

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices in interorganizational project: The case of Thames Tideway Tunnel project

Abstract:

This research aimed to provide insights into diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in a complex and multiple organizational setting – an interorganizational project. Data was collected through interviews, archival documents and visuals, using the case of the Thames Tideway Tunnel project in the UK. Content analysis has been used for the analysis. The findings provide evidence that both DEI adoption and DEI promotion are integrated into interorganizational projects. We identified six sub-themes of DEI adoption: natural process, demarginalization, philosophy of collaboration, inclusive leadership, supporting programs and anti-discriminatory policies. Moreover, the study presented evidence of four elements of DEI promotion: transforming macho culture, thinking outside the box, festivities and future making. The proposed DEI framework has several implications for DEI in interorganizational projects.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, DEI adoption, DEI promotion, Interorganizational project.

Introduction

“Diversity is variety; Equity is fairness and impartiality; and Inclusion is the incorporation or involvement within a group or structure” (Angel et al., 2021, p. 3853). In other words, we can say that diversity is “the range of human differences, encompassing the characteristics that make one individual or group different from another,” equity is “the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people achieved by intentional focus on their disparate needs, conditions, and abilities,” and inclusion is “the intentional proactive, and continuing efforts and practices in which all members respect, support, and value others” (Hess et al., 2024, p. 144). Businesses worldwide commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), which means creating equitable and inclusive workplaces where no one is discriminated against and all employees—regardless of background and demographics—can reach their potential (Ciuk et al., 2022). DEI is being embedded into the fabric of contemporary organizations (Feitosa et al., 2022), due to which organizations are adopting the DEI initiative to promote a culture in which everyone is valued and given equal opportunities to thrive (Feitosa et al., 2022; Khan & Jabeen, 2019).

DEI research focuses on diversity management (Yadav & Lenka, 2020), including HRM role and organizational policy directives such as recruiting/selection practices (Griffith & Combs, 2015), top leadership support (Chin et al., 2016), training (Kalinowski et al., 2013) for a diverse workforce and fostering an inclusive culture that values diversity. Another stream of research focuses on DEI’s impact on performance (van Bommel et al., 2024), DEI can enhance team performance (Mayo & Woolley, 2016), financial performance (Ahmed et al., 2018), organizational performance and social performance (van Bommel et al., 2024) result in greater creativity and innovation (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). Prior research focuses on challenges in managing diversity, equity and inclusion, including barriers such as management disengagement/resistance, lack of resources, and organizational regimes of inequality (Kirton & Greene, 2019) in areas such as pay, employment opportunities, fighting stereotypes and prejudice based on several factors such as gender, race, disability, religion and nationality (Legendre et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2021; Manoharan et al., 2021). Despite growing interest in DEI, the current research continues to report limited evidence, particularly in the hospitality and tourism industry (Madera et al., 2023), higher education (Keshtiban et al., 2023; Yi et al., 2024),

construction industry (Powell & Sang, 2013; Karakhan et al., 2021) and STEM (Noble et al., 2021). Moreover, the contemporary works on DEI put a strong emphasis on micro-level interactions (individual experience, group interactions) and macro-organizational approaches (organizational structure and governance) with limited regard for the interplay across organizational levels (Combs et al., 2019). To date, there is a lack of empirical research that explores DEI from organizational members' perspectives, which could shed light on its nuances and complexities as well as its impact on organizational and industrial culture and strategy.

Interorganizational projects are inherently temporary and complex, involving interdependent tasks (Jones & Lichtenstein, 2008) and typically engaging multiple organizations (Manning, 2017). The organizations involved in such projects lead to a multicultural environment — have members from diverse cultures, and countries and place different values. These disparities reveal themselves in the working relationships, cooperation and understandings of the individuals on the project team (Turnbull et al., 2010). Interorganizational projects provide an excellent setting in which to study DEI from organizational members' perspectives, where we can observe nuances, challenges and impact of it. For example, men dominate the construction workforce; in the United States, women make up only one-tenth of the total construction workforce (Navarro-Astor et al., 2017; Hickey & Cui, 2020). This demonstrates the lack of diversity and inequity. Furthermore, challenges related to masculinity, ethnicity, disability, and other stereotypes have adversely influenced the experiences of marginalized groups and minorities working on large projects (Powell & Sang 2013; Al-Bayati et al., 2017). For instance, In the UK construction industry, around two-thirds of people of color have reported that their race has impeded their career advancement. To make matters worse, 60% of all employees faced leaders' prejudice (Balch, 2019).

Interorganizational projects have a social responsibility to ensure that all individuals, regardless of origin or identity, have equal job prospects and fair treatment (Hon & Gamor, 2022). Project team members in the inclusive workplace are committed to their employment, which can boost productivity and reduce turnover (García-Rodríguez et al., 2020). Many countries, including the UK, have laws prohibiting discrimination based on traits like gender, race, and disability (Madera & Abbott, 2012). Thus, research on DEI can help such projects in identifying areas for improvement and developing strategies to build an inclusive workplace (Hon & Gamor, 2022). Despite the growing awareness of DEI, it is evident that there is limited research on DEI in interorganizational projects. The existing literature lacks an integrated approach that addresses this gap. A holistic understanding of DEI in interorganizational projects is vital. This study aimed to explore DEI adoption and promotion in interorganizational projects. This paper answers the following research questions:

- How is DEI adopted in interorganizational projects?
- How is DEI promoted in interorganizational projects?

In this study, interorganizational project is the unit of analysis. We considered the Thames Tideway tunnel as an interorganizational project. This project has made commitments to fostering DEI by investing in practices with an aim to improve the experiences of historically underrepresented groups (Dawson et al., 2024; Roberts, 2021; Triana et al., 2021). This study contributes to DEI in two ways: first, by identifying the steps taken to incorporate DEI, and second, by revealing the initiatives to promote DEI. The subsequent sections of this article will review the relevant theoretical background, describe the methodology employed, present the findings, and conclude with a discussion of the findings and their broader implications.

Literature review

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

Diversity is the presence of distinction within a specific context (Bowen & Blackmon, 2003). It can be defined as the variety of individual characteristics within a work unit (Roberson et al., 2017). The presence of differences in characteristics within a group makes individuals distinctive and unique (Ferdman, 2017; Marques & Dhiman, 2022; Roberson & Perry, 2022; Shore et al., 2018). Diversity may be on the surface or at a deep level. Surface-level diversity refers to observable diversity, whereas deep-level diversity refers to unobservable diversity (Harrison et al. 1998). Surface-level or observable diversity contains features of diversity that are plainly discernible and unchanging, such as race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, etc., while deep-level or unobservable diversity is represented in personality characteristics, attitudes, skills, experience, beliefs, values, etc. which are mutable and not readily recognizable, and which become evident through communication and direct interaction (Harrison et al., 1998; Milliken & Martins, 1996; Mor Barak, 2015; Roberson, 2019; Romansky et al., 2021; Stephenson et al., 2020). As a result, diversity initiatives were formed to minimize discrimination and impediments for underrepresented groups in terms of surface-level and, in some organizations, deep-level diversity, with the goal of reaping benefits through retention, favorable perceptions and innovativeness (Yang et al., 2022).

Diversity can produce both positive and negative outcomes. The distinction depends on the work environment and the degree to which diversity is managed or mismanaged. When diversity is effectively managed and the workplace promotes and encourages a varied workforce, employees from all demographic backgrounds feel included and believe their ideas, opinions and proposals are valued (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). However, when the work environment fails to encourage a diverse workforce, negative results might occur, such as an increase in harassment and discrimination (Schneider et al., 2000), turnover (McKay et al., 2007) and intergroup conflict (Jehn et al., 2008). In today's world, people from different diverse backgrounds come together in the workspace to pursue common goals or visions. Therefore, organizations need to acknowledge and handle all the differences (Marques & Dhiman, 2022).

Equity entails treating everyone fairly, irrespective of their similarities or differences (Livingston, 2020) in terms of both opportunity and outcome (Ferraro et al., 2023). Equity is defined as “the absence of systematic disparities between groups with different levels of underlying social advantage/disadvantage – that is, wealth, power, or prestige” (Chin & Chien 2006, p. 79). Equity refers to the support that employees receive in the workplace to grow within the organization, whether it is equal across groups or specialized to individuals or specific groups; it is viewed as fair to others inside the organization (Livingston, 2020). People come from a variety of backgrounds, and equity is a strategy to ensure that all people, regardless of identity, have the opportunity to learn, participate, be heard and contribute (Marques & Dhiman, 2022). The key is perceptions, and no group should believe that any other group is receiving preferential treatment, even if they are different (Russen & Dawson, 2024). In general, equity is a strategy that assures that everyone gets the same opportunity. Moreover, the terms equity and equality are adopted interchangeably. However, equity should not be confused with equality (Marques & Dhiman, 2022). Equality refers to the access and availability of the same resources or opportunities. Equity, however, recognizes that everyone is unique, but it does not imply treating everyone equally, but rather treating each individual based on their unique circumstances (Bernstein et al., 2020). ‘Equality is giving everyone a shoe. Equity is giving everyone a shoe that fits’ (Chheda et al., 2023, p. 248).

According to O'Donovan (2017), implementing equality alongside diversity initiatives will make them more beneficial. Equity is a changing perception that individuals have within the organization, which can be both favorable and unfavorable at the same time (Ferdman, 2017). Employees may feel that one item (training) promotes equitable treatment while another (development opportunities) does not. Equity allows diversity to serve as an advantage within the organization. Equity is a critical component in creating an environment in which individuals feel welcome and valued (and hence want to stay). Diversity without equality separates or segregates communities (Berry, 2016). To attain equity, it is critical to elevate practices that can help people transition from diversity to equity (Bernstein et al., 2020).

Inclusion is the extent to which individuals believe that the environment gives them a sense of belonging that allows them to be authentic (Jansen et al., 2014). Inclusion is defined as 'the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by others in a work system' (Pelled et al., 1999, p. 1014). According to Shore et al. (2011), inclusion is the degree to which an employee feels valued as a member of the work group as a result of receiving treatment that meets his or her desire for belonging and individuality. It contributes to creating an environment in which employees feel comfortable expressing their thoughts without fear of reprisal and with the assumption that a new or opposing position will be fully considered (Tracy et al., 2020). Inclusion is felt through contact with others, through one's attitude and behavior at work and through the norms, policies, procedures and values of the organization (Ferdman, 2017). Hence, employees feel involved and integrated within their organization (Roberson, 2006) by fostering and supporting practices that allow them to be completely themselves, with their differences and similarities to everyone else, while working collaboratively (Ferraro et al., 2023; Khan & Jabeen, 2019). People who feel connected to the organization's mission are more inclined to contribute their unique perspectives and talents, resulting in increased creativity and productivity (Hunt et al., 2015; Khan & Jabeen, 2019).

Diversity and inclusion are often mixed up and assumed to be the same terms (Shore et al., 2018). However, they are not the same. A focus on diversity can contribute to establishing distinction rather than a sense of belonging (Roberson, 2006). Through inclusion, diverse individuals are welcomed, cherished and respected when they are included in an organization or community. This is a basic human need (Maslow, 1943), as well as a right, and hence serves as a measure of a workplace's performance (Mor Barak, 2015; Randel et al., 2018). Mayers stated that 'diversity is being asked to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance' (Verna Mayers Company, n.d.). Furthermore, being asked to dance indicates that relationship building is essential. Nevertheless, inclusiveness is regarded as a critical objective of diversity practices (Leslie, 2019). Inclusion is important in allowing a diverse workforce to thrive, yet it cannot exist without diversity (O'Donovan, 2017). Inclusion without diversity can result in an oversaturation of similarities and simplified opinions (Shore et al., 2018), but inclusion entails more than simply accepting the points of view of others. It is about valuing distinct ideas and appreciating differences rather than simply tolerating them (Mor Barak et al., 2021). Diversity programs may be futile unless they are preceded by an analysis and implementation of cultural inclusionary values. Thus, the belief that diversity is the starting point and inclusion is introduced to get the most out of a diverse workforce leads to various fallacies concerning not only inclusion and diversity, but also equity (Russen & Dawson, 2024).

These terms are different but related. Diversity, for example, can be optimized by implementing equitable practices and creating an inclusive climate (Feitosa et al., 2022). Moreover, the importance of DEI in interorganizational projects has significantly increased due to

high gender disparity (Naoum et al., 2020), the high turnover rate (Ayodele et al., 2020) and the increased labor shortage across different work classifications (Thomas, 2013). Construction projects have no choice but to create an equitable, fair and welcoming work environment for people.

Interorganizational projects

In an interorganizational project, multiple organizations collaborate over a defined period to coordinate the supply of complex products, subsystems, and services (Roehrich et al., 2022). These projects tend to be larger in scale, longer in duration, more complex, and subject to additional legal, regulatory, and social scrutiny compared to intra-organizational projects (Söderlund et al., 2017). They also attract greater public and media attention and often have significant social impacts. Interorganizational projects are recognized as a unique organizational form (Manning, 2017), characterized by strong temporal delimitations and expectations of cooperation that may extend beyond the focal project (Fernandes et al., 2023; Ligthart et al., 2016; Sydow, 2022). Collaborative efforts by different organizations can produce outcomes that would not be achievable individually (Schulz & Geithner, 2010). These projects involve pooling resources and expertise, with each organization focusing on its core competency while others contribute complementary activities (Barringer & Harrison, 2000; Oliveira & Lumineau, 2017), creating interdependencies between the collaborating organizations (Braun & Sydow, 2019).

A key feature of interorganizational projects is temporality (Sydow & Braun, 2018), meaning that these projects have a clearly defined beginning and endpoint, known to all participants (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1998; Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). These collaborations are temporarily embedded, and it is less likely that project members have worked together before (Iftikhar & Wiewiora, 2022). Flexibility is another important characteristic. The structure of an organization is shaped based on the demands of the project or the needs of the client by the lead organization. Lead organizations often select organizations based on their suitability for the project, with partners adapting their involvement to meet evolving requirements (Ligthart et al., 2016). Since interorganizational projects are temporary organizational settings, they are inherently flexible and reconfigurable (Bechky, 2006).

Methodology

Research design

We used a single case study to develop a better insight into DEI in an interorganizational project. Case studies provide rich data and therefore make them suitable for answering research questions that require a deeper understanding (Hartley, 2004). Single case studies are of particular interest when inquiring about a novel phenomenon or unexplored situation (Yin, 2018). The Thames Tideway Tunnel in London, United Kingdom, is an excellent example of an interorganizational project that adopts and promotes DEI initiatives. This is evident from legacy strategy, hiring process and working environment where diverse team members share their views and create a multicultural project setting. We selected this case to explore how DEI is adopted and promoted— in an interorganizational project. Our research questions are addressed using an inductive approach.

Case description: Thames Tideway Tunnel project

In most parts of London, combined sewerage systems collect sewage, rainwater runs off from streets, gutters, and pavements in addition to sewage from toilets, sinks, showers, and washing machines. Sir Joseph Bazalgette designed the system we use today after Great Stink in 1858.

He designed his system to serve four million people by the mid-19th century. Due to the current population of approximately nine million people, the 1,100 miles of underground sewers are simply overwhelmed. Hence, to accommodate London's growing population, Thames Water is upgrading its sewer system. In constructing this 25km tunnel, sewage waste will be intercepted, stored, and eventually transferred away from the Thames, making it possible to address current pollution issues and provide a system that can handle future demands.

Nearly 95% of the construction work is completed on the project. Preparatory work on the project began in 2015 across 24 construction sites in London. The tideway is designed to last at least 120 years. In 2023, tunneling has been completed, followed by testing and commissioning in 2025. Project cost is estimated to be £4.5 billion (archival documents).

Data collection

The data were collected using semi-structured interviews, archival documents, and visual data. Semi-structured interviews were selected as a primary data-gathering method since they provide high-quality insights in real time. We used and analyzed archival documents and visual data to compare different sources of information, consider alternative explanations (Yin, 2018), and gain a deeper insight into the project's context.

Interviews

A total of 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 participants, ranging in duration from 45 to 102 minutes. As part of our study, we selected study participants according to a theoretical sampling process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to generate better insights and develop or expand our theory (Creswell, 2007). Senior leadership and middle management from client and utility suppliers, contractor and program managers were interviewed. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Archival documents

We utilized archival sources of data, acquired either through internet searches or provided by Tideway's official website, to gain adequate background knowledge of the case. A total of 212 internal and publicly available files have been collected from the archive. These include corporate news, financial publications, revenue statement, supply chain, government support packages and impact reports. Archival data helped us understand the case context better.

Visual data

Video data can provide unique insights into phenomena of interest by giving viewers a sense of the surrounding environment. Various research sources (Lave 1988; Scribner, 1984) have indicated that a better understanding of how people learn requires examining the interactions between individuals, artifacts, and social groups. An ideal way to capture and analyze context is through video, which provides comprehensively rich data in a format that can be viewed repeatedly (Asan & Montague, 2014). There are 86 publicly available videos ranging from 1.5 to 14 minutes available on YouTube (Tunnel vision) and Tideway website. In total 448 minutes of videos were transcribed (see Table 1 for details).

Table 1: Methods for data collection

Interviews					
Role of organization	Designations	Education	Project joined in (year)	Experience (years)	Interview duration (minutes)
Client	Chief Technical Officer	MBA	2012	39	102
	Head of Corporate Responsibility	-	2015	32	60
	Director of Strategy and Regulation	MSc.	2015	26	45
	Director of Business Services and HSW	MSc.	2016	21	58
	Program Manager	MSc.	2015	26	54
	Digital Communication Manager	M.A.	2017	16	53
	Internal Communication Manager	-	2017	9	51
Water supply and wastewater treatment organization	Head of Transformation	MBA	2014	45	67
Civil engineering- Contractor	Head of Health and Safety	-	2014	26	57
	Deputy Head of Health and Safety	-	2016	23	53
Civil engineering- Program manager	Program Director	MSc.	2015	28	45
	Project Manager 1	Meng	2017	14	53
	Project Manager 2	Meng	2015	8	55
	Schedule Integration Lead	BE	2019	12	55
Archival data					
Type of archival data	Details of archival data				Quantity
Corporate news	Financial reports Directorate changes Half yearly reports Others				29
Financial publications	Annual reports and financial statements Interim reports and financial statements Debt summaries Investor reports Holding company principles Supplementary prospectus Green bond reports and sustainable finance framework reports				129
Revenue statements	Revenue statements				13
Supply chain	Main contractor awards				13
Government support package	License award documents				11
Impact reports	Social impact Legacy assessment Community investment and fundings				12
PowerPoint presentations	Investor presentations				5
Visual data					
Videos	Execution of the project and DEI initiatives				86

Data analysis

For interviews, archival documents and videos, we followed conventional content analysis. As little is known about the DEI initiative in interorganizational projects, a conventional content

analysis is appropriate, to generate new understanding (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Specifically, the content analysis contains a reading of each of the interviews, documents and transcription of videos understanding and interpreting the text in the context, and, finally, coding and classifying the text (Krippendorff, 2004). The purpose of content analysis is to “classify large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). We followed Hsieh and Shannon’s (2005) guide for applying conventional content analysis. Interview and video transcripts and project documents were read over several times to gain understanding of the understudied phenomenon. Next, initial coding was done by highlighting the words from the text that captured key concepts. Then, coding was refined through a thorough notetaking of our impressions and thoughts. Finally, the conceptually similar codes were grouped into abstract categories.

Findings

DEI adoption

Our findings present six sub-themes to explore in DEI adoption: natural process, demarginalization, philosophy of collaboration, inclusive leadership, supporting programs and anti-discriminatory practices.

Natural process

DEI is seen as a natural process. In Tideway, we found that team members become part of a project without consciously thinking about the DEI. The idea behind it was to get the best people irrespective of their background. As illustrated below:

The team here is one of the most diverse teams that come from different nationalities and backgrounds. It’s something that I don’t think too much about, it’s just come together... I have employed the best person regardless of background or ethnicity you are, it’s just naturally happened. It just happens that we come from different backgrounds, and different ethnicities. (Head of Health and Safety, Contractor)

It is evident that in this organically diverse context, Tideway strives to create an inclusive environment where team members have equal opportunities and can be their best selves.

Demarginalization

Demarginalization is about bringing the marginalized people back into the workforce. In Tideway project, we found that demarginalization occurs by having more women, providing everyone a second chance, reaching out to those who are previously unemployed, returning to work after a career break, and persons with convictions. It is essential to provide work experience and job opportunities to people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and demographics. As illustrated below:

We have been looking for carrying ex-offenders and trying to get them back into the workplace. We are trying to get women back into the workplace, or anyone who’s taking an extended career break back into the workplace. (Program Manager, Client)

Construction and infrastructure industries are historically seen as male-dominant, and there is an institutional narrative about the need for more women. Tideway addresses this by demarginalization and employing more women. Moreover, a narrative, a talk, is seen essential for emphasizing and reinforcing the importance of equality and equal opportunities among workers.

Philosophy of collaboration

Philosophy of collaboration includes elements of communication, collaboration and coordination. In the Tideway project, we found evidence that it is essential to communicate and collaborate openly. Tideway is a good example that demonstrates employee voice behavior. As illustrated below:

Respect for people of different backgrounds and celebrate people of different backgrounds and collaborate... Everyone is encouraged to give their opinion, and everyone's opinion is valued and taken on board. (Digital Communication Manager, Client)

As evidence shows, Tideway responds to the wider institutional narrative by identifying and recognizing the challenges and debating about them internally with the team.

Inclusive leadership

Inclusive leadership plays an important role in adopting the DEI. Without their vision, support, and willingness to change, it would not be possible to achieve what has been achieved by Tideway in terms of DEI. As illustrated below:

We conveyed and communicated that “this is going to be a different project. We are going to do things differently. We are going to do things better. We are going to create an environment that is the best you have ever experienced”. We set several objectives around that, and we put a budget aside to make sure that that was achievable. So, at the very outset, it was about doing things differently. (Director of Business Services and Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Client)

The differentiation of the project provides a unique project identity that has been created internally through leadership and support from the team.

Supporting programs

There are different supporting programs that were introduced in Tideway project for adoption of DEI initiative. For example, Encompass group, returners' program and apprenticeship for young people to join Tideway all focused on DEI. As illustrated below:

We have an employee-led staff network called 'Encompass', which is our diversity and inclusion program, which looks at individual elements of diversity and inclusion. It looks at gender, it looks like multicultural faiths. It looks at disabilities, etc. So, through our Encompass program, we look at what challenges individuals are faced with, and how can we make life better for them? How can we make everyone feel included as part of Tideway? (Director of Business Services and Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Client)

Tideway clearly supports a wider institutional narrative and communities of practices. They are actively supporting DEI-related initiatives.

Anti-discrimination practices

When people from different backgrounds, countries, ethnicities etc., are working together in public, there might be chances to face discrimination. Tideway project makes sure that they would

not tolerate any racist and discriminatory behavior toward their employees, which represent a caring and responsible working environment. As illustrated below:

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination. We have had situations where we have had to call the police, where there's been discriminative behavior by residents, and we don't hold back. We support everyone on our site to make sure that they are supported. (Director of Business Services and Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Client)

This extreme practice allows the project to avoid any kind of discrimination in support of the DEI policy.

DEI promotion

Once DEI is adopted, the next important step is to promote DEI initiative throughout the project life and even subsequently. Tideway experienced changes during COVID-19, we found evidence that during COVID, the DEI initiatives were promoted as well. Accordingly, we find the sub-themes of transforming macho culture, thinking out of the box festivities, and future making.

Transforming macho culture

The construction industry has been seen as a male-dominated environment, and even in terms of race there are more white engineers. However, incorporating DEI initiatives, it transforms the macho culture into a caring culture. The idea is to care for and protect multicultural people. As illustrated below:

I think having a much more diverse team creates a much more caring, inclusive culture, and takes away the macho culture, where people are quite happy taking risks. DEI creates a much more caring culture, where everyone is looking out for each other... The core value of ours is protecting people... We said we are going to pay everybody for the period we stopped working during COVID-19. Even if people can't work, we are going to pay them, just so that they've got their livelihood protected. (Program Director, Program Manager)

Tideway is an example that promotes DEI by providing well-being activities and practices for employees.

Thinking out of the box

Thinking out of the box is essential for promoting DEI. There are six tunnel boring machines (TBMs), which were named after inspirational women from history to pay homage for their efforts which provide encouragement to other women out there to be part of the project. As illustrated below:

TBMs are named after famous women in the local area... TBM Rachel was named after Rachel Parsons, who founded the first all-women's engineering company and was president of the women's engineering society... TBM Millicent was named after Dame Millicent Fawcett, an English feminist, intellectual, political and union leader, and writer who is primarily known for her work as a campaigner for women to have the vote... TBM Ursula was named after Dr Audrey Ursula Smith, a British cryobiologist who discovered the use of glycerol to protect human red blood cells during freezing in 1948... TBM Selina was named after Dr Selina Fox, a pioneering doctor who set up

Bermondsey Medical Mission for Southwark's poor and disadvantaged residents... The TBM Charlotte was named after suffragist Charlotte Despard. She was a key leader in the suffragette movement and political activist and spent much of her time doing charitable work... TBM Anne was named after the astronomer Anne Scott Dill Russell, the first female scientist to work at the Greenwich Observatory and worked as a Lady Computer. (Visual data)

This creative way of labelling and thinking out of the box is seen essential for promoting DEI to a wider society.

Festivities

In the Tideway project, people tend to celebrate different religious festivals. Fostering DEI by educating people by having experience of other faiths and recognize the different cultures. As stated below:

We do celebrate various events throughout the year, with an education program, so people understand what it is all about: who was celebrating it, and why did they celebrate in this way? What did it all mean? What can you expect, and how can you help? We have had a few people who have taken up the challenge of fasting through Ramadan with their colleagues, so they can experience it personally, at the same time, and then share those stories, so that it helps educate everybody else on the program. (Director of Business Services and Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Client)

Festivals provide a great opportunity to mix different cultures and celebrate achievements.

Future making

The Tideway project is not just about cleaning up the river Thames, but it provides and delivers wider benefits to society for generations to come. They are trying to change behaviors in the construction industry, which will leave lasting impressions and shape the future. As illustrated below:

People with convictions often face a hard time re-entering the labor force because a large proportion of employers are less likely to hire them. A lack of stable employment and income, in turn, can encourage them to re-offend, thus creating a vicious circle with a significant negative impact on these people's wellbeing.... Offering a job to people with convictions can present an opportunity to acquire the stable earnings and sense of security associated with having a job. This increases their sense of purpose and fulfilment in life and makes them significantly less likely to commit a crime again. (Archival data)

Future making also comes with some challenges. Particularly Brexit and immigration policy could impact on the workforce and material in the construction industry in future. As illustrated below:

Brexit is not biting yet, but we are seeing warning signs that it could do, and we are struggling to get labor and material. The government's current immigration rule is that European laborers need to have equivalent academic levels of UK to get on the visa scheme, which they don't. So, we are struggling to get that type of labor that would traditionally have come from elsewhere. Obviously, one big unknown, if we ever get

any change in legislation, requires us to do things differently that could have an impact.
(Program Manager, Client)

An ongoing sensemaking process, early warning sign identification is evident to make sense of the future, the changes in legislations and possible impact.

Discussion

Diversity is about incorporating different perspectives, backgrounds, and identities within and across organizations. Equity is to ensure fairness in processes, policies, and outcomes (Roberson, 2006), whereas inclusion is about creating environments where people feel valued and empowered (Shore et al., 2011). The importance of DEI significantly increased in the context of interorganizational projects since such projects have a long-lasting impact on the economy, the environment, and society (Brookes & Locatelli, 2015; Zhai et al., 2009). In our paper, we explore DEI adoption and promotion in Tideway project which is an interorganizational project. In the case of the Tideway project, the DEI initiatives are inspired by prior projects such as the Cross Rail project; adoption of DEI provides legitimacy to Tideway. Figure 1 below shows DEI framework, which represents the elements for DEI adoption and promotion.

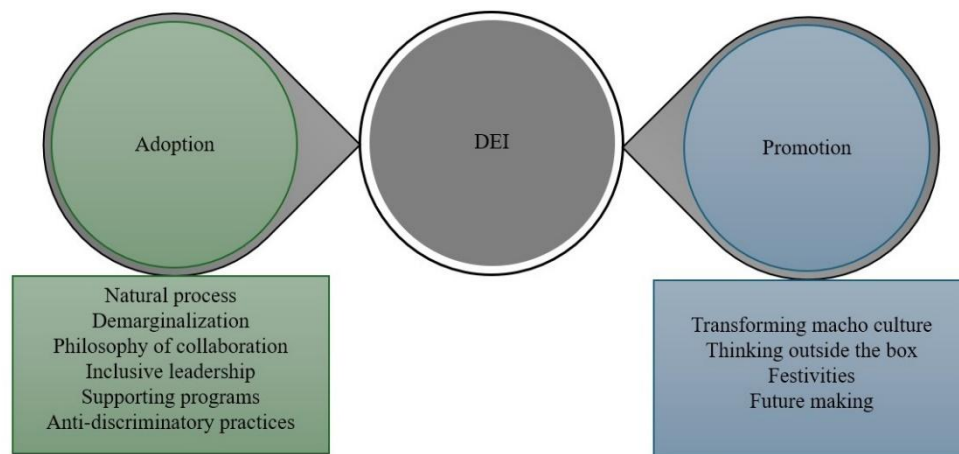


Figure 1: DEI framework

DEI adoption

According to Dobbin and Kalev (2016), the integration of the DEI initiative happens through natural adoption. In interorganizational projects, integrating DEI as a natural process is essential for fostering collaboration and achieving shared goals. Moreover, the Tideway project is based on London which is the most diverse city and as a result, it leads to a much more diverse workforce on the project (Magne & Ferri, 2023). Hence the DEI comes naturally to Tideway.

It is essential to understand marginalization to comprehend the concept of demarginalization. Marginalization is “a phenomenon that is expressed in the relegation of an individual or group to conditions of disadvantage, exclusion, or inferiority, that is, to the margins or periphery of their context” (Castillo-Rivero et al., 2023, p. 1626). Demarginalization reverses marginalization and includes marginal people in society and development activities (Acharya & Zafarullah, 2024). In the case of the Tideway project, having more women, giving everyone a second chance, reaching out to people who were previously unemployed, people returning to work after a career break, and

providing employment to people with conviction are the actions taken to have a demarginalized setting.

Collaboration is defined as “joint effort toward a goal” (Randrup et al., 2016, p. 898). Interorganizational projects require collaboration to deliver complex and interdependent tasks. Collaboration philosophy requires support from an organizational climate and culture. For example, the findings present that the Tideway project develops a culture of values, i.e., respect and openness where everyone is encouraged to give their opinion, and their opinion is valued. It reflects that collaboration would empower the workforce as well (Kahn, 1996).

Inclusive leadership is a behavior to create a sense of connectedness within organizations (Roberson & Perry, 2022). Inclusive leadership refers to the “leaders who exhibit visibility, accessibility, and availability in their interactions with followers” (Carmeli et al., 2010, p. 250). Tideway has inclusive leadership which represents the importance of top management philosophy and values pertaining to adopting DEI.

DEI adoption requires supporting programs. Supporting programs provide support for vulnerable individuals and groups (Follmer et al., 2024). Support programs are “formalized practices designed to improve experiences at work by providing emotional, financial, and instrumental assistance beyond the scope of standard HR pay, benefit, recognition, and training and development programs” (Grant et al., 2008, p. 898). It is evident from the findings that Tideway has adopted several DEI supportive programs and considered People as part of their legacy strategy.

Anti-discriminatory practice refers to “an approach which aims to decrease or eliminate discrimination and oppression, in particularly concerning sexism, racism, ageing and disablism” (Thompson, 2006, p. 51). At organizational and institutional levels, the implementation of anti-discrimination strategies is essential. These strategies focus on preventing discriminatory attitudes and behaviors, monitoring the discrimination situation; and managing the consequences of discrimination (Zhou et al., 2022). It has been made clear in the Tideway project that there is zero tolerance policy for discrimination. The project faced some discriminatory incidents but handled it by spreading awareness and forcibility by calling police if needed.

DEI promotion

Traditionally, the construction industry has been dominated by men with a strong macho culture. It is known as a macho industry. Discussion about health and well-being around such culture is challenging (Hanna et al., 2020). There is a need to transform the macho culture (Wallo et al., 2024). Through promoting DEI initiatives, it is viable to have a caring culture in the construction industry. The Tideway project acknowledges that the project culture is about protecting and caring for people, where everyone openly discusses their mental health issues without any stigma attached to it.

Thinking out of the box is a way to bring novel and fresh ideas through creative thinking (Shafi et al., 2020). Most managers and professionals are quite capable of thinking effectively outside of a box, a can generate lots of good ideas (Coyne et al., 2008). As per our findings, it is quite evident that in the Tideway project, thinking out of the box helped to set ambitious DEI targets. Moreover, the TBMs’ were named after on inspirational women, is a good representation of thinking outside of the box and promoting DEI.

Festivities play a pivotal role in promoting DEI by providing platforms to celebrate and honor the unique cultural, religious, and social identities of individuals. Celebrating different festivals in a workplace allows employees from different cultural backgrounds to share their traditions,

encouraging mutual respect and breaking down cultural barriers (Mazur, 2010). This shows that every individual's identity matters and ensures that no one feels marginalized (Shore et al., 2011). The Tideway project has celebrated different festivals that help in fostering DEI.

Future making is “the work of making sense of possible and probable futures, and evaluating, negotiating and giving form to preferred ones” (Whyte et al., 2022, p. 1). Projects are interventions into future and existing situations (Whyte & Mottee, 2022). The Tideway project is not merely providing a clean river and sewage tunnel for generations to come, but shapes the future of the construction industry by providing jobs to convicted people, offering STEM programs, etc. However, future making comes with challenges, as suggested by Whyte and Mottee (2022), projects are inherently uncertain and have ignorance about the future, so they cannot be fully planned. Our findings highlight that the Tideway project has recognized such challenges.

Conclusion

The paper contributes to the literature of DEI and institutional theory by extending its application to interorganizational projects. We demonstrate how an interorganizational project complies with social norms and requirements to receive legitimacy and support, placing employees at the heart of values. First, it provides DEI adoption and promotion in interorganizational projects. Prior research considered, DEI with each element individually, however, in this research we explore DEI as a whole. The proposed DEI framework (Figure 1) supports academics and practitioners to adopt the DEI initiatives and once the DEI initiatives are adopted, later stage they can be promoted to inspire other projects and organizations to adopt DEI.

There are several practical implications. First, DEI adoption and promotion require organization to invest in resources. There is no one size fit here, it needs a tailored made approach as per the requirements of projects, organizations and industries. Hence, senior management and organizations need to develop a pool of resources for DEI advocacy i.e., DEI adoption and promotion. Second, there is a dire need to bring a shift into leadership roles since initiatives will only be successful if they come from top to bottom. Third, culture transformation is a must for such initiatives to encourage behaviors and values that promote DEI as a fabric of society, which cannot be done instantly but requires steady and stepwise approach such as training, changes in current policies etc. Fourth, it is essential to create awareness about DEI initiatives by organizing seminars, workshops, and training events, for the audience of professionals and society. Moreover, DEI is a buzzword. It is important that senior management of projects and organizations are serious in delivering DEI, not just playing a lip service. Hence, senior management should be held accountable.

The study has several limitations. First, DEI is considered as a whole, for example, we did not focus on certain kinds of diversity, such as gender etc. Hence, it might be possible that some of the elements get diluted. Second, we have studied DEI adoption and promotion, there might be positive and negative impacts of DEI adoption, which is a good candidate for future research. Third, DEI initiatives are not without challenges, which is not the scope of the study. Fourth, our study is cross-sectional. DEI initiatives might require a change in organizational structure, leadership roles, rules and policies. Future researchers can conduct longitudinal studies to further explore the changes and the impacts of DEI initiatives. Fifth, the proposed DEI framework is provided, which can be validated in other contexts. Sixth, the case study of Tideway project is from UK, which is a developed country. Future researchers could study a context from a developing country. We believe the geographical location and classification of countries (developed vs. developing) lead to different findings. Finally, a single case study limits the

generalizability of the findings. Nevertheless, a case study was appropriate to collect rich contextual data and provide an opportunity to compare findings with the literature. In this study, the evidence comes from a variety of sources, including interviews, archival documents, and visual data. We analyzed interview, archival, and visual data. It has been a difficult process to combine different types of data and display the findings. Qualitative research involves personal biases, but the internal validity approach helped to validate the findings. As far as external validity is concerned (Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2018), this study is comparable to that in other contexts, though there are a few similarities and differences. However, future research could enhance generalizability by using multiple case studies.

References

- Acharya, K.K., & Zafarullah, H. (2024). Whither demarginalization, inclusion and effectiveness? Challenges of local government planning in Nepal. *Millennial Asia*, 15(2), pp. 216–235.
- Ahmed, A., Higgs, H., Ng, C., & Delaney, D.A. (2018). Determinants of women representation on corporate boards: Evidence from Australia. *Accounting Research Journal*, 31(3), pp.326–342.
- Al-Bayati, A.J., Abudayyeh, O., Fredericks, T., & Butt, S. (2017). Managing cultural diversity at US construction sites: Hispanic workers' perspectives. *Journal of Construction Engineering Management*, 143(9), pp. 04017064.
- Angel, D.M., Schatz, M., Zeiger, R.S., Sicherer, S.H., & Khan, D.A. (2021). Diversity, equity, and inclusion: What can a journal do? *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice*, 9(11), pp. 3853–3856.
- Asan, O., & Montague, E. (2014). Using video-based observation research methods in primary care health encounters to evaluate complex interactions. *Informatics in Primary Care*, 21(4), pp. 161–170.
- Ayodele, O.A., Chang-Richards, A., & González, V. (2020). Factors affecting workforce turnover in the construction sector: A systematic review. *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management*, 146(2), pp. 03119010.
- Balch, O. (2019). Diversity in construction needs to be top priority. Accessed October 31, 2024. <https://www.raconteur.net/business-innovation%20/diversity-construction>
- Barringer, B.R., & Harrison, J.S. (2000). Walking a tightrope: Creating value through interorganizational relationships. *Journal of Management*, 26(3), pp. 367–403.
- Bechky, B.A. (2006). Gaffers, gofers, and grips: Role-based coordination in temporary organizations. *Organization Science*, 17(1), pp. 3–21.
- Bernstein, R.S., Bulger, M., Salipante, P., & Weisinger J.Y. (2020). From diversity to inclusion to equity: A theory of generative interactions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 167(3), pp. 395–410.
- Berry, J. (2016). Diversity and equity. *Cross Cultural and Strategic Management*, 23(3), pp. 413–430.
- Bowen, F., & Blackmon, K. (2003). Spirals of silence: The dynamic effects of diversity on organizational voice. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(6), pp. 1393–1417.
- Braun, T., & Sydow, J. (2019). Selecting organizational partners for interorganizational projects: The dual but limited role of digital capabilities in the construction industry. *Project Management Journal*, 50(4), pp. 398–408.
- Brookes, N.J., & Locatelli, G. (2015). Power plants as megaprojects: Using empirics to shape policy, planning, and construction management. *Utilities Policy*, 36, pp. 57–66.

- Carmeli, A., Reiter-Palmon, R., & Ziv, E. (2010). Inclusive leadership and employee involvement in creative tasks in the workplace: The mediating role of psychological safety. *Creativity Research Journal*, 22(3), pp. 250–260.
- Castillo-Rivero, L., Elbakidze, M., McCann, P., & Sijtsma, F.J. (2023). Depopulation and ecological degradation, two dimensions of marginalization, and peripheralization: Ecosystem integrity as an assessment factor in local revitalization. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 15(7), pp. 1625–1647.
- Chheda, K.J., Beckel, J.L.O., & Gardner, D.M. (2023). When equal isn't equal: Contrasting equity and equality perspectives in supporting female professors. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 16(2), pp. 248–251.
- Chin, J.L., Desormeaux, L., & Sawyer, K. (2016). Making way for paradigms of diversity leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 68(1), pp. 49–71.
- Chin, M.H., & Chien, A.T. (2006). Reducing racial and ethnic disparities in health care: An integral part of quality improvement scholarship. *Quality and Safety in Health Care*, 15(2), pp. 79–80.
- Chrobot-Mason, D., & Aramovich, N.P. (2013). The psychological benefits of creating an affirming climate for workplace diversity. *Group & Organization Management*, 38(6), pp. 659–689.
- Ciuk, S., Śliwa, M., & Harzing, A.-W. (2022). Implementing the equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda in multinational companies: A framework for the management of (linguistic) diversity. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 33(4), pp. 868–888.
- Combs, G. M., Milosevic, I., & Bilimoria, D. (2019). Introduction to the special topic forum: Critical discourse: Envisioning the place and future of diversity and inclusion in organizations. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 26(3), pp. 277–286.
- Coyne, K.P., Clifford, P.G., & Dye, R. (2008). Breakthrough thinking from inside the box. *Harvard Business Review*, 85(12), pp. 70–78.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dawson, N.E.A., Parker, S.L., & Okimoto, T.G. (2024). Profiles of diversity and inclusion motivation: Toward an employee-centered understanding of why employees put effort into inclusion and exclusion. *Human Resource Management*, 63(1), pp. 45–66.
- DeFillippi, R., & Arthur, M. (1998). Paradox in project-based enterprise: The case of film making. *California Management Review*, 40(2), pp. 125–139.
- Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2016). Why diversity programs fail. *Harvard Business Review*, 94(7-8), pp. 52–60.
- Feitosa, J., Hagenbuch, S., Patel, B., & Davis, A. (2022). Performing in diverse settings: A diversity, equity, and inclusion approach to culture. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 22(3), pp. 433–457.
- Ferdman, B.M. (2017). Paradoxes of inclusion: Understanding and managing the tensions of diversity and multiculturalism. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 53(2), pp. 235–263.
- Fernandes, E.B., Wegner, D., & Möllering, G. (2023). Governance of interorganizational projects: A process-based approach applied to a Latin American–European case. *Project Management Journal*, 54(3), pp. 219–234.
- Ferraro, C., Hemsley, A., & Sands, S. (2023). Embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI): Considerations and opportunities for brand managers. *Business Horizons*, 66(4), pp. 463–479.

- Follmer, K.B., Sabat, I.E., Jones, K.P., & King, E. (2024). Under attack: Why and how I-O psychologists should counteract threats to DEI in education and organizations. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 17(4), pp. 452–475.
- García-Rodríguez, F.J., Dorta-Afonso, D., & González-de-la-Rosa, M. (2020). Hospitality diversity management and job satisfaction: The mediating role of organizational commitment across individual differences. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 91, pp. 102698.
- Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine Transaction.
- Grant, A.M., Dutton, J.E., & Rosso, B.D. (2008). Giving commitment: Employee support programs and the prosocial sensemaking process. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 51(5), pp. 898–918.
- Griffith, J.N., & Combs, G. (2015). Racial differences in job attribute preferences: The influence of ethnic identity and self-efficacy. *Journal of Business Diversity*, 15(2), pp. 60–75.
- Hanna, E., Gough, B., & Markham, S. (2020). Masculinities in the construction industry: A double-edged sword for health and wellbeing? *Gender, Work & Organization*, 27, pp. 632–646.
- Harrison, D.A., Price, K.H., & Bell, M.P. (1998). Beyond relational demography: Time and the effects of surface- and deep-level diversity on work group cohesion. *Academy of Management Journal*, 41(1), pp. 96–107.
- Hartley, J. (2004). Case study research. In C. Cassell, & G. Symon (Eds.), *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*. London: Sage, pp. 323–333.
- Hess, J. L., Lin, A., Whitehead, A., & Katz, A. (2024). How do ethics and diversity, equity, and inclusion relate in engineering? A systematic review. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 113(1), pp. 143–163.
- Hickey, P.J., & Cui, Q. (2020). Gender diversity in US construction industry leaders. *Journal of Management Engineering*, 36(5), pp. 04020069.
- Hon, A.H., & Gamor, E. (2022). The inclusion of minority groups in tourism workforce: Proposition of an impression management framework through the lens of corporate social responsibility. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 24(2), pp. 216–226.
- Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S.E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), pp. 1277–1288.
- Hunt, V., Layton, D., & Prince, S. (2015). *Why diversity matters*. McKinsey and Company, available at: www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters
- Iftikhar, R., & Wiewiora, A. (2022). Learning processes and mechanisms for interorganizational projects: Insights from the Islamabad–Rawalpindi metro bus project. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 69(6), pp. 3379–3391.
- Jansen, W.S., Otten, S., van der Zee, K.I., & Jans, L. (2014). Inclusion: conceptualization and measurement. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 44(4), pp. 370–385.
- Jehn, K.A., Bezrukova, K., & Thatcher, S. (2008). Conflict, diversity, and faultlines in workgroups. In De Dreu C.K.W., & Gelfand M.J. (Eds.), *The psychology of conflict and conflict management in organizations*. New York: Taylor & Francis, pp. 179–210.
- Jones, C., & Lichtenstein, B. (2008). Temporary interorganizational projects: How temporal and social embeddedness enhance coordination and manage uncertainty, In S. Cropper, M. Ebers,

- C. Huxham, & R.P. Smith, (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Interorganizational Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 231–255.
- Kahn, K.B. (1996). Interdepartmental integration: A definition with implications for product development performance. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 13(2), pp. 137–151.
- Kalinoski, Z.T., Steele-Johnson, D., Peyton, E.J., Leas, K.A., Steinke, J., & Bowling, N.A. (2013). A meta-analytic evaluation of diversity training outcomes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34(8), pp. 1076–1104.
- Karakhan, A.A., John A., Gambatese, J.A., Simmons, D.R., & Al-Bayati, A.J. (2021). Identifying pertinent indicators for assessing and fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion of the construction workforce. *Journal of Management in Engineering*, 37(2), pp. 04020114.
- Keshtiban, A., Gatto, M., & Callahan, J.L. (2023). Trojan horses: Creating a positive hidden (extra)curriculum through a Justice, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) initiative. *Management Learning*, 54(3), pp. 338–358.
- Khan, K., & Jabeen, S. (2019). Investigating the impact of workplace diversity on organizational citizenship behavior: The mediating role of inclusion. *Journal of Management and Research*, 6(2), pp. 18–50.
- Kirton, G., & Greene, Anne-Marie. (2019). Telling and selling the value of diversity and inclusion—External consultants' discursive strategies and practices. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 29(4), pp. 676–691.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage Publications.
- Lamin, A., & Zaheer, S. (2012). Wall street vs. main street: Firm strategies for defending legitimacy and their impact on different stakeholders. *Organization Science*, 23(1), pp. 47–66.
- Lave, J. (1988). *Cognition in practice: Mind, mathematics and culture in everyday life*. Chicago, IL: Cambridge University Press.
- Legendre, T.S., Yu, H.C., Ding, A., & Madera, J.M. (2022). Boycotting Asian restaurants: The effect of mortality salience, contagion name, and media exposure on boycotting. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 107, pp. 103333.
- Leslie, L.M. (2019). Diversity initiative effectiveness: A typological theory of unintended consequences. *Academy of Management Review*, 44(3), pp. 538–563.
- Ligthart, R., Oerlemans, L., & Noorderhaven, N. (2016). In the shadows of time: A case study of flexibility behaviors in an interorganizational project. *Organization Studies*, 37(12), pp. 1–23.
- Livingston, R. (2020). How to promote racial equity in the workplace. *Harvard Business Review*, 98(5), pp. 64–72.
- Lumineau, F., & Oliveira, N. (2018). A pluralistic perspective to overcome major blind spots in research on interorganizational relationships. *Academy of Management Annals*, 12(1), pp. 440–465.
- Lundin, R.A., & Söderholm, A. (1995). A theory of the temporary organization. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 11(4), pp. 437–455.
- Ma, E., Wu, L., Yang, W., & Xu, S. (2021). Hotel work-family support policies and employees' needs, concerns and challenges—The case of working mothers' maternity leave experience. *Tourism Management*, 83, pp. 104216.
- Madera, J.M., & Abbott, J. (2012). The diversity-validity dilemma: implications from the Ricci V. DeStefano US Supreme Court Case. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 53(1), pp. 31–39.

- Madera, J.M., Yang, W., Wu, L., Ma, E. J., & Xu, S.T. (2023). Diversity and inclusion in hospitality and tourism: Bridging the gap between employee and customer perspectives. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 35(11), pp. 3972–3989.
- Magne, V., & Ferri, G. (2023). Student perceptions of diverse accents of English in a multilingual London post-1992 university. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 21(2), pp. 268–284.
- Manning, S. (2017). The rise of project network organizations: Building core teams and flexible partner pools for interorganizational projects. *Research Policy*, 46(8), pp. 1399–1415.
- Manoharan, A., & Singal, M. (2017). A systematic literature review of research on diversity and diversity management in the hospitality literature. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 66(1), pp. 77–91.
- Marques, J., & Dhiman, S. (2022). *Leading with diversity, equity and inclusion: Approaches, practices and cases for integral leadership strategy*. Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Maslow, A.H. 1943. A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), pp. 370–396.
- Mayo, A.T., & Woolley, A.W. (2016). Teamwork in health care: Maximizing collective intelligence via inclusive collaboration and open communication. *AMA Journal of Ethics*, 18(9), pp. 933–940.
- Mazur, B. (2010). Cultural diversity in organizational theory and practice. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 2(2), pp. 5–15.
- McKay, P.F., Avery, D.R., Tonidandel, S., Morris, M.A., Hernandez, M., & Hebl, M.R. (2007). Racial differences in employee retention: Are diversity climate perceptions the key? *Personnel Psychology*, 60(1), pp. 35–62.
- Miles, M.B., Huberman, M.A., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Milliken, F., & Martins, L. (1996). Searching for common threads: Understanding the multiple effects of diversity in organizational groups. *Academy of Management Review*, 21(2), pp. 402–433.
- Mor Barak, M.E. (2015). Inclusion is the key to diversity management, but what is inclusion? *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 39(2), pp. 83–88.
- Mor Barak, M.E., Luria, G., & Brimhall, K.C. (2021). What leaders say versus what they do: inclusive leadership, policy-practice decoupling, and the anomaly of climate for inclusion. *Group and Organization Management*, 47(4), pp. 840–871.
- Naoum, S.G., Harris, J., Rizzuto, J., & Egbu, C. (2020). Gender in the construction industry: Literature review and comparative survey of men's and women's perceptions in UK construction consultancies. *Journal of Management in Engineering*, 36(2), pp. 04019042.
- Navarro-Astor, E., Román-Onsalo, M., & Infante-Perea, M. (2017). Women's career development in the construction industry across 15 years: Main barriers. *Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology*, 15(2), pp. 199–221.
- Noble, C.E., Amey, M.J., Colón, L.A., Conroy, J., De Cheke Qualls, A., Deonauth, K., et al. (2021). Building a networked improvement community: Lessons in organizing to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, pp. 1–10.
- O'Donovan, D. (2017). *Inclusion: Diversity management 2.0. Managing Organizational Diversity*. Springer, Cham, pp. 1–28.
- Oliveira, N., & Lumineau, F. (2017). How coordination trajectories influence the performance of interorganizational project networks. *Organization Science*, 28(6), pp. 1029–1060.

- Pelled, L.H., Ledford, G.E., Jr., & Mohrman, S.A. (1999). Demographic dissimilarity and workplace inclusion. *Journal of Management Studies*, 36(7), pp. 1013–1031.
- Powell, A., & Sang, K.J.C. (2013). Equality, diversity and inclusion in the construction industry. *Construction Management and Economics*, 31(8), pp. 795–801.
- Randel, A.E., Galvin, B.M., Shore, L.M., Ehrhart, K.H., Chung, B.G., Dean, M.A., & Kedharnath, U. (2018). Inclusive leadership: Realizing positive outcomes through belongingness and being valued for uniqueness. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28, pp. 190–203.
- Randrup, N., Druckenmiller, D., & Briggs, R.O. (2016). Philosophy of Collaboration. *49th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS)*, Koloa, HI, USA: pp. 898–907.
- Roberson, Q., & Perry, J.L. (2022). Inclusive leadership in thought and action: A thematic analysis. *Organization Management*, 47(4), pp. 1–24.
- Roberson, Q., Ryan, A.M., & Ragins, B.R. (2017). The evolution and future of diversity at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), pp. 483–499.
- Roberson, Q.M. (2006). Disentangling the meanings of diversity and inclusion in organizations. *Group & Organization Management*, 31(2), pp. 212–236.
- Roberson, Q.M. (2019). Diversity in the workplace: A review, synthesis, and future research agenda. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 6, pp. 69–88.
- Roberts, R. (2021). From snacking on diversity and inclusion to systemic organizational consumption. *Strategic HR Review*, 20(4), pp. 141–144.
- Roehrich, J.K., Kalra, J., Squire, B., & Davies, A. (2023). Network orchestration in a large inter-organizational project. *Journal of Operations Management*, 69(7), pp. 1078–1099.
- Romansky, L., Garrod, M., Brown, K., & Deo, K. (2021). How to measure inclusion in the workplace. *Harvard Business Review*, pp. 27.
- Russen, M., & Dawson, M. (2024). Which should come first? Examining diversity, equity and inclusion. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 36(1), pp. 25–40.
- Schneider, K.T., Hitlan, R.T., & Radhakrishnan, P. (2000). An examination of the nature and correlates of ethnic harassment experiences in multiple contexts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85(1), pp. 3–12.
- Schulz, K.P., & Geithner, S. (2010). Between exchange and development: Organizational learning in schools through inter organizational networks. *The Learning Organization*, 17(1), pp. 69–85.
- Scribner, S. (1984). *Studying working intelligence*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Shafi, M., Zoya, Lei, Z., Song, X., & Sarker, M.N.I. (2020). The effects of transformational leadership on employee creativity: Moderating role of intrinsic motivation. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 25(3), pp. 166–176.
- Shore, L.M., Cleveland, J.N., & Sanchez, D. (2018). Inclusive workplaces: A review and model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28(2), pp. 176–189.
- Shore, L.M., Randel, A.E., Chung, B.G., Dean, M.A., Holcombe Ehrhart, K., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and diversity in work groups: A review and model for future research. *Journal of Management*, 37(4), pp. 1262–1289.
- Söderlund, J., Sankaran, S., & Biesenthal, C. (2017). The past and present of megaprojects. *Project Management Journal*, 48(6), pp. 5–16.
- Stephenson, J.H., Persadie, N., Bissessar, A.M., & Esnard, T. (2020). *Introduction. In Diversity, equality, and inclusion in Caribbean Organisations and Society*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Sydow, J. (2022). Studying the management of project networks: From structures to practices?. *Project Management Journal*, 53(1), pp. 3–7.
- Sydow, J., & Braun, T. (2018). Projects as temporary organizations: An agenda for further theorizing the interorganizational dimension. *International Journal of Project Management*, 36(1), pp. 4–11.
- The Verna Mayers Company. <https://learning.vernamyers.com>
- Thomas, J. (2013). Study on causes and effects of employee turnover in construction industry. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 4(5), pp. 3041–3044.
- Thompson, N. (2020). *Anti-discriminatory practice: Equality, diversity and social justice*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Tracy, S.J., Razzante, R.J., & Hanna, K.N. (2020). *Creating the being of inclusion in organizations: Organizing Inclusion: Moving Diversity from Demographics to Communication Processes*, Routledge, London.
- Triana, M. D. C., Gu, P., Chapa, O., Richard, O., & Colella, A. (2021). Sixty years of discrimination and diversity research in human resource management: A review with suggestions for future research directions. *Human Resource Management*, 60(1), pp. 145–204.
- Turnbull, H., Greenwood, R.A., Tworoger, L., & Golden, C. (2010). Skill deficiencies in diversity and inclusion in organizations: Developing an inclusion skills measurement profile. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 9(1), pp. 1–14.
- van Bommel, H.M., Hubers, F. & Maas, K.E.H. (2024). Prominent themes and blind spots in diversity and inclusion literature: A bibliometric analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 192(3), pp. 487–499.
- Wallo, A., Martin, J., Elg, M., Harlin, U., Gremyr, I., Bozic, N., Skagertc, K., & Williamsson, A. (2024). Charting the path to a sustainable, competitive and green industry in an era of rapid change: Proposing a research agenda. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), pp. 2344189.
- Whyte, J., & Mottee, L. (2022). Projects as interventions. *International Journal of Project Management*, 40(8), pp. 934–940.
- Whyte, J., Comi, A., & Mosca, L. (2022). Making futures that matter: Future making, online working and organizing remotely. *Organization Theory*, 3(1), pp. 1–20.
- Yadav, S., & Lenka, U. (2020). Diversity management: A systematic review. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 39(8), pp. 901–929.
- Yang, M., Luu, T.T., & Qian, D. (2022). Group diversity and employee service innovative behavior in the hospitality industry: A multilevel model. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34(2), pp. 808–835.
- Yi, V., LePeau, L., Chang, T.-H., Museus, S.D., Mathew, S., Saelua, N., & Haywood, J. (2024). Symbols contested: An analysis of how symbols advance and hinder diversity, equity, and inclusion. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 17(4), pp. 504–517.
- Yin, R.K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications. Incorporated.
- Zhai, L., Xin, Y., & Cheng, C. (2009). Understanding the value of project management from a stakeholder's perspective: Case study of megaproject management. *Project Management Journal*, 40(1), pp. 99–109.
- Zhou, L., Liu, J., & Liu, D. (2022). How does discrimination occur in hospitality and tourism services, and what shall we do? A critical literature review. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34(3), pp. 1037–1061.