demonstrated through these comments, participants tell the story of how a

commitment to inclusion has a rippling effect from executive leadership to mid-level

managers and departments to individual employees. The vibrancy of the ripples is

maintained by seeking input from employees, developing intentional programming, and

having invested leadership that values employee contributions. In the next section, I walk

59

through how a genuine commitment to inclusion increases the likelihood that people enact intercultural empathy. More specifically, I detail how listening demonstrates respect and creates the possibility for meso- and macro-level change.

Intercultural Empathy

According to the perceptions of Valley Ridge employees, a diverse workforce (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.), a receptive organizational climate for engaging difference, and a genuine commitment to inclusion increase the likelihood that employees would enact intercultural empathy. I used the label, *intercultural empathy* to encompass two conditions: C3 (displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences) and C5 (ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization). As illustrated below, participants perceived intercultural empathy as a key factor in creating an inclusive workplace.

A central part of empathy is perspective taking, which takes listening. And, indeed, participants discussed the importance of just that. "Listening to the diverse needs of those in the organization in itself is a display of respect for those differences" (009). Yet listening and hearing are two different concepts: "The ability to listen, I think, is the key phrase 'cause people aren't just hearing you're listening…That's the key word…When you're listening, you're actually paying attention and taking to heart what somebody is saying" (018). Another participant echoes this affective, other-oriented quality of listening: "If you don't care, then you're not gonna listen. You're gonna focus on something else" (009). In addition to being a demonstration of respect toward others, listening also serves as a springboard for action.

"If you recognize that people have differences, then it helps to recognize that they need different things at times" (015). Listening does not start with the assumption that the listener will hear what they want, or expect, to hear. Rather, listening to the diverse needs of those in the organization serves as the foundation to learn, as demonstrated in various participants' comments: That's where you learn what people want or what people feel" (011). And, "if you can hear what the needs are of the people in your organization, you respond" (002). If taken seriously, leaders will listen to the diverse needs, which "ideally trigger programs that are responsive to those needs (013).

Furthermore, "leaders in the organization, if they hear what the concerns are, and if there is a need or concern about some type of diversity, then I would think that would encourage the leaders to look to see what could be offered" (007). In a follow-up focus group, participants approved of various ongoing programming that promotes educational awareness. Among the programs offered were guest lectures, conversational café sessions, and expert panel sessions (002, 003, 004).

When considering the relationship between listening and responding, one participant noted the mutual support they have for one another:

> You know, this is sort of like one of those cart before the horse questions.
> Initially, I felt that in order to offer the programs, you got to listen to at least some
> of the needs first. But yet having at least initiating a base program and then
> evolving that program gives you the forum to listen. So I think they're
> interdependent on one another. (012)

In addition to promoting meso-level programming, displaying respect for employees' differences through listening can also inform macro-level organizational policies. "When

there's an awareness and listening takes place, there is an applicability for enhanced policies" (008), "because if you're listening, then you're gonna come up with policies to support it [concerns of employees]" (018). The notion that listening can inform policy is echoed by another participant who experienced this firsthand: "I've participated in policy committees where some policies have come to fruition after listening to diverse needs" (005).

Clearly, participants believe in the importance of authentic listening to demonstrate respect for others. In addition to demonstrating respect, listening opens possibilities to learn about the diverse concerns of employees. With an increased awareness, leaders can enact their intercultural empathy by offering responsive programming and policy. Programs and policy can loop back into the ongoing conversation of inclusivity, as demonstrated below.

Inclusive Organizational Infrastructure

According to the perceptions of employees, a diverse workforce across all levels of the organization, a receptive organizational climate for engaging difference, a genuine commitment to inclusion, and intercultural empathy increases the likelihood that people would work toward creating an inclusive organizational infrastructure. I used the label *inclusive organizational infrastructure* to encompass these three conditions: C2 (offering programs that promote inclusion), C11 (a supportive and caring organizational culture), and C6 (policies that promote inclusion in the workplace). As illustrated below, participants perceived an inclusive organizational infrastructure as a key factor in creating an inclusive workplace. What's more, they perceived this type of structure to positively support the preceding conditions.

62

This iterative process is captured by several participants. For example, one participant noted, "Well, if the organization is required to incorporate diverse groups of people, then they will, and the presence will be there" (009). He continued, "Offering the programs will create a more inclusive environment, and that environment will be more welcoming to diverse people across all levels." Another participant added the power of policies in creating a diverse workforce (i.e., race, sexual orientation, sex, etc.): "I don't know if there are policies that tell us that we need to be more inclusive or diversify our workforce. For example, having policies like that significantly supports the presence of more diversity across the organization" (001). This sentiment is echoed by yet another participant: "Well, I guess if you have policies at the bare minimum—even if people don't actually care about diversity and inclusion—then they at least want to be in compliance" (013).

As with any process of change, change can happen in a variety of ways—notably change at the cultural level and change in individual people's intentions of valuing inclusivity. While change in policy and culture do not inherently change people's intentions, they may influence individual change by how policy and culture is instituted. For example, one participant noted the potential of instituting programming regarding diversity and inclusion:

> I believe if there is a policy about inclusion, to me that would support a program that would support that policy. And it's not necessarily about like individuals, you know, thinking about it or supporting it. It would just go back to that this is a policy. This is what we're doing to implement this policy. (014)

As previously mentioned, however, participants noted the potential of using programming as a space to listen, ask questions, and become validated—all conditions of a receptive organizational climate. If the cycle continues, change in intention may manifest through a series of iterations where inclusivity is advocated and practiced. The series of iterations maintains potential for a supportive and caring organization to replenish itself. "Again, it goes back to the culture itself. It's going to, by its very nature, become very inclusive and very supportive and allow for diverse people across the organization to, to be willing to be vulnerable" (005).

Organizational infrastructure, participants believed, could create change at the policy and programming level. Yet, as participants mentioned, people may only follow policy out of compliance at first. Participants noted that if inclusion is the goal, holding employees in compliance—whether they agreed with the policy or not—would achieve the goal set forth by the policy.

Summary of Analysis

This study used a grounded, participant-driven methodology that produced various findings along the way. In this chapter, I revisited key findings that led to the culmination of this findings chapter. More specifically, I revisited the 14 conditions in Table 2 and the theme-based metastructure in Figure 3. I then used linkage rationales to help show how participants perceived the connection between and among themes. Along the way, I attempted to stay close to the participants' comments to share how they contributed to the data analysis through their qualitative responses. In the next chapter, I offer contributions and implications based on these findings.

CHAPTER 5

CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS: ADDING TO THE CONVERSATION OF

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Organizational leaders and employees face the enduring question and project of diversity and inclusion (Ahmed, 2012; Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008). Here, I offer contributions for how leaders and employees might reimagine the process of conducting organizational research on diversity and inclusion. I begin with larger metatheoretical, theoretical, and methodological contributions and follow by grounding these contributions in practical implications (Figure 4).
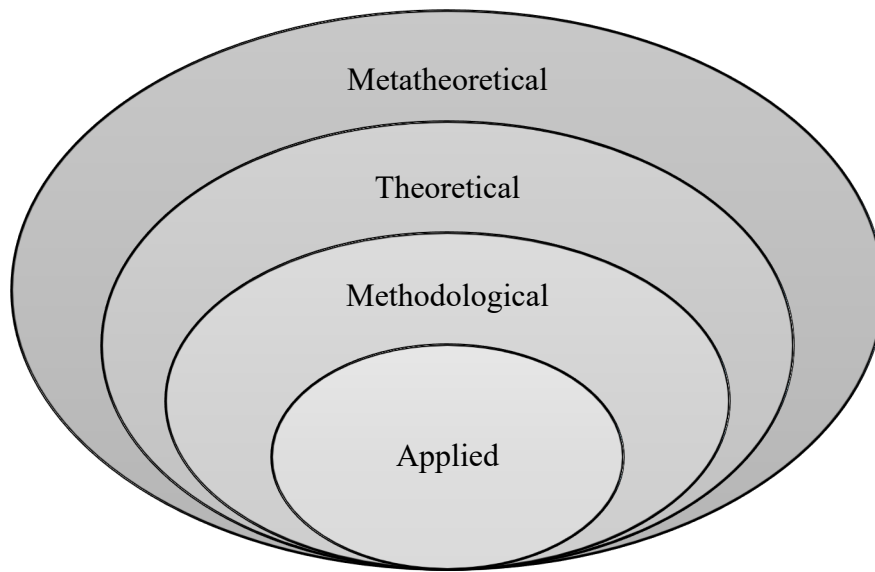
Figure 4. Overview of contributions chapter.

First, I offer metatheoretical contributions by bringing Interactive Management into conversation with engaged scholarship (Putnam & Dempsey, 2015). This contribution is important to advance the metatheoretical conversation of engaged scholarship's role in co-constituting inclusive workplaces both in general and in particular with Interactive Management. More specifically, I situate Interactive

Management within participatory action research, collaborative learning, and applied communication research.

Second, I offer theoretical contributions by extending the Trittin and Schoenborn (2017) theoretical essay that advocates for scholars to bridge diversity management with communication as constitutive of organizations (CCO). This dissertation offers an empirical study for how the two theories can work together to address the question and project of diversity and inclusion. This is significant because it challenges scholars' claim that CCO is too abstract and unpractical to do applied scholarship (Bisel, 2010b; Reed, 2010).

Third, I offer methodological contributions by extending the conversation of how scholars and practitioners seek to address the question of diversity and inclusion. More specifically, I situate Interactive Management (Warfield, 1976) as a useful methodology for those seeking to co-identify pathways for creating inclusive workplaces. I additionally detail what we learned about the methodology when adapting ISM to fit Valley Ridge's culture.

Finally, I offer practical implications based on the results of this study. The participant-generated results implicate Valley Ridge leaders to act on this information. Here I focus on three implications: intentional hiring practices, psychological safety, and educational programming. While research has identified the importance of each condition individually, this study showed how participants perceive the relationship among these conditions. This is significant because Valley Ridge leaders can become clear on how to address the question of inclusivity in various ways.

Metatheoretical Contributions

The current study was situated under the larger umbrella of engaged scholarship, which has the research goal of addressing complex social issues as they occur in organizations and communities (DeWine, 2005). There are many approaches to engaged scholarship (Putnam & Dempsey, 2015); this study utilized three in particular: collaborative learning, participatory action research, and applied communication research. In what follows, I bridge Interactive Management and ISM with the aforementioned approaches. This is important to advance the metatheoretical conversation of engaged scholarship's role in co-constituting inclusive workplaces in general and with Interactive Management specifically.

Participatory Action Research

Participatory action research suggests that researchers work with participants seeking to improve local, contextualized issues (Greenwood et al., 1993; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Interactive Management was originally designed for solving complex problems in a different contexts (Warfield, 1976). Since its creation in the 1970s, the Center for Interactive Management (now defunct) and various scholar/practitioners have used the facilitation-based method within different groups and contexts, including Native American tribes (Broome, 1995), Greek and Turkish Cypriots (Broome, 2004), policy makers for community wellness (Hogan et al., 2015), and understanding barriers to a healthy marine ecosystem (Domegan et al., 2016). Interactive Management generally, and this study particularly, connects with participatory action research in two ways.

First, Interactive Management takes a holistic, systems-based approach to understanding complex social questions and gives participants an opportunity to explore

the interconnectivity of their various experiences. For example, in the initial open-ended qualitative survey, participants were first asked, "In your experience, what are key characteristics of an inclusive workplace?" Participants then had the opportunity to participate in ISM interviews during which they could vocalize how they understood the relationship between conditions. After the ISM interview, each participant was then able to see a manifestation of their perceptions in the form of a flowchart structure. The individual structures across interviews were then aggregated into a metastructure that offered a collective representation of key pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. The Interactive Management process allowed participants to learn from one another and, through the later stages of data collection, about themselves as well.

Second, Interactive Management, and the results produced from the study, hold the potential for action. In other words, now that the study has been conducted, Valley Ridge leaders are exposed to how a select number of employees identify pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. As a response, leaders may use the findings to inform future initiatives, inclusive decision-making processes, or specific programming, among other possibilities. I return to practical implications later in this chapter. For now, I turn to collaborative learning as another general approach to engaged scholarship and participatory action research specifically.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning suggests that practitioners and "researchers engage in cyclical and iterative phases to address social problems through helping collaborators construct and understand their worlds" (Putnam & Dempsey, 2015, p. 14). Interactive Management embraces collaborative learning throughout the data collection process. In

this study, data were collected and presented back to participants throughout the entire process.

First, the qualitative surveys were administered to the 253 employees. The 255 characteristics were then themed and represented in Table 2 (see p. 50). Second, participants then had the chance to self-select into follow-up ISM interviews where they created structures that represented how they perceived the relationship among the 14 conditions. Immediate feedback was available after the interviews, and participants were able to visually see a representation of how they perceived the relationship among the conditions. Finally, participants self-selected into a follow-up focus group or dyadic interview where they had the opportunity to learn how employees collectively perceived the relationship among the 14 conditions. The follow-up focus group member reflections offered the opportunity for participants to learn how their own perceptions related to the perceptions of the collective group. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to learn from one another in the follow-up focus groups by processing the results together.

Along the way, Debra and I also engaged in collaborative learning by co-designing the study, co-navigating organizational bureaucracy, and co-collecting data. The 10-week internship, 47 meetings after the internship, and 59.8 hours collaborating with one another added an extra layer of collaborative learning to the study. Debra learned a great deal about qualitative research, IRB, and being a principal investigator. I learned a great deal about organizational red tape, concerns of liability, and the power of relationships. In addition to collaborative learning, Interactive Management offers a specific method for applied communication research.

Applied Communication Research

Applied communication research, on the other hand, starts with the premise that there are complex social issues in the world and that scholars can work with practitioners to offer practical solutions (Frey & Cissna, 2009). In this framing, theory and practice are understood as a symbiotic relationship in which theory informs practice and practice informs and creates theory (Broome, 2017; Keyton, Bisel, & Ozley, 2009). As such, the current study started from the localized context of Valley Ridge and its leadership's desire to create an inclusive workplace. One component of applied communication research is to offer practical solutions back to an organization for potential implementation. Later, I offer three practices for potential implementation—intentional hiring practices, creating an environment of psychological safety, and educational programming.

Theoretical Contributions

There exists a debate on the practicality of the theoretical framework of communication as constitutive of organizations (Bisel, 2010b; Reed, 2010). The debate emerged with hope that scholars can become clear on how they use communication in constituting organizations and organizing processes. Bisel (2010a) particularly noted that the theoretical gap of communication as constitutive of organizations "may be bridged by organization theory outside of communication theory, or…be bridged by an evaluation of how communication relates to the material necessities of organizing" (p. 129). I address this theoretical debate by offering clarity on how communication as constitutive of organizations has practical use.

I offer two clarifications in response to Bisel (2010a) for how I use communication as constitutive of organizations (CCO) in this study: a) how I understand the role of communication in organizing processes and b) how I use diversity management theory in combination with CCO. In what follows, I detail how this study advances the conversation of communication as constitutive of organizations in relation to diversity management studies. I conclude by suggesting communication scholars use "radical inclusion" (Johnson, 2019) as a framework to do CCO and diversity management scholarship.

Organizing through Communication

Adapting Interactive Management to the organizational culture of Valley Ridge proved to be a challenge. Gatekeepers in IRB and the Valley Ridge legal department wanted to keep employees' face-to-face interaction to a minimum due to concerns that such interaction might identify other employees. Additionally, I had to conduct interviews from a distance or else I would have needed special clearance to be on Valley Ridge's campus as an external researcher. As a result, I chose to conduct the study virtually and designed it in a way that limited employees' synchronous interaction to virtual member reflections where participants could only hear and not see other participants.

As previously stated, Bisel (2010a) recommended that researchers using CCO become clear on "how communication relates to the material necessities of organizing" (p. 129). Considering the nature of this study, I had to be creative in how to defend it as communicative, especially when a majority of data collection segmented and siloed

participants from one another. To address Bisel's argument, I first need to situate the study metatheoretically.

Theory is used differently based on one's metatheoretical assumptions. For example, post-positivist researchers use theory to deductively drive empirical studies that either confirm or challenge existing theory. Interpretive researchers use theory to understand a certain phenomenon from a particular lens. Critical- and post- scholars use theory as an analytic tool to illuminate injustices with the intention of creating social change. This study uses CCO interpretively to understand how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. This metatheoretical approach becomes important when determining the role of communication in organizing processes.

In this study, I implicitly defined communication as the process of co-creating meaning through interaction—whether face-to-face, via email, in newsletters, or other. The nature of the current study called for employees to co-create meaning through indirect interaction. In other words, rather than talking to each other face-to-face, employees communicated their understanding of inclusivity through the mediated platform of ISM. Before continuing, I discuss the role of materiality in the organizing process (Cooren, 2018).

Cooren (2018) argues that communication should be considered a relational ontology between sociality and materiality. Here, sociality means people interacting with one another directly or indirectly. At the same time, people's thoughts and interpretations manifest materially through words, images, and drawings, among other modes of

representation. Cooren's relational ontology becomes important when considering how people interact with one another through the mediated platform of ISM.

In returning to the interpretive nature of this study, I argue that communication—framed as a relational ontology through sociality and materiality—was used to understand how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. In other words, each participant created an ISM structure that showed how they understood the relationship among conditions. Through individual interviews, ISM inhibited participants from talking to one another directly. Yet—under the framework of relational ontology—employees still communicated with one another as I created the metastructure. In other words, the metastructure relies heavily on the polyphony (Bakhtin, 1984) of participant voices and the ventriloquist nature of the metastructure representing the many voices of participants. Only after I created the metastructure did I seek participant feedback through member reflections during which participants communicated synchronously via audio call in Skype for Business.

In conclusion, Bisel (2010a) encouraged scholars using CCO to become clear on what they mean by communication as capable of organizing processes. By defining communication as a relational ontology between sociality and materiality, I make the argument that ISM is one particular method that researchers using CCO can use to understand how people constitute organizing efforts. Bisel's second suggestion was to bring CCO into conversation with other theoretical frameworks. To address his second suggestion, I turn to diversity management studies.

CCO and Diversity Management

By merging CCO and diversity management studies, organizational communication scholars can explore CCO's utility as a theoretical framework, especially when examining how organizations organize around diversity and inclusion from within. In this section, I suggest that CCO paired with diversity management studies offers a suitable and pragmatic way to understand how organizations organize for inclusion.

To review briefly, there exist four approaches to CCO: the Montreal School (Cooren, 2018; Cooren, Taylor, & Van Every, 2006), the Four Flows Model (McPhee, 2015; McPhee & Zaug, 2000), the Social Systems Approach (Luhmann, 2003), and the Boulder School (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009). In this study, I did not claim to associate with one school in particular, although I used Luhmann's Social Systems Approach as a starting point. More particularly, I focused on the two sensitizing concepts of *autopoiesis* (Maturana & Varela, 1991) and *decisional communication*. Autopoiesis is the idea that organizations can evolve and create new insights from within—as opposed to external forces alone. Decisional communication is the idea that the process of communication can lead to autopoietic insight for action.

The argument put forth by Trittin and Schoenborn (2017) is that decision-making regarding diversity and inclusion can come from autopoietic decisional communication. Within this framework, diversity and inclusion initiatives can emerge through communication among employees of a single organization. In other words, when seeking to answer the question of diversity and inclusion (Ahmed, 2012; Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008), organizations can begin with their own employees. Leaders can learn how to build

a context-specific diversity and inclusion strategic plan by bringing people together with a diverse range of standpoints through decisional communication.

In the field of communication, Amber Johnson (2019) recently coined this process as *radical inclusion*. According to Johnson, radical inclusion rests on the assumption that inviting diverse groups to the table is not enough. Rather, radical inclusion occurs when diverse stakeholders' voices are woven into decision-making processes. Johnson offered the metaphor of a dinner table and a host asking the attendees what they wanted to eat and drink—in addition to what kind of music to play, where the party is to be held, what activities will be present, and if pets are allowed or not. Through participants' contributions, the host, in collaboration with the participants, co-creates a dinner where everyone takes ownership. Diversity management studies and CCO benefit from one another by seeking to understand how employees with a diverse range of standpoints can work together to identify pathways for building an inclusive workplace.

When applied to CCO and diversity management, radical inclusion embraces autopoiesis and decisional communication as organizing principles from which to build diversity and inclusion initiatives—as opposed to top-down, non-performative speech acts from leaders (Ahmed, 2012). In turning CCO and diversity management toward radical inclusion (Johnson, 2019), communication scholars can invite and welcome the conversation of CCO and diversity management into the discipline of communication studies. This move is needed to emphasize how communication can constitute organizing around diversity and inclusion. Furthermore, the move welcomes CCO scholarship as integral when examining the social construction of similarities, differences, and commonalities in organizational contexts.

Methodological Contributions

This study introduces Interactive Management as a useful methodology for addressing the question of diversity and inclusion from within an organization. Interactive Management was originally designed for groups of people to work together, face-to-face (Warfield, 1976). However, I needed to adapt the methodology to meet the needs of Valley Ridge employees, their IRB, and their legal department. Based on these modifications, I introduce two methodological contributions.

First, research on diversity and inclusion has employed a variety of methodologies and methods (Chambers et al., 2017). I contribute to these existing methodologies by offering an example of how Interactive Management can be used as another tool— beyond questionnaires, interviews, and case studies—to address the question of diversity and inclusion. Interactive Management is a unique methodology in that it uses grounded theory sensibilities to inform each step of data collection by previous data collection. For example, I synthesized the 255 responses in the qualitative survey to create 14 conditions for the ISM interviews. The data that emerged from the individual ISM interviews then contributed to the aggregate metastructure. This is important because the results produced from the study are truly emergent from participant input.

Second, various methods were used to collect data within the methodology of Interactive Management, one being ISM. In spirit with Interactive Management, ISM was originally designed for group settings. However, I made two modifications to the method. First, I conducted individual interviews—a modification that is not novel (see Brenneman et at., 2017; Broome et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2016; Valianos et al., 2014). Yet, conducting interviews virtually is novel and significant because it introduces the

possibility of using ISM in virtual and digital spaces. Such a move opens the possibility to reimagine the method in the digital age—a possibility I offer for future directions in Chapter Six.

Practical Implications

A goal of engaged scholarship, especially applied communication research, is to conduct research that can inform future action. The primary impetus of this study was to help Valley Ridge leaders understand how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. I demonstrated answers to that question in Chapter Four when analyzing the metastructure. The next step after gathering that data is to present recommendations for how Valley Ridge leaders might use that data to inform their strategic planning around diversity and inclusion. In what follows, I offer three practical implications for future practice: intentional hiring practices, increasing the environment of psychological safety, and increasing educational programming. I conclude by offering a potential infographic that Valley Ridge leaders can use to articulate the findings of this study.

Intentional Hiring Practices

The first practical implication is an increase in intentional hiring practices across all levels of the organization. Hiring committees, whether for entry-level positions or executive leadership, should diversify their pool of candidates. In order to have a diverse pool, however, committees need to be aware that not all potential candidates have equal access to career development opportunities.

Scholarship shows that racial and ethnic minorities experience racial discrimination in the workplace (Opie & Roberts, 2017). In addition to race and ethnicity,

women still fight the glass ceiling (Glass & Cook, 2016; Parker, 2001), disabled candidates fight stigma (Cherney, 2019), heteronormative policies create homophobia and job insecurity (Ferguson, 2018; Yep, 2003), and immigrants fight xenophobia (De Castro, Fujishiro, Sweitzer, & Oliva, 2006). Oftentimes, these interlocking systems of oppression work together (Cruz, 2015; Liu, 2018; Parker, 2001). As such, intentional hiring practices need to respond to the larger barriers of prejudice and discrimination.

Finally, once diverse candidates are hired, search committees need to be sure that diverse employees have support systems to thrive. This becomes especially true if the workplace already harbors exclusivity. A diverse representation of employees across all levels is important because, according to participants in this study, this serves as a physical manifestation that diversity is celebrated and valued. It empowers minorities at lower levels to continue dreaming that they, too, can climb the organizational ladder and know that it is a realistic possibility and not just a pipe dream limited by exclusive policies and practices.

Psychological Safety

The second practical implication is the need to foster a receptive organizational climate built around psychological safety. Psychological safety is the "shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking" (Edmondson, 1999, p. 350). Participants in the study, no matter what their social identity, reinforced that trust is essential for fostering a climate of acceptance, collaboration, growth, and innovation. The most common barrier was the fear of being judged, critiqued, or silenced for asking questions or making comments. A variety of methods exist to foster a

receptive organizational climate to difference through psychological safety; here I focus on two: *relational mindfulness* and *dialogue*.

Mindfulness is a way of being aware and fully present in any given moment (Kaba-Zinn, 2005). Relational mindfulness, however, is the awareness of a deep interconnectivity between people (Falb & Pargament, 2012). Through continual practice, relationally mindful interactions can serve as a foundation for creating a psychologically safe environment. As an embodied way of being, relational mindfulness can lead to collective social change (Hanjian, 2017; Hanh, 2017) and organizational growth (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000).

When applied to social change, relational mindfulness allows people to become present to suffering in the world and in oneself. That awareness may increase the likelihood people would commit to taking action to alleviate injustices that cause suffering. When applied to organizational growth, relational mindfulness can be cultivated through continual practice. Events such as conversation hours or dialogic sessions may help to develop a communicative skill-set to display relational mindfulness through compassion. In sum, a psychologically safe organizational climate, rooted in relational mindfulness, increases the likelihood that people treat each other as human beings and not as objects as means for personal- or work-related ends. This leads to another method for increasing an environment of psychological safety, dialogue.

Dialogue is a specific orientation of interacting with others. Dialogic communication, whether verbal or non-verbal, starts with the premise that others should be revered rather than treated as an object (Freire, 2000). This becomes especially true when creating inclusivity around differences. As a part of an organizational ethic of

inclusion, leaders might create normalized venues for dialogue in which similarities, differences, and commonalities can be openly explored through dialogic civility—a form of dialogue that acknowledges difference, understands historical exclusion, fosters a willingness to learn, and is not forced (Arnett, 2001). Through continual practice, employees can re-work old habits of (un)conscious bias and of shying away from communicating about the materiality of difference. When combined with relational mindfulness, dialogue offers the opportunity that micro-level interaction can scale up to inform meso-level programming and macro-level organizational culture.

Educational Programming

The third practical implication is that Valley Ridge would benefit from a sense of increased educational programming. In follow-up focus group member reflections, participants noted education and transparency as essential factors missing from the metastructure. When focus group participants spoke about transparency, they spoke about wanting to know how diversity was acquired and how the process of inclusion worked. More specifically, participants wanted to know about the demographic breakdown of each level of the organization and how decision-making processes were made. This was especially true when getting clear on how policies were made and how they were enforced. For future diversity and inclusion organizing, Valley Ridge would benefit from a series of educational programming that increases awareness regarding the current state of diversity across the organization. An increased awareness of the demographic breakdown across the organization would bring awareness to where the organization is doing well and where the organization could improve.

Valley Ridge could additionally benefit from sharing how policies are created and enforced across the organization. While some participants of this study worked with policies, many did not. Those who did not work with policy saw policy as something instituted to protect the organization from legal action. Yet, there remains great potential in increasing people's investment in policy as a driver for change not only for this organization but also for the country (Kendi, 2019).

Finally, Valley Ridge could benefit from sharing this study with all employees, especially decision-makers, as the first study out of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Sharing this study would show the organization that the office is interested in developing internal research and, importantly, make clear to employees that their contributions in original research can be used for future organizing efforts. As mentioned in ISM rationales, participants wanted to be invited to the table for decision-making, and this study served as response to those wishes.

Organizational Change as a Series of Iterations

Rather than viewing the metastructure as linear, it is more accurate to represent the metastructure as a series of iterations. In other words, just as previous themes support later themes, previous iterations of change support new iterations of change. That is to say, processes of change need to be continually reimagined for current issues. As such, the metastructure offered in Figure 3 (see p. 51) is more pragmatically represented as a series of iterations in Figure 5 below.
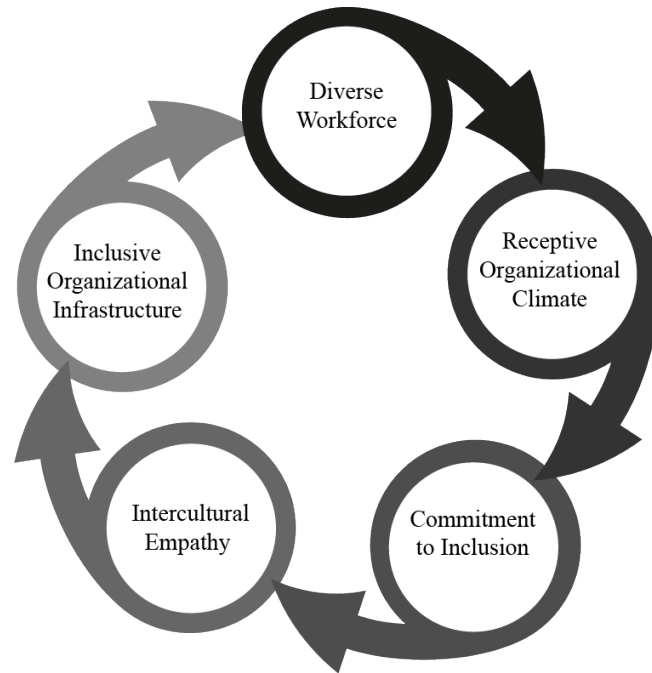
Figure 5. Theme-based metastructure as a series of iterations. Darker shades represent more supportive themes.

Viewing the themes in this way highlights the process of building an inclusive workplace as a continual process and aligns with Ahmed's (2012) claim that diversity and inclusion is a willing that no longer needs to be willed. By this she means that the intention for change must be initiated and sustained. Figure 5 represents employees' perceptions that willing an inclusive workplace into existence begins with a diverse workforce across all levels of the organization. That initial willing increases the likelihood that leaders would will a receptive organizational climate into existence, and so on. However, as Ahmed (2012) notes, the will must be sustained. As such, I make the logical deduction, as illustrated in Figure 5, that Theme 5—an inclusive organizational infrastructure—can, and must, lead back into hiring diverse employees at all levels of the

organization. Making this logical deduction adds an extra layer of practical implications for Valley Ridge leaders.

Based on the perceptions of participants, Valley Ridge should not rely on intentional hiring practices alone—perceptions echoed by scholars in communication (Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008). In addition to intentional hiring practices, they should also work to create a receptive organizational climate through psychological safety. At the same time, offering educational programming offers space for employees to enact intercultural empathy and advocate for an inclusive organizational infrastructure. The inclusive organizational infrastructure should favor intentional hiring practices to diversify employees at all levels of the organization. In sum, Figure 5 represents the willing of inclusion as a series of iterations—a process sustained effort over time.

Summary of Contributions

In this chapter, I worked through metatheoretical, theoretical, and methodological contributions to the ongoing question and project of diversity and inclusion (Ahmed, 2012; Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008). I then offered practical implications for Valley Ridge leaders. I first brought Interactive Management into conversation with engaged scholarship in general and then participatory action research, collaborative learning, and applied communication research specifically. This contribution was significant because it suggested rooting diversity and inclusion initiatives in the metatheoretical assumptions of engaged research.

I then suggested that the discipline of communication would benefit from bridging CCO and diversity management studies through the lens of radical inclusion

(Johnson, 2019). This contribution is significant because it centralizes communication as a key component to co-constituting inclusivity.

I followed by offering shared how Interactive Management as a methodology and ISM as a method are available tools to help answer contextually-based diversity and inclusion questions. This contribution is significant because it begins to reimagine what tools are available when co-constituting inclusivity. More specifically, scholars and practitioners expand their methodological toolkit by incorporating this participant-driven methodology when understanding how to address diversity and inclusion.

I concluded by offering three practical implications for Valley Ridge: a) an increase in intentional hiring practices, b) an increased sense of psychological safety for communicating about difference, and c) an increase in educational programming. These implications are significant because they come from employees for employees. Finally, rather than viewing the process of creating an inclusive workplace as linear, I made the logical deduction, using Ahmed's (2012) idea, that the inclusion exists through an initial willing that no longer needs to be willed. As such, the process for creating inclusivity must be viewed as an iterative process.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

A primary goal of this study was to add to the theoretical conversation regarding diversity and inclusion as a question and project to be answered (Ahmed, 2012; Rodriguez & Chawla, 2008). I then situated this study within Trittin and Schoenborn's (2017) theoretical call to merge diversity management studies with communication as constitutive of organization (CCO). I extended their theoretical essay by conducting an empirical study aimed at understanding how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive workplace.

A second goal of the study was to understand how leaders could use employee input to inform their meso-level and macro-level communication about inclusion. This second goal is in line with engaged scholars who call for conducting practical research in response to complex social issues (Putnam & Dempsey, 2015). The current study's data and analysis provided leaders with directions for implementing strategic plans that create an inclusive workplace.

In this final chapter, I detail limitations and future directions for researchers and practitioners. More specifically, I address methodological limitations and a lack of occupational diversity. I then offer three areas for future directions that include: the potential for follow-up studies, exploring ISM methodological capacities, and decisional communication as common practice.

Limitations

Readers of this study should note several limitations when considering the previous chapter's findings. Here, I focus on two in particular: methodological limitations and lack of occupational diversity. I detail each of these below. I then offer recommendations for future researchers when considering these limitations in their own research.

Methodological Limitations

First, technological miscommunication needs to be discussed when interpreting these data and findings. As stated in the methods chapter, Interactive Management (Warfield, 1976) was modified to accommodate Valley Ridge's time and legal constraints. Generally, Interactive Management is used in group settings where people dedicate significant amounts of time with each other to develop, clarify, rank-order, and structure ideas. In this study, however, Valley Ridge gatekeepers and the organizational culture would not allow groups of people to take time away from their jobs to go through a typical Interactive Management session. As such, we turned to technology.

While technology mostly worked, there were a few instances when the technology became a barrier. In the survey to generate ideas, a few participants became confused by the format of the survey. Rather than providing a three- to five-word phrase capturing a characteristic of an inclusive workplace, a few participants entered detailed paragraphs. Additionally, a few others informally mentioned to Debra that they opened the survey, became confused, and exited the survey immediately. While 255 characteristics were generated from 67 participants, the technological miscommunication caused by the survey prevented a handful more from taking part.

Another, more impactful, case of technical miscommunication forced us to conduct fives of the ISM interviews via phone-call rather than screen share. Whether it was trouble connecting to Skype for Business or internet failure, we felt it necessary to exclude these five out of the original 19 interviews. A primary limitation of using the phone is that participants could not see the context statement, questions, and clarifications as presented on the ISM software. Seeing the screen allowed participants to keep their responses grounded to the particular question rather than theorizing and responding with rationales unrelated to the question presented. Matters became worse for one deaf participant[1], and her interpreter, who could not see my face and mouth to help understand what I was saying during the interview process. Based on technological miscommunication, I have a few recommendations for future research using technology as part of the Interactive Management methodology.

My first recommendation for using Interactive Management and ISM is to better anticipate the methodological confusion caused by various steps, particularly using ISM as a specific type of interview method. Researchers can mitigate future confusion by creating an educational video detailing the methodological process. My second recommendation for using technology is to consider the participants' needs when using ISM. For example, had we known a participant needed to see faces during the interview process, we may have pushed back on the recommendations from IRB and the legal department to keep everything visually anonymous. Additionally, future programmers of

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[1] I follow Cherney's (2019) use of placing disability before the person for two reasons. First it works to normalize disability. Just as one would say "a Black male" or "an Asian woman" so too should society normalize "a disabled woman." The second reason is that making this rhetorical move combats ableist rhetoric, which allows people to feel politically correct without working to disrupt ableism. As such, people should work to advocate and create equity and locate personal shortcomings.

ISM should consider how to make the software program more accessible to disabled participants, especially those who cannot hear or see. They could do so, for instance, by collaborating with experts in assistive technology.

Occupational Diversity

The second limitation of this study is the lack of occupational diversity represented in the ISM interviews. As captured in the survey data, the occupational representation lacks participants from executive leadership. The occupational representation in the ISM interviews mirrored the lack of representation in the survey. Most participants of this study worked as mid-level business professionals, and a few worked in clinical settings. This caused a limitation for two primary reasons.

Originally, the design of the study set out to capture data from clinical and non-clinical participants across all levels of the organization. While a few clinical employees and executive leaders contributed to the generation and clarification of ideas in the survey, their input would have been valued in the ISM interviews. While two ISM participants worked directly with patients, the majority of participants maintained white-collar jobs that supported the business affairs of Valley Ridge. A diversity in occupational representation would have been ideal to capture the medical and business aspects of Valley Ridge.

Based on this limitation, I have two recommendations for future researchers who wish to work across a variety of levels in an organization, especially in a healthcare organization. First, I recommend researchers actively recruit executive leaders to take part in the study. As noted by Debra in an informal conversation, employees at Valley Ridge experience survey burnout from various departments seeking data from employees.

88

An individualized message from Debra that emphasized the importance of this study may have made an impact on increasing the occupational diversity. If a leader still could not participate, they may have recommended others to do so and made time for them to participate.

My second recommendation is to become more creative in recruiting participants, especially clinical employees. For example, not all employees have constant access to email due to the nature of their job. This becomes especially true when doctors, nurses, and technicians have to respond to patients and their families. As such, creative and focused recruitment efforts, such as continuing education credits, could have set aside specific days and times for clinical workers to take part in the study. Finally, looking for other ways to place importance on the study, such as continuing education credit, may have added extra incentive to take part. In the future, highlighting the collaborative learning component of the study increases the likelihood that continuing education credit would be awarded.

Future Directions

I leave this study with more questions than when I began. Here, I present five directions for future research: context-specific follow-up studies, advancing ISM as an interview tool, methodological development and future capacities, decisional communication as common practice, and exploring inclusion as a noun. I detail each of these future directions below and brainstorm hypothetical approaches to addressing them.

Follow-Up Study with Valley Ridge

The first area for future research builds on the current study with Valley Ridge. As stated in the methodology section, ISM is often used in group settings as opposed to

one-on-one settings. A follow-up study, or two, could valuably investigate how employees at all levels of the organization perceive the pathways for creating an inclusive workplace.

One potential study involves interviewing executive leaders. As noted in the limitations section, occupational diversity was sparse, especially among executive leadership. As such, future research should work with executive leaders to understand how they envision the relationship among the same 14 conditions and how their envisioned pathways for inclusion compare to those of lower-level and mid-level employees. With these data and findings, Valley Ridge could design a strategic plan that incorporates various occupational standpoints.

Another potential follow-up study involves comparing how various demographic groups understand the pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. In other words, do Black, Asian, Latinx, and Native American employees envision different pathways for creating an inclusive workplace than White employees? Or, do females, women, non-binary, and trans employees envision different pathways than cis-White males? Answers to these questions could help leaders learn more about how various demographic groups understand the process of creating an inclusive workplace.

Finally, a future study would benefit from gathering employees together in-person to conduct an ISM session of the 14 conditions. Interactive Management and ISM were originally designed for in group small group sessions (Warfield, 1976). An in-person group session would add an extra layer of dialogue where participants can learn from one another through the process of sharing rationales. In all three studies, findings would help

give Valley Ridge more information that has the potential to inform strategic planning in the future.

One-On-One ISM Interviews

Interactive Management was originally designed for groups of people to work together face-to-face (Warfield, 1976). Modifying Interactive Management to the context of Valley Ridge required computer-mediated communication in several ways to protect participant anonymity, both from each other and from me as a researcher. This became especially important when conducting one-on-one interviews. Only a few prior studies used ISM in one-on-one interview contexts (Brenneman et at., 2017; Broome et al. 2019; Chen et al., 2016; Valianos et al., 2014). This is the first study that used ISM in virtual interviews via screen-share. I discussed the limitations of using virtual ISM interviews in the limitations section. Here, I address insight I gained from using ISM as a general interview method.

Typically, when used in group settings, ISM creates one structure that represents the thinking of the entire group. When used in one-on-one interviews, however, each participant produces a structure that represents their own thinking. Whereas the group can use their collective structure to guide future action, having individual interviews requires the extra step of creating a metastructure. With ISM only recently being used in one-on-one interviews, no research exists to determine how many interviews is enough to feel confident that the metastructure represents the thinking of the entire pool of participants. As such, I entered this study with an informal curiosity to understand how many interviews are enough.

I kept a running log that helped me determine how a condition's average influence score changed after each interview. What I found was that the average influence score of each condition seemed to reach consistency after 10 interviews. This is significant because it helps future researchers determine how many individual interviews are needed when conducting one-on-one ISM interviews. This is also significant because it tells us that if we were to interview another participant, their ISM structures may not significantly alter the overall metastructure.

Future research can benefit the methodological development of ISM and its use in one-on-one interviews. More specifically, future studies should keep track of how many interviews are needed to reach consistency. This would continue to help future researchers during their research design process. This would also help give reviewers confidence that a sufficient number of interviews have been collected.

Exploring ISM Methodological Capacities

As noted in the methods section, this was the first study that used a modification of Interactive Management via digital spaces. Here, I detail the possibility of adapting ISM, specifically, into an app that organizations can use to understand the perceptions of its employees. Modifying the ISM into an app offers organizations the potential to gather information quickly across a variety of people. However, researchers and practitioners must take caution if pursuing this endeavor for several reasons.

First, one must assess the quality of data produced from this adaptation. For example, traditionally, ISM is used in deliberate dialogic settings where a group of people contemplate relational questions. Using ISM as a one-on-one interview process already pushes the integrity of ISM's original design. The design and use of an app

92

further removes ISM from its original intention and, thus, should be considered a different methodology altogether.

Second, in addition to the quality of the ISM structures produced, app designers should be cognizant of how they would collect qualitative rationales, if at all. The qualitative rationales offered by participants shed light on how people perceive the relationship between two conditions. Rationales are important because they help participants process their response and the researcher interpret their ISM structure. Modifying ISM into an app risks losing rationales for instant data.

Finally, those designing the app should be aware that John Warfield designed Interactive Management and created ISM out of benevolence rather than personal, profitable gain. Creating an app for wide use should be done in line with the spirit of Warfield's original intention and should not be used for the sole purpose of personal gain.

Even with these warnings, there are positives to app development. First, as previously mentioned, an app allows for wide access and use, like legislators using it to understand how constituents perceive an issue or with families becoming clearer on how time and money should be used to increase family well-being. Second, it offers new possibilities for turning ISM into a more accessible research tool. As mentioned in the limitations, ISM may be a bit confusing and awkward. This becomes worse for disabled participants who have difficulty hearing or seeing. The ISM tool could be designed in a more user-friendly way. Finally, an app could bring autopoietic decisional communication into the larger discourse of an ecological approach to problem-solving.

Decisional Communication as Common Practice

Penultimately, I return to the original theoretical argument of the study. As Trittin and Schoenborn (2017) demonstrated, CCO is a useful theoretical framework for understanding how to incorporate a diverse range of standpoints into decisional communication around diversity and inclusion. Meanwhile, in critical-cultural studies, Johnson (2019) articulated the need to understand radical inclusion as a process of incorporating key stakeholders' perspectives when designing inclusive programming. Future research should build on Trittin and Schoenborn's (2017) theoretical essay, this empirical study, and Johnson's (2019) theoretical arguments. For example, organizations—such as the National Communication Association—could benefit from applied research in which members from a diverse range of standpoints communicatively co-constitute pathways for creating an inclusive association. Much work has already been done to address Whiteness in higher education and the communication discipline (Chawla, 2020). Radical inclusion offers a theoretical and methodological lens to explore ecological approaches to creating diverse and inclusive workplaces.

As demonstrated in the opening quote of this dissertation, one participant expressed her empathy for leaders who have to manage various standpoints and visions for creating inclusion. By incorporating decisional communication and radical inclusion as common practice, organizations can continually design and reimagine what an inclusive workplace means and how to invest time and resources into realizing that inclusive workplace.

Exploring Inclusion as a Noun

The final direction for future research revisits the keyword, inclusion. This study adopted inclusion as a verb describing the process of bringing together the perceptions of employees to identify pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. More research needs to be done on what constitutes inclusion as a noun, especially in the field of organizational inclusions. As noted in the literature review, organizational inclusion is a burgeoning field within communication. We already know that there are bottom-up and top-down approaches to creating inclusion (Doerfel & Gibbs, 2020; Ferdman, 2017). We also know that people can create an inclusive environment by challenging oppressive rhetoric and educating others at the micro-level (Razzante & Orbe, 2018). Finally, we also know of a few meso-level practices that promote inclusivity through dialogic spaces (Tracy, Razzante, & Hanna, 2020). What we lack, however, are empirical studies where people articulate what constitutes inclusion. The current study offers some data for how people constitute inclusion (i.e, the 14 conditions). Future research might take a deeper dive back into each of the 14 conditions to understand more about how people of different backgrounds conceptualize the condition as a characteristic of inclusion.

Summary of Conclusion and Future Directions

This dissertation set out to identify how employees with a diverse range of standpoints co-constitute the pathways for creating an inclusive workplace. Along with the findings and implications came limitations and future directions for research. In this chapter, I explored the methodological limitations and lack of occupational diversity. I also offered five directions for future research: a context-specific follow-up study, advancing ISM as an interview tool, methodological development and future capacities,

and decisional communication as common practice. My hope is that future researchers will use this information to better inform their research design when using Interactive Management and ISM with diverse groups of participants.

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APPENDIX A

IDEA GENERATION SURVEY

You are being asked to participate in Phase One of a research study about inclusion at Valley Ridge. Your contribution will help us continue to understand what conditions contribute to an inclusive workplace. You are being asked to take part in this study as a participant in Employee Resource Groups and/or Diversity Councils demonstrating a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

The goal of this study is to identify keys to building an inclusive workplace across cultural difference. You can support this research by taking this short, anonymous survey (no more than 10 minutes) completed on a computer - desktop or laptop and during or after work hours.

Debra, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, is the principal investigator of the study. She is working with co-investigator, Mr. Rob Razzante, who is a doctoral candidate at Arizona State University and previous intern for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. This study will be part of Mr. Razzante's dissertation research.

There is minimal risk in taking part in this study. To ensure confidentiality, your name will not be kept on record. Additionally, any data collected is password protected in a duo-authentication Google Drive. You benefit from this study by being able to share ideas for how we can identify conditions for an inclusive workforce.

All participants must be 18 years or older and a current employee at Valley Ridge. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. There is no penalty if you do not participate.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Valley Ridge Institutional Research Review Board. The Institutional Research Review Board is responsible for making sure that all human subjects' research at Valley Ridge is conducted in compliance with federal regulations. Additionally, you can contact Debra if you have any questions regarding this study.

* Required

1. By clicking "I agree" below, you are agreeing to participate and confirming that you meet the eligibility requirements. If you do not want to participate, or do not meet the eligibility requirements, please click, "I do not agree." *
Mark only one oval.
I agree
I do not agree *[Survey ends if this option is selected]*

Idea Generation

Imagine a time when you were included at work. What about that experience made you feel included? Was it something that a colleague did or said? Was it a certain policy or

workshop that created an inclusive climate? What about the organizational culture made inclusion thrive?

While completing this survey, please consider the following question : In your experience, what are the key characteristics of an inclusive workplace?

To start your response, use one of the following phrase starters and please keep your answer to 2-5 words. For example, "Willingness to actively listen." While these phrase-starters are meant to help generate ideas, you may also choose your own. You may complete as many of the 8 as you are able.

In your experience, what are the key characteristics of an inclusive workplace?
Starters:

Being... Embracing... Advocacy for... Presence of... Support of... Willingness to... Policies that... Existence of... Ability to... Understanding of... Norms of... Others

Response #1 *
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Response #2 *
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Response #3 *
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Response #4
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Response #5
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Response #6
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Response #7
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Response #8
Please provide a definition or example of your response.

Employee Information
All information is anonymous and confidential. Please refer back to the consent form

Prohibition on Discrimination and Harassment

Valley Ridge is committed to providing a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. It is the policy of Valley Ridge to ensure that the work environment is free from discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, marital status, age, national origin, disability, military status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. Valley Ridge prohibits any such discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation.

In order to address the needs of all our employees, please consider the following optional questions.

Job Position
Which job title most accurately reflects the work you do? *Mark only one oval.*
Administrator
Physician
Human Resources
Nurse
Patient experience
Physician's assistant
Technician
Allied Health
Other:

Gender/Sex
What is your gender/sex? *Mark only one oval.*
Female
Male
Non-binary
Prefer not to say
Other:

Sexual Orientation
What is your sexual orientation? *Mark only one oval.*
LGBTQ+
Other:
Prefer not to say

Race/Ethnicity
What is your race/ethnicity? *Mark only one oval.*
Black or African American
Native American/American Indian
Asian or Asian American
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
Hispanic/Latinx
White

Multi-racial
Prefer not to say
Other:

Education Level
What is your highest level of education? *Mark only one oval.*
Some high school experience
Graduated high school
2-year technical degree
Bachelor's degree from a college/university
Master's degree from a college/university (M.BA, M.A., M.S.)
Advanced degree (MD, JD, PhD, EDD, etc.)
Prefer not to say
Other:

Other Identities
Please share other social identities that are meaningful to you (optional).

Thank you!
We appreciate your contribution to this study. We invite you to take part in a follow up interview and/or focus group. Would you be interested?
Yes
No

If no, the survey ends. If yes, the participant will be directed to the recruitment email for Phase Two and Phase Three:

Hello,

You are being asked to participate in Phase Two of a Three-Phase research study about inclusion at Valley Ridge. Your participation will help us continue to understand what conditions contribute to an inclusive workplace. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are a participant in an Employee Resource Group and/or Diversity Council and demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

There are more ways you can contribute to this study:

1) Phase Two: one-on-one interview (no more than one hour).
2) Phase Thee: focus group (no more than one hour); optional after taking part in Phase Two.

Interviews and focus groups will be conducted virtually via Skype and outside of work hours. You may participate in both the interview and the focus group, although not required. Participation will require that you have access to a computer or phone (via screen-share).

You can sign up for an interview by emailing Debra.

Debra, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, is the principal investigator of the study, She is working with co-investigator, Mr. Rob Razzante, who is a doctoral candidate at Arizona State University and previous intern for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. This study will be part of Mr. Razzante's dissertation research.

There is minimal risk in taking part in this study. To ensure confidentiality, your name will not be kept on record. Additionally, any data collected is password protected through a two-factor authentication Google Drive account. You benefit from this study by being able to share ideas for how we can identify conditions for an inclusive workforce.

All participants must be 18 years or older and a current employee of Valley Ridge. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. There is no penalty if you do not participate.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Valley Ridge Institutional Research Review Board at Valley Ridge. The Institutional Research Review Board is responsible for making sure that all human subjects' research at Valley Ridge is conducted in compliance with federal regulations. Additionally, you can contact Debra if you have any questions regarding this study.
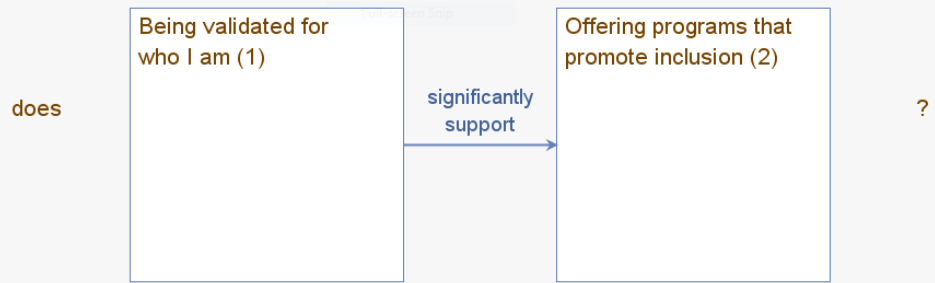
Best Regards,

Debra and Rob Razzante

APPENDIX B

PHASE TWO SAMPLE ISM QUESTION

In the context of creating an inclusive workplace,

| Being validated for who I am (1) | | Offering programs that promote inclusion (2) |

does   significantly support →   ?

| YES | NO |

115

APPENDIX C

ISM INTERVIEW OVERVIEW DOCUMENT

Thank You for participating in the Inclusion Survey *Phase Two* Interview
Introduction

The goal of this interview is to identify how <u>you</u> understand the relationship among the 14 listed conditions as they relate to inclusion at Valley Ridge. Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) will be used to map and identify your connection with the identified conditions.

Prior to conducting the interview, please read the attached "Interview Information Sheet." You will be asked if you have any questions and then your verbal agreement before the interview begins.

To preserve confidentiality, you will be referred to by your assigned code which you received in the interview confirmation email.

In the Phase One Inclusion Survey, participants were asked, "In your experience, what are key characteristics of an inclusive workplace." 255 characteristics were submitted by 67 Valley Ridge caregivers describing the condition of an inclusive workplace.

Attachment 1 lists the 14 most common conditions among the responses provided.
If needed, refer to this attachment during the interview.

When you join the interview by Skype you will see this on your screen:
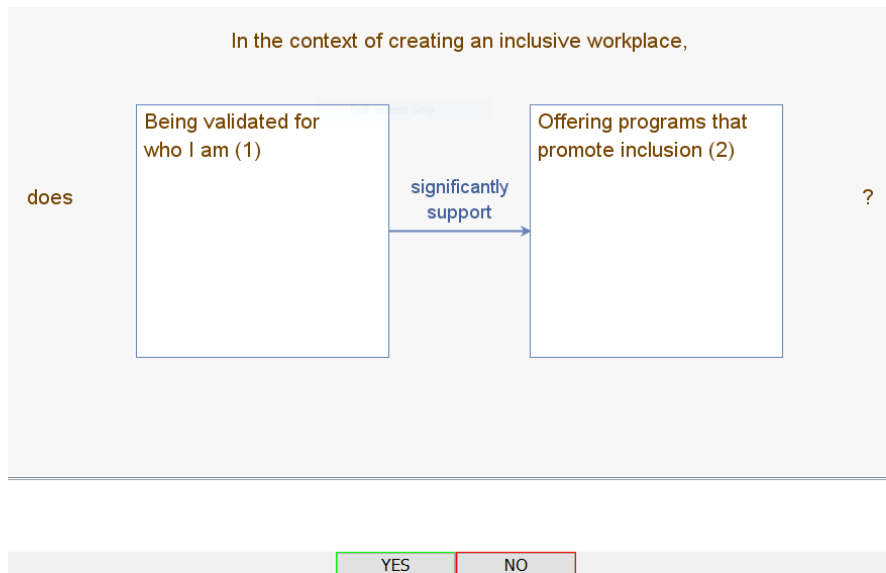
- Refer to your screen, you will be asked to answer the question – "Does condition 1 significantly support condition 2?"

- Your "Yes/No" answer will be entered by the study's co-investigator, Rob Razzante. Rob will have control of the screen. Debra will be present during the interview if you have questions.

- If you say "Yes," you will be prompted to provide an example or explanation for your answer.

- If you respond with "No," we'll go onto the next question.

- This interview will take < 45 mins.

ATTACHMENT 1

Note:
Column 1 – Conditions note the 14 themes from the Phase One Inclusive Survey responses
Column 2 – Clarification statements that provide an explanation or example of the condition

#	Conditions	Clarification
1	Being validated for who I am	Being in a workplace where I can be my authentic self and be recognized as my authentic self.
2	Offering programs that promote inclusion	Continuing education, speaker-series, employee resource groups, opportunities to talk with other caregivers, and more.
3	Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences	Having an environment where people can have differing opinions but demonstrate respect, acknowledgement—and if necessary make accommodations.
4	Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion	Intentional action of creating conditions that support inclusion.
5	Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization	Being able to listen to the needs and concerns of others.
6	Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace	Having policies that reflect the cultural needs of our caregivers.
7	Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation	Embracing each other's cultural differences for personal and enterprise growth.
8	Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization	The presence of diverse people across the enterprise (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.).
9	Being open-minded to different ideas	Recognizing that others may not share the same ideas as me.
10	Decision-making that includes minority voices	Including the experiences of minorities to help shape fair policy.
11	Supportive and caring organizational culture	Change may be uncomfortable yet a supportive organizational climate increases my willingness to be vulnerable.
12	Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization)	Knowing that the organization is committed to fair treatment (within and beyond the organization).
13	Being free to ask questions without being judged	Being invited to share thoughts and opinions without judgements.
14	Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team	Teamwork enables us to provide the best care for patients and colleagues.

*You may refer to this table before or during your interview.
*Please direct any questions to Debra.

APPENDIX D

001–019 ISM INTERVIEWS

Participant 001

Participant 001 was a Latin-American immigrant who is currently working on his master's in business administration. He made it clear that to another immigrant at a high level in the organization showed inspiration and created a sense of belonging for him. 001 particularly noted that the CEO has been a key contributor to celebrating diversity across the organization. This comment is reflected in 001's ISM structure below.
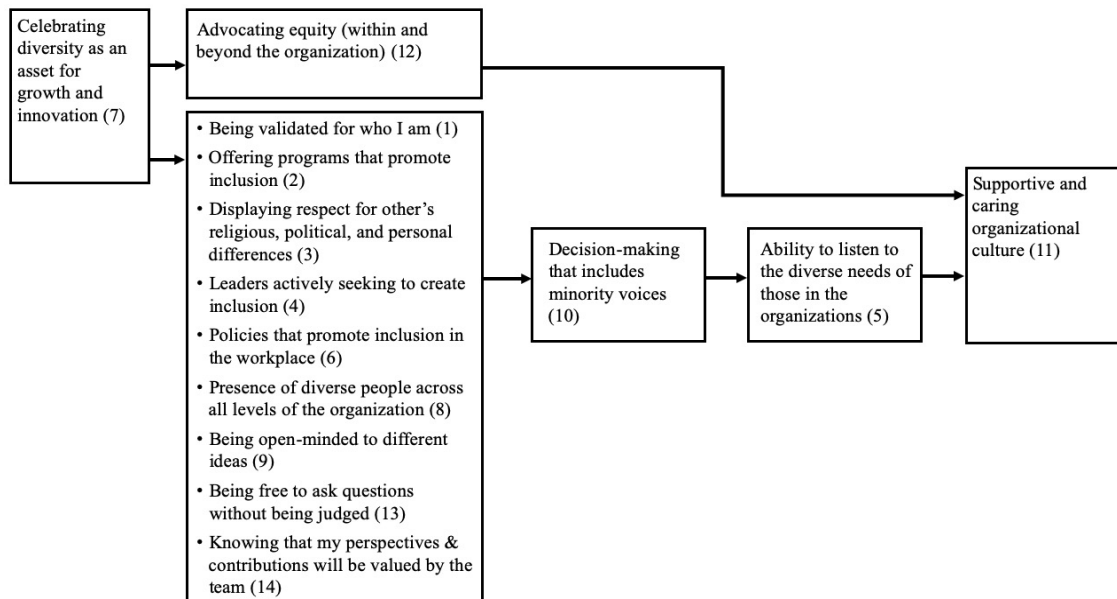
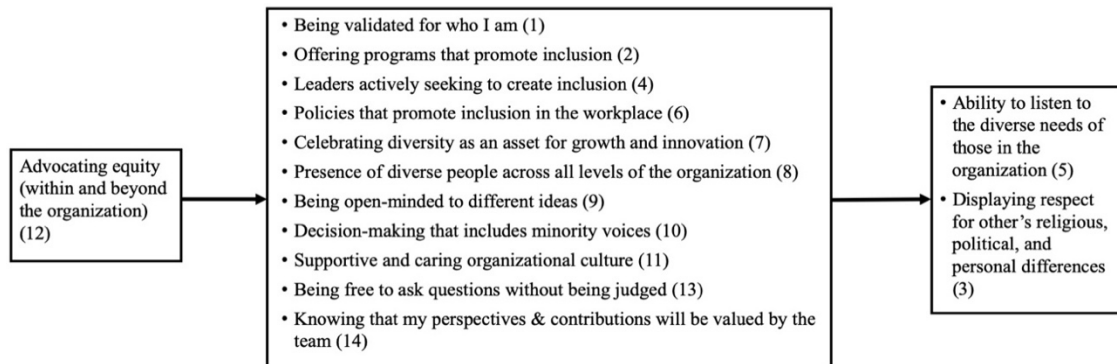**Participant 002**

Participant 002 was a White woman who self-identified as a Pollyanna and was quick with her responses. Debra identified this participant as a leader within the organization who worked closely with policy. Her close connection with policy was reflected in her comment that "policy is going to drive behavior." This sentiment was also reflected in her ISM structure below.
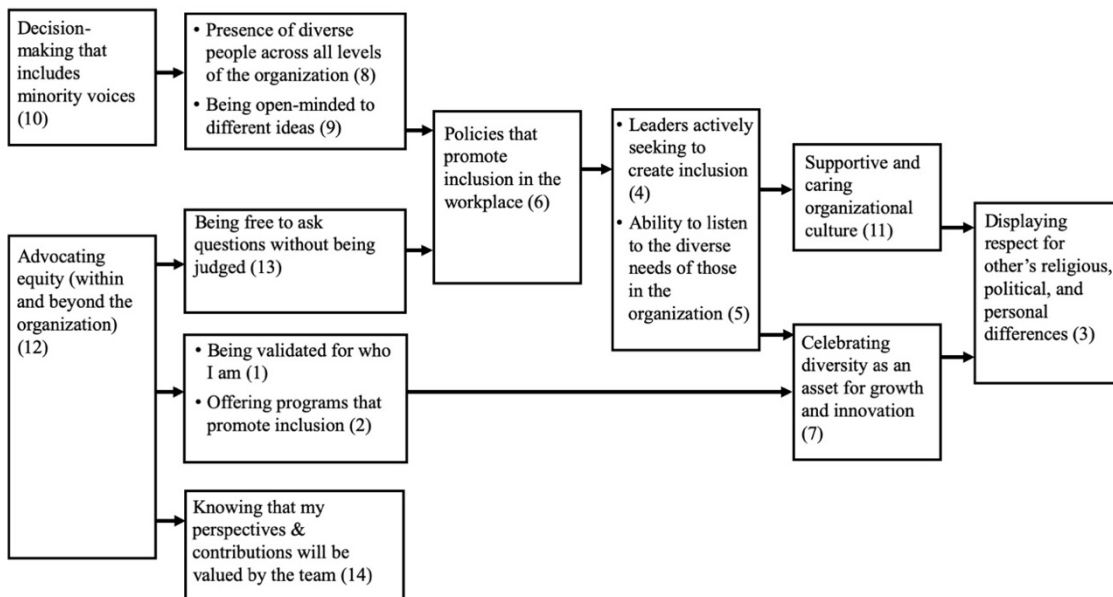
Participant 003

Participant 003 was a Black female who was a part of a management team for the organization. She was donned a rock star by Debra due to her continuous involvement with her respective ERG. Due to technology not working on my end, the interview was conducted over the phone, which led to it being the shortest interview at 26 minutes. The interview felt rushed, and it was clear that not seeing the screen had an impact on 003's responses. Her common response became "for sure" to nearly every question. Below is her ISM structure.

Participant 004

Participant 004 was a White female who has an associate degree, works in a clinical setting, and chairs her health center's DC. The center where she works is relatively small, and there are not many employees. Participant 004 was eager to participate; she was the first to sign up for an interview on the first day of interviews. She was so eager to respond that she attempted to say "yes" to every question to which she could share more qualitative data. Her job position requires her to work with policy across the entire organization. That experience is represented in her ISM structure below.
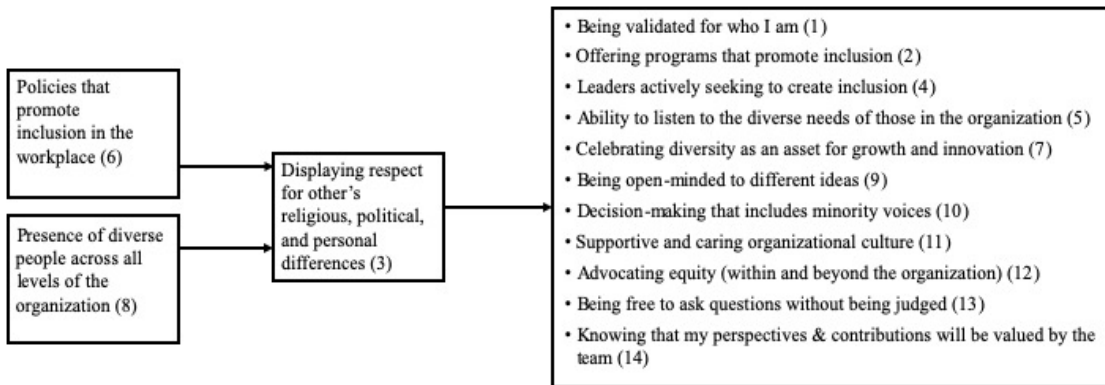
Participant 005

Participant 005 was a White male, a father of all girls who works on many policy committees due to his job in human resources. His specialty is in the Americans with Disabilities Act, and he uses his knowledge to advocate for inclusive policies in terms of disability. Participant 005 found himself second guessing many of his responses, as he indicated his brain was not working as quickly—with the interview being at the end of the day. Even with his experience and background in policy, 005's ISM structure indicates that there needs to be work done before creating inclusive policies.
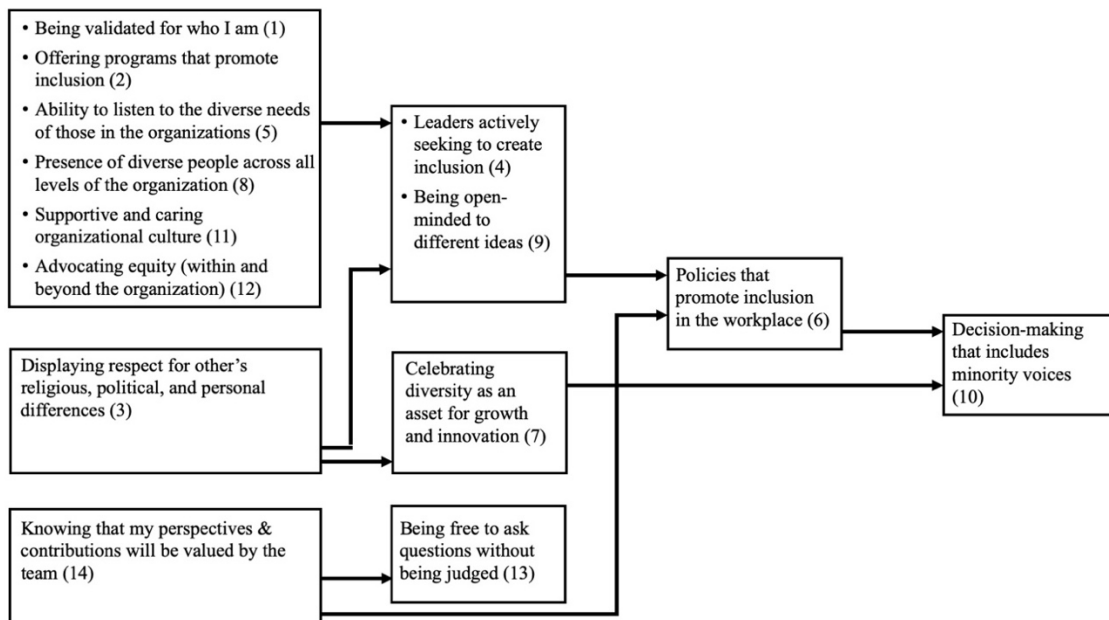
Participant 006

Participant 006 was a multi-racial female who expressed involvement in several programs, including the ERG for disability and frequently attending the speaker's series. Participant 006 was also deaf and required the use of a translator during the interview process. Typically, 006 would see the faces of those with whom she is speaking—with the translator also having visual access to the speaker's face. The role of the translator would be to sign my questions to the participant who would then respond for herself. The audio quality of 006's voice was poor, and we conducted the interview in both audio and text via the chat function on Skype for Business. When answering questions, 006 would frequently respond with "yes," which led to the following ISM structure.
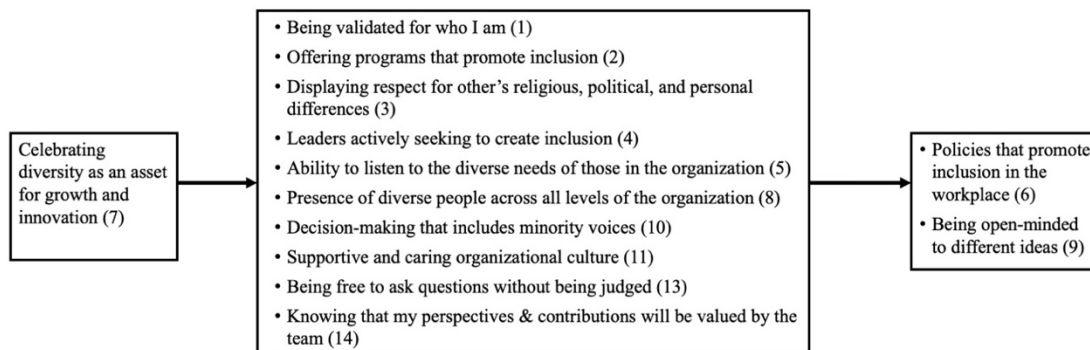
Participant 007

Participant 007 was a White female co-chair of her hospital's DC. After the interview, Debra noted that 007 has worked at Valley Ridge longer than she and that 007 works with lots of data for her job. In addition to working with data, 007 is a leader and has access to administrative leaders across the hospital. She would frequently note that the organization demonstrates its appreciation of diversity and inclusion by having diverse employees. Her standpoint is reflected in her ISM structure below.
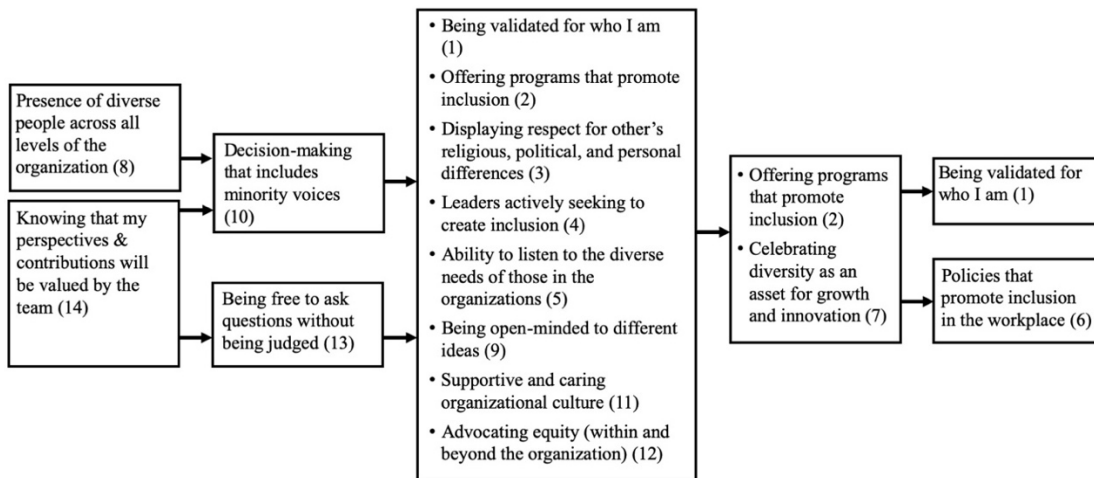
Participant 008

Participant 008 was a Latina woman who has a master's degree and works as a human resource business partner. By the time I called into the meeting, Debra had been talking with 008, who was commuting to her office. Debra and I asked to push the meeting back until later that day, but the participant insisted starting right away. The interview was conducted via phone, which lacked the screen-share function. In addition to being Latina herself, 008 advocates for and supports Latinx groups. Her value in advocacy is reflected in her ISM structure below.
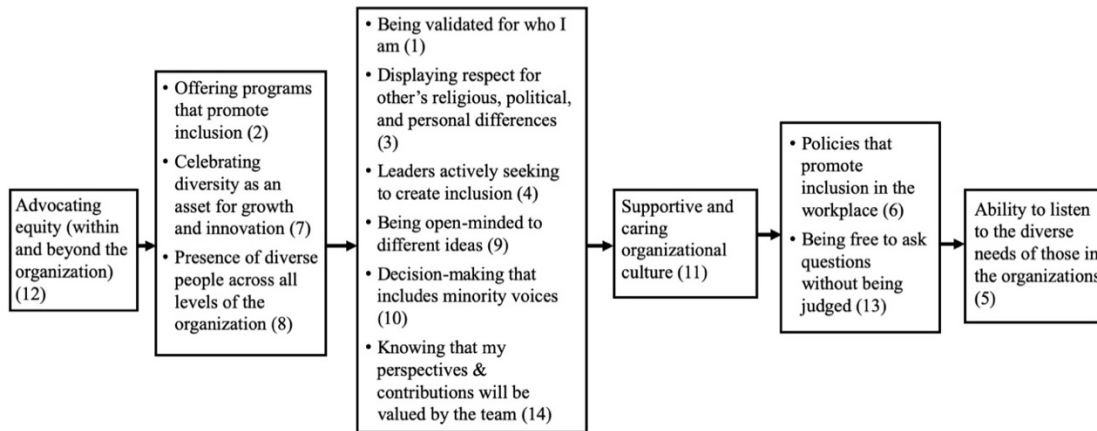
Participant 009

Participant 009 was a White male who has a master's degree and works with accreditation and continuing medical education. He also identifies as a member of the LGB community in terms of sexuality. This interview was conducted via phone due to technical issues on my side, which resulted in the lack of screen-share capabilities. At one point, the participant mentioned that leadership would trickle down to everyone else in the organization. That philosophy was then reflected in 009's flowchart where "leaders actively seeking to create inclusion" appeared all the way on the left side of the ISM structure.
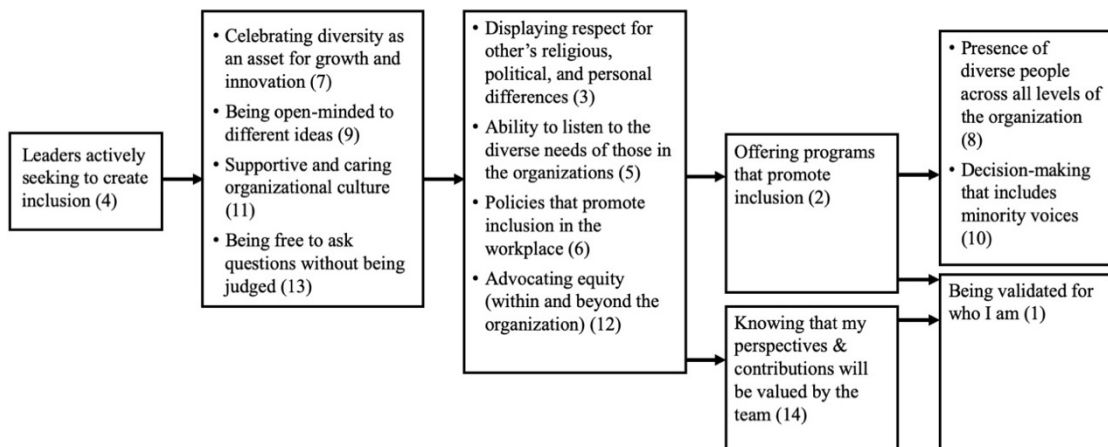
Participant 010

Participant 010 was a White female who rescheduled from a previous time slot due to her running late. By rescheduling, we were able to reconvene via screen-share. Participant 010 works in the continuing education sector of the organization where and has experience in programming and policy. 010 was excited to hear about the study coming out of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and expressed interest in taking part in the follow-up member reflections without yet being asked. Below is her ISM structure.
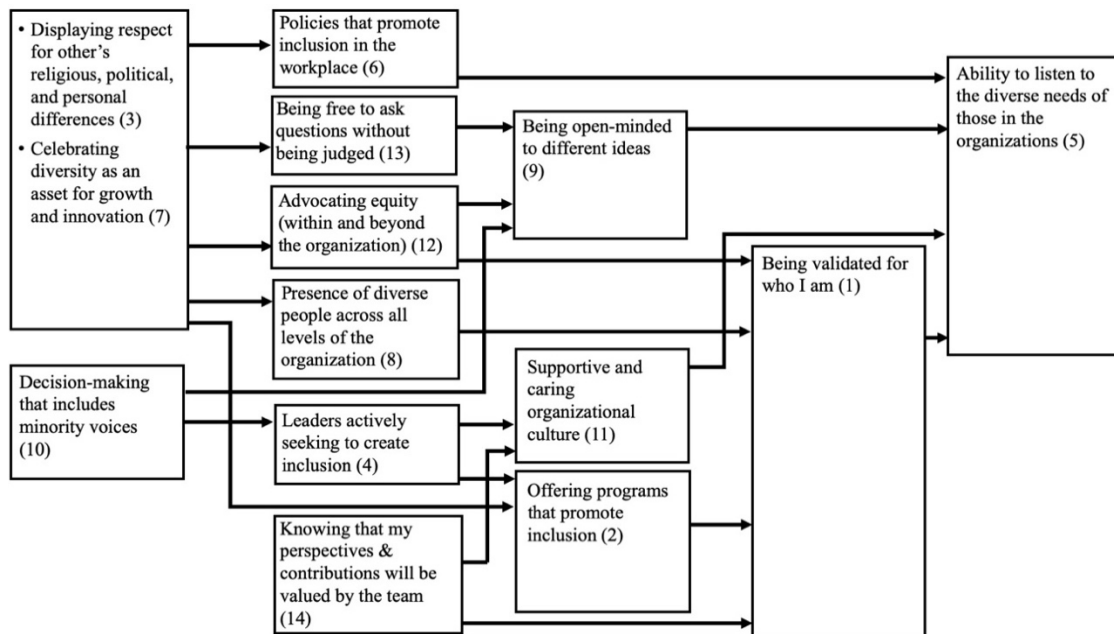
Participant 011

Participant 011 was a Black female who has worked at Valley Ridge for 16 years. She noted that she has seen great growth in how the organization addresses diversity and inclusion in its strategic planning and demographic representation of diverse groups. Participant 011's ISM structure seemed to reflect her thinking that micro-level interaction would scale up to meso-level organizational practices and macro-level policy and culture.

• Offering programs that promote inclusion (2) • Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organizations (5) • Being open-minded to different ideas (9) • Being free to ask questions without being judged (13) • Knowing that my perspectives & contributions will be valued by the team (14)	• Being validated for who I am (1) • Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences (3) • Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion (4) • Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization (8) • Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization) (12)	• Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace (6) • Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation (7) • Decision-making that includes minority voices (10) • Supportive and caring organizational culture (11)

Participant 012

Participant 012 was a White female who tried calling in from home after a long night working in a clinical setting and studying for an unidentified degree. Her new computer didn't have Skype for Business, yet she insisted we start the interview via phone call. Participant 012 noted that she has had an increased awareness of the immense poverty in her surrounding communities. This awareness has influenced her advocacy for change within and, more importantly, beyond the walls of Valley Ridge. Below is her ISM structure, which emphasizes the importance of being able to listen to diverse needs.

| Offering programs that promote inclusion (2) • Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization (5) | → | • Being validated for who I am (1)
 • Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences (3)
 • Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion (4)
 • Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace (6)
 • Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation (7)
 • Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization (8)
 • Being open-minded to different ideas (9)
 • Supportive and caring organizational culture (11)
 • Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization) (12)
 • Being free to ask questions without being judged (13)
 • Knowing that my perspectives & contributions will be valued by the team (14) | → | Decision-making that includes minority voices (10) |

Participant 013

Participant 013 was a Black female who seemed to be as interested in the ISM software as she was in the topic of inclusion. At one point, the participant noted that policies create inclusion because, even if people do not agree with it, they will follow along to stay in compliance with organizational policies. At the same time, however, policy would help keep leadership in check; "ideally leaders will actively seek to create inclusion, if not for any other reason but just to be, you know, um, in line with the policy." Her intertwined thinking between leadership and policy is reflected in her ISM structure below.
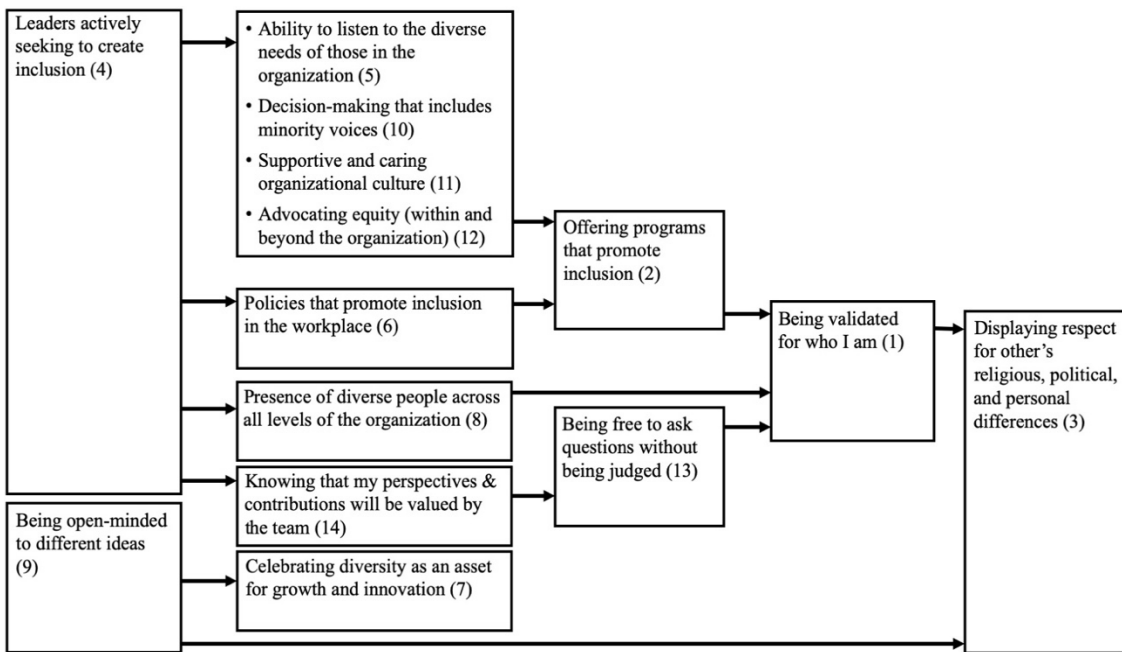
Participant 014

Participant 014 was a Black mother who works across the organization at various levels. Debra was excited 014 decided to participate based on her work experience and leadership role on her DC. In her responses, she particularly noted the importance of establishing a culture of inclusivity first and then offering programs as patchwork. For example, 014 noted that "policies create opportunities" and that policies come from a supportive workplace. Her macro-level thinking is reflected in her ISM structure below.
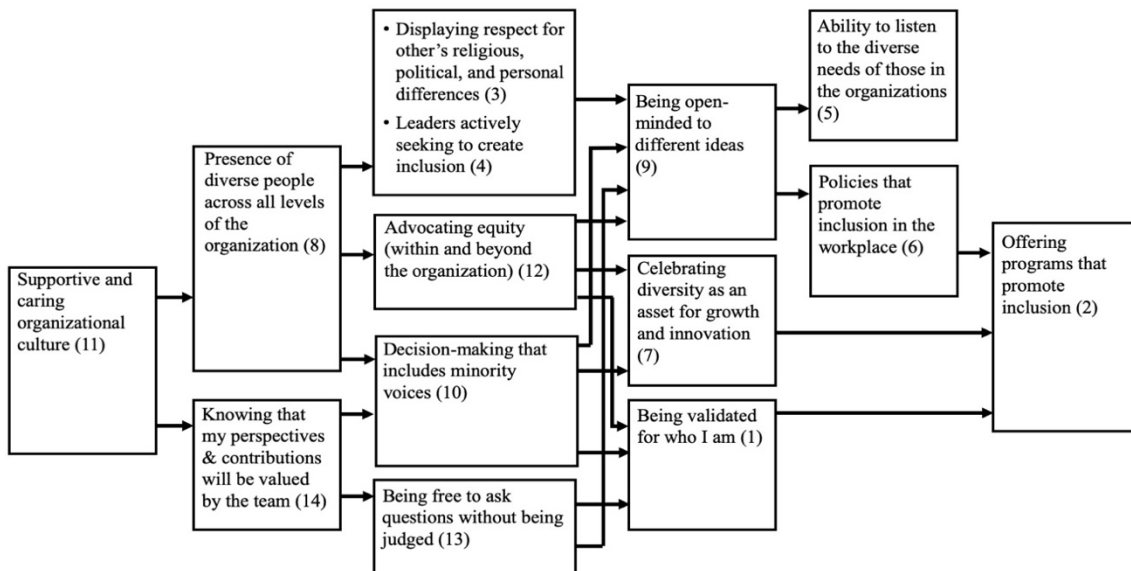
Participant 015

Participant 015 was a White male with a master's degree who works in allied health. He was to quick to respond with short rationales. He seemed so sure about his answers that it gave the impression that he spent ample time preparing for the interview. At one point in his interview, 015 noted that "displaying respect for other religious, political ,and personal differences is a, is a fairly easy thing, but I think it actually requires a lot before you can actually get there." This thought process is reflected in his ISM structure below.
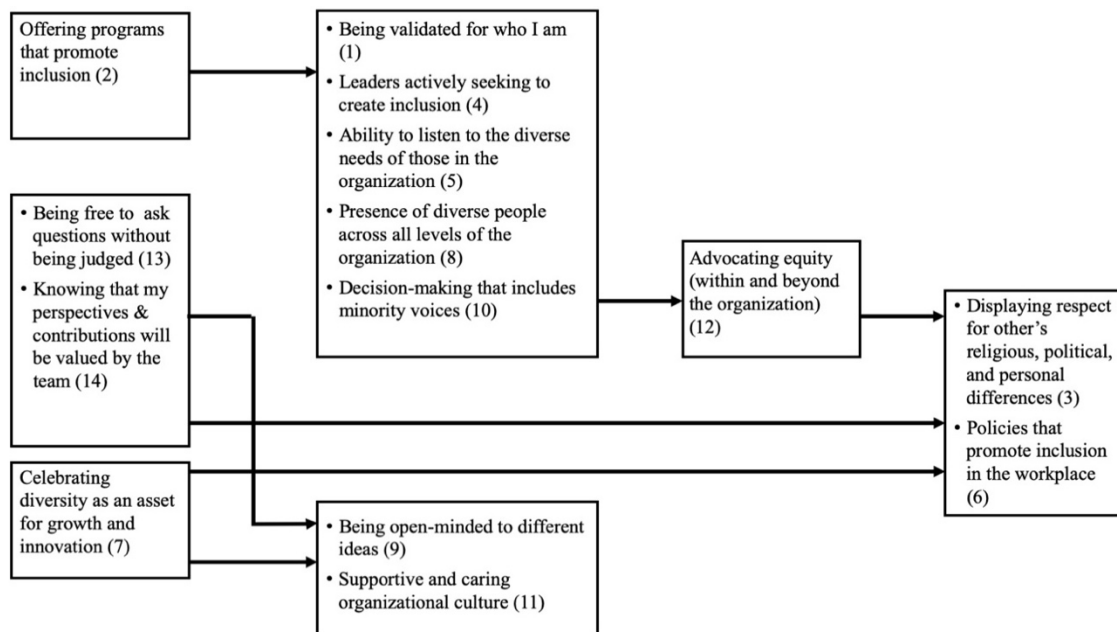
Participant 016

Participant 016 was a White female who runs the organization's focus groups for internal research. While she had experience conducting interviews, the ISM method seemed to cause confusion and challenges. For example, 016 would often say, "oh god, this is so hard," "this is hurting my brain," or "this is the hardest thing I've ever done." Debra and I asked 016 is she wanted to stop the interview, but she kept insisting we continue. She added that her confusion came from the difficulty in distinguishing *significantly* supportive relationships. As we worked through the interview process, 016 often referred to the importance of hiring a diverse group of people across all levels of the organization. Her added emphasis on diversity across the organization is reflected in her ISM structure below.
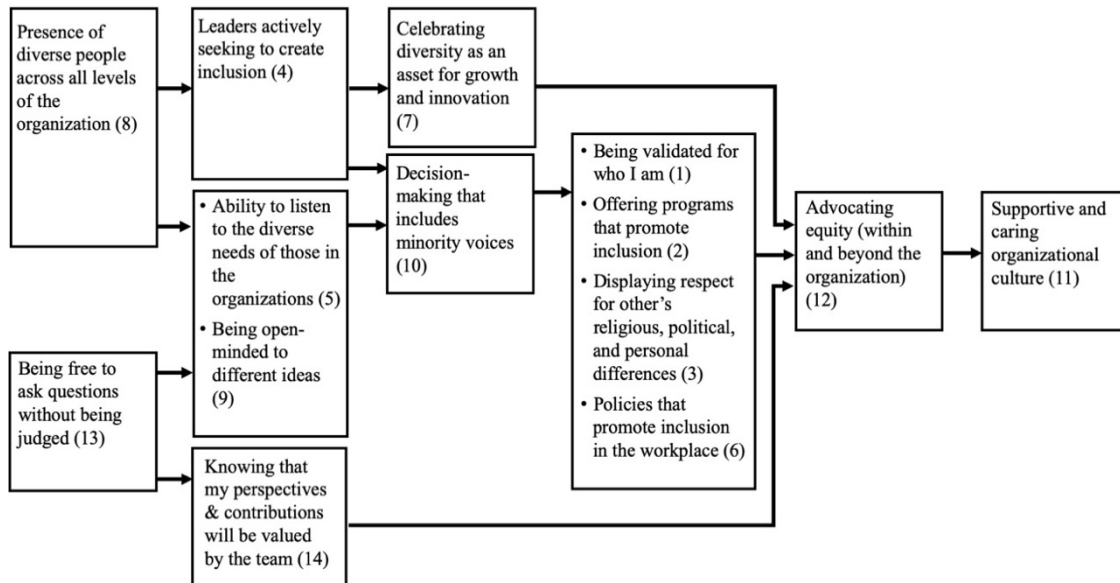
Participant 017

      Participant 017 was a White female who had experience and background in working with policy. She frequently made it clear that demonstrating respect comes from action. That is, "what is the organization actually doing?" 017 noted over and over again that the actions and how the organization acts are the biggest way to show respect for employees. Even with her background in policy, 017 did not believe policy was the biggest driver for creating inclusion. As demonstrated by her ISM structure below, many conditions must first be present before policy becomes effective.
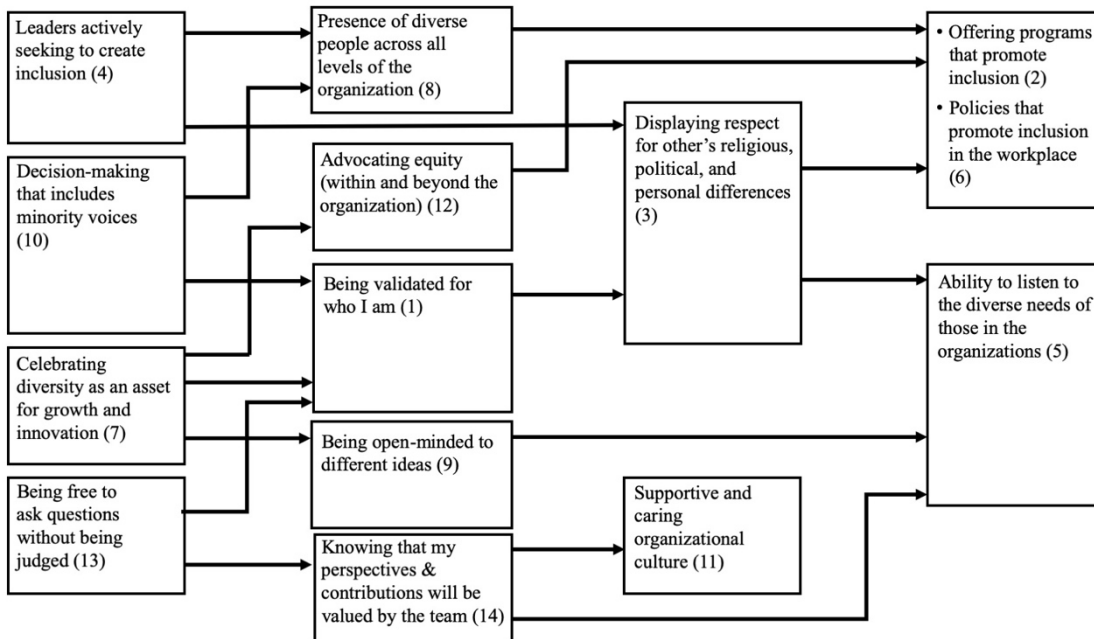
Participant 018

Participant 018 was a White female who identifies as LGB in terms of sexuality. She noted that when she first started working at Valley Ridge 14 years ago she was surrounded by predominantly White men and that demographics in sex/gender and race/ethnicity has become more varied. Right from the beginning of the interview, 018 made it clear that she perceived policies as not having a big influence on creating inclusion. More specifically, she noted that, "policies can't mandate behavior." Rather than placing emphasis on policies, 018 highlighted the importance of open-mindedness; "if you're not open-minded, you're—everything is going to stay the status quo." Her heightened value on open-mindedness and decreased attention to policy is reflected in her ISM structure below.
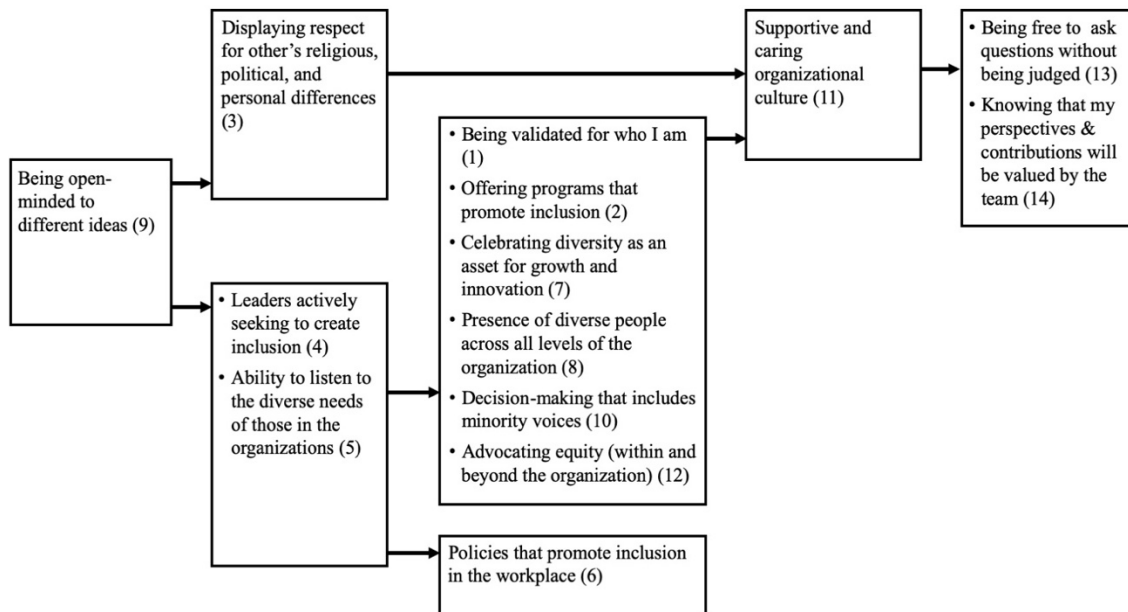
Participant 019

Participant 019 was a White female who has an associate degree and works closely with families who visit the hospital. Participant 019 noted that she often gets excluded from certain conversations based on her job position which is reflected by her associate degree. When Debra and I logged onto the interview, 019 was already on the line via phone call. We reminded the participant that she should join via screen-share, but she was not able to access Skype for Business. Participant 019 insisted we continue with the interview via phone and that she would look at her overview handout. Even with the handout, 019's ISM structure reflected many yes-yes relationships.
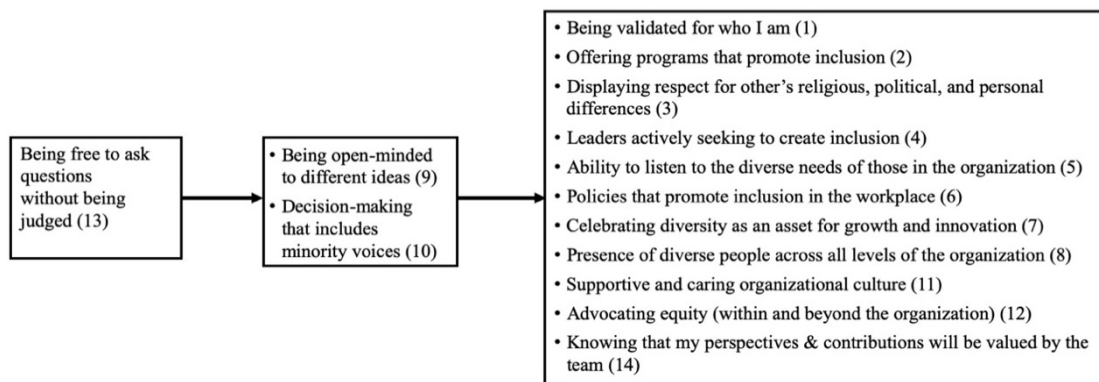
APPENDIX E

CALCULATING INFLUENCE SCORES

How to Calculate Influence Scores

For the sake of this appendix, I refer to conditions as items. An item signifies the number assigned to a condition (i.e., 1–14), whereas a condition refers to the text itself (e.g., being validated for who I am). In all, six scores informed the placement of one item in the metastructure: position score, succedent score, antecedent score, activity score, net score, and influence score. In what follows, I go through each score in detail using participant 002's ISM structure as an example.
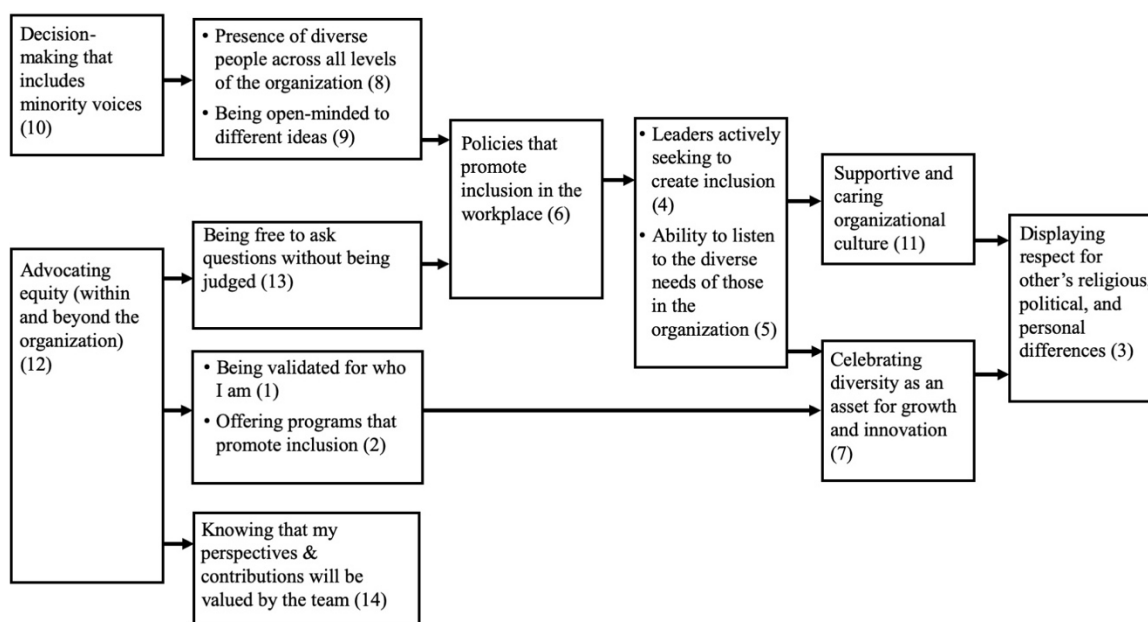
Position Score (POS)

Each item was given a position score depending on where it fell within its particular structure. Various stages exist within each structure; these are represented by the number of columns present. For example, participant 002's ISM structure has six stages. To assign a position score, I counted the number of stages—the right stage being the lowest number (i.e., 1) and the left stage being the highest (i.e., 6). The position score will range from 1–6 depending on how many columns/stages are present in the ISM

structure. As such, in 002's ISM structure, C10 (decision-making that includes minority voices) and C12 (advocating equity [within and beyond the organization]) were assigned a 6 for being the last of six stages. On the other side of the structure, C3 (displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences) was given a 1 for being the first of six stages.

Antecedent Score (ANT)

The antecedent score represents how many items come before a particular item. To calculate the antecedent score, I followed the path of influence as far to the left as possible. The path of influence is represented by the arrows preceding an item. To determine the antecedent score, I selected an item and counted how many items came before that item. In participant 002's ISM structure 1, the antecedent score of C13 (being free to ask questions without being judged) is one—with the lone preceding item being C12 (advocating equity [within and beyond the organization]).

Succedent Score (SUC)

Contrary to the antecedent score is the succedent score. That is, rather than counting the number of items preceding a particular item, the succedent score identifies how many items follow a particular item. For example, take C1 (being validated for who I am). This condition occurs in a cycle with C2 (offering programs that promote inclusion). All items in a cycle are counted as items that precede and succeed the item of analysis. As such, items that follow C1 are C2 (offering programs that promote inclusion), C7 (celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation), and C3 (displaying respect for other's religious political, and personal differences)—a succedent score of three.

Activity Score (ACT)

The activity score is the sum of the antecedent score and the succedent score. Items in the middle of a structure often receive the highest activity score for having many items before and after. Items with the highest activity scores can also be understood as conduits that connect items from the left side of the structure to items on the right side of the structure.

Net Succedent/Antecedent Score (NET S/A)

The net score is calculated by subtracting an item's antecedent score from its succedent score. A positive score indicates that an item is more often a provider of support for subsequent items. A negative score indicates that the item is more often a receiver of support from preceding items.

Influence Score (INF)

Finally, the influence score can be calculated by adding the position score (POS) with the net succedent/antecedent score (NET S/A). This score represents both the actual influence and the potential for influence. The actual influence score considers the items as presented in all the existing individual structures. The potential for influence takes into consideration items that may be added in the future without changing the overall structure. The influence scores are what used to create the metastructure—a process I detail next.

Creating the Metastructure

For the purpose of this study, I was interested in creating a theme-based metastructure that showed the relationship among all 14 conditions. In order to create the metastructure, I first calculated the average for each of the aforementioned scores across

all 14 structures. I then calculated average influence scores based on these averages. These averages, or composite scores, were then used to create the foundation for the theme-based metastructure. More specifically, I first grouped conditions with similar composite influence scores. I then created thematic titles for each group based on the conditions within each grouping.

Just like condensing the 255 characteristics into the 14 conditions, I once again engaged Dr. Broome and Debra through crystallization (Ellingson, 2009) to workshop thematic titles. Through a series of iterations, we made two changes to the metastructure. First, we reworded the titles of three themes to make clearer distinctions between them. To do this, we used the sensitizing concepts of micro-, meso-, and macro-level communicative behavior as reflected in communication as constitutive of organizations literature (Schoeneborn & Vasquez, 2017). Second, we relocated three conditions: C1 (being validated for who I am), C2 (offering programs that promote inclusion), and C11 (supportive and caring organizational culture). Based on their composite influence score, these three conditions would have been grouped under Theme 4, intercultural empathy. However, after consulting with Dr. Broome and Debra, it made the most sense to relocate C1 (being validated for who I am) to Theme 2, receptive organizational climate, and C2 (offering programs that promote inclusion) and C11 (supportive and caring organizational culture) to Theme 5, inclusive organizational infrastructure. Due to these changes, the metastructure is a theme-based metastructure rather than a metastructure purely rooted in composite influence scores.

APPENDIX F

MEMBER REFLECTION OVERVIEW DOCUMENT

Thank You for participating in the Inclusion Study *Phase Three Focus Group.*

Prior to conducting the focus group:
1) Please read this document and keep it for reference during the focus group.

2) Please read the attached *"Focus Group Information Sheet."* You will be asked if you have any questions and to give your verbal agreement before the focus group begins.

3) Please complete this brief anonymous < 5 minute demographic survey before your scheduled focus group—This data will contribute to further our analysis and results.

Aggregate Data Collected
After conducting each interview, an ISM algorithm calculated the mean location of each condition (conditions are noted in Appendix 1).

- Your flowchart can be found in Appendix 2.

- The average influence score for each Theme is marked: INF = #.

- A higher average score means the conditions tended to fall on the left of the flowchart. 1 lower average score means the conditions tended to fall on the right.

- The number in parentheses is the number of each condition from the Table in Appendix 2.

Figure 1. Aggregate flowchart including the 14 conditions

Theme 1 **Presence of Diverse People** INF = 7.86	Theme 2 **Receptive Organizational Climate** INF = 4.29	Theme 3 **Committing to Inclusion** INF = 3.63	Theme 4 **Enacting Intercultural Empathy** INF = 1.75	Theme 5 **Inclusive Organizational Infrastructure** INF = -0.22
• Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization (8)	• Being free to ask questions without being judged (13) • Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion (4) • Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team (14) • Being validated for who I am (1)	• Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation (7) • Being open-minded to different ideas (9) • Decision-making that includes minority voices (10) • Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization) (12)	• Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences (3) • Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization (5)	• Offering programs that promote inclusion (2) • Supportive and caring organizational culture (11) • Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace (6)

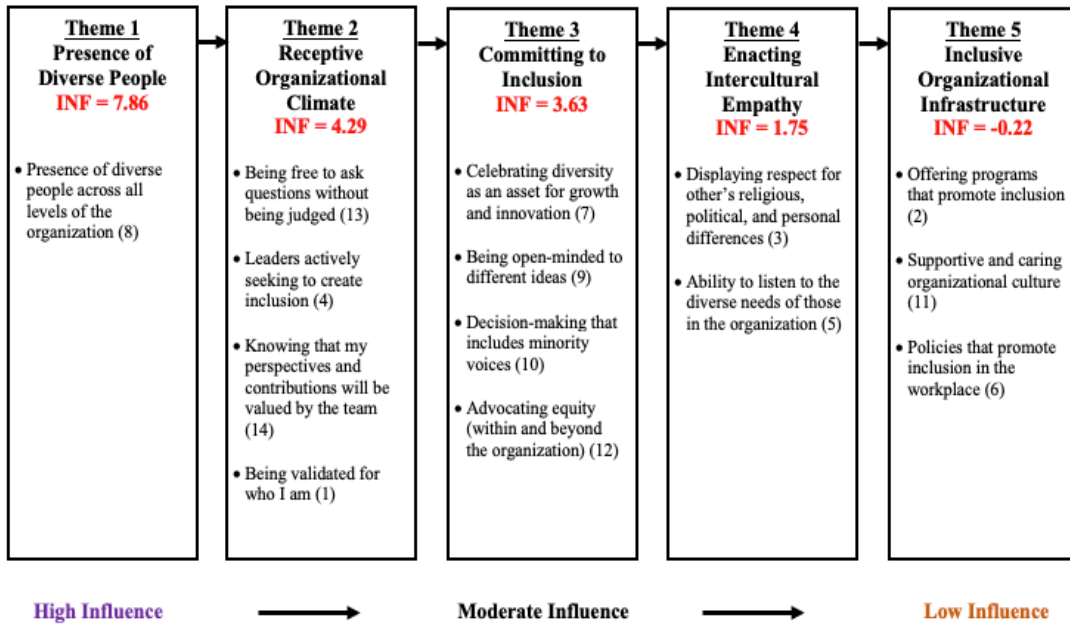**High Influence** ⟶ **Moderate Influence** ⟶ **Low Influence**

Figure 2. Aggregate flowchart that represents the relationship among the five themes

147

Figure 3. How to interpret the data

The results show caregivers from the Phase Two interviews *perceive* that:

The *presence of diverse people* is the biggest influencer for creating an inclusive workplace

Followed by a *receptive organizational climate* for creating inclusion

Having diverse people and a receptive organizational climate may create:

Caregivers more likely *committing to inclusion*

Caregivers more likely *enacting intercultural empathy*

Caregivers more likely to *advocate for an inclusive organizational infrastrcuture*
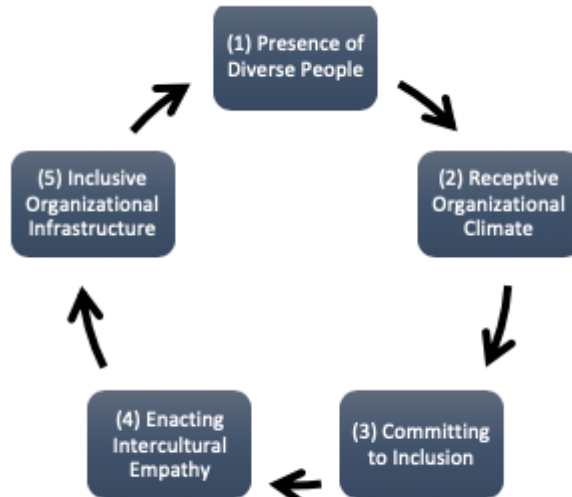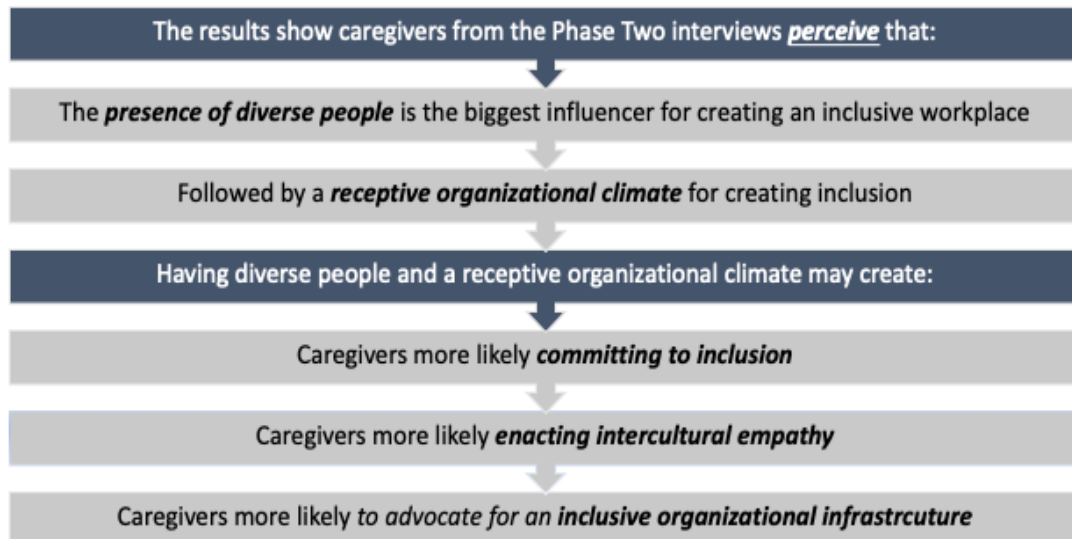
Phase Three Focus Group Interview:
The goal of the Phase Three Focus Groups is to gather feedback from Phase Two Participants. You may be asked the following questions:

1. What does an inclusive workplace mean? What does it look like?
2. What are the advantages of an inclusive workplace? Are there any disadvantages?
3. What else if anything, needs to be present to create an inclusive workplace ?
4. What other factors contribute to the Value of Inclusion at Valley Ridge? Any other questions?
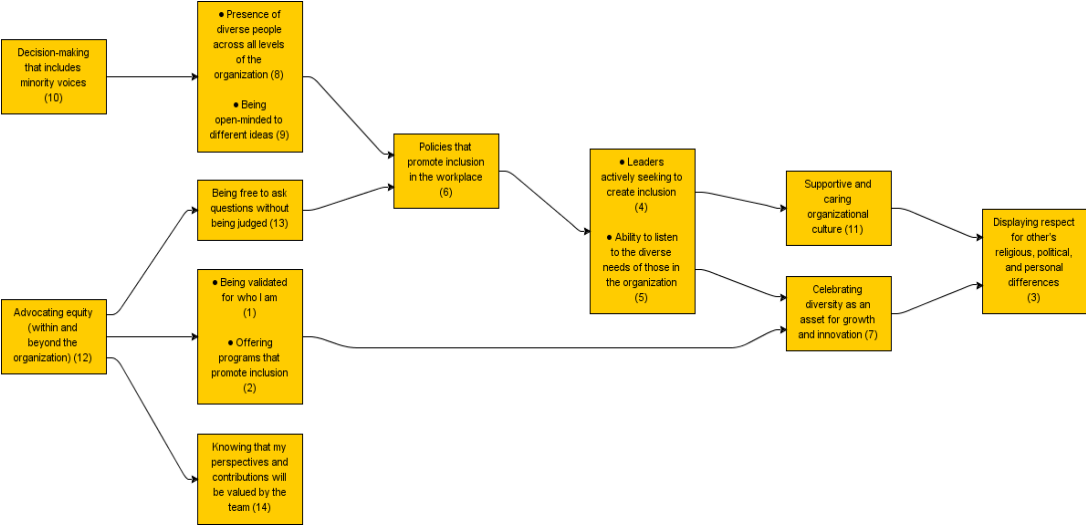
*To preserve confidentiality, you will be referred to by your assigned code which you received in the Phase Two Interview confirmation email.
*Please direct any questions to Debra.

Appendix 1

#	Conditions	Clarification
1	Being validated for who I am	Being in a workplace where I can be my authentic self and be recognized as my authentic self.
2	Offering programs that promote inclusion	Continuing education, speaker-series, employee resource groups, opportunities to talk with other employees, and more.
3	Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences	Having an environment where people can have differing opinions but demonstrate respect, acknowledgement—and if necessary make accommodations.
4	Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion	Intentional action of creating conditions that support inclusion.
5	Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization	Being able to listen to the needs and concerns of others.
6	Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace	Having policies that reflect the cultural needs of our employees.
7	Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation	Embracing each other's cultural differences for personal and enterprise growth.
8	Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization	The presence of diverse people across the enterprise (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.).
9	Being open-minded to different ideas	Recognizing that others may not share the same ideas as me.
10	Decision-making that includes minority voices	Including the experiences of minorities to help shape fair policy.
11	Supportive and caring organizational culture	Change may be uncomfortable yet a supportive organizational climate increases my willingness to be vulnerable.
12	Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization)	Knowing that the organization is committed to fair treatment (within and beyond the organization).
13	Being free to ask questions without being judged	Being invited to share thoughts and opinions without judgements.
14	Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team	Teamwork enables us to provide the best care for patients and colleagues.

Appendix 2: 002 Flowchart

Decision-making that includes minority voices (10)

● Presence of diverse people across all levels of the organization (8)

● Being open-minded to different ideas (9)

Being free to ask questions without being judged (13)

Advocating equity (within and beyond the organization) (12)

● Being validated for who I am (1)

● Offering programs that promote inclusion (2)

Knowing that my perspectives and contributions will be valued by the team (14)

Policies that promote inclusion in the workplace (6)

● Leaders actively seeking to create inclusion (4)

● Ability to listen to the diverse needs of those in the organization (5)

Supportive and caring organizational culture (11)

Celebrating diversity as an asset for growth and innovation (7)

Displaying respect for other's religious, political, and personal differences (3)

APPENDIX G

TOTAL DATA COLLECTED

Data Collected	
Phase One Qualitative Survey	
Participants	67
Characteristics	255
Clarifications	217
Phase Two ISM Interviews	
Participants	19
Transcripts	382 pages
Reflections	24 pages
Hours	17.42 hours
Phase Three Focus Group Member Reflections	
Participants	12
Transcripts	69 pages
Reflections	5 pages
Hours	5.05 hours
Meetings with On-Site Coordinator	
Reflections	33 pages
Hours	59.80 hours