Managing workforce diversity: Framing justice and fairness in Australian organizations

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Abstract

Diversity management is a dominant management paradigm embraced by organizations in response to the heterogeneity of the contemporary workforce. It is therefore envisaged that research conducted in this area is theoretically and practically significant, especially if the outcomes can advance knowledge and influence improved ways of managing a diverse workforce. Rooted in social justice, the concept of diversity management originally emerged to address institutionalized systematic barriers and discrimination faced by marginalized groups. The progression of diversity management, however, saw a shift in focus, where a strong emphasis on the economic advantages of diversity became eminent. The emphasis on economic benefits raises the issue as to whether organizations are likely to value diversity for profits over attaining justice and fairness in the workplace for marginalized groups, and this steered this study to explore diversity management interventions of organizations.

The study argues that justice and fairness in the workplace is central to diversity management. It aims to address fundamental gaps in knowledge by uncovering the linkage between workplace justice and diversity management and identify how justice and fairness frame diversity management. To this end, a qualitative case study inquiry was conducted to capture organizational responsiveness to workforce diversity incidents encountered by Australia workplaces. Accordingly, data were collected from 23 Australian organizations representing a range of industry sectors. The study uses social justice theory informed by Amartya Sen’s ‘an idea of justice’ and John Rawls ‘justice as fairness’, and principles of organizational justice theory established by Colquitt (2001) and Greenberg (1993) as the philosophical foundation. To the researcher’s knowledge, this is the first empirical study to use a theoretical framework of social justice and organizational justice to identify how justice and fairness frame diversity management practices in organizations. Several key findings emerged that have theoretical and practical implications.

The study establishes that diversity management interventions aligned with Sen’s notion of justice is a superior approach to managing diversity – it enables the achievement of a higher level of justice and fairness in the workplace, fosters legitimacy of the process of diversity management, enhances reputation and promotes greater acceptance of organizations across a wide group of
stakeholders. Furthermore, such an approach improves organizational performance through promoting positive employee behaviours.

Importantly, the study frames diversity management through a justice and fairness perspective and offers a theoretically founded model that is of pragmatic value for organizations to manage workforce diversity. It provides practical examples of best practices for organizations to emulate and provides insights for diversity management practitioners, leaders, managers and agencies involved in diversity management to develop just and fair workplaces and societies.
Acknowledgement

This journey would not have been possible without the invaluable support, guidance and encouragement of many people. I owe my sincere gratitude to all of you.

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I dedicate this thesis to my brother Indranath, the most wonderful person I was privileged to have in my life. I wish you were here to see me graduate.
I, Pradeepa Dahanayake declare that this thesis:

1. Contains no material which has been accepted for the award to the candidate of any other degree or diploma, except where due reference is made in the text of the examinable outcome;
2. To the best of the candidate’s knowledge, contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text of the examinable outcome;
3. Where the work is based on joint research or publications, discloses the relative contributions of the respective workers or authors;
4. Jeanette Walton edited this thesis. The editing addressed only style and grammar and not its substantive content;
5. This thesis has met all the requirements of the Ethics Approval from the Swinburne University of Technology under SHR Project 2014/166.

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2018
Publications Arising from this Thesis

During the PhD study, some material presented throughout this thesis has been published in the form of journal articles and conference proceedings. The list is given below.

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHRI</td>
<td>Australian Human Resources Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALD</td>
<td>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEO</td>
<td>Equal employment opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAGDP</td>
<td>The Indigenous Australian Government Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTI</td>
<td>Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESB</td>
<td>Non-English speaking background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAP</td>
<td>Reconciliation Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGEA</td>
<td>Workplace Gender Equality Agency</td>
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This research study examines diversity management approaches of contemporary Australian workplaces, framed by way of a justice and fairness paradigm. In this chapter, the background to this study, along with the primary focus, research aims, objectives and the research questions, will be presented. This is followed by a discussion on the contributions and significance of this research, as well as the research methodology and scope. Lastly, an outline of the structure of this thesis is presented.

1.2. Background to the Research

Workforce diversity has gained much attention among both researchers and practitioners, and has given rise to the emergence of a dominant management paradigm in contemporary organizations across the globe (Al Ariss, Cascio & Paauwe 2014; Syed & Kramar 2009; Syed & Özbilgin 2009; van Ewijk 2011; Watson, Spoonley & Fitzgerald 2009). In view of the heterogeneity of its population, Australia stands out as a nation with an intensely diverse workforce, necessitating organizational responsiveness to a broad range of diverse groups in the workplace (Leveson, Joiner & Bakalis 2009; Shen et al. 2009; Syed & Kramar 2009). Kramar (2012 p. 253) illustrated Australia’s mosaic of diversity as a “fertile environment for the development and application of diversity management”.

Australia already has a strong legislative foundation of equal opportunity in the workplace (Australian Human Rights Commission 2008; 2017a; Burgess, French & Strachan 2009; Kramar 2012). In addition, Australian workplaces have been exposed to diversity management interventions since the introduction of affirmative action legislation for gender equality in the workplace in the 1980s (Strachan, Burgess & Sullivan 2004). Yet despite diversity management now being well-established in management discourse among many Australian organizations (Kramar 2012), and a strong legislative framework of equal employment opportunity (EEO), parity
and equality with regard to employment in a true sense is yet to fully evolve in Australia (Burgess, French & Strachan 2009; Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Kramar 2012; Rajendran, Farquharson & Hewege 2017). Therefore, with several demographic groups remaining disadvantaged and underprivileged in the workplace, Australia’s ‘fair go for all’ ideology for an egalitarian society remains far from reality.

Indigenous Australians, who represent 2.8 percent of the population according to the 2016 census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017a; hereafter ABS), experience a disproportionately high rate of unemployment compared to the rest of the population (Australian Human Rights Commission 2012). Furthermore, migrants often find the employment pathway challenging, even for those who possess educational and professional qualifications and skills (Australian Human Rights Commission 2012). People of mature age and those with disability, in spite of being willing to work, often encounter barriers that adversely affect their ability to actively participate in the workforce (Australian Human Rights Commission 2016). Women also continue to be disproportionately represented in organizational hierarchies, despite their advancements in education (ABS 2015a; Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2016a; 2017a). Those who are part of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTI) community continue to face discrimination in workplaces, often experiencing high levels of discomfort about disclosing their sexual identity in the broader community as well as in the workplace (Smith, Oades & McCarthy 2013).

These scenarios bear testimony to the existence of social stratification and systemic barriers in Australian organizations which create unequal regimes with regard to employment outcomes. Such barriers need to be addressed if Australia is to truly resonate with its egalitarian values of ‘mateship’ and ‘a fair go for all’. Its organizations need to create just and fair workplaces for all employees, to effectively manage the high prevalence of workforce diversity. As diversity management is a self-regulated voluntary initiative implemented by organizations (Strachan, Burgess & French 2009), organizational responsiveness to the issues connected with workforce heterogeneity plays a pivotal role in creating just and fair workplaces. This study therefore aims to identify how diversity management practices implemented by Australian organizations best support justice and fairness in the workplace.
Further validating the focus of this study, its review of previous literature shows that justice and fairness in the workplace are closely linked with diversity management (Choi & Rainey 2014; Downes, Hemmasi & Eshghi 2014; Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Goodman 2001; Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016; Kim & Park 2016; Ledimo 2015; Magoshi & Chang 2009; Roberson & Stevens 2006). Yet, as pointed out by several of these scholars, there has been very little research focusing on this association (Choi & Rainey 2014; Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016). In Australia as well as globally, there has been an absence of empirical research exploring the nexus between diversity management practices implemented by organizations and principles of justice and fairness in the workplace. Thus, in an attempt to address this gap, this study will provide insights as to how justice and fairness frame diversity management within Australian organizations.

The importance of managing diversity in an intensely heterogeneous landscape such as Australia, and of achieving justice and fairness in its workplaces for vulnerable groups in particular, along with the lack of previous corresponding empirical studies in this area, justifies this research.

1.3. Focus of the Current Study

The empirical research in this study is based on the analysis of organizational documents and interviews with diversity management practitioners in 23 Australian organizations. The study has focused on voluntary interventions to manage workforce diversity, to determine the context of diversity management applicable to Australia, based on the demographic composition of its contemporary workforce, and to investigate diversity management interventions of organizations through a justice and fairness lens.

Through their relational multi-level framework of diversity management, Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) identified three interrelated levels: macro-national; meso-organizational; and micro-individual. They argued that interventions at meso level should be influenced by both macro and micro levels if organizations are to address problems such as disparities in employment outcomes experienced by diverse employees. To this end, this research has mainly focused on meso-organizational-level diversity management interventions, including how they integrate with justice and fairness in the workplace. In doing so, it has considered both the contextual and
individual factors relevant to diversity management. This research has therefore examined corresponding organizational interventions at the meso-organizational level, within the context of Australia’s macro-environment, and has also taken into account the issues encountered by diverse employees at the micro-individual level. The study has also focused on the integration of justice and fairness in the workplace through diversity management interventions that address disparities and inequalities experienced by employees across multiple social identities. The justice and fairness perspective relevant to this research was informed by Amartya Sen’s ‘an idea of justice’ and John Rawls’ ‘justice as fairness’, and the four elements of organizational justice theory – distributive justice, procedural justice, informational justice and interpersonal justice (Colquitt 2001; Greenberg 1993) – that form the theoretical basis of this study.

1.4. Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

1.4.1. Research Aims and Objectives

The literature revealed two main streams of rationale that underscore diversity management: the business case; and the moral case (Kramar 2012; Olsen & Martins 2012; Qin, Muenjohn & Chhetri 2014; van Ewijk 2011). The business case rationale is based on economic legitimization, while the moral case for diversity management is based on social justice and focuses on the wellbeing of people (Köllen 2015). According to some scholars, the dominant emphasis in diversity management is the business case rationale (Qin, Muenjohn & Chhetri 2014; Spaaïj et al. 2014). However, its rigid application has been subject to severe criticism by some for undermining the disadvantages faced by diverse employees and ignoring power disparities that often exist in the workplace (Bleijenbergh, Peters & Poutsma 2010; Greene & Kirton 2011; Lorbiecki & Jack 2000; Noon 2007; O’Leary & Weathington 2006; Strachan, Burgess & French 2010).

In light of this, several scholars have recently advocated the need for alternative diversity management approaches, emphasizing and embedding principles of justice and fairness (Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Mor Barak 2011; Tomlinson & Schwabenland 2010; van Dijk, van Engen & Paauwe 2012). Despite such insights, a robust framework of diversity management practices that embed justice and fairness in the workplace is lacking in the literature. Thus this study has sought to address this research gap and provide a theoretically sound framework that will be of
pragmatic value to organizations when managing workforce diversity. Hence the primary research objective is:

To explore and identify the approaches adopted by Australian organizations to manage diversity through a justice and fairness frame.

In particular, this study aims to 1) understand Australian organizational views of the context of diversity management, 2) understand the elements of justice and fairness within diversity management practices of Australian organizations, and (3) investigate and describe how justice and fairness frame diversity management in organizations.

1.4.2. Research Questions

The following primary research question and two subsidiary research questions have guided this current study:

Primary Research Question: How do justice and fairness frame diversity management in organizations?

Subsidiary Research Question 1 How do Australian organizations perceive the context of diversity management?

Subsidiary Research Question 2 How do diversity management practices in Australian organizations reflect justice and fairness in the workplace?

1.5. Contributions and Significance of this Research

The outcomes of this study are expected to benefit many, including organizations, diversity management practitioners, organizational leaders and managers, agencies that promote diversity in the workplace such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Network and the Diversity Council of Australia, employees, and society in general. They will also contribute to existing knowledge on diversity management and workplace justice and fairness.
First, this study will offer valuable insights for organizations in successfully managing diverse workforces, including useful and pragmatic examples they can emulate when formulating and implementing relevant diversity management programs. In particular, it will contribute towards the development of a holistic diversity management framework that embeds principles of justice and fairness in the workplace – a tool that will enhance organizational capacity to create just and fair cultures and climates and pave the way to build harmonious and productive workplaces.

Second, it is anticipated that this study’s outcomes will enhance the knowledge of diversity management practitioners and further sharpen their skills and expertise. It is expected that they will motivate and help them to better promote diversity management as an organizational practice of strategic importance.

Third, it will likely enhance confidence and capabilities of organizational managers to effectively provide leadership to heterogeneous employees and teams. Managers will gain skills and knowledge and be better equipped to effectively lead heterogeneous teams and individuals.

Fourth, it is expected to provide valuable input to not-for-profit organizations such as the Diversity Council of Australia and the Equal Employment Opportunity Network of Victoria, and government agencies such as the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) that promote diversity and inclusion in Australian workplaces.

Fifth, the outcomes will likely contribute to the creation of an equal regime of employment for all employees, as well as societal wellbeing in general, particularly for underprivileged groups. In this context, the insights from this study will support the Australian ideology of a ‘fair go for all’.

Lastly, it is anticipated that it will contribute to the body of knowledge on diversity management and its link with justice and fairness in the workplace. As identified in this study’s review of literature, there have been several studies that focused on workplace justice and diversity management, but none that examined organizations’ diversity management practices by way of a justice and fairness framework founded on social justice and organizational justice theory. While diversity management practices have proliferated in organizations, there has been a lack of a comprehensive framework to specifically address issues of employment inequality. Thus this study
has explored and identified diversity management approaches of Australian organizations via a justice and fairness paradigm.

1.6. Research Methodology

1.6.1. Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from 23 Australian organizations across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, in the form of in-depth semi-structured interviews and organizational documents. Diversity management practitioners of these organizations were the key informants. In these interviews, participants were encouraged to provide a description of their real-life experience in managing diversity in the workplace. In addition, organizational documents relevant to diversity management were sourced through diversity management practitioners or their designated nominees. These practitioners were also requested to complete a questionnaire to obtain background information regarding organizational, workforce-related and organizational-performance-related data.

A total of 108 organizations were approached to participate, with 23 agreeing. Some interviews were carried out face-to-face at the premises of the organization, while others were conducted over the telephone. With the consent of participants, an electronic recorder was used to record interviews. The organizational documents were sourced in hardcopy as well as electronic format, depending on the preference of the organizational representative who provided the data.

1.6.2. Data Analysis

Once the data collection process was completed, detailed case notes were prepared for each organization, in line with Buchanan’s (2012) recommendation to treat each organization as a separate unit of analysis. Using NVivo software, the data were then coded into categories informed by the conceptual model, the research questions and the researcher’s own knowledge of the subject based on a review of literature. An agile approach was adopted, involving an iterative process which saw the continuous generation and reorganization of the categories. From this, relevant themes were identified, and, as recommended by Yin (2014), pattern matching and cross-case analysis and synthesis enabled a comparison of cases, with the findings then reported.
1.7. Definition of Key Terms

Australian organizations: This refers to organizations based in Australia that have an Australian workforce. Multinational organizations operating in Australia are included within this definition.

Dimensions of diversity: Dimensions of diversity refers to the similarities and differences of individuals in a given society based on the demographic characteristics that define human diversity and make up the multiple social groups.

Diversity management: Diversity management is a process that addresses heterogeneity of the workforce and is concerned with individual differences founded on socio-demographic factors that elicit identifiable dimensions of diversity in a given society (Shen et al. 2009). It is an internally driven, voluntary, management-initiated organizational process in response to the heterogeneity of the workforce (Burgess, French & Strachan 2009; Prasad, Prasad & Mir 2011; Shen et al. 2009). Further detail about definitions of diversity management is provided in sections 2.5.2 and 2.5.3 of Chapter 2.

Diversity management practitioners: For the purpose of this study, diversity management practitioners are individuals entrusted with managing the implementation of diversity management practices in organizations. In this study they are regarded as experts in the field of diversity management, and were therefore the key informants for the purpose of data collection.

Equal employment opportunity (EEO): EEO refers to the legislative framework relevant to non-discriminatory work practices that require compliance under the national and state legal systems (Shen et al. 2009). EEO is externally driven and imposes mandatory compliance obligations upon organizations (Burgess, French & Strachan 2009; Kramar 2012), and is narrower in scope than diversity management (Shen et al. 2009).

1.8 Research Scope
This study focuses on the context of workforce diversity and managerial responsiveness within Australian workplaces. Both large- and medium-sized Australian organizations were included in this study, based on the ABS’ (2001) classifications, where organizations with fewer than 20 employees are small, those with 20 or more but fewer than 200 are medium, and those with 200
or more employees are large. It was envisaged in this study that small organizations may not have sufficient diversity within the workforce, and may therefore not prioritize the implementation of diversity management practices, particularly due to a lack of resources. In contrast, it was anticipated that medium- and large-scale organizations would better reflect the diversity of the Australian population and also have more of need to implement diversity management practices.

1.9. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters, as follows.

Chapter 1 provides the background to the research, the research focus, the research aims and objectives, the research questions, and the contributions and significance of the research. Brief explanations of the research methodology, definitions of key terms, and the research scope are also presented.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of workforce diversity and the phenomenon of diversity management. It describes the nature of workforce diversity, its scope and application globally and, in Australia, the emergence and the development of diversity management, and the implications of workforce diversity relevant to positive and negative organizational outcomes.

Chapter 3 reviews diversity management literature and builds the philosophical foundation that guides this study. It also draws on the frameworks of diversity management approaches adopted by organizations and the ensuing outcomes, and establishes the link between diversity management and justice and fairness in the workplace. It identifies the theoretical gap that has been filled in this current research, and then concludes by presenting the conceptual framework that has guided this study in achieving its overall objective.

Chapter 4 discusses the methodological approach adopted in this study. First, it describes the research problem as identified here. Second, it outlines the primary research question and the subsidiary research questions that guided this study. Third, it provides a detailed account of the methodology adopted and explains the justification for adopting a qualitative case study approach, and describes the research process, the conceptual framework, and the research design that underpinned this empirical investigation. Fourth, it explains the manner in which the cases were
selected. Fifth, the techniques of data collection and analysis are presented. Lastly, it explains how the study ensured rigour, and then concludes by discussing the ethics approval process that was adhered to.

Chapter 5 provides insights into the diversity context in Australian workplaces, based on several themes that were identified. Through an in-depth analysis of organizational documents relevant to diversity management, including contrasting the diversity policies of the case study organizations, several themes that describe the diversity context of Australian workplaces are presented. This chapter first uncovers the relevance of EEO law to diversity management as outlined in the organizational policies. It next provides an overview of how organizations define the scope and meaning of diversity, and the key dimensions of diversity that gained organizational attention are then presented. It concludes by discussing several emerging dimensions of diversity identified in the Australian workplaces in this study.

Chapter 6 presents an in-depth discussion on how diversity management is implemented in Australian workplaces, based on the perceptions of diversity management practitioners. Through analysis of these practitioners’ interviews, representing 23 case study organizations, the chapter provides a detailed account of how diversity management practices are implemented. It also describes how diversity management integrates with the core organizational functions, with diversity management practices analysed and presented under each of these functions. The chapter concludes by presenting the dimensions of diversity focused on by the 23 case study organizations, based on how each one practises diversity management.

Chapter 7 reports on key empirical findings regarding the research questions that underpin this study. It discusses how organizations respond to key diversity issues prevalent in Australia workplaces, and frames these organizational interventions based on justice and fairness theories. These theories include organizational justice as categorized by Colquitt (2001), as well as social justice based on Amartya Sen’s idea of justice and John Rawls’ theory of justice as fairness. This chapter refers to 14 case studies, to describe and discuss diversity management interventions relevant to cultural diversity, gender equity, gender pay gaps, ageing workforces, LGBTI employees, indigenous employment and disability in the workforce. Two dissimilar cases for each of these diversity issues were used to compare and illustrate different approaches to managing
diversity. The chapter concludes by presenting the justice and fairness incidents relevant to managing diversity that were identified in this research.

Chapter 8 contextualizes and discusses the findings of this research with respect to the existing body of knowledge. It also delineates the key contributions, summarizing the main results and findings, and addressing the main objectives and the research questions. It discusses study limitations and makes recommendations for further research.

1.10. Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the foundation of the study regarding workforce diversity and justice and fairness in the workplace. It has provided the background to the research, including the focus, research aims, objectives and research questions. A justification for the research has also been presented. The chapter has highlighted the contributions and significance of the research to organizations, diversity practitioners, leaders and managers, employees, and to society. It has highlighted the importance of workplace justice and fairness in pursuance of Australia’s ideology of a ‘fair go for all’. The research methodology used was also briefly discussed, followed by an introduction to the key terminology and the study’s scope. Lastly, it has outlined the thesis content.
CHAPTER 2
WORKFORCE DIVERSITY IN ORGANIZATIONS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides background information on workforce diversity and corresponding diversity management. It begins by examining the concept of workforce diversity, including its scope and meaning as well as global- and country-specific perspectives. It then examines the integral dimensions of diversity most relevant to contemporary Australian workplaces. Next, the phenomenon of diversity management and its evolution is discussed, including its development both globally and within Australia. Lastly, the literature on the implications of workforce diversity is reviewed, including positive and negative outcomes and its role as a moderator in both contexts.

2.2. Workforce Diversity – An Overview

While current definitions of diversity are relatively broad, the term generally signifies the description of the nature of specific individuals through societal constructs (Kreitz 2008). The notion of workforce diversity stems from different social identities among members of the workforce (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Workforce diversity has been given a range of interpretations by management scholars and practitioners, mostly because the diversity concept is a social construct (Kreitz 2008; van Ewijk 2011).

This section examines some of the more widely accepted interpretations and definitions of workforce diversity to gain a better understanding of what it means. Questions such as ‘Does it mean different things to different people depending on the context?’, ‘Are there common elements in the diverse interpretations of workforce diversity?’ and ‘How should the term be defined for the purposes of this study?’ are explored in the following subsections.
2.2.1. The Meaning and Scope of Workforce Diversity

Diversity arises from the incidence and interaction of people who possess varied attributes of human characteristics (Spaaij et al. 2014). Williams and O’Reilly (1998, p. 81) adopted a social-psychological perspective when they described diversity as “any attribute that people use to tell themselves that another person is different”. The ‘attributes’ that differentiate groups or individuals are many, some visibly obvious, and others hidden deep (Spaaij et al. 2014; Williams & O’Reilly 1998; Zhang et al. 2008). Zhang et al. (2008) explained that readily detectable diversity attributes include ethnicity, sex and age, while more deep-level attributes relate to internal values and attitudes.

The main determinant of whether an individual’s particular identity warrants recognition as a dimension of diversity lies in the consequential work-life outcomes that arise as a result of such innate characteristics (van Ewijk 2011). Diversity can elicit positive or negative outcomes due to its propensity to either trigger a celebration of such differences or stimulate differential treatment that is often detrimental to a group or individual (Spaaij et al. 2014): for example, research suggests that individuals from diverse demographic groups, particularly minorities, often endure negative outcomes such as workplace exclusion, which in turn can lead to detrimental outcomes for employees as well as the organization (Findler, Wind & Mor Barak 2007; Spaaij et al. 2014). Conversely, individuals who possess ‘preferred attributes’ are often subject to workplace privileges (Spaaij et al. 2013; Wilson 2000). Thus, where such disparity occurs in the workforce, there is a need for the organization to align its management philosophies to address these contrasting employee experiences to ensure fair treatment for all employees.

While organizations often pay attention to visible or surface-level diversity, non-visible differences are equally important, as these also have the potential to cause workplace-related experiences and reactions from individuals and groups, which include negative reactions such as bias, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination (Harrison, Price & Bell 1998; Milliken & Martins 1996; Mor Barak 2011). Where differences are clearly visible, negative reactions are often instantaneously triggered, whereas less obvious or non-visible differences are not generally responded to unless they become clearer, such as through workplace disclosure (Milliken & Martin 1996; Mor Barak 2011).
As diversity is socially constructed (Spaaij et al. 2014; van Ewijk 2011), it cannot be defined in a fixed sense but rather in a manner that captures the “fluid nature of social identities and boundaries” (Spaaij et al. 2013, p. 348). Thus the work-life outcomes for employees as a result of diversity dimensions are dependent on socioeconomic, cultural and political attitudes, as well as ideologies that prevail in a social system within a given context and time period. Furthermore, an individual may have a combination of demographic characteristics that characterize a distinctive identity, leading to different work-life experiences (Syed & Pio 2010): for example, the challenges Muslim migrant women face in the Australian workplace are more complex than those of their male counterparts, as a result of a combination of ‘differences’ that include gender, ethnicity and religion (Syed & Pio 2010). This intersectionality of diversity first gained attention in the USA in the late 1980s, in relation to the limits of anti-discrimination legislation, which constrained the rights of women of African descent, who, due to the interlocking effects of gender and race, were disadvantaged under both identities (Alberti, Holgate & Tapia 2013; Carbado et al. 2013).

There is no clear consensus among researchers as to what diversity means or what its pivotal dimensions are (Spaaij et al. 2014). Mor Barak (2011) argued that diversity has different connotations based on varying dimensions. Thus the divergent and at times ambiguous meanings attached to diversity further reflect that the concept is socially constructed (van Ewijk 2011).

D’Netto, Smith and Pinto (2000, p. 78) uncovered a wide plethora of human characteristics that exist within society, causing them to define diversity as a concept that encompasses multiple dimensions:

Diversity is the differences and similarities between individuals and groups. Working with diversity is recognizing and valuing the uniqueness of oneself and others on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, culture, age, sexual orientation, religion, language, socioeconomic status, education, style, personality, family status, [and] physical and mental ability.

Bell (2007) further defined diversity as real or perceived differences between people, based on power or dominance between different identities that affect interactions and relationships, resulting in different outcomes. Bell emphasized differences that stem from significant power variances, including historic inequalities in society, as fundamental to the concept. However, similar to
Konrad (2003), Bell also cautioned that focusing on every single difference would make the concept boundary-less and meaningless.

Mor Barak (2011), on reviewing how workforce diversity has been defined, categorized the various definitions into three streams: 1) narrow-category-based; 2) broad-category-based; and 3) conceptual-based. The narrow-category-based definitions of diversity relate to the traditional US approach, which is linked to discrimination legislation in the USA (Mor Barak 2011). These US-centric definitions, which include gender, race and ethnicity, national origin, disability and age, are narrow and limiting in scope, and may not be applicable to other countries; a subsequent outlook on diversity is the broad-category-based view, which is more expansive, covering a number of variables, including both visible and invisible types of diversity (Mor Barak 2011). The conceptual-based category identified by Mor Barak defines diversity in the context of either a sense of belonging or exclusion, leading to different behaviors towards members of one’s ‘own group’ and the ‘other group’. Definitions that fall under this category emphasize group belonging and resultant outcomes, such as prejudice and discrimination, as opposed to specifying types of diversity.

Each of these definitions has been subject to criticism: for example, broad definitions of diversity fail to draw a distinction between benign differences and those that cause serious consequences (Mor Barak 2011). The diversity concept therefore becomes futile (Bell 2007), due to the pursuing of a “virtually endless variety of diversities” (Konrad 2003, p. 7). In addition, most narrow definitions of diversity are culture- and/or country-specific and hence cannot be applied across all domains (Mor Barak 2011). Furthermore, the conceptual-based definitions are often somewhat controversial, because they draw a distinction between the privileged and the underprivileged – that is, between those who discriminate and those subject to discrimination (Mor Barak 2011). Taking into consideration the limitations of how diversity is defined in the literature, Mor Barak (2011, p. 148) proposed the following global definition of workforce diversity:

Workforce diversity refers to the division of the workforce into distinct categories that (a) have a perceived commonality within a given culture or national context, and that (b) impact potentially harmful or beneficial employment outcomes such as job opportunities, treatment in the workplace, and promotion prospects irrespective of job-related skills and qualifications.
This definition raises the following question: ‘What brings about these distinctions that make the contemporary workforce so diverse?’ Thus, the next subsection explores the forces that have made the contemporary global workforce so diverse.

2.2.2. Reasons for Workforce Diversity from a Global Perspective

Diversity is often a consequence of demographic and socio-political features that are present in a given population (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Thus, due to a multitude of socioeconomic and political trends, the nature of the workforce has undergone significant global shifts, particularly in the Western world (Shen, D’Netto & Tang 2010). For instance, the magnitude of international migration due to the neoliberal economic climate and an increase in conflict, war and natural disasters has been a major force in shifting the demographics in many global labor markets (Alberti, Holgate & Tapia 2013). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2013) recently reported that 232 million people, or 3.2 percent of the world’s population, lived outside their country of origin, compared with 175 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990. These statistics signify the momentous growth of cross-border migration over the past decade or so, marking a dramatic shift in the composition of the workforce in terms of cultural diversity.

Furthermore, a change of societal attitudes toward historically excluded and marginalized groups, particularly during the latter part of the 20th century, has affected workforce dynamics across many nations (Mor Barak 2011): for example, diverse sexual orientation is now more accepted, with many countries focusing on the unique needs and challenges faced by those who identify as non-heterosexual and therefore fall into minority and other hitherto marginalized sexual identity groups. This is particularly prevalent in the Western world, with Australia, the USA and the European Union (EU) enacting some of the strongest sexual-orientation rights, including workplace anti-discrimination laws (Drydakis 2014). Despite such progression, LGBTI employees on a global level continue to be vulnerable to workplace hostility and often have lower job satisfaction levels than their heterosexual counterparts (Drydakis 2014).

Another significant driver changing the nature of the global workforce is the increasing number of females in paid employment. Females have begun to enter the workforce in greater numbers worldwide, particularly over the past few decades (Mor Barak 2011). According to the World Economic Forum (2016), integrating women into the talent pool is fundamental to achieve
sustainable economic growth and to empower women who now represent at least one half of humanity. Yet, despite this shift in workforce demographics, the achievement of gender equality within the workforce at a global level remains a momentous challenge (World Economic Forum 2016). The gap between labor participation rates of men and women remains a concern at a global level (International Labour Organization 2014). The International Labour Organization (2017) reported that “gender equality in the world of work still remains an elusive goal” and women are “still grossly underrepresented in the world’s board rooms”.

Adding to the growth in workforce diversity is the improvement in mortality rates across the globe (Mor Barak 2011): for example, most of the world’s developed economies, including Australia, have an ageing workforce, which is a consequence of increasing longevity in these countries (Cooke 2006; Patrickson & Ranzijn 2005; Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Furthermore, with the largest age group in these developed countries – the ‘baby boomers’ – approaching retirement age, a significant talent shortage is envisaged (Patrickson & Ranzijn 2005; Szinovacz 2011; Murray & Syed 2005). Thus many organizations need to explore ways of meeting the challenges of managing an older workforce to help address an inevitable talent shortage. As Billett et al. (2011, p. 1248) say:

... it is likely that many, if not all, countries with advanced industrial economies will need to retain the service of workers and sustain their employability beyond existing retirement ages. The focus on employability will include finding ways of maintaining these workers’ workplace competence and deploying them more effectively across their working lives.

The nature of the 21st century workforce has become diverse at a global level (Findler, Wind & Mor Barak 2007; Olsen & Martins 2012), and it is inevitable that this trend will continue into the future (Mor Barak 2011). This phenomenon marks a paradigm shift in management philosophy, causing organizations to embrace and deal with the challenges of an intensely diverse workforce (Hsiao, Auld & Ma 2015; Mor Barak 2011; O’Leary & Weathington 2006; Olsen & Martins 2012).
2.2.3. Diversity from a National Perspective

Mor Barak (2011), signifying a cultural perspective to diversity management, contended that diversity should be approached from a national perspective, even though many identity groups are common across most countries and cultures. Similarly, Syed and Kramar (2009) believed that national culture and demographics are pivotal to the development of a country’s diversity management policies and interventions. The caste system in India, religious affiliations in Ireland, HIV status in Africa, and some countries’ attitudes toward sexual orientation are examples of diversity issues that are specific to certain countries, often having far-reaching employment and societal outcomes (Mor Barak 2011). It has been reported that fewer than 20 percent of countries have workplace anti-discrimination laws based on sexual orientation, and 2.7 billion people live in countries where being gay is a crime (Drydakis 2014). In Kenya women, the disabled and non-heterosexuals are regarded as inferior and are often subject to unfavourable conditions, such as limited access to education and employment opportunities (Hanappi-Egger & Ukur 2011). In China, rural versus urban status is significant, with the rural community often facing both societal and workplace discrimination. Cultural diversity, due to the emphasis on multiculturalism as a result of large-scale international migration is an important dimension of diversity in most parts of the Western world, including Australia (Shen et al. 2009).

It is imperative to examine diversity from the perspective of a country’s social system (Spaaij et al. 2013; van Ewijk 2011). As van Ewijk (2011, p. 682) states, “diversity refers to the condition of heterogeneity within a certain whole, such as a society or an organization”. Similarly, Pio (2015, p. 67) contends that “diversity is always politically charged and is a complex weave of historical and socioeconomic legacies” – links that affect both organizational and societal practices.

Thus it was deemed necessary in this study to explore the demographic trends and distinct dimensions of diversity that are fundamental in the contemporary society and workforce of Australia.

2.3. Workforce Diversity from an Australian Perspective

Based on the recommendations above that diversity be examined from a country-specific perspective, this study examined the socioeconomic and cultural factors that signify prevalent
similarities and differences among Australian people by reviewing previous studies. This enabled identification of the key dimensions of diversity in the contemporary Australian workforce.

Similar to most other industrialized countries in the Western world, Australia faces the challenge of managing an intensely heterogeneous workforce, based on a changing demographic profile (Syed & Kramar 2009; van Ewijk 2011). Migration, an ageing population, increases in educated females, prevalence of disadvantaged groups such as indigenous Australians, the disabled, gender segregation within certain industries, changing lifestyles and shifting social norms are some of the key socioeconomic factors that have previously been identified as impacting on labor market dynamics within Australia (Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency 2012). According to the ABS (2014a), “Australians today are older, more likely to live in urban areas, have fewer children, and are more likely to be born overseas than a century ago”. With a focus on Australia’s ongoing skills shortage, Kramar (2012) recommended that local organizations factor in the composition of the country’s social structure, including segments such as mature and overseas workers (Kramar 2012). Strachan, Burgess and French (2010) profiled the average Australian employee as a male, located in a capital city, born in Australia, part of a family and with no disability. Highlighting that labour market processes and practices have thus been designed to cater to the needs of the average employee, the researchers identified those with disabilities, mature age persons, indigenous Australians, females and migrants as groups that most often encountered challenges and disadvantages in relation to Australia’s labor market.

Several waves of migration have significantly affected the demographic landscape of Australia (Härtel 2004; Lewis, French & Phetmany 2000). In particular, since the 1970s, with the abolition of the White Australia policy formally in 1966 (through The Migration Act), barring non-Caucasians from migrating to Australia, multiculturalism has become deeply rooted in society (Lewis, French & Phetmany 2000; Mason 2010; Walsh 2014). The socioeconomic and political factors that have stimulated Australian multiculturalism include external forces such as globalization, new technologies, international competition, border changes, war, and poverty, as
well as internal forces such as governmental policies, skills shortages and relatively small population (Bertone & Leahy 2003; Lewis, French & Phetmany 2000).

Furthermore, the greater awareness of and even societal concern about challenges faced by individuals of alternative sexual orientation is another primary factor that has influenced acceptance of diversity within Australia (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). A new classification was added to the 2011 Census that recognized Australians cohabitating in the same household as same-sex couples (ABS 2012). Following on from this, the ABS’ (2014b) fourth General Social Survey of Australians aged 15+ years was the first time people were asked about their sexual orientation. In addition, despite remaining a controversial topic, marriage equality in Australia gained considerable media attention and became a major discussion point within the country’s political arena (Neilsen 2012), which led to the passage of law, following the recent plebiscite on the recognition of same sex marriages in Australia (Attorney General’s Department 2017). Such societal developments reflect attitudinal changes in terms of acceptance of diverse sexual orientations and lifestyles.

Adding to this, the high unemployment rates of indigenous Australians and their general wellbeing is another societal issue that has gained wide attention from consecutive governments and the wider community (Gray, Hunter & Lohoar 2011). For example, under the Closing the Gap initiative, targets have been set at national level by the government to halve the gap in employment outcomes between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians by 2018 (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2016; hereafter DPC).

There are many socioeconomic, political and cultural factors that have fuelled Australia’s more diverse demographic profile, with the link between these and its labor market an area of interest to numerous researchers (Chattopadhyay 2003; Kmec & Gorman 2010; Mor Barak 2011; Muchiri & Ayoko 2013). Thus the next section examines the key dimensions of diversity in the contemporary Australian workforce caused by the country’s shifting demographics.
2.4. Key Dimensions of Diversity in the Australian Workforce

The key dimensions of diversity relevant to the contemporary workforce of Australia are culture, indigeneity, sexual orientation, ageing, disability and gender, as discussed in the following subsections.

2.4.1. Cultural Diversity

Within the context of this research, culturally diverse employees are migrants and their descents with distinct ethnic and cultural identities. In this study, this group is compared with the referent ‘Anglophones’, which is made up of Australian- and British-born employees who experience similar employment outcomes in Australia (Colic-Peisker 2011). In this study, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have been considered a separate demographic group that has been categorized as indigenous Australians. This aligns with Dunn et al. (2010) who advocated that indigeneity should not be positioned within multiculturalism because there are salient differences between migrants and indigenous Australians due to historic circumstances as well as socioeconomic, political and labor market outcomes.

Hofstede (1993, p. 89) defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group or category of people from another”, and contended that national cultures instil “invisible values held by a majority of their members, acquired in early childhood” which “change only very slowly if at all” (p. 92). Thomas and Inkson (2004) proposed that children and grandchildren of migrants are influenced by their cultural values, even when they are fully immersed in the host culture. In view of the focus of this study, Hofstede’s (1980) monumental research has made a valuable contribution, establishing that an individual’s work-related behaviours are generally influenced by inherited cultural values. Cultural diversity in the workplace hence requires organizations to manage “the differences and similarities of employees, or the degree of ‘otherness’ felt by individuals” (Fenwick et al. 2011, p. 495). Organizational management of cultural diversity requires interventions such as competences, policies and practices that capitalize on the potential of a culturally diverse workforce (Roberson & Block 2001).

Al Mousa and Jones (2006) emphasized the importance of addressing cultural diversity in the
workplace, suggesting that such strategies should go beyond the macro concepts, namely, power-distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/feminism, uncertainty avoidance and long- or short-term focus identified by Hofstede (2001). They recommended a more in-depth focus on other aspects such as the varied knowledge, skills, behaviours, actions and reactions of culturally diverse individuals, which often draws out innovative potential. Leveson, Joiner and Bakalis (2009) suggested that visible embracing of cultural diversity by organizations can strengthen employee perceptions of support for their differences, which in turn can elicit positive outcomes such as employee loyalty. However, managing cultural diversity within the workplace can be challenging, because such distinctions often create a strong sense of individualism that is more vulnerable to stereotyping and discrimination (Roberson & Block 2001; van Knippenberg, van Ginkel & Homan 2013). The irony is that many migrants cross borders in their quest for a better life, yet in the host labor market their cultural differences often make them vulnerable to exploitation, segregation and low-paid, unregulated employment, including a lack of union protection (Alberti, Holgate & Tapia 2013).

With cultural diversity existing across different occupations and organizational hierarchies, issues such as stereotyping, discrimination and a lack of recognition of qualifications gained in their home country have been highlighted as key challenges often faced by such groups in the workplace in Australia (Bertone & Leahy 2003; Colic-Peisker 2011; Parr & Guo 2005; Syed & Kramar 2009). Certain industries such as manufacturing appear to have higher proportions of migrant employees (D’Netto et al. 2014), raising the question of whether there is industry segregation based on cultural identity. A recent study of Australia’s manufacturing sector, where around one-third of the workforce is made up of migrants, showed non-recognition of overseas skills and qualifications, ineffective communication, increased training costs and social isolation as barriers affecting these culturally diverse employees (D’Netto et al. 2014). This study also found that a stronger work ethic among cultural minorities, opportunities to learn from other cultures, lower absenteeism and lower turnover were potential benefits of a culturally diverse workforce (D’Netto et al. 2014). The results also revealed that, although overt discrimination was not prevalent in Australian workplaces, culturally diverse employees continued to experience disadvantages in relation to workplace-related outcomes.
Culture is probably the most significant form of diversity in contemporary Australia (D’Netto et al. 2014; Fenwick et al. 2011; Leveson, Joiner & Bakalis 2009; Syed & Kramar 2010), and Australia is undoubtedly a magnet for migrants. According to the Australian Census of Population and Housing 2011, just over one-quarter (26 percent) of Australia’s population was born overseas and a further one-fifth (20 percent) had at least one overseas-born parent (ABS 2013). Historically, most migrants were from Europe, but the pattern of immigration has changed gradually, with more Australians now having ancestral origins in Asia and world regions, resulting in a culturally diverse society with a variety of languages, religions, ancestries and birthplaces (ABS 2017b). Thus, contemporary Australian society is typically multicultural, and ‘multiculturalism’ is synonymously used to describe the nation (D’Netto et al. 2014). In multiculturalism, cultural differences are acknowledged and accepted by all parties, with ongoing attempts made to accommodate and meet the needs of different groups living together in a plural society (Berry 2011; Berry & Sam 2015) This is in contrast with the ‘melting pot of cultures’ ideology, where assimilation by the non-dominant cultural groups is pursued (Allard 2002; Berry 2011; Mor Barak 2011).

While the nation’s cultural diversity can be a source of social and economic wealth (Department of Social Services 2014), cultural differences can also create challenges that impede the performance of a workforce (Fujimoto & Härtel 2004). In Australia, national policies on economic reform are linked to productive diversity in terms of leveraging diverse linguistic and cultural expertise, multi-market intelligence business experiences of multicultural employees (Leveson, Joiner & Bakalis 2009). Thus the success of Australia’s multicultural ideology is largely dependent on positive employment outcomes among its culturally diverse workforce (Colic-Peisker 2011). Furthermore, its labor market opportunities relate to productive diversity and determine the socioeconomic status of individuals as well as the nation (Castles, Hugo & Vasta 2013; Ho & Alcorso 2004; Leveson, Joiner & Bakalis 2009). Thus, against the cultural mosaic of the Australian population, the effects of multiculturalism and productive diversity can have a profound effect on employees, organizations, the community and the nation as a whole. It is such perceived socioeconomic benefits of multiculturalism that have prompted many nations including Australia to enact legislation and policy, such as ‘Productive Diversity’ that both safeguard and value cultural differences in the workplace (Al Mousa & Jones 2006; Leveson, Joiner & Bakalis 2009; Smith & Pinto 2000; Singh 2003).
Even though cultural diversity appears to be integral to Australia, several researchers have revealed that the organizational management of cultural diversity does not seem to be a high priority in Australian workplaces (Bourke 2004; D’Netto & Sohal 1999; Syed & Kramar 2009). In particular, Syed and Kramar (2010) highlighted a lack of integrated approaches in terms of organizational responses to cultural diversity, where national-, organizational- and individual-level issues have all been considered. Adding to this, Al Mousa and Jones (2006) pointed out that organizational strategies in Australia for managing cultural diversity in the workforce are often focused on achieving conformity with the dominant or mainstream culture, rather than taking advantage of the benefits of a culturally diverse workforce.

### 2.4.2. Indigenous Australians

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are those who identify themselves as descendants of the original inhabitants of the continent and its surrounding islands (Biddle 2014). This demographic group – Australia’s ‘first people’ – are categorized in this study as ‘indigenous Australians’. The terms ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ and ‘indigenous’ are used interchangeably in this thesis to refer to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

According to the 2016 Census, 2.8 of the Australian population were of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin (ABS 2017c). Indigenous Australians have significantly lower levels of socioeconomic status compared with non-indigenous Australians in a number of spheres, including employment outcomes (Bandias, Fuller & Holmes 2012; Biddle 2014). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander unemployment is higher than the non-indigenous rate across all age groups, with the largest difference in the younger population (aged 15–24 years), which in 2014-2015 was at 31.8 percent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people compared with 16.7 percent for non-indigenous Australians (ABS 2016a).

A number of factors have been cited as exacerbating labor market outcomes of indigenous Australians. These include lower levels of education and skills, lack of relevant work experience, living in remote locations, higher levels of arrest and links to crimes, poorer health, workplace discrimination, recruitment standards of employers, lower levels of job retention, lack of a supportive environment, difficulty experienced by indigenous Australians in balancing indigenous and non-indigenous cultures, and over-reliance on welfare payments (Bandias, Fuller & Holmes
Despite numerous claims made by Australian organizations about promoting inclusive cultures and non-discriminatory practices that appreciate indigenous culture, Pearson and Daff (2011) point out that human resources (HR) practices such as recruitment have been designed to cater to mainstream employees. Lack of competency in the mainstream language places indigenous Australians at a distinct disadvantage during recruitment assessments (Pearson & Daff 2011). Many organizations therefore need to be more responsive and innovative in terms of their HR practices, and move away from the current inflexible and narrow approach, to open up employment opportunities to indigenous applicants. An example of this is the Queensland Police’s Justice Entry Program, specifically designed to facilitate the intake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants who fall short of the standard recruitment criteria (Fleming, Prenzler & Ransley 2012). Scerra (2012) noted the absence of a formal model within Australia to help facilitate culturally aligned professional development for indigenous Australians. Hunter (2010) earlier recommended that such a model should factor in the building of cultural competencies, the integrating of Aboriginal stories, an alignment with cultural practices, and peer support and supervision from Aboriginal colleagues within workplaces.

It has also been recognized that educational disadvantages, lower career aspirations including lack of awareness about careers, and social and cultural barriers are factors that can inhibit career opportunities for indigenous Australians (Helme 2010). Adding to this, Paradies and Cunningham (2009) identified racism against indigenous Australians as common across most situations life including employment as well as in public and from service providers. They pointed out that “given the amount of daily life spent in employment settings, it is particularly disturbing that over a quarter of indigenous people reported frequent experiences of racism at work or on the job” (Paradies & Cunningham 2009, p. 564).

Within Australia, health care and social assistance, education and training public administration and safety are most common employment industries for indigenous employees (ABS 2017d), while mining is the largest private sector employer for them (Minerals Council of Australia 2017a). Yet, even though the mining industry, which accounted for up to 14.4 percent of Gross Domestic
Product (GDP) in 2016 (Minerals Council of Australia 2017b), has employed a significant number of indigenous Australians, Pearson and Daff (2013, p. 57) observed issues:

A convenient assumption was that these Aboriginal people would adopt vocations that would be linked to the mining sector; however, a lack of understanding of Aboriginal society, culture, and traditions has become a barrier to the operation of installed universalistic Anglo Celtic notions and paradigms for indigenous employment in the Australian mining sector.

Thus, while the mining industry within Australia soars, indigenous Australians “who arguably have a stake in the mineral wealth” due to their enshrined connection with land, continue to experience employment disparities in this sector, which lacks an equitable approach to employment (Pearson & Daff 2013, p. 57).

Therefore employers need to consider several areas in order to improve labor market outcomes of indigenous Australians. Gray, Hunter and Lohoar (2011) suggested several initiatives that could better assimilate indigenous Australians into the workforce, including non-standard recruitment strategies, cross-cultural training, mentoring and support, flexible work arrangements that cater to specific cultural needs, family support, combating racism in the workplace, and establishing indigenous-specific employment goals. Loxton, Schirmer and Kanowski (2012) further noted that support and opportunities for ongoing training and employment, including peer support received from other indigenous employees, would contribute to the positive employment of indigenous Australians.

To address this employment gap, a number of policies and programs have been implemented in Australia at the macro-government level, such as the Indigenous Employment Programs set up under the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy (Australian Government 2017). The Indigenous Australian Government Development Program (IAGDP) is another initiative that makes a significant contribution towards improving employment opportunities for indigenous Australians interested in working in the public sector (Department of Employment 2017). Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs)\(^2\) developed by Reconciliation Australia

\(^2\) RAPs are set up under the auspices of Reconciliation Australia, an independent, national not-for-profit organization promoting reconciliation by building relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and
are a mechanism contributing to the improvement of indigenous employment outcomes (Gray, Hunter & Lohoar 2011). These organizational RAPs are voluntary and non-prescriptive, and aspire to promote positive employment outcomes for indigenous Australians in consideration of their disadvantaged position based on past discrimination (Daly, Gebremedhin & Sayem 2013).

A positive corresponding trend is that a number of Australian organizations, particularly in the private sector, are increasingly promoting indigenous employment by way of RAPs, leveraging positive workforce outcomes for indigenous Australians and other organizational members, as well as the wider community (Daly, Gebremedhin & Sayem 2013; DPC 2017). Referring to a major Australian bank’s use of RAPs, Daly, Gebremedhin and Sayem (2013) highlighted that the initiative had enhanced employment opportunities for indigenous Australians, promoted financial inclusion, and created more awareness and understanding of indigenous culture and aspirations.

The support for the reconciliation movement in Australia is primarily based on social justice, to honour and recognize the status of indigenous people as traditional custodians of the land, and to remedy past injustice in the form of racism and colonization (Paradies & Cunningham 2009).

Whilst the government continues to focus on narrowing the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians in the employment sphere, indigenous employment outcomes remain a complex area, with a multitude of underlying factors that require more “organizational and individual intellectual commitment, interest, involvement and understanding – than public or private sector organizations have been prepared to acknowledge and commit – to this point in time” (Bandias, Fuller & Holmes 2012, p. 61). Thus it is arguable as to whether most Australian organizations fulfil their moral obligation of implementing diversity management strategies that support indigenous Australians.

2.4.3. Sexual Orientation

According to the ABS (2014b), sexual orientation is based on whether a person identifies as being ‘heterosexual’, ‘gay or lesbian’, or ‘other’, with the ‘other’ category including bisexuals and sexual
 orientations other than heterosexual, gay and lesbian (ABS 2014b). In 2014, 3 percent of the adult population in Australia (over half a million people) identified as non-heterosexual (ABS 2014b).

Both Aaron and Ragusa (2011) and Irwin (2007) noted the oppression of non-heterosexuals in Australian workplaces and in society in general, and described the national legal framework as insufficient in addressing the challenges faced by individuals of minority sexual orientations. It has also been claimed that organizations focus less on sexual orientation compared with the other dimensions of diversity, despite the adversities non-heterosexual employees are often subject to (Tonks 2006). Aaron and Ragusa (2011) identified a lack of managerial commitment toward implementing organizational policies that address sexual minority issues in the workplace.

Some of these scholars have contended that workplace equity for non-heterosexuals is yet to be achieved in Australia, given the existence of homophobia and heterosexist attitudes in many organizational settings (Irwin 2007; Tonks 2006). Even where legal action or organizational recourse is available for incidents of sexually oriented victimization, many are reluctant to resort to legal action or to use the workplace’s complaint mechanisms based on the threat of negative implications for future career prospects and their working life (Drydakis 2014; Willis 2012).

With regard to disclosing sexual orientation, Drydakis (2014) reported that sexual minority employees who are more open about their sexuality within the workplace are more likely to report higher job satisfaction than those who are not. Despite this, it would appear that many non-heterosexual individuals prefer to protect their sexual identity and “stay in the corporate closet and therefore conceal their sexual orientation” (Smith, Oades & McCarthy 2012, p. 51), most likely to avoid stigmatization and negative stereotyping that could adversely affect the quality of their working life (Bouzianis, Malcolm & Hallab 2008; Burnett 2010; Tonks 2006; Willis 2012). The personal decision to reveal or conceal sexual identity is often a difficult decision for non-heterosexuals, and a non-supportive work environment may impose further ‘tremendous pressure’, leading to lower employee commitment to the organization and dissatisfaction with career progression (Trau & Härtel 2007, p. 215).

Willis (2012) argued that discrimination can be experienced by non-heterosexual employees as direct targets or even by witnessing negative treatment levelled against others that resonate with their identity. Willis pointed out that LGBTI employees witnessing of homophobic discourse in
the workplace, even when they were not specifically targeted, often caused psychological stress. Burnett (2010) contended that non-heterosexual employees often experience feelings of isolation, loneliness and discomfort due to not being akin to the dominant heterosexual grouping in the workplace. According to Willis (2012, p. 1594), “the informal social ordering of individuals in organizations gives heterosexuality a naturalized and normalized status”. Willis noted that many of the homophobic expressions in the workplace, including informal staffroom jokes and conversations, can position non-heterosexual identities as inferior and morally degraded, while reinforcing heterosexuality as the norm against which all others are appraised.

According to Burnett (2010) many such homophobic incidents are triggered by misinformation, individual perceptions and values, particularly of superiors toward sexual diversity, and a general lack of understanding about sexual orientation, often leading to restricted career choices and employment options for sexual minorities. Aaron and Ragusa (2011) argued that stereotypes, lack of acknowledgement of the parity of non-heterosexual and heterosexual relationships, and conventional views that associate masculinity with certain roles can lead to discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation. Disparities in compensation and benefits, diminished job security, occupational health and safety issues, and psychological distress are some of the resultant challenges faced by non-heterogeneous employees, which can lead to absenteeism, stress, resignations, accidents, errors, reduced self-esteem, low job satisfaction, feelings of isolation and career uncertainty (Irwin 2007; Smith, Oades & McCarthy 2013; Willis 2012).

These consequential factors that are often detrimental to employee wellbeing also often inevitably affect the wellbeing of the organization: for example, a work culture that condones homophobic discourse as normal office banter runs the risk of alienating employees who belong to sexual minorities through creating boundaries between heterosexual and non-heterosexual identities, thus inhibiting productive working relationships, work efficacy and employee wellbeing (Aaron & Ragusa 2011; Willis 2012).

In the employment sphere in Australia, it is fundamental to address the barriers to workplace participation and acceptance that are often encountered by individuals of minority sexual identities (Willis 2012). Trau and Härtel (2007) highlighted that contextual factors such as a supportive organizational environment, fair treatment and inclusive policies significantly contribute toward positive career attitudes and enhance the quality of work life of sexual minorities. They believed
that such inclusive organizational cultures that proactively deal with sexual orientation issues are able to better attract talent and establish work environments that are productive and free of conflict. Furthermore, it is important that non-heterosexual employees have equal rights to their heterosexual counterparts, including respect, acceptance and a safe work environment free from ridicule, vilification and victimization (Irwin 2007; Tonks 2006).

As a result of changing societal attitudes toward sexual minorities, there have recently been some positive strides to create inclusive workplaces for sexual minorities (Aaron & Ragusa 2011). Yet more remains to be done, as evidenced in the findings of the second national survey of the health and wellbeing of LGBT Australians conducted in 2011 (Leonard et al. 2012). These showed that sexual minorities in Australia are a distinct demographic category that continues to be disadvantaged, despite the endowment of legal rights and social reform; this group’s mental health and wellbeing is adversely affected due to the mental strain of heterosexist discrimination, stigma and abuse that many of them experience within the workplace (Leonard et al. 2012). Smith, Oades and McCarthy (2012) highlighted this predicament through minority stress theory, reporting that negative societal attitudes, when internalized or self-directed by sexual minorities, have the likelihood to cause mental and physiological health issues.

Unfortunately, despite the successful advocacy of rights and increasing societal acceptance, discrimination, abuse and even violence against sexual minorities remain a concern in Australia workplaces (Berman & Robinson 2010; Smith, Oades & McCarthy 2012), with non-physical types of abuse ranging from verbal, harassment, threats of physical violence and the most common written abuse (Leonard et al. 2012).

2.4.4. Ageing Workforce

According to the ABS (2014c), 11.6 million persons aged 15+ years were in the Australian workforce as at November 2013. This included 18 percent aged 15-24 years, 15 percent at 55+ years, 2 percent 65+ years, and a significant 52 percent aged 35-54 years (ABS 2014c). These statistics highlight some of the key characteristics of the demographic makeup of the workforce: first, that organizations are social systems made up of individuals belonging to diverse generations; second, Australia has an ageing workforce that reflects the ageing population of the nation in general (ABS 2014c); and third, there is a significant disproportion between younger (including
new entrants) and mature-aged workers. Thus it has been suggested that Australia’s ageing workforce could lead to a fundamental decrease in the overall workforce, with fewer younger workers replacing the older workforce as the latter exit the employment system (Murray & Syed 2005; Strachan, Burgess & French 2010).

Australia’s ageing population and the associated socioeconomic implications have been subject to continuous scrutiny by various governments (Schofield, Fletcher & Callander 2009). Patrickson and Ranzijn (2005, pp. 729-730) examined some of the critical challenges that have emerged in Australia due to this imbalance between labor inflow and outflow – predominantly caused by shifting demographics (Taylor et al. 2013) including longevity and lower birth rates – where “the shrinking proportion” of the population will have to support “an expanding proportion of those without work”. In particular, these authors highlighted the paradox of the objectives of governmental policy and the aspirations and attitudes of most organizations and mature-aged employees:

As a broad generalisation, government is telling older workers to keep working and telling employers to retain older workers, but many employers either don’t want them or are unwilling to explore alternative conditions under which their employment might be of benefit. Similarly, many older workers indicate they would prefer to retire, and seem equally unwilling to explore alternative conditions where they could continue to work, perhaps in a reduced capacity. (p. 730)

Although there has been some recognition from Australian employers of the need to focus on the ageing workforce, the issue does not seem to be a high priority for many of them (Patrickson & Ranzijn 2005; Shacklock, & Brunetto 2011; Taylor et al. 2013). It is only really public sector and large-scale organizations that have started to show an active interest in addressing issues associated with Australia’s ageing workforce (Schofield, Fletcher & Callander 2009). Despite such limited attention, Murray and Syed (2005) reported that older workers are continually disadvantaged in the Australian workforce due to deep-rooted perceptions, negative stereotypes and HR practices that lag shifting dynamics concerning older workers.
An inevitable consequence of the changing age demographics of Australia’s workforce including prolongation of retirement is ‘generational diversity’, where different age groups of employees come together in the workplace (Wong et al. 2008). Hendricks and Cope (2012) pointed out that most researchers have demarcated four generations within the contemporary workforce: veterans (born 1925–1945); baby boomers (born 1946–1964); generation X (born 1965–1980); and the millennials (born 1980–2000). These generations have grown up in divergent eras often marked by significant events, meaning that each group possesses historical and social experiences that have shaped their traits, behaviors, values, ethos and motivational factors (Hendricks & Cope 2013; Wong et al. 2008). In a study regarding generational diversity in Australia’s nursing industry, Hendricks and Cope (2013) asserted that this fusion of different generations elicits a wealth of knowledge and experience to the profession, but also issues such as conflict due to different generational attitudes and values. Knouse (2011, p. 255) contended that many 21st century organizations face a “daunting task” of managing disparate generations of employees, including distinct age-related characteristics that influence their workplace behaviors.

2.4.5. Disabled Employees

Brazenor (2002, p. 319) defined a disability as “... any limitation, restriction, impairment or lack of ability (resulting from impairments) to perform an action in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being, and which has lasted or is likely to last six months”. In 2012, there were 2.2 million Australians of working age (aged 15-64 years) with a disability, and their labor participation rate was 52.8 percent, as compared to 82.5 percent among the non-disabled (ABS 2015b). Within this proportion of disabled labor participants, around 1 million were in paid employment, comprising 8.8 percent of the total Australian workforce (ABS 2015b). According to Brazenor (2002), disabilities can significantly affect the earning capacity of an individual: for example, in 2015, the Australian median gross income of those with disability was less than half of those without disability (ABS 2016b) This financial disparity is often due to employment restrictions among the disabled, particularly those that are more severely disabled, including types of roles available to them, as well as hours of employment and ability to accommodate their special assistance requirements (ABS 2016b; Wilkins 2004).
In Australia, while there have been efforts made to legally protect and ensure equality that enhances employment outcomes for those with disabilities, labor force participation rates are still significantly lower among the disabled (ABS 2015b). Furthermore, obtaining and sustaining employment remains a major challenge for people with disabilities in Australia (King et al. 2006; Smith 2002). O’Brien and Dempsey (2004) reported that, in the Australia, individuals with disabilities often face myriad challenges and are unable to access the necessary support to participate in the labor market.

Despite such challenges, it has been suggested that people with disabilities are an under-utilized segment of the potential workforce in Australia (Waggon et al. 2005). While there are clearly barriers hindering employment options among Australia’s disabled (Wilkins 2004), certain modifications to work-related processes and facilities, as well as attitudinal changes, will have a profound impact, including enabling prospective disabled employees to perform to their full potential and have fulfilling work-life experiences.

To date, there has been limited research in Australia as well as globally, that focuses on employment outcomes of people with disabilities, including their specific needs as a minority group within the workplace (Brazenor 2002; Cavanagh et al. 2017; Schur, Colella & Adya 2016; Smith 2002). Such limitations suggest that organizational interventions that address the diverse needs and behaviours of Australia’s disabled employees have largely been overlooked.

2.4.6. Gender Diversity

There has been significant progress in Australian gender equality, with women more educated than ever before and their participation in the workforce now at 46.2 percent (Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2017b). Yet even though there has been a progressive trend in Australian gender diversity in the workplace, women still earn less than men, are less exposed to career advancement, and are more likely to spend their older years in poverty (Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2017a). It has previously been reported that Australian women save less, have lower lifetime earnings, retire earlier, live longer and are financially challenged, particularly post-retirement, compared to men (Rosenman & Scott 2009). Furthermore, career progression of females into more senior roles in both private and public sector Australian organizations is far lower than for males.
(ABS 2015a). This is despite the momentum women have gained in terms of educational and professional prospects in Australia (Beck & Davis 2005).

Even though equal employment opportunity (EEO) policies for gender equality and gender diversity underpin diversity management philosophies of most Australian organizations (Beck & Davis 2005), with many focusing on female employee issues, the playing field for the two genders remains unequal (Kalysh, Kulik & Perera 2016; Strachan, Burgess & French 2010; Whitehouse 2003). Inequality regimes still exist in many Australian workplaces, rooted in masculine principles that influence work practices, policies and processes (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Despite more than 20 years of Australian legislation striving to create equality for women in the workplace, they still represent less than 9 percent of board directorships, only 11 percent of executive manager positions, and fewer than 6 percent of line manager positions (Syed & Kramar 2009). This was confirmed by the ABS, which reported that women remain under-represented in leadership roles in organizations, as they occupy 17 percent of CEO roles in Australian workplaces (ABS 2015a). This aligns with the opinions of Burgess, Henderson and Strachan (2005) who contended that adherence to legislative requirements alone is insufficient to inculcate the ideals of equal opportunity for women, that managerial commitment to such ideals is critical to drive better outcomes.

Research also shows gender dominance in some industries in Australia. For example, while most employees in Australia’s second largest industry, the retail sector, are females – in line with global trends – men remain at the forefront in terms of its leadership and managerial as well as full-time roles (Chang & Travaglione 2012). Female employees also dominate in Australia’s largest employment sector, health care and social assistance which at 78.3 percent represents the largest amount of women in any industry (Vandenbroek 2016; Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2016b). Adding to this, as pointed out by Acker (1990) who introduced the concept of a ‘gendered’ organization, some organizational processes and practices perpetuate gender inequalities. In addition, organizational cultures, which determine the norms as to how each gender should behave and gendered identities perceived by both men and women, perpetuate gender inequalities and gender divisions in organizations and jobs (Acker 2012).
According to some research, there are a number of factors that rationalize the ‘gendered’ attribute of some Australian organizations and occupations. For example, casual work offers more flexibility to attend to carer and domestic responsibilities, tasks that are traditionally perceived as female responsibilities (Bu & McKeen 2001; McDonald, Bradley & Brown 2008). Therefore, certain types of jobs and work arrangements are regarded as more appealing to women, such as the flexibility afforded by casual and part-time work in retail (Chang & Travaglione 2012). This could be one of the primary reasons for women making a conscious choice to work in certain industries or lower ranking part-time and casual roles where there is a lack of career progression. It could also be that employers perpetuating the ‘gendered’ identities of roles and occupations, either consciously or unconsciously, leaves women with little choice. These areas need further investigation in the Australian workplace context.

In contrast, some research suggests that Australian organizations value certain skills and competencies that women bring to the workplace, which has also been attributed to gender segregation in certain industries and professions: for example, a number of studies have identified a link between ‘emotional’ labor and female employees (Lynch 2007; Pilcher 2007; Sirianni & Negrey 2000). Pettinger (2005) explained that the gendering of retail employment is a consequence of the feminization of customer service work based on the emotional management attributes innate in women.

Overall, even though some progress appears to have been made, gender inequality still persists based on stereotyped perceptions embedded within some organizational cultures (Beck & Davis 2005). The Australian labor market continues to show division based on gender, with females one of the marginalized groups in relation to workplace outcomes. This is in line with the global scenario, where women as a source of talent remain under-utilized in most labor markets, despite the fact that their levels of education have escalated. This is despite the fact that the Global Gender Gap Report 2016 of the World Economic Forum reported that harnessing the talents of women is fundamental to global economic success, and that organizations can derive benefits via the effective integration of female employees (World Economic Forum 2016). Thus, while it remains important for government to set the right policy frameworks at the macro level, it is integral that workplaces also set the right ecosystems to tap into the sources of talent both male and female employees (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahidi 2011).
2.5. Diversity Management

In recent decades, the emergence of a heterogeneous workforce has become one of the most significant challenges faced by organizations on a global scale (Mor Barak 2011; Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010). The co-existence of diverse groups of employees within organizations has stimulated fundamental questions that require managerial attention, such as whether a one-size-fits-all approach including in HR practices meets the needs and unleashes the full potential of a diverse workforce (Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010). In response, a new wave of organizational thinking and strategizing has led to the emergence of the management philosophy referred to as ‘diversity management’. With this concept continuing to capture the interest of academics and practitioners, the following sections discuss the evolution of diversity management including its primary meaning and purpose.

2.5.1. The Evolution of Diversity Management

Diversity management first evolved in the USA in the 1990s, where the appropriateness of conventional management approaches and ideologies to deal with the complexities of a diverse workforce gained the attention of practitioners and researchers (Mor Barak 2011; Pitts 2009; Syed & Ozbulgin 2009). Prior to its emergence, workforce diversity issues were approached in a legalistic and regulated manner by organizations, with little emphasis on managerial intervention and associated workplace-related outcomes for employees (Pitts 2009). Workforce diversity subsequently gained management attention, which prompted both organizations and researchers to view the differences brought by diverse employees as a potential strength (Pitts & Wise 2010). This change of focus, pioneered by Thomas (1990), signified the emergence of the concept of diversity management (Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010; Kellough & Naff 2004; Kramar 2012; Pitts 2009; Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Thomas (1990) advocated a move beyond the legal and regulatory approach to workforce diversity to instead focus on deriving strength from it by unleashing the full potential of a heterogeneous workforce. Thomas proposed that diversity be viewed in a more expansive manner, beyond merely focusing on race and gender (Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010). Thus a variety of societal groups was being encompassed within the domain of diversity, along with interventions relating to workforce diversity dispersed across the

In the USA, diversity management has its roots in affirmative action. This is because during the 1960s to the 1970s the focus on minority societal groups was based on legal compliance through affirmative action and equal opportunity (Qin, Muenjohn & Chhetri 2014). During this era, the emphasis was on two primary objectives: a discrimination-free work environment and an increase in the numbers of under-represented employees via affirmative action initiatives targeted at remedying past discrimination based on gender and race (Qin, Muenjohn & Chhetri 2014). However, in the 1980s, such affirmative action was subject to widespread criticism for failing to achieve its primary objective of addressing past discrimination and for causing a racial backlash, eliciting the need for an alternative, which marked the emergence of the diversity management concept (Lorbiecki & Jack 2000).

The early stages of diversity management in the USA signified organizational attempts to emphasize employee differences and focus on integration and inclusion (Qin, Muenjohn & Chhetri 2014; Von Bergen, Soper & Parnell 2005). Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) hence referred to this as the ‘political stage’ of diversity management, leading to a more expansive scope of diversity as organizations and researchers started looking beyond the two traditional discrimination dimensions of race and gender. In the 1990s diversity management truly emerged as a new management paradigm, where its business case became the norm (Qin, Muenjohn & Chhetri 2014). At this stage, compelling arguments that tied diversity management with bottom-line results particularly economic gains, with limited emphasis on social justice or the moral argument, were used to persuade and justify organizational commitment to this concept (Kramar 2012; Lorbiecki & Jack 2000; Pitts & Wise 2010). Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) identified this as the economic stage of diversity management. Lastly, in the face of failure to deliver anticipated outcomes in terms of economic outcomes as well as value-adding results such as greater equality, the critical phase of diversity management emerged (Lorbiecki & Jack 2000).

Elaborating on the critical stage in the USA, Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) raised several issues. One was the emphasis on power and separation. Diversity is inherent among those who are ‘managed’ when compared against the referent group consisting of those who ‘manage’ (Lorbiecki & Jack
This could lead to stigmatization in that a clear demarcation is created between the managing and the managed (Zanoni & Janssens 2004). This reflection indicates that diversity management can embed power differences and may even perpetuate and emphasize unequal power regimes, and it therefore needs to be applied both cautiously and diplomatically.

More recently, inclusion has been emphasized as a discourse that is distinct from diversity by researchers such as Roberson (2006), Sabharwal (2014) and Shore et al. (2011). This potentially marks a new era, where diversity has been replaced by inclusion in a continuous evolutionary cycle, from anti-discrimination to equality to diversity and then to inclusion (Oswick & Noon 2014). However, Oswick and Noon (2014) argued that equality, diversity and inclusion overlap in many areas according to research, and therefore recommended that academics and practitioners instead focus on the repertoire of approaches rather than treating them as exclusive constructs.

Furthermore, while diversity management clearly has its roots in affirmative action, they still appear to be distinct concepts (Pitts 2009). Diversity management is a practice that is generally voluntary and internally driven, with the view to achieving organizational outcomes, whereas affirmative action and EEO are externally enforced by way of legal regulations based on equity, equality, social justice and human rights (Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010; Mor Barak 2011; Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Diversity management is more of a strategic initiative (Pitts 2009) that often addresses workplace issues, such as “retention and career development of women and minorities hired under affirmative action plans, and the need to warm the chilly climate for these groups in many workplaces” in areas where affirmative actions have failed (Agócs & Burr 1996, p. 30). Further, while affirmative action and EEO focus on recruitment and selection, diversity management focuses on processes and practices that underpin organizational outcomes in terms of enhanced performance via workforce diversity (Ashikali & Groeneveld 2015; Pitts 2009). Therefore, as Agócs and Burr (2000) argue, diversity management and affirmative action are two concepts that can co-exist and complement one another.

While the diversity management concept first evolved in the USA, it is now both globally accepted and practised. The following section therefore examines the meaning of diversity management as defined in different parts of the world.
2.5.2. The Global Definitions of Diversity Management

Diversity management has been defined and conceptualized in a number of ways across the world (Mor Barak 2011; Kramar 2012). However, after examining the various meanings of diversity management, Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) identified core themes that underline these various definitions. They highlighted two of the more popular definitions of diversity management from the United Kingdom (UK) and the USA. The UK definition is as follows:

The basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences which will include factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and workstyle. It is founded on the premise that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where their talents are being fully utilised and in which organizational goals are met … (Kandola & Fullerton 1998, p. 7, in Lorbieki & Jack 2000, p. 19)

The US definition is:

Diversity management refers to organizational approach to workforce diversity development, organizational culture change, and empowerment of the workforce. It represents a shift away from the activities and assumptions defined by affirmative action to management practices that are inclusive, reflecting the workforce diversity and its potential. Ideally it is a pragmatic approach, in which participants anticipate and plan for change, do not fear human differences or perceive them as a threat, and view the workplace as a forum for individual growth and change in skills and performance with direct cost benefits to the organization. (Arredondo 1996, p. 17, in Lorbieki & Jack 2000, p. 19)

While there are some small differences between these two primary definitions of diversity management, both signify that it is often a result of differences between individuals, and that managing diversity is advantageous because it brings about positive outcomes for organizations in terms of economic rewards (Lorbiecki & Jack 2000).
Olsen and Martins (2012, p. 1169) provided a broader meaning of the concept based on existing definitions, defining it as follows:

The utilization of human resource (HR) management practices to (i) increase or maintain the variation in human capital on some given dimension(s), and/or (ii) ensure that variation in human capital on some given dimension(s) does not hinder the achievement of organizational objectives, and/or (iii) ensure that variation in human capital on some given dimension(s) facilitates the achievement of organizational objectives.

2.5.3. Evolution and Development of Diversity Management in Australia

Syed and Özbilgin, (2009) highlighted that industrialized countries (including Australia) are faced with the challenge of managing an intensely diverse workforce, resulting from their changing demographic makeup. Thus Kramar (2012) pointed out that, with its diverse demographic workforce, Australia provides “a fertile environment” (p. 9) for the growth and development of diversity management. As the concept is generally influenced by a range of localized factors, including social, economic, political and historic (Kramar 2012), a pure US-centric approach that fails to consider the national context will likely prove ineffective (Syed & Ozbiligin 2009). Organizations need to take this into account and align diversity management initiatives that suit country-specific requirements, such as cultural, demographical and institutional factors (Sippola & Smale 2007). Strachan, Burgess and Sullivan (2004) observed that the historical context of diversity management in Australian workplaces is unique. Thus it is important to analyse the evolution and approach to diversity management in an Australian context.

The affirmative action legislation introduced in Australia in the 1980s, with the intention of promoting EEO for women, marked a significant milestone in the development of the nation’s diversity management. Such regulation paved the way for a decentralized system of addressing workplace diversity issues, departing from the previous centralized, semi-judicial approach that relied on legal mechanisms such as conciliation and arbitration to resolve such issues (Strachan, Burgess & Sullivan 2004). This Australian version of affirmative action is distinct, as it is more focused on employer-driven interventions as opposed to the legislative-driven regimes prevalent
in other nations, including the USA (Strachan, Burgess & Sullivan 2004). In essence, its affirmative action is more closely linked to diversity management, because what is labelled ‘affirmative action’ in Australia is more of a voluntary, internally focused and committed intervention, as opposed to legal enforcement by way of penalties and sanctions.

In addition to its foundations in affirmative action legislation, Australia’s trade unions appear to have played an important role in formulating the country’s diversity management, particularly in relation to gender equality. During the 1980s and 1990s the trade unions bargained for more family-friendly and flexible working conditions to meet the needs of female employees (Strachan, Burgess & Sullivan 2004). Adding to this diversity management development in Australia was the government policy brought in during the 1990s that included childcare support and better enabled parents and carers to engage in employment (Strachan, Burgess & Sullivan 2004). More recently, Australia’s National Employment Standards (NES), which came into effect in 2009, contain provisions such as the right to request flexible work arrangements, unpaid parental leave and personal/carers leave, which are all closely associated with diversity management (Kramar 2012).

Strachan, Burgess and Sullivan (2004) asserted that affirmative action in Australia embodies benefits to organizations – in other words, elements of the business case, which is a salient feature of diversity management. Contrary to this view, Kramar et al. (2014) claimed that Australia’s affirmative action and EEO initiatives are geared more toward ensuring similar treatment and opportunities for all, while diversity management is a much broader concept based on the notion that organizations should endeavour to achieve better outcomes by valuing differences in their workforce. Accordingly, Kramar et al. (2014, p. 286) defined diversity management in the Australia context as follows:

A process of managing people’s similarities and differences; it is built on a set of values that recognises that the differences of people are a potential strength for the organization; this process of management creates an environment that allows all employees to contribute to organizational goals and contribute to personal goals.

Similar to the USA, affirmative action and EEO formed the foundations upon which diversity management grew within Australia. Yet there are striking differences between affirmative action
and how it is linked to diversity management across the two countries. The distinction between affirmative action and diversity management in Australia is often blurred (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Furthermore, unlike in the USA, affirmative action in Australia has no legal sanctions for non-compliance or quotas, and is targeted only at women rather than multiple demographic groups including women as well as ethnic minorities. In the USA, affirmative action primarily originated to redress past discrimination in employment and education, mostly due to entrenched racial discrimination against African-Americans. In Australia, affirmative action programs were mainly initiated with the aim of achieving better gender diversity in workplaces (Kramar et al. 2014). It is also noteworthy that in Australia the term ‘affirmative action’ was removed from subsequent legislation (Syed & Kramar 2009), with the current Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 used to promote gender equality in the workplace (Kramar et al. 2014). Lastly, unlike in the USA, the literature in Australia does not show affirmative action as being subject to controversy or backlash, even though Strachan, Burgess and Sullivan (2004) highlighted criticism based on ineffectiveness and inadequacy.

The next section discusses the implications of workforce diversity to help establish the importance of managing diversity within the workplace.

2.6. Implications of Workforce Diversity

The review of literature shows divergent views on the implications of workforce diversity. Some studies indicate that diversity makes positive contributions to organizations, while a more sceptical view is suggested by another stream of research. This section discusses both the views of proponents of positive outcomes from workforce diversity and studies that posit a more negative view about the benefits of workforce diversity, including theoretical explanations encompassing these contrasting perspectives.

2.6.1. The Paradox of Positive and Negative Outcomes of Diversity

Heterogeneity in the workforce is a powerful force that can impact an organization through both positive and negative outcomes (D’Netto et al. 2014; Jehn & Bezrukova, 2010; O’Leary & Weathington 2006; Olsen & Martins 2012). A segment of research supports the view that diversity incurs positive outcomes for most organizations. Some studies have shown that diversity in a work
group enables high-quality decision-making, creativity and problem-solving by facilitating a greater range of perspectives and ideas (Cox 2001; Hoffman & Maier 1961; Watson, Kumar & Michaelsen 1993; McLeod & Lobel 1992; Herring 2009). The findings from a study of Fortune-500-rated firms were consistent with the proposition that developing a diverse workforce and cultivating relationships with a diverse set of stakeholders provide firms with a competitive advantage (Slater, Weigand & Zwirlein 2008). Consequent to a comprehensive review of diversity literature, Sourouklis and Tsagdis (2013) concluded that diversity has a positive effect on a number of key performance indicators, such as employee commitment and satisfaction, as well as turnover and productivity.

On the flip side, there is a body of research that has highlighted the negative effects of diversity. It has been argued that diverse work groups are less cohesive because group integration can be challenging, while job dissatisfaction and turnover are often higher (Jackson et al. 1991; Jehn, Northcraft & Neale 1999; O’Reilly, Caldwell & Barnett 1989; Wagner, Pfeffer & O’Reilly 1984), thus hindering organizational performance. Further, some studies have demonstrated that diversity can lead to disadvantages such as increased conflict, additional training costs, stereotyping and communication issues that negatively affect organizational performance (Fujimoto & Härterl 2004; D’Netto et al. 2014; Hsiao, Auld & Ma 2015). Milliken and Martins (1996) earlier described this paradox of the negative and positive outcomes of diversity as a ‘double-edged sword’ that often brings about ample opportunities as well as immense challenges to organizations.

Despite these ample bodies of research, findings on the link between diversity management and organizational performance remain inconsistent and inconclusive (Härterl 2004; Hsiao, Auld & Ma 2015; Milliken & Martins 1996; Olsen & Martins 2012; Syed & Kramar 2009). Furthermore, some researchers have pointed out that the link between diversity and positive organizational outcomes remains problematic due to a lack of empirical research (Ashikali & Groeneveld 2015; Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich 2013). For example, even in the USA, where workforce diversity first evolved, there is minimal empirical research on diversity management linked to organizational outcomes such as performance (Pitts 2009; Pitts & Wise 2010). Similarly, in a recent review of literature on diversity as a source of competitive advantage, Richard and Miller (2013) concluded that empirical work on the diversity-performance relationship is scarce. Such ambiguity and
complexity surrounding the diversity-performance link has prompted some researchers to endeavour to explain the resonance via theoretical constructs.

2.6.2. Theories on the Positive Consequences of Workforce Diversity

There are several theories that help to understand the positive outcomes that ensue from workforce diversity. The information processing and elaboration perspectives theory (van Knippenberg & Schippers 2007; van Knippenberg, van Ginkel, & Homan 2013), human capital theory (Hillman, Cannella Jr & Harris 2002; Johnson, Schnatterly & Hill 2013; Singh 2007), the resource-based view on HR (Richard & Miller 2013) and the representative bureaucracy theory have been used by some researchers to explain the positive effects of diversity.

The information processing and elaboration perspective is founded on the notion that heterogeneous teams possess better and wider sources of information resources that enable improved decision-making and problem-solving, and increased creativity and innovation, leading to enhanced performance (van Knippenberg, van Ginkel & Homan 2013; William & O’Reilly 1998). According to human capital theory, the diverse range of skills, knowledge and expertise, such as linguistic skills, cultural intelligence and market knowledge, brought about by a diverse workforce that represents the society, can enable organizations to succeed via higher productivity, improved corporate image and lower staff turnover (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Slater, Weigand and Zwirlein (2008) categorized three areas in which diversity positively contributes in the form of HR capital. First, diversity in the boardroom and in other areas of the organization contributes to a range of leadership skills and workstyle perspectives which result in better decision-making. Second, such diversity contributes to customer connections: for example, when there is a match between employees and the customers, there is ease of communication, a sense of comfort due to familiarity and a better understanding of customer preferences, leading to enhanced organizational performance. The third area highlighted is enhanced innovation, as a diverse workforce can pave the way to a rich source of creativity due to the amalgamation of divergent ideas and perspectives.

The resource-based view of diversity is a theoretical approach that is often used to understand the positive effects of diversity on workplace outcomes (Richard & Miller, 2013). Also known as the cognitive resource perspective (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich 2013), it was first developed by
Penrose (1959) and then by successive researchers such as Grant (1991), where employees are categorized as an asset within an organization (Barney 2001; Barney, Ketchen & Wright 2011). According to Grant (1991), six categories of resources exist in organizations: financial; physical; technological; reputation; organizational; and human. The essence of the resourced-based view is that in the context of organizations striving to gain a competitive advantage, HR or employees are an invaluable asset that drives sustainable organizational outcomes (Barney 2001; Barney, Ketchen & Wright 2011; Grant 1991; Richard & Miller 2013; Wright, Dunford & Snell 2001).

Richard and Miller (2013) theorized the resource-based view of diversity, referring to the fusion of knowledge, skills and abilities of diverse employees as a competitive advantage – a resource that is often scarce and difficult to duplicate or substitute. In his corresponding work, Grant (1991) made a distinction between resources and competencies, where resources are the basic unit and competencies are at a higher level and denote the capacity of a group of resources to achieve a specific objective, provided these resources are “properly managed”. Further, two organizations endowed with equal resources may have different outcomes in terms of organizational performance due to the way the resources are managed, or, more specifically, due to the competencies each organization possesses in terms of managing those resources (Bourne Mills & Faull 2001; Grant 1991). The resources-based view provides a solid theoretical basis through which workforce diversity and its contribution to organizational performance can be explained. The underlying premise is that diversity in a work group increases the cognitive resources and abilities due to the fusion of knowledge that comes from a diverse range of employees (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich 2013; Richard & Miller 2013; Roberge & Van Dick 2010).

In addition to these, the representative bureaucracy theory has also been used to help establish the view that diversity leads to better performance (Pitts 2009). The term ‘representative bureaucracy’, coined by Kingsley (1944) to describe the British civil service, is founded on the notion that a demographically representative public service enhances the performance of government, through the agility to be more responsive to different perspectives, experiences and social issues of the communities and the population (Clark Jr, Ochs & Frazier 2013). Underpinning representative bureaucracy is the perspective that the composition of organizations in a demographic sense, reflective of the configuration of the population, breaks the dominance of those that are in power (Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010). In this sense, not only does this challenge the traditional
power structures, it also helps create equality and efficiency with a focus on performance when linked to diversity management (Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010).

### 2.6.3. Theories on the Negative Consequences of Workforce Diversity

Social categorization (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Turner 1985) and the similarity–attraction paradigm (Byrne 1971) are two popular theories that have been used by some researchers to understand why diversity in a work group can lead to negative outcomes, such as intra-group conflict and decreased cohesiveness (Findler, Wind & Mor Barak 2007; Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Olsen & Martins 2012). As pointed out by Johnson, Morgeson and Hekman (2012), based on the social identity theory, individuals often identify themselves as part of a group to reduce uncertainty or to boost self-esteem. Individuals tend to include or alienate group members via the constructs of in-groups and out-groups based on similarities and dissimilarities (Findler, Wind & Mor Barak 2007), leading to higher levels of cooperation and trust among the in-group than with the out-group (van Knippenberg, van Ginkel & Homan 2013). Corresponding detachment or alienation associated with those in the out-group can impact the workplace through negative employee perceptions, antagonistic employee attitudes and decreased employee performance (Hsiao, Auld & Ma 2015).

Lau and Murnighan’s faultline theory (2005) is another theoretical construct through which the negative consequences of workforce diversity can be explained. According to this theory, strong demographic ‘faultlines’ can undermine cohesion in work teams (Grow & Flache 2011), with demographic differences resulting in the formation of homogeneous subgroups or coalitions that can lead to polarization and/or conflict (Flache & Macy 2011; Lau & Murnighan 2005). When employees perceive that organizational practices are favourable to some groups over others, the demographic differences become salient, posing threats to cohesiveness that can result in negative performance outcomes (Jehn & Bezrukova 2010).

### 2.6.4. Managing Diversity in the Context of Positive and Negative Outcomes

When examining the link between diversity and performance, the need to explore contributory factors and conditions that may be relevant to the diversity performance relationship has been highlighted by some researchers (Olsen & Martins 2012; Richard & Miller 2013; Syed and Kramar 2009). Olsen and Martin (2012) point out that the mixed findings may be due to contextual...
variables such as societal factors, time and the diversity management approach of the organization. They emphasized the importance of organizational interventions that address diversity issues as a key determining factor of positive or negative outcomes. Similarly, Syed and Kramar (2009) attributed the positive and negative outcomes of workforce diversity to the integrated or narrow focus adopted by organizations in managing diversity. Using a theoretical basis, van Knippenberg, De Dreu and Homan (2004) argued that the divergent views on diversity and performance are mostly due to the positive outcomes of diversity, such as information processing being mitigated by the negative effects or intergroup biases caused by social categorization processes in diverse groups.

It has been argued by Pitts and Wise (2010) that the outcomes of diversity, including the associated benefits and challenges, remain an underexplored and inconclusive area of research due to the complex non-linear interaction of a number of factors that intervene in the diversity and performance link. There is a general consensus among researchers that diversity management is essentially concerned with nurturing positive effects of workforce diversity and in mitigating the negative effects (Ashikali & Groeneveld 2015). During the evolving stages of the concept of workforce diversity, Cox (1993, p. 11) articulated this assertion when he defined diversity management as “planning and implementing organizational systems and practices to manage people so that the potential advantages of diversity are maximized while its potential disadvantages are minimized”.

Contemporary researchers have expressed similar sentiments, and stressed the importance of effective managerial interventions in the nature of diversity management to reap organizational benefits (Davis, Frolova & Callahan 2016). For Jelínková and Jirincová (2015), workforce diversity is an intangible asset of a business linked to intellectual capital, and, as Kaplan and Norton (2004) argued, the value creation of intangible assets is indirect and complex and they do not create value on their own. Thus, Jelínková and Jirincová (2015) emphasized the importance of diversity management as a tool for managing intellectual capital in an organization. Similarly, Hall (2013) examined how managers could increase the positive outcomes from workforce diversity, and argued that minimizing the faultlines or the hypothetical dividing lines based on various characteristics through managerial interventions would help to achieve this.
2.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature on workforce diversity, providing a contextual understanding of the area of focus in this study. It examined and defined the meaning and scope of workforce diversity, highlighting that ‘diversity’ is a social construct that is fluid and context-specific, and uncovering key dimensions in the context of contemporary Australia, involving six main demographic groups representing human diversity. It then defined the key elements of the concept of diversity management within the context of Australia in comparison with other countries, including the USA where it first evolved. The evolution of diversity management in Australia was consequently identified as unique, based on its association with EEO legislation and affirmative action. Lastly, the chapter reviewed literature on the implications of workforce diversity, highlighting that both positive and negative outcomes are associated with it, and reaffirming the importance of managing this.

The next chapter discusses the literature in relation to organizational approaches to workforce diversity, facilitating identifying the research gaps and the conceptual framework that have driven this study.
CHAPTER 3
WORKFORCE DIVERSITY – ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACHES

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter identified the key demographic groups that are visible in the contemporary workforce of Australia and discussed the concept of diversity management within the literature. This chapter now reviews the literature to explore the framework within which the organizational responsiveness to workforce diversity and the ensuing outcomes relevant to diversity management are embedded. Justice and fairness in the workplace are brought forward to frame the philosophical discourse of diversity management. First discussed are the different approaches to diversity management based on the rationales adopted by organizations, namely, the business case and the social justice rationale. Second, the organizational factors that are relevant to diversity management are discussed, followed by the organizational culture and climate. Third, this chapter aims to establish the link between diversity management and justice and fairness in the workplace, including identifying theoretical gaps that this study seeks to address. Lastly, the chapter presents the conceptual framework that has driven this study, in order to address the research questions and to achieve its overall purpose.

3.2. Framing Diversity Management

This section discusses how diversity management has been framed in the literature in relation to organizational outcomes and responsiveness. The rationales for diversity management, relevant organizational factors, culture and climate, and the role of justice and fairness in managing diversity are discussed.

3.2.1. The Business and Moral Case Rationales for Diversity Management

The preceding chapter highlighted that diversity can lead to positive or negative outcomes, and that diversity management entails managerial interventions to mitigate the negative outcomes and to leverage the positive outcomes. To this end, the research has uncovered two main streams of anticipated outcomes that motivate organizations to focus on diversity management: the classical
approach of the moral case for diversity, and the pragmatic approach of the business case (Kramar 2012; Olsen & Martins 2012; van Ewijk 2011). Underlying both of these approaches is a diversity management rationale, one based on moral justification driven by the purpose of mitigating or eliminating the negative effects of diversity, where the wellbeing of ‘people’ is fundamental, and the other on economic legitimization underpinned by the notion that diversity brings about positive outcomes and thus contributes to the organization’s bottom-line (Köllen 2015).

Cox and Blake (1991) were possibly the first researchers to categorize diversity management based on business benefits, as well as the achievement of social justice based on a moral rationale. The business case argument for diversity proposes that diversity engenders a competitive advantage that can lead to positive organizational outcomes (Kramar 2012), such as a better corporate image, increased performance, and the ability to attract and retain human capital (Bleijenbergh, Peters & Poutsma 2010). In contrast, the social justice approach requires organizations to act morally to achieve equality and fairness, including addressing unequal regimes that reflect power differences within the workforce (Noon 2007; Spaaij et al. 2014).

Early advocates of diversity management, such as Thomas (1990) and Cox (1993), viewed diversity management as a mechanism to derive a competitive advantage from a heterogeneous workforce. Cox and Blake’s (1991) ground-breaking research prompted practitioners and theorists to view a heterogeneous workforce as an enabler of positive organizational outcomes. Thomas (1990) advocated a philosophy of ‘managing for diversity’ and emphasized the bottom-line benefits that can be derived via workforce diversity. From such notions evolved the business case approach to diversity management (Pitts & White 2010; Kochan et al. 2003), which, by emphasizing the bottom-line benefits, made the whole idea of diversity more palatable to employers (Pitts & Wise 2010). Thus the business case argument for diversity is built on the idea that it engenders a competitive advantage and leads to the attainment of positive organizational outcomes (Kramar 2012). According to Spaaij et al. (2014), the business case approach is the dominant approach adopted by most organizations. Embedded in the business case rationale is the “value-in-diversity” perspective, where a diverse workforce in comparison to a homogeneous workforce is viewed as producing better business outcomes, or in other words that diversity pays (Herring 2009, p. 219; Herring & Henderson 2015).
Under the social justice-based approach, organizations strive to achieve equality and fairness by way of diversity management interventions (Noon 2007; Spaaij et al. 2014). Also known as the moral case approach, it aims to achieve social justice through equal opportunity, inclusion in the workplace and long-term sustainable employment (Kramar 2012; Poutsma 2010). Van Dijk, van Engen and Paauwe (2012) argued that achieving equality or the moral rationale for diversity management corresponds with reasoning founded on deontology and the business case rationale for diversity on utilitarian principles. Spaaij et al. (2014) argued that the more persuasive business case argument has overshadowed the social justice approach to diversity management. Kramar (2012) is of the view that most European organizations consider a variety of stakeholders under diversity management, based on societal wellbeing and moral grounds, such as social justice and human rights, whereas countries such as the UK and Australia lean more towards the economic rationale for diversity management in the traditions of the business case.

In Australia, Strachan, Burgess and French (2010) identified three approaches to diversity management: the legislative-driven approach; the productive diversity approach; and the valuing diversity approach. Even though diversity management is mostly a non-legislative process of managing differences in the workforce, in the Australian context it is often regarded as encompassing both legal and voluntary initiatives (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010), and is therefore a legislative-driven approach. This could be due to the close association and overlap between diversity management and affirmative action in Australia (as discussed in the previous chapter). In contrast, productive diversity is akin to the business case approach, reliant on the principle that differences and diverse skillsets of employees can be leveraged to contribute to productivity (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Lastly, the valuing diversity approach is about changing organizational structures and practices to address disparities in the workplace and to address individual needs (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). This last approach tends to be aligned to the moral case for diversity, as it refers to eliminating disparities and providing equal opportunity to employees via a process of internal change to foster and value diversity within the organization.

Despite its dominance, the business case approach to diversity management has been criticized by some for only valuing diversity provided if it benefits organizations financially (O’Leary & Weathington 2006), and for undermining the achievement of social justice and equality (Greene
Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) asserted that the business case approach can perpetuate inequalities and maintain the privileged position of the mainstream employee. At the heart of the criticism levelled against the business case approach is that it would defeat the fundamental basis for diversity management, namely, to create just and equitable workplaces (Noon 2007; O’Leary & Weathington 2006; Syed & Kramar 2009; Syed & Ozbilgin 2009).

Drawing on such ethical perspectives, O’Leary and Weathington (2006) questioned the diversity for profit approach, given that interventions supporting marginalized groups, such as employees with disabilities, may not necessarily deliver significant economic benefits to organizations that managers are able to quantify through a cost benefit approach which leads to a compelling business justification. Questioning the narrow view advocated by the business case rationale for diversity, these authors highlighted potentially catastrophic outcomes if organizations are to abandon diversity programs due to a lack of bottom-line benefits. Thus they argued that the business case approach is generally too narrow to be of value to managers in achieving fair and equitable outcomes for minority groups, as enshrined in anti-discrimination legislation. Similarly, Gotsis and Kortezi (2013) argued that valuing diversity for tangible benefits may replicate and perpetuate social inequalities and, in the absence of tangible gains, diversity management may recede from the management agenda.

According to Bleijenbergh, Peters and Poutsma (2010), concentrating exclusively on the business case for diversity places organizations at risk. They therefore proposed the incorporation of social justice and sustainability elements, cautioning that attempting to implement diversity management initiatives devoid of equality and equity principles may spark resistance and hinder its implementation. Furthermore, ambiguities exist regarding a straightforward link between diversity and performance (Pitts & Wise 2010). These, coupled with a lack of short-term performance enhancements (Bleijenbergh, Peters & Poutsma 2010), may invoke doubts regarding the legitimacy of diversity initiatives if an organization relies exclusively on a business case rationale. Further challenging the rigid application of the business case, which often fails to deliver desirable outcomes for minority groups, Jones et al. (2013) advocated diversity management founded on ethics of care. In support of this, Wallace, Hoover and Pepper (2014) found that such an
approach is evident in the majority of organizations rated as best places to work as published by *Fortune* magazine.

Adding to these, Tomlinson and Schwabenland (2010) believe that considering employees merely as instrumental in achieving profits in line with the rigid application of the business case is unacceptable, although they also argue that it is difficult to justify the persistence of an approach in which the welfare of disadvantaged employees takes precedence over serving the organizational customers. Thus, they propose that both business and social justice missions should co-exist. Van Dijk, van Engen and Paauwe (2012), contending that the equality and the business case perspectives diverge because they emanate from opposing moral perspectives – the first from the utilitarian conviction that diversity produces better business outcomes, the latter from a deontology suggesting that it is wrong to discriminate. They proposed that a virtue ethics perspective to diversity management (where individual attributes are disregarded, unless they are pivotal for job function) is a more sustainable diversity management approach, enhancing both equality and business outcomes. Adding to this, while advocating a business case for diversity as a compelling motivator for diversity management, Mor Barak (2011) also believes that, based on moral and ethical considerations, organizations should break down socioeconomic disparities within the workforce.

Syed and Kramar (2009) caution against an overemphasis on the business case for diversity, highlighting a number of concerns regarding overreliance on the link between economic benefits and workforce diversity. They support the view of Jones and Stablein (2006, p. 640) who colorfully refer to diversity management as “a Trojan Horse: The appearance of the Horse acts as an advocate to further the capitalist enterprise, while sheltering activists working for social justice”. Noon (2007) wholly rejected the business case approach, claiming that it undermines the notion of equality and social justice.

While the dominance of the business case rationale for diversity management has been subject to considerable criticism, Olsen and Martins (2012) argue that it is less stigmatizing for minority employees as it focuses on their added value by way of business benefits, rather than their individual characteristics or differences. Further, in the eyes of the mainstream employees, it is likely to be perceived as fair, as opposed to being construed as one party (minority) getting preferential treatment because of an innate characteristic (Olsen & Martins 2012). For Olsen and
Martins (2012), what is more important is for an organization to place value on diversity and to focus on both the business case and the moral rationale for diversity management. They claim that such an approach based on dual values would help to attract a wider pool of talent from the majority as well as minority groups, since it will appeal to a wider audience and thus result in better outcomes for the organization in the sphere of talent management.

Several other recent studies have similarly advocated an integrated approach to diversity management. Kramar (2012) points out that the most recent approach is a comprehensive multifaceted focus, through integration of the different motives for diversity management. Syed and Kramar (2012) propose a broader and integrated approach to diversity management. Mor Barak (2011) advocates an emphasis on the business case as a compelling motivator for organizations to embark on diversity management, but also points out that the motive for breaking down barriers within groups that stem from socioeconomic disparities is often underpinned by moral and ethical considerations for managing diversity. Thus Mor Barak (2011) recommends a three-pronged approach to diversity management, where, in addition to the business and moral cases, the third motive is that organizations have to adapt to the reality of a current and emerging workforce that is intensely diverse.

The researcher therefore proposes that an integrated approach to diversity management that places value on the business case, as well as the moral justification, combined with agility and responsiveness to the changing composition of the workforce, will better enable organizations to realize far-reaching outcomes relevant to workforce diversity for themselves as well as for a number of stakeholders.

3.2.2. Organizational Factors Relevant to Diversity Management

As highlighted by Herring and Henderson (2015), organizational factors accordingly play a pivotal role in realizing positive outcomes via a diverse workforce. To this end, the existence of a work environment that supports and values diversity, and how diversity management is practised, are critical organizational factors that determine positive outcomes (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich 2013; Cox 1993; Olsen & Martins 2012; Prasad, Pringle & Konrad 2006; Shore et al. 2011). Thus the organizational approach on how diversity management is practised is vital to the outcomes (Kossek, Lobel & Brown 2006; Roberson, Kulik & Pepper 2003).
Cox and Blake (1991) proposed five essential elements that elicit positive outcomes from diversity management: top management commitment, including championing diversity efforts; diversity awareness and capability building training; research and data on diversity-related issues within the organization; analysis and change of culture and HR management systems; and following up by monitoring, evaluating and institutionalizing change. In relation to the commitment and support of the organization’s leaders, Sabharwal (2014) pointed out that senior management must take necessary steps to eliminate systemic barriers, and to leverage and capitalize on the unique talent of employees based on their differences. Similarly, Ashikali and Groeneveld (2015) argued that transformational leadership is an important mediator between diversity management and organizational outcomes, because it contributes to the creation of an inclusive culture. Integrating diversity initiatives into strategic agenda of the organization, upholding diversity as a business imperative, a culture that values diversity and leadership commitment and support are highlighted by Wentling (2004) as necessary factors that contribute to successes through diversity. Wentling also noted that lack of awareness of the value of diversity within the organization, competing agendas, size and complexity of the organization and economic changes are barriers that could impede the success of diversity management efforts.

When reviewing the diversity management programs of a large number of federal agencies in the USA, Kellough and Naff (2004) identified a number of diversity management practices that were considered effective in yielding positive outcomes for organizations. These include management accountability for success in achieving diversity-related goals, reviewing the organization’s structure, culture and management systems, reviewing the HR processes for potential bias, monitoring group representation across occupations and organizational levels, gauging employee perceptions of the organizational environment, diversity-related training and mentoring programs, internal advocacy groups representing minority employees such as women, and proactively creating an inclusive climate that welcomes diverse social groups. Slater, Weigand and Zwirlein (2008) further highlighted several managerial interventions that demonstrate a true commitment towards diversity management, such as establishing a coherent link between diversity and business strategy, line management commitment and ownership, visible commitment of leadership, establishing diversity management goals and monitoring progress, proactive recruitment processes through internships and partnerships with educational institutes, and building skills and competencies such as teamwork. In addition to such diversity management practices, Slater,
Weigand and Zwirlein believed that management interventions should include diversifying the consumer base and suppliers, being cognizant that diversity may trigger conflicts, dealing effectively with such conflicts, and addressing potential negative reactions to diversity through demonstrating that the organizational diversity programs are fair for all employees.

More recently, organizational efforts in relation to mentoring, work-life balance programs and family-friendly work practices have proliferated in an attempt to move from a passive to an active approach in managing diversity (Pitts 2009; Sabharwal 2014). Importantly, Sabharwal (2014) highlighted that, in the absence of a supportive organizational culture, these programs may be perceived as mere accommodative practices, and that employees making use of these programs may encounter negative outcomes such as career derailment and exclusion.

Moving beyond a mere compliance approach and focusing on the value and advantages of workforce diversity has been identified as an enabler that could reap potential benefits (D’Netto et al. 2014; Sabharwal 2014; Shen et al. 2009). In this context, some researchers have recommended the incorporation of diversity management into HR processes. Shen et al. (2009) are of the view that such integration at strategic, tactical and operational levels, coupled with line management commitment and involvement, will facilitate both organizational and individual employee benefits. They emphasize the ‘people’ factor in managing diversity and caution that ineffective diversity management can trigger negative outcomes relating to HR, such as conflict, low employee morale, high turnover and low organizational performance. Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernández and Sánchez-Gardey (2012) note that managing a heterogeneous workforce requires holistic transformation of HR strategies. On examining available diversity management and HR integration approaches, they conclude that there is lack of a comprehensive model that takes into consideration all the contingencies and configurations applicable to diversity management.

3.2.3. Diversity Culture and Climate

Many scholars have argued that the diversity climate and culture play a pivotal role in diversity-related outcomes, with implications for individual employees, teams and the broader organization (Ashikali & Groeneveld 2015; Cox 1993; Ely & Thomas 2001; Kuenzi & Schminke 2009). The mixed results of workforce diversity have also been attributed to the organizational climate – whether it is conducive to diverse employees (Ely & Thomas 2001; Jayne & Dipboye 2004).
Gonzalez and Denisi (2009, p. 24) defined the diversity climate as the “aggregate perceptions about the organization’s diversity-related formal structure characteristics and informal values”. ‘Organizational climate’ in Cox’s (1993) conceptualization is collectively made up of individual, group and organizational context factors. These organizational context factors include the organizational culture and the acculturation process, structural integration, informal integration and institutional bias. When they analyzed interpretations of organizational climate, Kuenzi and Schminke (2009) supported the definition of Schneider and Reichers (1983) who interpreted it as a set of shared perceptions concerning activities relevant to policies, practices and procedures that an organization rewards, supports and expects, and employees’ perceptions of these activities. Accordingly, Kuenzi and Schminke (2009) argue that, while organizational climate is distinct from organizational culture, organizational culture is a contextual factor of organizational climate.

In this context, the importance of organizational culture and climate has received considerable attention in relation to workforce diversity and performance outcome research. Wilson (2000) argued that each organization has a ‘unique constellation’ of practices, understandings, symbols and constructed meanings which make up its culture, defining how organizational employees see and respond to human differences, and this in turn impacts the potency of diversity. According to Wilson, the mere existence of organizational policies and practices will not serve much purpose in terms of effective diversity management if the organizational culture is antipathetic towards inclusiveness. However, according to Herdman and McMillan-Capehart (2010), the deployment of diversity management programs can have an impact on the diversity climate and culture of the organization.

Sabharwal (2014) argues that creating an inclusive culture is a determinant of leveraging positive outcomes from workforce diversity. Similarly, Slater, Weigand and Zwirlein (2008) asserted that a deep sense of commitment to diversity that is entrenched in the very culture of the organization is necessary for competitive advantage. Illustrating how the organizational culture shapes workplace-related outcomes for different demographic groups, Spataro (2005) pointed out that the shared beliefs and expectations of an organization in regard to preferred employee ‘type’ based on demographics could potentially lead to latent discrimination. According to Allen et al. (2007), if employees do not perceive the organization to be embracing diversity, despite the existence of demographic diversity, such an organization will not be in a position to capitalize on this.
However, Hsiao, Auld and Ma (2015) have established that perceived organizational commitment to diversity among employees often creates a sense of belonging that correlates to positive employee behavior reflected through organizational citizenship, job performance and an increased intention to remain with the organization. While the organizational climate and culture are pivotal in deriving positive outcomes from workforce diversity, several scholars have described conducive diversity climates and cultures within organizations. Cox and Blake (1991) were perhaps the first researchers to consider the internal diversity climate of an organization as a precursor of successful outcomes from diversity management. They emphasized that it is imperative to create ‘multicultural organizations’ if the aim is to leverage the benefits of workforce diversity while mitigating its negative impacts. Distinguishing multicultural organizations from the traditional monolithic (homogeneous, dominated by one culture) or plural organizations (seemingly diverse, but one culture still dominates and differences are neither valued nor used for the betterment of the organization), Cox and Blake (1991, p. 52) identified several unique features in multicultural organizations: pluralism (all cultural groups respect, value and learn from each other); full structural integration (all cultural groups are well-represented across all organization levels); full integration of minority cultures (integration into the informal networks of the organization); absence of prejudice and discrimination; equal identification of minority and majority group members, with equal opportunity for alignment of organizational goals to individual career aspirations; and minimal intergroup conflict based on group identities such as race, gender and nationality.

Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich (2013) believe that a diversity climate is multidimensional and can often be defined by encompassing the two concepts of fair or equal treatment and the integration of shared employee perceptions. In relation to measuring the diversity climate within an organization, Ely and Thomas (1996; 2001) were pioneering researchers who developed a theory involving the different organizational conditions that affect the output of diverse teams. Motivated by the need to provide an empirically and theoretically constructed explanation of the conditions that moderate the effectiveness of culturally diverse workgroups, they argued that the ‘diversity perspective’ of the group members impacted the group’s effectiveness. Such diversity perspectives were based on beliefs, ideals and expectations about diversity, including their understanding of the role of diversity within the work group. Accordingly, Ely and Thomas (1996;
2001) elucidated three diversity perspectives as affecting the functionality of the group: integration and learning; access and legitimacy; and discrimination and fairness.

Dass and Parker (1999) further identified a fourth perspective to diversity management, which they labelled the ‘resistance perspective’. Then, more recently, based on the concepts of both Dass and Parker (1999) and Ely and Thomas (2001), Podsiadlowski et al. (2013) have built a comprehensive framework consisting of five diversity perspectives that may exist in organizations: reinforcing homogeneity; ‘colour-blindness’; fairness; access; and integration and learning. Ely and Thomas (1996), Dass and Parker (1999) and Podsiadlowski et al. (2013) all assert that the integration and learning paradigm depicts the optimal level of diversity management. Further detail on the five perspectives defined by Podsiadlowski et al. (2013) is as follows: reinforcing homogeneity – avoids and rejects a diverse workforce; colour-blindness – avoids discriminatory practices based on legitimation and social responsibility; fairness – provides specific support for minority groups to reduce social inequalities; access – diversity is accepted and seen as a business strategy to gain access to diverse customers and markets by internally reflecting an organization’s external environment; integration and learning – creates a productive work environment and makes use of diversity to meet organizational goals, individual wellbeing, and to address social inequities, i.e., it focuses on change and learning.

Emphasis on an inclusive culture has received greater attention from diversity scholars in more recent times (Oswick & Noon 2014; Roberson 2006; Sabharwal 2014; Shore et al. 2011). Mor Barak (2011, p. 248) has argued that the goal of diversity management involves the transformation of organizational culture to a “heterogeneous-pluralistic culture where different value systems are heard and thus equally affect the work environment”: an inclusive workplace adopts a value-laden approach to diversity and fosters inclusion within the organization as well as in the larger system, including across communities and spanning national and international boundaries. According to Mor Barak, changing the culture of the organization to a truly inclusive state involves interventions at four different levels: intra-organizational (relevant to individuals and groups within the organization); corporate community (involving a variety of stakeholders such as the community where the organization operates); state and national (focusing on disadvantaged and underprivileged groups of the population); and global (where international collaboration by way of fair and mutually beneficial economic activities and respectful relationships occurs).
It is salient that corporate social responsibility (CSR) involving a variety of stakeholders has been emphasized in Mor Barak’s (2011) inclusive workplace model, which stressed the importance of reaching out to disadvantaged members of society, ethical conduct, and contributing to national and global issues such as poverty. Similarly, the diversity perspectives framework of Ely and Thomas (1996), Dass and Parker (1999), and Podsiałowski et al. (2013) incorporate strong elements of social justice. The learning and integration perspective emphasizes employee benefits based on achieving equality and fairness, with diversity seen as a resource. Oswick and Noon (2014) further contend that the learning and effectiveness perspective first identified by Ely and Thomas (1996) is comparable to the concept of inclusion in the modern diversity discourse.

**3.2.4. Justice and Fairness in Diversity Management**

The preceding subsection highlighted that the success of diversity management programs depends on the organizational climate and culture, endowed with a commitment to inclusion where issues of equality, fair treatment and social justice are at the forefront. This subsection reviews the literature relevant to justice and fairness in the workplace in the context of diversity management.

Roberson and Stevens (2006) argued that justice is central to workforce diversity. In their study of justice and diversity management, they established that justice concerns are raised by employees regarding diversity management incidents. Employee concerns about fair outcomes and processes were significant in relation to discrimination, management treatment (such as equal treatment) and relationships (such as cohesiveness between diverse employees). Accordingly, Ledimo (2015) opines that diversity management is linked to organizational justice because it concerns eliminating bias and prejudice in an organizational setting. Thus commitment to diversity management demonstrates that an organization is committed to fair and just treatment to all employees that disregards characteristics such as race, gender and age (Ledimo 2015; Magoshi & Chang 2009). Kim and Park (2016) highlight that organizational justice is a normative outcome of diversity management, establishing that it often propels positive perceptions of organizational justice among female employees. Downes, Hemmasi and Eshghi (2014) investigated the mediating effect of distributive justice when female employees perceive the presence of gender-based barriers in the workplace (perceived ‘glass ceilings’), and established that it often mediates turnover intentions and organizational commitment.
Further linking social justice with diversity management, Goodman (2001) argued that social justice seeks to address issues of equity, power disparities and institutionalized oppression promoted by the privileged group in a diverse setting, and stressed the importance of promoting individual dignity, self-determination, and physical and psychological safety. Hiranandani (2012) correspondingly advocated that issues of social justice should be integrated into diversity management programs within organizations, particularly if institutionalized barriers that perpetuate incidents such as white supremacy are to be eliminated and if greater inclusiveness and positive social change are to be achieved. This thus advocates an anti-racism reproach to diversity management, where the privileged groups of the organization (e.g., employees of Caucasian origin) are to acknowledge the existence of societal injustices such as racism.

Several studies have shown that, when implemented within an environment where justice and fairness prevail, diversity management can enhance favourable outcomes. Choi and Rainey (2014) examined whether diversity management, implemented in an environment of perceived organizational fairness and fair treatment, enhances job satisfaction. They found that, when employees perceive a higher level of organizational fairness, diversity efforts become more effective through enabling higher levels of job satisfaction. Similarly, Buengeler and Den Hartog (2015) established that national diversity has a positive correlation to team performance when there is a high level of interactional justice experienced by team members through line management conduct. Other studies have identified that perceptions of fair treatment in the context of diversity management can lead to a range of positive outcomes, such as organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions (Buttner, Lowe & Billings-Harris 2010), interpersonal trust (Kim & Park 2017), organizational attachment (Otaye-Ebede 2016), organizational citizenship behavior (Mamman, Kamoche & Bakuwa 2012) and enhanced team performance (Buengeler & Den Hartog 2015).

According to Huong, Zheng and Fujimoto (2016), workplace inclusion among diverse employees is closely aligned to organizational justice, particularly interactional and procedural justice. Such inclusive workplaces have been known to derive outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, retention and task effectiveness (Mor Barak 2011), which are similar to the outcomes of organizational justice, as evident from a considerable body of empirical research (Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016).
The importance of justice and fairness in gaining employee buy-in for diversity management programs has also been highlighted by other researchers. Bleijenbergh, Peters and Poutsma (2010) raised the issue of ‘legitimacy’ of diversity management programs, and highlighted that managers often rely on both the business case and the social justice rationale to gain support for diversity when implementing such programs. However, they were apprehensive about relying on the business case rationale, as the absence of short-term business outcomes gained via diversity management may jeopardize the legitimacy of such programs. To overcome this issue of legitimacy, they advocated that justice and sustainability through conducive employee relations should be emphasized to validate diversity programs. Similarly, Jones et al. (2013) suggested that diversity training encompass elements of social justice, as opposed to emphasizing the benefits of diversity to the bottom-line of the organization, which can be hard to establish. Slater, Weigand and Zwirlein (2008) argued that a sustainable and deep sense of commitment to diversity requires the addressing of potential negative reactions, in particular by demonstrating that organizational diversity management programs are seen as fair by all employees.

Findler, Wind and Mor Barak (2007) argued that demographic differences of employees can influence the way they are treated in the organization, which in turn influences the way they perceive fairness, inclusion and social support. In a recent study, Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat (2013) argue that the notion of justice when managing diversity is critical, given that the effectiveness of diversity management relies primarily on addressing unfairness that exists in diverse organizations. They argue that integrating organizational justice principles will create fairness among employees in heterogeneous workplaces.

Opining that there is often a lack of organizational initiatives to address issues of unfairness faced by minority employees due to barriers such as discrimination and marginalization, Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat (2013) propose a ‘diversity justice management model’ that enables organizations to proactively establish organizational justice principles in relation to diversity-oriented work events. They argued that this model is a useful tool that facilitates fair and just decision-making in order to establish socially responsible and just organizations.

In summary, existing research indicates that justice and fairness are critical elements closely associated with diversity management, and are often an expected outcome of diversity management efforts. A justice and fairness approach is an integral enabler of the successful
implementation of diversity management initiatives. It promotes legitimacy and employee buy-in, and eliminates resistance to diversity management programs. When combined with diversity management, justice and fairness contribute to enhanced organizational performance and is core for a positive diversity climate and culture.

Therefore, the synthesis of information through this study’s review of the literature points to the need to approach diversity management within the parameters of a justice and fairness framework, irrespective of whether organizations are driven by economic motives or a moral rationale. Overall, even though both organizational justice and diversity management research have continued to grow and flourish, there seems little interconnection and cross-fertilization between the two, which is apparent through the dearth of research that examines the intersection of the two phenomena (Choi & Rainey 2014; Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016).

3.3. Research Gaps Addressed in this Study

As highlighted in the section above, justice and fairness are integral as the foundation and also as determinants and outcomes of diversity management. As argued by Choi and Rainey (2014) and Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013 (2013), a managerial approach embedding justice and fairness could enable organizations to build the required culture and climate to effectively manage workforce diversity. Yet within the context of diversity management in organizations, this has not been adequately explored, with very little research focusing on organizational interventions that address issues of fairness and inclusion in diverse workplaces (Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Kalev, Dobbin & Kelly 2006; Kramar 2012; Shore et al. 2011; Wooten & James 2004).

Existing research has largely explored justice and fairness in the context of diversity management from the perspective of minority employee experiences and reactions (Buengeler & Den Hartog 2015; Buttner, Lowe & Billings-Harris 2010; Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich 2013; Downes, Hemmasi & Eshghi 2014; Findler, Wind & Mor Barak 2007; Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016; Kim & Park 2016; 2017; Ledimo 2015; Magoshi & Chang 2009; Mamman, Kamoche & Bakuwa 2012; Otaye-Ebade 2016; Roberson & Stevens 2006). Previous studies linking diversity and justice and fairness have focused on discrimination and social justice as relevant to privileged employees (Goodman 2001; Hiranandani 2012), conceptualizing inclusive organizational climates (Mor
Barak 2011), legitimacy of diversity programs (Bleijenbergh, Peters & Poutsma 2010), diversity training (Jones et al. 2013) and fairness as an element of organizational commitment to diversity (Slater, Weigand & Zwirlein 2008). In a recent study, Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat (2013) conceptualized the diversity justice management model linking organizational justice to diversity management based on socio-psychological theories and prior studies on the mediational effects of organizational justice and principles of business ethics. However, this model lacks an empirical foundation and reference to diversity management practices implemented in organizations by way of a holistic justice and fairness framework. Indeed, analysis of the literature more generally shows an absence of empirical research exploring the nexus between such practices and principles. Thus, diversity management practices from the perspective of just and fair workplaces have not been documented. This study therefore investigates diversity management practices in selected Australian organizations holistically through a justice and fairness framework based on corresponding justice and fairness theories, in an attempt to fill the research gap.

Furthermore, this study has explored past research on the diversity context to ascertain the nature of diversity management in contemporary Australian workplaces. The literature review shows that the scope and nature of workforce diversity is complex and fluid, as diversity is a social construct dependent on a variety of socioeconomic and cultural factors applicable to a specific era. Importantly, workforce diversity relates to group identities based on attributes that cause different work-life outcomes, where certain groups appear disadvantaged against others who appear to be more privileged. Thus, given its fluid and context-specific nature, it is important to identify the nature of diversity relevant to the contemporary workforce of a particular country. Previous research has established the existence of six main demographic groups within the contemporary Australian workforce (Strachan, Burgess & French 2010).

This study has explored the spectrum of diversity considered by Australian organizations based on the mosaic of the Australian population, aiming to identify and validate the demographic groups that are disadvantaged or underprivileged and can be considered under the ambit of diversity management in Australian workplaces. While the rhetoric of diversity has gained popularity in contemporary Australian organizations as a response to the nation’s demographically diverse society, in reality how they embrace it in light of corresponding issues such as inequality,
stratification and segregation remains an under-explored area of research. The current study strives to fill this gap.

As Kramar (2012) points out, despite a number of academic conceptualizations in diversity management, there is a dearth of empirical research on how it actually works within organizations and national systems such as in Australia. Kulik (2014) argues that diversity management research is heavily skewed toward methodologies that measure employee perceptions, but diversity management as reported by senior management and organizational documents is an under-explored research area. This current study therefore also seeks to address these gaps through the actual experiences of diversity management practitioners and organizational documents. It aims to identify how diversity management practices implemented by organizations best underscore just and fair workplaces, given the diversity context of the country’s workplaces, where certain groups inhabit underprivileged positions based on demographic characteristics. Hence the study’s overall purpose is to elucidate diversity management approaches and outcomes in Australia by way of a justice and fairness paradigm. The primary research question was therefore identified as follows:

Research Question: How do justice and fairness frame diversity management in organizations?

To answer this question, the context of workforce diversity and the organizational responsiveness to diversity in the perspective of justice and fairness needed to be ascertained. Thus the following two subsidiary research questions were also identified:

Subsidiary Research Question 1 How do Australian organizations perceive the context of diversity management?

Subsidiary Research Question 2 How do diversity management practices in Australian organizations reflect justice and fairness in the workplace?

3.4. Conceptual Framework of the Study

To address the research gaps and to achieve the study’s overall purpose, a conceptual framework was developed. Its constructs were derived through the review of diversity management literature
and justice and fairness theories. Organizational justice theory, equity theory, social exchange theory and two eminent social justice theories (Rawls’ theory of justice and Sen’s idea of justice) formed the theoretical basis of that conceptual framework. The following subsections discuss these theories further.

3.4.1. Organizational Justice Theory

The term ‘organizational justice’ was coined by Greenberg (Colquitt 2001; Tan 2014), who looked at theories of justice through which organizational phenomena could be examined (Greenberg 1987). Initially founded on social psychological theories of equity and procedural justice, the field of organizational justice research has evolved over the past three decades to become one of the leading theories to explain the factors that drive employee attitudes and motivations (Greenberg & Colquitt 2013). As Harris, Paese and Greising (2008) argue, organizational justice theory is an effective framework for evaluating numerous organizational phenomena, particularly in relation to employees, such as HR processes. Yean and Yusof (2016) have further explained that organizational justice has economic (e.g., a necessity for employees to receive a salary that enables them to maintain quality of life), social (e.g., a need to be treated fairly and respectfully in the organization) and ethical (e.g., a responsibility to ensure pay equity) considerations.

Central to organizational justice is the fact that individuals seek justice and fairness in social and economic exchanges (Steiner, Gilliland & Skarlicki 2011). According to organizational justice theory, employees base their reactions to a decision on two major considerations: the outcome received and the procedures upon which the outcome was based (Cropanzano & Greenberg 1997; Gilliland 1994; Harris, Paese & Greising 2008). Organizational justice is thus a strong enabler that motivates employees to achieve organizational goals by establishing conducive employee-employer relationships (Greenberg & Colquitt 2013; Steiner, Gilliland & Skarlicki 2011). Greenberg (1987) and Hosmer and Kiewitz (2005) have argued that organizational justice is the employee perception of being treated fairly. Such perceptions of fairness, as further explained by Tan (2014), can impact employee attitudes and behaviors, and are often manifested via organizational commitment, trust and satisfaction. In particular, Tan (2014) believes that fairness in organizational policies, payments and benefits are relevant to organizational justice. According to Al-Zu’bi (2010), organizational justice is a term relevant to the work environment where the
role of justice in the workplace is upheld. Cugueró-Escofet and Fortin (2014) have noted that the terms ‘justice’ and ‘fairness’ can be used interchangeably in most organizational justice situations.

Studies show that there are four categories of workplace justice and fairness under the umbrella term ‘organizational justice’: fairness of outcomes (distributive justice); fairness of procedures (procedural justice); interpersonal treatment (interpersonal justice); and information (informational justice) (Cugueró-Escofet & Fortin 2014). Distributive justice (the fair distribution of outcomes or resources) is consistent with the principles of equity or equality (Colquitt 2001; Rifai 2005). For Tan (2014), distributive justice concerns perceptions of fair distribution of gains in accordance with the value of the contributions made by employees. For Al-Zu’bi (2010), it is the perceived fairness of the outcome for an employee from the organization. Procedural justice concerns the justice or fairness of the processes that lead to outcomes (Leventhal 1980) and how employees perceive the fairness of rules and procedures used in such processes (Nabatchi, Bingham & Good 2007). Here the emphasis is on process rather than outcome, informed by the procedural emphasis in the legal system (Colquitt 2001). Interational justice arose from consideration of fairness being defined by the quality of interpersonal treatment in implementing organizational procedures (Bies & Moag 1986). It emphasizes treating employees with dignity, sensitivity and respect and having clear rationales for decisions (Al-Zu’bi 2010; Colquitt 2001). Mikula, Petri and Tanzer (1990) suggested that perceived injustices are not restricted to distributional or procedural issues, but are largely impacted by the way employees are treated during interactions and encounters. Thus Yean and Yusof (2016) contend that interactional justice is enhanced by sharing information and explaining rationales for management decisions. Interactional justice was subsequently divided into two categories: interpersonal justice, the respect and sensitivity aspects of interactional justice; and informational justice, the explanation of rationales, which involves providing information (Colquitt 2001; Greenberg 1993). Despite the lack of consensus regarding this division (Al-Zu’bi 2010; Yean & Yusof 2016), researchers including Colquitt (2001) recognized it and adopted a four-structure approach to organizational justice. Colquitt (2001) examined the impact of organizational justice on outcomes such as leader evaluation, rule compliance, commitment, and helping behaviour (acts of consideration), using the four-factor model of organizational justice, which has been summarized in Table 3.1 below.
Table 3.1: Four-factor model of organizational justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distributive justice</th>
<th>Procedural justice</th>
<th>Interpersonal justice</th>
<th>Informational justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome received reflects the effort</td>
<td>Opportunity to express views and feelings during procedures</td>
<td>The treatment received was polite, dignified and respectful</td>
<td>Candid communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome is appropriate considering the work completed</td>
<td>Ability to influence the outcomes achieved via procedures</td>
<td>Absence of improper remarks or comments</td>
<td>Clear and thorough explanation of the procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome reflects individual contribution to the organization</td>
<td>Consistency in application and free of bias</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome can be justified given the individual’s performance</td>
<td>Consideration of accurate information</td>
<td></td>
<td>Explanation of the procedure is reasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to appeal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Timely communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures meet ethical and moral standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communications address specific individual needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Colquitt (2001)

Organizational justice research indicates that justice and fairness in the workplace are not only beneficial to employees but also to organizations (Potipiroon & Rubin 2016; Yean & Yusof 2016) through inducing positive behaviours and attitudes (Colquitt 2012; Tan 2014) and promoting employee wellbeing (Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016). Cho and Sai (2013) argue that organizational fairness has a positive impact on employee behaviours and attitudes leading to career development aspirations, employee satisfaction, organizational loyalty and cooperation,
which contribute to higher levels of organizational performance. Colquitt et al. (2013) point out that organizational justice contributes to low turnover, higher levels of task performance, trust and organizational citizenship behaviour, and negates counterproductive behaviour. Rubin (2007) argues that there is a significant positive relationship between procedural justice perceptions and employee satisfaction and trust in management, and a negative relationship between procedural justice perceptions and turnover intentions. These studies further demonstrate that fairness perceptions explain the unique variance in key attitudes and behaviours, including organizational commitment, trust in management, citizenship behaviour, counterproductive and retaliative behaviour, and better task performance (Colquitt et al. 2013; Rubin 2007; Steiner, Gilliland & Skarlicki 2011). Justice-related incidents trigger emotional reactions of employees (Barclay, Skarlicki & Pugh 2005; Barsky, Kaplan & Beal 2011). As further attested by Steiner, Gilliland and Skarlicki (2011), organizational justice has a strong moral foundation: individuals not only seek justice for themselves but are also driven by morality to react when witnessing injustices occurring to others.

3.4.2. Equity Theory

Research has drawn a close link between Adams’ (1965) equity theory and distributive justice (Bonache 2004; Cugueró-Escofet & Fortin 2014; Morand & Merriman 2012; Tan 2014). Till and Ronald (2011) argue that equity theory was founded on Homans’ (1961) concept of distributive justice. According to equity theory, individuals compare the ratios of their contribution and the output they receive against others, to determine whether there is an inequality in terms of what they have gained (output) through their contribution (Adams 1965; Till & Ronald 2011). Thus, as highlighted by Morand and Merriman (2012), equity-based justice is ingrained in the logic of proportional distribution of outcomes: individuals are to be rewarded in proportion to their contribution or the efforts they have put in. In an organizational setting, such distributive justice applies to a variety of payments and value-laden outcomes, including rewards, bonuses, premiums, promotions and employee benefits (Beugre 2002; Folger & Konovsky 1989; Morand & Merriman 2012). Cugueró-Escofet and Fortin (2014) argue that equity theory is founded on Aristotle’s principle of merit, where proportionate equality of distribution of goods is said to be just (Greenberg & Cohen 1982).
Morand and Merriman (2012) believe that there is a strand of research that recognizes equality (in addition to equity) as an integral element embedded in distributive justice. According to them, Rawls (1971, 2001) draws a close link between equality and distributive justice: under equality, all individuals are entitled to equivalent outcomes, irrespective of their individual effort or input. Morand and Merriman also note that, within the peripheries of organizational justice literature, equality as a basis of justice has received less attention, possibly because most organizations are meritocracies based on an economic rationale for distribution of rewards. Considering the importance of equity and equality in the distribution of resources, they contend that there should be a corresponding ‘equality theory’, as all social systems must strive to achieve a balance between self-interest and the wellbeing of the larger society, and the equality approach can also contribute to organizational effectiveness in line with the ethical imperatives of organizations.

Social comparison theory is another construct that is closely linked to equity theory (Till & Ronald 2011) and it suggests that satisfaction with an outcome is reliant on a comparison with a referent group (Goodman 1974; Till & Ronald 2011).

### 3.4.3. Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory has also been linked to organizational justice (Ko & Hur 2014; Rahman et al. 2016). According to this theory, individuals evaluate the justice of what they receive through social exchange and then tend to reciprocate (Gould-Williams & Davies 2005; Ko & Hur 2014). Linking organizational justice with social exchange positions workplace justice as a predictor of behaviours driven by feelings of sentiment towards the organization, where employees react through reciprocal behaviours that positively affect the organization (Barclay, Skarlicki & Pugh 2005; Masterson et al. 2000). For Ko and Hur (2014), social exchange theory comprises two types of exchange: perceived organizational support (the exchange relationship between employee and workplace); and leader-member exchanges. They examined the importance of procedural justice in social exchange theory, and consider procedural justice as perceived organizational support (see also Parzefall & Salin 2010 and Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002). Accordingly, Ko and Hur (2014) argued that procedural justice – an element of perceived organizational support – is positively related to desired work attitudes in employees, such as increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover intentions.
Otto and Mamatoglu (2015) suggest a connection between social exchange theory and interactional justice, concluding that perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between interactional justice and organizational loyalty, and that bullying mediates the relationship between interactional justice and mental impairment. As previous studies have suggested, interactional justice refers to an individual’s perceptions of the fairness they have received from the organization during the implementation of a process (Colquitt & Greenberg 2003; Cropanzano 1998). Employees consider organizations as human characters and thus develop a set of beliefs that the organization cares about employee wellbeing (perceived organizational support) (Otto & Mamatoglu 2015). In social exchange theory, if employees are treated by the organization in the manner they expect, they reciprocate favourably (Otto & Mamatoglu 2015).

3.4.4. Social Justice

Social justice does not have a single meaning and varies according to the perspectives of social theories and ideologies (Zadja, Majh & Rust 2006). In a broad sense, social justice refers to a society that is concerned not only with what is good for an individual, but also for the whole of society in which equality, harmony, human rights and dignity of every human being are recognized and valued (Capeheart & Milovanovic 2007; Zadja, Majh & Rust 2006). Social justice pursues inclusiveness and enhances wellbeing and development at individual, institutional and societal levels (Capeheart & Milovanovic 2007). This section discusses two eminent theoretical conceptions of social justice that have gained attention in recent years – those of political philosopher John Rawls and of Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen.

3.4.4.1. Rawls’ Theory of Justice

In his seminal work, A Theory of Justice, Rawls developed one of the most prevalent philosophical views of justice, which can be applied to analyse the justice of social institutions (Bonache 2004). Rawls’ work has been widely used in the areas of political, legal and democratic theory (Landázur 2010; Wingenbach 1999) and to some degree in the field of organizational research (Bonache 2004; Marens 2007; Newbert & Stouder 2011; Toenjes 2002). Applying Rawls’ theory of justice conceived in the traditions of social justice, Bonache (2004) argued that contract work has increased inequalities and has created a class of workers who are deprived of some of the basic
rights afforded by labor laws, thus becoming susceptible to discrimination. While Rawls focuses on a societal level of justice (Premdas 2016), Bonache (2004) demonstrates that Rawlsian concepts can be applied to organizations by assessing fairness through the lens of social legitimization of organizational practices. The core element of social justice is to embed principles of equity, and at times go “beyond merited mathematically calculated distribution of resources” in the quest to address issues of justice in society, through demonstrating social responsibility toward those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, and those who have been historically oppressed and discriminated against (Premdas 2016, p. 453). This relates to overarching social ideals such as human dignity and equality, as well as the distribution of resources to ensure the fulfilment of basic needs, particularly of the disadvantaged (Premdas 2016).

Justice according to Rawls should be the first virtue of social institutions (Aryee et al. 2015). Bonache (2004) contends that reference to social institutions does not restrict the applicability of Rawlsian principles of justice to organizations. Given that Rawls attempted to reflect the state of justice desired by society, Bonache points out that what is socially accepted as fair and what is socially rejected as unjust can be used to evaluate the systemic fairness of organizational practices: for example, certain types of employment may be rejected by society if they fall short of what is envisaged as ‘just’ by members of society.

In contrast, in organizational justice theories, where fairness of specific practices is the focal point, Rawls looks at the justice of the social system (Bonache 2004). Further, Rawls views fairness in the sense of what it ought to be rather than whether something is perceived as fair by individuals, which is the approach of organizational theories of justice (Bonache 2004). According to Bonache (2004), Rawls’ attempts to give justice a universally accepted meaning by moving away from a subjective and selfish motive, whereas an individual perception of justice is coloured by what is favourable individually, which may not be acceptable by all members as fair. Rawls emphasizes impartiality: he refers to a position where everybody is behind a ‘veil of ignorance’, where everyone is equal and rational, and argues that what is just is to be determined in such a situation (Bonache 2004; Cohen 2010).

Referring to the principle of egalitarian distribution of Rawls, Bonache (2004) points out that the principle is about freedom and equal opportunity, and that the non-egalitarian rule applies to
incomes and wealth, as long as it leads to increased production, satisfying the expectations of the least advantaged members. Thus the first principle refers to equal rights to the most expensive basic liberty, which is the principle of freedom (Bonache 2004; Najafpour & Harsij 2013). The second principle is about social and economic inequalities (Najafpour & Harsij 2013): social and economic benefits should be for everyone’s advantage (the principle of differentiation), attached to positions that are open to all (the principle of equal opportunity) (Bonache 2004). Bonache (2001) also argued that Rawls’ framework, particularly the principle of difference, requires the identification of the most and least advantaged groups in regard to employment conditions. Bonache (2004) suggests a three-prong approach when applying Rawls’ framework to analyse the fairness of HR practices: it is necessary to ascertain whether a) all groups have the same basic labor rights and opportunities, b) greater rewards correspond to greater merits, and c) the greater rewards of the more favoured improve those of the less favoured.

Hunt (2010) argues that Rawls’s theory is both deontological and substantially egalitarian in terms of outcomes. Addressing critiques of Rawls’s theory (e.g., Cohen 2010) for accommodating differences (the principle of differentiation), and thus creating inequities (Bonache 2004), Hunt (2010) is of the view that these differences should essentially be significant. Hunt contends that a just society will overcome those differences by way of morally conceived structures, such as equal opportunity for education and standards set by professional associations, even if the legal system is not sufficient to address such inequalities. Vaca (2013) is of the view that Rawls’ principle of justice, as opposed to the claim that it is exclusively forward-looking, can be applied to address unfavorable conditions faced by some as a result of past oppression and disadvantages.

3.4.4.2. Amartya Sen’s Idea of Justice

Amartya Sen developed his theory of justice based on reason by critically evaluating and challenging the hitherto existing frontiers of social justice (Osmani 2010; Wiener 2013). Focusing on Rawls’ theory of justice and fairness, Sen further extends the theory by challenging some of its key elements (Marin & Quintana 2012; Osmani 2010). In contrast to theories of organizational justice, where fairness of specific practices is the focal point, Rawls looks at the justice of the social system (Bonache 2004). Bonache (2004) demonstrates that Rawlsian concepts can be
applied to organizations by assessing the ‘fairness’ of organizational practices through social legitimization.

However, one of the main criticisms that Sen has of Rawls’ theory is its supposition of a perfectly just society, governed by a single set of rules, which Sen believes is not feasible (Newbert & Stouder 2011; Osmani 2010). Sen asserts that it is difficult to conceptualize a ‘perfectly just society’ in an imperfect world where there is plurality of perspectives as to what is ‘just’ due to the existence of different social conditions (Osmani 2010). Sen argues that defining an ideal society is a futile endeavour, because it will not help society become less unjust (Osmani 2010). Sen is critical of the notion that equality in social primary goods leads to the achievement of justice and fairness as outlined by Rawls, as this concept disregards human diversity, such as physical characteristics, opportunities, working conditions and temperament (Marin & Quintana 2012; Robeyns & Brighouse 2010). Sen highlights that, according to Rawls’ theory, a person who is severely disabled will not be entitled to additional resources, as Rawls’ differentiation principle does not provide for special consideration based on an impairment (Robeyns & Brighouse 2010).

As opposed to the Rawlsian tradition of comparing the holding of primary resources regardless of heterogeneous capabilities of individuals, Sen perceives justice as a capability approach (Robeyns & Brighouse 2010). Sen advocates exploration of the characteristics that enable the conversion of primary goods into outcomes that a person values, whereby individuals should have substantive freedoms – that is, the capability to choose a life that one values (Robeyns & Brighouse 2010). Accordingly, each society must then decide on its specific capability requirements through a process of democratic social dialogue (Routh 2014).

Sen (2009) contends that the Rawlsian approach of the ‘original position’ – a hypothetical status where individuals are ignorant of their attributes such as social class, gender and disability (Waldman & Ojelabi 2016) – may entail ‘exclusionary neglect’, as the Rawlsian approach tends to neglect issues of equal access to participation (Wiener 2013). While Rawls emphasized just institutions and the distribution of resources as an enabler to achieve social justice, Sen focuses on the ends rather than the means (Osmani 2010; Thomas 2014) – that is, focusing on the notion of justice of the outcome, meaning the actual realization of justice society, rather than merely the “institutions and rules” (Sen 2009, p. 9). According to Thomas (2014), Sen’s claim is that the
Rawlsian approach of emphasizing justice within social institutions disregards the need to consider justice at the level of individual conduct. Sen instead advocates for a ‘comparative view of justice’, focusing on the “...the advancement and/or retreat of justice” (Sen 2009, p. 8), as opposed to concentrating on a ‘just society’ as in the Rawlsian approach (Wiener 2013). Thus, Sen’s approach suggests that justice should be assessed from an inclusive and comparative perspective where pluralistic views are considered, as opposed to the narrow and exclusionary perspective which underpins the Rawlsian tradition of the original position, behind a veil of ignorance (Wiener 2013). For Sen, it is more important to augment justice and fairness which are actually experienced by people, rather than follow a utopian construct of universal justice which is illusionary (Sondak 2010).

Sondak (2010) argues that Sen’s approach to justice, which has influenced economic policy and philosophical thinking, provides a useful platform to study justice and fairness in organizations. This consideration of individual behaviours and reactions to procedures and outcomes, along with the pragmatic approach embedded in Sen’s notion of justice, makes it a plausible option to use in any organizational setting (Sondak 2010). Influenced by the importance placed on ‘employee voice’ by psychologists studying fairness, Sondak highlights Sen’s acknowledgement of a person’s voice: “A person’s voice may count either because her interests are involved or because her reasoning and judgment can enlighten a discussion” (Sen 2009, p.108, quoted in Sondak 2010). Thus employee voice will lead to diverse interpretations and perspectives and therefore be an impetus for just and fair outcomes by considering alternatives. The flexibility and pragmatism of Sen’s view of justice, where individuals are directly involved in determining their own capability-enhancing factors, can be evidenced in Routh’s (2014) research. Routh claims that the participatory process of developing capabilities through social dialogue combats inequality.

More recently, Shrivastava et al. (2016) have asserted that Sen’s version of social justice is a useful framework that enables organizations to achieve outcomes that are valued by employees. Distinguishing Sen’s approach to social justice as enabling the achievement of both procedural and distributive justice, as opposed to other theories of justice that are focused either on procedural or distributive justice, Shrivastava et al. believe that the approach helps to identify unjust outcomes in organizations. They also argue that the Rawlsian view on justice and Sen’s approach to justice can lead to very different outcomes for employees. They highlight that the Rawlsian approach that
condones individuals acting in their own self-interest has the propensity to promote inequity, disregard employees and alienate external stakeholders from the ambit of justice, because they are external to a given society, which is the organization. Shrivastava et al. also emphasize that the Rawlsian approach allows for differentiation or inequities in the distribution of primary resources only if this is beneficial to everyone.

3.4.5. The Conceptual Framework of Justice and Fairness in Diversity Management

Informed by the knowledge and theories of diversity management and justice and fairness derived from extant literature, the following elements constitute the conceptual framework that guided this study. The relationships among the elements of the framework are then discussed below.

![Conceptual Framework of Justice and Fairness in Managing Diversity](image)

**Figure 3:1: Conceptual Framework of Justice and Fairness in Managing Diversity**
The framework in Figure 3.1 proposes that diversity management interventions influenced by organizational justice, social justice, organizational equity and employee expectations contribute to a ubiquitous culture and climate framed by concepts of justice and fairness in the workplace. These perceptions of justice and fairness can leverage positive employee behaviours toward the organization such as reciprocity, and positive societal perceptions toward the organization resulting in social legitimization of diversity management practices.

The constructs of the framework are explained as follows:

- **Organizational justice.** This relates to fairness concerns within the workplace, such as how employees perceive whether they have received fair treatment on the basis of distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice and informational justice (Colquitt 2001). Thus organizational justice theory proposes that, in an organizational setting, employees judge organizational actions and perceive whether or not they have received fair treatment.

- **Organizational equity.** According to Adams’ (1965) equity theory, individuals judge the fairness of an outcome by determining whether the output was fair in comparison to their input or contribution, and then by comparing the ratio of input and outcome against comparable others. Thus employees in an organizational setting will determine if they receive fair treatment based on their expectations regarding fair distribution of rewards and opportunities based on their own output and how other employees are treated. Equity theory is closely connected to the achievement of distributive justice (Colquitt 2001).

- **Employee expectations of fair treatment and the process of social exchange.** In an organizational context, social exchange theory suggests that a process of social exchange occurs between the employee and the employer based on reciprocity, where the perceived treatment employees receive from the organization determines the outcomes of their behaviour toward the organization (Blau 1964). According to social exchange theory, if employees are treated by the organization in the manner they expect, they reciprocate favourably, resulting in positive outcomes for the organization (Otto & Mamatoglu 2015). Therefore employee expectations of just and fair treatment from the organizations, and the organization’s ability to meet those expectations, will have implications for employee behaviour towards the organization.
• *Social justice.* A social justice lens maintains that certain societal groups are at a disadvantage due to determinants that include socioeconomic conditions that can limit their capacity in comparison to those who belong to advantaged groups (Clingerman 2011). Therefore social justice advocates achieving justice, fairness and equality by recognizing and addressing inequities that prevail in society. According to Rawls (1971), social justice entails equal rights and fundamental liberties and the equitable distribution of primary resources. For Sen, social justice involves developing human capabilities, where individuals have the freedom to select what they value (Robeyns & Brighouse 2010).

• *Diversity management.* This is a managerial process demonstrating organizational responsiveness to heterogeneity of the workforce which is determined by socio-demographic factors that demarcate a dominant group – perceived as privileged – from minority groups – perceived as underprivileged – in a given society.

• *Organizational culture and climate.* These are closely connected and refer to characteristics of work settings that help understand the identity of an organization and how people perceive and experience it (Schneider, Ehrhart & Macey 2013). More specifically, organizational culture refers to shared assumptions, values, beliefs and norms that shape it and the way employees behave, feel and communicate (Schein 2010; Zohar & Hofmann 2012). Organizational climate refers to the shared perceptions of employees toward the organization based on their experiences and perceptions of organizational incidents (Schneider, Ehrhart & Macey 2013). According to McKay, Avery and Morris (2009), when diversity is embedded as an organizational value, employees perceive that the employment policies are fair and that the organization promotes inclusion. According to Pugh et al. (2008), an organization’s diversity climate refers to employees’ shared perceptions of how the organization values and fosters diversity. Thus, the implementation of diversity management programs may signify that an organization values diversity as part of its culture, and this in turn contributes toward a positive diversity climate via positive corresponding employee perceptions of the organization’s commitment towards diversity (Herdman & McMillan-Capehart 2010).
3.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed diversity management literature to help understand the implications of workforce diversity, the importance of managerial interventions in relation to the outcomes of such diversity, the business case and the moral case justifications for diversity management, and the organizational factors that affect diversity management. Literature relevant to diversity culture and climate, and justice and fairness in the workplace was also examined.

The literature suggests that the link between diversity management and organizational performance is inconclusive. There is a dearth of research that establishes a coherent link between diversity and positive performance. Some studies and theoretical underpinnings postulate that diversity can lead to either positive or negative outcomes for organizations. Following this paradox of positive or negative outcomes, several scholars have emphasized that it is important for organizations to effectively manage workforce diversity, including leveraging the benefits and minimizing or eliminating the negative consequences.

The chapter discussed two main streams of motivators that underpin organizations’ diversity management approaches: the business case rationale and the moral justification. A review revealed that the dominance of the business case rationale has been subject to severe criticism by some scholars who question the morality of an economic justification for diversity management, because, in particular, it undermines the need to address issues that disadvantaged groups encounter in the workplace and fails to challenge hegemony.

While organizations can implement a variety of practices under diversity programs, their success depends on the organizational climate and culture that influence the commitment to inclusion in a true sense, where issues of equality and fair treatment are at the forefront. Thus this study’s literature review suggests that diversity management linked with justice and fairness principles offers a sophisticated approach to address such issues, irrespective of whether organizations are driven by economic motives or a moral rationale. As this is currently an under-researched area, the study aims to fill the gap by addressing the primary and two subsidiary research questions framed here in order to achieve the study’s overall purpose. To facilitate and guide this study, a conceptual framework based on justice and fairness theories was developed and presented.
In the next chapter, the methodological approach adopted and the techniques used in data collection, analysis and reporting of findings are discussed.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

The previous two chapters reviewed the literature and ascertained the gaps that led to the framing of this study’s research questions. Given that this investigation involved the answering of complex research questions that are of an exploratory and descriptive nature relevant to a contemporary phenomenon in a real-world setting (Yin 2012; 2014), this chapter discusses the case study methodology that was deemed most appropriate for this empirical study. The chapter begins by examining the research problem and the research questions. The key elements of the methodology, including its justification, the research process, the conceptual framework and the research design of the study are then presented, followed by the techniques used for data collection and analysis. Lastly, the chapter provides an explanation of the way in which the quality of the study was established and outlines the ethics approval process that was followed.

4.2. The Research Problem

The research problem identified is the lack of a justice and fairness approach for managing diversity in organizations. The rhetoric of workforce diversity has gained popularity in contemporary Australian organizations as a response to a demographically diverse society. Yet in reality it remains elusive how Australian organizations embrace diversity in light of issues such as inequality, stratification and segregation that arise from heterogeneity. As is evident through the review in Chapter 3, very little research has investigated the link between diversity management and justice and fairness in the workplace, even though justice and fairness are central to this concept. Given the heterogeneity of the contemporary Australian workforce, as outlined in Chapter 2, certain groups are underprivileged due to their demographic characteristics. Thus, creating an equal regime of employment opportunity and workplace-related outcomes via organizational interventions is pivotal. As Kramar (2012) and Strachan, Burgess and French (2010) argue, organizational interventions are necessary to create an equal regime of opportunity for all segments of the Australian workforce. Hence the overall objective of this research is to elucidate diversity
management approaches and outcomes of Australian organizations through a justice and fairness paradigm.

4.3. The Research Questions

According to Eisenhardt (1989), defining research questions within a broad study provides focus, as researchers can often become overwhelmed by the volume of data. Eisenhardt posits that research questions help investigators determine the type of organizations to approach as potential participants of the study and the kind of data to be collected. This view is supported by others such as Yin (2014) and Baxter and Jack (2008). Thus, in line with the overall purpose of this research, the following questions have guided this investigation:

- **Research Question**: How do justice and fairness frame diversity management in organizations?
- **Subsidiary Research Question 1**: How do Australian organizations perceive the context of diversity management?
- **Subsidiary Research Question 2**: How do diversity management practices in Australian organizations reflect justice and fairness in the workplace?

The first subsidiary research question involves an investigation of how Australian organizations define workforce diversity, critical issues relevant to diversity management, and the nature of diversity management practices among contemporary Australian organizations. This question facilitates the identification of key themes underpinning the nature of the diversity management within Australian workplaces and the organizational practices within its scope. The second subsidiary research question explores diversity management approaches from a justice and fairness perspective, alongside the diversity issues identified in the first subsidiary question. This helps illustrate how diversity management is integrated with what is just and fair in the workplace, which then helps answer the primary research question.

Yin (2014) argues that case study research can be exploratory, explanatory or descriptive, and that there can be a considerable amount of overlap between the three categories. According to Neuman
(2003), such exploratory research addresses ‘what’ questions, which requires a creative and open-minded approach, leading to the exploration and discovery of new issues. Neuman also believes that exploratory studies help a researcher formulate more specific and systematic research, and can set the scene for further inquiry regarding new issues that emerge from the exploratory study. Neuman also contends that ‘how’ and ‘who’ questions are akin to descriptive research – that descriptive research is concerned with illustrating specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship.

Accordingly, this study’s research questions indicate that the research here is exploratory and descriptive in nature. It explores diversity management practices in Australian organizations and then provides a detailed description of how these are integrated with what is just and fair in the workplace through a theoretical perspective using justice and fairness theories. Thus this study is multi-faceted and includes elements of both exploratory and descriptive research.

4.4. Methodology

This study involves a preliminary exploratory investigation into workforce diversity in Australian organizations by way of thematic analysis. This leads to a more specific and definitive in-depth study, which investigates how these organizations approach diversity through the lens of justice and fairness. Thus qualitative inquiry and the key aspects of the case study methodology have been used.

4.4.1. Justification of Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative research is concerned with gaining insights into the social world through multiple perspectives and constructing knowledge from within individuals (Saldaña 2011). Qualitative researchers strive to understand the “meaningful character of human group life” (Travers 2001, p. 9). In contrast, quantitative research is concerned with measurements and instruments that uncover the facts that exist in the real world (Saldaña 2011). This current study focuses on diversity management, which is a phenomenon that is socially constructed. The research involves understanding human interactions within an organizational setting, and the exploration of perceptions, behaviors, experiences, organizational attitudes and the context applicable in an organization, which is a social entity in the real world.
Therefore, considering the nature of this research, a qualitative research approach is appropriate, as qualitative methods enable the researcher to gain valuable insights into phenomena in their natural settings (Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Mello & Flint 2009) through naturalistic inquiry (Green 2002; Sapsford & Jupp 2006). Positivist techniques, which seek to explain the social world through measurements and correlations (Sapsford & Jupp 2006), are insufficient and too shallow to measure complex phenomena that are socially constructed (Cooper & Schindler 2006; Silverman 2003).

Qualitative research seeks to understand in-depth meaning and lived experiences from the perspective of those who experience the social world (Cooper & Schindler 2006; Corti & Thompson 2004) and attempts to give meaning and context to fluid and complex processes (Liampittong & Ezzy 2005). Thus most qualitative research will study humans and their products (Saldaña 2011). This study’s interaction with diversity management experts as key informants via semi-structured interviews is an integral part of the research. This technique enables the collection and interpretation of data relating to real-life experiences of those directly dealing with workforce diversity issues. The detailed accounts of their descriptions relating to diversity management in an organizational setting provide insightful information. Likewise, organizational documents, which are products created through human endeavours, are a rich source of data. These documents are another source that provide substantial detail relevant to the context of the studied organizations and their diversity management approaches.

4.4.2. Justification of Case Study Methodology

Case studies are one of the most common types of research design techniques in management research (Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007; Yin 2014). They involve in-depth investigation using a variety of data sources (Baxter & Jack 2008; Yin 2014). Case studies enable the researcher to address research questions that are fluid and complex through an exploration of organizational processes, the human and social experiences of such processes, organizational interventions, and outcomes in an organizational context (Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007). Answering the research questions in this current study requires a thorough analysis of organizational processes and outcomes linked to diversity management and the experiences of diversity management practitioners within an organizational context.
According to Yin (2014), case studies are appropriate for answering ‘what’ questions of an exploratory nature. Yet case studies often go beyond exploratory studies and are pertinent when the researcher attempts to address descriptive questions and explanatory factors, as they provide rich descriptions and insightful explanations (Rowley 2002; Yin 2014). At the outset, this study was exploratory in nature, as it investigated a contemporary phenomenon within a real-world setting over which the investigator had minimum control. Then the final stage of the analysis provided a rich and insightful description of the phenomena that was being researched. Thus, this study denotes exploratory elements as well as descriptive elements, warranting the suitability of case study methodology.

According to Yin (2014, p. 16) “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in-depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. Eisenhardt (1989, p. 534) defines case studies as “a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings”. This current study has investigated the complex nature of diversity issues in contemporary Australian organizations. Certainly ‘diversity’ is a defining characteristic of the modern Australian workplace, fuelled by its intensely heterogeneous population. Thus workforce diversity and the resultant organizational responsiveness in the form of diversity management are contemporary phenomena.

In this study, diversity management context and organizational responsiveness are explored and the justice and fairness elements embedded in organizational interventions that address issues relevant to a heterogeneous workforce are illustrated. The study has to answer complex and multi-faceted research questions while focusing on contemporary phenomena as opposed to historic events. Furthermore, although diversity management and social justice have been linked in previous studies that encompass a moral rationale for diversity management, the integration of justice and fairness and diversity management has remained a matter of conjecture, with a dearth of empirical research encompassing the complex constructs of social justice, organizational justice and diversity management. In light of these factors, the case study approach constitutes the most appropriate methodology for this study.
4.4.3. The Research Process

Neuman (2003) identifies seven steps that are followed by most researchers when conducting research: choosing a specific topic; narrowing the topic to specific research questions; designing the study by giving detailed practical consideration to the manner in which the study will be conducted; collection of data; analysis of data; interpreting the findings; and informing others by writing about the study and its outcomes. Informed by Neumann (2003), the research process adopted in this current study is presented in Figure 4.1, below. However, as stated by Neuman (2003), the research process is complex and may not always be linear because the steps are interactive, with researchers often moving back and forth in an ongoing cyclical pattern. For example, the literature review of the current study continued throughout the research journey to ensure that the researcher’s knowledge of the subject was current and that the study incorporated a high-quality synthesis through a comprehensive review of relevant literature. The conceptual framework adopted in the research was then revised through an iterative process, in line with the insights gained from the continuous review of literature and the emergence of themes and trends during the initial stages of data analysis.
Figure 4.1  The Research Process
4.4.4. The Conceptual Framework

Several factors justify the use of the conceptual framework. According to Yin (2012), case studies are of particular benefit when the study design, data collection and analysis are guided by theoretical concepts. Green (2014) contends that theoretical frameworks aid qualitative researchers to frame the study coherently and to explain the outcomes by providing a basis to guide the process of analysis and representation of data. Similarly, Eisenhardt (1989) states that theoretical frameworks are beneficial, and advocates the use of priori constructs in theory building research studies. According to Eisenhardt, although not very common in theory building research, theoretical frameworks enable a researcher to accurately measure constructs. Thus, when constructs emerge as the investigation progresses, there is a strong empirical grounding for the emerging theory. However, Eisenhardt also cautions that the early identification of theoretical constructs should be tentative, as preordained theoretical perspectives or propositions may hinder the iterative process and limit the findings. Similarly, Walsham (1995) and Yin (2012) believe that theory provides a valuable guide for case study research but should not be used rigidly because it may stifle the emergence of new issues arising from exploration.

As flexibility and openness to new emergent issues are integral to this study, the conceptual framework has been used as a guide, as opposed to a rigid application, in line with the recommendations of these researchers. Thus the conceptual framework developed informs the study design, selection of cases and data analysis.

4.4.5. The Research Design

According to Yin (2009, p. 28), the research design is “the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research question and, ultimately to its conclusions”. Research designs provide specific direction for the procedures to be followed in an investigation within qualitative, quantitative or mixed-method approaches (Creswell 2013). Yin (2014), however, highlights a lack of comprehensive guidelines when designing case studies, and hence recommends the inclusion of five components: the study’s questions; propositions if any; the units of analysis; the logic of linking the data to the propositions; and the criteria for interpreting the findings.
In this study, the research questions help identify the relevant data to be collected and scope the study within manageable limits, thereby negating the temptation to cover everything (Yin 2014). In addition, the conceptual framework comprising several constructs was developed to guide the study. Determining the unit of analysis is an important element of case study research design, although this may not be a straightforward task (Baxter & Jack 2008; Yin 2014). According to Yin (2014), defining the ‘case’ is integral, as it constitutes the main unit for analysis in a research case study. Thus, in line with this study’s questions and purpose, how Australian organizations respond to the phenomenon of workforce diversity and what is just and fair in a workplace emerge as significant issues. The unit of analysis here is therefore the ‘organization’.

Case study researchers need to determine whether single or multiple cases are best suited for the phenomenon under investigation (Baxter & Jack 2008; Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007; Yin 2014). Multiple case studies are more robust and reliable than single case studies, as the analytical conclusions are stronger in terms of direct and theoretical replication (Yin 2014). Multiple case studies facilitate intra- and cross-case analysis, enabling deeper understanding of phenomena both within and across contexts (Baxter & Jack 2008; Cooper & Schindler 2006; Yin 2014). Hence the choice of multiple cases is best-suited for this current study as opposed to a single case. It enables in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of diversity management by investigating the contexts relevant to workforce diversity, the variations of diversity issues relevant to organizations, and responsiveness of organizations in terms of diversity management interventions. Using multiple cases is appropriate because the nature of the project dictates elucidating the differences and similarities of diversity management approaches between organizations and understanding the phenomenon of diversity management in Australia holistically through pattern matching and synthesis of similarities and differences (Yin 2014). Thus, in this study, data from 23 organizations have been analyzed separately and then compared and contrasted during the first phase. In the final phase, a total of 14 case studies portraying alternate scenarios are compared and contrasted based on the conceptual framework founded on justice and fairness theories.

4.5. Selection of Cases

Sampling is a vital element of research, involving the selection of participants and/or issues that provide the opportunity to explore matters central to the study (Barbour 2008; Tharenou, Donohue
& Cooper 2007). Sampling is the process whereby sufficient participants are selected, and where it is vital that the sample consists of the right characteristics in order to generalize the findings to the population under study (Sekeran 2003). However, generalization to such a universe is immaterial in case study research, where phenomena are instead understood by studying a small number of carefully selected cases (Ishak & Bakar 2014) in order to empirically illuminate the relevant theoretical perspectives (Yin 2012). Yin (2014) recommends that such selection should be based on criteria regarding the types of cases relevant to the study, rather than on convenience. It is important to select cases where the phenomenon under investigation is “intense and visible” (Buchanan, 2012, p. 361). Thus, in this study a set of criteria most relevant to the overall purpose of study has guided the selection of the case study organizations.

4.5.1. Selection Criteria

Several criteria guided the selection of case studies. The first was that the cases selected be organizations domiciled in Australia, since the purpose of the study was to investigate and describe diversity management approaches of organizations resulting from the heterogeneity of the Australian population. The second was that the organizations be medium or large entities\(^3\), with the expectation that these were more likely to have a diverse workforce than small organizations. The third criterion that organizations have a commitment to diversity management. The fourth was that there be some variance in the nature of the organizations, as similar entities may offer a limited scope in investigating and identifying diversity issues and approaches, and may stifle the process of comparison and the emergence of findings.

Based on these criteria, 23 organizations, representing 12 of the 19 industries classified under the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZIC) specified by the ABS (2006), comprised the cases. These 23 included public-listed and proprietary companies, multinationals (including Fortune 500 listed companies), public sector organizations, and not-for-profit organizations. Table 4.1 below presents the profiles of these organizations.

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\(^3\) According to ABS (2001) classification: 20-199 employees medium-sized, more than 200 employees large.
Table 4.1: Profiles of the participant organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study organization</th>
<th>Industry classification</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Domestic/ Multinational*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>Not-for-profit</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</td>
<td>Not-for-profit</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>Not-for-profit</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>Not-for-profit</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>Not-for-profit</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Insurance and Finance</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Administrative and Support Services Education and Training</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>Public university</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Information Media and Telecommunications</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>Public university</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services Construction</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Foreign-owned multinationals are classified as ‘multinational’; all Australian-owned organizations, including those with overseas operations, are classified as ‘domestic’.
Yin (2014, p. 176) recommends that in reporting case studies researchers should make the case studies “exemplary and not just run-of-the mill”; exemplary case studies are those that are significant, complete, consider rival perspectives, present the most relevant evidence, and are engaging. Therefore, while 23 organizations were analysed, only 13, where key diversity issues were salient, were selected for reporting (under seven themes) (Figure 4.2). These selected organizations offered the most insightful and interesting case studies descriptive of scenarios that depict diversity issues, and how they link to justice and fairness in the workplace. Thus two case studies that emerged from the analysis as offering interesting and unique diversity management interventions relevant to each theme have been selected to illustrate organizational approaches to diversity management through a justice and fairness paradigm. Table 4.2 presents profiles of cases thus selected.

4.5.2. Access to Organizations

Gaining access is critical when conducting organizational research and its lack can stifle the progress of research (Saunders 2012). Envisaging such challenges, the recruitment process in this research was carefully strategized to ensure that the project did not flounder. One of the most anticipated challenges was that a large proportion of organizations would not want to participate in the study. To overcome this, 108 medium to large Australian organizations were invited to participate, with the expectation that a considerable number would not want to proceed.

The ANZIC has been used as a guideline when compiling the list of invitee organizations to ensure that a broad base, representing diverse industry sectors, was included. The Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) listing, the Diversity Council of Australia’s membership list, and public and local government, multinationals and not-for-profit organizations that the researchers had knowledge of were included in the invitee list. The majority of these were contacted by leaving a message on the company website, using the ‘contact us’ option; the message contained a brief overview of the project and requested it be forwarded to the executive who handled the subject matter. Where email addresses were unavailable, telephone calls were made to obtain email addresses to forward

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4 One organization (20) was used for two case studies, under two different themes. Therefore a total of 14 case studies were reported, using 13 organizations.
invitation letters. Postal addresses were also used to contact a handful of organizations where websites provided a postal address as the preferred mode of contact.

Table 4.2: Case studies that illustrate key diversity issues within the justice and fairness paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study organization</th>
<th>Industry classification</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Domestic/ Multinational</th>
<th>Theme of case study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Cultural diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Gender diversity – gender equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services Construction</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
<td>Gender diversity – gender equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Information Media and Telecommunications</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Gender diversity – gender pay gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>The ageing workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>LGBTI employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Indigenous employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Information media and telecommunications</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
<td>Disability in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Multinational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of challenges were encountered when gaining access to these organizations. As expected, a significant number (68) did not respond to the research request. In addition, five organizations that were channelling the request to their diversity teams to consider participation did not respond further, despite reminders. A total of 17 organizations advised a decision to decline the invitation to participate; 23 agreed to participate. The response rate was thus 21 percent. A
further challenge was that considerable time was spent in communicating and sharing information to secure participation. All 23 organizations that eventually participated required information in addition to that provided in the project information sheet and the invitation letter prior to agreeing to participate. Additional discussion took place over the telephone and by email for most participants; two organizations invited the researcher to their worksite for a face-to-face meeting prior to agreeing to participate. The slow response rate, particularly at the start of the project, rejection and non-response led to frustration and disappointment at times. In hindsight, however, it was a valuable learning experience of the realities of conducting organizational research.

As an explanation for such challenges, Saunders (2012) stresses that organizations are likely to receive many requests for research, and hence may evaluate the value to them of participating. Saunders also noted that such participation generally involves a resource commitment such as management’s time and effort, and organizations may also consider certain information as sensitive and hence be apprehensive about taking part. Escalation to higher levels of the organization may be required, and such projects may not receive approval even though line managers may be willing to participate. These barriers were applicable to this current study, as was evident from some of the organizations’ responses that they were unable to participate. For some, organizational policy prevented participation, or other priorities such as organizational transformation and the lack of comprehensive diversity interventions were cited as reasons for non-participation. Several that expressed inability to participate encouraged the researcher’s efforts by explicitly showing their commitment toward workforce diversity. One Head of Diversity and Inclusion of a leading insurance company stated:

Unfortunately, at this time, we will not be able to participate; we are in the process of HR transformation and have a number of competing priorities. This topic is something true to my heart and I believe undertaking ongoing research is critical in order for us to improve the ability for Australian corporates to achieve genuine inclusive workplaces. I commend you and wish you all the very best in the study.

The leader of diversity in a major building and construction materials company stated:
At this point [the firm] is in very early stages on the diversity journey. We are not operating at a level of maturity whereby we could provide you with relevant/meaningful data at this stage, nor do we have a dedicated resource to support the supply of information collection, assembly of materials, etc. Please feel free to make contact with us in 12 months – I think that we may be in a better position to provide you with the research data that you are looking to source.

4.6. Data Collection

Yin (2014) points out that case study research typically draws data from multiple sources of evidence. Thus such data collection may be retrieved from documentation, archival records, interviews, physical artefacts and observations (Baxter & Jack 2008; Yin 2014). In this study, interviews and organizational documents are the primary sources of data. In addition, a questionnaire was used for the purposes of collecting background information regarding the case study organizations. Thus, as recommended by Yin (2014), the data for this study come from multiple sources, enabling the convergence of evidence that will lead to accurate and conclusive outcomes.

4.6.1. The Interviews

Interviews are one of the main ways of collecting qualitative data as they are time-efficient and intense, enabling the collection of rich and meaningful data (Roulston 2010). Barbour (2008, p. 113) refers to them as the “gold standard of qualitative research” that should be approached as “both an art and a science” to leverage their full potential. Yin (2014) perceives such interviews as one of the most significant sources of evidence in case studies, as they are often in-depth and/or unstructured. Interviews take the form of guided conversation, where a free flow of information is encouraged, as opposed to a rigid structured line of inquiry inherent in survey research (Yin 2014). Thus in-depth interviews help explore meaning and interpretation in the form of more natural conversations (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005; Sapsford & Jupp 2006). In-depth interviews have therefore been used to obtain information from diversity management practitioners who can be regarded as experts in the field of diversity management due to their hands-on experience in managing diversity in organizations.
4.6.1.1. Interview Protocol

When conducting in-depth interviews, it is important to enable flexibility, while at the same time ensuring that the data collection remains focused on issues relevant to the study (Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007). An interview guide should be thus used in a flexible manner to collect data on relevant issues and at the same time allow for new lines of information to emerge (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005). Accordingly, an interview protocol consisting of several open-ended questions underlying relevant key areas was developed (see Appendix A).

However, to ensure flexibility, the researcher did not follow the questions in the protocol prescriptively, but used them to guide the conversation with the interview participants. As Yin (2012) has said is most appropriate for case studies, the questions serve as a mental framework to guide the researcher rather than as a verbatim script. The literature review, the conceptual framework and discussion with supervisors also aided in developing the interview protocol. The rigorous work involved in its design (Barbour 2008; Flick 2014) helped develop the researcher’s competency as an interviewer and better ensured the interview remained within the study scope. This all enabled the researcher to carry out the interview process with ease and confidence.

4.6.1.2. Recruitment of Interview Participants

The interview participants, deemed experts in diversity management, are the management representatives of the case study organizations. By recruiting interview participants who are experts, a researcher has the opportunity to learn about their experiences (Polkinghorne 2005) and to obtain rich information (Sekeran 2003). According to Yin (2012), participants’ insights obtained through interviews are a rich data source and when they are key people in the organization the value of these insights proliferates – these are ‘elite interviews’.

Thirty-three participants were interviewed. All were senior executives accountable for diversity management, including specific subject-matter experts in the case of larger organizations. Of the 23 case study organizations, three opted to involve more than one interview participant: one nominated seven in addition to the primary interviewee, and data were obtained from all eight participants on an individual basis. Table 4.3 below presents the profiles of all interview participants.
It was expected that the interview participants would have the required authority, access to information, passion and interest to share information, and willingness to participate in the study due to their status in the organizational hierarchy, their area of responsibility and expertise. The letter of invitation and the project management sheet outlined in detail the role of the management participant and the nature of data required for the study (see Appendices B and C). During discussion prior to data collection, the nature of the study, the type of data required, ethical considerations and the involvement and role of the management participant, including time commitment, were explained, with the opportunity provided to ask questions.

Informed consent from the organizations and the interview participants was obtained before commencing data collection (see Appendices D and E). Apart from their direct involvement in interviews, interview participants acted as key contact persons of the case study organizations. They provided all other data that came within the ambit of this study relevant to each individual organization, such as organizational documents, either directly or through a designated employee.

**Table 4.3: Profiles of interview participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study organization</th>
<th>Designation of the interviewee</th>
<th>Primary responsibility of the interviewee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>CEO &amp; Operations Manager</td>
<td>Overall operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Diversity Manager</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Head of Diversity</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Talent Manager</td>
<td>HR specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Diversity Manager</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study organization</td>
<td>Designation of the interviewee</td>
<td>Primary responsibility of the interviewee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>(1) HR Manager</td>
<td>(1) HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Diversity Team Leader</td>
<td>(2) Diversity and inclusion in community-related outcomes and advisory role in workforce diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) SME* Language Aid Services</td>
<td>(3) Language aid program to assist CALD clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>(1) Deputy Director, Diversity</td>
<td>(1) Diversity specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) SME Diversity Strategy</td>
<td>(2) Diversity specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) SME Gender Diversity</td>
<td>(3) Diversity specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4) SME Indigenous Matters</td>
<td>(4) Indigenous specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5) Recruitment Manager</td>
<td>(5) Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6) Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>(6) Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7) SME Workforce Planning</td>
<td>(7) Workforce planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(8) SME Workforce Research</td>
<td>(8) Workforce research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>HR Director, HR Executive</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Recruitment Team Leader</td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>Diversity and employee relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study organization</td>
<td>Designation of the interviewee</td>
<td>Primary responsibility of the interviewee</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>Diversity and workplace relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Diversity Manager</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>HR Manager, HR Executive</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Diversity Manager</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>HR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SME = subject matter expert

### 4.6.1.3. The Interview Process

Prior to commencement of data collection, the researcher gained knowledge of effective interview techniques by reading several textbooks, attending a qualitative research training workshop, seeking guidance of the research supervisors and conducting a practice interview with the principal supervisor. These mechanisms enabled the researcher to develop the required interviewing skills.

During interviews, several principles were followed to enhance their quality, including putting the interviewee at ease, building rapport (Crowther & Lancaster 2009) yet remaining detached (Sapsford & Jupp 2006), listening more than talking, following up on what was undertaken at the time of the interview, asking genuine questions, seeking clarification and encouraging the interviewee to tell a story (Barbour 2008; Seidman 2006). Questions were tactfully worded and caution was exercised to avoid asking double-barrelled and leading questions that could compromise the quality of the interview output (Sekaran 2003).

Interviews took place at the workplace, that is, in the everyday natural setting of the interviewee (Sapsford & Jupp 2006). Organizations were given the choice of the venue and the mode of the interview. Of the 23 organizations, 15 invited the researcher to the worksite and interviews were
conducted face-to-face; eight preferred telephone interviews. These strategies helped obtain information that was as free as possible from bias that may be caused by the interviewer, interviewee or the situation (Sekaran 2003). A total of 33 hours was spent on the interviews, with interview times ranging from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes.

4.6.1.4. Recording and Storage of Interview Data

Interviews were digitally recorded, except for one which was hand-noted simultaneously, as the interview participant was concerned about a strict organizational policy in relation to employees issuing statements to the media. Recording interviews proved to be pragmatic and allowed the researcher to conduct them without interruption or break in the conversation flow. It also enabled gathering of sufficient and in-depth data through optimization of time allocated. The transcripts were typed verbatim and were completed by the researcher soon after each interview.

In some instances, interview participants were contacted to clarify unclear areas, to verify data or to obtain further data that seemed necessary after the recordings were transcribed. The recordings and transcripts are stored in a secure location in accordance with the policy of Swinburne University of Technology, and accessibility is restricted in line with the University’s research protocol.

4.6.2. Organizational Information Questionnaire

A questionnaire referred to as a ‘data record sheet’ was developed to obtain information across three main areas: organizational; workforce-related; and organizational performance-related (see Appendix F). The data record sheet consisted of a mix of numerical and qualitative data, used to ascertain the profiles of organizations, including workforce demographics and performance-related information.

This questionnaire proved to be an effective tool to obtain this type of data in an efficient and expedient manner. The time allocated for the interview did not need to be used to gather this type of background information. Some of the data outlined in the questionnaire were obtained from the official corporate websites of the case study organizations, particularly in the case of ASX-listed and public sector organizations which had a significant amount of online information. This
mechanism helped to avoid duplication of data, minimized the time commitment and subsequent inconvenience to the interview participants, and better ensured the efficient use of interview time to obtain data most relevant to their lived experiences in relation to workforce diversity management.

Caution was exercised when requesting statistical information such as organizational financials, considering the confidentiality of such information, particularly with regard to organizations that did not have a regulatory requirement of financial disclosure. Therefore, in some instances, information regarding the financial performance was obtained without referring to exact figures. This approach was adopted in order to respect the confidentiality of such information and to ensure that the organizational representative providing such information did not experience any discomfort. Furthermore, the indices contained in the data record sheets pertaining to financial performance were not relevant to the not-for-profit and public sector organizations. In such instances, data relevant to the strategic objectives or the key performance indicators were instead obtained. Overall, the data record sheets proved to be a useful framework in obtaining and compiling the required data, as the abundance of data available to researchers in this information age can potentially lead to the collection of unnecessary data in terms of volume and relevance (Crowther & Lancaster 2009).

4.6.3. Organizational Documents

Documentary evidence is considered an important data source in qualitative research (Barbour 2008; Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007) relevant to the fields of HR and Management (Ridder & Hoon 2009). According to Travers (2001, p. 5), “qualitative researchers have always known that one can learn a lot about the world by looking at documents”. Yin (2014) also agrees that documents are an important source of evidence in case study research. Documentation is often considered useful as a complementary data collection method in qualitative studies utilizing a variety of methods, to provide better insights and enhance the quality the research (Ridder & Hoon 2009; Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007; Yin 2014). Although, Tharenou, Donohue and Cooper (2007) note that there are some studies that have used documentary evidence as the main data collection method, in this current study, documents were used as a source of evidence in addition to the interview data. In line with Lee’s (2012) observation, documents may come in the form of
textual, visual and audio representations. For the purpose of this study, documents were limited to the category of written or textual data in the traditional sense (Sapsford & Jupp 2006). The interview participants facilitated the process of accessing organizational documents by sharing internal company documents, sending web links and directing the researcher to the correct data repositories in the public domain. While these internal documents were provided in both hardcopy and electronic formats, one participant organization gave access to the relevant sections of the corporate intranet for the purposes of accessing relevant documentation.

The official corporate websites of the participant organizations and the website of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)\(^5\), which is the Commonwealth Government’s statutory agency for promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces, were the main public domain data repositories used in this study. Sourcing documentary data from these reliable websites helped overcome common issues relating to accuracy and authenticity associated with documentary data (Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007). The researcher was mindful that organizational documents could potentially derail the research focus, as existing documents often contain large volumes of data prepared with a distinct purpose in mind, which may be quite different to the phenomena that the researcher is studying (Crowther & Lancaster 2009). Thus the conceptual framework of this study, the research questions, the researcher’s own knowledge of diversity-related policies and documentation, and the discussions with interview participants helped in collecting documentary evidence that was empirically focused. The types of documents analysed for the purposes of this study fell into the categories of corporate websites, corporate policies and plans, corporate reports, surveys, and case studies relevant to workforce diversity (see Appendix G for the full list of organizational documents).

4.7. Data Analysis

Yin (2014) argue that data analysis in case study research can be particularly challenging due to the lack of well-defined techniques. According to Yin (2014, p. 133), “much depends on the researcher’s own style of rigorous empirical thinking, along with sufficient presentation of evidence and careful consideration of alternative interpretations”. Thus Yin emphasises the

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\(^5\) The WGEA is a statutory agency created by the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* to promote and improve gender equality in Australian workplaces.
importance of developing an analytical strategy by becoming familiar with the data and making tentative connections between the data and the main conclusions via a cyclical pattern.

The data analysed in this study comprised interview transcripts, organizational data through the questionnaire (data record sheet) and other documents, collected from the 23 case study organizations that were the ‘units of analysis’. The analytical strategy commenced with the preparation of detailed case notes from the data, as recommended by Buchanan (2012) for each unit of analysis. Familiarization with the dataset is an integral starting point of qualitative data analysis (Yin 2014), and the preparation of case notes aided the process in this study.

The next step of the analytical process was coding the data into categories, which was done using NVivo software. Yin (2014) recommends the use of key assumptions on which the study is based when analysing data at the outset. The data were therefore coded into categories guided by the conceptual framework and the research questions of the study. As the coding of data continued, the categories were further revised and expanded by adopting an agile approach, as recommended by Barbour (2008) and Yin (2014), to enable identification of new and emerging themes. This iterative technique led to the identification of a number of themes and trends along which pattern matching and cross-case analysis and synthesis (Yin 2014) were conducted. Through this approach, cases studies were compared and contrasted, guided by the conceptual framework, which ultimately illuminated compelling findings.

**4.8. Quality of the Research Design – Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness**

Yin (2014) advocates that the criteria for judging the quality of social research are relevant to case study research, as case studies are a form of social research. Accordingly, validity and reliability are essential elements that establish rigour in case study research. Thus Yin also advocates four tests – construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability – to better establish quality in empirical social research as relevant to case study research.

**4.8.1 Construct Validity**

According to Yin (2014), construct validity is the identification of a set of operational measures most relevant to the concepts being studied, to overcome subjective judgments in data collection
due to the influence of a researcher’s preconceived notions. Yin therefore recommends three tactics to meet the requirement of construct validity in case studies. These were used in this current study. First, the study used multiple sources of evidence in the process of data collection, including interviews, questionnaires and organizational documents. Similar to Yin (2014), Tharenou, Donohue and Cooper (2007) also recommend this use of multiple sources of data to minimize the potential threats to validity of data collection in case studies due to the impact of the researcher’s bias and pre-conceived notions. The use of multiple sources of evidence also enables triangulation of data, which strengthens construct validity (Yin 2014). Data triangulation is based on the premise that several viewpoints and perspectives enable verification and can therefore elicit more accurate and comprehensive findings (Crowther & Lancaster 2009; Jack & Ratury 2006; Jogulu & Pansiri 2011; Neuman 2003; Silverman 2010; Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007; Yin 2014). Since this study involved the integration of data collection from a combination of sources, the phenomena were explored and understood from a variety of lenses (Baxter & Jack 2008), which contributed to construct validity.

The second approach recommended by Yin (2014) to achieve construct validity is to maintain a clear chain of evidence. In this study, such a chain was maintained for all data collected and detailed case notes were prepared by the researcher, so that the data remained easily retrievable for later access. The third recommendation by Yin (2014) to assure construct validity is that draft case studies be reviewed by key informants. Thus, in this study, the participant organizations were offered the option to review the transcripts and the contents of the thesis relevant to their organization to check for accuracy. In addition, the researcher offered each participant organization the opportunity to receive a report or the complete thesis at the conclusion of the study. In line with the recommendations of Yin (2014), these factors contributed to the construct validity of the current study.

4.8.2 Internal Validity

Yin (2014) describes internal validity as causal relationships where certain conditions lead to certain outcomes, as opposed to spurious relationships. Thus internal validity is mainly an issue applicable to explanatory case studies, where an investigator strives to explain the relationship as to how or why certain events lead to other events (2013; 2014). Highlighting that achieving internal
validity can be a challenge in case study research, Yin (2014) suggests the four analytical approaches, pattern-matching, explanation-building, addressing rival explanations and the use logic models, to achieve this end. Since this study is of an exploratory and descriptive nature, internal validity was not applicable.

4.8.3 External Validity

Case study research is often considered to be weak in terms of generalizability (Silverman 2010). Although such concerns can be addressed by using multiple cases, as the same phenomenon can be studied through a number of cases (Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper 2007; Silverman 2010; Yin 2014). This current study is a collective case study (Silverman 2010), with 23 participant organizations included in the analysis, which allows for multiple studies of the same phenomenon (diversity management). Thus this study has addressed the issue of generalizability. While there is no ruling to determine the required number of cases, it follows that more cases contribute to greater confidence in a study’s findings (Yin 2012). Thus the 23 (rather than fewer) cases in this study bolstered the validity of the research findings.

Generalizing by way of a theoretical perspective rather than to a population is another mechanism that can address the issue of external validity; hence selecting case studies based on a theoretically guided choice is recommended by Silverman (2010). Similarly, Yin (2014) advocates that a theoretical perspective helps generalize the findings in case study research. Yin also argues that generalization in case studies should be based on ‘analytic generalization’, where a study’s logic derived from its theoretical constructs is applied to other situations, in contrast with surveys and other quantitative methods based on positivism, where ‘statistical generalization’ is used to generalize findings from a sample to a population. The selection of case studies in this current study was driven by a set of criteria founded on theoretical constructs embedded in the conceptual model and it thereby addressed the issue of external validity.

4.8.4 Reliability

According to Yin (2014), ‘reliability’ signifies that another researcher should arrive at the same findings and conclusions if a similar study is conducted. Yin recommends that an auditing approach, following the research protocol and creating case study databases, contributes to such
reliability. Reliability was achieved in this study by adopting an auditing approach throughout where data were collected and systematically maintained in a manner that was available for auditing and review at any time. The use of NVivo software for data collection and analysis provided a substantial audit trail which further enhanced the rigour of this research study (Silverman 2010).

Continuous progress monitoring and guidance was extended by the research supervisors, which helped enhance the accuracy and authenticity of data and the adherence to the research protocol. Using an audited approach and the involvement of supervisors enabled the researcher to meet the dependability and confirmability elements of the trustworthiness criterion advocated by Guba and Lincoln (1989) as contributing to research rigour.

4.9. Ethics Approval

The data collection for this study commenced after receiving ethical clearance from the Swinburne University Human Research Ethics Committee on 29 July 2014 (see Appendix H for the ethics clearance notification). The ethics protocol was strictly followed throughout the study. In the case of one participant organization, additional ethics clearance was obtained from its relevant ethics committee, which was a prerequisite for its participation in the study.

4.10. Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive description of the qualitative case study methodology, informed by techniques recommended by Yin (2014; 2012), that was used in this study. The chapter has detailed the research process, the research design, methods of data collection, the data analysis process, and how the quality of the research was ensured through validity, reliability and trustworthiness. The study used multiple case studies, where each case study organization was analyzed holistically and then compared and contrasted with the other organizations using pattern matching and cross-case analysis and synthesis to arrive at conclusive findings. The 23 case study organizations provided a rich source of data, by way of elite interviews (Yin 2012) and documentation, which enhanced the quality of this study and led to comprehensive research findings and outcomes.
5.1. Introduction

The overall purpose of this study was to elucidate diversity management approaches and outcomes of Australian organizations through a justice and fairness paradigm, using the methodology described in Chapter 4. The first stage involved exploring the diversity context in Australian workplaces to ascertain the integral dimension of diversity. For this purpose, organizational documents relevant to diversity management in 23 case study organizations were analysed. These documents were extensive and although they proved to be challenging when distilling salient themes, they were beneficial by providing rich data. The documents of each case study organization were examined holistically and the information was then analysed, compared and contrasted to uncover the main themes which were identified as follows:

1. scope of diversity management and EEO law
2. concepts of ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’
3. organizational definition of diversity
4. key dimensions of diversity
5. emerging dimensions of diversity.

These themes reveal the diversity context within contemporary Australian workplaces, further discussed in this chapter.

5.2. Diversity Management and EEO

The document analysis revealed several trends regarding the way diversity management and EEO are derived from the macro environment of Australia’s legislative and policy framework, which has been greatly influenced by the global treaties of the United Nations. The Universal Declaration
of Human Rights recognizes that the “ideal of free human beings” can be achieved only when the necessary conditions to safeguard the freedom to enjoy economic, social and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights, are established (The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2017). Based on this premise, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 recognizes the right to work and the right to enjoy just and favorable conditions of work, including equal pay for equal work and equal opportunity for promotion based on skills and seniority, without distinction (The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2017). This, together with several other United Nations treaties relevant to EEO (the International Covenant on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 1965, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979, Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities 2006, and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007), has greatly influenced legislation and policy development for EEO in Australia (Australian Human Rights Commission 2017a). However, as Strachan, Burgess and Henderson (2007) point out, such legislation and policy at federal or state level set the minimum standards to remove discrimination and promote equal opportunity. Therefore such mechanisms, if devoid of organizational-driven initiatives, will fail to bring about equality in its true sense (Strachan, Burgess & Henderson 2007). Hence the policy documents of the case study organizations were examined to ascertain how organizations viewed EEO in association with diversity management, and if these showed differences. This section therefore discusses trends present in the case study organizations in regard to how diversity management was linked with aspects of EEO.

- **Clear Distinctions between EEO and Diversity Management**

There were distinct differences between EEO and diversity management when examining the policies of some of the case study organizations (14, 17, 15). In these organizations, EEO meant focusing on the legislative obligations of providing equal opportunity and fair treatment to all, including prohibiting discrimination, harassment and bullying based on an individual’s characteristics. In one organization EEO was concerned with providing a “work environment free from harassment, discrimination and retaliation” (15), in line with legal obligations put upon employers under Australia’s current legislative framework. Similarly, in another organization, the fair treatment policy aimed to provide “an inclusive workplace where everyone has access to equal
opportunity and a work environment free from harassment, discrimination and hostility” (17); and, in another, the EEO policy was concerned with “eliminating all forms of discrimination” (14). Such organizations considered EEO and diversity management separately. EEO was considered a purely legal obligation that should not be violated, upholding the minimum standards required for a non-discriminatory and harassment-free workplace. In contrast, diversity management was considered a voluntary management intervention with the objective of bringing about beneficial business results for the organization.

- Complementary Nature between Diversity Management and EEO

As opposed to defining EEO and diversity management as two distinct interventions, a complementary approach to the two concepts was adopted by a number of other case study organizations (02, 03, 04, 05, 07, 09, 12, 18, 19, 20, 22). Their EEO policies acknowledged that, while it was a legal obligation, there were additional outcomes that could be leveraged from it, similar to those derived from diversity management. EEO was considered a means of promoting diversity and equality in the workplace and making a positive impact on business outcomes in addition to its role in meeting legislative compliance. In one organization, EEO was endorsed both as a legislative obligation and as part of the internal culture that enabled talent retention, delivery of an enhanced service, and the establishment of a work environment of “respect dignity and courtesy” (12).

The EEO policies of two organizations covered the areas of unlawful discrimination and workplace harassment in a legal sense, while also referring to achieving positive business outcomes such as a competitive advantage via a diverse workforce (03, 18). In another, EEO policy was concerned with discrimination and harassment in a legal and compliance sense, and sought to guide employee behaviours that were linked to a conducive work environment and business success (07). The policy read:

… each of us must try to understand the different backgrounds and ways of thinking of our co-workers. This spirit is required for … to succeed as a company. Disrespect causes conflict and hard feelings that take time and energy away from our work.
This EEO policy also highlighted that “diverse talent will enable … a comparative and competitive advantage in the marketplace”.

The complementary nature of diversity management and EEO was evident not only in the EEO policies but also in some of the diversity policies (02, 22, 04, 06, 05). One organization in its diversity and inclusion policy outlined diversity initiatives, as well as the legal obligations that came under the purview of EEO (02). Thus the scope of the document covered the legal voluntary aspects of organizational responsiveness under diversity management. Similarly, another organization incorporated aspects of EEO and diversity management in the equity and diversity plan, describing the expected outcomes in both areas (22). However, that organization had separate EEO policies that more specifically set out its legal obligations under federal and state legislation within the realm of EEO. Another organization’s diversity and inclusion policy centred around five core principles – meritocracy, fairness and equality, contribution to commercial success, applicable to everyone, and diversity as a cultural priority (20) – and covered aspects of diversity management as well as legislative requirements; the diversity and inclusion policy itself acknowledged that diversity and EEO were closely related in the context of an inclusive workplace: “We’re committed to being inclusive at all levels of the company – and this is supported through our values, cultural priorities and our diversity & Inclusion and discrimination & bullying policies”. Promoting EEO for another organization meant meeting legal and compliance requirements as well as enabling diversity of the workforce: “A fundamental aim of equal employment opportunity is to ensure a diverse and representative workforce profile” (04).

Overall, organizations that had policies indicating diversity management and EEO as complementary linked the two concepts, on the basis that they are inter-connected and have the capacity to enhance the outcomes of each process. Importantly, this association between diversity and EEO appears to indicate that the diversity management for these organizations involved not only business benefits but also the moral obligation of achieving equality over and above the legal minimum of having a discrimination- and harassment-free workplace.

- **Overlap of Diversity Management and EEO**

Some organizations seemed to integrate diversity and EEO, with no clear distinction between the two concepts (09, 15, 13, 06, 10). One under its equity and inclusion policy was committed to EEO to nurture a workplace where employees are valued and respected, and free from all forms of
discrimination, harassment, bullying, occupational violence and victimization (09). This policy was underpinned by six principles, one of which was diversity, the other five being social justice, human rights, accountability, participation, and empowerment. The policy acknowledged that certain groups were at risk of exclusion from economic, social, cultural and political opportunities because of systemic and structural discrimination and barriers. The policy also stated that workforce diversity was valued and was a key factor enabling the organization to meet the needs of the community it served. Other outcomes associated with diversity management, such as creativity and enhanced quality of service standards, were mentioned. Thus it had integrated the legal requirements of EEO and anti-discrimination with business outcomes traditionally associated with diversity management.

One multinational organization defined the value of diversity management as eliminating all forms of workplace harassment, bullying, bullying, occupational violence and victimization (15). Its diversity policy covered aspects of diversity management as well as discrimination, bullying and harassment that fall within the purview of EEO legislation. Similarly, in another organization, the access and equity policy encompassed the framework of legislative requirements as well as principles relevant to diversity management (13). These organizations appeared to consider diversity management and EEO as integrated rather than as distinct concepts. The legal obligations that fall within EEO and the moral obligations of creating equality in the workplace and deriving benefits for the organization through a diverse workforce came within the ambit of one process. These organizations also appeared to have a legalistic- and moral-based view of diversity management, where equality, non-discrimination and anti-harassment, in a legal as well as a moral sense, were part of diversity management. At the same time, the policy statements contained elements of business benefits derived through diversity management.

While a few organizations did not have written diversity policies, they referred to their EEO policies as diversity policies (01, 08, 23). However, further examination of the content of two of these organizations’ (01, 23) corresponding policies revealed that they did not cover any aspects of diversity management, but catered purely to EEO legislative requirements. While the other organization (08) provided its EEO policy as a document relevant to diversity management, stating that it was yet to formulate a diversity policy, the EEO policy focused essentially on legislative requirements.
Lack of Documented Diversity and EEO Policies

One organization did not provide any documents for analysis at the time of data collection, contending that it was in the process of reviewing its existing EEO and diversity policy (21). Another not providing documentation relevant to diversity or EEO admitted that it did not have any relevant policy documents, and that the policies would be developed in the future because it had only just started considering these areas (11).

One multinational organizations (16) referred to its global diversity policy. The policy gave a brief overview of the organization’s commitment to diversity at a global level. However, the organization did not produce a separate EEO policy, and the limited information in the global diversity policy did not cover aspects of the legal implications under EEO legislation.

The fact that some organizations had not developed comprehensive diversity policy documentation raised the question of whether diversity was a management priority or whether it was still evolving in some workplaces.

Diversity Management Policies in Multinational Organizations

All the organizations that were multinationals, including those that had comprehensive diversity policies, adopted global diversity policies. However, such policies did not make any reference to diversity issues or objectives at the end-market level (i.e., for the Australian workplace) and were instead focused on the global market and global diversity. It appeared that the multinationals seemed to consider local diversity issues as less important. Thus diversity in the Australian workforce context, given the diverse nature of the society and workplaces, may not receive the attention it warrants in Australian organizations that are part of foreign-owned global establishments.

Table 5.1 below summarizes the different trends visible in the case study organizations in terms of policies concerning diversity management and EEO.
Table 5.1: Diversity management and EEO policy trends in Australian workplaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity management and EEO as two distinct and separate concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity management aligned with achieving business outcomes, as opposed to outcomes relevant to equality and fairness. EEO was restricted to meeting the bare minimum legal requirement of maintaining a non-discriminatory and harassment-free workplace.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity management and EEO as two complementary concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EEO is concerned with meeting legal obligations, leads to diversity in the workplace, and has a positive impact on the business. Diversity management promotes equality and fairness in a moral sense, leads to positive business outcomes, and enhances the ability to meet legal obligations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overlapping of EEO and diversity management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The distinction between diversity management and EEO is blurred. Diversity management includes meeting legal obligations required by law, promoting equality and fairness in a moral sense, and achieving positive business outcomes for the organization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of diversity management policies in some organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity management was still evolving as a management intervention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity management policies in multinationals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global policies were applied to Australian workplaces, indicating a lack of responsiveness to the local context applicable to the nation’s workforce diversity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3. Organizational Definitions of Diversity

This section examines how case study organizations defined diversity in their policy documents. Analysis revealed varying approaches they adopted when defining the scope and meaning of diversity.

- **Diversity involving a Multitude of Dimensions**

An approach adopted was to define diversity in a broad sense, indicative of a wide array of dimensions falling within its scope (02, 04, 05, 06, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22). One organization defined
diversity as “the differences and uniqueness of all people” (02). The scope of diversity encompassed an expansive range of dimensions such as “skills, knowledge, experiences and perspectives, demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, sexual orientation, religion or national origin or social origin and personal characteristics such as disability, medical condition, carers’ responsibilities, pregnancy or potential pregnancy and any other characteristic of an individual” (02). Similarly, another took a broad-based view that diversity meant a variety of individual differences ranging from “demographics, backgrounds, life experience, communication styles, interpersonal skills, education, functional expertise and problem solving skills” (20). Yet another defined diversity as including “the diversity of people, cultures, viewpoints, brands, markets and ideas” (04).

A multitude of dimensions was included in another’s definition, where the diversity policy referred to a number of demographic groups, including race, color, age, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, disability, national or social origin or birth, as well as diverse perspectives such as thinking, skills, experience, working styles and different career and life stages (16). Diversity was defined as ‘individual uniqueness’ by two organizations (12, 15), again suggesting the inclusion of a multitude of aspects, and was thus a definition with a broad scope. Similarly, another took a broad view of diversity without specifying any dimensions: “we are all different; bringing varying experience and thought” (06).

- **Diversity as an Outcome and Activity**

Another way of defining diversity was to adopt an activity- and outcome-oriented meaning, which was visible in a few organizations (03, 07, 10, 17). In one diversity was defined as encompassing attributes of “skills, experience and capabilities” (03). Whilst demographic groups were not included within the purview of diversity, the following outcomes were mentioned in the definition: attracting and retaining people; developing an inclusive culture where people are engaged and their unique contribution is valued; connecting effectively with customers and the community; and fostering innovation by leveraging the experience, ideas and different viewpoints (03). Similarly, another appeared to define diversity through an outcome-oriented lens, indicating how critical diversity was to the bottom line (07). The definition of diversity in yet another included the elements “respect for individual differences”, “valuing and utilizing the unique knowledge, skills and
attributes that people bring” and “we maximise our capability by drawing on the diversity of our people” which are all activity- and outcome-oriented phrases (10).

- **Diversity Dimensions Important to the Organization**

Another way of defining the scope of diversity was to specify those dimensions particularly important to the organization, as opposed to a non-exhaustive list of dimensions (09, 13, 14, 19, 22). This was the approach of two organizations in the community services sector, where diversity was defined in relation to the underprivileged and oppressed groups within the local community to whom they provided services. One of these defined diversity with specific relevance to identifiable groups and individuals disadvantaged and at risk of exclusion from economic, social, cultural and political opportunities (09). Accordingly, culture, race, religion, indigenous status, youth, women and a group categorized as sexuality, sex and gender diversity were included within the definition of diversity. The terms ‘sexuality’, ‘sex’ and ‘gender diversity’ were consciously used in the policy statements to ensure that the terminology was inclusive and encompassed the whole spectrum of sexual orientations, sex and gender identities of individuals. These groups signified the key demographics of the local community that the organization served.

Similarly, vulnerable members of the community were classified within the dimensions of diversity by the other organization in the community health sector (13). A number of high priority groups were identified as ‘vulnerable’ based on the demographics of the local area within which the organization operated, and its underlying vision of “a healthy and connected community”. The groups identified as falling within the scope of its diversity policy were people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people from CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) backgrounds, people with dementia, those living in rural and remote areas, those experiencing financial disadvantage and challenged with homelessness, and individuals who identify themselves as LGBTI.

One multinational organization specified the scope of diversity in its corresponding policy, with gender, seniors, young people, nationalities and people with disabilities identified as integral groups under its global diversity policy (14). Of two organizations in the higher education sector, one specified race, religion, ability, sexuality and gender as dimensions of diversity (19), while the
other identified gender and sexual diversity, race, culture and religion, age, disability, experience, role and position, family responsibilities, educational background, and work-life balance as integral dimensions of diversity (22).

Table 5.2 summarizes the different ways organizations defined the scope and meaning of diversity. It should be noted that a definition for diversity was not available in five organizations due to the lack of documented diversity policies (01, 08, 11, 21, 23).

Table 5.2: Diversity definitions of Australian workplaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defining diversity in a broad sense</th>
<th>Most organizations defined the scope of diversity in a broad and lucid manner, and focused on demographics, describing varying aspects of human diversity with a non-exhaustive list of attributes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving diversity an outcome- and activity-oriented meaning</td>
<td>Some organizations defined diversity from an outcome- and activity-oriented perspective focusing on the results of diversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specifying diversity dimensions that are important to the organization</td>
<td>Some organizations defined diversity by specifying dimensions of diversity important to the organization as opposed to a non-exhaustive list of dimensions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4. Key Dimensions of Workforce Diversity

The preceding section demonstrated that workforce diversity as defined by organizations often includes a multitude of dimensions. This raises the question of whether organizations focus on all such dimensions as outlined in the definitions. From a pragmatic perspective, it is also questionable whether it is even feasible for organizations to focus on such a broad range of diversity dimensions. Thus this section examines the key dimensions of diversity that have gained organizational attention, based on this study’s analysis of comprehensive strategies, plans, objectives and
measurable targets of the case study organizations, as opposed to mere mention in the diversity policies.

5.4.1. Gender

In this study, gender was the diversity dimension that received most organizational attention. According to document analysis, 15 of the 23 case study organizations focused on gender diversity (02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 09, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22), and four were recipients of a WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation. Increasing gender diversity of the whole workforce and at leadership level, including management and board, was important to these organizations in terms of achieving gender equity. One was concerned that its overall female representation was 37 percent and 32 percent at leadership level, which declined further at senior leadership levels (02). To overcome this issue, the organization had set an ambitious target of achieving a 50 percent female appointment rate to the senior leadership pipeline as a strategic imperative. The gender diversity efforts of this organization have been cited by WGEA as a best-practice example for gender equality, adding further testimony to its efforts.

Another integral area of gender diversity focused on by some organizations was pay equity. Achieving gender pay equity through fair and equal remuneration gained management attention in several organizations (02, 09, 18, 19, 20, 22). One included gender pay equity as a key goal in its diversity strategy (02). Another viewed gender pay equity as a natural outcome of an organization where diversity and inclusion was a cultural norm (20).

The documents analysed also revealed barriers that women often faced in employment. One organization identified long-standing perceptions and beliefs embedded in the workplace culture that hindered achievement of gender equality (20); these included out-dated beliefs about a lack of qualified female recruits as one key barrier affecting the progress of gender equality in the organization. It contended that, except for one niche area (both male-dominated and with a highly-specialized workforce of technicians) which continued to present challenges in attracting female recruits, there was no real dearth of female talent for remaining roles. Another organization faced the challenge of achieving gender equality at leadership level, with some roles that offered

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6 The citation is a leading practice recognition program for gender equality in Australian workplaces awarded by the WGEA.
necessary experience for career progression deemed “non-traditional occupations for women” (02); women in this organization therefore did not receive such experience, resulting in a lack of female representation at leadership level; further, some major business groups operated in male-dominated industries and hence had a significantly lower proportion of female employees.

Employee resistance that often hampered the recruitment and progression of women was another issue that needed to be addressed in some organizations, particularly those with a long tradition of male dominance (02, 10). One such organization pointed out that resistance to gender diversity came not only from men within the organization, but also from some senior women who did not perceive gender equality to be an issue (02). With reference to such deeply entrenched attitudes among employees that often perpetuate gender inequality, another statement highlighted this: “There is still much to be done, in communicating and educating the workforce on our policy changes, and subsequently achieving the consistent, deep penetration of new attitudes and behaviours required to be a better [diverse] organization” (10).

Traditional linear career progression models that do not allow flexibility were also a barrier restricting women’s career progression (10). One organization emphasized that this led to a significant under-representation of women at leadership levels. Further, operational requirements such as mobility, relocation (including placements at remote and overseas locations), 24-hour deployment, and overnight shift systems were identified as barriers faced by women in this workplace.

Unconscious bias was a factor that placed female employees at a disadvantage in terms of employment outcomes. One testimonial of a female employee who had achieved career progression in a supply chain – often viewed as a non-traditional field for women – described her experience when looking for relevant work:

I had a lot of issues trying to get back into this industry after leaving. I was knocked back saying I didn’t have enough experience. As an experiment, in my last lot of applications I shortened my name from [real name] to [gender neutral name] and actually got quite a few call-backs for interviews. It proved to me that we have a long way to go as an industry. (06)
Unfounded assumptions and negative perceptions among women were also barriers to positive employment outcomes in these organizations. Female employees tended to limit their career progression and choices due to assumptions they held. As one female employee in the retail industry commented, “[The retail industry] is not as physical or male dominated as you think” (06). Some women also assumed that many jobs lacked flexibility and would therefore hinder them from fulfilling family and other caring responsibilities (06). Another female employee in the retail sector testified:

Many [women] just think that’s not for me, but you’re free to make things work in your own way … In my store, two department managers [women] job share and that works perfectly for their young families. Don’t assume you’ll be stuck with certain hours, because shops operate differently and you can often work shifts around your needs. (06)

Such feedback confirms that barriers persist in the work environment that affect employment outcomes of women, which organizations strive to address under diversity management. Table 5.3 below summarizes findings in relation to gender diversity in Australian workplaces, as drawn from analysis of organizational documents.

**Table 5.3: Key areas of focus under gender diversity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achieving gender equity in the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the representation of women in the workforce and in leadership roles, and addressing gender pay inequity are key areas under gender diversity initiatives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers faced by women in the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs, attitudes and perceptions regarding lack of qualified female recruits and employee resistance due to an entrenched culture of male dominance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The existence of gendered roles, where some are non-traditional occupations for females.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconscious bias, particularly with regard to employing women in certain occupations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfounded assumptions, negative assumptions and lack of confidence among women (candidates).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional career progression models and job designs that do not offer flexibility in terms of work-life balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility, relocation and operational patterns such as shifts that are non-family-friendly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.2. Indigenous Australians

Indigenous employment was also a priority for some organizations. Of the 23 reviewed, 10 focused on indigenous employees within their diversity agenda (03, 06, 09, 10, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 22). These acknowledged that indigenous individuals experience disadvantages in terms of labour market outcomes compared with other Australians. Several had RAPs (03, 06, 10, 13, 19, 20) outlining initiatives and measurements regarding organizational efforts relevant to the indigenous workforce. Providing employment options for indigenous employees was a priority for these organizations, with the objective of improving the social and economic outcomes of indigenous Australians. One committed to providing sustainable employment opportunities and becoming an employer of choice for indigenous employees claimed it had a long-term association with indigenous communities (03). It noted that it have formally committed to improving social, economic and social wellbeing of indigenous Australians under the RAP. Another had a vision to restore the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the community through respect, equity and recognition (13). It strived to ensure cultural safety of Aboriginal people who interacted with the organization as clients, staff or members of the community. For another, achieving a 2.7 percent indigenous representation by 2015 and beyond was a key objective (10). It aspired to be positioned as an employer of choice for indigenous Australians. Yet another that already had 4 percent of employees self-identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander was keen to further increase its indigenous workforce (20). It was keen to create the necessary social, economic and cultural change and had a RAP which specifically catered to indigenous customers, community members and employees. It made reference to the historic relationship it had with the Aboriginal community as the laying of its first infrastructure over the land of the traditional owners. it also took pride in connecting remote parts of the country where Aboriginal people had lived for millennia, through providing services to these areas. Reconciliation Australia has praised the organization for its achievements under the indigenous strategy, and holds it up as an example for other organizations to emulate.

Potential negative impacts on cultural safety experienced by indigenous employees, and the lack of awareness of indigenous culture within the workforce, were issues emphasized (03, 13, 12) as a major barrier faced by such employees in the workplace. Indigenous employees were considered
to be difficult to source due to gaps in language, literacy and numeracy levels, as well as cultural differences (03, 10).

This study’s overall examination of organizational documents revealed that indigenous Australians were regarded as a key group under the ambit of diversity management. Table 5.4 below summarizes findings in relation to indigenous employment as shown in organizational documents.

Table 5.4: Key areas of focus applicable to indigenous employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Improving social and economic outcomes for indigenous Australasian</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enabling positive labour market outcomes for indigenous employees through employment programs targeting the indigenous population.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Barriers faced by indigenous employees in the workplace.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative experiences of indigenous employees due to lack cultural safety in the workplace, possibly due to a lack of awareness of indigenous culture within organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantages faced by indigenous candidates in the recruitment process due to lack of literacy and numeracy levels, as well as the cultural differences of indigenous candidates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.3. Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation received attention based on the comprehensive interventions in eight case study organizations (02, 09, 10, 13, 18, 19, 20, 22). These recognized that employees from sexual minorities were vulnerable and needed support to feel included and accepted in the workplace. As proof of its commitment to providing a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTI clients and staff, one organization emphasized that all staff must treat this minority group with dignity and respect (13). Its LGBTI policy stated: “It is important to not simply display rainbow flags⁷ to demonstrate

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⁷ The Rainbow Tick is a set of six national LGBTI-inclusive practice standards against which organizations in health services can be accredited. The scheme has been developed under the auspices of Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria (GLHV), which is funded by the Victorian Government.
that we welcome LGBTI individuals, but rather to have processes and practices in place to ensure that LGBTI clients and staff will receive an inclusive service”.

Another, where 7 percent of employees identified themselves as LGBTI, had a specific inclusion strategy which aimed to improve the commitment, loyalty and performance of LGBTI employees (02). It sought to minimize mental health issues among LGBTI employees resulting from stigma and discrimination, and aspired to be recognized as an inclusive employer with a leading-edge LGBTI strategy (02). Another that also strived to be an employer of choice in the LGBTI space historically had a vastly different view regarding LGBTI inclusion (10). This organization previously had policies that imposed prohibitions on openly gay, lesbian and bisexual personnel serving in certain capacities in the workplace; there were also stringent prohibitions and guidelines regarding the employment of transgender individuals. While such restrictions and prohibitions no longer existed, the organization was keen to remove some of the institutionalized elements that might possibly remain due to the historic context and might cause LGBTI employees to feel excluded, unwelcome and unsafe in the workplace. Thus, while respect, trust and inclusion were integral elements underpinning its LGBTI strategy, creating a safe environment where these individuals felt comfortable to disclose their sexual orientation and family status was a main objective of the organization.

Another organization that has continually received recognition for its LGBTI-inclusive culture and practices (e.g., Pride in Diversity8 has recognized it as one of Australia’s top employers for people of diverse sexualities and gender identities) had a strong LGBTI ally group (22). A number of Australian organizations have since replicated this LGBTI ally group model.

A key aspect of study organizations that had LGBTI-inclusive policies was the recognition of a wide range of relationships, irrespective of sexual or gender identity, for entitlements such as parental leave. Thus same-sex partners and same-sex parents were explicitly recognized by some in regard to employment-related benefits and facilities – ahead of legal recognition of same-sex marriage in Australia in late 2017 (10, 18, 13, 22).

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8 Pride in Diversity is Australia’s national not-for-profit employer support program for LGBTI workplace inclusion.
Despite such policies, adverse treatment of LGBTI individuals – often manifested in discrimination, exclusion and resistance – still existed in Australian workplaces according to some of organizational documents. Two organizations highlighted that employment-related adversities made LGBTI employees susceptible to mental health issues (02, 18). Another stressed the importance of creating a safe environment for LGBTI individuals, such that they felt comfortable to disclose their sexual orientation and family status without feeling excluded, unwelcome or threatened (10). The importance of ‘cultural safety’ in the workplace for LGBTI employees as well as with customers was emphasized by another organization (13), which acknowledged that LGBTI individuals frequently experienced discrimination and lack of cultural safety due to incidents of homophobic or transphobic comments, breaches of confidentiality about gender identity or sexual orientation, and other forms of stereotyping and exclusion.

This study’s examination of organizational documents revealed that a number of case study organizations acknowledged that LGBTI employees continued to encounter barriers and issues of acceptance in the employment sector – which they were eager to address.

Table 5.5 below summarizes key findings in relation to LGBTI employees in Australian workplaces based on analysis of organizational documents.

Table 5.5: Key areas of focus applicable to LGBTI employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGBT-inclusive workplaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve the commitment, loyalty and performance of LGBTI employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat LGBT employees with dignity and respect.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers experienced by LGBTI employees in the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental health issues based on stigma, discrimination and exclusion associated with their sexual identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence to disclose their sexual orientation and family status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidents of homophobic and/or transphobic behaviours, and exclusion, including non-inclusive language, and stereotyping.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.4. Disability

A focus on disability in the workplace was evident in 10 case study organizations (02, 03, 06, 09, 10, 19, 09, 13, 20, 22). These went beyond the compliance-based approach required under EEO legislation and manifested a proactive approach towards employing people with disability, as evidenced in analysis of the organizational documents. One, under its diversity and inclusion strategy, implemented a range of initiatives across the employment cycle, from recruitment to engagement and retention, in order to promote disability in the workforce (10). A key feature of its disability employment program was to provide employment opportunities to people with intellectual disability – a category often overlooked and stigmatized in most workplaces. Furthermore, the contributions people in care relationships (caring for a family member with a disability) make to the community and the challenges they often face due to their caring role were recognized by some organizations under their disability employment strategies (19, 20, 22). The disability action plans of these organizations catered for the needs of the carers as well as those with disability.

Most initiatives in relation to disability employment were concerned with removing barriers that impeded the recruitment of disabled people. Some organizations underlined a practice in their recruitment policy where potential job applicants were asked to advise any support or access requirements to enable a barrier-free recruitment process for candidates with disability (03, 06). In terms of making reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process, one organization ensured that recruitment tests were accessible to candidates who were visually impaired (03). Two organizations reported that they had supported employment programs for disabled individuals who were unable to work at full capacity due to their disability (20, 22).

One organization identified lack of awareness about disability and accessibility barriers, including availability of learning and development opportunities, as challenges faced by employees with disabilities (03). A lack of employee confidence to disclose disability status was yet another challenge recognized by some organizations; it often led to a lack of accurate and comprehensive data on disability in the workplace (02, 10, 20). Consequently, these organizations reported that

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9 Supported employment programs provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities who are unable to perform paid work without ongoing support. These programs are funded by the Federal Government.
unavailability of reliable, accurate information impeded managerial interventions to address the needs of disabled employees.

Table 5.6 below summarizes key findings in relation to employees with disabilities.

Table 5.6: Key areas of focus on disability in the workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment opportunities and career progression for disabled people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility options, including adjustments to accommodate the needs of employees and candidates with a disability, is a key area of focus under disability action plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of carers within the ambit of disability employment in recognition of the challenges associated with caring for a family member with a disability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers encountered by disabled employees in the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility barriers such as physical access to buildings and sites, communication barriers due to disability, safety issues, non-availability of facilities, and a lack of learning and development opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudinal barriers such as discrimination and lack of awareness within the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence among disabled employees regarding disclosure of disability status.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.5. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

A specific focus on the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), as a dimension of diversity with documented action plans and measurable outcomes, was evident in six case study organizations (03, 09, 10, 13, 20, 22). Notably, while the diversity policies studied mentioned race and ethnicity, only this limited number (six) had actual action plans with specific measures and targets. One included CALD as an identified group under its diversity and inclusion strategy, along with gender, indigenous status, disability and LGBTI (20). It tracked the engagement levels of these five groups through its employee engagement survey. Another organization identified a number of high priority groups as ‘vulnerable’, including people from CALD backgrounds (13). It sought to deliver a culturally proficient high-quality health service by recruiting and managing a workforce that reflected the diversity of the community it served. Its recruitment advertisements stated that a community language was highly desirable, and that individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds were encouraged to apply for roles in the organization.
One organization took pride in its status as one of the most CALD workforces in Australia (03). The workforce of over 33,000 employees originated from 134 countries and spoke 65 or more languages other than English as their primary language. This organization was conscious that many of its CALD employees were award-level staff and consequently focused on skills and capability development to address language and cultural barriers to improve their career progression and long-term employability.

Another organization had a comprehensive CALD action plan that aimed to develop cultural competencies among its workforce and to remove barriers such as unconscious bias (22). The scope of its CALD action plan covered a variety of aspects, such as first-generation migrants, accents, visible minorities (racial minorities that were non-Caucasian) and religious diversity. It aspired to be an employer of choice that had inclusive employment practices for CALD individuals. Another said that its aim under its CALD strategy was “to build an organization that promotes freedom from racism and race-based discrimination” (09).

Despite such efforts, issues pertaining to psychological safety are often experienced by minority groups, particularly in the areas of cultural identity and religious belief, as indicated in some organizational documents analysed: for example, an Islamic-faith employee revealed the apprehension she experienced when applying for a job because of visible demonstration of her religious faith:

I was somewhat sceptical and debated if I should go to the interview without the headscarf and then put it on later… [so as to not jeopardize job prospects] … or should I just go as ‘me’ … To my surprise, I was hired. (20)

Unconscious bias was identified as a common barrier faced by CALD employees: for example, one organization recognized that elements such as accents, visible characteristics (such as non-Caucasian) and religious faith could trigger unconscious bias (22). ‘Race privilege’ was identified as a key issue that affected the confidence and psychological wellbeing of its CALD employees. Another identified language, literacy and lack of cultural awareness about Australian workplaces as barriers affecting employment outcomes of CALD employees (03).

Table 5.7 below summarizes key findings in relation to employment outcomes of CALD employees in Australian workplaces revealed through the analysis of documents.
Table 5.7: Key areas of focus relevant to CALD employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improved employment options for CALD employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizations were eager to reflect the cultural diversity of the community and consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of career advancement of CALD employees was an area of concern for organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers faced by CALD employees in the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racism, race-based discrimination and unconscious bias towards CALD individuals may be present in workplaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence and fear experienced by CALD individuals regarding exposing one’s religious belief and cultural identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of language and literacy skills, as well as lack of cultural awareness about Australian workplaces, can negatively affect the employment outcomes of CALD employees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.6. Age and Generational Diversity

Age and generational diversity were within the ambit of diversity action plans in only five organizations (02, 12, 17, 10, 20). Despite an ageing workforce being a contemporary issue in Australia, due to the imminent loss of experience and a potential skills shortage (identified by some organizations), only a few prioritized mature-aged employees in terms of diversity management: for example, one that had an ageing workforce (29 percent aged 44-54 and 17 percent aged 55-64) did not have an action plan to address the needs of these older age groups (14); neither did it have any strategies to address the potential issues that might arise as a result of its ageing workforce. In contrast, another with a high proportion of mature-aged employees had a comprehensive career management program in place (12), centered on individual career aspirations and lifestyle choices of mature-aged employees, with the view to supporting transition to retirement. While this organization aspired to benefit from the retention of more experienced employees and their skills and expertise, employees were provided with more flexible work options and career choices.

Another organization aspired to be an employer of choice for all age groups, including those of mature age and youth (10). In addition to potential skills shortages due to Australia’s ageing
population, this organization had also considered emerging challenges associated with generational diversity, where five generations will inevitably be present in many workplaces.

Overall, mature-aged employees received less attention, particularly with regard to employment plans. At the time of data collection, only one organization had just begun focusing on the mature-aged workforce in a strategic sense (20). It planned to develop a return-to-work program for older people in its quest to promote age and generational diversity within the workplace.

Table 5.8 summarizes key findings in relation to mature-aged employees derived from organizational documents.

Table 5.8: Key areas of focus relevant to mature-aged employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways to address potential skills shortage and loss of experience due to exodus of mature-aged employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement and retention of mature-aged employees by catering to their career aspirations and lifestyle options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting mature-aged employees with transition to retirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers encountered by mature-aged employees in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential conflicts and resistance due to generational diversity in the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A general lack of organizational focus to address the needs of an ageing workforce.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5. Emerging Dimensions of Diversity in Australian Workplaces

In this study, gender, indigenous status, LGBTI, disability, CALD and the ageing workforce emerged as the key dimensions of diversity that have received organizational attention through comprehensive action plans and strategies. Yet while these demographic groups appear to be perceived as most important by organizations, several other diversity dimensions are gaining momentum. For example, one public sector organization added a group categorized as ‘future’ in its diversity framework to accommodate other potential categories that may become relevant after the publication of its diversity strategy (10). While comprehensive plans and strategies are yet to be developed for such evolving categories, organizations were beginning to consider them through
numerous initiatives, particularly those that provided for fulfilling workplace experiences and career prospects.

Such new and emerging dimensions of diversity were ascertained through this study’s analysis of the organizational documents, as further discussed below.

5.5.1. Youth

As an integral dimension of diversity in the workforce, youth was considered by one organization which recognized the importance of engaging and developing youth as the future labour force (10). It had programs in place for youth engagement and development, with the purpose of obtaining a steady inflow of talent through the employment of young Australians. These programs included a community-based youth engagement program, cadetships and career pathways that targeted youth recruitment. Another organization in the engineering sector worked closely with local community groups such as the Beacon Foundation and SpiritWest to help disadvantaged youth in the areas of education and training (14); it contributed towards developing the skills of this group in the streams of mathematics, science and engineering, and encouraged them to join the organization and the industry.

5.5.2. Women Affected by Domestic Violence

While gender was an integral dimension of diversity in most case study organizations, an emerging trend was visible in relation to consideration of the issues faced by women affected by domestic violence. Some organizations had already implemented initiatives to support this cohort through specific interventions under diversity management (12, 20, 13, 09, 19). Thus female employees experiencing domestic violence were considered a separate dimension, due to the multitude of disadvantages they faced, which positioned them as a separate category from the more general category of women in the workforce. One organization had a family violence working group made up of employees, to identify and address the underlying causes of violence against women and to review organizational practices and interventions to support those employees who were subject to domestic and family violence (13). Two others, through their gender equity action plans, identified women already experiencing or at risk of domestic violence as a priority group that required assistance and support from the organization (19, 09). Similarly, the work-life balance and
flexibility policy of one organization recognized that women affected by domestic violence were entitled to flexible work options on a priority basis (13).

5.5.3. Caregiving Responsibilities for Children

The intersectionality of the two identities of gender and caregiver was considered by some case study organizations, where there were interventions designed to meet the needs of female employees who were also mothers (02, 12, 18, 13, 19, 06). Return-to-work programs (after parental leave), network opportunities (mothers’ groups) and the provision of breastfeeding facilities within the workplace were the primary interventions that had been implemented by these to address the group’s needs.

While the notion of parenthood is still most often associated with women and their role as the primary carers of young children, a new wave of thinking was evident in some organizations that focused on ‘parents’ as a category in a gender-neutral manner. For example, “working parents” (02, 06) and “new parents” (18) were specified as employee categories that needed support to fulfil their caring responsibilities and these could collide with workplace expectations and career aspirations.

Same-sex parents were encompassed within the scope of ‘parents’ by some organizations (02, 18, 13, 10, 22), indicating commitment to LGBTI inclusiveness and recognition of family status irrespective of sexuality. Similarly, this study identified a move away from associating work-life balance and flexible options as only applicable to women (20, 03, 19): while acknowledging that flexible workplace arrangements had evolved as a result of the need to accommodate family responsibilities of working women, one organization reiterated that it no longer associated this with females only (19); another specified that its work-life balance program catered to the different life stages of employees, such as parental responsibilities and care of the elderly (20).

5.5.4. Mental Health

Three organizations considered the mental health of employees a separate category of diversity management from the disability dimension (12, 22, 18). One received external recognition for diversity and inclusion by the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI), based on its efforts
in promoting a mentally healthy working culture (12). The AHRI includes mental health as a category within its diversity and inclusion awards, underpinning the trend in Australia to recognize employees subject to mental health issues as a separate dimension that warrants organizational focus to ensure their wellbeing. Another organization that identified this as part of its diversity and inclusion strategy emphasized the importance of supporting employees’ mental health beyond the traditional employee assistance model (18). This organization had engaged in a study with social firms and a university to identify ways of better supporting mental illness in the workplace. Another in the higher education sector contended that the prime objective of focusing on mental health was to encourage informed and non-discriminatory attitudes towards employees and students with mental illnesses (22).

5.4.5. Other Emerging Groups

In two organizations, refugees were also considered a category requiring specific support in the workplace based on their disadvantaged status (03, 09). One organization provided mentoring and work experience for refugees to assist them in gaining sustainable and meaningful employment (03). Both organizations determined that those who arrived in Australia as refugees often had additional barriers compared with other CALD categories, including recently arrived skilled migrants, for example, where lack of networking opportunities and confidence were noted as conditions that severely restricted employment opportunities for refugees.

Two organizations targeted religious differences as part of their diversity strategy, including attempts to support the careers of employees who belonged to the Islamic faith by enabling them to practise their religion (10, 22). It is noteworthy that while one of these organizations had a strong Anglo-Australian identity, it strived to ensure that individuals who wish to practise their religion did not feel inhibited or at risk, as part of its commitment to upholding diversity. This included the significant step of setting up a religious advisory committee with a Muslim representative appointed to ensure that employees of the Islamic faith had appropriate representation and were supported in their careers.

Thus, while refugees and religious diversity are categories that could fall within the ambit of CALD individuals, specific reference to supporting refugees and those that belong to the Islamic
faith signifies organizational responsiveness to emerging groups that need specific attention in the Australian workplace to address current doubt or hostility they may face.

Adding further to this focus on emerging groups, two community services organizations identified a number of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in society that came within the ambit of the services they provided (09, 13). People with dementia, those living in rural and remote areas, and those experiencing financial disadvantage and homelessness were identified as vulnerable. Two more vulnerable groups were identified by one organization as reflecting intersectionality of diversity – young women struggling with transition to adulthood, and same-sex-attracted and gender-diverse young people (13). While a number of initiatives at societal level to address the needs of such groups who are vulnerable to social exclusion were visible in these two organizations, they also examined removal of structural and systemic discrimination and barriers within their organizations.

Two organizations (18, 20) supported young LGBTI staff through implementing ‘It Gets Better’\textsuperscript{10}, a global program to inspire LGBTI youth to overcome challenges and issues around their sexuality, including harassment and bullying. However, similar to the other emerging groups identified, comprehensive strategies under diversity management are yet to fully evolve in Australian workplaces with respect to these categories of employees.

Table 5.9 below summarizes the group identities that are new and emerging in Australian workplaces as additional dimensions of diversity that in the future may gain further momentum under the arena of diversity management.

\textsuperscript{10} ‘It Gets Better’ is a worldwide movement, inspiring LGBTI individuals to share their stories via videos. The purpose of the initiative is to support LGBTI youth facing harassment and bullying.
### Table 5.9: New and emerging group identities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Youth as a dimension of diversity</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From a business perspective, this dimension was considered important to build the future capabilities of the organization, in terms of talent inflow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From a social justice perspective, several categories of youth who were disadvantaged due to the combination of attributes such as poverty and sexual identity were considered to fall within diversity management.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Mental illness within the workforce</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees affected by mental illness were increasingly being considered as a new dimension of diversity, with an increased focus by organizations on the mental wellbeing of the workforce.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Domestic and family violence</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women affected by domestic and family violence as a dimension of diversity was increasingly gaining attention, as their disadvantages and circumstances are different from typical female employees in the workforce.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Caregivers and parental responsibility</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents who are caregivers to young children were recognized as a dimension of diversity, reflecting a gradual shift in societal trends where men are increasingly assuming caregiver responsibilities for young children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Refugee status and religious diversity (e.g. employees who belong to the Islamic faith)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees and individuals belonging to religious minorities were gaining attention as distinct groups that warrant consideration, outside of the broader dimension of CALD, given the current political and societal contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in society</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Several categories such as people with dementia, those living in rural and remote areas, those experiencing financial disadvantage, and homelessness were identified as vulnerable groups that require organizational support.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, organizational documents obtained from case study organizations were analysed and findings reported. The analysis of these documents enabled the identification of themes relevant to the context of diversity management in contemporary Australian organizations. These include the scope of diversity management and EEO, how organizations define diversity, and organizational responsiveness to incidents associated with the six main demographic dimensions of diversity: women; indigenous; LGBTI employees; the disabled; CALD and mature-aged. Several new and evolving identifiable groups were gaining organizational attention as part of diversity management initiatives and have been regarded as emerging dimensions of diversity.

The themes identified have set the overall scene for the analysis that follows. The next chapter presents the analysis and findings relevant to organizational responsiveness to workforce diversity based on diversity management practices implemented by the case study organizations.
CHAPTER 6
Analysis and Findings – Part 2
DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS’ PERSPECTIVES

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the nature of diversity management practices implemented by the case study organizations is discussed. This is based on the demographic characteristics of the Australian contemporary workforce identified in Chapter 5. Through additional analysis of interview responses of diversity practitioners, diversity management practices in workplaces were identified. These interviews provided a rich source of data. Subsequent analysis also involved data triangulation. Themes that emerged from the analysis of organizational documents were further examined to validate the diversity management practices relevant to the diversity context.

Documentary analysis discussed in Chapter 5 focused on the organizations’ diversity policies. This interview analysis focuses on the implementation of those policies. This chapter therefore presents organizational responsiveness to diversity issues in Australian workplaces.

6.2. Diversity Management Practices of Australian Workplaces

The diversity management practices were examined by analysing the data obtained from interviews. This analysis found that practices are generally integrated into core organizational functions such as HR, CSR, organizational strategy and leadership. However, some practices were not so integrated; they were instead exclusively related to the operational aspects of diversity management. These practices were forums and structures implemented by organizations to deliver diversity management initiatives and the mechanisms that were implemented to measure the effectiveness of diversity management initiatives.

Table 6.1 below depicts those diversity management practices classified under core organizational functions. The alternative more exclusive practices are listed under ‘operational aspects of diversity management’.
Table 6.1: Diversity management practices integrating organizational functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HR</th>
<th>CSR</th>
<th>Organizational strategy</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Operational aspects of diversity management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment of talent</td>
<td>Supporting disadvantaged groups in the community</td>
<td>Diversity as a strategic priority</td>
<td>Leadership commitment and involvement</td>
<td>Forums and structures to implement diversity initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training, development and career progression</td>
<td>Sponsorship and participation in external events and initiatives</td>
<td>Integration with vision/mission, values and purpose</td>
<td>Diversity capability development</td>
<td>Measuring effectiveness of diversity initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee engagement and wellbeing</td>
<td>Contributing to knowledge of diversity issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.1. Diversity Management Practices and HR

The majority of diversity management interventions implemented by the case study organizations overlapped with HR processes and practices. These areas included recruitment of talent, training, development and career management, employee engagement and wellbeing, and rewards management.

6.2.1.1. Recruitment of talent

The data drawn from the interviews illustrated a number of areas where diversity management practices integrated with recruitment and selection (see Table 6.2 below for a summary of these practices). Increasing gender diversity through specific recruitment efforts was considered by 13 organizations, all of which focused on the recruitment of females. The exception was one that actively looked at widening its candidate pool to increase the number of males in the workforce.
This organization was in the disability care sector, which was an industry regarded as female-dominated. Two others were eager to increase the proportion of males in the workforce, one in the community services sector and the other in nursing, although neither of these organizations was actively engaged in sourcing male candidates.

Apart from gender diversity, recruitment efforts focused on increasing indigenous representation (nine organizations), disability in the workforce (seven), attracting younger employees (seven), recruitment of CALD employees (two), and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as the long-term unemployed and the economically disadvantaged (one).

Recruitment advertisements, websites and promotional campaigns were used by several organizations to illustrate the value placed on encouraging a more diverse range of candidates to apply. Awareness-building initiatives among university and secondary school students to address misconceptions about the gendered nature of certain industries and roles had been undertaken by some organizations with the view to attracting female talent.

Six organizations were also conscious of the composition of recruitment panels and the diversity capabilities of staff involved in the recruitment process. Accordingly, the demographic profiles of the members of recruitment panels were considered by some organizations. A balanced gender representation and specialized recruitment teams were also engaged by some in relation to the recruitment of females, indigenous Australians and those with a disability. Some organizations trained recruitment staff in diversity issues. One reported that substantial research had been conducted to identify the barriers to recruitment in the case of employee groups that were ‘difficult to source’, which included women and indigenous Australians.
Table 6.2: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with recruitment of talent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment of talent activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing diversity via recruitment initiatives/ employment schemes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-focused recruitment</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x* x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous employment scheme</td>
<td>x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting younger talent to the workplace</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment scheme for the disabled</td>
<td>x x x x*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment of CALD employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment scheme for long-term unemployed and economically disadvantaged</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Organization had abandoned gender-focused recruitment and the disability employment scheme at the time of data collection.
Table 6.2: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with recruitment of talent (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment of talent activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17  18  19  20  21  22  23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication with external stakeholders</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal perceptions and awareness</td>
<td>x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated websites for indigenous and gender diversity</td>
<td>x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes diversity in recruitment advertisements</td>
<td>x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruitment expertise</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender representation in recruitment panels</td>
<td>x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized recruitment teams</td>
<td>x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research on barriers to recruitment of identified groups</td>
<td>x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity training for staff involved in recruitment</td>
<td>x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.1.2. Training, development and career management

Interview responses demonstrated that a number of organizations integrated diversity management practices with the training, development and career management of employees (see a summary of these practices in Table 6.3 below).

In particular, the career progression of women was pivotal in seven organizations. The lack of diversity at the higher echelons, including female representation in senior management, was an issue that had gained the attention of these organizations in terms of specific interventions relevant to career progression.

Three organizations provided training to mature-aged employees. One of these offered a suite of training that was dependent on the career choices made by mature-aged employees. The other two offered training to mature-aged employees with the objective of supporting them with their transition to retirement rather than in relation to career progression.

In regard to CALD employees, two organizations highlighted that language training was provided, with one taking additional steps to build the confidence of its CALD employees. Mentoring was also used as a tool by four organizations to engage and develop specific staff categories, such as women, indigenous and younger employees. In addition to such targeted development of specific groups of employees, diversity-related training was also provided to the general workforce by various organizations, both to create awareness around diversity related issues and to develop the diversity capabilities of employees.
Table 6.3: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with training, development and career management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training, development and career management activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17  18  19  20  21  22  23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Training, development and career management</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career progression scheme for women to progress to senior/leadership roles</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training to develop women</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for mature-aged employees</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language training for CALD employees</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building confidence of CALD employees through training</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training to build diversity capabilities of the workforce</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity capabilities framework</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


6.2.1.3. Employee engagement and wellbeing

The interview responses revealed a range of diversity management practices integrated with employee engagement and wellbeing across the case study organizations. These practices included work-life balance programs, networking opportunities for minority group employees, valuing and celebration of workplace diversity, addressing specific needs of minority employee groups, and the engagement and wellbeing of mature-aged employees. A summary of these practices is presented in Table 6.4 below.

Notably, work-life balance programs offering flexible work options and assistance to cater to family and personal commitments were available to varying degrees across all 23 organizations. This ranged from one that offered such flexibility across all job roles to another that only offered flexible work options based on compelling grounds, such as caring for a family member with a terminal illness. While different demographic employee groups were considered within work-life balance programs, parents with caring responsibilities were afforded significant support by most organizations.

Affinity groups based on demographic categories were present in nine organizations, used to encourage networking and collegial support particularly among minority employee groups. Some of these provided examples of such affinity groups, including LGBTI networks, disability networks, indigenous employee networks, women’s networks, mother’s groups and CALD networks. Four included specific minority group employees as members of working committees to help drive diversity initiatives.

Some organizations highlighted the acknowledging and valuing of differences through celebration of diversity-related events in the workplace. These included International Women’s Day, White Ribbon Day\(^\text{11}\), International Disability Day, NAIDOC Week\(^\text{12}\), Welcome to Country initiatives\(^\text{13}\),

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\(^{11}\) White Ribbon Day signifies the elimination of violence against women, and is a global male-led movement.

\(^{12}\) NAIDOC Week in July is celebrated across Australia in recognition of the history, culture and achievements of indigenous Australians. NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee.

\(^{13}\) Welcome to Country is a ceremony performed by indigenous Australian Elders to welcome visitors to traditional land. It is a gesture to recognise the indigenous people as First Australians and to create awareness and respect towards indigenous culture and heritage.
Wear it Purple Day\textsuperscript{14} to celebrate the LGBTI community in the workplace, taste of harmony\textsuperscript{15}, cookery demonstrations and the sharing of cultural cuisine to celebrate cultural diversity. Two organizations had cultural calendars, highlighting days of cultural significance to different communities and ethnic groups as a step towards acknowledging and celebrating multiculturalism in the workplace. Mental health was another area that came within the purview of diversity in the workplace in eight organizations, with events such as R U OK\textsuperscript{16} Day and Mental Health Week\textsuperscript{17} celebrated in workplaces.

Addressing language barriers through training and by enabling employees from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) to express their opinions in languages other than English, providing support to newly arrived migrants and their families to settle in Australia, and providing forums to raise issues such as racism in the workplace were some of the mechanisms present in some organizations to support CALD employees. Two had prayer rooms to enable CALD employees (of the Islamic faith) to practise their religious beliefs.

To address the specific needs of employees with disability, facilities such as assisted technology and individualized accessibility plans were provided by four organizations to enable them to function effectively in the workplace. For example, individual accessibility plans were implemented by some to cater to the needs of employees with disability and those with caring responsibilities for a person with a disability. Eight focused on the mental health of employees and facilitated interventions to support those prone to mental health issues.

\textsuperscript{14} Wear it Purple Day symbolizes support for people who are sexually diverse, celebrated by workplaces to signify a safe and inclusive working environment for the LGBTI community

\textsuperscript{15} A Taste of Harmony is an initiative to celebrate cultural diversity in Australian workplaces, where colleagues from different cultural backgrounds share food and stories.

\textsuperscript{16} R U OK is an Australia-wide campaign to show that a conversation or a question can make a big difference to people who are struggling with life. R U OK Day is celebrated in workplaces and other institutions.

\textsuperscript{17} Mental Health Week is around the week nearest to World Mental Health Day, which is on 10 October. During this week initiatives are implemented across Australia to create awareness and engage individuals around mental health.
Table 6.4: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with employee engagement and wellbeing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee engagement and wellbeing activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-life balance options</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide range of flexible work arrangements</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of some flexible work options</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– part-time, flexible start and finish times, or based on compelling circumstances</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time off to fulfil cultural needs/cultural leave</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave purchase scheme and additional sick leave for caring responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structuring roles and planning organized around needs of parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with childcare</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generous and enhanced parental leave scheme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs to support new parents retuning to work</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

144
Table 6.4: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with employee engagement and wellbeing (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee engagement and wellbeing activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee Groups</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee affinity groups and networking</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee representation in diversity-related committees</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Celebrating and valuing diversity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity-related events</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural calendars</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing specific employee group needs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALD employees</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees with disability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health of employees</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous employees</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTI employees</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature-aged employees</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another six organizations supported LGBTI employees by ensuring their emotional and physiological wellbeing, while engagement and retention of indigenous staff was focused on by some by addressing their cultural needs and feelings of isolation in the workplace.

The engagement and wellbeing of mature-aged employees were also met by seven organizations through interventions such as providing career options to those nearing retirement, offering flexible work arrangements, including job share and part-time options, and supporting the transition to retirement through creating awareness of post-retirements options.

6.2.1.4. Rewards management

Through their rewards management strategy, six organizations aimed to address gender disparities in pay, and were correspondingly committed to establishing fair and equitable remuneration policies. Table 6.5 presents a summary of such interventions to achieve gender pay equity.

Analysing and discerning information about the relevant roles and underlying reasons for gender pay gaps and reporting to the leadership team on gender pay gaps, along with the progress achieved in creating gender pay equity, were practices implemented to address these diversity management issues.
Table 6.5: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with rewards strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rewards strategy activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysing gender pay disparities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reporting to the leadership team regarding gaps and progress made in achieving equity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>x</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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6.2.2. Diversity Management Practices and CSR

Many organizations described diversity management interventions that were fundamentally concerned with societal issues, thereby demonstrating a commitment to CSR. Table 6.6 below presents a summary of those practices that integrate with CSR, as reported by practitioners.

Implementation of CSR initiatives under the ambit of diversity management demonstrated that diversity management can encompass not only the workforce, but also external stakeholders who belong to identifiable groups that exist in society. It also shows the concern and commitment of organizations to address issues and barriers faced by disadvantaged groups in society. Sponsorship of public events, supporting social causes and reaching out to disadvantaged and underrepresented groups through numerous interventions were some of the practices that were integrated with CSR. Several organizations had shared knowledge and experiences of diversity-related issues with external stakeholders so that others could emulate such practices, ultimately leading to the wellbeing of employees and the society as a whole.

As standout examples of reaching out to disadvantaged groups within the community, two supported people with disabilities via social firms\(^\text{18}\) by providing employment opportunities, while others had disability employment plans. Several focused on helping indigenous communities by providing work experience placements, employment opportunities and by sponsoring indigenous-community-related projects. The LGBTI community also received attention under CSR, with some organizations sponsoring events such as the Midsumma Festival\(^\text{19}\).

In terms of its perspective that women have often been under-represented in technology, one organization sponsored projects that encourage women to embrace technology. Another organization supported the initiatives of Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA)\(^\text{20}\) that encouraged and empowered women to take on leadership positions in the corporate

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\(^{18}\) A social firm is a not-for-profit organization with a supportive and modified environment that provides employment to people with mental illness or disability.

\(^{19}\) Midsumma Festival is a premier LGBTI arts and culture festival in Victoria that promotes LGBTI inclusivity by celebrating and showcasing artistic content.

\(^{20}\) CEDA is an independent national organization in Australia delivering leading thinking, informed discourse and rigorous research on the issues that matter through a cross-sectional membership.
and entrepreneurial sectors, and also sponsored White Ribbon Day activities of the local council to prevent men’s violence against women.

There were a number of other groups deemed as disadvantaged and underprivileged (long-term unemployed and economically challenged, including the homeless and youth from disadvantaged backgrounds) that were provided with work experience by some organizations to enhance their employability. One encouraged voluntarism by offering employees a paid day to volunteer on a community-related initiative of their choice to help disadvantaged members in society.

In regard to diverse customer bases that had an impact on Australian workplaces, five organizations had implemented initiatives that considered the disadvantages faced by these diverse groups. One had implemented an interpreter service using its CALD staff to better address issues often encountered by CALD members of the community served by the organization.

Another had implemented initiatives to support LGBTI youth in the community it served; two others supported both clients from the LGBTI community and those belonging to the Islamic faith. Accessibility options and facilities were often provided for clients with disabilities, particularly in two organizations in the higher education sector. Clients from disadvantaged backgrounds were also notably supported by another organization, with special consideration afforded to those who were economically disadvantaged when it came to both payments and services.
Table 6.6: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with CSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship and participation in external events and initiatives</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting disadvantaged groups in society</td>
<td>x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting needs of disadvantaged clients/customers</td>
<td>x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to knowledge of diversity issues</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.3. Diversity Management Practices and Organizational Strategy

Analysis interviews demonstrated a connection between diversity management and the overall strategic direction of organizations in several such entities (see Table 6.7 below). In some, such links involved a connection between diversity and overarching aspirations of the organization, including its vision, mission and values. Some made a link between diversity and organizational strategy via other mechanisms, such as incorporating diversity-related outcomes in key performance outcomes and integrating diversity outcomes into the corporate plan. One incorporated diversity as an element in its strategic culture change program; another developed an overall diversity capability framework that aligned with its strategic plan.

6.2.4. Diversity Management Practices and Leadership

A number of organizations also indicated a link between diversity management and leadership (see Table 6.8 below).

Such involvement was visible through leaders holding specific roles and accountability for diversity-related issues. For example, some CEOs chaired diversity councils and assumed roles such as male champions of gender equality change and gender pay equity ambassadors. One local council had a mayor who chaired its diversity and inclusion advisory committees composed of employees and community members.

In many the leadership team tracked and monitored diversity data, including progress made under the diversity plans. In one, diversity was an agenda item at every Executive Committee meeting. In the interviews several diversity management practitioners explicitly cited their appreciation of the commitment of their organization’s leadership towards workforce diversity, despite competing priorities. Although some pointed out that other priorities such as restructures and other HR issues often took precedence over diversity issues in the leadership agenda, they acknowledged that leadership commitment and passion were required for successful outcomes in the diversity space.
Table 6.7: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with organizational strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational strategy activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration with vision/mission, values and purpose</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity as a strategic priority</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.8: Summary of diversity management practices integrated with leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership activities</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership commitment and involvement</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.5. Interventions Directly Linked with Operational Aspects of Diversity Management

There were a few standalone diversity management initiatives implemented that directly linked with operational aspects of diversity management. These included forums and resources used to implement diversity strategy, along with mechanisms to measure the success of diversity management interventions (see Table 6.9 below).

6.2.5.1. Forums and structures used by organizations to implement diversity strategy

Some organizations had forums and structures to enable effective management of diversity. Often referred to as ‘diversity councils’, such forums consisted of senior members of the organization who acted in an advisory capacity and provided monitoring and strategic direction for diversity management through their membership. In addition to such forums that were often ongoing, some organizations also held forums comprised of employees to implement specific initiatives and projects that were time-limited. For example, one that had an overrepresentation of mature-aged employees had established a forum to investigate the issue and to recommend a way forward. Another had set up an employee group that aimed to create an LGBTI-inclusive workplace. These employee-constituted forums dispersed once the initiatives and projects were complete.

In some organizations individual employees, in addition to their core tasks, functioned as facilitators to support diversity management. One organization had diversity contact officers and another had diversity equity officers to assist employees with diversity-related issues. These officers were from different functional areas of the organization and played a facilitation role.

In regard to establishing roles with primary responsibility for diversity management, the 23 organizations had four streams of structures. Most assigned diversity management responsibility to their HR managers. HR generalists were responsible for diversity management in 11, and HR specialists in another five handled diversity management in addition to their specialist HR areas. Another six had diversity specialists who were exclusively responsible for diversity management. Notably, one of these had several diversity specialists who were subject matter experts associated with different centres of excellence in relation to diversity. In one, which was comparatively small in terms of employee numbers, diversity management came under the purview of the general manager who was responsible for overall operations of the organization.
6.2.5.2. Measuring the success of diversity management interventions

Interview analysis showed that some organizations measured success of diversity management through workforce data pertaining to employee demographics. Data on gender and age profiles of the workforce were available for most organizations, while four had data on a wider range of demographics. Yet, despite the availability of such data, only some used it to measure the success of diversity management in their workplace.

Such measures used by eight organizations included achieving gender balance of the overall workforce as well as gender targets at the senior level. Two of these used gender pay equity as a key measure of diversity management, while one also measured the rate of return after parental leave.

Five measured a broad spectrum of diversity that was inclusive of race and ethnicity, religion, languages spoken, sexual orientation, indigenous status, disability status, and age, in addition to gender distribution. Of these, one compared its demographic profile with that of the community in which it operated, while the others compared their profiles with the overall population of Australia. Comparing workforce demographics with those of similar organizations was also highlighted by three as a mechanism for measuring success of diversity management interventions.

Employee surveys were used by 10 to measure the success of their diversity programs. Five used audits to evaluate and measure diversity success. In one the audit conducted for the Rainbow Tick accreditation of LGBTI inclusiveness enabled them to measure the success of their LGBTI initiatives. Another had developed a diversity audit tool which helped it to assess and ensure that its projects were compliant with diversity and inclusion. Two organizations tracked the success of diversity training and capability development via employee feedback. Performance indicators were incorporated into the diversity plans of five, with the progress measured against the set targets.
Table 6.9: Summary of interventions directly linked to operational aspects of diversity management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities relevant to operational aspects of diversity management</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17  18  19  20  21  22  23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forums and structures for diversity management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior-level forums</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee forums</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees assisting as facilitators</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary responsibility for diversity management</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR generalist</td>
<td>x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x  x</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR specialist</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity specialist</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>General manager</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities relevant to operational aspects of diversity management</td>
<td>Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measuring effectiveness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender distribution</td>
<td>x  x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of return from parental leave</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender pay equity</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic data</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audits for accreditation</td>
<td>x  x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal audits</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success of diversity training</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance indicators of diversity plans</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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6.3. Dimensions of Diversity Most Important to the Australian Workplaces

Analysis of the diversity management practices identified a diverse range of interventions and practices in relation to how they responded to diversity issues. However, not all gave equal priority to all six dimensions of diversity as far as such practices were concerned. Table 6.10 summarizes the different dimensions of diversity that were the main focus.

Table 6.10: Dimensions of diversity most focused on by the organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study Organizations</th>
<th>CALD</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ageing</th>
<th>LGBTI</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
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<td>x</td>
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6.4. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the data obtained from the interviews with diversity management practitioners of the 23 case study organizations were analysed and the findings presented. This analysis has enabled the identification of a variety of diversity management practices used in Australian workplaces, based on the themes identified in Chapter 5. Most of the diversity management practices were integrated with core organizational processes, particularly HR. Such interventions were also extended into the external environment through CSR initiatives, demonstrating organizational concerns for societal issues relevant to disadvantaged groups. Leadership commitment was also considered an integral element that underpinned diversity management. Furthermore, a trend of some of the organizations incorporating elements of diversity management into strategic priorities was identified.

The interview analysis also confirmed that most diversity management practices were implemented on the basis of six core dimensions of diversity: women; mature-aged; CALD; indigenous; disabled; and LGBTI employees. Robust diversity management practices had not yet developed for other emerging dimensions of diversity. The analysis also showed that most organizations did not give equal priority to all six core dimensions of diversity.

The next chapter explores and evaluates Australian organizational responsiveness to the key diversity issues based on the six core dimensions of diversity via a justice and fairness perspective, and presents the findings using 14 case studies.
CHAPTER 7
THE CASE STUDIES: FRAMING DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT WITHIN JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS

7.1. Introduction

Given the context of diversity and the multitude of diversity management practices identified in Chapters 5 and 6, this chapter evaluates how the selected case study organizations responded to key diversity issues from a justice and fairness perspective. Organizational and social justice theories were used as theoretical frameworks to explore and evaluate workforce diversity interventions. In the examination of organizational justice, the four elements of organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational) proposed by Colquitt et al. (2001) were considered.

John Rawls’ theory of justice as fairness and Amartya Sen’s concept of justice formed the philosophical foundations of the analysis of social justice. Cultural diversity, gender diversity including gender equity and the gender pay gap, managing an ageing workforce, LGBTI employees in the workforce, indigenous employment and disability in the workforce were the diversity issues explored across multiple cases using cross-case analysis and synthesis. Two dissimilar cases for each diversity issue were used to illustrate the Rawls and Sen approaches to managing workforce diversity.

The findings presented in this chapter are reported in relation to 14 organizational case studies (see Table 4.2) based on the themes of cultural diversity, gender equity, gender pay gap, the ageing workforce, LGBTI employees, indigenous employees and employees with disability.

7.2. Cultural Diversity

Multiculturalism is the basis of Australia’s unique identity as a nation, owing to its cultural diversity (D’Netto et al. 2014). Yet, while its multiculturalism is often considered to be a source of social and economic wealth (Department of Social Services 2014), such cultural differences can give rise to challenges that impede the performance of work teams (Fujimoto & Härtel 2004).
Thus, given the cultural mosaic of the Australian population, this study analysed how organizations respond to cultural diversity in the workplace. In this section, these findings are presented using two of the case study organizations (09 and 22).

Organization 09 is a municipal council in the public administration and safety sector, servicing an area where 33.7 percent of residents were born overseas. A wide range of languages is spoken in the area, and approximately 7.8 percent of the local population does not speak English well or at all. The mission of the council was underpinned by the objective of creating an “accountable democracy” via active community engagement. The workforce of the council was highly diverse and, over the past five years, the proportion of employees from non-English speaking backgrounds had increased. Comprehensive data on employee demographics were available in the organization that showed that 20 percent of the total workforce was born overseas across 46 non-English speaking countries, with 12 percent of the permanent workforce speaking a language other than English at home.

The council was conscious that a national study revealed that its service area had a higher than average rate of racism, including within the workplace, even though, paradoxically, multiculturalism was valued in the area. As a result, the council had launched a local racism inquiry to further understand these research findings and to investigate race-based discrimination with the aim of developing a strategy to address it. An anti-racism strategy, underpinned by the value of “a fair go for all”, was developed to address issues at three different levels: within the community; when providing services; and within the organization. It was eager “to build an organization that promotes freedom from racism and race based discrimination” and to be “inclusive and reflective of the community”. The anti-racism strategy contained a number of strategies, such as employing individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds, providing training to employees on racism and discrimination, and the use of an audit tool to assess policies, practices and services to ensure these were free from potential race-based discrimination or inhibition to cultural diversity. The council placed a high value on cultural diversity, with its Diversity Team Leader stating:

We are probably a very informed council in terms of the importance of diversity both internally and externally. We have many processes in place that many local governments don’t have.
Consistent with this assertion, the council had a number of polices and action plans under the strategic pillars of equity, inclusion and human rights. However, most were predominantly aimed at achieving outcomes for the community serviced, such as achieving social justice among its culturally diverse constituents. While the cultural diversity of employees was acknowledged and valued, it was mostly viewed as a vehicle to deliver a better service to the community and to enable the council to achieve its business outcomes, which took precedence over the potential issues and needs of its culturally diverse workforce.

The council sought the views of the community in regard to experiences of racism, to factor these in when implementing the anti-racism strategy. Yet there was no evidence of attempts to gain insights from employees of their racism experiences. While the council conducted internal census surveys to capture data on employee demographics, including ethnicity, religion and languages spoken (attributes of cultural diversity), this did not capture any information on issues faced by culturally diverse employees nor of their general wellbeing in the workplace. Other than portraying the diversity profile of the council, the census survey seemed to serve little purpose. The council also had a number of committees to examine cultural diversity, such as the Anti-Racism Strategy Steering Committee, the Interfaith Council and the Intercultural Centre. The primary role of these committees was to address culture- and race-related issues prevalent in the community. For example, the Intercultural Centre supported development of English language skills, including learning a second language, and aimed to facilitate intercultural engagement and anti-racism initiatives within the community. However, the ambit of the committees did not extend to employee issues.

The cultural diversity of the workforce was relied upon for organizational outcomes, including service quality. The council implemented a language aid system that used employees who could converse in different languages to assist customers who communicated in languages other than English. Thus cultural diversity was regarded as a resource that enabled the council to provide a better service to its customers. The HR Manager, referring to the personal care and assistance service provided to the community, stated:

So sometimes there are language barriers. For example, where English is the second language, and there are cultural barriers … we try to cater to these. For
example, there has been an increase in Muslim employees who are being sent out [for services] because we have a large proportion of Muslim clients.

Overall, cultural diversity initiatives focused on delivering an inclusive service to the community. Nevertheless, mechanisms to address racism, unconscious bias, and equal employment opportunity were integrated into the council’s human resource processes. However, valuing cultural diversity in the workforce as an integral resource to deliver organizational objectives was an overriding factor.

When applying justice principles to the manner in which cultural diversity in the workforce was managed, the interventions appeared to be more in line with the Rawlsian principles of justice. That is, the council stressed principles of EEO and fair treatment without distinction. A differentiation that took into consideration culturally diverse employees was only made when there was an advantage that benefitted the overall organization. For example, cultural diversity within was valued from the perspective of its contribution to enhancing the services provided. A specific example is that the council paid a language allowance to employees conversant in a language other than English, so that the services of these individuals could be obtained within the language aide system. The council noted that this mechanism not only enhanced overall service quality, but also procured cost savings, thus benefitting the organization. Further, its recent increase in Muslim employees, due to the large population of Muslim clients, reflects Rawlsian principles where the employment of minority employees is justified, because it is advantageous to the overall organization in terms of upholding its service philosophy.

The other case study organization (22) was a public university that was significantly focused on cultural diversity. It had a comprehensive cultural diversity action plan aimed at developing cultural competency and removing barriers such as unconscious bias, so that culturally diverse staff could achieve their full potential. The scope of the plan addressed a variety of dimensions, such as first-generation migrants, accents, visible minorities and religious diversity. The university aspired to be an employer of choice with inclusive employment practices for culturally diverse individuals.

The university used an innovative mechanism to recruit culturally diverse individuals. This included a ‘diversity job bank’ that was set up to enable certain jobs to be filled by culturally
diverse individuals. The diversity job bank was linked to a network of employment service providers to assist managers to source suitable candidates from within the identified groups. This practice was adopted by the university to promote the recruitment of individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds considered as under-represented and disadvantaged in terms of employment outcomes. Religious differences were also considered under the university’s cultural diversity interventions: it endeavoured to support the careers of employees of the Islamic faith by providing a safe environment to practise their religion. The university had a cultural calendar depicting significant days across a diverse range of cultures and religions. One of the core elements of promoting and upholding diversity in this workplace was prioritizing capability building across the university, which was the hallmark of its diversity agenda. The Diversity Manager stated:

So how do you build a culture of diversity in a workplace where staff come from diverse backgrounds, migrants, Aboriginal people … gay and lesbian people, women, people with disabilities, etc.? So, we have done a lot of work in raising consciousness and capacity building.

One striking factor was that, with respect to raising consciousness and capacity building relevant to a culturally diverse workforce, the university involved CALD employees as well as the rest of the employee population, including its leadership. In terms of equipping employees from non-English speaking backgrounds to integrate into the workplace, English language training was provided. Equity and diversity training and anti-racism workshops were also in place to build cultural awareness among all employees. The university used a “cultural diversity and inclusive practice toolkit” to enhance cultural competence of staff to deal with culturally diverse colleagues as well as clients in a respectful and culturally sensitive manner.

One of the key initiatives under this action plan was workshops conducted under the banner of “courageous conversations about race”. These workshops provided an open forum for CALD staff to discuss race and privilege and to voice any concerns and issues, including any experiences of discrimination or threat to cultural safety. Ideas were also sought at these workshops regarding how to resolve issues and to make the workplace culture more inclusive. The university was mindful that the ambience of the workshop was safe and welcoming for individuals to talk about their personal experiences and concerns, including racism in the workplace. The Diversity Manager explained:
So, we have an affinity model for migrants. So, they gather and talk freely about racial issues, discrimination and how we can make things better, and we talk about what issues they want me to take to the executive.

In this way, critical issues in the workplace concerning culturally diverse employees were escalated to the level of the executive, to be addressed by the leadership. The university also used employee surveys to ascertain concerns about diversity and inclusion. A number of opportunities were made available to employees to voice their opinions, and such processes involved not only employees who were culturally diverse, but also others. There were a number of diversity and equity advisors within the university, who supported and assisted employees in matters pertaining to diversity and inclusion. The aim of the university through its diversity agenda was described as “building a workplace and a learning environment founded on inclusivity, respect, fairness and dignity”.

When considering the principles of organizational justice, this study recognizes organization 22 as committed to establishing equal opportunity in employment outcomes. The university also emphasized following the right procedures. For example, it was compulsory for members of recruitment panels to have diversity-related training. A code of ethics established the ethical principles and legal obligations required when implementing equal opportunity policies and practices, affirmative action, anti-discrimination and harassment.

Organization 09 was also committed to achieving equality and used the diversity audit tool to ensure due process regarding organizational initiatives. Thus distributive justice and procedural justice were visible in both organizations. However, when comparing the cultural diversity approaches of the two, the university upheld both informational and interpersonal justice, whereas the approach of the council in managing cultural diversity in the workforce did not indicate the presence of both. For example, employee voice was emphasized in the university’s approach, with employees encouraged to raise issues, express their ideas and suggest solutions. The university was committed to capacity building, enabling disadvantaged employees to build capacity and competence to enjoy positive workplace experiences similar to those in privileged positions. In contrast, the council did not provide opportunities for employee voice and the capability development of minority employees. For example, the census survey in the council was only for
the purpose of collecting demographic information and capability development focused on training employees on racism and discrimination in serving culturally diverse clients.

It is therefore argued in this study that the university’s approach was consistent with Sen’s justice and fairness model, unlike the council, which was more focused on leveraging business benefits via its minority, culturally diverse employees. Through its cultural diversity strategy, the university endeavoured to create fair and just employment outcomes for culturally diverse employees, especially through capability building.

7.3. Gender Equity in Organizations

There is little doubt that Australian women are more educated than ever before. The ABS (2016c) reports that, while the last decade has seen an increase in the proportion of people of both sexes studying, the growth among females has been higher than for males. It reports a significant increase in the participation of women in the labour force (almost doubling between 1961 and 2011), while there was a decline in the proportion of males during the same period (falling from 80 percent to 57 percent). Despite this significant growth, the labour participation rate of men remains higher (ABS 2016c), and women remain under-represented in the higher echelons of organizations, with less economic security (Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2016a; 2017a).

It is therefore questionable whether Australian organizations are creating an equal playing field for both men and women to ensure they have fair and equal access and opportunity in the sphere of employment. Are institutional structural barriers that create the so-called glass ceiling impeding the labour market outcomes of women? How focused are Australian organizations on structural, institutional and societal barriers concerning women that perpetuate ‘injustice’ in the workplace? Such questions revolve around the justice and fair treatment of women in the workplace. How organizations 10 and 23 approach the issue of gender diversity in their workplaces is discussed below.

Organization 10 in the public administration and safety sector is an iconic Australian establishment in the public sector, with a history of over 150 years. It has a strong Anglo-Australian masculine identity, and symbolizes bravery, accomplishment and patriotism. Becoming an inclusive organization and increasing female representation across all its levels have been key priorities.
These objectives are part of its culture change program for strategic reform; the development of more diversity within leadership and senior levels is a key priority. It acknowledged the lack of gender diversity, particularly within the hierarchies of its structure. Individual accountability for fair treatment and governance was emphasized as an imperative within its culture change program.

The organization was in the process of reviewing its values and behaviours with the intent of formulating a new set of values and behaviours to better reflect its refreshed cultural intent. A striking feature of this review process was the consultative approach, involving stakeholders and providing an opportunity for ‘voice’. It also conducted an ‘unfair behaviour’ survey annually, giving employees the opportunity to express any concerns. This process underscored the importance of safeguarding interests of individuals, including one’s dignity and resolving issues “fairly, quickly and consistently” as an echo of the principles of justice and fairness.

Investigation of whether there was an equal playing field for both genders drove its gender diversity strategy, as was evident from its statement that “the first step to solving the problem is to accept that there is a problem” in the strategic culture change program. As part of identifying and addressing the barriers faced by women, it had initiated a comprehensive review process to identify attitudinal issues. This involved several ‘independent’ reviews to assure an unbiased approach and therefore uphold procedural justice. Fairness and equality were at the forefront of these reviews; critical and indeed bold questions relevant to the treatment of women were prevalent. For example, questions such as “What are the attitudes towards women and how are they treated in the workplace?”, “What is the system of accountability?”, “What are the incidents of grave misconduct perpetrated or condoned by organizational members?”, and “What are the root causes of these behaviours?” were raised in the reviews. These questions revolved around the fairness of the processes, individual conduct and behaviour and the very culture of the organization. The process involved openly and candidly communicating and sharing relevant information with employees and stakeholders about organizational justice and fairness issues, thus upholding both procedural and informational justice. The organization’s commitment to transparency in regard to issues, challenges and successes achieved under its gender diversity strategy was further demonstrated by its open sharing of the audit findings of its gender diversity inquiry with employees and other stakeholders. Importantly, the findings of the reviews created opportunities to learn and to improve
the culture of the organization, demonstrating its commitment toward learning and capability development to combat issues concerning gender inequity in the workplace.

The establishment of a Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office strengthened its ability to address and eradicate issues of gender-based discrimination and harassment. One of the main functions of this office was to handle issues of sexual misconduct in a respectful and sensitive manner, and provide victim support. The responsibilities of the office extended to capacity building, through education, awareness and formulation of policies to ensure a safe and secure workplace for women.

The notion of social justice was revered within the organization, which was eager to meet the high expectations of behaviour expected by the Australian public. The organization was unwilling to compromise its credibility, and incidents concerning gender inequity were not perceived as trivial: “We should be surprised, angered, embarrassed and saddened – every time there is a revelation about unconscionable behaviour by a member of our community”.

One of the major hindrances that restricted the organization’s capacity to create a level playing field for women was the lack of flexible work options. The situation was aggravated by a sense of insecurity associated with career prospects in the event of accessing flexible work options. The organization acknowledged the need for flexibility, agility and awareness in order to attract and retain women. Furthermore, while the caring responsibilities of women were emphasized, it openly acknowledged that work-life balance was not an issue exclusive to women. The Gender Diversity Advisor stated:

… the way that roles have been historically structured is based on a full-time working model, so if people want to work flexibly or part-time, while we have made progress supporting more and more people to do that, it’s still not the structural norm in the organization … So particularly for women with families, but not exclusively for people with families, it can be difficult. We do see people leaving at a higher rate at that point of time when they are considering having a family or when they have got a young family …
This outlook created a sense of fairness regarding entitlement to work-life balance, particularly as the organization was willing to look at the individual lifestyles, needs and attributes of its wider employee base.

Overall, perceptions of a just, inclusive and fair-minded culture were integral to this organization. It acknowledged that gender diversity increased effectiveness and there was therefore a business justification for this. However, achieving gender equity and reflecting the Australian population in terms of demographics (i.e., gender) were the overarching factors of its gender diversity strategy.

Organization 23 is a private organization in the engineering, construction and infrastructure sector and established about three years earlier. It had set ambitious performance targets for itself. Even though current performance did not measure up to these targets, the HR Manager explained that its performance level was reasonable, considering the overall performance of the industry. While the culture of the organization was still evolving, the industry was masculine, with the HR Manager explaining:

> Construction is traditionally male-dominated, so putting aside the corporate offices, the operational areas are manual type of work … and engineering too is very traditionally a male-dominated industry. These types of roles do not reflect the general 50/50 [splits] of males and females …

This organization did not have mechanisms or intentions to increase the intake of females, nor to retain them, despite gender under-representation, mostly because recruiting women was a challenge across the industry.

Gender equity did not seem to be as much of a priority to it; it had a complacent approach toward identifying and addressing issues that women may face in the workplace that jeopardize their career progression and wellbeing. However, it did stress the importance of equal treatment of both men and women. For example, commenting on the recruitment and retention of engineers and agreeing that there was no specific initiative to attract women, the HR Manager remarked: “There is nothing … [no specific focus in recruitment efforts to increase the number of female recruits], we certainly acknowledge or celebrate if we can get one or two female apprentices on board”.

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In regard to support provided to staff, it was oblivious to the fact that women may require differential treatment to ensure equal opportunity in a real sense, since they were a minority in the industry as well. The HR Manager of organization 23 explained:

> We try to give as much as support to all our employees where possible … where we do have females … those people are celebrated and probably highlighted, but there is no policy that specifically gives them over and above what their male colleagues would receive.

This was in contrast to the approach of organization 10, which aspired to increase and retain female talent through numerous mechanisms, despite the ‘gendered’ identity of the organization. The leadership of organization 10 endorsed its diversity and inclusion strategy:

> … true inclusiveness does not mean treating everyone exactly the same way, all the time … affording equal opportunity to enable everyone to contribute to the organization may require different treatment based on individual circumstances and needs.

Overall, it approached gender diversity using a capability development approach that upheld distributive, procedural, informational and informational justice. Open and candid communication, dealing with issues in a respectful and sensitive manner, and differential treatment to address unique issues faced by women in the workforce, underpinned by justifications based on reason, emphasis on development and capability building of individuals and the organization, were salient features of its gender diversity strategy. This approach was consistent with Sen’s approach to social justice, emphasizing that capability development is fundamental to addressing inequalities.

In contrast, organization 23 was eager to ensure that it treated everyone equally irrespective of the innate differences of individuals. Hence it paid less attention to creating a just and fair workplace for women, instead accepting the status quo that women were difficult to recruit in the industry. It emphasized EEO more in line with distributive justice, and chose to disregard the fact that women were a minority in the industry – more in line with the Rawlsian principle of ‘veil of ignorance’ – and assumed that equal opportunity was available to both genders.
7.4. The Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap is a diversity-related issue prevalent in many Australian workplaces. Australia’s national gender pay gap was recently reported at 15.3 percent and existing across every industry and occupational group, with full-time average earnings of men higher than for women (Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2017c). Addressing inequity in pay is a critical issue that some organizations strive to address under the realm of diversity management.

Such disparity in pay directly relates to issues concerning the fair distribution of rewards, and this can be informed through distributive justice and equity theories. Distributive justice asks questions like: Does the reward reflect the effort that one has put in? Does it reflect what an individual contributes to the organization? When there is pay inequity between genders, those who receive lower levels of remuneration (women in this case) are likely to switch into a comparison mode, as explained in equity theory (Adams 1965), and are likely to feel that there is a lack of fair and just distribution in rewards. Under this theory, employees compare the ratios of their contribution and the output against others to determine whether there is inequality in terms of what they have gained from their contribution (Adams 1965). In addition to distributive justice, gender pay inequity has elements that compromise procedural justice. For example, are procedures determining the reward decisions applied consistently? Are they free of bias? Are ethical and moral standards embedded in the procedures? Are these procedures transparent? These are some of the issues that female employees may contemplate when they experience pay inequity. The responses of two organizations (15 and 20) in relation to the issue of gender pay inequity were examined and the findings are presented here.

Organization 15 in the manufacturing sector considered achieving gender pay equity as an initiative that supported its efforts to increase female participation in the industry. It was in an industry perceived as male-dominated and the key occupational group where gender balance was to be established was engineering, an occupation that is male-dominated. According to the HR Manager, the caring roles of female employees, which prevents them from having uninterrupted careers, is one of the main causes of the gender pay inequity. The HR Manager further explained:
You know, it is widely known that females take maternity leave … it is one of the big contributors to causing them to have a reduced pay against male counterparts … we have some really good data that backs us up.

To address the gender pay gap, the organization introduced a system where changes were made to the process of determining annual increments. Under this new initiative, female employees who were on maternity leave were given a merit increment based on their performance during the 12 months prior to going on leave. This process was explained by the HR Manager:

This year for the first time, we provided a merit increase to females who were on maternity leave. So, they were renumerated based on their past twelve months ... it [the increment] was reflective of their performance … even though they weren’t given any amounts of money ... they were informed, of their new salary package based on their previous 12 months’ performance, then they will be on that package when they return to work.

The organization then provided another increment if employees took maternity leave for an additional year, giving an average merit increment, to take effect once the employee returned to work. The Human Resources Manager stated:

Now if they go on two years’ leave they get another letter in 12 months’ time … because they weren’t here for 12 months, here is their average merit amount, and will give them 3 percent straight away.

These interventions adopted to address the gender pay inequity can be explained through the principles of distributive and procedural justice, as they involved the fair distribution of rewards via an appropriate procedure. However, the data did not indicate transparency and whether information relating to the gender pay gap was communicated to all employees or other stakeholders, other than informing those who were on maternity leave regarding the changes to remuneration. Further, the organization was focused on addressing disparities that might arise in the future, rather than eliminating the disparities that were already there.

It was also revealed that one of the primary reasons that prompted this organization to address the gender pay gap was the need to retain female engineers, who were currently on maternity
leave. Thus, according to social exchange theory, such actions may support the motives of individuals to evaluate the justice of what they receive and correspondingly react through reciprocal behaviour. In this instance, the organization would have expected employees to respond by returning to work post-maternity leave as a gesture of reciprocity.

The other organization (20) in the information media and telecommunications sector is a large-scale company with over 30,000 employees. It considered addressing gender pay inequity a strategic priority within its strategic imperative to create a culture that promotes gender equality. It was recognized for its efforts in addressing gender pay inequity and was vigilant in ensuring no gender bias in recruitment and selection, performance management, and remuneration decisions. It had adopted a strong governance approach in its remuneration decision-making, including top management involvement, and reporting on adherence to policies. Its Diversity Council, which was made up of senior leaders, was responsible for ensuring gender pay equity.

Remuneration data were rigorously analysed by the organization to identify possible disparities in pay that could be explained through performance issues, seniority or the value attached to the job. They claimed to look at remuneration at the individual level to ensure that gender pay inequities were addressed to significantly reduce pay gaps. A separate budget was allocated to make adjustments to remuneration in the event that a disparity existed between male and female employees. Further, there was acknowledgement, both to external stakeholders and employees, of the existence of a gender pay gap and the organization’s commitment to achieve gender pay equity. For example, the CEO was an equal pay ambassador supporting WGEA’s national pay equity campaign.

It also considered addressing gender pay inequity in several ways beyond fixing disparities in salaries. Not only the career breaks that women often took to meet their caring roles, but issues such as bias in the recruitment process, performance management and the promotional process were recognized as possible causes of the gender pay gap. Thus awareness-raising and education across all levels of the organization, working closely with recruiters to ensure the selection process was bias free, introducing more flexibility in jobs and promoting non-traditional technical and engineering careers to schoolgirls and female university students were all part of the strategy to address the gender pay gap in the long term. Addressing the gender pay gap was more than a
gender-related issue, it was about creating an inclusive and fair workplace. It believed that a culture of fairness helped attract, retain and engage best-in-class talent, regardless of gender.

When comparing how these two organizations dealt with the issue of gender pay inequity, it is evident that organization 20 took a more holistic view and was willing to consider issues such as bias at the recruitment and selection stage, in performance management, and in career progression decisions. In contrast, organization 15 appeared to exercise more caution and mostly attributed such gender inequity to the career breaks taken by women. Organization 15, through a managerial decision, had implemented changes to the remuneration mechanism to prevent future disparities in pay between the genders, while organization 20 involved a wide group of stakeholders in open discussions on gender pay inequity, affording a voice to employees and other stakeholders. Notably, information regarding the issue of gender pay inequity appeared to be shared more widely by organization 20. It also took a more sustainable approach to resolving gender pay inequity, endeavouring to eliminate the inequities that already existed as well as to minimize inequities occurring in the future. At the same time, it endeavoured to build capabilities across the organization through awareness and education to eliminate gender pay inequity. Thus, the approach adopted by organization 20 aligns with Sen’s principles of justice, whereas the approach of organization 15 was narrower in scope, where the benefits to the organization of retaining female employees were prioritized, which fits better with the Rawlsian model of justice. Organization 15 fell short of meeting justice and fairness according to Sen’s approach, which is to involve wider stakeholders, encourage employee voice and build capabilities to address an issue in a more sustainable sense.

7.5. The Ageing Workforce

As in other developed countries, Australia has an ageing population which has ramifications for the demand for labor and national economic wellbeing (ABS 2015c). A recent global-level study identifies three labor market themes that effectively support older workers: encouraging later retirement; improving employability; and reducing employment barriers (PwC Australia 2016). This study highlights flexible work arrangements and phased retirement policies as the main mechanisms adopted by Australian organizations to address the issue of an ageing workforce. However, age discrimination in the workplace is a significant concern in Australia, as is evident
from the number of complaints under the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* in the recent past (Australian Human Rights Commission 2015). This section therefore discusses how two organizations (12 and 08) responded to issues relating to their own ageing workforce.

Organization 12 in the health care and social assistance sector provided health care, aged care and community care services. Its provision of “compassionate care” for those in need was embedded in its service philosophy, stemming from its historic background based on a Catholic ethos. EEO was regarded not only as a legislative requirement, but also as part of its culture, which helped provide the best possible service and also work environment that embedded respect, dignity and courtesy. It had an ageing workforce, with most of its employees in the mature-aged brackets; the average age was 45 years.

A program appropriately titled “stepping-stones” was the key initiative that engaged its mature-aged employees. The aim was “to support managers and mature-aged employees in having conversations to ensure they experienced a positive and productive career and transition to retirement”. The initiative involved giving employees the choice of phased retirement (providing the organization with the opportunity to capitalize on the experience and knowledge of older employees), offering employees flexible options, and enabling “constructive conversations” with mature-aged staff so that they could make informed career and financial decisions. According to the People and Culture Director, “stepping-stones” was used in conjunction with policies concerning flexible work options. The different needs and lifestyles of mature employees were taken into account when engaging with them through the program, leading to a great amount of flexibility and individual choice for employees. This Director emphasized that the organization did not discriminate, but instead recognized the needs of individuals both young and old. Even though the program was designed for older employees, the organization adopted a non-rigid approach. Thus, commenting on the individualistic approach and the flexibility of the program, the Director explained:

> Sometimes in your career, whether it is to have a gap year and travel, or whether it is to have children, or whether you are mature-aged and you want to look after your grandchildren, or whether you are mature-aged and you have a caravan and you want to go around Australia [you may aspire for a career break]. We call it
‘step out and about’. You may want to step up to a senior role [‘step up’] and you might want to ‘step down’ for a period of time and not forever. So around that model are all the different options that you can do while working at … [organization 12].

This humane approach adopted in implementing the program was salient, and signified the organization’s belief that the success of diversity initiatives of this nature was dependent on the ‘safe culture’ perceived by employees, openness and transparency in communicating, value placed on employees, and the consistency in implementing the policy, which are all elements of justice and fairness. The Director said:

… to have that discussion [regarding options under the stepping-stones program], we provide a safe platform, so that people are safe to say I want to have 12 months off, and why wouldn’t we give them 12 months off? We need them back … and also consistency matters.

The program embedded capability development dependent on the career and lifestyle choices made by employees. If a choice was made to ‘step up’, where a mature-aged employee sought more responsibility and career progression, appropriate capability development through programs such as succession planning, a middle-managers program and executive leadership program were offered to develop their capabilities aligned with their career choice.

This approach towards the older workers in the workplace was instrumental in addressing potential conflicts and disputes between different generations of employees and better facilitated knowledge transfers. Thus, according to this Director:

Because you got young grads, you got older nurses, with more experience working together … and you know nurses have a culture of being bullies too. We deal with it if it comes up, but it is not a semantic issue … It is also addressed in our stepping-stones program. There is knowledge transfer happening from some of our more experienced workers to young grads, there is mentoring relationships happening, and they [older employees] may even stay on after they have left the organization, in a voluntary capacity and to mentor our younger grads [referred to as ‘step forward’].
The other organization (08) is a supplier of building materials in the wholesale trade sector. Established over a century ago, the business has remained in one family throughout its operations. ‘People’ were central to the success of the business, underpinned by the values of “Happiness, Respect, Curiosity, Belonging, Honesty and Achievement”. Its workforce comprised over 60 percent mature-aged employees. The HR Manager stated: “You know people have given a lot of years to our business, so it not unusual for someone to start at our business when 20 and still be there at 60”. However, while the organization was appreciative of the longevity of the service rendered by its mature-aged workforce, concerns were raised about when many of the physically demanding tasks became difficult and how risks of fatigue and injuries increased as employees aged. The type of operations involved a considerable amount of manual work that required physical strength and stamina. Thus, the organization was concerned about deploying older people in most roles, mainly due to ‘risk of injury’. For example, referring to the somewhat “reluctant attitude” to assign older employees to certain roles, the HR Manager stated:

We would prefer not to, because of injuries, to have an older person, say over 50, drive a delivery truck because they have to hand-unload, so that is very physical and it increases the risk of injury. Now that does not mean that a young person cannot get hurt. But based on statistics, our older drivers are likely to have a greater number of injuries than a younger driver.

Yet the risk of injury issue did not seem to be a major concern if employees were highly experienced in the role, as was evident from the following statement from the HR Manager:

So I would prefer not to employ a 60-year-old man or woman in the timber yard. If they have been doing it all their life, that’s a little bit different, they are quite conditioned.

Therefore, when it came to recruitment, ‘differential treatment’ applied to individuals depending on which age bracket they fell into, raising issues of equal distribution of access to opportunities. However, the organization still endeavoured to maintain its humane approach, justifying this differential treatment based on the safety of older employees rather than on economic reasons such as lower levels of productivity due to age, although whether mature-aged cohorts would perceive this approach as ‘fair and just’ remained questionable.
The organization was not in favour of the extended retirement age introduced by the government, perceiving it as a burden in an economic sense as well as ‘unkind’ for employees, considering the physical burden on their ageing bodies. The HR Manager suggested that the policy was unfair to the organization as well, remarking:

So when the government says that you can work up to 70, or whatever, I look at our industry and go ‘that’s a real unkind thing to do’. You are forced to pay people who work physically when they can’t work.

This organization was often in a dilemma when productivity levels were dropping due to ageing employees in physically demanding roles, and admitted that conversations regarding retirement with long-standing employees were often difficult. It had attempted to handle such issues in a sensitive and caring manner, by constructively communicating with individual employees. The HR Manager explained:

It is a very difficult situation … for example, at the moment I have someone in one of our branches who is 68 … wants to work, but his body is not as flexible. We are worried that he is going to be hurt. What I have started to do is to talk to him about preparing for retirement and perhaps about reducing some hours. So we have only had one conversation, and will go back in a couple of months, and will see how he is feeling and whether he has thought about it, etc. So, it is about planting the seed, to get him to reduce some hours, so at least he gives his body a rest.

A mixture of concern for employee wellbeing and economic outcomes for the firm appeared to guide its approach towards older workers. Such an approach could potentially raise doubts as to whether the action was ‘fair’, because the organization was not actively looking at options such as reasonable adjustments to the work environment, building employee capabilities through education and awareness on issues such as employee safety and health, and making changes to the processes. Further, there was no streamlined effort to offer employees a choice, such as flexibility, alternative career options or retraining.

The absence of employee input was another striking factor that could affect the justice and fairness climate here. For example, did the firm’s approach prompt mature-aged employees to endure
physical strain and continue working without reporting injuries? Was it treating its mature-aged employees in a sensitive, respectful and sincere manner, or did it instead reflect dehumanization of the workplace? Such questions in relation to employee wellbeing and social justice need to be better considered in a realm where most Australian organizations bind themselves to economic rationales at the expense of justice and fairness. The approach of this case study organization could raise doubts about its genuine commitment to its values revolving around ‘people’; thus, it could adversely affect perceptions of justice in the workplace.

Organizations 12 and 08 had more than 50 percent mature-aged employees in their workforce, reflecting the ageing population and prolonged working life due to government policy on retirement age. While both demonstrated a genuine concern for their employees, organization 12 proactively addressed issues via a robust process that engaged its ageing workforce and was coupled with choice, capability building and the opportunity for employee voice – all key attributes of the Senian notion of justice.

7.6. LGBTI Employees

The Australian Human Rights Commission (2014) reports that a significant number of LGBTI employees are subject to harassment, bullying and discrimination and are targets of homophobic behaviours, depriving them of the enjoyment of just and fair employment opportunities and favourable work conditions. It is estimated that around 11 percent of the population is of diverse sexual orientation, although these numbers may be inaccurate because some individuals are reluctant to disclose their sexual identity due to the fear of violence, harassment, bullying and stigma (Australian Human Rights Commission 2014). Most LGBTI individuals face numerous challenges within the community as well as in the workplace, which adversely affects their social and economic wellbeing as well as mental and physical health (Australian Human Rights Commission 2014). The LGBTI community continues to be a vulnerable group in society, often deprived of the rights that their heterosexual counterparts inherently enjoy. Thus, whether Australian organizations do step forward to secure the equality and fairness that LGBTI individuals have the right to enjoy along with other society members is a thought-provoking question. How two organizations (13 and 04) responded to LGBTI employees in the workplace is examined and presented in this section.
Organization 13 is a private not-for-profit in the health care and social assistance sector, providing community health services to a highly diverse population. Its main objective is to provide services to individuals at risk of poor health and wellbeing, with a view to reducing health inequities. The very nature of the services, the clientele serviced and the workforce reflected heterogeneity. Its Access and Equity Policy, which was the framework that laid down the principles relevant to an accessible service and workplace, recognized several vulnerable groups that were subject to social exclusion and increased risk of poor health. In this regard, the LGBTI community qualified as a vulnerable group in the community. The organizational responsiveness to the needs and issues of the LGBTI community was not restricted to its service philosophy, but extended to the way it dealt internally with members of staff who identified as belonging to sexual minorities.

The organization was committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment to both LGBTI clients and staff, including treating them with dignity and respect. In this regard, the LGBTI policy referred to “cultural safety”, which implied being respectful of a person’s culture, identity and beliefs, which are potential triggers for discrimination. The organization was conscious that LGBTI individuals could experience a lack of cultural safety due to the incidence of homophobic or transphobic remarks, breaches of confidentiality regarding one’s sexual orientation and gender identity, assumptions as to one’s gender identity and sexual orientation prior to disclosure and the stereotyping of sexual minorities. It was eager to take appropriate action to address such incidents, which included setting up a special committee to report such incidents experienced by staff, as well as volunteers and clients.

The use of inclusive language when communicating with LGBTI individuals was important to the organization, and included considering the sensitive nature of questions around one’s gender and sexual identity. Its employees received training to increase awareness of such sensitivities and to use appropriate questions and inclusive language when communicating with LGBTI individuals. The HR Manager provided an example of efforts towards establishing equality for the LGBTI community in the workplace, including use of inclusive language:

When I did the recent gender equality report it was interesting that we had indicated that two primary caregivers who were male … And they [reporting authority] went ‘what?’ That is how diverse we are. So that’s a very rare situation that some workplaces would never have … so we again wanted to review our
policy to make sure that it [the report] does not record the sex … Now we do not refer to paternity leave, maternity leave or adoption leave. We try to use a more inclusive word. So, we call it parental leave and primary and non-primary caregiver [without indicating the sex], so we try to move away from that labelling situation.

It also conducted annual inclusive practice audits which included staff feedback surveys, giving LGBTI employees an opportunity to air their views and concerns. The HR Manager explained that the organization’s annual employee survey contained a number of questions around “people’s safety and perception of inclusiveness and respect”. These mechanisms were channels of communication that enabled the organization to gauge the perspectives of LGBTI employees as well as the overall workforce, about the existence of any hostile issues that undermined the wellbeing of LGBTI employees. It also conducted a Rainbow Tick self-assessment gap analysis to assess how inclusive the practices were toward the LGBTI community and to identify areas for improvement.

There was an employee-led LGBTI working committee that was one of the key employee network and affinity groups in the organization. This group assisted the Quality Manager in the inclusive practice audits and in making recommendations to improve LGBTI inclusivity relevant to the work environment as well as the provision of services to the community. The organization was transparent with regard to the gaps identified through these audits, as well as the recommendations made and the action taken to address these recommendations. A reporting mechanism was in place to communicate such information to employees and other stakeholders through the annual Quality Care Report.

The LGBTI working committee was a progressive employee group, with the accountability and empowerment to develop and enhance a conducive work environment for LGBTI employees. This mechanism provided an opportunity for employees to voice their views and encouraged them to implement initiatives to address areas that concerned them. The HR Manager positively described how the committee spearheaded the implementation of policies and practices to address LGBTI issues through its involvement in the Rainbow Tick accreditation:
… that group [LGBTI working committee] was really responsible for ensuring that we were on track to undergo the recent accreditation … to receive our Rainbow Tick. So, they did a lot of work around policy and procedures and in terms of putting together internal training and sourcing external training in terms of more intensive workshops … and looking at all the intake forms as well as how we record information, to ensure that these were inclusive [language used for purposes of obtaining and recording employee information].

The organization had a written LGBTI-inclusive policy, separate from the overall inclusivity and diversity policy, which signified the importance of recognizing LGBTI individuals as a distinct category for which a conducive work environment was also required. The HR Manager commented that one reason for having a distinct LGBTI inclusivity policy was to “promote” the high level of commitment of the organization towards the LGBTI community.

The organization was involved in a number of programs concerning LGBTI youth in the community. One such program was ‘YGlam’, an initiative where the organization worked closely with local schools on theatre production, involving students and the school community to support youth who identify themselves as LGBTI, in order to deal with issues concerning sexuality and diversity. The HR Manager commented that the organization was eager to expand such community initiatives concerning societal issues relevant to the LGBTI community while also looking after the welfare of its large base of employees who identified as LGBTI. Helping the LGBTI community cope with issues relevant to their sexual identity, providing an inclusive service to LGBTI clients, and ensuring fair treatment and equal opportunity for LGBTI employees were all of equal importance and priority. Thus the HR Manager stated:

> It is that question of whether the chicken came first or whether the egg came first … so it is getting out there and saying to that community, whether they are employees, clients or members of the community, that we are inclusive, we are diverse and that we respect how you choose and what you choose … and treat you with respect regardless.

Additional examples of its commitment to recognizing and respecting the LGBTI community included celebration of Purple Day and participation in the Midsumma Festival. The involvement
of staff and volunteers in these events was of significant importance to the organization, and it encouraged not only staff who identified as LGBTI but also others to get involved in these events to inculcate the virtues of respect and inclusivity in the workplace.

The other organization (04) is a multinational business in the grocery, liquor and tobacco product wholesaling industry, engaged in the marketing and distribution of a highly regulated product. Its HR Manager stated that diversity of thought was encouraged in the organization, and was of the view that the very nature of the industry attracted individuals who appreciated diversity:

You need to have an open mind that it is a legal product, and that adults have the ability to make choices … So, my personal view is that we do encourage diversity and we do attract diversity.

Yet even though this organization was open-minded toward diversity, it appeared to lack specific focus or support in relation to the LGBTI community. For example, while there was a policy and an ally group for LGBTI individuals in the organization’s head office in the UK, there had been no attempt to replicate such practices in Australia. Referring to the level of acceptance of LGBTI employees, the HR Manager stated: “I would say that in my opinion, people who fall into gay and lesbian categories are certainly accepted”.

Despite this opinion, the organization did not gauge the views of LGBTI employees or the workforce in general with regard to the possible issues faced by the LGBTI employees, nor how inclusive it was toward the LGBTI community. While it was not hostile towards that community, it appeared to be oblivious to the potential issues that confront this group in society as well as in the workplace. It adopted an approach that was more likely to be perceived as complacent, where it was assumed that LGBTI employees received fair and equal treatment in the workplace.

While it mainly focused on gender in its diversity strategy, and expressed the intention to focus on disability and indigenous employees in the future, a focus on LGBTI employees did not seem to be within the purview of its future direction. It appeared to be driven by the belief that it was already inclusive toward LGBTI employees. Yet it lacked mechanisms to gauge employee opinions, including the perceptions of LGBTI employees as well as the general workforce to substantiate these views. In addition, the lack of specific mention of this category as a dimension
of diversity and the non-replication of LGBTI-inclusive practices that were present at the head office level compromised its justice and fairness approach toward LGBTI employees.

When comparing the approaches adopted by these two organizations (13 and 04), one key difference was that organization 13 recognized and acknowledged LGBTI individuals as a vulnerable group susceptible to challenges such as discrimination, isolation and harassment, while organization 04 assumed that the LGBTI employees did not face any issues that compromised their wellbeing in the workplace. Thus, organization 13 was more committed to upholding the respect and dignity of LGBTI employees, for which it had proactively implemented a number of mechanisms driven by the objective of achieving social justice and equal treatment. For this purpose, it proactively considered its processes and practices, with changes implemented as necessary. In reviewing these processes and practices, it considered the perspectives of employees, including LGBTI individuals, as well as management, thus providing the opportunity for ‘employee voice’.

Inclusive language was deemed critical in organization 13, recognizing that the use of more mainstream language could unfairly exclude and be disrespectful and insensitive toward LGBTI individuals. Capability development through designing and implementing appropriate training to inculcate and sustain a LGBTI-inclusive workplace was also present. While it acknowledged that being an LGBTI-inclusive organization would enable it to expand and provide a better service to LGBTI clients, the LGBTI inclusivity within the workforce appeared to be important to it and independent of achieving business objectives relevant to its services through an LGBTI-inclusive culture.

In contrast, organization 04 took a more complacent approach with no acknowledgement that the LGBTI community could face barriers and challenges within the workplace and in the community that could impede fair and just societal- and workplace-related experiences. This unworried and oblivious attitude toward LGBTI employees and the non-recognition of the LGBTI community as a disadvantaged group in society could potentially create a sense of injustice toward LGBTI employees.

Organization 13 afforded fairer opportunities to potential recruits and employees who identified themselves as LGBTI, and therefore better met the requirements of distributive justice. The well-
documented procedures and policies that the organization consistently reviewed indicated that procedural justice was met when dealing with its LGBTI employees. Another striking feature was the emphasis placed on the use of inclusive language, to ensure that LGBTI employees felt included, comfortable and respected. Thus upholding interpersonal justice by sharing information openly and transparently, and upholding a process where employees were given the opportunity to express their views and concerns, showed commitment to informational justice. The emphasis on capability development through creating awareness across the organization about the needs and concerns of the LGBTI community confirmed its eagerness to develop the capabilities of employees (LGBTI employees and others) to address the issues faced by the LGBTI community. Giving ample opportunity for employee voice and actively involving those who were affected and vulnerable, including empowering and encouraging them to take action to address the inequities and challenges they faced, indicated that this organization had adopted a social justice approach through capability development, as advocated by Sen.

7.7. Indigenous Employees

Economic development of the indigenous community is a national priority to help close the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians (DPC 2017). The Federal Government’s recent target has been to halve that gap by 2018 (DPC 2017). Yet this target is proving elusive, with indigenous employment rates having significantly declined from 53.8 percent to 47.5 percent between 2008 and 2013, compared to a minimal decline of 73.4 percent to 72.1 percent for all Australians (DPC 2016). Further declines in employment of indigenous Australians have proven likely, as revealed by the latest National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey which cites an indigenous employment rate of 46 percent in 2015 (ABS 2016b). The pivotal role of employers in finding solutions to this issue, including lack of progress in achieving the ambitious target set under the initiative, cannot be underestimated. This section therefore presents the commitment and efforts made by two organizations (03 and 06) in the realm of indigenous employment.

Organization 03 is in the transport, postal and warehousing sector, with an employee base of over 33,000. It has focused on building a diverse and inclusive workforce through attracting and retaining talent from within the communities it serves. The overarching objective its diversity strategy was to
embed a diverse and inclusive high-performing culture that met all EEO obligations. Indigenous Australians were a key dimension of the strategyn. As one of the largest and most prominent corporation in Australia, the organization acknowledged its vested responsibility to help address the disparities and disadvantages faced by indigenous Australians in contemporary society.

The organization boasted a long history – spanning over 200 years – of its association with indigenous Australians. During the past 25 years, its commitment toward improving the economic and social outcomes of indigenous Australians has been formalized and streamlined by creating meaningful employment opportunities and contributing to the development and wellbeing of indigenous Australians. This also included a RAP focused on creating a better future for indigenous Australians, so they can avail themselves of equal opportunities to participate and enjoy the benefits of all Australians. In pursuance of this objective, the organization has endeavoured to provide sustainable employment opportunities, including becoming an employer of choice for indigenous employees. It publicly acknowledged its motive to be part of the indigenous communities by providing services, particularly to indigenous populations located in remote Australia, and by recognizing and respecting the culture and status of the First Australians.

Referring to its RAP, the Head of Diversity and Inclusion emphasized the importance of improving the representation of indigenous employees in the workforce:

A big portion of our Reconciliation Action Plan is to build up our representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees … We were declining in our Aboriginal and Torres Islander representation. We felt that that was not good enough … and we as an organization decided that we should be having parity in terms of the representation of that population which is 2.5percent.

Recognizing that indigenous Australians do not have equal access to employment opportunities, the organization used various mechanisms to create parity in terms of access to recruitment. For example, the recruitment webpage provided comprehensive information regarding indigenous employment opportunities, including a facility to register for job opportunities. The Head of Diversity and Inclusion explained that the mainstream recruitment advertisements stated that the organization was “for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment” and that, “Yes, we certainly do promote that”. Indigenous Employment Consultants were available across Australia
to support indigenous recruits by providing necessary information and assistance throughout the recruitment process. These consultants were easily accessible with their contact details available on the recruitment website. Noting that the recruitment panels include these Indigenous Employment Consultants, the Head of Diversity and Inclusion explained the broad scope of their involvement to ensure fair and equal opportunity for indigenous Australians to progress through the recruitment and selection process:

It is not only for the interviews … you know the main thing for us is to educate the recruitment managers to ensure that they are aware of some of the cultural differences and so forth …

In consideration of the cultural sensitivities and the entrenched disadvantages many indigenous Australians experience in the sphere of employment, the organization used the expertise of its Indigenous Employment Consultants in its attempts to create fair and equal opportunities for indigenous candidates to join it.

In its RAP, creating increased awareness of indigenous values, culture and heritage among the workforce, and acknowledging and understanding the unique needs of indigenous communities and employees were key imperatives. As part of its demonstration of respect toward indigenous culture and heritage, the organization included statements and visuals on the recruitment webpage, as well in all its corporate and retail outlets that acknowledged the indigenous communities as traditional owners of the land. Celebration of indigenous cultural events in the workplace, including employee participation in these events such as Reconciliation Week, was also encouraged.

Such initiatives facilitated the successful recruitment as well as retention of indigenous employees through engaging them, helping support the organization to reach its target of achieving equality of indigenous employees in the workforce. Indigenous representation in its workforce was at 1.7 percent at the time of this study; the target was 2.5 percent. One indigenous employee, describing organization commitment toward creating a fair and just work environment for indigenous employees, endorsed its belief in respectful treatment toward all individuals and its reciprocal effects:

I have always felt extremely supported … I have never come across any discrimination and believe that if you treat everyone around you with respect,
people will treat you with the same level of respect, regardless of whether they are your supervisor, colleague or the public.

It created a sense of justice and fairness to indigenous employees and the wider indigenous community by giving employees the opportunity to ‘voice’ their opinions and concerns. For example, it engaged in consultations with indigenous employees while developing its RAP, through a series of forums as well as an online facility that was set up to obtain feedback and input during its formulation. It also considered the input of senior management, other employees and the broader community of stakeholders when developing this RAP. This consultative process displayed transparency and the consideration of the wellbeing of a range of stakeholders likely to be impacted directly or indirectly by the RAP initiatives. Indigenous employees had an opportunity to air their views and concerns, including through employee surveys. These enabled the organization to measure the ‘pulse’ of indigenous employees at different stages of the employment cycle, providing an opportunity to gauge how these employees perceived its efforts to achieve justice and fairness.

Thus joiner and exit surveys, employee engagement surveys, the RAP impact survey and the EEO survey enabled indigenous employees to express their perceptions of whether they received equal and fair treatment. Such surveys also helped the organization identify barriers that compromised career progression and the engagement of indigenous employees; the RAP impact survey also measured general employee attitude toward indigenous initiatives. The organization reported key findings from the surveys through a transparent process to employees as well as to high-level external forums, such as Reconciliation Australia and the Federal Parliament.

Concerned that indigenous employees might feel isolated and inhibited in the workplace due to their ingrained cultural backgrounds and beliefs, relocation (for employment purposes) and social exclusion in the workplace, it set up an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee network. This forum enabled indigenous employees to support each other, network, uphold collegiality and collectively raise issues with management that were applicable to them. A quarterly indigenous newsletter also provided indigenous employees with access to information that was relevant and important to them as a distinct community, and with a channel to voice their views and opinions. This mechanism ensured that indigenous employees had a medium to access and share information relevant to them, which would not have been possible through organizational mainstream internal
communication channels that catered more to stereotypical employees. Such initiatives confirmed that it valued and acknowledged that distinct issues may be of importance to its indigenous employees.

In line with this, and in consideration of the disadvantages often faced by indigenous Australians in the spheres of education and employment, it also provided internships and postgraduate scholarships to enhance indigenous graduates’ skills and capabilities to be successful in the job market. A school-based traineeship program was available for indigenous students where they received on-the-job training and mentoring by both indigenous and non-indigenous employees. Accredited traineeships were offered to indigenous adults who gained employment upon completion of a traineeship. A variety of similar initiatives was implemented, such as digital education, literacy programs, sponsoring sports, arts and cultural programs, and community inclusion projects.

Indigenous employees also had specific individual development plans to ensure their professional development and career progression. One such program was Establish Emerging Leader, which was implemented to identify and develop future supervisors and managers from among existing indigenous employees. In addition to building individual capabilities of indigenous employees to equip them to improve their status in employment and educational levels, the organization believed that capability development of the managerial and supervisory staff and the general employee population was critical in creating an inclusive workplace for indigenous employees. To achieve this objective, there were conducted cultural awareness programs for employees. All staff working directly with indigenous employees received appropriate training and awareness of indigenous culture, so that they communicated and conducted themselves in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner. More experienced indigenous staff were trained to be mentors of newly recruited indigenous employees, in recognition that these new starters generally needed more support and encouragement to adjust to the working environment due to their cultural beliefs, social status, isolation from the community and other hardships often encountered. Employees were encouraged to participate in community partnership programs to facilitate awareness of indigenous cultures and values. It was also mandatory for the senior leadership team to visit Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities to develop a greater appreciation and awareness of indigenous culture.
The building of the capabilities of indigenous employees as well as of the organization so that indigenous employees were on a level playing field regarding employment outcomes was integral. Providing indigenous communities with a ‘voice’ and treating them with respect and sensitivity were key aspects of the indigenous employment strategy. These features embed Sen’s notion of social justice, denoting capability building, providing a voice and human development. Ensuring equal access to employment through differentiating indigenous candidates from others in the recruitment and career progression process is indicative of distributive justice. Adherence to robust, transparent and mandated procedures in relation to indigenous recruitment, career progression, employee engagement, and the reporting process of the progress of the indigenous employment strategy, demonstrated commitment to the principles of procedural justice. The emphasis on treating indigenous Australians with respect and sensitivity and recognizing their culture and status as First Australians were aspects of interpersonal justice. Lastly, encouraging open communication in a trustworthy manner, where indigenous employees were given the opportunity to raise issues that were important to them, demonstrated commitment toward informational justice regarding indigenous employees.

The other organization (06) is a large-scale retail business employing approximately 100,000 employees across Australia. It has been in existence for over 100 years and has a strong presence and reputation among Australian households for a diverse range of everyday products. Similar to organization 03, it considered indigenous Australians a priority group under its diversity strategy. Its vision under its indigenous strategy consisted of several elements: to represent the communities served; to gain a deeper understanding of the indigenous culture and heritage; and to promote mutual respect among these communities. It targeted three areas: employment opportunities and career progression for indigenous Australians; building indigenous supplier relationships; and forming deeper connections with the indigenous community to better understand their needs and aspirations. As part of its initiative to support social causes, it participated in a campaign that helped provide access to sporting equipment to young indigenous Australians in remote communities.

The group of companies that it was part of had a RAP that contained a number of action items, such as indigenous education, employment and recruitment targets. This RAP highlighted commitment toward equal treatment for indigenous recruits. It also outlined the importance of
creating awareness about the objectives and initiatives within the RAP among the group’s employees. At key group events, such as annual general meetings and group leadership conferences, acknowledgement of indigenous heritage formed part of the proceedings.

Yet even though the RAP specified a number of initiatives for indigenous communities, there appeared to be a lack of specific actions and accountability to create a true sense of justice and fairness to indigenous employees and the community. The initiatives in the RAP seemed to be negligible, particularly for a large-scale entity operating across Australia. This study revealed that individual accountability of the organization, along with a robust action plan underpinned by streamlined processes, would better reflect a sincere sense of commitment to address societal issues faced by indigenous Australians, including indigenous job applicants, employees and communities. The organization also lacked a robust recruitment and career progression process for indigenous employees when compared with organization 03. For example, there was no evidence of specialized support provided to indigenous candidates through the recruitment and selection process to cater to their needs. Although at a group level the RAP did consider indigenous employment and equal opportunity as key priorities, and the organization had consequently set an individual target in terms of indigenous employee numbers that was separate from the overall group target set under the RAP. The Diversity Manager stated that the goal was to have 3 percent of indigenous staff by 2020.

Achieving this indigenous employee target was the main outcome expected at group level, as expressed by the group’s ultimate objective within the RAP: “We will know that we have succeeded when we have a workplace that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve”. The overall diversity and inclusion strategy stated that the diverse and inclusive team, which represented the community it served, enabled the entity to “provide an environment where all employees feel genuinely included and valued … where differences are valued and harnessed to achieve the common objective of positive business outcomes”. The Diversity Manager highlighted that representing the disadvantaged communities, including indigenous Australians within the workforce, centred on “… how do we make our stores more accessible to our customers”. This indicated that the underlying objective of the diversity and inclusion strategy was to expand the customer base to include different segments of the population. These issues raised the question of whether the prime objective of the indigenous strategy was to achieve business outcomes in an
economic sense, thus undermining commitment to address the social inequities and disadvantages faced by indigenous Australians. It was therefore surmised in this study that the focus on indigenous employees and the community by this organization was, to a large extent, based on the ultimate business benefits. Such an approach was in line with the Rawlsian principle of differential treatment if there is a benefit to the overall firm, which in the case of this firm was the growth of its customer base.

In terms of developing the capabilities and awareness of non-indigenous employees regarding the culture, heritage and sensitivities applicable to indigenous communities, the divisional leadership teams under the group’s RAP received training and cultural awareness. However, no specific action appeared to be undertaken to develop capabilities of other stakeholder groups, such as general employees, suggesting that the training was limited to a few in leadership roles. This was in contrast with organization 03, which targeted a wide spectrum of stakeholders for capability development. Thus, a large segment of staff of organization 06 was excluded from receiving awareness and training, with the exception of fragments of diversity-related training that were included in the induction and general training programs.

Such lapses in capability development could hinder the ability to deliver justice and fairness to indigenous employees and the community. Although organization 06 acknowledged the disadvantaged status of indigenous Australians, there was a lack of concerted effort to build capabilities to address applicable disparities and inequities; thus its approach did not adequately meet the notion of social justice advocated by Sen, founded on capability building for human development.

With the exception of monitoring indigenous numbers, neither the group nor the organization considered measures such as the engagement level of indigenous employees, their level of satisfaction and their wellbeing as measures of success. The organization appeared to lack a comprehensive mechanism to provide indigenous employees with a voice to air their views, including how engaged they were in the workplace. For example, although the employee engagement survey contained a question about the indigenous status of employees, the engagement level of indigenous employees was not tracked separately. Thus it could be perceived as turning a ‘blind eye’ to the concerns of indigenous employees, undermining its commitment to creating a just and fair work environment where they have the opportunity to be heard and considered.
Although this organization considered indigenous Australians as one of the three main pillars of diversity encompassing its diversity initiatives, there appeared to be room for progress in the areas of procedural, interpersonal and informational justice. Its approach to indigenous-related issues was more in line with the Rawlsian approach to justice, as opposed to organization 03, which adopted a more comprehensive approach adhering to all core elements of organizational justice and the Senian notion of social justice.

7.8. Disability in the Workforce

According to the National Disability Strategy Consultation Report (Department of Social Services 2012), most people with disabilities lead complex lives and are often deprived of some of the basic human rights that the mainstream community takes for granted, such as a place to live, a job, health care, a good education and participation in the community. Accessing meaningful employment remains a struggle for many individuals with disability, often due to misconceptions that cause a reluctance to employ them, as well as discrimination, stigmatization and concerns regarding costs associated with workplace adjustments and special facilities required for disabled employees (Department of Social Services 2012).

The disability rate of Australians in the prime working age group of 15 to 64 years was 14.4 percent of the population in 2012 (ABS 2015b). This signified a positive trend from 1993 to 2012, with the unemployment rate for those with a disability in prime working age decreasing from 17.8 percent to 9.4 percent (ABS 2015b). Yet with a decrease in unemployment also applying to those without a disability (from 12 percent in 1993 to 4.9 percent in 2012), the unemployment rate for the disabled was significantly higher in comparison (ABS 2015b). Against this backdrop, it is thought-provoking to enquire how Australian organizations rise to the challenge of bringing about justice and fair treatment to the disabled members of its population. Thus this section examines how two organizations (20 and 14) dealt with disability in their workplaces.

Organization 20 (also used as a case study to examine gender pay gaps) positioned its diversity strategy under its overall business purpose, which was “to create a brilliantly connected future for everyone”. It defined diversity in a broad sense to include a multitude of demographic groups such as gender, age, ethnicity, race, cultural background, ability, religion, sexual orientation, differences in background and life experience, communication styles, interpersonal skills, education, functional
expertise and problem-solving skills. Within this, it had identified six priority groups for specific focus in its diversity strategy, including people with a disability which was part of its “show you care” value. As one of the eminent employers and corporations in Australia, it believed it was imperative to step up and build an inclusive workplace and community.

Its disability action plan recognized the needs of people with a disability and those of their carers, acknowledging that not only those with disability but also those who care for them often face significant economic-, social- and employment-related hardships, and hence may require special adjustment such as flexibility in the workplace. The caring factor was encouraged among its employees, by providing them with volunteering opportunities and payroll giving campaigns\textsuperscript{21} to support disability service organizations. In addition to employment, the disability action plan had two other streams: the supply chain; and community and customers. The supply chain initiatives included collaboration with suppliers that supported disability employment, such as purchasing goods and services from not-for-profit groups and social enterprises that employed the disabled. The community and customers stream of the organization strived to make its products and services accessible for customers with disabilities, such as those with communication challenges. All employees in customer service received recurrent disability awareness training to build their capacity to communicate and connect with disabled customers.

In its quest for social inclusion, the organization also sponsored a number of projects and initiatives with the aim of achieving social change, such as “tech for good”, where community partnerships were implemented to help people with disabilities live more independently including through the use of digital technology. The organization considered this initiative part of its responsibility embedded in its vision to keep “everyone connected”. In pursuit of removing the employment barriers often faced by people with a disability, it had partnered with the Australian Network of Disability and participated in the Stepping into Internship Program, which was a paid internship program targeting university students with disabilities and provided work experience, networking opportunities and job readiness to these students, enhancing their capacity to obtain meaningful employment. It had also provided employment for some interns who had participated in the program. Such programs helped promote a culture of caring in line with the “show you care” value.

\textsuperscript{21} Payroll giving, also referred to as workplace giving, is a joint relationship between employers, employees and charitable institutes, where employees contribute a small portion of their pre-tax salary to a charitable cause.
Maintaining a representative rate of employees with disabilities in parallel with the proportion of disabled people in the community was a key imperative. Stretching its responsibilities further, it had an objective of achieving an engagement score for employees with disability, to be either equal to or higher than the whole-of-company engagement score. Such activities signified strong commitment to ensuring the wellbeing, fair treatment and favorable working conditions of employees with disabilities. It was proud of the significant progress it had already achieved in providing employment to people living with a disability, as stated by the Head of Diversity and Inclusion:

The climate has really evolved … the idea of creating a better workplace, and looking at how you can vary your customer base and contribute to the community … It is really part of who we are. It is directly connected with our purpose which is to create a brilliant connected future for everyone …

Its Diversity Council, which included representatives of the leadership team, conscientiously tracked performance against the two key measurements of representation of disability in the workforce and the engagement score of employees with disability, and recommended appropriate actions to achieve these targets. Employees and other stakeholders subsequently received updates on the progress of diversity objectives through staff communications, the corporate website, and annual and sustainability reports which it referred to as “an independent end-of-term performance review”. These all upheld transparency in communicating the progress in relation to its disability action plan.

Furthermore, as acknowledgement that people with disability may have special requirements relating to employment, the organization encouraged open and honest communications between managers and employees with disabilities, providing the latter with the opportunity to reveal workplace-related needs. The organization had recently introduced a ‘personalization guide’ for leaders and a ‘personalization passport’ for employees with a disability. The core objective of the personalization guide was for leaders to take accountability and to remove barriers that employees with disability encountered, to ensure “fulfilling and successful careers … for everyone, including people with disability and their carers”. In addition, there was a disability support group comprised of senior leaders and HR experts to provide the necessary support to employees with disabilities. To promote networking, support and fellowship, there was also an internal network made up of
employees with disabilities, employees with caring responsibilities, and employees interested in disability.

It had adopted an ongoing consultative approach when formulating and updating its disability action plan, ensuring the engagement of employees impacted by disability and taking into consideration their views, concerns and input. The disability support group, the managers and employees of business units impacted by disability, and external disability bodies also provided input to the disability action plan.

It encouraged employees to declare their disability status, with a voluntary survey used for this purpose. It believed that identification of those with a disability enabled it to make necessary adjustments and to provide the required support for them to perform and progress in a similar way to all other employees. In terms of providing appropriate channels for employees with a disability to voice their concerns, the organization contacted new disabled recruits and requested feedback regarding their recruitment experience, as well as the selection and induction processes, to help improve these areas and to provide further support to these employees.

The employee engagement survey was also an important mechanism that gave staff with disabilities the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding workplace issues that might hamper their wellbeing in the workplace. Seeking the views of employees with disability and using their feedback to improve processes and facilities was a priority. For example, commenting on the importance placed on the employee engagement survey as a mechanism that encouraged honest feedback, upon which the organization developed and implemented appropriate action plans, the Head of Diversity and Inclusion stated:

The most significant difference between people with disability and the overall workforce was around obstacles for doing their job well, so this might be reasonable adjustments. There was something about long-term opportunity for career development, and the other one was about awareness regarding the support that was available do the work allocated … So, these were the opportunities for us, and we are addressing of these issues.

Overall, the disability action plan demonstrated an eagerness to establish equitable employment outcomes for people with disability, and to contribute toward minimizing the challenges faced by
them due to social exclusion and deprivation of basic facilities and rights. While robust and transparent procedures were in place to create a just and fair work environment and EEO for those with disabilities, the organization emphasized the importance of employee involvement and encouraged employee voice by providing a variety of mechanisms for those with disabilities to express their needs, ideas and views. As part of this, a consultative approach was encouraged where employees affected by disability had the opportunity to have open and honest discussions with those in leadership.

This organization took cognisance of the unique needs of employees with a disability and demonstrated both concern and sensitivity towards them. Thus, considering the disadvantages faced by people with disability in the spheres of employment, society and community, it was not hesitant in differentiating and affording special consideration to them through a number of practices, to lead towards equitable and fair outcomes for this often disadvantaged and challenged societal group. The approach in relation to disability in the workforce was in line with the Senian principles of social justice.

The other organization (14) is a multinational in the manufacturing sector that services the energy industry, and has been in existence for approximately 60 years. Though originally Australian-owned, it has gone through a number of ownership changes and business restructures. At the time of this study, the business was owned by a French organization that operates at a global level. The HR Manager explained that the firm had been adversely affected by the global financial crisis and that employee numbers were drastically reduced as part of the restructuring efforts to achieve business turnaround. It had a workforce of approximately 400, but 18 years earlier this had been approximately 2,000. According to the HR Manager, it continued to face business challenges. As part of a multinational it was under pressure due to its high manufacturing costs in Australia compared with other markets such as China. Yet despite such changes, restructures and business challenges, it had a considerable number of long-serving employees, with the HR Manager explaining that it was still “a good place to work”.

It did not have a documented disability employment plan or any type of documented diversity policy. However, the HR Manager was of the view that the recruitment process was fair and transparent, and upheld EEO. Explaining that recruitment was purely based on merit, the HR Manager stated:
The best person for the job [is selected]. I do not care if you are black, white, yellow, blue, heterosexual, homosexual. The business never does. You can see that with what people we have in the business. Even in recent times, it has never become an issue.

However, in regard to employment of people with disabilities, the emphasis on business results, particularly in the face of market challenges, outweighed the social benefits and individual fulfilment, including inclusivity and economic benefits, gained by people with disability. Stating that the firm did not currently focus on disability recruitment, the HR Manager explained that it had been compelled to discontinue its former disability employment scheme:

I made a real focus on it [disability employment]. We used to have a few [employees] … recruited through a disability service. They did jobs around the factory … painting and general upkeep and that sort of stuff. They remained in the organization for seven years and worked for two days a week … so that employment did not affect their disability pension. Unfortunately, when we started to go down [business downturn], they were one of the first ones we had to take out … They cost us nothing but … they were counted in the headcount … and went through to Paris [head office] … unfortunately they had to go.

Acknowledging that businesses have a moral obligation to support disadvantaged members of society, such as people with disability, the HR Manager stated that it was emotionally difficult to end the disability employment scheme: “We have retrenched a lot of people and those two [employees with disability] were the hardest ones I did.” The HR Manager was of the view that employment of people with disability brought not only economic empowerment to the individuals, but also contributed to their mental and emotional wellbeing. For example, the Manager shared the sentiments of an employee with a disability: “You gave me a job, you let me go to Queensland for my son’s 21st and I could take him out with the money I earned here”. Employing people with disabilities contributed to a positive business culture and an energized workplace. Humorously, the Manager stated:

They were good blokes and very funny blokes too. One of them [an employee with disability] lost his two false front teeth. We got everyone to look at the
bottom of the paint tin because he may have bent down when painting and the false teeth may have fallen in. But we could not find the false teeth … Then we got a phone call … we found them … [name of employee with disability] went into the toilet and sat down took his false teeth out, put it on top of the toilet roll. The next bloke comes in, sat down and goes ‘… there’s some teeth there looking at me’. All a bit of fun. It helps to make your day.

There were instances where the business considered employees affected by sickness and those impacted by disability based on their caring responsibilities as compelling cases where flexible work arrangements were warranted. The HR Manager provided two relevant examples, one where the firm offered flexibility to an employee who was caring for a profoundly disabled child, and the other offering flexibility to an employee who was suffering from cancer. However, there was no policy regarding such facilities, with management considering each case on an *ad hoc* basis.

The prerogative of the international head office to terminate the local disability employment scheme denied equitable treatment to employees with disability. In its number reduction exercise, the global head office merely considered the negligible number of employees with disability as ‘mere numbers’, showing an apparent lack of sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of individuals affected by disability. The action of the head office demonstrated a lack of a humane approach towards employees with disabilities. Justice and fairness in relation to the decision made to terminate the services of those engaged under the disability employment scheme were therefore questionable. A documented disability employment policy, a proven intent to make reasonable adjustment to HR processes such as recruitment, and the provision of necessary facilities to support disabled employees in the workplace were not visible.

These issues raised the question of whether organizational justice was present for employees with a disability. It could be argued that equal access to employment can only be achieved by making reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process considering the disadvantages faced by candidates with disability. Thus, in the absence of such reasonable adjustments, the recruitment process in this business appeared to deny candidates with disabilities fair opportunity for employment. In the past the HR Manager, in collaboration with a disability service organization, had recruited individuals with intellectual disability, thus demonstrating attempts to adjust the recruitment process.
The lack of coherent and transparent policies and procedures on employment and engagement of people with disabilities raised issues of whether procedural justice was met. In particular, the attitude of the head office, which disregarded the issues and challenges faced by disabled individuals, defeated the presence of interpersonal justice. It appeared that information and communication barriers existed in the organization. It seemed that the local management was either uncomfortable with or did not have communication access to the decision-makers at global head office level to openly and honestly communicate the value addition of the disability employment program, and their dissatisfaction with the insensitive way the number reduction exercise was implemented. This also indicated a lack of informational justice within the organization.

Overall, even though the HR Manager was eager to create a fair and equal opportunity regime for employees and candidates with disabilities, the leadership at head office level did not consider it an area of concern. While austerity measures were necessary in light of the business challenges faced, the leadership had failed to approach the exercise in a sensitive and compassionate manner, given that the termination of the disability employment scheme was not bringing any cost saving. It appeared that the subsequent approach towards disability fell short of any attempts to contribute toward the achievement of social justice. This firm was more driven by business outcomes and had abandoned its disability employment scheme. The need to create a level playing field for those with disability was no longer part of its agenda – in stark contrast to organization 20, which considered itself to be in a unique position to contribute to the social cause of inclusion of people with disability.

7.9. Justice and Fairness Incidents in the Case Study Organizations

The case studies discussed in this chapter highlight how justice and fairness were integrated with diversity management practices. The organizations that had diversity management practices aligned to Senian principles of social justice showed a strong presence of all four elements of organizational justice – distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational. Table 7.1 below depicts a summary.
Table 7.1: Summary of justice and fairness incidents in managing diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study organization</th>
<th>Theme addressed</th>
<th>Justice and Fairness in Managing Diversity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Elements of organizational justice</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Distributive justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 09</td>
<td>Cultural diversity</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 22</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 10</td>
<td>Gender equity</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 15</td>
<td>Gender pay gap</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 20</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 12</td>
<td>Ageing workforce</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 08</td>
<td></td>
<td>x *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 13</td>
<td>LGBTI employees</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 04</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 03</td>
<td>Indigenous employees</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 06</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 20</td>
<td>Disability in the workforce</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mature-aged employees were disadvantaged in securing employment opportunities, which the organization justified based on safety and employee wellbeing. However, this raises questions in relation to distributive justice in terms of employment opportunities.*
7.10. Chapter Summary

This chapter presented 14 organizational case studies where diversity management practices relevant to the key dimensions (CALD, gender, mature-aged, LGBTI, indigenous, disability) identified in chapter 5 and 6 were analysed. The approaches to diversity management exhibited varying elements of organizational justice and social justice. Comparator organizations were set apart, in accordance with each one’s attempts at adhering to justice and fairness in managing issues relevant to six identified demographic groups: culturally diverse employees; women; older Australians; LGBTI community; indigenous Australians; and people with a disability.

The findings revealed that entities adopted different approaches to managing issues springing from demographic diversity within the workforce. For example, a social justice approach to diversity management, based on the human development approach to social justice and underpinned by moral philosophy, as advocated by Amartya Sen, applied in some. This approach proved to be far superior in terms of managing human diversity. The Senian approach promotes theoretical rigour, pragmatism and a deep sense of concern for marginalized, underprivileged and vulnerable groups present in society. Notably, the bodies that met the criteria aligned with the Senian principles of justice demonstrated all four elements of organizational justice. There were several organizations that demonstrated the rigorous standards required to meet these criteria.

Some organizations displayed a lesser inclination to achieve social justice through diversity management. These were oblivious to the inequities faced by disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society, and were driven solely by creating equality by treating everyone similarly, including both the privileged and the underprivileged. Differential treatment to minority groups was applicable only in instances where there was an underlying benefit to the overall operation. This approach to managing diversity matched the Rawlsian principles of social justice. Such organizations had lapses in a number of areas, such as providing employees with a voice, empowering employees, involving employees in addressing the issues they face due to their demographic circumstances, and developing capabilities of employees and the entity.

This was in contrast to the approach adopted by those more aligned with the Senian notion of social justice. Elements of distributive justice were visible in the diversity management approaches of these, and a few also demonstrated procedural justice. However, none indicated the presence of
informational and interpersonal justice. By contrast, all four elements of organizational justice were present in those that approached diversity management consistent with the principles enumerated in the Senian version of social justice.

Lastly, these findings reveal that justice and fairness are critical elements in managing diversity in organizations. Thus a framework based on the principles of social and organizational justice forms a robust theoretical foundation to evaluate diversity management approaches in organizations. Such a framework can form an effective and pragmatic foundation to evaluate, create and measure diversity management interventions. The case studies here illustrate that the diversity management interventions underpinned by the Senian approach to achieving social justice provide a superior approach to diversity management through comprehensive strategies that deliver all aspects of organizational justice.

Table 7.2 below summarises the key elements derived from the case studies.
Table 7.2: Key elements of diversity management under a justice and fairness framework founded on Senian principles of justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational-level attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition and acknowledgement of disadvantages due to one’s group identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building awareness and developing employees across the organization (mainstream employees,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>managers and leaders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership commitment and accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to policies, practices and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane approach towards disadvantaged groups that embrace employees and the society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive to employee resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscious of social justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of all four elements of organizational justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse employee-level attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee involvement in decisions that affect them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee development interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to network and elicit collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving employees choice with regard to career- and workplace-related opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An individualized approach to resolving employee needs and issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building of diverse employees for equal access to employment opportunities and outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 8
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1. Introduction

The primary objective of this research was to explore and identify the approaches adopted by Australian organizations to manage diversity through a justice and fairness frame. Accordingly, this study was guided by the primary research question of How do justice and fairness frame diversity management in organizations? and two subsidiary research questions, How do Australian organizations perceive the context of diversity management? and How do diversity management practices in Australian organizations reflect justice and fairness in the workplace? This chapter begins with a recapitulation of the rationale for this study, and then further discusses the main findings in the context of current knowledge, including insights on framing diversity management through justice and fairness as well as the implications for knowledge and practice. It concludes by discussing the limitations of this study and directions for future research.

8.2. The Rationale and Research Overview

The rationale that motivated this study was the recognition of the importance of justice and fairness when implementing organizational interventions as part of diversity management. In the context of diversity within the Australian population and diversity management consequently gaining momentum (as discussed in Chapter 2), it explored how Australian organizations manage workforce diversity beyond the rhetoric. As highlighted in Chapter 1, inequality in the workplace for diverse Australian employees continues to exist. Thus diversity management has not yet realized its most fundamental intent in Australian workplaces, which is the empowerment and inclusion of less privileged societal groups (Herring & Henderson 2012; Nkomo & Hoobler 2014). This study therefore investigated the steps taken by Australian organizations to further their diversity agendas, seeking to delineate the notion of justice and fairness embedded in their diversity management practices.

In this thesis, the importance of framing diversity management via justice and fairness principles for the much-needed impetus to achieve diversity outcomes is discussed. Thus the importance of
instilling a culture of justice and fairness for minority employees by way of organizational justice and social justice is emphasized. Given the significance of fairness, parity and equality within diversity management, this study focused on the relevant interventions among Australian organizations through a theoretical lens of justice and fairness. Organizational justice theory and the social justice principles by John Rawls and Amartya Sen offered an insightful philosophical basis to examine the linkage between justice and fairness and diversity management.

8.3. Summary of Main Findings as Framework for Discussion

Table 8.1 provides summaries of the main findings and their implications for managing workforce diversity in Australian organizations. This provides the discussion framework for the chapter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main findings</th>
<th>Chapters addressing the findings</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Organizations were inclined to define the scope of diversity by referring to demographic groups that exist in society.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organizations should include the key disadvantaged groups in society when defining the scope of diversity and be open to encompass emerging dimensions of diversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and meaning of ‘diversity’</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Diversity’ did not have a universal meaning. Organizations referred to demographic groups when defining diversity, with most including a broad range of groups. A few organizations did not refer to demographics, but to outcomes and activities relevant to organizations due to workforce diversity.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Organizations recognized several disadvantaged groups in Australian workplaces.</strong></td>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
<td>These multiple demographic groups experienced different employment outcomes. Organizations should therefore consider the multiple social groups that exist in society when implementing diversity management programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key dimensions of diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender, indigenous Australians, LGBTI, disability, CALD and the ageing workforce were the main dimensions of diversity focused on by organizations. They recognized that these groups were facing barriers that affected their employment outcomes; although not all six dimensions received equal focus by organizations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in the workforce</td>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
<td>Women continue to face barriers in the workplace due to organizational, societal and individual factors, which organizations should address under their diversity programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing female representation in the workforce and in leadership, and addressing gender pay inequity.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Beliefs, attitudes and perceptions regarding lack of qualified female recruits</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Employee resistance due to an entrenched culture of male dominance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gendered roles – some are non-traditional occupations for women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Unconscious bias, particularly with regard to employing women to certain occupations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Main findings</td>
<td>Chapters addressing the findings</td>
<td>Implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unfounded assumptions, negative assumptions and lack of confidence among women (candidates)</td>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
<td>Women continue to face barriers in the workplace due to organizational, societal and individual factors, which organizations should address under their diversity programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Traditional career progression models and job designs that do not offer flexibility and work-life balance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mobility, relocation and operational patterns such as shifts that are non-family-friendly</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Women in the workforce**

**Priorities**

• Increasing female representation in the workforce and in leadership, and addressing gender pay inequity.

**Barriers**

• Beliefs, attitudes and perceptions regarding lack of qualified female recruits
• Employee resistance due to an entrenched culture of male dominance
• Gendered roles – some are non-traditional occupations for women
• Unconscious bias, particularly with regard to employing women to certain occupations
• Unfounded assumptions, negative assumptions and lack of confidence among women (candidates)
• Traditional career progression models and job designs that do not offer flexibility and work-life balance
• Mobility, relocation and operational patterns such as shifts that are non-family-friendly

**Indigenous Australians in the workforce**

**Priorities**

• Enabling positive labor market outcomes for indigenous employees through employment programs.

Chapters 5, 6

Organizations need to play a more proactive role in bridging the gap between indigenous and other Australians.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main findings</th>
<th>Chapters addressing the findings</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Negative experiences of indigenous employees due to lack of their cultural safety in the workplace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of awareness of indigenous culture within organizations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Disadvantages at recruitment due to lack of literacy and numeracy skills, and cultural differences</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LGBTI in the workforce</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priorities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve commitment, loyalty and performance of LGBTI employees, and ensure dignity and respect toward them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mental health issues because of stigma, discrimination and exclusion associated with their sexual identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of confidence to disclose sexual orientation and family status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incidence of homophobic or transphobic behaviors, exclusion, including non-inclusive language and stereotyping.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disability in the workforce</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priorities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessibility options and adjustments to accommodate needs of employees and candidates with disability, and inclusion of carers within the ambit of disability employment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessibility barriers such as physical access, communication barriers, safety issues and non-availability of facilities as well as learning and development opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organizations should consider the psychological wellbeing of LGBTI employees as part of diversity management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility option offered by organizations should extend beyond bare minimum legal requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Main findings

- Attitudinal barriers such as discrimination and lack of awareness of disability
- Lack of confidence to disclose disability status

**CALD in the workforce**

**Priorities**

- Organizations were eager to have a workforce that reflects cultural diversity. Career advancement of CALD individuals was a concern for the organizations.

**Barriers**

- Racism and unconscious bias in the workplaces
- Lack of confidence and fear regarding exposing religious beliefs and cultural identity
- Lack of language and literacy skills as well as cultural awareness about Australian workplaces

**Mature-aged in the workforce**

**Priorities**

- Engagement and retention of mature-aged employees by catering to their career aspirations and lifestyle options, and supporting their transition to retirement.

**Barriers**

- A general lack of focus in addressing the needs of an ageing workforce
- Potential conflicts and resistance due to generational diversity in the workplace

**Emerging dimensions**

Several emerging dimensions of diversity were gaining attention in some organizations, although robust policies and practices were not yet present for these dimensions. Intersectionality of diversity was only recognized by a few organizations. These emerging

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters addressing the findings</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
<td>Organizations should actively contribute to multiculturalism via diversity management programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
<td>Organizations should actively engage in recruiting and retaining mature-aged employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
<td>Organizations should be sensitive to the needs of societal groups that may not fall within the mainstream dimensions of diversity and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main findings</td>
<td>Chapters addressing the findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mainstream dimensions of diversity, as disadvantaged in the workplace.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dimensions were youth, those affected by mental illness, women affected by domestic violence, those with caregiving and parental responsibilities, refugees, religious minorities, those living in remote areas, economically disadvantaged, the homeless, youth affected by poverty, and youth identifying themselves as sexual minorities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Organizations implemented several diversity management practices in response to the heterogeneity of the workforce.</strong></td>
<td>Diversity management practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity management practices closely integrated with HR management practices, as well as CSR, organizational strategy and leadership. Mechanisms to measure and monitor the progress of diversity initiatives were visible in organizations.</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Diversity management was not at the forefront of the management agenda in some organizations.</strong></td>
<td>Diversity management and EEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most organizations drew a link between the legislative requirements of EEO and diversity management, while a few instead drew a clear distinction between the two.</td>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of diversity policies</strong></td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of robust policies relevant to diversity management was visible in some organizations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity focus in multinationals</strong></td>
<td>Chapters 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multinationals were less cognizant of host country diversity issues.</td>
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<td><strong>6. Justice and fairness were met at different levels</strong></td>
<td>Justice and fairness in managing diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity management practices consistent with Senian principles met all four elements of organizational justice (distributive,</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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### Main findings

**by organizations when managing diversity.**

procedural, interpersonal and informational justice). A high commitment to the moral rationale for diversity management and an emphasis on fair and equitable outcomes for disadvantaged groups were visible in the organizations. The business case rationale was more prominent in those that aligned with Rawlsian principles when managing diversity, where propensity to undermine equitable outcomes for disadvantaged groups was justified by the benefit to the overall organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters addressing the findings</th>
<th>Implications</th>
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<td>justice is a superior approach to managing diversity.</td>
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**7. Embedding Elements of justice and fairness offered legitimacy to diversity management.**

Fostering legitimacy in the diversity management process

Diversity management when aligned with Senian principles of justice showed promise in addressing the weaknesses of the business case approach and the social justice approach, and offered an alternative approach to managing diversity.

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<th>Chapters</th>
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<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>A justice and fairness approach to managing diversity meets expectations of a wider group of stakeholders and upholds legitimacy of the process of diversity management.</td>
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**8. Justice and fairness as a frame for managing diversity.**

Attributes of a justice and fairness framework for managing diversity

Several key attributes were visible in organizations that approached diversity management consistent with Senian principles. Diversity management can be framed by a justice and fairness perspective by embedding these attributes.

**Organizational level attributes**

- Recognition and acknowledgement of disadvantages due to one’s group identity
- Building awareness and developing employee capabilities across the organization (mainstream employees, managers and leaders)
- Open communication
- Leadership commitment

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<th>Chapters</th>
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<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>The justice and fairness frame developed in this study offers a pragmatic and robust approach to managing diversity.</td>
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<td>Main findings</td>
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<td>• Changes to policies, practices and culture</td>
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<td>• Humane approach towards disadvantaged groups which embraces employees and the society</td>
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<td>• Sensitive to employee resistance</td>
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<td>• Conscious of social justice</td>
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<td>• Presence of all four elements of organizational justice</td>
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**Diverse employee level attributes**

- Employee voice
- Employee involvement in decisions that affect them
- Employee development interventions
- Opportunities to network and collegiality
- Giving employees choice with regard to career and workplace opportunities
- An individualized approach to resolving employee needs and issues
- Capability building of diverse employees for equal access to employment opportunities
8.4. Main Findings and Implications

The key contributions to knowledge drawn from the main findings are presented in this section, including the implications for just and fair workplace systems. The findings addressing both subsidiary research questions are first discussed, followed by those that answer the main research question.

8.4.1. Diversity Management Context in Australian Organizations

This section presents the main findings relevant to the first subsidiary research question: How do Australian organizations perceive the context of diversity management?

8.4.1.1. Organizations were inclined to define diversity by referring to demographic groups in society

While diversity was defined differently by organizations, there was a common inclination to relate it to the demographic characteristics that exist in Australian society. This inclination supports the views of Spaaji et al. (2013) and Mor Barak (2011) who allude to a lack of consensus in defining diversity. When incorporating demographics into diversity, most organizations preferred to define it in a broad sense by specifying a multitude of inconclusive characteristics. For example, one organization specified demographic characteristics as age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and national or social origin, and personal characteristics as disability, medical condition, carers’ responsibilities, and pregnancy or potential pregnancy. A few others had a more narrow view in terms of defining diversity, only specifying demographic groups they considered important. Another group defined diversity based on workplace outcomes and activities, such as potential organizational outcomes from a diverse workforce including greater connectivity, innovation and impact on the bottom-line. This study therefore found three streams of diversity definitions in Australian organizations.

This aligns to an extent with Mor Barak (2011), who identified three categories of diversity definitions: broad-based definitions, which encompass a wide array of dimensions of diversity; narrow-based definitions, which include dimensions of diversity that are protected by legislation; and conceptual-based definitions, which include dimensions of diversity subject to disadvantages
such as prejudice and discrimination. In line with Mor Barak, this study found broad-based definitions of diversity, where organizations had defined it via a multitude of dimensions. In contrast, the narrow-based definitions adopted by this study’s cases related to demographic groups they deemed important, unlike Mor Barak’s (2011) categorization, where legally protected groups were relevant to the narrow-based definitions. In this regard, disadvantaged and under-privileged societal groups were considered important by some organizations, as they were under-represented in the workforce. Others that defined diversity via a narrow perspective included demographic groups that represented their customers; thus, social justice was not a key influence. Instead, gaining access and providing a better service to customers were key factors in how these defined the scope of diversity. The third category of Mor Barak’s (2011) definitions is a more conceptual view of diversity in relation to behaviours and outcomes to employees, such as marginalization. In this study, the outcomes-and-activities-oriented definitions found in some organizations instead defined diversity through a conceptual view in relation to business outcomes for the organization, and not in relation to employee experiences in the workplaces, such as marginalization.

From a justice and fairness perspective, it is important that organizations encompass disadvantaged groups that exist in society when defining the scope and meaning of diversity. Including disadvantaged groups in diversity definitions will propel organizations to be conscious of societal issues and contribute towards achieving parity and equality of treatment within the workforce. Such defining enables organizations to serve not only the interests of employees that represent such groups, but a wider group of stakeholders, including potential candidates, customers, suppliers and the overall society. In contrast, defining diversity via outcomes relevant to the organization, such as gaining access to customers and improving business results, may adversely affect marginalized groups. This approach may lead organizations to perceive diversity purely from an economic angle, ignoring issues of justice and fairness in the workplace.

8.4.1.2. Organizations recognized several disadvantaged groups in Australian workplaces

Despite many organizations defining diversity as encompassing a multitude of demographics, several distinct groups gained the most attention: women; indigenous; LGBTI; disabled; CALD; and mature-aged. Organizational interventions were visible in relation to these dimensions, as
opposed to merely being mentioned in policy documents. Most organizations believed these six groups faced significant barriers relevant to employment outcomes and wellbeing.

From a justice and fairness perspective, it is critical that Australian organizations acknowledge that employment outcomes are not equal and that they strive to address such issues across the six key demographic groups perceived as disadvantaged compared with the typical employee (i.e., white, male, heterosexual, with no disability as profile by Strachan, Burgess & French 2010). Unfortunately, some organizations did not appear to have any such interventions for some of these key groups. For example, some did not focus on groups such as indigenous Australians and those with disability, claiming that they were difficult to recruit. It is argued that, even if the workforce does not have representation of all six diversity dimensions, organizations can help to address social inequities via initiatives such as supporting social firms, promoting supplier diversity and encouraging volunteerism among employees to support these disadvantaged groups. Overall, Australian organizations have a vital role to play in creating an equal regime of employment in an intensely diverse society, to uphold the nation’s ingrained psyche of a ‘fair go for all’.

- **Female workforce in Australian organizations**

Gender diversity was a common dimension within the purview of diversity management. This study highlighted that increasing the overall representation of women, including in leadership positions, and addressing gender pay inequity were priority areas organizations strived to achieve. However, not all focused on gender diversity. Some appeared to accept the status quo with no obvious action to improve female representation, particularly those in more masculine industries. Others, despite having a high female representation, did continue to address barriers faced by women.

Another standout finding was that there were organizations keen to increase the representation of males, particularly those in industries identified as feminine, such as nursing, disability care and community service. Even though men were not considered marginalized by these organizations, diversity management practitioners noted that recruiting men was something worth celebrating. The practitioner representing a disability services body noted that recruiting male care support workers was a priority because it enabled provision of better service to male clients, particularly in the area of personal care.
Despite efforts over several decades to address gender inequality in the workplace and the elevated status of women in regard to education and empowerment, this study revealed that women continue to face employment barriers. This aligns with the arguments of Easteal, Califari and Bartels (2015) and Strachan, Burgess and French (2010) that Australian workplaces have unequal gender regimes that negatively affect women’s employment outcomes.

Several organizations and job roles projected a masculine identity, in line with Acker’s (1990) concept of ‘gendered’ organizations and roles. Acker (2012) argued that organizational practices, processes, culture and employee attitudes perpetuate gender inequalities. This study revealed gendered notions deeply embedded in the culture of some organizations; diversity management practitioners highlighted these as a major barrier to gender equality. Notably, it was also revealed that employee resistance to gender diversity in masculine organizations could come from both men and women. This is the “queen bee” phenomenon, where women in senior positions adjust to a masculine culture and show hostility and a non-supporting demeanour towards other women in the organization (Derks, van Laar & Ellemers 2016, p. 457).

However, consistent with other research (Vandenbroek 2016; Workplace Equality Gender Agency 2016), findings showed female dominance in the industries of health care and social assistance. In retail, organizations with a retail arm as part of the overall business structure had a higher proportion of women in this area. Two large retail organizations showed an equal proportion of men and women, which was an unexpected finding. According to Chang and Travaglione (2012), the retail industry in Australia employs a high proportion of women.

According to this study, societal perceptions of a woman’s role as the homemaker and primary carer for children, taking precedence over employment, career choices and career progression, often affects gender equality in the workplace. Most organizations tended to overlook other possible causes, such as bias in recruitment and promotional processes, as well as attitudinal issues affecting managerial decisions on recruitment and promotion of women. Career breaks taken by women to meet parental responsibilities was the prime reason cited by most organizations for gender pay inequity.

To create an equal employment regime for women organizations need to continue with gender diversity programs. They should focus on identifying and addressing the actual barriers that affect
gender equality in the workplace, which could include organizational factors. It is also important that organizations identified as masculine do not become complacent, instead exploring what needs to be done to address barriers at individual, organizational and societal level to achieve equality and fairness for both genders.

- Indigenous workforce in Australian organizations

Diversity management interventions targeting indigenous Australians were underpinned by the national priority to raise this demographic group’s social and economic outcomes. In this regard, the establishment of Reconciliation Australia in 2001 to create a reconciled, just and equitable nation, commencement of the RAPs in 2007, then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s apology to the ‘stolen generation’, and the establishment of Closing the Gap Targets in 2008 (Gardiner-Garden 2013; Reconciliation Australia 2016), marked key milestones of the Australian Government’s commitment to address historical disadvantages and injustices faced by indigenous Australians.

Such political activities have ramifications for many workplaces, and were expected at the time to help improve employment outcomes for indigenous Australians. Organizational initiatives, particularly RAPs, were used to support indigenous employment and wellbeing. Some of this study’s cases also highlighted their historic ties with the indigenous population when conducting business, and acknowledged a moral responsibility for their wellbeing. But others showed minimal interest in implementing interventions relevant to indigenous Australians. Practitioners from some these provided responses such as indigenous employment would be considered in the future and that the location of the organization did not enable such recruitment. Such attitudes toward redressing past injustices and disadvantages demonstrated a lack of commitment to contributing toward social justice in Australian society.

From a justice and fairness perspective, it is fundamental that organizations contribute toward creating parity between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Even if organizations are constrained in recruiting indigenous candidates due to, for example, their geographical location, they can consider other initiatives, such as sponsoring traineeships and providing work experience, to enhance this group’s employability, as observed in some of the more proactive organizations in this study. In particular, as both this study and the literature (Bandias, Fuller & Holmes 2012; Gray, Hunter & Lohoar 2011; Helme 2010; Loxton, Schirmer & Kanowski 2012; Pearson & Daff 2011) have identified a lack of skills as a major barrier affecting indigenous Australians’
employment opportunities, organizational interventions in the areas of education and skills development would be worthwhile contributions.

Consistent with Hunter’s (2010) observation, lack of organizational knowledge of indigenous culture is often a major impediment affecting recruitment and retention of such employees. This finding demonstrates a lack of exposure to indigenous culture and values among most Australians. Thus, to ensure Australia’s indigenous have equal opportunities in the workplace, organizations and perhaps the national education curriculum should consider strategies to create higher levels of awareness among the non-indigenous, including opportunities to engage with indigenous communities. Regrettably, the target to halve the employment gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians by 2018 in the 2008 Closing the Gap Targets is far off track (DPC 2016), suggesting the commitment of organizations is imperative in addressing inequities indigenous Australians continue to experience in the sphere of employment.

- **LGBTI workforce in Australian organizations**

Several organizations acknowledged that LGBTI employees are a vulnerable group in both the workforce and the community. Contrary to the findings of Aaron and Ragusa (2011) and Tonks (2006), who claimed a lack of managerial commitment and organizational policy to address sexual minority issues, many of this study’s organizations were committed to ensuring the wellbeing of LGBTI employees under formal diversity management programs.

The psychological wellbeing of LGBTI employees was found to be a main area of concern. Several organizations noted that the mental health of LGBTI employees may suffer due to stigma, discrimination and exclusion. They organizations were keen to create a safe environment where LGBTI employees felt confident to disclose their sexual identity. A standout observation was that community service organizations were particularly sensitive to the needs of LGBTI and were eager to ensure the psychological wellbeing of staff and clients who identified as LGBTI.

Some practitioners believed that LGBTI employees were well-accepted within their workforce; hence specific policies and interventions were unnecessary. One noted that same-sex partners were welcome at official functions, and that LGBTI employees were open about their sexual orientation. Thus issues of psychological safety and disclosure did not appear to be applicable in such
organizations. However, these views were not based on perceptions of LGBTI employees themselves.

Another that had robust interventions for several diversity dimensions indicated that LGBTI was not within its diversity management purview. While it did not show any hostility toward the LGBTI community, the researcher did not probe further, assuming that the topic might be sensitive and based on the organization’s status as a religious institution. It is also worth noting here that, in an attempt to balance religious doctrines and equal opportunity, the Australian legal system exempts religious organizations from anti-discriminatory legislation (Australian Human Rights Commission 2017b). Hence under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, religious organizations in Australia can deny employment on grounds of sexual orientation, and thus violate an individual’s right to EEO (Australian Human Rights Commission 2017b).

The politically charged issue of legalizing same-sex marriage in Australia, including initiating a national plebiscite instead of directly introducing a Bill to Parliament to amend marriage law, was cautiously dealt with by the government, due to potential resistance from some members and constituents. Recent homophobic material on social media, including campaigns saying ‘no’ to marriage equality, indicates that the LGBTI community continues to be marginalized and discriminated against in Australia. Despite this, most of this study’s organizations were respectful and open-minded toward the LGBTI community, with several actively campaigning for marriage equality and recognizing same sex-couples and families of employees, even prior to the initiation of the plebiscite and the subsequent amendment to the law.

Even though the Australian community appears to be divided on the issue of marriage equality, the outcome of the plebiscite was 61.6 percent in favour of legalizing same-sex marriage (ABS 2017e). This shows a societal trend toward inclusion of the LGBTI community. With the marriage equality legislation made law, Australian organizations may have to formalize diversity management programs targeting the LGBTI community including amending formal policies and documents to recognize family and partner status. It will also be interesting to see the ramifications with regard to the exemption applicable to employers categorized as religious organizations.
Some of this study’s cases were eager to visibly and actively uphold the rights of people with disability, while others only complied with the bare minimum legal framework requirements of making reasonable adjustments to ensure EEO. While most practitioners showed compassion and willingness to establish disability employment programs and accessibility options, some organizations did not actively implement these. Three were not currently focused on disability employment, with the practitioners opining this as an area to be considered in the future without providing actual evidence of such plans. Another practitioner expressed disappointment that the organization’s disability employment program was abandoned due to business restructure involving cost cutting.

Such findings suggest that, even where diversity management practitioners recognize disability as part of human diversity, relevant employment may not be a strategic priority among the organization’s leaders. This study also identified attitudinal barriers affecting employment of the disabled, due to lack of awareness of their needs, which could also attribute to the narrow focus of some organizations regarding disability interventions.

Despite such barriers, a few organizations included those who care for a family member with a disability in their disability action plans. This signified a trend to broaden the scope of disability in the workplace by recognizing needs and employment-related challenges faced by those indirectly affected by disability. Other than the right to request flexible work options under the NES, employees who are carers of the disabled have no other legal or governmental support. Thus, the inclusion of carers within diversity management interventions is a progressive move. Another encouraging trend was the recognition of those with intellectual disabilities and providing employment opportunities for them, which was a key initiative under the disability action plan of one large-scale public sector organization.

Overall, this study found that organizations recognize that employees with disability face numerous barriers throughout their employment lifecycle. From a justice and fairness perspective, it is important that organizations move away from a compliance-based approach to disability and actively contribute to improve the social, emotional and economic wellbeing of this cohort. In this study, most organizations did not seem to be motivated by the incentive and wage subsidies paid by the government to employ people with disability.
Another issue that affected the employment outcomes of people with disability was reluctance to disclose disability status. While this may be due to stigma and fear of negative employment outcomes, it can deprive organizations of the opportunity to make special adjustments to support and perpetuate their disadvantaged situation.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reports that employment rates for people with disability in Australia are falling, highlighting that a significant proportion of those with disability and health problems live in poverty (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2010). But in that report Australia was ranked 21 out of the 29 OECD countries in regard to employment rates of people with disability (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD 2010). Thus it is critical that Australian employers play a far greater role in addition to making reasonable adjustments as prescribed by the legal system to meet accessibility to employment needs among the disabled.

- **CALD workforce in Australian organizations**

Considering the multicultural ideology of Australia, CALD was found to be an important dimension of diversity among the study’s organizations. Colic-Peisker (2011) correspondingly highlighted labor market outcomes of migrants as indicative of the multicultural ideology of nations. Despite this, diversity management initiatives for CALD employees in some organizations were more symbolic and restricted to celebrating multicultural events and sharing cultural food. These organizations indicated that issues such as racism and unconscious bias were non-existent in their workplaces.

This study also found that there is no practice in Australian organizations focused on cultural diversity at the leadership and management level. Overall, although most organizations were keen to represent the demographic composition of the community, the notion of ‘board diversity’ and diversity at leadership level were restricted to gender equality. Diversity management practitioners highlighted that leadership teams do not represent the cultural diversity found in Australian society. One was indeed critical that top positions in Australian organizations are occupied by the ‘white privileged’.

Data relevant to cultural diversity of the workforce were largely unavailable across organizations. The exceptions were a few that captured substantial data relevant to CALD employees such as
race, ethnicity, languages spoken and religion. This study found that organizations were conscious of the fact that employees may feel uncomfortable about disclosing information regarding their cultural background and religious beliefs. Thus the lack of data on CALD employees may be due to the sensitivity attached to asking questions regarding cultural background and religious beliefs. Another possible explanation is that some organizations believed that merely celebrating multicultural events was sufficient to denote inclusiveness. Some did allude to the possible existence of marginalization of cultural minorities in their organizations; they acknowledged that most incidents of workplace discrimination were subtle (as D’Netto et al., 2014, also found).

Considering that Australia is a multicultural nation, it is pivotal that organizations create a climate in which CALD employees feel safe and comfortable to talk about their cultural identity. If there is no dialogue about the issues faced by CALD employees, organizations may miss opportunities to address such issues, including identifying training needs to build cultural competencies of mainstream employees. This lack of dialogue may lead organizations to make inaccurate assumptions about how culturally inclusive they are, particularly as the findings suggest that racial discrimination in Australian workplaces is subtle rather than overt, meaning that issues faced by CALD employees can easily go unnoticed. Furthermore, if organizations focus on cultural diversity in a symbolic manner, without focusing on the hidden and often unspoken issues, equality of employment will be denied to CALD employees. This predicament will adversely affect the country’s notion of multiculturalism.

This study confirms that in Australia’s quest to embrace multiculturalism workplaces need to move away from the current legal-compliance-based approach to address racism, and instead initiate changes to organizational policies and practices as argued by Berman and Paradies (2010).

- **Mature-aged workforce in Australian organizations**

In this study, there was a general lack of focus by organizations on mature-aged employees, despite incentives such as wage subsidiaries offered by the Australian Government to recruit and retain them. Most organizations that had such interventions were focused on transition to retirement strategies and knowledge transfers from mature-aged to younger employees. Training and development for mature-aged employees were limited and largely centred on creating awareness of post-retirement options, rather than skills development and retraining to aid careers and prolong working lives. Notably, no organization had an employment scheme for recruiting mature-aged
employees, despite Australian Government incentives under the Restart\textsuperscript{22} initiative to encourage businesses to hire employees aged 50 years or over.

The value the organizations placed on mature-aged employees was mixed. Some diversity management practitioners valued their commitment, expertise and work ethic; others referred to fixed ideas among mature-aged employees that were often not accepting of change. Some practitioners highlighted that, as employees aged, the risk of injury increased and the quality of work and productivity decreased. A possible explanation for these differences of opinion may be the type of work performed: risk of injury may increase with age if the work is manual and physically demanding; quality of work may suffer if the task requires a high degree of manual dexterity and good vision (as examples from practitioners in dentistry and physiotherapy).

Overall, this study revealed that mature-aged employees are a cohort with limited diversity management interventions in Australian organizations, which is consistent with previous findings such as Shacklock and Brunetto (2011), Taylor et al. (2013), and Patrickson and Ranzijn (2005). A lack of alignment of HR practices such as recruitment, retention and training confirms the view of Murray and Syed (2005) who argue that HR practices lag behind the changing needs of an older workforce.

This study also recognized challenges in the form of conflict and misunderstanding between different age groups where there was generational diversity in the workforce, although diversity management practitioners commented that these issues were generally trivial and resolved without any managerial intervention. This is in contrast with Knouse (2011), who describes managing an intergenerational workforce as a ‘daunting task’.

From a justice and fairness perspective, mature-aged employees appeared to be unfairly treated; there were minimal diversity management interventions in most organizations. While they appreciated employee experience and skills, the emphasis was to transfer this to younger employees through mentoring relationships rather than to retain mature-aged employees and their

\textsuperscript{22} Restart offers employers a wage subsidy for hiring and retaining mature-aged job seekers who have been unemployed or receiving income support from the Government.
skillsets. Even though employee affinity groups encouraged collegiality and networking was visible in relation to other diversity dimensions, no organization had such offerings for mature-aged employees. This study generally found that upskilling, making reasonable adjustment and retraining mature-aged employees were not high priorities. Most organizations did not seem to perceive the ageing population as a marginalized group, and did not appear to support Australian Government’s initiatives to create better employment outcomes for older workers.

8.4.1.3. Organizations recognized disadvantaged groups in Australian workplaces outside the mainstream dimensions of diversity

In addition to the six mainstream dimensions within diversity management, this study found some emerging ones recognized by organizations. Several were willing to broaden the scope of diversity to support these societal groups that are vulnerable due to distinct characteristics and/or prevailing social issues.

These emerging dimensions included those who belonged to religious minorities, refugees, those affected by mental illness, women affected by domestic violence, caregivers and parents, and youth (aged 15 to 24 years). Notably, organizations in the community services sector recognized an even wider range of groups, including those living in rural and remote areas, and those experiencing poverty and homelessness. This was possibly due to the nature of their services, which exposed them to a wider range of societal issues and vulnerable members of the community.

Although religious diversity was not a mainstream dimension in this study’s cases, tolerance and respect towards diverse religious beliefs and customs were visible. This scenario reflects the growing secularism in Australian society, as well as religious diversity driven by immigration, as evident from census data (ABS 2017b). In particular, this study found that workplaces were increasingly focusing on the wellbeing of Islamic employees, perhaps due to growing incidents of ‘islamophobia’ and negative perceptions towards the Muslim community (who make up 2.4 percent of the population: ABS 2017b), based on religious extremism in the international arena.

Another finding was that some organizations recognized refugees as a distinct group that faced disadvantages, as opposed to skilled migrants. These disadvantages included poor literacy skills,
lower levels of education, and lack of experience and qualifications valued by Australian employers, which made it challenging for them to secure and retain employment.

This study also identified mental wellbeing of employees as gaining momentum within organizations’ diversity management initiatives. Such recognition of those struggling with mental illness and issues such as domestic violence mark a development in diversity management, demonstrating increasing awareness of and emphasis on employee emotional wellbeing. According to the ABS (2015d), 17.5 percent of the population reported a mental or behavioural condition during 2014-2015, and three in five aged between 15 and 64 years with a mental or behavioural condition were employed. This shows that a significant number of people affected by mental illness are in the workforce, positioning it as a part of workplace diversity.

Several studied organizations referred to ‘parents’ and appeared eager to offer work-life balance and other supportive facilities to both genders to fulfil caring responsibilities. Several practitioners proposed practices, such as work-life balance programs and carers leave to meet caring responsibilities, as gender-neutral practices. Such organizations were supporting a much-needed social change by promoting caregiving as a gender-shared responsibility, in line with dual-income families becoming the norm (Hayes et al. 2010). Some did not want work-life balance options to be perceived as beneficial only to women, nor a stigmatized practice that was career-limiting for females. Munsch, Ridgeway and Williams (2014) find that such flexible work practices can be stigmatized and negatively perceived by other employees. Rudman and Mescher (2013) and Vandello et al. (2013) indicate that men may be reluctant to request these flexible options, believing that they may undermine their masculinity, since work-life balance is mostly associated with caregiving and the woman’s role in the family. However, by emphasizing ‘parents’, these organizations were contributing toward the removal of institutionalized constraints which, according to Pedullaa and Thébaud (2015), affect gender equality in the workplace and, more broadly, caregiving responsibilities.

As another dimension of diversity, youth was particularly important to organizations with higher proportions of mature-aged employees, in order to achieve a better mix of generations. Some were also eager to recruit young employees such as recent graduates to groom them as future leaders. Thus organizations did not generally view ‘youth’ as a disadvantaged group, but more as a beneficial resource. Yet when youth also had other characteristics such as poverty and LGBTI
status, some perceived them as disadvantaged groups requiring support. A standout example of this was the support offered by some to young employees who belonged to sexual minorities (LGBTI) to overcome the emotional strain of ‘coming out’, including mentoring and counselling. Another was the sponsorship of ‘It Gets Better’ by some organizations, a worldwide movement helping LGBTI youth cope with the stress associated with identifying and owning their sexuality.

As evidenced in this study’s findings, intersectionality of diversity was recognized by some organizations. Thus employees with a combination of diversity characteristics were seen as experiencing distinct disadvantages, as previously highlighted in studies (e.g., Alberti, Holgate & Tapia 2013; Carbado et al. 2013; Syed & Pio 2009). For instance, women subject to domestic violence were recognized as a distinct category from mainstream women, and LGBTI youth were considered to have different disadvantages to those of LGBTI employees.

Overall, the findings indicated that organizations were responsive to societal issues and were willing to recognize several emerging disadvantaged groups, including those with a combination of characteristics (intersectionality of diversity). This represents the emergence of just and fair employment and social outcomes, signifying organizational recognition of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups that are often unseen and unheard. However, it would appear that more needs to be done, as these groups are yet to gain the benefits of robust organizational policies and interventions, and have not yet received the attention of the wider corporate community. Furthermore, there is a dearth of academic conceptualization regarding workplace-related experiences and outcomes of the emerging dimensions, including intersectionality of diversity in Australian workplaces. Focusing on these areas both in academia and in practice is vital for further development of diversity management in Australia.

8.4.1.4. Australian organizations implemented several diversity management practices in response to workforce heterogeneity

This study uncovered a spectrum of diversity management practices implemented, most often integrated with HR management in the areas of recruitment, training, development and career progression, employee engagement and wellbeing, and rewards management. Several studies (Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernández & Sánchez-Gardey 2012; Cox & Blake 1991; Groeneveld & Van de Walle 2010; Murray & Syed 2005; Pearson & Daff 2011; Shen et al. 2009) highlight the
importance of aligning HR practices with the needs of diverse employees to ensure they are not disadvantaged, because HR practices have been traditionally designed to meet the needs of mainstream employees. The HR-related diversity management practices identified in this study are broadly similar to those classified as tactical- and operational-level HR practices in the diversity management model developed by Shen et al. (2009).

Another set of diversity management practices identified here fell within the scope of CSR, including sponsorships, participation in external events, supporting needs of disadvantaged clients, customers and society members, and contributions made to diversity management knowledge. While Shen et al.’s (2009) model does not include such practices, Mor Barak (2011) and Kramar (2012) argue that CSR is an important element in diversity management. Mor Barak (2011) emphasizes that diversity interventions should involve not only individuals and groups in an organization, but also under-privileged groups in the community; Kramar (2012) notes that the embedding of CSR into diversity management is a recent trend which projects a more comprehensive approach. Consistent with these two views, this study argues that the incorporation of CSR will enrich the process of diversity management.

Leadership commitment was found to be a significant enabler and valued by the organizations when implementing diversity management practices. This finding is consistent with several previous studies (Ashikali & Groeneveld 2015; Sabhrawal 2014; Slater, Weigand & Zwirlein 2008; Wentling 2004) that highlight the importance of leadership commitment for the successful implementation of diversity management practices. Diversity management initiatives were linked to the strategic agendas of some of these, consistent with Slater, Weigand and Zwirlein (2008) and Wentling (2004), who emphasize the importance of establishing a coherent link between diversity management and organizational strategy.

In this study, some organizations had specific committees to implement and monitor the progress of diversity management initiatives. While most assigned diversity management to HR managers, some of the larger organizations had designated diversity managers. A trend was visible where diversity management was posited as a specific area of expertise.

A key finding was that several organizations emphasized the importance of measuring the success of diversity initiatives. Employee feedback was regarded as a highly effective mechanism. Other
metrics included internal and external audits, employee demographics, and rates of return from maternity leave. This study also found that setting targets or quotas was uncommon, other than for gender and, in some, for indigenous recruitment, although most were committed to having a workforce representative of the demographic of the community or the clients.

From a justice and fairness perspective, it is vital that social identities and the associated power structures influence how organizations respond to diverse employees. Diversity management practices should take into consideration the unequal regimes often existing in workplaces due to power disparities within human diversity. Furthermore, organizations’ increasing emphasis on diversity management and the realization that traditional HR practices cannot address complex issues based on employee diversity are aspects that contribute toward justice and fairness in the workplace. The increased emphasis on CSR-related diversity management practices as revealed in this study aligns with the arguments of some scholars such as Mor Barak (2011) that organizations are corporate citizens that have a responsibility toward disadvantaged members of the workforce and to society. It is therefore progressive that several organizations have recognized this obligation and implemented CSR initiatives in pursuance of creating societal equality.

**8.4.1.5. Diversity management may not be a priority item on the management agenda in some Australian organizations**

The way diversity management and EEO were linked in some organizations, and the absence of comprehensive diversity policies and how it was approached by the multinationals raises the question of whether diversity management is a priority for some organizations.

- **Australian organizational views of the linkage between diversity management and EEO**

Most organizations drew a close link between EEO and diversity management, which supports Strachan, Burgess and French (2010), who assert this close connection within the Australian context. Several organizations viewed diversity management and EEO as two distinct but complementary processes, where one enhances the other, while others viewed them as one combined concept. Legal compliance requirements and voluntary organizational interventions were amalgamated in the policy documents of these latter organizations. In contrast, a clear distinction between EEO and diversity management was evident in other organizations, where legislative obligations under EEO and voluntary initiatives under diversity management were
considered distinct concepts. Diversity management in these was viewed as an intervention to achieve business outcomes in an economic sense, while EEO was purely a legal obligation where minimum standards of compliance were sufficient.

As argued by Burgess, Henderson and Strachan (2005), the legal system alone is inadequate to instill equality in the workplace. Thus, from a justice and fairness perspective, organizations should draw a linkage between EEO and diversity management. In this way elements of fairness and equality can be embedded into diversity management, prompting organizations to consider disadvantages faced by minority employees and broader issues of social justice outside the legal restrictive ambit of EEO legislation. In contrast, a strict demarcation between EEO and diversity management, where organizations focus on meeting the bare minimum legal requirements under EEO and value diversity for economic benefits, may incline organizations to overlook disadvantages faced by minorities. Notably, several scholars have argued that Australian organizations are yet to create inclusive workplaces, and raised concerns that many adopt a compliance-based approach to diversity management (Davis, Frolova & Callahan 2016; D’Netto et al. 2014; Strachan, Burgess & Sullivan 2004; Syed & Kramar 2009). Thus incorporating EEO into diversity policies, and projecting the two concepts as complementary, will pave the way to encompass justice and fairness and enable harmonious and conducive workplaces for diverse employees. Importantly, such an approach will encourage organizations to move away from a narrow legal compliance approach to diversity management.

- *Lack of diversity policies in Australian organizations*

The study found that diversity policies were still evolving in some organizations that were still at the developmental stage. In contrast, other organizations had well-developed diversity policy documents, which were shared with the researcher during data collection. This scenario indicates that Australian organizations are at different stages in their diversity journeys, with corresponding policies still evolving in some workplaces. At the time of data collection, a few organizations did not even have basic policies relevant to legislative compliance under EEO to address critical areas such as discrimination and harassment in the workplace. While such lack of policies may not mean an organization condones discrimination and harassment, it is an indication that it is oblivious to the pivotal role it must play in advancing and creating awareness of basic human rights among its workforce.
A few organizations referred to EEO policies that contained the bare minimum legislative requirements as diversity policies. A possible explanation for this is a lack of appreciation of the differences between diversity management and EEO. Alternatively, it may denote a conscious choice by these organizations to consider diversity management and EEO as the same, meaning a narrow compliance-based approach to diversity management.

From a justice and fairness perspective, it is a concern that some organizations have not yet formulated appropriate diversity polices. The absence of such policies raises the question of whether diversity issues were a priority in these organizations, as policies often form the basic framework for managerial interventions. Furthermore, such policies provide guidance to staff, as to how they should contribute to organizational priorities and conduct themselves in the workplace.

- **Multinationals were less attentive to host-country diversity issues**

According to this study, most multinationals showed a lack of commitment toward addressing diversity issues affecting disadvantaged and under-privileged groups in Australia. It appeared that they did not to prioritize the local (Australian) diversity context when formulating such policies. Instead, global diversity policies were applied to Australian establishments, without any changes to reflect the Australian context. For example, diversity policies of multinationals did not reflect demographic dimensions such as indigeneity and multiculturalism. This finding confirms the assumption of Kramar (2012), who argues that multinationals in Australia may have a propensity to disregard the diversity context by merely transferring the policies of the home company to the host country.

Several diversity management practitioners indicated a lack of support from their global head office as a barrier to implementing diversity initiatives in Australia. For multinationals, a key area of focus was the diverse nationalities that formed their global workforce. Disadvantaged and under-privileged groups in host countries appeared less important. The diversity policies and practices in the multinationals were less robust compared with those of most Australian-owned organizations. Viewed through a justice and fairness lens, it is a concern that multinationals are less interested in addressing diversity issues, including inequality in the workplace. In this study, multinationals were less inclined to contribute toward social development by improving the status of disadvantaged and under-privileged groups in Australian society.
8.4.2. Justice and Fairness Relevant to Managing Diversity in Australian Workplaces

The case studies reported in Chapter 7 provided insights into how justice and fairness are linked with diversity management in Australian workplaces. Findings are discussed here in relation to the second subsidiary research question: How do diversity management practices in Australian organizations reflect justice and fairness in the workplace? First, how justice and fairness is reflected in Australian organizations when managing diversity is presented, followed by discussion on how it legitimizes diversity management.

8.4.2.1. Justice and fairness met at different levels by Australian organizations when managing diversity

The two rationales for diversity management in mainstream diversity research – the moral and business cases – existed across organizations, with a dominant paradigm present in each. For example, a strong economic rationale due to a business downturn drove one organization to abandon its disability employment program as an austerity measure, even though the cost of it was negligible. In contrast, despite an economic downturn, another organization continued to focus on its diversity efforts, motivated by social justice. Thus, even though Kramar (2012) argued that diversity management in Australia favours the business case rationale, this study’s finding have not clearly established such dominance.

More contemporary issues of social justice greatly influenced the diversity management programs of some organizations, particularly those where Senian principles were visible. In contrast, despite some concern for social justice, economic gains appeared to be the overarching motivation for managing diversity in some others more aligned with Rawlsian principles. In these latter, there was a propensity to undermine equitable outcomes for disadvantaged groups by justifying benefits to the overall organization.

Other researchers such as Goodman (2001), Hiranandani (2012), Jones et al. (2013), and Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat (2013) highlight the importance of linking social justice with diversity management practices. Similarly, this study found organizations to be sensitive to the needs of disadvantaged employees at varying levels. This included implementing initiatives to address issues of power disparity, institutionalized oppression and psychological safety of minority
employees. Some organizations addressed social justice issues at the macro level, including active involvement in preventing domestic violence, bridging the gap for indigenous Australians, standing against racism, advocating LGBTI rights, supporting education and uplifting employability skills of disadvantaged groups. Such organizations were not only addressing inequality within the workplace, but also advocating social changes to promote inclusive communities. However, the intensity of organizational responsiveness to both internal and macro level issues varied. In particular, organizations more aligned with Senian principles of justice showed a higher overall level of concern for disadvantaged groups, and were actively involved in eradicating organizational and societal barriers that perpetuate inequality.

Another significant finding was that the four elements of organizational justice – distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational – were visible in those organizations where diversity management aligned with the Senian notion of justice. Several scholars (Buengeler & Den Hartog 2015; Choi & Rainey 2014; Downes, Hemmasi & Eshghi 2014; Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat 2013; Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016; Kim & Park 2016; 2017; Ledimo 2015) argue that organizational justice principles are central to diversity management, suggesting its success is determined by its effectiveness in addressing unfairness in heterogeneous workplaces. This study’s findings suggest that diversity management underpinned by Senian principles is an effective approach that instils justice and fairness by delivering all four elements of organizational justice.

Overall, this study identified diversity management interventions consistent with Sen’s notion of justice as a robust approach, delivering a higher level of justice and fairness through embedding both organizational and social justice. This is a significant finding, as the literature had not previously explored justice and fairness incidents of diversity management practices implemented by Australian organizations.

8.4.2.2. Embedding elements of justice and fairness offered legitimacy to diversity management

Embedding the Senian principles not only enables the achievement of a higher level of justice and fairness perceptions, but also adds legitimacy to the diversity management process. In the literature, both the business and moral case approach to diversity management have been subject to criticism. For example, an approach ingrained in social justice that considers only employee benefits is difficult to justify (Tomlinson & Schwabenland 2010), could trigger resistance, and
lead to backlash and stigmatization of minority employees (Olsen & Martins 2012). Likewise, the business case approach has also been condemned for disregarding the need to create fair and just workplaces for marginalized groups (Gotsis & Kortezi 2013; Greene & Kirton 2011; Jones et al. 2013; Jones & Stablein 2006; Noon 2007; Strachan, Burgess & French 2010; Syed & Kramar 2009; Syed & Ozbilgin 2009). Gotsis and Kortezi (2013) argue that the business case rationale underpinned by economic benefits places the very existence of diversity management at risk, because, if such gains are not realized or if short-term results are not achieved, the continuation of diversity management programs is jeopardized.

A critical issue with the business case approach, as discussed in section 2.6.1 of Chapter 2, is that research has been inconclusive on the diversity–performance link. Researchers such as Syed and Kramar (2009) and Noon (2007) have pointed out that the business case approach undermines justice and fairness to marginalized groups. For these reasons, relying on the business case rationale is not feasible. Researchers such as Bleijenbergh, Peters and Poutsma (2010) argue that diversity management programs lacking equality and fairness principles may fail due to employee resistance. Ryan and Wessel (2015) emphasize that diversity-related fairness perceptions are increasingly becoming important not only to marginalized groups but also to mainstream employees that expect organizations to have non-discriminatory practices and cultures of fairness. Such predicaments have shown that an alternative approach to diversity management is required. In response, several scholars (Kramar 2012; Mor Barak 2011; Olsen & Martins 2012; Tomlinson & Schwabenland 2010) advocate a dual-value approach of both the business case and the social justice rationale. Yet this also raises problems, such as those highlighted by van Dijk, van Engen and Paauwe (2012), who argue that there could be difficulty identifying which of the two streams emerging from opposing moral perspectives of utilitarianism and deontology should take precedence in the event of a conflict.

Despite such concerns, this study identified that a justice and fairness approach to diversity management, as visible in those organizations aligned with Senian principles, has the capacity to address such issues of legitimacy. Those organizations that aligned with the Senian principles fundamentally acknowledged the existence of social disparities and unequal power regimes due to social stratification. Thus a concern for equality and fairness was at the core of their diversity management. As all four elements of organizational justice were visible in
these organizations, it could be argued that minority employee expectations of a just and fair workplace were met. These organizations emphasized a fair and just culture and climate, fulfilling employee expectations of a non-discriminatory workplace.

Importantly, a justice and fairness approach to diversity management influenced by the Senian principles is not necessarily inconsistent with the business case rationale. Such an approach could eliminate the ‘inhumane nature’ of the stringent application of the business case, where diverse employees are valued based on their contribution to the bottom line. As is well-established from the research discussed in section 3.4.1 of Chapter 3, organizational justice contributes to improved employee performance. Several recent studies (Buengeler & Den Hartog 2015; Buttner, Lowe & Billings-Harris 2010; Choi & Rainey 2014; Huong, Zheng & Fujimoto 2016; Kim & Park 2017; Mamman, Kamoche & Bakuwa 2012; Otaye-Ebede 2016) have established that perceptions of justice among minority employees enhance organizational performance via positive employee behavior. Thus framing diversity management through a justice and fairness perspective in the traditions of Sen would enable organizations to achieve higher performance levels among minority employees, making a positive contribution toward the bottom line. Notably, linking diversity management with organizational justice is useful for establishing a link between diversity and performance.

It is further argued that minority as well as mainstream employees show less resistance to diversity management programs that embed justice and fairness aligned with Sen’s principles. For example, organizations that demonstrated Sen’s principles of justice focused on building capabilities at both individual and organizational levels to create parity and equal opportunity, as opposed to giving preferential treatment to minority employees (e.g., quota recruitment systems), which could lead to stigmatization and backlash. Furthermore, providing the opportunity for ‘employee voice’ and involving minority employees in resolving issues that concern them, as characterized by the Senian principles, is empowering rather than stigmatizing. Capability building in the relevant organizations included creating awareness of diversity issues, such as those affecting minority employees, as well as organizational issues such as institutional barriers that perpetuate disadvantages, and societal issues concerning social stratification. Encouraging the involvement of mainstream employees in such diversity-related initiatives was evident, underpinning the
motive to change attitudinal issues of employees and thus address issues of resistance from mainstream employees.

This study found that both minority and majority employees, customers of the organization and society in general were regarded as stakeholders by those organizations that depicted Sen’s notion of justice. This aligned with Freeman’s (1984, p. 46) stakeholder definition of “any group who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives”. Such organizations strived to meet the justice and fairness expectations of a wider category of stakeholders. Thus embedding elements of justice and fairness into the diversity management process contributes to the sustainability of organizations as respected corporate entities that meet justice and fairness concerns of a wider group of stakeholders.

8.4.3. Justice and Fairness Framework for Managing Diversity

This section discusses key attributes within a justice and fairness approach to diversity management, as evidenced in the organizations in this study that demonstrated Senian principles, and also presents a justice and fairness model for managing diversity. The corresponding justice and fairness attributes uncovered in this study are recommendations for organizations to better manage diversity in the workplace. The findings discussed here address this study’s primary research question: How do justice and fairness frame diversity management in organizations?

8.4.3.1. Key attributes of the justice and fairness framework

- Social inequality
A diversity journey underpinned by justice and fairness first requires recognition of inequalities arising from social stratification that defines unequal power structures between the privileged and under-privileged. A justice and fairness approach inherently recognizes that such inequalities and associated societal barriers affect employment-related outcomes as well as the wellbeing of identifiable groups.

In identifying such minority groups, justice and fairness requires organizations to embrace not only the main demographic groups, but also emerging dimensions in a given society and
intersectionality of diversity. Power disparities between the privileged and underprivileged, and societal barriers affecting the under-privileged, are often reflected in the attitudes and behaviours within workplaces. Thus a justice and fairness approach to diversity management acknowledges that society and organizations, which are social institutions, are not always fair.

- Organizational inequality

The justice and fairness framework for managing diversity is not only influenced by societal but also by organizational factors that perpetuate and aggravate inequality. Under-representation of certain groups in the workplace is a matter of concern within a justice and fairness framework, highlighting the need for organizations to review underlying factors in the workplace that give rise to inequality, rather than mere representative statistics. Organizational processes, practices and policies, values, climate and the overall culture of the organization are therefore subject to scrutiny under a justice and fairness framework.

Furthermore, a justice and fairness framework is characterized by the questioning of ‘fairness’ within the organization. Such organizations are not afraid to acknowledge potential unfairness, and constantly question the status quo and explore relevant incidents, ranging from grave issues such as discrimination to more subtle issues such as unconscious bias. Inspired to become an employer of choice for diverse employees, including the disadvantaged and under-represented in the workforce, identifying and addressing issues of unfairness becomes a priority and a continuous journey for such organizations.

In general, the justice and fairness approach means that organizations are eager to eradicate unequal regimes underpinned by unfairness founded on organizational factors, such as organizational practices, structures and job designs, work arrangements, physical facilities and artefacts, policies, organizational culture, non-inclusive language, and persistent employee attitudes and behaviours. Such organizations also often strive to address unfairness issues beyond workplace boundaries, including proactively engaging in social movements. Thus not only organizational change but also societal change that stimulates inclusivity is integrated into a diversity agenda framed by justice and fairness.
• Capability development

One of the main enablers in a justice and fairness approach to managing diversity is capability development. Such efforts focus on enhancing the capabilities of under-represented or disadvantaged employees to equip them to access the same workplace-related opportunities and outcomes as other staff members. This is where organizations implement numerous initiatives for skills development, including training, mentoring and confidence building, as well as providing facilities such as accessibility options for employees with disability, and being sensitive and responsive to the diverse needs of diverse employees. Minority employees are also provided with networking opportunities through affinity groups in order to address such issues as isolation and low confidence levels. Such initiatives enhance the capabilities of employees of disadvantaged groups and contribute toward a level playing field in the workplace.

Capability development within a justice-and-fairness-driven system also extends to employees deemed privileged or who occupy leadership positions, and who generally belong to the privileged majority. In this context, creating awareness about diversity management issues such as the challenges minority employees often face in the workplace and in society (for example, discrimination and unconscious bias), contribute toward building the diversity capabilities of leaders and mainstream employees. Such capability building minimizes adversities such as attitudinal issues and resistance from mainstream employees to diversity management initiatives.

Capability development of leaders is integral in a justice and fairness framework, as their involvement is critical in addressing issues of unfairness. Respectful behavior toward minority groups and being sensitive to their needs are essential leadership attributes. Accordingly, diversity capabilities form part of leadership development. It is critical that those with managerial responsibilities are capable of managing and leading diverse employees including those deemed as disadvantaged and vulnerable.

Organizational capabilities to address diversity issues can be strengthened by establishing forums and engaging experts. Mandatory employee training on critical aspects of diversity such as EEO and anti-discrimination, involvement of employees in diversity-related
initiatives, and communication of diversity policies and action plans across the organization can help build both employee and organizational capabilities.

‘Learning’ is important in a justice-and-fairness-driven approach to diversity, as it paves the way for improving both individual and organizational capabilities. Thus awareness raising and education across all organization levels underpin the justice and fairness approach to managing diversity, where capability development is approached in a holistic sense, encompassing employees, leaders, managers and the overall organization. Lastly, capability development also extends to the macro environment, where organizations actively engage in enhancing the skills and confidence of disadvantaged groups via schools, universities and communities, to increase their chances of securing meaningful employment.

- Employee voice

The collective voice of employees may not necessarily capture the voice of minority employees, which means their concerns, issues and viewpoints may go unheard. This denies organizations the opportunity to address issues that concern minority employees and undermines their ability to create inclusive workplaces. For minority employees, ‘being heard’ is critical, because it facilitates opportunities to voice their concerns and makes visible incidents of unfairness they often silently encounter but to which the organizational hierarchy is otherwise oblivious. Thus the denial of a voice often creates injustice for disadvantaged and under-privileged employees. Encouraging minority employee voice is fundamental to justice and fairness in the workplace. A fair and just system of managing diversity provides the opportunity for minority members to be heard and ensures that the information escalated to the hierarchy of the organizations is authentic.

Employee voice is most genuine and authentic when employees feel ‘safe’. Organizations should therefore carefully consider the mechanisms for capturing workplace voice, as minority employees often feel vulnerable and lack confidence to discuss their concerns. The main channels that can be used to capture the voice of minority employees include surveys, meetings, focus groups, discussions with line managers and complaints and grievance procedures. Employee affinity and network groups can also communicate the collective voice of the minorities they represent.
Capturing the voice of minority employees not only provides organizations with valuable input regarding the perceptions of diverse employees, it also enables them to identify the gaps and formulate robust diversity and inclusion strategies. Diverse employee perceptions enable organizations to measure the diversity climate in the workplace.

A justice and fairness framework not only provides mechanisms to capture workplace voices, but also conveys genuineness and trustworthiness based on the uncompromised psychological safety of minority employees. Hence, instead of a sense of fear or threats of repercussion, organizations guided by a justice and fairness framework convey care and concern where employees feel safe and confident to discuss concerns.

- **External and internal reviews**
A justice and fairness approach to managing diversity demonstrates the willingness of organizations to seek reviews by internal and external parties. Thus, in addition to using employee voice for gauging perceptions of the diversity climate, reviews such as diversity audits, accreditations and progress reviews of diversity plans provide input regarding the organization’s performance under its diversity agenda and help identify gaps. Such data can then be rigorously analysed to identify issues and causes of unequal treatment and unfairness. Reviews are also opportunities for learning, measuring and benchmarking, where organizations can realistically assess where they are in the diversity journey and identify where they need to go. Overall, a robust process of reviews, consisting of a mix of external and internal reviews, contributes to the accurate assessment of the diversity culture and climate, and provides valuable input to formulate strategies to improve justice and fairness within organizations.

- **Stakeholder focus**
Diversity initiatives under a justice and fairness framework encompass a number of stakeholders. In this context, while employees from disadvantaged or under-represented groups are the primary stakeholders, the overall employee population, potential employees, customers, the community and society are also considered stakeholders. Thus, while diversity programs mainly address the needs of employees within identified groups, they also accommodate the needs of mainstream employees, including extending facilities such as work-life balance to the wider workforce. Organizations consider individual employee needs and adopt a flexible approach in terms of addressing them: a process that is deemed fair due
to its emphasis on ‘need’ rather than ‘entitlement’. Consequently, there is less resistance to diversity initiatives from mainstream employees, and it is also less stigmatizing for minority employees because a wider stakeholder group is involved.

Extended stakeholder focus also means that organizations strive to engage the community by participating in CSR initiatives in respect of disadvantaged societal groups. Creating awareness and highlighting diversity-related issues among stakeholders is also part of a justice and fairness approach in managing diversity. For this purpose, organizational websites, event sponsorships, public forums, and training and awareness campaigns are often the channels used by organizations to share diversity information.

Such organizations are conscious that not only employees but also other stakeholders such as customers, suppliers and the greater community expect them to behave and conduct affairs in a just and fair manner. Embracing a wider group of stakeholders, particularly the wider society, supports the organizational intent to effect social change in pursuance of addressing social inequality under the justice and fairness framework for managing diversity.

- Employee involvement and choice

In a justice and fairness context, employees are given options, with organizations acknowledging that their needs differ according to individual circumstances and lifestyle choices. Thus they offer employees an opportunity to make decisions regarding flexible working arrangements, career breaks, career choices and retirement options. Giving employees a choice is considered one of the main ways of empowering minority groups.

Providing employees with opportunities to be involved in initiatives and decisions that directly affect them is important within a justice and fairness framework. Minority employees can actively contribute to diversity initiatives through their involvement in committees and forums set up to implement diversity programs. In this way organizations are less likely to promote homogeneous ideals when developing diversity programs, addressing the issue that decision-makers who occupy the higher echelons are often homogeneous and represent the ‘privileged’ majority. When minority employees are actively involved in diversity programs and are empowered to influence the decision-making process, a sense of genuineness and fairness is created.
• Leadership commitment
Leaders play a pivotal role in creating and sustaining just and fair workplaces. Treating minority employees with respect and dignity is an important aspect in creating a just and fair climate and culture in organizations; thus it is important for leaders to demonstrate such behaviour. Those in leadership positions can demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity via active involvement in diversity programs, such as signing off on diversity policies.

Leadership representation is visible in the forums and committees that formulate and monitor the progress of diversity initiatives. Such leaders are also proactive in listening to the employee voice concerning issues affecting the wellbeing of minority employees. With diversity goals included in strategic plans, sustainability initiatives and CSR programs, which fall under the purview of leaders, leaders assume direct accountability for key diversity-related objectives. Corporate leaders become involved in external diversity-related initiatives, including serving on external committees that address diversity and equality issues.

• Open and transparent communications
The transparent sharing of information is a key part of the justice and fairness approach to managing diversity, including internally and with external stakeholders. Organizations are transparent regarding diversity policies and plans, the progress made and the findings from internal and external reviews. For example, annual reports, sustainability reports and diversity reports are made available to external stakeholders and the public, with such information also shared with employees through internal communications. Organizations share not only the successes but also the gaps that need to be addressed to create just and fair workplaces.

• Culture and climate of fairness
Organizational culture is an enabler in the creation of a just and fair workplace, and is also a core characteristic of an inclusive culture. From this perspective, an inclusive culture is where justice and fairness are revered in the treatment of employees and where they feel they are being treated fairly. By approaching diversity-related issues in a more humane manner, acknowledging specific employee needs and disadvantage situations, and seeking to address
societal and organizational barriers that affect wellbeing, a justice and fairness culture is established.

Valuing differences and demonstrating agile responsiveness to the diverse needs of a heterogeneous workforce is fundamental to a justice and fairness framework. As opposed to being ‘bound’ by rigid practices and processes, a justice and fairness framework requires a more flexible organizational culture. The ‘one size fits all’ approach will not work in a justice and fairness culture due to the differences inherent in human diversity. Furthermore, willingness to change and embrace fairness is important within a justice and fairness framework. This is where organizations recognize that culture change may be necessary to remove deep-rooted beliefs, attitudes and values that perpetuate workplace unfairness and inequality.

- Outcomes

A culture and climate of fairness brings about positive outcomes for minority employees, the organization as well as society. All four elements of organizational justice are evident in organizations that approach diversity management through a justice and fairness framework. Thus minority employees perceive fair and just treatment, which in turn contributes to employee wellbeing and enhanced performance. An organization’s reputation as an employer of choice for diverse employees is enhanced by adopting a justice and fairness approach to diversity management. The organization not only becomes a preferred employer but also a respected corporate citizen.

From a justice and fairness perspective, workplace parity and equality should take precedence over managing diversity for economic reasons. Economic outcomes can then instead occur through enhanced employee performance, as a natural consequence of justice and fairness in the workplace. Furthermore, a culture of justice and fairness can help attract, engage and motivate talented employees.

Overall, when a diversity strategy is framed by justice and fairness, including satisfying the four principles of organizational justice and contributing towards the achievement of social justice, there is increased organizational reputation and enhanced performance.
8.4.3.2. Justice and fairness model for managing diversity

The justice and fairness model for managing workforce diversity, as developed in this study, is illustrated in Figure 8.1 below. This model depicts the key elements of the justice and fairness framework, with the key drivers of social inequality and organizational inequality underscoring this framework. The key enablers are capability development, employee voice, internal and external reviews, stakeholder focus, employee involvement and choice, leadership commitment, and open and transparent communication. The resultant organizational changes are employee empowerment, employee perceptions of fairness, culture change, organizational agility, attitudinal and behavioural change, social consciousness and legitimization of the diversity management process in the organization. By embedding these elements, a justice and fairness culture is created within the workplace, with ensuing outcomes that are beneficial to minority employees, the organization as a whole and to society.
Figure 8.1. Justice and Fairness Model for Managing Diversity

Drivers
- Social inequality
- Organizational inequality

Drivers of diversity management
- Capability development
- Employee voice
- Internal and external reviews
- Stakeholder focus
- Employee involvement and choice

Enablers of diversity management
- Leadership commitment
- Open and transparent communication

Organizational Justice

Outcomes of diversity management
- Minority Employees
  - Employee wellbeing
  - Positive employee behavior
- Organization
  - Organizational reputation
  - Enhanced performance
- Society
  - Social change
  - Societal wellbeing

Organizational Changes
- Employee empowerment
- Employee perceptions of fairness
- Culture change
- Agile organization
- Attitudinal and behavioral change
- Social consciousness
- Legitimization of diversity management

Culture and Climate of Justice and Fairness
8.5. Conclusion

This study has addressed an important research gap in diversity literature, given the scarcity of research focusing on justice and fairness in the workplace. To this end, it has explored diversity management practices of Australian workplaces, and defined how justice and fairness frame diversity management in such organizations.

The study found that Australian organizations are mainly focused on six dimensions of diversity – gender, CALD, LGBTI, indigenous, disability, and mature-aged – which are the main demographic groups representing the contemporary population. While organizations considered these groups to be disadvantaged and numerous diversity management practices were correspondingly implemented, parity in employment outcomes has not been achieved. In addition to the six main dominant demographic groups, several emerging disadvantaged groups, including those with intersectionality of dimensions, have begun to gain recognition under diversity management. However, robust interventions were not present for these groups across organizations.

The level of intensity and focus with regard to the different dimensions of diversity varied across organizations. Some were mostly underpinned by the business case rationale for diversity, while others had a strong desire to achieve social justice. A close link between EEO legislation and diversity management appears to be a key feature of diversity management in Australia. Numerous diversity management practices were implemented by organizations, and, while most of these were integrated with HR management, CSR is also becoming another key aspect of diversity management.

The theoretical lens used in the study indicates that diversity management practices aligned with Sen’s principles deliver social justice as well as all four elements of organizational justice. Justice and fairness were met at a higher level in those organizations that demonstrated Sen’s principles of justice when managing diversity. Embedding justice and fairness enabled organizations to not only deliver equitable outcomes to employees but to also foster legitimacy in the diversity management process. This often enhanced the reputation of the organization and assured greater acceptance among a wider group of stakeholders. These results suggest a justice and fairness
framework is capable of enhancing organizational performance through positive employee behavior toward the organization.

An outcome of this study is the justice and fairness framework for managing diversity that evolved. While social equality and organizational equality are the main considerations that underpin this framework, it also consists of several elements that organizations should focus on when managing diversity: 1) capability development; (2) employee voice; (3) internal and external reviews; (4) stakeholder focus; (5) employee involvement and choice; (6) leadership commitment; and (7) open and transparent communications. Embedding these elements when managing diversity will result in: (1) employee empowerment; (2) employee perceptions of fairness; (3) culture change; (4) organizational agility; (5) attitudinal and behavioral change; (6) social consciousness; and (7) legitimization of diversity management in the organization. It will also propel positive outcomes to minority employees, as well as the organization and to society.

Lastly, this study provides significant insights for organizations, diversity management practitioners, leaders, managers and agencies involved in diversity management to create and foster just and fair workplaces. It highlights the importance of adopting a justice and fairness perspective when managing diversity.

By exploring how organizations manage diversity from a justice and fairness perspective, this research has extended the theories of diversity management and workplace justice, and provided practical advice to organizations and those involved in diversity management. Research to validate and extend these findings should further improve the justice and fairness framework for managing diversity, enabling a positive impact on organizations, employees and society.

8.5.1. Research Implications for Theory

The findings of the study extend the existing theoretical knowledge on diversity management, including the link between justice and fairness and organizational responsiveness to workforce diversity, an area that has received little attention. Choi and Rainey (2014) point out that, even though organizational justice and diversity management research have grown significantly in recent times, there is little interconnectedness between the two streams. This current study therefore contributes to an area where there is a dearth of research.
The study was guided by justice theory mainly in the traditions of Amartya Sen and organizational justice theory (Colquitt 2001; Greenberg 1993). To the researcher’s knowledge, there are no previous studies empirically investigating the diversity management practices of organizations under a holistic justice and fairness framework. Thus, in the absence of empirical research, these findings provide new knowledge about the field of diversity management in the context of social and organizational justice.

Furthermore, this study identified women, indigenous, LGBTI, disabled, CALD and mature-aged employees as the main dimensions of diversity in Australian workplaces. Consistent with Spaaji et al. (2014), this demonstrates that dimensions of diversity are fluid and influenced by societal issues. Accordingly, there were several emerging dimensions of diversity in this study, such as youth, mental illness, women subject to domestic violence, caregivers, parents, refugees, those of different religious faiths, those living in rural and remote areas, the economically disadvantaged, and the homeless. Intersectionality of diversity was also recognized, acknowledging that a combination of two or more disadvantages in an individual require specific support from organizations, which has also been suggested in other studies (Alberti, Holgate & Tapia 2013; Carbado et al. 2013; Syed & Pio 2009).

The study also found a multitude of diversity management practices, most of which can be categorized under the areas of HR management, CSR, organizational strategy and leadership. The study offers a comprehensive framework specifying examples of diversity management practices, and fills the research gap identified by Alcázar, Fernández and Gardey (2012) as a lack of a robust framework integrating diversity management and HR management. Furthermore, consistent with the views of Mor Barak (2011), Kramar (2012), it study shows how CSR aspects can be embedded into diversity management to enrich the process. These findings therefore expand the model of Shen et al. (2009) by linking CSR and leadership with diversity management practices in addition to HR management.

Importantly, this study provides insight into the role of justice and fairness in managing workforce diversity, adding to the findings of Fujimoto, Härtel & Azmat (2013), who argue that organizational-justice-based decision-making involving key stakeholders contributes to the achievement of diversity management objectives. While they focused on organizational justice, this study also considered social justice as an integral aspect of managing diversity, drawing a
coherent link between social justice, organizational justice and diversity management. Notably, this study has been based on empirical evidence, in contrast to the study of Fujimoto, Härtel, & Azmat (2013), which was conceptual in nature: the model they proposed is founded on a broad notion of managerial decision-making, whereas this study specifically focuses on diversity management practices in Australian organizations.

By conceptualizing diversity management via justice and fairness theory, this study also demonstrates that both social and organizational justice can be delivered by framing diversity management with the Senian principles of justice. The justice and fairness framework proposed here legitimizes the diversity management process, including upholding the organization as a legitimate corporate citizen. Furthermore, this study establishes that framing diversity management with justice and fairness is a superior approach to managing diversity, delivering organizational justice, social justice and enhanced organizational performance. Thus, a new framework for managing diversity has evolved as an outcome of the study.

In summary, the study contributes to the broad area of diversity research. More specifically, the findings expand the current body of knowledge in the emerging areas of diversity management and workplace justice and fairness research.

8.5.2. Research Implications to Practice

The justice and fairness framework that evolved here is an impetus to create much-needed justice and fairness culture and climate in workplaces. If Australian workplaces are to be more successful in the domain of diversity management, the justice and fairness framework developed here offers a robust and pragmatic approach. It offers flexibility to cater to a number of diversity issues and provides empirically-based guidelines to formulate, evaluate and monitor the success of diversity management initiatives and to justify diversity management as a strategic priority. It also bestows legitimacy on diversity programs from a multitude of stakeholders, and safeguards organizations and employees from dehumanization of labor due to managing workforce diversity devoid of concerns for justice and fairness particularly for minority groups.

For organizations, the study provides real-life examples of diversity management practices to emulate as best practice. This includes highlighting diversity challenges and barriers at
organizational, societal and individual levels. The insights gained will guide organizations and diversity management practitioners in resolving issues and better strategizing diversity management programs.

The findings will also help diversity practitioners develop skills and competencies and sharpen their expertise in diversity management. Insights in this study are expected to equip diversity managers to influence key decision-makers and promote the strategic importance of diversity management in the context of today’s heterogeneous workforce. Another contribution offered is that it provides insights for leaders and managers to develop diversity capabilities, to effectively lead and manage the heterogeneous workforce of contemporary organizations.

It is expected that the study will provide input to agencies such as the Diversity Council of Australia, the Equal Employment Opportunity Network of Victoria, WGEA and the Australian Network on Disability, supporting their efforts to promote inclusive workplaces in Australia.

Lastly, this study will contribute toward an equal regime of employment opportunities by encouraging and equipping organizations to remove systemic and institutionalized barriers. It is anticipated that organizations will be inspired to create just and fair workplaces and contribute toward the wellbeing of less privileged groups in society.

**8.6. Limitations and Directions for Future Studies**

There remain several limitations and suggestions to improve the rigour of future studies in this area.

The data for this study were obtained by interviewing diversity management practitioners with accountability for diversity management in organizations, and by examining organizational documents; none was obtained from employees. In future research, it is therefore recommended that employees’ perspectives be obtained to further validate and expand the justice and fairness framework for managing diversity. It is also important to ascertain the perspectives of leaders and line managers who lead heterogeneous organizations and teams to further expand the domain.

As this was a qualitative study, future research could use quantitative methods to ascertain a more coherent link between the components of the justice and fairness model for managing diversity. It
could also focus on developing a comprehensive set of measurements relevant to the justice and fairness framework developed and presented here.

Twenty-three Australian organizations spread across various industry sectors were included in this study. Future studies could examine different industry groups to ascertain whether there are similarities in the manner in which particular sectors approach diversity management. More insights can then be gained regarding factors that may influence the choice of diversity management strategies for different industries.

Lastly, future research should be conducted to validate the findings of this study. In particular, the justice and fairness model developed in this study should be tested to determine whether these findings can be replicated in other organizations.
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Appendices

Appendix A – Interview Protocol

Checklist for Management Interview

The following semi-structured approach will be used when conducting interviews with Diversity Managers/HR Managers representing the organisations selected for the study. Probing questions will be asked depending upon the responses of the interviewee to ensure that relevant data under the main themes of Diversity Management, Diversity Climate and Organisational Effectiveness are elucidated during the interview.

Broadly, as a guideline, the following interview protocol and sequence will be followed. However, based on the responses, the interviewer may decide to change the sequence, skip certain questions or ask probing questions to obtain relevant and substantial data required for the project.

1. Just to begin the interview, tell me a little bit about yourself, your organisation and your current role?

2. How would you describe your organisation’s performance over the last three years?

3. Who is the senior most officers responsible for workforce diversity in your organisation? Are there any other officers, groups or forums responsible for diversity related issues? Please describe the roles and responsibilities.

4. What are the diversity management initiatives your organisation has implemented or intends to implement in the near future?

5. What are the major objectives your organisation hopes to achieve through diversity management? Has the organisation already achieved any of these objectives? Please describe and explain.

6. How does your organisation measure the success of its workforce diversity management initiatives? Please describe and explain?

7. Generally, how would you describe the diversity climate in your organisation?
Letter of invitation to organisations

Invitation to participate in a research project on workforce diversity and organisational effectiveness

Project Title: Managing workforce diversity in Australia: Diversity management practices and organisational effectiveness in Australian organisations

Investigators:

Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator)

Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student investigator)

Dr Glenda Ballantyne (Associate Investigator)

Dr Lyndon Walker (Associate Investigator)

Pradeepa Dahanayake is doctoral student at the Faculty of Business and Enterprise, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia, studying Diversity Management in Australian workplaces. The project aims to examine diversity management practices in Australian workplaces and strives to provide insights and guidelines that are of pragmatic value for organisations when formulating their diversity management strategies.

We are seeking your assistance to identify the key drivers of workforce diversity that would bring about positive organisational and labour market outcomes and would like to invite your organisation to take part in the study.

We are hopeful that you would be willing to be part of this important study. If you are interested in participating or require further information, please contact the undersigned on the contact details listed below.

Thank you.

Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator)
Senior Lecturer in Management, Faculty of Business and Enterprise, Swinburne University of Technology, PO Box 218, Hawthorn, VIC 3122
Tel: 03 9214 4552
drajendran@swin.edu.au

Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student Investigator)
Faculty of Business and Enterprise, Swinburne University of Technology
PO Box 218, Hawthorn, VIC 3122
Tel: 0410941683
email: pdahanayak@swin.edu.au
Appendix C – Project Information Sheet

Project Information Sheet for Organisations and Management

Project Title: Managing workforce diversity in Australia: Diversity management practices and organisational effectiveness in Australian organisations

Investigators:

Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator)

Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student Investigator)

Dr Glenda Ballantyne (Associate Investigator)

Dr Lyndon Walker (Associate Investigator)

Introduction to the Project:

Pradeepa Dahanayake is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Business and Enterprise, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia, studying Diversity Management in Australian workplaces. The greater purpose of this study is to explore how Australian workplaces are managing workforce diversity and to identify gaps and effective organisational interventions that contribute to harmonious work cultures and productive organisations.

We are seeking your assistance to identify the key drivers of workforce diversity that would bring about positive organisational and labour market outcomes and would like to invite your organisation to take part in the study.

What we want to know

For the purposes of this study, we would want to know about workforce diversity and associated outcomes in your organisation through the organisational, management and employee perspectives. Therefore, the study will include the following:

- Collection of data relating to workforce demographics, organisational performance and categorisation - This would be done through a tabulated data sheet and will not take more than 30 minutes to be filled by an organisational representative using existing organisational records. (see the attached data sheets)
- Study of organisational documents - The investigators may request to examine existing organisational statements and policies relating to diversity management and organisational performance, such as the Diversity policy, Equal Employment policy, Diversity report, Recruitment and promotion policy, Annual Reports, etc.
- Management interview and survey – An officer who is responsible for diversity management in the organisation will be invited to participate in an interview which will take 1 – 2hrs and a survey, which will take no more than 10 minutes. The interview will be held at a place and time convenient to the participant, face to face or via telephone. The interview will be recorded and in addition, notes will be scribed by the investigators. The option is available to complete the survey online or on hardcopy. (see the attached interview checklist/guidelines and the management survey)
- Employee survey – a cross section of employees in the organisations will be invited to participate in a survey which will not take more than 30 minutes. The survey can be competed either online or on hardcopy basis. (see the attached employee survey)

**Free consent and Support available to participants**

Participation is voluntary. If any participant feels uncomfortable responding to any of the questions, or providing any information requested by the investigators, they have the right to refuse or withdraw from the study. At any point, if participants feel stressed due to recalling or reflecting upon workplace related experiences for the purposes of this study, they may phone Lifeline on 131114. All participants have the right to withdraw participation, data or material contributed at any time. The responses of management/employee participants or their refusal to participate shall not have any bearing on their employment.

Valid consent will be obtained from all participants through the following methods:

- Organisation and Management - by signing the attached consent forms
- Employee survey participants -by completion and return of anonymous questionnaire either online or via pre-addressed and pre-paid post.

**How we keep and publish data**

**Confidentiality:** All electronic data, documents and responses to the questionnaires will be either stored electronically in a password protected computer/electronic device or in hardcopy format in a locked cabinet, depending upon the format they were received, to be used later in the study. There will be the opportunity for follow up (over the phone, email or in person) after the interview to clarify any questions you may have or if the student investigator needs further clarification. Only the investigators identified in this application will have access to such data during this period, after which these will be disposed of as per the ‘Guidelines for Data Storage and Retention’, where questionnaires/documents will be shredded and electronic data storage devices will be reformatted.

Research outcome: The outcomes of the study will be published in a doctoral thesis, conference proceedings and journal articles. Anonymity of the participants will be assured and the organisation will not be identified without express written consent.

The investigators will make available a summary of the thesis to participant organisations at the conclusion of the doctoral thesis and the full thesis and publications that may arise out of this study can be made available to the organisation on request.

Who to contact

If you would like further information about the project, please contact:

Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator)
Senior Lecturer in Management,
Faculty of Business and Enterprise,
Swinburne University of Technology,
PO Box 218, Hawthorn, VIC 3122
Tel: 03 9214 4552
e-mail: drajendran@swin.edu.au

or

Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student Investigator)
Faculty of Business and Enterprise,
This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne’s Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact:

Research Ethics Officer, Swinburne Research (H68),

Swinburne University of Technology, P O Box 218, HAWTHORN VIC 3122.

Tel (03) 9214 5218 or +61 3 9214 5218 or resethics@swin.edu.au

Thank you for your time and support.

Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator) and Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student Investigator)
Appendix D – Organizational Consent Form

Permission letter from participant organisation

Letter of Authorisation

Project Title: Managing workforce diversity in Australia: Diversity management practices and organisational effectiveness in Australian organisations

Investigators:

Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student Investigator)
Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator),
Dr Glenda Ballantyne (Associate Investigator)
Dr Lyndon Walker (Associate investigator)

1. On behalf of: ……………………… (Name of Organisation)………………………………
   I hereby authorise the following official(s)/employee(s)/agent(s) to participate in the project in a representative capacity, the project’s particulars having been satisfactorily explained to me:

   Name of representative(s): …………………………………………………..…………

2. In relation to this project, please circle your response to the following:
   - I agree that s/he can be interviewed by the researcher   Yes/ No
   - I agree that the interview can be recorded by electronic device   Yes/ No
   - I agree that s/he can complete questionnaires relating to workforce diversity and organisational performance   Yes/No
   - I would like to check any transcription / citation in respect of my organisation’s involvement for accuracy   Yes/ No
3. Please circle your response to the following:

- I give my permission for the organisation to be named in any publication arising from the research  Yes/No

- I further give my permission for the named researcher(s) to access/analyse organisational records as requested / and conduct an employee survey  Yes/No

- In permitting access/analyse de-identified organisational records as requested, the following / attached condition(s) apply:
  
  …………………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. I acknowledge that the data collected for the Swinburne project will be used for research purposes and not for direct profit. Research purposes may include publishable / peer reviewed outcomes.

Name of Person of Authority and Position: ……………………Signature & Date:

………………………………………………………………………………
Appendix E – Management Participant Consent Form

Management participant consent form

Project Title: Managing workforce diversity in Australia: Diversity management practices and organisational effectiveness in Australian organisations.

Investigators:
Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student Investigator)
Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator)
Dr Glenda Ballantyne, (Associate Investigator)
Dr Lyndon Walker (Associate Investigator)

1. I consent to participate in the project named above. I have been provided a copy of the project consent information statement to which this consent form relates and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. In relation to this project, please circle your response to the following:
   - I agree to be interviewed by the researcher  
     Yes  No
   - I agree to allow the interview to be recorded by electronic device  
     Yes  No
   - I agree to make myself available for further information if required  
     Yes  No
   - I agree to complete questionnaires relating to workforce diversity and organisational performance  
     Yes  No

3. I acknowledge that:
(a) my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation;
(b) the Swinburne project is for the purpose of research and not for profit;
(c) any identifiable information about me which is gathered in the course of and as the result of my participating in this project will be (i) collected and retained for the purpose of this project and (ii) accessed and analysed by the researchers for the purpose of conducting this project;
(d) my anonymity is preserved and I will not be identified in publications or otherwise without my express written consent.

By signing this document I agree to participate in this project.

Name of Participant: …………………………………………………………………………………

Name of Organisation: …………………………………………………………………………………

Position within Organisation …………………………………………………………………………

Signature & Date: ……………………………………………………………………………………

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Appendix F – Data Record Sheet

Investigators:
Ms Pradeepa Dahanayake (Student Investigator)
Dr Diana Rajendran (Chief Investigator)
Dr Glenda Ballantyne (Associate Investigator)
Dr Lyndon Walker (Associate Investigator)

1. Organisational information

Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Organisation</th>
<th>Public Sector</th>
<th>Private Sector</th>
<th>ASX listed</th>
<th>Not-for-profit</th>
<th>Other (pls specify)</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Geographical Spread</th>
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<td>Other</td>
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Table 1.2
Pls complete this section if the organisation has employees based overseas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No of employees worldwide</th>
<th>Total No of employees based in Australia</th>
<th>No of Australian employees based overseas</th>
<th>No of overseas employees based in Australia</th>
<th>Location of Global head office</th>
<th>Geographic spread (regions)</th>
<th>No of countries in group</th>
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Table 1.3

The vision/mission and values of the organisation (If MNC, state the global vision/mission in addition to the vision and mission of the Australian organisation)
### 2. Employee Information

#### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Australian Indigenous (Aboriginal, South Sea Islander, Torres Strait Islander)</th>
<th>First and second generation Australians</th>
<th>Expatriate employees</th>
<th>28 years or less</th>
<th>29-48 years</th>
<th>49-68 years</th>
<th>69 years or more</th>
<th>Disability status Note 2</th>
<th>Disability or special needs</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Sexual orientation Note 3</th>
<th>GLBT Note 4</th>
<th>Same sex partners</th>
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<td>Total</td>
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**Note 1 - Generations in Australia**
- **First generation Australians** - People living in Australia who were born overseas. This group of people includes Australian citizens, permanent residents and long-term temporary residents.
- **Second generation Australians** - Australian-born people living in Australia, with at least one overseas-born parent.

**Note 2 - Disability status** - Do not indicate the numbers in terms of employee category, but the aggregate numbers and/or "Yes", "No" responses

**Note 3 - Sexual orientation** - Do not indicate the numbers in terms of employee category, but the aggregate numbers and/or "Yes", "No" responses

**Note 4 - GLTB** - GLTB denotes the sexual orientation/preferences of individuals and stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Do not indicate the numbers in terms of employee category, but the aggregate numbers and/or "Yes", "No" responses.
### Table 3.1
Please indicate in numeric form. If your organisation tracks/reports these KPIs under different formats please provide us with the figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial year</th>
<th>financials</th>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>customer</th>
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<td>Revenue</td>
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### Table 3.2
Awards and accolades received by the organisation over the last three financial years

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<th>Financial year</th>
<th>Awards and accolades received by the organisation over the last three financial years</th>
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<td>Name of award</td>
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### Table 3.1
Innovation, new product development, new market segments and process improvements over the last three financial years (please provide a brief description)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial year</th>
<th>Innovation, new product development, new market segments and process improvements over the last three financial years</th>
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Appendix G – Ethics Clearance

SHR Project 2014/166 - Ethics clearance

Astrid Nordmann
Tue 29/07/2014 1:52 PM
To: Diana Rajendran <drajendran@swin.edu.au>
Cc: RES Ethics <resethics@swin.edu.au>; Pradeepa Dahanayake <pdahanayake@swin.edu.au>; Gienda Ballantyne <gballantyne@swin.edu.au>; Lyndon Walker <lwalker@swin.edu.au>

To: Dr Diana Rajendran, FBE

SHR Project 2014/166 Managing workforce diversity in Australia: Diversity management practices and organisational effectiveness in Australian organisations
Dr Diana Rajendran, Pradeepa Dahanayake, Dr Gienda Ballantyne, Dr Lyndon Walker - FBE
Approved duration from 30/07/2014 to 31/03/2016

I refer to the ethical review of the above project protocol by a Subcommittee (SHE3C2) of Swinburne’s Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC). Your responses to the review, as per the email sent on 28 July 2014, were put to the Subcommittee delegate for consideration.

I am pleased to advise that, as submitted to date, the project may proceed in line with standard on-going ethics clearance conditions here outlined.

- All human research activity undertaken under Swinburne auspices must conform to Swinburne and external regulatory standards, including the current National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and with respect to secure data use, retention and disposal.

- The named Swinburne Chief Investigator/Supervisor remains responsible for any personnel appointed to or associated with the project being made aware of ethics clearance conditions, including research and consent procedures or instruments approved. Any change in chief investigator/supervisor requires timely notification and SUHREC endorsement.

- The above project has been approved as submitted for ethical review by or on behalf of SUHREC. Amendments to approved procedures or instruments ordinarily require prior ethical appraisal/clearance. SUHREC must be notified immediately or as soon as possible thereafter of (a) any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants any newness measures; (b) proposed changes in protocols; and (c) unforeseen events which might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

- At a minimum, an annual report on the progress of the project is required as well as at the conclusion (or abandonment) of the project. Information on project monitoring, self-audits and progress reports can be found at: http://www.research.swinburne.edu.au/ethics/human/monitoringReportingChanges/

- A duly authorised external or internal audit of the project may be undertaken at any time.

Please contact the Research Ethics Office if you have any queries about on-going ethics clearance. The SHR project number should be quoted in communication. Researchers should retain a copy of this email as part of project recordkeeping.

https://outlook.office365.com/owa/?viewmodel=ReadMessageItem&itemID=AAAkAgznMzInNfLTYDN6D5DvMIGY2F1LigatedhYsQ7wzExYg...
Appendix H – Approval of Change of Thesis Title

18 October 2017

Pradeepa Dahanayake
32 Warnalong Ave
GREENSBOROUGH, VIC 3088 Australia

Student ID: 1735965

Dear Pradeepa,

Subject: Change of thesis title

I am writing to advise you that your application to change the title of your thesis was approved in accordance with the provision of the Research Training Statement of Practice.

The approved title is, as requested:
Managing workforce diversity: Framing justice and fairness in Australian organizations

Yours sincerely,

Graduate Studies
Swinburne Research
Swinburne University of Technology
Tel +61 3 9214 3886
Email HDR@swin.edu.au

cc. Diara Rajendran, Principal Coordinating Supervisor