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Effect of Including the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Minority in Company Diversity Initiatives on Organizational Attraction
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Abstract

The current study aimed to examine the impact of including the LGBT minority in diversity messaging on applicants' organizational attraction. A total of 226 participants (133 men, 93 women) were assigned to a condition that presented one of two different types of job advertisements with diversity content: All-Inclusive (AI) and Affirmative Action (AA). The AI condition featured diversity messaging that explicitly supported the LGBT minority, whereas the AA condition featured diversity messaging that was generic and emphasized Affirmative Action guidelines. After viewing the assigned job advertisement, participants then responded to items regarding their attraction to the organization and perceptions of the diversity climate at the fictitious company mentioned in the ad. Results showed that participants found the company to be more prestigious in the AI condition than in the AA condition. There was also a significant main effect of gender on organizational attraction, such that women provided higher ratings for the job advertisements than men for general company attractiveness, intentions to pursue, and prestige. Exploratory analyses also showed an interaction between gender and condition, such that the effect of diversity initiative on workplace diversity perceptions was stronger for women than men. Specifically, as the job advertisement content changed from AA to AI, women reported more positive perceptions than men. Future research should continue to examine the impact of including the LGBT minority on organizational attraction and diversity perceptions.
Chapter I

Review of the Literature

Many organizations in the United States incorporate a diversity initiative into their corporate culture. A diversity initiative is a proposed movement that outlines an organization’s stance on issues of diversity and communicates ideologies of the culture, climate, and values. There are multiple benefits for including such an initiative, such as increased, superior problem solving and expanded customer bases (Cox, 1994; Robinson & Dechant, 1997; Von Bergen et al., 2002). As companies look to expand into foreign markets, the importance of understanding and conveying a support for the culture in those markets is crucial for a successful reception. Internally, if a company wants to attract diverse candidates with a diverse skill set, the company would need to have a diversity initiative in place to attract such candidates (Williams & Bauer, 1994). Once the company attracts the diverse applicants, the organization must also have a diversity climate that supports the ideologies presented in the diversity initiative to retain the applicants once they are hired (Hill, 2009). Therefore, diversity initiatives and climates offer many benefits that have important implications for the workplace.

However, there are many inconsistencies among various organizations’ approaches to these initiatives that have been subject to much research. Some initiatives heavily emphasize racial and national origin diversity, while excluding the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. This is possibly explained by the potential backlash that an organization may experience from including this community, as the
LGBT minority is an unfavorable group to some people in the U.S. at this time. Moreover, most of the current research is focused on racial minorities, even though diversity itself spans across multiple minorities. Hence, there is a major need for incorporating other minority groups in research. Although race-related research is important, it has been overgeneralized to represent not only other races but also other minorities that are not categorized by race or visible diversity markers, such as religious minorities or the LGBT minority. Moreover, within the past 20 years, several researchers have emphasized the need to incorporate other minority groups in diversity research (e.g., Hill, 2009; Williams & Bauer, 1994; Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998).

One minority group that has been underrepresented in diversity research is the LGBT community. One of the challenges with this minority group is the “visibility” of their status. LGBT individuals are difficult to identify as their diversity markers cannot be seen (i.e., skin tone) or heard (i.e., accent). Many non-minority members identify minority members by their visible differences, and thus have difficulty identifying LGBT individuals because they lack visible diversity markers. Throughout this study, the terminology indicating individuals who do not belong to a minority group will be referred to as “non-minority” rather than “majority.” This was done in order to differentiate between a categorization of a person (minority vs. non-minority) as opposed to a numeric representation (numeric minority vs. numeric majority). By including the LGBT community, this gap in the organizational diversity literature will be filled, and more appropriate conclusions could be made about the LGBT minority group.

The main purpose of the current study, therefore, is to incorporate the LGBT minority group in organizational diversity initiatives. Specifically, this study will
examine the effect of including a diversity statement that mentions the LGBT minority group in a job ad on organizational attraction. This is important to investigate, as research has shown that employers’ recruitment brochures can affect individuals’ intentions to apply (Herriot, Ecob, & Hutchison, 1980; Herriot & Rothwell, 1981). This study will also investigate whether this effect might differ between males and females. The following literature review will examine the potential business benefits afforded to a company for using different diversity statements, discuss a case for including the LGBT community in diversity initiatives and examine the effects this inclusion might have on organizational attraction. Finally, a discussion about how this effect might differ between males and females will be presented.

Diversity Initiatives

The current research on diversity initiatives is extensive in domain. Some studies are categorized in an applied setting attempting to explain reactions and efficacy of different diversity training approaches, aiming to explain a business case for diversity. This “business case” for diversity signifies the benefits that organizations could receive as a result of incorporating diversity into their business practices. Other studies are theory driven, where an ethical case for diversity is presented which seeks to explain the value of diversity initiatives. In the following sections, both cases will be discussed in more detail.

The business case for diversity. Before proposing a business case for diversity initiatives, it is important to discuss the preliminary issues facing the workplace. Hite and McDonald (2010) advocated for the early application of diversity training in undergraduate and graduate studies due to data that suggested students entering the
workplace are rather unaware of diversity issues. They also discussed the role that human resource development (HRD) has on implementing diversity in the workplace, and suggested that HRD is too focused on a business case for diversity, which can lead to a status quo system rather than informative resolutions. However, the HRD field itself would greatly benefit from implementing diversity training when practitioners are in school. This would allow HRD practitioners to be better equipped to address diversity issues in organizational settings because they would have had the appropriate training to handle situations of diversity (Hite & McDonald, 2010). Therefore, by proposing earlier exposure to diversity issues facing today's workplace, individuals who enter the workplace should be more aware of diversity as well as more open to accepting diversity initiatives.

In addition to initiating earlier training by incorporating diversity awareness in academic curriculums, incorporating social psychological theory into these training sessions can improve effectiveness. For example, Pendry, Driscoll, and Field (2007) analyzed various training approaches, suggested alternatives, and asserted potential efficacy outcomes. The authors asserted that the various approaches could be more effective if social psychological theory, regarding how people react to and form stereotypes, was incorporated. Therefore, if individuals were made aware of their stereotyping, they would be more capable of modifying the behavior and more receptive to diversity training (Pendry et al., 2007). One of the barriers facing these approaches in organizations is the lack of openness to challenging information. Individuals who are members of a non-minority group (e.g., White, male, straight) may have difficulty comprehending the adverse effect that occurs to their coworkers who are members of a
minority group. This difficulty arises from the non-minority group members being unaware of their role in diversity initiatives.

Non-minorities’ role in diversity initiatives varies depending on the training approach that is taken. Stevens, Plaut, and Sanchez-Burks (2008) examined two common approaches in American organizations: the “colorblind” and “multicultural” approaches. The colorblind approach posits that differences should not be acknowledged and should be ignored. This typically causes feelings of alienation among minorities as they feel they are not being appreciated or valued. The multicultural approach is designed to embrace the differences between people, but does not explain the role non-minorities play, creating dissimilarity and resentment among these groups. This could potentially explain the difficulty non-minorities have with openness to diversity initiatives because non-minorities often experience feelings of guilt for being the non-minority. Therefore, Stevens et al. proposed a model, entitled the all-inclusive multicultural (AIM) model, incorporating non-minorities and their role in the diversity discussion. This is an important facet to include because it advances the discussion among all groups by explaining how everyone holds an equal share in diversity initiatives.

Overall, there are numerous benefits to fully integrating diversity into the workplace. Regardless of the reason why it occurs, whether an organization is responding to changes in their own demographic composition or the company is simply moving forward with an initiative, the benefits are paramount. Organizational benefits such as increased intergroup relations, stronger employee engagement, lower turnover and absenteeism among minorities, lower group conflict (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009), heightened understanding of international customers, and increased employee
satisfaction, and positive perceptions of procedural justice can all be achieved (Pendry, Driscoll, & Field, 2007; Robinson & Dechant, 1997; Stevens, Plaut, & Sanchez-Burks, 2008; Volpone & Avery, 2010). Procedural justice is deeply rooted in personal perceptions and thus creates an ethical case for diversity to address such personal, individual level perceptions of how minority members are treated in the workplace diversity discussion.

The ethical case for diversity. A group-value approach can be developed based upon an ethical case for diversity which can benefit the overall organization. Triana and Garcia (2009) studied an organizational level of support for diversity and how this affects perceived procedural justice. A common belief among non-minority groups is equal treatment must come at the expense of their own benefits (Hill, 2009). Therefore, the distribution of equal treatment should adhere to procedural justice to be effectively perceived by non-minority groups, giving the perception that benefits are only being given to equalize, rather than afford an unfair advantage. Triana and Garcia developed a two-phase study to assess how attitudes of perceived discrimination and procedural justice impact affective organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors. During the first phase, participants responded to questions regarding perceived workplace racial discrimination and perceived organizational efforts to support diversity, whereas the second phase consisted of questions regarding procedural justice and affective commitment. The participants responded to the items as they relate to their current employer. Their findings suggest that perceptions of racial discrimination are negatively correlated with perceptions of procedural justice. Furthermore, the researchers found that procedural justice mediated the relationship between affective commitment
and perceived racial discrimination, and that, and that affective commitment mediated the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behaviors (Triana & Garcia, 2009).

Issues of procedural justice and organizational commitment are factors that are a part of what is known as a diversity climate (DC). Herdman and McMillan-Capehart (2009) examined the concept of a DC and its relationship with employee satisfaction. The study included rating scales such as a “diversity program survey,” “managerial values survey,” and the “diversity climate survey” in order to examine the overall concept of DC. The results suggested that a positive relationship existed between levels of racioethnic heterogeneity and diversity programs (Herdman & McMillan-Capehart, 2009). This offers a larger conclusion that the mere presence of a diversity initiative may not greatly affect the climate, but a stronger effect may be observed when visible diversity is present in multiple levels of the organization. In regards to DC and internal levels of an organization, Gonzalez and DeNisi (2009) examined how a DC moderates the relationship between employee attachment and unit performance. The main assertion behind this area of research is the similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971), which suggests that people distinguish others from visible differences and are attracted to others who are similar to themselves. Coworkers who must complete tasks within a work-unit are subject to this paradigm during formation of the unit. At times, the organization will designate members to a certain unit, whereas at other times, a unit is self-forming.

Depending on the DC, employee attachment can be harnessed into a positive, cohesive experience among coworkers, or dissimilarity can occur. These concerns should be addressed by any DC considering that the climate itself encompasses the differences
that are represented in the workplace. Gonzalez and DeNisi (2009) examined the effects of a DC on a work-unit (work team or department) as well as the individual employee perceptions of commitment within those units. Their findings indicated a positive correlation between a DC and organizational commitment. This raises the question that if people distinguish others using visible differences, how do individuals differentiate others with “invisible” differences, such as members of the LGBT community or members with certain religious beliefs?

This question can be further examined by investigating how work-unit groups should be designed, either to enhance a diverse composition by random assignment, or to let work-groups naturally form themselves (Harrison & Humphrey, 2010). Harrison and Humphrey attempted to answer this question by examining how stereotypes play a role in work-group selection. Some minorities may try to fit in by fulfilling stereotypical behavior, yet by doing so may only enhance feelings of dissimilarity (Steele, 1997). This explains the complexity of work-group design and caring for diversity. Harrison and Humphrey suggested that there is no easy solution to designing a cohesive work-group that fulfills all of these needs. However, potential solutions can range from randomly assigning group members to a group, or having groups on a rotation-based system, such that everyone will work with each other at some point. Both solutions aim toward the goal of increasing adaptability to task complexity by utilizing the unique talents and skills of a diverse work-unit (Harrison & Humphrey, 2010).

Inclusion of LGBT in diversity initiatives. Work-group composition greatly depends on the type of DC present in an organization. A DC can be the individualistic type, which values individual talents while focusing less on the cohesiveness of the
group. The DC can also be the collectivistic type, which is more group-oriented and values cohesiveness and equal treatment among its incumbents. Research has shown that as diversity increases, collectivist organizations display more cohesive member identities, greater intergroup interaction, and lower conflict (Chatman & Spataro, 2005). However, much of this research has only examined the “visible” minorities, such as racial groups, rather than the “invisible” minorities, such as the LGBT community. Thus, it is difficult to determine the generalizability of the results from diversity research due to the underrepresentation of these “invisible” minorities.

Hill (2009) attempted to study this “invisible” minority by examining the implications of explicitly including the LGBT community in organizational diversity initiatives. By applying the Academy of Human Resource Development’s Standards on Ethics and Integrity, Hill researched the potential backlash organizations face if they include the LGBT minority, and explored theories behind non-minority resistance. Many non-minorities have taken part in active forms of resistance against LGBT individuals in the workplace, which include behaviors such as bullying, shunning, acts of violence, and can also include the more common passive resistance (Hill, 2009). King and Cortina (2010) examined the impact of including LGBT minority members in the workplace on public perceptions, and found that LGBT job applicants were rated more negatively than non-LGBT job applicants, which could also explain why 25% to 66% of LGBT workers have reported experiencing some form of discrimination after disclosing their sexual orientation (King & Cortina, 2010). Therefore, it is important for organizations to explain why LGBT inclusion is important to not only ensure a safe working environment for all employees, but to also discourage discriminatory behaviors (Mello, 1996). Resistance
should be seen as an opportunity to start a discussion to address the need for including LGBT members in organizational diversity initiatives (Munoz & Thomas, 2006).

Discussing the need to include the LGBT minority group in diversity initiatives could potentially lead to positive outcomes, such as LGBT members being able to live openly within the workplace, which has been associated with increased job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational loyalty for LGBT members (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002). On the other hand, potential barriers that the organization may face for including LGBT members in an initiative include potential disgruntled employees, loss of productivity on behalf of the disgruntled, and lower organizational commitment (Hill, 2009). These barriers should be addressed because the benefits of retaining talent among the LGBT community are paramount and outweigh the cons (Hill, 2009). Typically, LGBT individuals gain a higher level of education than non-LGBT individuals, which is a valued predictor during selection (Black, Gates, Sanders, & Taylor, 2000). This is important because if an organization does not attract LGBT individuals by leaving out support for them in their diversity initiatives, they may lose potential employees with valuable skills and knowledge. Regardless of the benefits afforded by adopting a diversity initiative, I-O psychologists should specifically be concerned with adhering to American Psychological Association (APA) standards regarding ethical behavior. The APA requires respect and dignity of all people and does not condone any act of prejudice (APA, 2002). Yet, organizations still feel confronted with a dilemma that suggests an “either/or” paradigm: should the organization be all-inclusive in order to attract and retain the most diverse talent and employees, or should the organization maintain some specified political wants of the non-minority group to avoid backlash?
This predicament that organizations face has caused what is known as the "lavender ceiling." Similar to the "glass ceiling" in regards to gender equality, the "lavender ceiling" suggests that LGBT members will only be promoted or advanced so far within the organization so that the organization does not experience any backlash (Hill, 2009). This approach would imply that LGBT members are being tolerated rather than appreciated for their diversity. One major problem with common diversity approaches, such as the "colorblind" approach, is they teach tolerance, rather than awareness. However, tolerance only implies that the ones doing the tolerating have a power or higher rank than the minority (Vogt, 1997). An interesting question is whether having this higher rank or inequality is attractive to non-minority members, or whether an all-inclusive climate is more attractive. Some research suggests that simply appearing to have diversity initiatives does increase attraction to the organization and increases perceived fairness (Avery, 2003; Gilbert & Stead, 1999; Ng & Burke, 2005).

Organizational Attraction

Organizational attraction is an individual's affective and attitudinal thoughts about a certain company which are taken into consideration for employment purposes (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003). Some of the key elements of an organization that greatly influences an applicant's attitudes and perceptions of the company are organizational characteristics, such as reward structure, centralization, size, and geographical location (Turban & Keon, 1993). Increased organizational attraction can also be achieved by communicating a value for employee rights, rather than "employment-at-will" scenarios (Schwoerer & Rosen, 1989). These characteristics are important to accurately portray to applicants because when examining a potential
company to which to apply, applicants tend to align their personality characteristics with an organization's characteristics (Bretz, Ash, & Dreher, 1989). This is a crucial implication for minority applicants because research has shown that minority members are more likely to be attracted to a company that explicitly states a supportive stance for minorities, especially if that support has an effect on possible management opportunities (Avery, 2003).

In order for organizations to attract and recruit skilled employees, they should appeal to various types of potential candidates, which include both non-minority group members (e.g., Caucasians, straight people, males) and minority group members (e.g., people of various ethnicities, members of the LGBT community, women). One common approach organizations take to seem attractive to diverse candidates is to include an "equal employment opportunity" diversity statement where the company's stance is very neutral, yet conveys the message that the company cares about diversity issues. However, research suggests that this approach is not effective and requires more explicit statements of anti-discrimination policies, featured diversity training programs, and a supportive climate (Bidell, Turner, & Casas, 2006).

**Dimensions and antecedents of organizational attraction.** A more specific approach to increasing minority applicants' organizational attraction would be to incorporate explicit elements of a strategy at managing diversity. Managing diversity is known as properly utilizing unique skills from employees without putting certain groups of people at an unfair advantage or disadvantage (Thomas, 1991). Research has shown that applicants tend to be more attracted to organizations that state they have managing diversity strategies (Williams & Bauer, 1994). Research has suggested that organizational
attraction is a multifaceted construct that applicants assign different weights to different facets. For example, Thomas and Wise (1999) asserted four factors that applicants consider when making a judgment for organizational attraction: job, organizational, diversity, and recruiter factors. Job factors are things such as salary, how challenging the work is, and how suitable they are for the job, whereas organizational factors consist of corporate image, training opportunities, and job security. Examples of diversity factors are things like affirmative action policies, how the company manages diversity, and demographic composition. Lastly, recruiter factors are things like the recruiter’s personableness, competency, race, and gender. Although job factors were rated as most important when considering organizational attraction, minority members and women tended to weight organizational and diversity factors much more heavily than did non-minority members (Thomas & Wise, 1999).

In addition to these four proposed factors, it has also been suggested that organizational attraction can be measured by three dimensions: general company attractiveness, intentions to pursue, and prestige (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003). General company attractiveness is simply an initial feeling of interest, whereas intentions to pursue are more specific feelings that imply further action. Lastly, prestige is a socially-based dimension, which includes employees’ pride in working at the company and overall perceptions of the company (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003).

**Increasing organizational attraction through recruitment materials.**

Applicant reaction and organizational attraction research has investigated the effects of including LGBT and racial content in application materials. For example, Bidell et al. (2006) examined the effects of including different levels of diversity content in
application materials for various psychology graduate programs on minority representation among students. Specifically, a fictitious student contacted various programs to gather information regarding factors of diversity, such as minority financial aid, anti-discrimination policies, and diversity minors. After collecting that information, each program was evaluated. Bidell et al. found that programs that contained a diversity minor and explicitly stated support for the LGBT community, rather than making a general comment supporting “all types of people,” had a higher minority representation of students who chose their program. Specifically, higher LGBT student populations were found in those programs that had more explicit diversity stances and resources. These findings imply that members of the LGBT community could have perceived explicit statements of support more positively and had an increased level of attraction to the program/university. However, further implications from this study also suggest that regardless of the certain minority group featured in the recruitment materials, overall, people should be more attracted to materials that support diversity. In other words, diversity initiatives should be more attractive to everyone, and not just the specific group who is represented in a diversity statement.

Although a supportive stance has been shown to increase organizational attraction for minorities, other factors such as family-friendly policies, career path options, and person-organization fit add considerable contributions to the construct (Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997). Family-friendly policies include policies that aid in family needs, such as child care or health insurance benefits, and explicitly incorporate partner benefits, conveying a message that LGBT relationships are an equivalent counterpart to a traditional family unit (Friedman, 1990). In addition to these family-friendly policies,
offering different career path options can vary from more flexible options such as work sharing with less promotional opportunities, to more traditional career paths that offer more promotional opportunities, but at the cost of more hours worked. Research suggests that organizations increased attraction levels by not only offering more family-friendly policies that promote work-life balance, higher salaries, and flexible career paths, but also by advertising these various factors. These factors are important because Honeycutt and Rosen (1997) posit that these factors are valued by and are attractive to job applicants, and therefore they may develop a sense of an organization's values from their recruitment materials and find themselves a good fit and suitable for the company.

Therefore, incorporating diversity information in recruitment materials is extremely crucial in attracting applicants. Job advertising represents one recruitment source that has been frequently used by organizations (Perkins, Thomas, & Taylor, 2000). Some job advertisement research has examined applicants' reactions to diversity information portrayed in job ads (e.g., Avery, 2003; Williamson, Slay, Shapiro, & Shivers-Blackwell, 2008). For example, Avery (2003) examined the impact that different diversity messages have on racial minority members and non-minority members. Through the use of job ads that featured diversity messages, but manipulated the extent to which racial minority members were represented at different levels of the organization (entry level vs. supervisory-level positions), findings suggested that Black participants reported more attraction to the advertisement that depicted Blacks in supervisory-level positions as well as entry-level positions, whereas White participants' attraction levels were not affected. However, the job ad that featured Blacks only in entry-level positions resulted in White participants having slightly negative perceptions of attraction, whereas
Black participants' attraction was not affected. However, this latter finding was not statistically significant.

Moreover, Williamson et al. (2008) used a similar methodology by presenting job ads featuring statements regarding a company's diversity practices, but further examined the often complex relationship between applicant attraction and diversity messages. Williamson et al. focused on presenting strategic business benefits for diversity and ideological benefits, which were shown to influence not only non-minorities differently, but also different minority groups. The authors focused on Black and Asian minority members. Some of their findings suggest that Asian minority members' and non-minority members' attraction to the company was more influenced by strategic business benefits of diversity that were conveyed through the ad, whereas Black minority member's attraction was more influenced by the ideological message of diversity. These findings emphasize the need for further research that not only explains the complex relationship among different types of diversity messages conveyed through job ads, but also the impact they may have on different minority groups beyond Black and Asian minorities.

Brooks, Guidroz, and Chakrabarti (2009) examined applicant perceptions of selection materials that incorporated diversity. Although several hypotheses were tested, the findings mentioned here are directly relevant to the current research. Specifically, results showed that participants preferred the phrase “diversity” to “racial diversity” when used in selection policies, suggesting that people preferred a term that seemed more inclusive, as opposed to one that seemed to focus on a specific type of diversity, namely race. This is especially relevant to this study, as this finding suggests that people should prefer an “all-inclusive” diversity initiative to a more generic diversity initiative that
might not include all types of minority groups. However, it should be mentioned that reactions were not significantly different when policies were viewed separately and were only significant when policies were directly compared, perhaps because the difference was more salient when a direct comparison was made.

Further research suggests that an organization's aspects of teamwork and diversity that are displayed in recruitment materials do have an impact on applicants' attraction to the organization. Specifically, Rau and Hyland (2003) conducted a study in which participants viewed a fictitious recruitment brochure featuring manipulated statements about diversity and teamwork. The brochure featured text that focused on teamwork and incorporating other perspectives (diversity of thought), whereas the images conveyed diversity by featuring culturally diverse individuals. Organizations can to some extent increase minority recruitment by increasing exposure of diversity elements in their recruitment materials. Findings suggested that minority men and non-minority women were much more attracted to the company depicted in the high-diversity condition, although non-minority men and minority women were slightly less attracted to the same company (Rau & Hyland, 2003). The finding regarding minority women was contrary to the researchers' anticipated trend; however, a minimal difference in attraction levels was noted. The purpose of this study is to add to this existing research on incorporating diversity in job ads by examining the effect of explicitly including the LGBT minority in job ads and further investigating any differences in organizational attraction between males and females.

**Gender differences, diversity, and organizational attraction.** In addition to dimensions of organizational attraction, other researchers have focused on the impact that
gender-based individual attitudes and beliefs have on the construct. Martins and Parsons (2007) asserted that three different attitudes and beliefs may contribute to organizational attraction: centrality of gender identity (strength of one’s identification with their gender group), attitude towards affirmative action plans, and beliefs about discrimination. Greater emphasis on gender diversity management positively affected women’s organizational attraction, whereas men’s organizational attraction was negatively affected because they perceived that they will not receive any benefits from these programs (Konrad & Hartmann, 2001; Williams & Bauer, 1994). This assertion was further supported by other research suggesting that minority individuals who will benefit from such diversity management programs tend to support them more and find them more attractive than individuals not benefiting from the programs (Bobo, 1998; Konrad & Hartmann, 2001; Lowery, Unzueta, Knowles, & Goff, 2006). Men and women who also have high levels of centrality of gender identity, or sense of belonging to their gender group, tend to find programs that show support for their respective gender group as more attractive (Lowery, Unzueta, Knowles, & Goff, 2006).

The Current Study

Many individuals are dissatisfied with how diversity initiatives are often characterized similar to affirmative action plans, which tend to be partially successful in increasing minority representation (Dwyer, Gleckman, Segal, Smart, & Weber, 1991). Williams and Bauer (1994) examined dissatisfaction with diversity initiatives by comparing two types of job advertisements and the relationship among applicants’ attraction to the organization. One advertisement framed the diversity initiative as an “equal opportunity employer/affirmative action” plan, whereas the second advertisement
kept the same statement but added a paragraph explaining that the company valued diverse candidates of all races. Results from the study indicated that applicants rated the company in the second condition, which explained the company’s positive diversity stance as more attractive than the affirmative action condition. Also, women and minorities rated the same company significantly more positively than men did, yet both groups still rated the company positively overall (Williams & Bauer, 1994). Williams and Bauer suggested including sexual orientation, national origin, and disability as a further focus. Therefore, the LGBT minority will be examined in the current study as an extension of the Williams and Bauer study.

The purpose of the current study, therefore, was to replicate and extend Williams and Bauer’s (1994) study by substituting the focus of the diversity stimulus from race and gender to an LGBT focus. Specifically, this study will investigate the effect of including a diversity statement that mentions the LGBT minority group in a job ad on organizational attraction. However, although the LGBT component will be the featured manipulation, gender of the participants will also be examined. This study will contribute to the existing literature regarding diversity initiatives and organizational attraction by focusing on an underrepresented minority group, which has not been previously incorporated in past research.
Chapter II

Rationale and Hypotheses

Although little research has examined factors that contribute to an applicant’s attraction to an organization from an LGBT perspective, this study will bridge that gap. Other research has been conducted examining the experience of LGBT individuals in the workplace (e.g., King & Cortina, 2000), but there is a lack of experimental studies investigating the inclusion of the LGBT minority in organizational diversity initiatives. Although the aforementioned research is important for finding more effective ways to improve LGBT employees’ experience in the workplace, organizations could influence the tolerance and acceptance of LGBT employees through their public stance on diversity, combating discrimination in the process. Findings from this study should help organizations achieve that goal and learn more about how to attract LGBT applicants, and not just “diverse” candidates.

An organization’s stance may come in the form of a diversity initiative, which communicates organizational values to employees and potential applicants regarding the organizational environment and culture. This is one of the strongest methods of communicating these values, as it provides employees or potential applicants with a perceptual framework of what kind of environment the organization has (Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001). This allows potential applicants to accurately assess how they fit in the organization by comparing themselves to the climate indicators and ensure alignment of the applicant as a person with the organization supporting them (Honeycutt & Rosen,
Therefore, this research finding has strong implications for minorities, specifically LGBT individuals, as they are now better able to assess their fit with the organization by examining the company's diversity policy. This transparency of support for various minority groups that is conveyed through job advertisements has been shown to have a positive effect on LGBT minorities, and may have a similar positive effect on an organization in regards to how people perceive them (Hill, 2009). Based upon findings from Williams and Bauer (1994), individuals prefer more explicit statements of diversity management regardless of sexual orientation. Therefore, it is expected that including the LGBT minority in job ads will have a positive effect on organizational attraction as it adds more explicit content that communicates managing diversity. Specifically, the following hypotheses were developed:

*Hypothesis 1a:* There will be a significant main effect of diversity condition, such that participants will report higher levels of general company attractiveness for the organization that depicts the all-inclusive diversity statement than the organization that provides the affirmative action statement.

*Hypothesis 1b:* There will be a significant main effect of diversity condition, such that participants will report higher intentions to pursue a job at the organization that depicts the all-inclusive diversity statement than the organization that provides the affirmative action statement.

*Hypothesis 1c:* There will be a significant main effect of diversity condition, such that participants will report higher levels of company prestige for the organization that depicts the all-inclusive diversity statement than the organization that provides the affirmative action statement.
In addition, further research has indicated that minority group members reported diversity in a potential employer as more important than non-minority group members (Backhaus, Stone, & Heiner, 2002). Research has consistently reported many negative perceptions regarding minority and non-minority perceptions of diversity impressions of potential employers, indicating dissatisfaction with the general and broad approach that many employers take to appeal to a large demographic, without explicit mention of how or why they plan to manage diversity (Hill, 2009; Kaplan, 2006; King & Corina, 2010). Williams and Bauer (1994) examined race and gender effects on organizational attraction and found that members of a minority group (i.e., racial or gender minority) found the more supportive diversity initiative to be more attractive than did the non-minority group members. Therefore, the following interaction between gender and type of diversity initiative was also hypothesized:

*Hypothesis 2a:* There will be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on general company attractiveness will be stronger for females than males.

*Hypothesis 2b:* There will be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on intentions to pursue will be stronger for females than males.

*Hypothesis 2c:* There will be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on prestige will be stronger for females than males.

The effect of participant race/ethnicity may be explored for any interactions but will not be a primary focus of this study. Specifically, minority and non-minority groups
will be compared. The minority group will be an aggregate of any participants who responded as any other choice other than Caucasian, male, and straight. This aggregated process has been used to justify surveying minority participants against non-minority participants (Kossek & Zonia, 1994) and should still be applicable to the current study as well.
Chapter III

Method

Participants

Participants were selected using Amazon.com’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) system, which is an online survey “marketplace” where people are paid to complete Human Intelligence Tests (HITs). Participants were restricted to people who were at least 18 years old, living in the United States (to avoid any cross-cultural contamination that may impact the perceptions of the diversity condition), and who had a HIT rate of at least 95%. Participants were paid $0.50 for their participation, if they passed two quality checks and one manipulation check, which the exception of the first set of participants who were unable to enter their complete MTurk IDs. Specifically, it was determined early in data collection that the item that asked participants to enter their MTurk IDs was restricted to numbers instead of allowing participants to enter both numbers and letters. Given that these IDs typically have both letters and numbers, the first set of people who participated in this study (approximately 80 participants) were paid even if they failed any checks because there was no way to distinguish which set of responses belonged to each participant. However, even though those participants were compensated, their responses were not included in the data analysis if they failed any checks. A 2 (Diversity Condition: All-Inclusive vs. Affirmative Action) x 2 (Gender: Male vs. Female) between-subjects factorial design was used to examine the effects of diversity condition and gender on organizational attraction.
A total of 269 people participated in this study, but 43 participants were discarded due to failing either the manipulation check or at least one of the quality checks included in the study. This resulted in a final sample size of 226 participants, where 122 participants were randomly assigned to the All-Inclusive condition (Males = 71, Females = 51), and 104 participants were randomly assigned to the Affirmative Action condition (Males = 62, Females = 42). All 226 participants provided demographic information, but one participant did not respond to the item “Have you ever been previously employed?” About 41% were female. Overall, the average age was 33.10 years (SD = 11.91 years). About 77% reported they were Caucasian, 10% reported they were African-American, 8% reported they were Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% reported they were Latino/Hispanic, 1% reported they were Native-American, and 1% reported they were Biracial/Multiracial. In regards to sexual orientation, 90% reported they were Straight, 7% reported they were Bisexual, 1% reported they were Gay, 1% reported they were Lesbian, 0.5% reported they were Questioning/Unsure, and 0.5% reported they would rather not respond. About 96% reported they had been previously employed. As for current employment at the time of data collection, 49% reported they were working full-time, 20% reported they were employed part-time, and 31% reported they were not employed. Lastly, 37% of the sample reported themselves as active job seekers.

Overall, this sample seems representative of both racial/ethnic and sexual orientation demographics of the population in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2013), the racial composition of the United States in the year 2012 consisted of 77.9% Caucasian, 13.1% African-American, 5.1% Asian, 0.2% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 1.2% American Indian and Alaska Native, and
2.4% Biracial/Multiracial. It should be noted that race and ethnicity are separate items in the U.S. Census, with ethnicity referring to whether a respondent is Latino/Hispanic. Hence, because people of Latino/Hispanic origin could be of any race, they were included in the appropriate racial groups. However, overall, 16.9% were Latino/Hispanic. In addition, Gates (2011) found that approximately 3.8% of the adult American population consists of the LGBT minority group. Therefore, this study's sample seems to have been representative of the American population.

Materials and Measures

Job ads. Two advertisements depicting a fictional company were used (see Appendix A). These ads were created for an entry-level associate position, and they were similar to job ads used in the literature (e.g., Highhouse, Brooks-Laber, Lin, & Spitzmueller, 2003; Reeve & Schultz, 2004). Both ads described the same job specific content, using the same hypothetical company. However, the difference in content was the stance for diversity that was communicated. Specifically, one advertisement featured the “All-Inclusive,” experimental condition, whereas the other advertisement featured the “Affirmative Action,” control condition. The job ad content was adapted from Williams and Bauer’s (1994) materials, but the all-inclusive diversity statement was revised to include federally “unprotected” classes such as the LGBT minority. The ads in both conditions highlighted the company’s positive benefit packages, high salaries, and amount of paid vacation time, with a general statement asserting that the company is an “Equal Employment Opportunity” employer. The decision to make the “equal opportunity employer” statement the control group was based on research suggesting
almost all Fortune 500 companies feature these kinds of general statements, instilling a norm among popular organizations ("Uniform Guidelines," 1978).

**Demographics.** A general demographics form was also administered. Although a diverse sample of participants was desired for this study, no participants were excluded. It is important to note that the demographic items for "gender" and "race" were required for successful completion as these items were important to this study, but the "race" item did provide a "rather not respond" option. The "sexual orientation" item also included a "rather not respond" option. All of the items with the exception of "gender" and "race" were soft-required, which meant that participants did not have to respond to those items, but if they did that, the survey software reminded them that the items were left blank before submitting a final version of their survey. Please see Appendix B for a list of the demographic items.

**Manipulation check.** A manipulation check was utilized in this study to ensure participants carefully read the advertisement. This manipulation check tested for recognition of the manipulation and consisted of the following item: "Did the job ad explicitly state that ABC Consulting has moved aggressively to assure that minorities, including federally unprotected classes such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT), not only have equal access to employment but also get equal consideration for advancement?" Participants in the A1 condition had to answer "yes" to pass this check, whereas participants in the AA condition had to select "no" to pass this check. If participants failed this manipulation check, they were excluded from the study and were not compensated for their participation.
Workplace diversity perceptions. The Workplace Diversity Scale (WDS) was adapted for this study to examine the strength of the content in the job ads regarding the climate for diversity that is conveyed for the fictitious company (De Meuse & Hostager, 2001). The WDS was developed to determine people's perceptions of an organization's diversity climate based upon various indicators communicated. Five dimensions of perceptions of diversity underlie this 20-item scale, consisting of: emotional reactions, judgments, behavioral reactions, personal consequences, and organizational outcomes. For this study, these 20 items were adapted to focus specifically on the fictional company featured in the job ads. This survey was used as an indicator to ensure that the diversity statement in the experimental condition was successfully manipulated. Due to the negatively-phrased descriptors used within the survey, multiple items were reverse scored. A Cronbach's alpha of .95 was found for this 20-item scale. In addition to the 20 WDS items, one item was created to gather more information about people's perceptions of this company's appreciation of the LGBT minority group: "ABC Consulting is appreciative of LGBT employees." In order to examine the overall strength of the manipulation, the "All-Inclusive" diversity statement condition should be rated higher than the "Affirmative Action" diversity statement condition on the additional item. Moreover, if including information about the LGBT group indeed enhances diversity perceptions, then the WDS should also be rated higher in the "all-inclusive" condition than in the "affirmative action" condition.

Organizational attraction. After examining the dimensionality of organizational attraction, Houghouse, Lievens, and Sinar (2003) determined there were three appropriate dimensions corresponding with the overall construct: general company attractiveness,
intentions to pursue, and prestige. Highhouse and colleagues developed a 15-item scale to measure organizational attraction, with five items per dimension. Company attractiveness items included in the scale incorporated content from established research (e.g., Fisher et al., 1979; Turban & Keon, 1993), and one item was reverse-scored. Intentions to apply items were adapted from other scales (e.g., Ployhart & Ryan, 1998; Rynes & Miller, 1983; Schwoerer & Rosen, 1989). Lastly, prestige items were also drawn from various sources (e.g., Highhouse et al., 1998; Turban et al., 1998). Findings suggested that a three-factor model best fit the data, resulting in the final 15-item scale of organizational attraction (please see Appendix D). The company attractiveness dimension encompasses individuals' overall feelings toward an organization. The intentions dimension addresses a person's goal to apply to the organization. Finally, the prestige dimension refers to an individual's perception of the social norms of the organization. Highhouse et al. reported the following Cronbach's alphas: .88 for the general company attractiveness dimension, .82 for the intentions to pursue dimension, and .83 for the prestige dimension. In this study, the following Cronbach’s alphas were found: .92 for the general company attractiveness dimension, .87 for the intentions to pursue dimension, and .90 for the prestige dimension. Each statement was rated using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

Procedure

Approval to conduct this study was sought from Xavier University's Institutional Review Board (IRB; please see Appendix E for the IRB approval letter). After receiving IRB approval, materials and measures were uploaded to SurveyGizmo (an online survey hosting site) for participants to access through the MTurk database (see Appendix F for
the recruitment posting and the MTurk interface). Only the principal investigator and the faculty advisor had access to this survey and the collected data. After data collection was complete, the principal investigator manually deleted all the responses from the SurveyGizmo website, but an electronic copy of the data file that had no identifying information was permanently retained by the principal investigator and the faculty advisor on password-protected computers.

On the MTurk site, once participants selected the HIT for this study, they were presented with the informed consent statement (see Appendix G). After participants agreed to participate, they were randomly assigned to one job advertisement depicting one of two conditions: a description of a company with a general stance for diversity initiatives or a description of the same company with an all-inclusive stance including strong support for the LGBT minority group. After viewing the job advertisement, participants were asked to complete the measures of the study. The first measure presented was the organizational attraction scale. Then, the manipulation check and the WDS were presented in order to ensure that the participants carefully read the job ad and to assess the type of diversity climate the participants felt the company may have had based on the job ad they read, respectively. After completing the measures, a demographics form was provided. Although responding to most of these demographic items was optional, the gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and nationality items were required due to the nature of this study. However, with the exception of gender (a key variable in this study), a “rather not respond” option was available for these items. Once participants submitted their responses, they were directed to a debriefing form (please see Appendix H).
Chapter IV

Results

Workplace Diversity Perceptions

As previously mentioned, the 20-item WDS was adapted for this study to examine the strength of the job ad content regarding the diversity climate conveyed for the fictitious company. Moreover, one item was added to gather more information about people’s perceptions of this company regarding appreciating the LGBT minority group (“ABC is appreciative of LGBT employees”). Therefore, the WDS and the LGBT appreciation item were included to provide more information regarding the overall strength of the manipulation, in addition to the main manipulation check. As previously stated, the “All-Inclusive” (AI) diversity statement condition should be rated significantly higher than the “Affirmative Action” (AA) diversity statement condition on the LGBT appreciation item if the manipulation was successful. Along similar lines, WDS scores should be significantly higher for the AI group than the AA group. However, instead of simply running an independent-samples t-test with condition as the main independent variable, gender was included, and a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine if an interaction between gender and condition emerged on either the LGBT item or the WDS.

Therefore, a 2 x 2 between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the effects of gender and condition on responses to the additional LGBT item. Results showed that there was a significant main effect of condition. $F(1,$
222) = 52.96, \( p < .001 \), \( \eta_p^2 = .19 \), such that the job advertisement content featured in the AA condition (\( M = 4.20, SD = 0.70 \)) solicited more agreement with the statement than did the content featured in the AA condition (\( M = 3.49, SD = 0.80 \)). Therefore, this provides further evidence of the successful manipulation of job advertisement content, suggesting that the type of diversity initiative impacted how participants perceived the level of appreciation for LGBT employees. There was no significant interaction between gender and condition, \( F(1, 222) = .780, p = .378, \eta_p^2 = .00 \) (please refer to Table 1 for the means and standard deviations by condition). Moreover, there was no significant main effect of gender, \( F(1, 222) = .42, p = .519, \eta_p^2 = .00 \). In other words, men (\( M = 3.84, SD = 0.85 \)) and women (\( M = 3.92, SD = 0.77 \)) did not differ significantly on their responses to this item.

A 2 x 2 between-subjects ANOVA was also conducted to investigate the effects of gender and condition on the WDS. Results showed that although there was no significant main effect for condition, there was a significant interaction effect between gender and condition on the WDS, \( F(1, 222) = 4.14, p = .043, \eta_p^2 = .02 \), such that the effect of diversity initiative on the WDS was stronger for women than men (please refer to Table 1 for the means and standard deviations by condition). Specifically, as the job advertisement content changed from AA to AI, women reported more positive perceptions than men. Please see Figure 1 for the plotted interaction. However, it should be noted that the relatively small effect size suggests that this may not be a practically
### Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations for the WDS and LGBT item by Condition*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity Condition</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity Condition</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBT item</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Interaction between diversity initiative condition (AI vs. AA) and gender (male vs. female) on the WDS.
significant finding. Moreover, a significant main effect of gender was found, $F(1, 222) = 18.90, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .08$, such that women reported more positive perceptions of workplace diversity ($M = 4.15, SD = 0.51$) than men ($M = 3.76, SD = 0.71$). However, these results should be interpreted with caution because Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was significant, $F(3, 222) = 3.06, p = .029$, implying that the homogeneity of variance assumption has been violated.

**Organizational Attraction**

Prior to running the main analyses, the correlations among the three main dependent variables (i.e., general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige) were found to determine if one MANOVA or multiple ANOVAs would be more appropriate. It was found that these variables were highly correlated (please see Table 2); therefore, using multiple one-way ANOVAs instead of a MANOVA was justified. Hence, to test all the hypotheses, three one-way ANOVAS were conducted. Please refer to Table 3 for the ANOVA results.

The first set of hypotheses focused on examining the effect of diversity initiative on each dimension of organizational attraction. Specifically, *Hypothesis 1a* posited that participants in the AI diversity condition would rate the diversity climate of the fictitious company higher on general attractiveness than participants in the AA diversity initiative condition. Results showed that there was no significant effect of type of diversity initiative on general company attractiveness, $F(1, 222) = 1.60, p = .208, \eta^2_p = .01$. In other words, general company attractiveness did not significantly differ between the AI condition ($M = 3.98, SD = 0.79$) and the AA condition ($M = 3.87, SD = 0.74$). Therefore, *Hypothesis 1a* was not supported.
Table 2

*Correlations Among Organizational Attraction Dimensions, WDS, and LGBT Item*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General Company Attractiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Intentions to Pursue</td>
<td>.87**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Prestige</td>
<td>.73**</td>
<td>.78**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. WDS</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. LGBT Item</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 226.*

**ρ < .01.
### Table 3

**One-Way Between-Subjects ANOVA Results for Organizational Attraction Dimensions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>$\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Company Attractiveness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>8.47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.47</td>
<td>15.45</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Condition</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>121.68</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intentions to Pursue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>10.93</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>.335</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Condition</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105.19</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prestige</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
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<td>4.29</td>
<td>10.64</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Condition</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>.727</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>89.37</td>
<td>222</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 1b posited that there would be a significant main effect of diversity condition on intentions to pursue, such that participants would report higher intentions to pursue a job at the organization that depicts the AI diversity statement than the organization that provides the AA statement. Results showed that there was no significant effect of type of diversity initiative on intentions to pursue the company, $F(1, 222) = 0.94, \rho = .335, \eta_p^2 = .00$. In other words, intentions to pursue did not significantly differ between the AI condition ($M = 3.93, SD = 0.72$) and the AA condition ($M = 3.86, SD = 0.69$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1b was also not supported.

Lastly, Hypothesis 1c posited that there would be a significant main effect of diversity condition on company prestige, such that participants would report higher levels of prestige for the organization that depicts the AI diversity statement than the organization that provides the AA statement. Results showed that there was a significant effect of type of diversity initiative on company prestige perceptions, $F(1, 222) = 10.64, \rho < .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$, such that participants in the AI diversity initiative condition ($M = 3.93, SD = 0.62$) found the fictitious company to be more prestigious than those in the AA diversity initiative condition ($M = 3.65, SD = 0.66$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1c was supported.

To examine the second set of hypotheses, the interaction between gender and type of diversity condition on each dimension of organizational attraction was examined (please refer to Table 4 for the means and standard deviations by condition). Specifically, Hypothesis 2a posited that there would be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition on general company attractiveness, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on general company attractiveness would be stronger for females
### Means and Standard Deviations for Organizational Attraction Dimensions by Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity Condition</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$N$</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$N$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Company Attractiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$AI$</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
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<td>$AA$</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>62</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intentions to Pursue</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$M$</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$AI$</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>$M$</td>
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<td>$AI$</td>
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<td>71</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>42</td>
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</table>
than males. Results showed that there was no significant interaction between gender and type of diversity initiative on general attractiveness and gender, $F(1, 222) = 1.70, p = .194, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Therefore, Hypothesis 2a was not supported.

Hypothesis 2b posited that there would be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on intentions to pursue would be stronger for females than males. Results showed that there was no significant interaction between gender and type of diversity initiative on intentions to pursue, $F(1, 222) = 1.39, p = .240, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Therefore, Hypothesis 2b was not supported.

Lastly, Hypothesis 2c posited that there would be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on prestige would be stronger for females than males. Results showed that there was no significant interaction between gender and type of diversity initiative on prestige, $F(1, 222) = 0.12, p = .727, \eta_p^2 = .00$. Therefore, Hypothesis 2c was not supported.

There was also a significant main effect of gender on each dimension of organizational attraction. Specifically, there was a significant main effect of gender on general company attractiveness, $F(1, 222) = 15.46, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .07$, job pursuit intentions, $F(1, 222) = 10.93, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$, and prestige, $F(1, 222) = 6.78, p = .010, \eta_p^2 = .03$. As a reminder, gender was not a main focus of the current study; therefore, these main effects for gender were not hypothesized.
Chapter V

Discussion

The current study examined the impact of diversity initiatives in job advertisements on organizational attraction. The current study was adapted from Williams and Bauer's (1994) study concerning organizational attraction and diversity statements. This study responded to a suggestion from the aforementioned researchers, which stated that future research should focus on different minority groups mentioned in recruitment materials than just racial minorities. Therefore, the current study utilized a minority group that is less represented, the LGBT minority group.

The first set of hypotheses predicted that there would be a main effect of diversity initiative condition (i.e., All-Inclusive or AI vs. Affirmative Action or AA) on organizational attraction. Specifically, Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c predicted that there would be a significant main effect of diversity condition on general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige, respectively, such that participants would report higher levels of general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige for the organization that depicted the AI diversity statement than the organization that provided the AA statement. Although results showed that there was no significant effect of condition on either general company attractiveness or job pursuit intentions, there was a significant main effect on prestige. Therefore, although Hypotheses 1a and 1b were not supported, Hypothesis 1c was supported.
A potential explanation for the lack of support for the first set of hypotheses regarding the main effect of condition on organizational attraction can be attributed to a cultural shift in how the United States views diversity. During the time the Williams and Bauer (1994) study was published, it is possible that the United States' culture regarding diversity was much less proactive than it is at the present time. Since the publication year, the United States has elected an African-American President, has had various minority group representatives in key political positions, and numerous Fortune 500 companies have placed supportive diversity initiatives and policies that show forward momentum in the diversity discussion. A year after the Williams and Bauer study was published (i.e., 1995), The White House (under the direction of President Bill Clinton) also revised what Affirmative Action meant and refined its purpose from a "quota system" to a way to effectively manage and identify discrimination. Therefore, it is quite possible that participants who experienced these occurrences reflected this culture shift in their responses, leading to a slight discrepancy in a main effect for condition on general attractiveness and job pursuit intentions that did not align with the results from the Williams and Bauer study. Specifically, as diversity awareness becomes more prevalent in society, the mere inclusion of diversity in the Affirmative Action condition may have been seen as positive.

This aforementioned explanation is also supported by the results from the exploratory analyses for the WDS, which showed that there was no significant difference in workplace diversity perceptions between the AI and AA conditions. Moreover, the means suggested that participants felt that the companies in both conditions seemed to value diversity. This aspect should be examined further in future research by either
attempting to control for cultural shifts, or following up with this study’s results to see if a future cultural shift has a similar impact. However, it should be mentioned that there was a significant effect of condition on LGBT appreciation perceptions. In other words, even though overall diversity perceptions were not affected by condition, LGBT perceptions were more favorable in the AI condition than in the AA condition. This suggests that instead of utilizing a global measure of diversity perceptions such as the WDS, it may be more effective to examine a facet of diversity perceptions by using something like the LGBT appreciation item.

Moreover, it should be noted that even though a main effect for condition was not found for general company attractiveness and intentions to pursue, there was a significant main effect of condition on prestige. A potential explanation as to why this was found may be due to more companies managing diversity, propelling the diversity conversation more mainstream, allowing job applicants to possibly perceive a company that has all-inclusive diversity policies and approaches as more contemporary than a company that does not communicate its diversity approaches. This may result in job applicants perceiving the company as prestigious based upon the growing popularity of these diversity initiatives. Moreover, the prestige dimension seems to heavily focus on social influences, including reputation, popularity, and status, which is not the case for general company attractiveness and job pursuit intentions (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003). Therefore, even though applicants may be equally attracted to both companies and equally likely to pursue a job at both companies, they may still perceive the company that used the all-inclusive message as more prestigious.
The second set of hypotheses predicted that there would be an interaction between condition and gender on organizational attraction. Specifically, Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c predicted there would be a significant interaction between gender and diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige, respectively, would be stronger for females than males. However, none of these hypotheses were supported.

A potential explanation for the lack of support for the second set of hypotheses can be attributed to previous research suggesting women tend to react more favorably than men to diversity messaging, regardless of the message or how explicit the message is (e.g., Martins & Parsons, 2007; Zonia & Kossek, 1993). This is further supported by the significant main effect of gender found. Specifically, although there was no support found for interaction effects, there was a main effect of gender on each dependent variable, such that women reported higher levels of general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige, regardless of the type of diversity initiative used in the job ad. Therefore, it seems that the message of inclusion resonates more with women and is more applicable to their experience in the workplace as opposed to men. These findings support the aforementioned explanation that women seem to react more favorably than men to a diversity message, regardless of the type of diversity message used.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical implications. The current study’s results have theoretical implications regarding the role of other minority groups in diversity research. Specifically, this study examined an under-researched minority group, namely the LGBT
group. Previous research has focused solely on race being the cause of differences in attitudes among diversity-related content (e.g., Avery, McKay, Wilson, & Tonicandel, 2007; Bobo, 1998), but the current study emphasized sexual orientation as opposed to race. Therefore, this study contributed to the recruitment literature as well as the diversity literature by investigating an under-researched group. Even though the current study did not have an adequate sample of racially diverse participants therefore prohibiting examination of how different racial minorities viewed the LGBT minority, the current study still enriches the current diversity literature because of how the LGBT minority was utilized in the study materials. With the additional emphasis on the LGBT minority, a less prominent minority group challenged the trend of racial focus in the literature so that more could be learned about how other minorities are perceived. This adds a very important extension to the current diversity literature as there is not enough focus on the LGBT minority group.

The current study also has theoretical implications for the literature in regards to gender differences among job applicants’ perceptions of job advertisements. As mentioned earlier, a significant main effect of gender was found on each dimension of organizational attraction, suggesting that women and men perceive job advertisements featuring diversity content differently, further supporting other research (e.g., Avery, 2003; Konrad & Spitz, 2003; Martins & Parsons, 2007). However, the current study also found that women tended to provide higher ratings of company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige than men. This can potentially be explained by a concept mentioned in previous literature that straight, White males see diversity messaging as a sort of “threat,” which refers to the idea that others outside of a specific minority group
(such as straight, White men) must forfeit certain benefits in order for another minority to gain because the diversity messaging is not targeted towards them (Hill, 2009).

Furthermore, other studies have explained this "threat" through examining how group interest impacts attitudes of diversity, such that if certain group members (e.g., White, straight, men) believe they would not benefit from a diversity program, they will perceive it much more negatively (Baron, 2001; Tougas, Beaton, & Veilleux, 1991). However, even though there was a significant effect of gender on organizational attraction, the means for men suggested neutral or positive perceptions of both diversity conditions (i.e., above 3.50), despite being lower than the overall means of women. This may be a positive finding as men may now be shifting from purely negative attitudes and perceptions of diversity, to a more all-inclusive approach, contrary to previous research which suggests that men view diversity messaging more negatively (Bobo, 1998; Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2007).

**Practical implications.** Results from the current study have specific implications for not only how we conceptualize diversity, but also how we manage diversity. With both the job advertisement content altered and focusing on the different perceptions between men and women, the current study is able to emphasize the need for organizations to "manage" diversity. By managing their diversity, companies may be able to formulate their own diversity stance to be competitive as a desired organization, and positively influence their employees' productivity and engagement (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009). The current study asserts that if a company wants to be both attractive and inspire applicants' intentions to pursue a position, the company can either include an Affirmative Action or an All-Inclusive diversity type of messaging in their job advertisements.
However, if an organization would like to also be seen as prestigious, the All-Inclusive type of diversity message content should probably be used.

The current study’s results have practical implications regarding how to attract both LGBT applicants as well as female applicants. Although the only main effect of condition was found for the prestige dimension, the exploratory analyses suggest that an All-Inclusive type of message could enhance positive perceptions of a company that shows support and appreciation for the LGBT minority group. Furthermore, the exploratory analyses regarding the WDS expand on the benefits of utilizing an all-inclusive diversity message, as it could positively enhance female applicants’ overall diversity perceptions of the company. Results from the current study assert that the inclusion of the LGBT minority can be seen as a more prestigious approach to managing diversity. This insinuates that there are numerous ways to effectively appeal to applicants through diversity messaging in job advertisements. Therefore, organizations could use this information when designing the type of diversity information that is communicated through job advertisements.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

There are a few limitations to this study. One involves using a hypothetical organization and corresponding job advertisement. Moreover, the job advertisements heavily emphasized the culture of the organization, which may have been difficult for some participants to provide an accurate perception of a company they knew so little about. However, this is a common practice in organizational attraction studies and increases internal validity. Future research could focus on enhancing external validity by using real companies with different job ads.
Additionally, although the strength of the manipulation of the diversity initiative was successful because the manipulation check ensured that participants were able to detect an effect, the all-inclusive condition was much more explicit and specific in how the organization supports diversity, whereas the Affirmative Action condition was much more implicit, vague, and used common legal jargon to convey a rather neutral stance for supporting diversity. However, using the Affirmative Action statement is similar to how it might be portrayed in real job ads, and the content was developed to be as realistic as possible for an experimental design. Moreover, the content was directly adapted from Williams and Bauer (1994). In reality, job seekers often have numerous companies to which they apply, and therefore can compare various aspects of the different companies to each other, as opposed to evaluating only one job ad. However, having a between-subjects design reduced demand characteristics and seemed more appropriate for this study than a within-subjects design.

Future research should focus on manipulating the content of the job advertisements even further. Although there is a noticeable difference in length due to the amount of content between each type of initiative (i.e., the All-Inclusive initiative featuring more information), the actual content can continually be altered to be more explicit. It also seems that using a more inclusive approach in job advertisements could attract more LGBT applicants, and therefore, this should be examined in the future. Moreover, future research could include other under-researched minority groups to examine if there are any changes in the trends from the current literature. This effort of exploring other underrepresented minority groups has also been suggested by Ruggs et al. (2013), who specifically mentioned the following minorities of interest: racial minorities.
in addition to those who are Black, LGBT individuals, older workers, individuals with
disabilities, those who are heavy, religious minorities, and those who face marital status
discrimination.

Another limitation concerns the diversity of the final sample. Although MTurk
was used for data collection, the sample was not as diverse as anticipated. Specifically,
the lack of diversity in racial composition prevented conducting additional analyses
examining any race differences. This was also true for diversity regarding sexual
orientation. However, the lack of diversity in the sample is somewhat counterbalanced by
using an experimental design, and therefore enhancing the internal validity of the results.
Also, as previously mentioned, the sample seems to be representative of the population
from which the sample was extracted, further increasing generalizability.

One final suggestion for future research would be to continue exploring various
relationships that the LGBT minority group may have with other constructs in the
workplace, as there is a strong need for more LGBT representation in current research.
For example, future studies could focus on how to enhance an LGBT employee’s job
satisfaction, organizational commitment, or productivity. As mentioned earlier, past
studies have simply generalized to “other” minority groups rather than specifically
focusing on the LGBT group. As previously mentioned, the LGBT minority group can
often be very difficult to visibly identify, which adds an additional layer of complexity to
understanding perceptions regarding the group when compared to a racial minority group.
Racial minority groups often have a well-established set of stereotypes and attitudes
associated with the group that could potentially be used by others to form their own
opinions. Research has strongly investigated these facets of attitudes and stereotypes
DIVERSITY INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRACTION

(Avery, 2003; Avery & McKay, 2006; Steele, 1997), and future research should continue this trend and explore the visibility issue regarding the LGBT minority group.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the current study's findings added to the expanding research examining the effect of including diversity content in job ads on job seekers' attraction to a company. The results of this study suggest that what is formally known as “Affirmative Action” may be as effective as an “All-Inclusive” approach that mentions the LGBT minority group in enhancing general company attractiveness perceptions and job pursuit intentions, but using an “All-Inclusive” approach might increase applicants' perceptions of company prestige. Future research should examine if LGBT applicants might be more attracted to companies that use an “All-Inclusive” approach than non-LGBT applicants. Moreover, results suggest that although females' overall diversity perceptions are enhanced when using an All-Inclusive diversity approach, females tend to be more attracted to companies that mention any type of diversity initiative than men. Future research should further examine these gender differences and should investigate the effect of including other under-researched minority groups in diversity initiatives on organizational attraction.
Chapter VI

Summary

Many organizations in the United States incorporate a diversity initiative into their corporate culture. A diversity initiative is a proposed movement that outlines an organization's stance on issues of diversity and communicates ideologies of the culture, climate, and values. The purpose of the current study was to examine the impact of job advertisements conveying different diversity messaging on organizational attraction. This study is important as it strives to fill a gap in the literature regarding under-researched minorities, namely the LGBT minority. This study will also investigate whether this effect might differ between males and females.

There can be multiple benefits for a company that includes diversity initiatives, such as superior problem solving and expanded customer bases (Cox, 1994; Robinson & Dechant, 1997; Von Bergen et al., 2002). Other benefits include increased intergroup relations, stronger employee engagement, lower turnover and absenteeism among minorities, lower group conflict (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009), heightened understanding of international customers, and increased employee satisfaction, and positive perceptions of procedural justice can all be achieved (Pendry, Driscoll, & Field, 2007; Robinson & Dechant, 1997; Stevens, Plaut, & Sanchez-Burks, 2008; Volpone & Avery, 2010).

In addition to the business benefits, there is also an ethical component. A common belief among non-minority groups is equal treatment must come at the expense of their own benefits (Hill, 2009). Research suggests that procedural justice mediates the
relationship between affective commitment and perceived racial discrimination, and that affective commitment mediated the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behaviors (Triana & Garcia, 2009). The main assertion behind this area of research is the similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971), which suggests that people distinguish others from visible differences and are attracted to others who are similar to themselves, impacting their affective commitment.

Researchers have asserted that previous research has focused too heavily on racial minorities (e.g., Hill, 2009; Williams & Bauer, 1994; Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998). Hill (2009) studied the implications of explicitly including the non-racially identified minority group (LGBT community) in organizational diversity initiatives and identified there could potentially be positive outcomes, such as LGBT members being able to live openly within the workplace, which has been associated with increased job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational loyalty for LGBT members (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002). On the other hand, potential barriers that the organization may face for including LGBT members in an initiative include potential disgruntled employees, loss of productivity on behalf of the disgruntled, and lower organizational commitment (Hill, 2009). Despite researching these potential benefits and barriers, little has been examined concerning how the inclusion of the LGBT minority could impact job seekers’ attraction to an organization.

Organizational Attraction

Organizational attraction is an individual’s affective and attitudinal thoughts about a certain company which are taken into consideration for employment purposes (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003). Increased organizational attraction can be achieved
by communicating a value for employee rights, rather than "employment-at-will" scenarios (Schwoerer & Rosen, 1989). This is a crucial implication for minority applicants because research has shown that minority members are more likely to be attracted to a company that explicitly states a supportive stance for minorities, especially if that support has an effect on possible management opportunities (Avery, 2003).

Research has suggested that diversity management strategies impact three dimensions of organizational attraction differently: general company attractiveness, intentions to pursue, and prestige (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003). General company attractiveness is simply an initial feeling of interest, whereas intentions to pursue are more specific feelings that imply further action. Lastly, prestige is a socially-based dimension, which includes employees' pride in working at the company (Highhouse et al., 2003).

The purpose of this study was to examine how diversity initiatives (All-Inclusive vs. Affirmative Action) in job ads affect organizational attraction. The following hypotheses were proposed regarding the main effect of diversity condition and the interaction between diversity condition and gender on organizational attraction:

*Hypothesis 1a:* There will be a significant main effect of diversity condition, such that participants will report higher levels of general company attractiveness for the organization that depicts the all-inclusive diversity statement than the organization that provides the affirmative action statement.

*Hypothesis 1b:* There will be a significant main effect of diversity condition, such that participants will report higher intentions to pursue a job at the organization
that depicts the all-inclusive diversity statement than the organization that provides the affirmative action statement.

Hypothesis 1c: There will be a significant main effect of diversity condition, such that participants will report higher levels of company prestige for the organization that depicts the all-inclusive diversity statement than the organization that provides the affirmative action statement.

Hypothesis 2a: There will be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on general company attractiveness will be stronger for females than males.

Hypothesis 2b: There will be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on intentions to pursue will be stronger for females than males.

Hypothesis 2c: There will be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on prestige will be stronger for females than males.

Method

Participants

Participants were selected using Amazon.com’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) system, which is an online survey “marketplace” where people are paid to complete Human Intelligence Tests (HITs). Participants were restricted to people who were at least 18 years old, living in the United States, and who had a HIT rate of at least 95%.

Participants were paid $0.50 for participating, if they passed two quality checks and one manipulation check. A total of 269 people participated, but 43 participants were
discarded due to failing either the manipulation check or at least one of the quality checks included in the study, which resulted in a final sample size of 226 participants. All 226 participants provided demographic information, but one participant did not respond to the item "Have you ever been previously employed?" About 41% were female. The average age was 33.10 years ($SD = 11.91$ years). About 77% reported they were Caucasian, 10% reported they were African-American, 8% reported they were Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% reported they were Latino/Hispanic, 1% reported they were Native-American, and 1% reported they were Biracial/Multiracial. In regards to sexual orientation, 90% reported they were Straight, 7% reported they were Bisexual, 1% reported they were Gay, 1% reported they were Lesbian, 0.5% reported they were Questioning/Unsure, and 0.5% reported they would rather not respond. About 96% reported they had been previously employed. Moreover, 49% reported they were working full-time, 20% reported they were employed part-time, and 31% reported they were not employed. Lastly, 37% of the sample reported themselves as active job seekers.

**Materials and Measures**

**Job ads.** Two advertisements depicting a fictional company were used (see Appendix A). These ads were created for an entry-level associate position, and they were similar to job ads used in the literature (e.g., Highhouse, Brooks-Laber, Lin, & Spitzmueller, 2003). Both ads described the same job specific content, using the same hypothetical company, but one advertisement featured the "All-Inclusive (AI)" experimental condition, whereas the other advertisement featured the "Affirmative Action (AA)" control condition. The job ad content was adapted from Williams and
Bauer’s (1994) materials, but the all-inclusive diversity statement was revised to include federally “unprotected” classes such as the LGBT minority.

**Demographics.** A demographics form was also administered (see Appendix B). The “gender” and “race” items were required, as these items were important to this study, but the “race” item provided a “rather not respond” option. The “sexual orientation” item also included a “rather not respond” option. All of the items with the exception of “gender” and “race” were soft-required, which meant that participants did not have to respond to those items, but if they did that, the survey software reminded them that the items were left blank before submitting a final version of their survey.

**Manipulation check.** A manipulation check was utilized in this study to ensure participants carefully read the advertisement. This manipulation check consisted of the following item: “Did the job ad explicitly state that ABC Consulting has moved aggressively to assure that minorities, including federally unprotected classes such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT), not only have equal access to employment but also get equal consideration for advancement?” If participants failed this item, they were excluded from the study and were not compensated for their participation.

**Workplace diversity perceptions.** The Workplace Diversity Scale (WDS) was adapted for this study to examine the strength of the content in the job ads regarding the climate for diversity that is conveyed for the fictitious company (De Meuse & Hostager, 2001). Five dimensions of perceptions of diversity underlie this 20-item scale, consisting of: emotional reactions, judgments, behavioral reactions, personal consequences, and organizational outcomes. An additional item was added, serving as an additional
manipulation check. This item stated “ABC Consulting is appreciative of LGBT employees” (see Appendix C).

**Organizational attraction.** After examining the dimensionality of organizational attraction, Hightower et al. (2003) determined there were three appropriate dimensions underlying this construct: general company attractiveness, intentions to pursue, and prestige. This scale is a 15-item scale of organizational attraction, where each statement was rated using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 = *Strongly Disagree* and 5 = *Strongly Agree* (see Appendix D).

**Procedure**

Approval to conduct this study was sought from Xavier University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB; see Appendix E). Participants accessed the SurveyGizmo survey link through the MTurk database through a recruitment post (see Appendix F). Once participants selected the HIT for this study, they were presented with the informed consent statement (see Appendix G). After agreeing to participate, participants were randomly assigned to one job advertisement depicting either the AI or the AA condition. After viewing the advertisement, participants were asked to complete the organizational attraction scale, the manipulation check, the WDS, and a demographics form. Once participants submitted their responses, they were directed to a debriefing form (see Appendix H).

**Results**

**Workplace Diversity Perceptions**

A 2 x 2 between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the effects of gender and condition on responses to the additional LGBT item
(see Table 1). Results showed that there was a significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 222) = 52.96, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .19$, such that the job advertisement content featured in the A1 condition ($M = 4.20, SD = 0.70$) solicited more agreement with the statement than did the content featured in the AA condition ($M = 3.49, SD = 0.80$). There was no significant interaction between gender and condition, $F(1, 222) = .780, p = .378, \eta^2_p = .00$. Moreover, there was no significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 222) = .42, p = .519, \eta^2_p = .00$. In other words, men ($M = 3.84, SD = 0.85$) and women ($M = 3.92, SD = 0.77$) did not differ significantly on their responses to this item.

A 2 x 2 between-subjects ANOVA was also conducted to investigate the effects of gender and condition on the WDS (see Table 1). Results showed that although there was no significant main effect for condition, there was a significant interaction effect between gender and condition on the WDS, $F(1, 222) = 4.14, p = .043, \eta^2_p = .02$, such that such that as the job advertisement content changed from AA to A1, women reported more positive perceptions than men (see Figure 1 for the plotted interaction). Moreover, a significant main effect of gender was found, $F(1, 222) = 18.90, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .08$, such that women reported more positive perceptions of workplace diversity ($M = 4.15, SD = 0.51$) than men ($M = 3.76, SD = 0.71$). However, these results should be interpreted with caution because Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances was significant, $F(3, 222) = 3.06, p = .029$, implying that the homogeneity of variance assumption was violated.

**Organizational Attraction**

Prior to running the main analyses, the correlations among the three main dependent variables were examined. Given that these variables were highly correlated (see Table 2), using multiple one-way ANOVAs instead of a MANOVA was justified.
Hence, to test all the hypotheses, three one-way ANOVAS were conducted (see Tables 3 and 4).

The first set of hypotheses focused on examining the effect of diversity initiative on each dimension of organizational attraction. Specifically, Hypothesis 1a posited that participants in the AI diversity condition would rate the diversity climate of the fictitious company higher on general attractiveness than participants in the AA diversity initiative condition, and was not supported $F(1, 222) = 1.60, \ p = .208, \ \eta^2_p = .01$. Hypothesis 1b posited that there would be a significant main effect of diversity condition on intentions to pursue, such that participants would report higher intentions to pursue a job at the organization that depicts the AI diversity statement than the organization that provides the AA statement, and was also not supported $F(1, 222) = 0.94, \ p = .335, \ \eta^2_p = .00$. Lastly, Hypothesis 1c posited that there would be a significant main effect of diversity condition on company prestige, such that participants would report higher levels of prestige for the organization that depicts the AI diversity statement than the organization that provides the AA statement, and was supported $F(1, 222) = 10.64, \ p < .001, \ \eta^2_p = .05$.

To examine the second set of hypotheses, the interaction between gender and type of diversity condition on each dimension of organizational attraction was examined. Specifically, Hypothesis 2a posited that there would be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition on general company attractiveness, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on general company attractiveness would be stronger for females than males, and was not supported $F(1, 222) = 1.70, \ p = .194, \ \eta^2_p = .01$. Hypothesis 2b posited that there would be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on intentions...
to pursue would be stronger for females than males, and was also not supported $F(1, 222) = 1.39, p = .240, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Lastly, Hypothesis 2c posited that there would be a significant interaction between gender and type of diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on prestige would be stronger for females than males, and was also not supported $F(1, 222) = 0.12, p = .727, \eta_p^2 = .00$. There was also a significant main effect of gender on each dimension of organizational attraction. Specifically, there was a significant main effect of gender on general company attractiveness, $F(1, 222) = 15.46, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .07$, job pursuit intentions, $F(1, 222) = 10.93, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$, and prestige, $F(1, 222) = 6.78, p = .010, \eta_p^2 = .03$. As a reminder, gender was not a main focus of the current study; therefore, these main effects for gender were not hypothesized.

**Discussion**

The first set of hypotheses predicted that there would be a main effect of diversity initiative condition (i.e., All-Inclusive or AI vs. Affirmative Action or AA) on organizational attraction. Specifically, *Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c* predicted that there would be a significant main effect of diversity condition on general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige, respectively, such that participants would report higher levels of general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige for the organization that depicted the AI diversity statement than the organization that provided the AA statement. Although results showed that there was no significant effect of condition on either general company attractiveness or job pursuit intentions, findings showed that there was a significant main effect on prestige. Therefore, although *Hypotheses 1a and 1b* were not supported, *Hypothesis 1c* was supported.
A potential explanation for the lack of support for the first set of hypotheses regarding the main effect of condition on organizational attraction can be attributed to a cultural shift in how the United States views diversity. During the time of the Williams and Bauer (1993) study, Affirmative Action was re-defined causing people to view the initiative much different than before. It is quite possible that participants who experienced more diversity awareness in society, the mere inclusion of diversity in the Affirmative Action condition may have been seen as positive and reflected this culture shift in their responses, leading to a slight discrepancy in a main effect for condition on general attractiveness and job pursuit intentions that did not align with the results from the Williams and Bauer study.

The second set of hypotheses predicted that there would be an interaction between condition and gender on organizational attraction. Specifically, Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c predicted there would be a significant interaction between gender and diversity condition, such that the effect of type of diversity initiative on general company attractiveness, job pursuit intentions, and prestige, respectively, would be stronger for females than males. However, none of these hypotheses were supported. A potential explanation for the lack of support for the second set of hypotheses can be attributed to previous research suggesting women tend to react more favorably than men to diversity messaging, regardless of the message or how explicit the message is (e.g., Martins & Parsons, 2007; Zonia & Kossek, 1993). These findings support the aforementioned explanation that women seem to react more favorably than men to a diversity message, regardless of the type of diversity message used.
Theoretical and Practical Implications

The current study's results have theoretical implications regarding the role of other minority groups in diversity research. Previous research has focused solely on race being the cause of differences in attitudes among diversity-related content (e.g., Avery, McKay, Wilson, Tonidandel, 2007; Bobo, 1998), but the current study adds a very important extension to the current diversity literature as there is not enough focus on the LGBT minority group. The current study also has theoretical implications for the literature in regards to gender differences among job applicants' perceptions of job advertisements. Some of the current study's results suggest that women and men do perceive job advertisements featuring diversity content differently, further supporting other research (e.g., Avery, 2003; Konrad & Spitz, 2003).

There are also practical implications that can be extracted from these results. Results indicate that by managing their diversity, companies may be able to formulate their own diversity stance to be competitive as a desired organization, and positively influence their employees' productivity and engagement (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009). The current study asserts that if a company wants to be both attractive and inspire applicants' intentions to pursue a position, the company can either include an Affirmative Action or an All-Inclusive diversity type of messaging in their job advertisements. However, if an organization would like to also be seen as prestigious, the All-Inclusive type of diversity management content should probably be used as suggested by the exploratory analyses.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

There are a few limitations to this study. One concern involves using a hypothetical organization. Although this is a common practice in organizational attraction
studies and increases internal validity, future research could focus on enhancing external validity by using real companies. Additionally, although the strength of the manipulation of the diversity initiative seems to have been successful, the AI condition was more explicit and specific in how the organization supports diversity than the AA condition. However, using the AA statement is similar to how it might be portrayed in real job ads, and the content was developed to be as realistic as possible for an experiment. Job seekers also often have numerous companies to which they apply, as opposed to evaluating only one job ad. However, having a between-subjects design reduced demand characteristics and seemed more appropriate for this study than a within-subjects design. Although MTurk was used for data collection, the sample was not as racially diverse as anticipated, prevented conducting additional analyses examining any race differences. This was also true for diversity in the survey regarding sexual orientation.

Future research should focus on further manipulating the content of the job advertisements. Moreover, future research could include other under-researched minority groups to examine if there are any changes in the trends from the current literature. Finally, future research should continue exploring various relationships that the LGBT minority group may have with other constructs in the workplace.

Conclusions

The current study’s findings added to the expanding research examining the effect of including diversity content in job ads on job seekers’ attraction to a company. Results suggest that what is formally known as “Affirmative Action” may be as effective as an “All-Inclusive” approach that mentions the LGBT minority group in enhancing general company attractiveness and job pursuit intentions, but using an “All-Inclusive” approach
might increase applicants' perceptions of company prestige. Moreover, results suggested that although females' overall diversity perceptions are enhanced when using an all-inclusive diversity approach, females tend to be more attracted to companies that mention any type of diversity initiative than men.
References


Appendix A

Job Advertisements

Imagine you are currently searching for a job and that you plan on applying to jobs in the near future (1-2 months from now). Imagine you came across the following job ad about a hypothetical company, ABC Consulting.

Please carefully read the following job ad and respond to items relating to your perceptions of the job being advertised and the company, ABC Consulting.

---

**Entry-Level Associate**

Entry-level associates are needed to contribute to a corporation with holdings in a variety of areas including entertainment and marketing. All majors, areas of expertise, and levels of relevant experience welcome!

ABC Consulting is rapidly growing. In the past five years, we have increased the number of offices we have opened across the U.S. We are also in the process of increasing the number of employees by 150%.

On average, employees of ABC Consulting are very satisfied with their work. We offer competitive salaries based on education level, past experience, and office location. Employees are also given a comprehensive benefits package.

*One of ABC Consulting’s most abiding beliefs is respect for the individual – respect for the dignity and rights of each person. To that end, ABC Consulting has moved aggressively to assure that minorities, including federally unprotected classes such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT), not only have equal access to employment but also get equal consideration for advancement.*

ABC Consulting adheres to the diversity guidelines to remain compliant as an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA) employer.

For more information and to apply to this position online, please visit our website at www.abcconsulting.com/careers

* This part signifies the experimental condition. Otherwise, the job ad in the control condition will have the same information presented in this job ad.
Appendix B

Demographic Form

Directions: Please complete all of the questions by either choosing the answer you feel best represents you, or by providing information in the blanks provided.

With which gender do you identify?
Male
Female

Age: ______

Sexual Orientation:
Straight
Gay
Lesbian
Bisexual
Questioning/Unsure
Rather Not Respond

With which racial or ethnic group do you identify?
Caucasian
African-American
Native-American
Asian/Pacific Islander
Latino/Hispanic
Biracial/Multiracial
Other
Rather Not Respond

Nationality (e.g., American)

What country do you live in? (e.g., United States)

Level of Education
Below High School
High School Diploma or equivalent
Some college, no degree
Associate’s Degree
Bachelor’s Degree (e.g., BA)
Master’s Degree (e.g., MBA)
Doctoral Degree (e.g., PhD)
Have you ever been previously employed?
Yes
No

Are you currently employed?
Yes, full-time
Yes, part-time
No

Are you currently searching for a job?
Yes
No

How many years of overall work experience do you have? (if in months, please write the word months after the number):

Please type your unique worker ID to receive payment, if eligible: __________________
Appendix C

Workplace Diversity Scale

This scale is not reproduced for copyright reasons, but below is the reference for this measure:

Appendix D

Organizational Attraction Scale

This scale is not reproduced for copyright reasons, but below is the reference for this measure:


10.1177/0013164403258403
Appendix E

IRB Approval Letter

April 15, 2013

Joshua Prickett
4012 Harwood Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45212

Re: Protocol #1202, Effect of Including the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Minority in Company Diversity Initiatives on Organizational Attraction

Dear Mr. Prickett:

The IRB has reviewed the materials regarding your study, referenced above, and has determined that it meets the criteria for the Exempt from Review category under Federal Regulation 45CFR46. Your protocol is approved as exempt research, and therefore requires no further oversight by the IRB. We appreciate your thorough treatment of the issues raised and your timely response.

If you wish to modify your study, including the addition of data collection sites, it will be necessary to obtain IRB approval prior to implementing the modification. If any adverse events occur, please notify the IRB immediately.

Please contact our office if you have any questions. We wish you success with your project!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Marcell E. Mullins, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Xavier University

[Stamp]

C: Dalit Diab, Advisor
Appendix F

Recruitment Posting and MTurk Interface

Recruitment Posting

Complete two surveys after viewing a fictitious job advertisement. The study should take 30 minutes to complete, but an hour is provided. All items, including the quality and manipulation checks, must be successfully completed for payment of $0.50.

MTurk Interface

This study aims to explore the impact of job advertisement content on applicants’ perceptions of an organization. This study should take approximately 30 minutes to complete, but you will be given 1 hour to complete it. You will be paid $.50 for participating in this study. However, please note that if you do not complete all required items or if you do not pass the quality and manipulation checks, you may not be eligible for compensation. The manipulation check ensures you have carefully read the job ad. You have to be at least 18 years old to participate in this study.

Please note that you will have to enter your unique ID TWICE, once HERE and once at the END of the study in order to be compensated, if eligible.


Also, please SAVE your unique identifier because you will be required to enter it once again AT THE END OF THE STUDY.

2. Please click the following link in order to access the survey. After you complete the survey, click the “Submit” button below.

Provide your worker ID here:

[Box for entering worker ID]

Survey link:

https://edu.surveygizmo.com/s/1219473/Thesis

[Submit]
Appendix G

Informed Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in a master’s thesis project conducted by Joshua Prickett at Xavier University. The purpose of this study is to investigate perceptions of a job selection process and organization.

In this study, you will be shown two brief job advertisements describing an open position at two different companies, and will be asked to answer questions about each job advertisement. You will also be asked to respond to a few demographic items. The total time to complete this task will be approximately 30 minutes, but you will be given 1 hour to complete the entire survey.

There are no known risks associated with this study. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from Xavier University. You will be paid $5.00 for participating in this study. However, please note that if you do not complete all required items or if you do not pass the quality and manipulation checks, you may not be eligible for compensation. The manipulation check ensures you have carefully read the job ad. You have to be at least 18 years old to participate in this study.

Although you will be required to enter your MTurk unique worker ID at the end of the survey to receive compensation if eligible, the researchers will not be able to access any identifying information you provided to Amazon or MTurk. Moreover, the researchers will not release any of your survey responses to Amazon or MTurk, and only the researchers conducting this study will have access to your responses. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. Finally, no analyses of any kind will be conducted prior to the removal of all MTurk ID numbers from the data set.

If you have any questions at any time during the study, you may contact the principal investigator, Joshua Prickett at prickettj@xavier.edu, or the faculty advisor, Dr. Dalia Diab at diabd@xavier.edu or. Questions about your rights as a research subject should be directed to the Xavier University’s Institutional Review Board at 513-745-2870.

By clicking “Next,” you agree to the following statement: I have been given information about this research study and its risks and benefits and have had the opportunity to ask questions and to have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I freely give my consent to participate in this research project.
Appendix H

Debriefing Form

Thank you for participating in our research project. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the type of diversity initiative (all-inclusive vs. affirmative action) an organization communicates will impact an applicant’s levels of organizational attraction and perceptions of the organization.

The company and job ads used in this study are fictitious. Please do not discuss the specifics of this study with anyone or distribute this form to any potential participants, as data collection is ongoing. If you have any questions or concerns, or if you would like to inquire about the results of this study, please contact the principal investigator, Joshua Prickett at prickettj@xavier.edu, or the faculty advisor, Dr. Dalia Diab at diabd@xavier.edu.