

# A Global Comparison of Diversity Assessment Tools

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**Abstract**

This multiple case study examines the use of diversity assessment tools to evaluate how diverse an organization's policies and practices are. In particular, the study seeks to find answers on how such tools compare globally. For this purpose, a comparative analysis of eight diversity assessment tools was conducted, which was complemented by insights gained from four semi-structured interviews with diversity and inclusion experts.

The findings of this study demonstrate that there does not exist a one-fits-all diversity assessment tool, and consequently no universally applicable approach to assess organizational diversity. It shows that organizations across the world are subject to varying external factors such as legislative and social policies. The study also reveals that each diversity assessment tool was developed within a specific local context. Nonetheless, this research finds that across the pre-defined analysis criteria the case tools converge in multiple ways. Most importantly, the case tools all include very similar domains. This consistency suggests a certain degree of consensus on key components of a diversity assessment tool, which permitted the creation of a model for a holistic diversity assessment. The model conceptualizes eleven relevant domains to be considered for organizational diversity assessment and visualizes their mutual relationship by subordinating them in three categories.

Studying organizational diversity assessment tools is timely and relevant since workforces across the world are becoming increasingly diverse. As a result, more and more attention is being paid to diversity management in organizations. While numerous reviews on organizational assessment exist in the field of cultural competence, studies on organizational assessments in the field of diversity are rather scarce and old. In particular, the link to diversity assessment tools has seldomly been researched.

Therefore, this research contributes to existing literature by constituting an up-to-date study of organizational diversity assessment, with a particular focus on diversity assessment tools. Especially the developed model for a holistic diversity assessment provides a valuable resource and opens avenues for future research. For managers, the model can serve as inspiration and guidance to develop their own diversity assessment tool. Further, the study equips managers with clear instructions and recommendations on how to set up and use a diversity assessment tool.

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**Keywords** diversity, organizational assessment, diversity assessment tool, inclusion

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AHRC	-	Australian Human Rights Commission
AICPA	-	American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
D&I	-	Diversity and Inclusion
DEI	-	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
GDIB	-	Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks
MHTTC	-	Mental Health Technology Transfer Center
SME	-	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Diversity assessments are becoming increasingly important for organizations around the world (Trenerry et al., 2010). Driven by the demographic changes of the population and numerous global migration flows, workforces are more diverse than ever before – and the trend is rising (Mor Barak, 2016). Logically, a more diverse workforce requires organizations to have effective diversity management practices in place. Although the effects of a diverse workforce on company performance are ambivalent and widely discussed in the literature (e.g. Cox & Blake, 1991; Harrison et al., 1998; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998), scholars converge in their opinion that when ensuring an inclusive work environment, a diverse workforce can lead to improved creativity and innovation in teams (Phillips, 2014; Richard, 2000), financial benefits (Hunt et al., 2015) or better decision making (Cloverpop, 2017). Therefore, understanding how diverse and inclusive organizations are in terms of their policies and practices represents a fundamental step to leverage potential benefits of possessing a diverse workforce.

Such diversity assessments can take place on an individual and organizational level, with the former evaluating personal diversity-related behaviors and attitudes, and the latter focusing on organization-wide diversity structures, policies, and practices (Olavarria et al., 2005). In this thesis, organizational diversity assessments are in the focus. Individual assessments were discarded since this study aims at analyzing the business context from a broad, organizational perspective. Interestingly, the focus of diversity assessments in the diversity literature seems to be on individuals rather than organizations (LaVeist et al., 2008; Kalev et al., 2006), which sparks academic interest of studying organizational diversity assessment.

Conducting organizational diversity assessments is a timely matter and also considered valuable among scholars. Evaluating diversity related practices assists in identifying strong- and weak-performing areas within an organization, which can ultimately indicate where there is potential for improvement (Ford & Evans, 2002; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012; Truong et al., 2017). If an organization conducts a diversity assessment repeatedly and considers it a systematic and strategic approach to address diversity issues, these improvements can also be examined over time (Mathews, 1998).

One way for organizations to evaluate their diversity practices is by using an assessment instrument. Typically, such a diversity assessment tool is designed in the format of a questionnaire, in which multiple domains, i.e. major content areas, and indicators are evaluated (Siegel et al., 2002). Other frequently used data collection methods to conduct a diversity assessment are interviews, focus groups, or document reviews (e.g.; Truong et al., 2017; Wentling, 2000). Naturally, organizations are not restricted to one data collection method only and can, depending on the available resources, combine multiple methods to reduce the potential for bias and conduct an assessment that is as thorough as possible (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012).

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Based on a comprehensive review of existing literature in the field of diversity research, I discovered that there is limited research on organizational diversity assessments (Comer & Soliman, 1996; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012). Interestingly, there has been a growing interest in diversity management research over the past decades (Roberson, 2019; Yadav & Lenka, 2020), and numerous studies on organizational assessment exist in the field of cultural competence (e.g. Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2005), yet reviews on organizational assessments in the field of diversity are rather scarce. In addition to being scarce, the studies located for this literature review were predominantly published between 2004 and 2006 (Bowen, 2004; Harper et al., 2006; Hubbard, 2004; Olavarria et al., 2005), and even the newest study (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012) already dates back eight years. Thus, there is a need for up-to-date research on organizational diversity assessment.

This thesis is written as part of a collaborative research project between Business Finland and Aalto University School of Business. Business Finland forms part of a government-led, cross-administrative program called *Talent Boost*. Among other things, the Talent Boost program aims at connecting foreign talent with Finnish small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to nurture their firm-growth and internationalization. Simultaneously, more foreign talent could help to reduce the Finnish labor shortage that has been primarily caused by decreasing birth rates during the past decades and the retiring post-war generations. (TEM, n.d.-a)

For this purpose, Business Finland has developed a diversity self-assessment tool in the form of a survey called *Talent Boost Index*. The survey provides participating companies with an evaluation of their readiness and maturity for contracting internationally diverse workforce



(Business Finland, 2020). Ultimately, the survey follows the goal of encouraging Finnish SMEs to recruit international experts. Hiring international workforce could lead to the internationalization of the SME while closing the labor shortage gap of the country.

Besides me, two other master's thesis students of Aalto University School of Business were also part of the research project. For all three theses, the Talent Boost Index is of importance, yet the academic goals of the theses vary. The following list explicates the three members of our research team and the respective title of each thesis:

- Johanna Virta: The Role of International Professionals in Firm Internationalization
- Martta Nieminen: Talent Boost Index: An exploratory study on recruiting and leading skilled migrants
- Rafael Polanco: A Global Comparison of Diversity Assessment Tools

My thesis topic is the only of the three that focuses on diversity assessment tools. The specific research objectives of my study are elaborated in the following chapter.

### **1.3 Research Objectives and Research Question**

This study is driven by both academic and practical objectives. Academically, this thesis intends to contribute to closing the research gap, which was identified in the previous chapter. There is a need for up-to-date reviews on organizational assessments in the diversity field, and this study is both recent and specifically focused on diversity, not other related fields such as cultural competence. Most importantly, I aim to develop a model for a holistic diversity assessment that summarizes in a structured way what diversity assessment domains are considered important when conducting a diversity assessment.

The practical objectives of this thesis are twofold. First and foremost, I aim to equip managers with comprehensive findings on how to set up and conduct a diversity assessment. Further, my research aims at providing Business Finland with specific insights on their assessment tool. More precisely, I will evaluate the Talent Boost Index in comparison to other diversity assessment tools and provide Business Finland with improvement suggestions for their tool.

Based on these abovementioned academic and practical research objectives, I formulate the underlying research question (RQ) of my study as follows:

*RQ: How do diversity assessment tools compare globally?*

The research question is intentionally formulated rather broadly and is not followed by any further sub-questions. Instead, I define multiple analysis criteria in the methodology section, which assist in guiding my research and finding a systematic response to the research question. Consequently, the research question determines the design of my research and clearly impacts which methodological approach is most appropriate for the study.

#### **1.4 Research Design**

Due to the nature of my research question, I decided to base this study on a qualitative research design. More concretely, I chose to conduct a multiple case study. The case study approach is particularly suitable for this study as my research question is clearly of a comparative nature (see Dillon, 1984). To find an answer to how diversity assessment tools compare, logically, multiple diversity assessment tools have to be analyzed.

In accordance with Eisenhardt's (1989) suggestion of limiting the number of cases to four to ten, I chose eight diversity assessment tools as my cases. The selection process of these tools followed a rigorous and highly systematic approach, which was guided by pre-defined case inclusion criteria. To complement the empirical findings of the diversity assessment tools, I conducted four semi-structured interviews with diversity and inclusion experts. These interviews contribute to an understanding of what aspects are considered important for a diversity assessment from a practitioner's point of view.

To analyze the data systematically, I divided the process into two parts. First, each diversity assessment tool was analyzed individually (within-case analysis). Then, the tools were evaluated against each other and compared to the findings of the literature review and expert interviews (cross-case analysis). For both parts, predefined analysis parameters served as the guideline for the analysis process. (see Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008)

#### **1.5 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is divided into six distinct chapters. After the introduction, I conduct a review of existing diversity literature, which focuses on three larger areas. First, the global context of diversity management is outlined. Second, I introduce the research field of diversity by providing a definition of diversity and discussing the effects of diversity on organizational performance. The third part, and core of the literature review, then presents the topic of organizational diversity assessment. At the end of the second chapter, the findings of the literature review are summarized.

In the third chapter, I then discuss my research methodology. Here, I explicate my philosophical position and research design first. Then, I provide a detailed elaboration of my data collection process and particularly emphasize the search and selection process of the case tools. Afterward, my data analysis process is presented, which introduces, among other things, the explicit analysis criteria for the within- and cross-case analysis. In the last part of the chapter, I evaluate limitations of my research approach and consider ethical concerns.

After having a theoretical foundation and the underlying methodology of this research established, the fourth chapter introduces the first empirical findings in the form of the within-case analysis. Here, I present the eight diversity assessment tools individually, which are analyzed in-depth through the lens of the predefined analysis parameters.

The fifth chapter presents the findings of the cross-case analysis and discusses these critically. At first, I synthesize the findings of the empirical analysis of the eight diversity assessment tools with the findings obtained from the literature review and the insights from the four conducted expert interviews. Based on this foundation, I then present a model for a holistic diversity assessment. Given the special role of Business Finland's assessment tool, I conclude the section by evaluating the Talent Boost Index against the other case tools and derive recommendations for improvement.

In the sixth and final part of this thesis, I conclude with a summary of the main findings and provide an answer to the research question. Moreover, I explicate theoretical and managerial implications, and express the limitations of my study which permit me to derive avenues for future research.

While the thesis structure clearly follows a linear structure, I want to point out that, in line with a qualitative research approach, the write-up and analysis process was much more iterative. The literature review, for instance, was only partly completed prior to conducting the data collection and analysis. Inspired by preliminary findings from the data analysis phase, I returned to conducting a more thorough literature review that aligned with the content areas identified in the empirical part of my thesis.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This thesis aims at understanding how diversity assessment tools compare globally. However, to comprehend the foundations of the empirical analysis, there are certain terminology that need to be defined first. Moreover, it is fruitful to review the findings of previous research on diversity management as well as practices of diversity assessment.

For this purpose, this literature review is divided into four parts. The first part reviews multiple factors that shape the context of diversity management and thus may influence organizations in their efforts to conduct a diversity assessment. Here, I also define four main perspectives to diversity management, which are particularly relevant for the empirical analysis. Thereafter, the research field of diversity is introduced, the multiple facets of diversity are defined, and the effects of diversity on business performance are critically discussed. Next, I discuss existing practices and studies that analyze how diversity can be assessed in organizations. This third part represents the core of the literature review since it explains the purpose of diversity assessment tools, how they can be set up, and what needs to be considered when using them. At the end of the literature review, the key findings are then summarized, and conclusions are drawn. By comparing and evaluating the key findings of previous studies, I provide an answer to my research questions from an academic perspective.

### **2.1 The Global Context of Diversity Management**

The topic of diversity has received increased attention during this year. One key factor for this is the Black Lives Matter movement. Even though the movement originated in the U.S. already in 2013, it was only this May that the death of George Floyd triggered a wave of international support for the movement in over 60 countries across the world (Shaw & Kidwai, 2020). The aim of the movement is to fight racism against black people and raise the overall awareness of the human-rights violations against them (Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2017). What the widespread support of the movement has demonstrated is that racism- and discrimination-related issues are familiar to most societies, and that these problems of systematic racial injustices have been neglected by many governments for too long.

Consequently, the Black Lives Matter protests have added urgency to the global discussion of inequalities at work as well (Faragher, 2020). And even though racial inequalities are in the focus of the movement, there is almost no diversity characteristics that is represented

equitably in the workplace (Faragher, 2020). Sparked by these discussions, stakeholders such as local communities or a company's own employees and investors have developed high expectations towards employers, pressuring them to achieve tangible progress in increasing workplace diversity and inclusion (Chan & DiMauro, 2020). In that way, the population generates a significant societal pressure onto organizations, hereby making it a great and timely example to underline the growing importance of addressing diversity and inclusion at the workplace.

This subchapter elaborates on a number of factors, similar to the Black Lives Matter movement, that have shaped the context of diversity management in the past and continue to influence it presently. These factors are divided into (1) legislative policies, (2) social policies, and (3) global demographic trends, which I analyze respectively.

At the end of this chapter, I then holistically summarize the different rationales that encourage organizations to address diversity management and define four main approaches to diversity management. The purpose of evaluating the perspectives to diversity management is to comprehend what aspects influence organizations in their efforts to address diversity within their organizations, and potentially conduct diversity assessments. This gained knowledge is particularly relevant in the empirical part of thesis, when I analyze the context in which each diversity assessment tool emerged.

### **2.1.1 Legislation**

Diversity management is influenced by anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity laws. Especially since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there has been a significant increase in new legislations across the world. More and more countries introduced laws to protect their citizens from workplace harassment and discrimination. The origin of this trend dates back to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948, which today, seven decades later, still continues to form the basis for all international human right laws. (Mor Barak, 2016)

Shortly after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the U.S. adopted a forerunner role in introducing civil rights legislation, particularly in form of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which outlaws employment discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, and national origin (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.). From the U.S., legislation trends then spread to Europe where constitutional provisions were established to prohibit various forms of discrimination, though often in weaker forms

compared to the U.S. (Academy of European Law, n.d.; Mor Barak, 2016). Despite this legislative forerunner role of the U.S. and Europe, in the 1980s and 1990s, constitutional revisions and the implementation of laws against discrimination and harassment at the workplace spread to most democratic and many non-democratic countries worldwide (Klarsfeld et al., 2014).

While the previous paragraphs clearly showcase that multiple laws around diversity management were established across the world, there does not exist direct legislation for diversity management in organizations (Louvrier, 2013). In any case, however, existing laws on equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination indirectly regulate and put pressure on organizations to address the issue of diversity – albeit not with a clear mandate (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2008). For example, the unfair treatment of workers and thus failure to comply with such anti-discrimination laws can lead to costly consequences caused by lawsuits filed by employees (Mor Barak, 2016). Therefore, organizations are clearly interested in managing their diverse workforce in accordance to respective legislative policies in order to prevent such incidents from happening.

Consequently, this permits to draw the conclusion that from a legislative perspective, diversity management can be seen as a reactive, extrinsically driven activity that is predominantly concerned with complying with anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity laws. An alternative perspective to diversity is now presented in the next subchapter.

### **2.1.2 Social Policies**

Social policies emerged from the notion that discrimination of all kind has been present and institutionalized over hundreds of years and cannot be rectified by banning such actions through laws alone (Mor Barak, 2016). In particular, opponents of such laws argue that the laws are not specific enough, hereby leaving organizations with plenty of freedom in terms of the integration of diversity management measures (Dobbin et al., 2011; Köllen, 2019).

Contrary to the reactive, extrinsically driven compliance with legislative policies, social practices represent a more proactive, intrinsically driven approach to fight discrimination in the workplace (Burstein, 1994). Such social policies actively aim to prevent unequal treatment and discrimination by providing advantages to those groups that have been discriminated in the past (Alon, 2015). These social practices can be summarized under the title ‘affirmative actions’.

Essentially, affirmative or positive actions have two main goals. On the one hand, they aim to reverse past discrimination by providing disadvantaged groups with better opportunities. On the other hand, they aspire to have a greater representation of traditionally discriminated groups in higher job positions (e.g. leadership). (Mor Barak, 2016). In that way, affirmative actions can be seen as intervention measures. It is crucial to point out, however, that originally, they were intended to be of temporary duration only (Alon, 2015). Ideally, affirmative actions can be withdrawn once sufficient justice has been achieved. Considering the current situation of equality in 2020, however, it seems to me that affirmative actions will continue to be of organizational relevance since full equality between disadvantaged groups are by no means achieved yet.

While achieving social justice is, undoubtedly, necessary and highly important, some criticism is raised about using affirmative actions for this purpose. Some scholars complain that by favoring a particular group through these initiatives, other groups are now being discriminated (Lynch, 1989; Mor Barak, 2016). This type of preferential hiring could also lead to the selection of unsuitable people for a particular job (Mor Barak, 2016). Building up on the preferential hiring, Crosby et al. (2006) point out that discriminated people may also feel demotivated or self-doubting if they become aware that they were chosen for the position in order to fill a quota.

Interestingly, there does also exist some legislative framework for affirmative actions. In the U.S., for example, the in 1965 signed Executive Order 11246 obliged federal agencies, as well as any companies of a particular size that do business with the federal government, to have affirmative action plans (Crosby et al., 2006). This demonstrates that legislative policies and affirmative actions by no means have to be mutually exclusive. On the contrary, I very much believe that in practice they go hand-in-hand and are both factors that influence organizations in their diversity management practices. Jonsen et al. (2011) share this belief and argue that legal mechanisms need to be closely tied to social mechanisms in order to result in equality.

One concrete example for a proactive social policy are Diversity Charters. Diversity Charters are cooperative initiatives to promote diversity in organizations. They originated from the Charte Diversité that was introduced in France in 2003 but have since then become a well-established social policy worldwide (Jablonski & Schwarzenbart, 2011). Its core idea is a certificate, a charter, that lists concrete action steps and commitments for the cooperating organizations (Charta der Vielfalt, 2020). Signatories of a Diversity Charter commit to

promote diversity, fairness, and equal opportunities for its staff, regardless of their diverse background (European Commission, n.d.). Since Diversity Charters are voluntary initiatives, organizations that do commit to become a signatory therefore demonstrate their intrinsic motivation and proactive thinking towards diversity management.

### **2.1.3 Global Demographic Trends**

After diversity related legislative and social policies were described in the previous sections, this subchapter presents relevant global demographic trends and explains how they have significant implications for diversity management.

Over the past two centuries the world has experienced an unprecedented growth of its population – and the world’s population continues to grow. A projection of the United Nations (2019) estimates that the world population will grow from the current 7.7 billion (2019) to 9.7 billion in 2050 and almost 11 billion in 2100. Interestingly however, the respective population growth rates of different countries and continents vary greatly. For example, while Sub-Saharan Africa will almost double their population by 2050, population in Northern America and Europe is expected to increase by only 2% (United Nations, 2019).

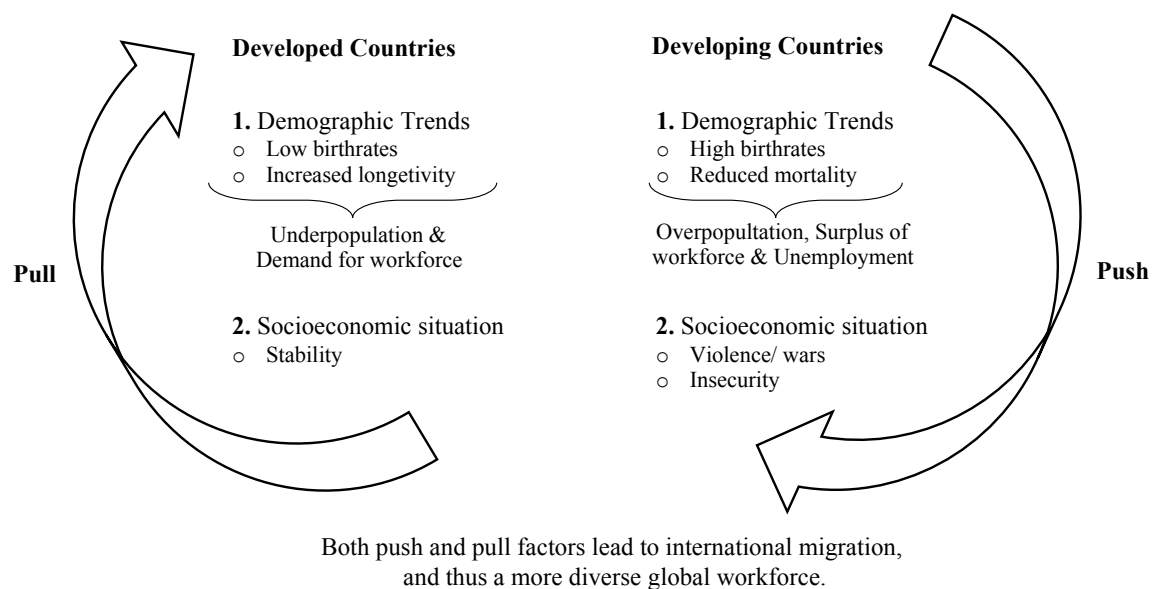
The two main drivers for population growth are fertility and mortality. Even though advances in health care caused an increase in global life expectancy over the past years – which is projected to continue in the future – mortality is not the determining factor for the varying growth rates (Mor Barak, 2016). Instead, these can be accounted to the continuously falling birth rates in most countries across the world (United Nations, 2019). Given these varying population growth rates caused by the deviating birth rates, nations across the globe face challenging dynamics. Countries with low birthrates face labor shortages and are in demand of workforce, whereas countries with high birthrates are often overpopulated leading to unemployment (Mor Barak, 2016). In general, developed countries tend to be on the demanding, or pulling side for workforce, whereas developing countries struggle with high birthrates, overpopulation, and thus unemployment (Mor Barak, 2016).

As consequence to these local challenges and the push and pull relationship between the developing and developed countries, population across the globe migrate. It is for this reason, that the United Nations (2019), in fact, identified international migration as the third driver of demographic change, following fertility and mortality. Another interesting perspective to international migration is provided by Coale & Zelnik (2015). The authors consider the role of international migration from a somewhat strategic perspective since it



can be used to “offset” population declines that were caused by the low birthrates in respective countries (Coale & Zelnik, 2015). Besides job-related migration, there are of course other factors that can lead to international migration as well. Political insecurities, violence, wars, or environmental crises are equally responsible for the shift of population between countries (Naudé, 2008).

Figure 1 visualizes these push and pull factors of international migration caused by global demographic trends and socioeconomic situations. It is to be noted, however, that I only demonstrate those factors in the figure that are directly influenced or caused by humans since they represent a more predictable picture of the push and pull relationship between developing and developed countries. Environmental catastrophes, which can obviously also lead to significant migration flows, are therefore not included in the figure.



**Figure 1. Push and Pull Factors of International Migration**  
(Based on Mor Barak, 2016: p. 139)

Naturally, the international migration flows across the world have a strong impact on organizations in each country. A greater influx of migrants within a country leads to workforce becoming increasingly diverse. Consequently, organizations are very likely to show a strong interest in diversity management, and potentially consider evaluating their current practices with the help of a diversity assessment tool. However, the effective management of the diverse workforce is not solely of interest for organizations. National economies are equally interested in an effective and trouble-free management of their diverse workforce since a country can then brand itself with their capabilities of welcoming foreigners (Mor Barak, 2016).

#### **2.1.4 Perspectives to Diversity Management**

Throughout the first three sections, I discussed multiple rationales that can encourage organizations to address diversity management. Such rationales can also be described as perspectives or approaches to diversity management. To provide a clear overview of these different perspectives, I conclude this chapter by establishing four main perspectives to diversity management, namely being (1) social justice, (2) the business case, (3) needs, and (4) compliance.

I derived these perspectives by converging the opinions of multiple scholars. Therefore, in the following paragraphs, I first highlight some classifications of diversity management perspectives provided by scholars. At the end of this section, I then summarize those four main perspectives and subordinate them in a matrix (see Figure 2).

One predominant classification of approaches to diversity management is provided by Ely & Thomas (2001). In essence, they argue that there are three different work group diversity perspectives. Firstly, 'integration and learning' which aims at diversifying workforce to improve internal work processes. Secondly, 'access and legitimacy' which encompasses the rationale of gaining access to as well as legitimacy with diverse customers and markets. The authors add that the business case for diversity (e.g. Cox & Blake, 1991) constitutes this rationale. And thirdly, 'discrimination and fairness' which refers to a perspective that aims to achieve justice and eliminate discrimination. (Ely & Thomas, 2001)

When analyzing these three perspectives provided by Ely & Thomas (2001), it can be observed that they partly overlap with the discussion on social policies in Chapter 2.1.2 (discrimination and fairness). Moreover, it is fruitful to highlight the business case for diversity. As I will present in Chapter 2.2, the effects of diversity on business performance can be ambiguous, yet many scholars have predominantly started to conceptualize diversity from a strategic perspective, hereby creating the business case for diversity (e.g. Cox, 1991).

Another noteworthy classification is provided by Köllen (2019). As result of his critical review of diversity management literature, the author established two main reasons for implementing diversity management: legitimacy and compliance. In terms of legitimacy, Köllen (2019) distinguishes between moral and economic legitimacy with the former relating to the moral praiseworthiness to achieve social justice and the latter referring to the business case for diversity. Compliance, on the other hand, relates to the necessity of having to comply with relevant anti-discrimination and equal opportunity laws (Köllen, 2019), and

has been discussed at the beginning of this chapter as well. While Ely & Thomas (2001) do not directly address compliance, but rather a company's moral obligations when discussing 'discrimination and fairness', there is still an overlap between the authors in terms of the legitimacy and business case perspectives.

Consequently, the previous paragraphs helped to extract the social justice, business case, and compliance perspectives to diversity management, albeit the slightly differing terminology used in the literature. Especially the distinction between social justice and the business case is popular among scholars (e.g. Louvri er, 2013; Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2010).

One final perspective to diversity, which I have not come across that frequently in the literature, is what I call the 'needs-perspective'. This perspective includes external factors other than laws which organizations might motivate to diversity their workforce. Global demographic trends would, in my opinion, fall under this category. An organization might, for example, put more attention to diversity management when they become aware that the country in which they are operating is facing a national labor shortage. This would generate an extrinsically driven need to diversify their workforce with foreigners.

To conclude, there are multiple perspectives to diversity management which, for the purpose of this thesis, I defined as (1) social justice, (2) the business case, (3) needs, and (4) compliance. In order to distinguish these perspectives one level further, I decided to subordinate them in a matrix based on their motivational and behavioral background. This means that I reflected whether each perspective is intrinsically or extrinsically motivated and whether it represents a proactive behavior or reactive response. I believe that this distinction is valuable to comprehend an organization's motivation to work on diversity management, and consequently its potential reasoning for wanting to conduct a diversity assessment. Figure 2 captures this classification.

In my opinion, which is strongly founded in this literature review, the social justice rationale represents the only truly intrinsically driven approach to diversity since it is solely based on the organization's moral values. While the business case for diversity is also proactive in nature, its motivation is grounded in the desired benefits of possessing a diverse workforce. Lastly, both the needs and compliance perspective represent extrinsically driven rationales that, logically, are reactive since they are generated as response to external factors.

		Motivation	
		Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Behavior	Proactive	Social Justice	Business case <i>(Benefits)</i>
	Reactive	-	Needs  Compliance

**Figure 2. Perspectives to Diversity Management**

On a final note, I want to reiterate that the perspectives to diversity management are by no means limited to these four. Further, it is important to highlight that they are in no way mutually exclusive but, on the contrary, very likely to coexist (Köllen, 2019; Louvrier, 2013). For instance, an organization might start their diversity management efforts due to their compliance with respective laws but then develop a more proactive approach driven by the employees' personal moral compass to work towards social justice of minorities. In that way, shifts between the different perspectives are likely to occur. Köllen (2019) argues, however, that typically there tends to be one rational that is more dominant than another.

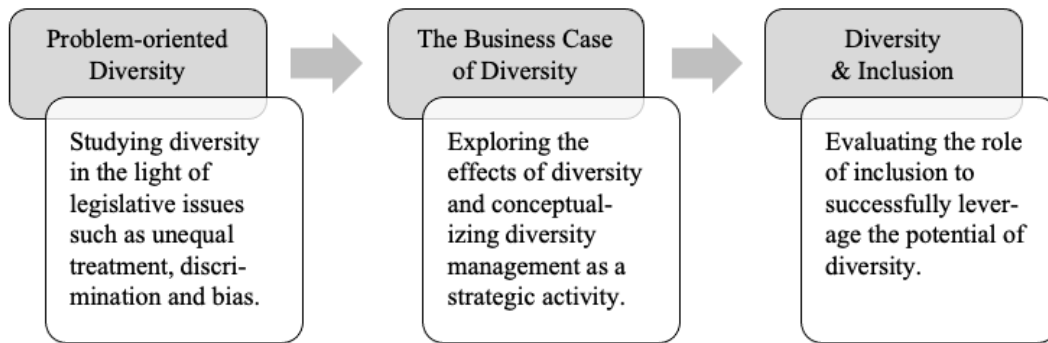
## 2.2 The Research Field of Diversity

After the global context of diversity management was presented in the previous chapter, this chapter takes a closer look at diversity research. In particular, I emphasize three main topics. First, the historical development of diversity research is outlined. Second, the multiple potential definitions of diversity are introduced and then discussed in the light of the different dimensions of diversity. Third, the ambiguous effects of diversity on business performance are presented.

### 2.2.1 Development of Diversity Research

Even though the topic of diversity has been studied in anthropology for over 150 years already, it is only in the last 40 years that diversity has been increasingly addressed in the field of management literature (Jonsen et al., 2011; Yadav & Lenka, 2020). Environmental and societal changes, including migration, legislation, the demographic changes in workforce, or simply the growing competitiveness of businesses on a global scale, have all

been contributing to diversity receiving increased attention (D’Netto et al., 2014; Triandis, et al., 1994; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). These changes have also contributed to a shift in the focus of diversity research over the past decades that, according to Otaye-Ebede (2018) can be classified into the following three pillars: (1) problem-oriented diversity, (2) the business case of diversity, and (3) diversity & inclusion.



**Figure 3. Diversity Research: From Problems, over Business Case to Inclusion**  
*(Based on Otaye-Ebede, 2018)*

Interestingly, it can be observed that Otaye-Ebede’s (2018) pillars of diversity research partly overlap with the rationales that organizations use to address diversity management (see Chapter 2.1.4). Yet, the paragraphs below grant additional insights into how these perspectives to diversity management have shifted over time.

First, in the 1980s and 90s, after diversity management spread from the U.S. and had gained a foothold across the world, diversity research was primarily driven by the problems connected to diversity and its legislative issues (Shore et al., 2009). Diversity research especially addressed the issues of unequal treatment, discrimination, and bias at the workplace. In this light, two areas frequently discussed by scholars were equal employment opportunity practices and tokenism (Jonsen et al., 2011; Otaye-Ebede, 2018). Equal employment opportunity refers to legislative policies put into place to guarantee fair and equal access for everyone to job development opportunities in organizations. Tokenism describes the malicious process of hiring people from minority groups only to appear more equal and diverse from the outside (Jonsen et al., 2011).

Since the beginning of the 90s, however, early diversity scholars like Cox (1991) and Thomas (1990) started to conceptualize diversity management as a strategic activity to improve business performance. Therefore, the second pillar of diversity management’s research history could be described as a shift towards considering diversity as a business case, since this pillar is characterized by a wide array of studies assessing the effects of

diversity on business performance. Whether diversity in fact leads to an improved business performance, or might have other effects, is discussed in Section 2.2.3.

Finally, the last pillar of diversity research addresses the need to incorporate inclusive actions into diversity management to fully leverage the benefits of diversity. A simple analogy for the relationship between diversity and inclusion is provided by Tapia (2009: p.12) who differentiates the two terms by stating that “diversity is the mix, inclusion is making the mix work”. In order to make the mix work, organizations need to ensure that everyone feels included and is treated accordingly. Therefore, Tapia’s (2009) analogy demonstrates that inclusion is an active and participatory process, whereas diversity solely describes a situation in which people with diverse backgrounds are present. Furthermore, as the previously mentioned concept of equal employment opportunities has indicated, diversity can be imposed by legislative power, while inclusion merely relies on voluntary actions within an organization (Winters, 2014). Hence, inclusion requires concrete actions within an organization. Why such concrete inclusive actions are crucial is discussed in Section 2.2.3.

## **2.2.2 Multiple Definitions and Dimensions of Diversity**

Since the term diversity is so broad and of such a universal use across different fields (e.g. biology, psychology, sociology, or economics), there is no uniform definition for diversity. Even within the organizational study field, scholars still diverge in their definitions. Therefore, this section provides some clarity on the various potential definitions by explaining the different dimensions of diversity.

When defining diversity, people most commonly think about visible characteristics of another person. Typically, these include a person’s gender, age, or ethnicity. However, diversity goes beyond these apparent characteristics and encompasses multiple, more complex, attributes of diversity.

One possible way of categorizing the different definitions of diversity was taken by Mor Barak (2016). She distinguishes between narrow-category based, broad-category based, and diversity definitions that are based on a conceptual rule. These three types of definitions are not mutually exclusive, however. Narrow definitions are mostly limited to seeing diversity as pure demographic differences such as age, gender, or race (Mor Barak, 2016). They usually are also restricted to a particular study and measure. Broad-category definitions refer to less obvious diversity attributes, such as values, sexual preference, or a functional

specialty (Dobbs, 1996). Especially diversity scholars such as Thomas & Ely (1996) or Jackson et al. (1995) are supporters of broader definitions of diversity, since they prefer a definition that includes all ways in which team members in an organization can differ. Lastly, the conceptual rule definitions refer to differences in perspectives and perceptions (Mor Barak, 2016). This latter categorization aligns with Triandis (1996) who defines diversity as a social construct, meaning that diversity is interpreted in social processes with others. In a similar vein, Garcia-Prieto (2003) argues that diversity categories are culture specific, meaning that a category that is considered important in one context, may be defined as less important in a different context.

Another, even more predominant classification of diversity emerged from Harrison et al. (1998). The authors distinguish between surface-level and deep-level diversity, which are terms that have been adopted and complemented by many researchers. Surface-level diversity is understood as differences that are more immediately apparent, such as age, gender, visible disabilities, nationality, sexual orientation, or ethnicity (Harrison et al., 1998). In Mor Barak's (2016) framework, surface-level diversity represents the equivalent to the narrow-category based definitions of diversity.

On the contrary, deep-level diversity refers to differences of a psychological nature such as values, attitudes, or personality (Harrison et al., 1998). Mor Barak's (2016) broad-category and conceptual rule definitions correspond to such deep-level diversity definitions. In the diversity literature, scholars use varying terms like cognitive/ acquired diversity (e.g. knowledge or perspectives), value diversity (e.g. influenced by religion or culture), or informational diversity (e.g. work experience or educational background) to define deep-level diversity (e.g. Page, 2007; Phillips et al., 2011). Regardless of the respective categorization, however, they all share the same characteristics: deep-level characteristics are hardly visible, less permanent than surface-level diversity, meaning that they can easily change, and might take time to emerge in a group (Harvey & Allard, 2015).

Despite the clear classifications of the two dimensions, Phillips & Loyd (2006) emphasize that the dimensions logically coexist in group constellations and can therefore cause very different dynamics, which need to be considered when assessing diversity. Just because people do not seem diverse, e.g. same gender, ethnicity, and age, it is very likely that they are in fact more diverse than one would expect, due to their individual personalities, upbringing, or acquired knowledge, for example.

Interestingly, there is also a wide gap between research regarding surface-level and deep-level diversity. Jackson et al. (2003) estimate that approximately 89 percent of the diversity research analyzes observable, or surface, traits. As the main reason for this, scholars argue that studies concerning deep-level characteristics are harder to operationalize since finding a research setting with demographic diversity traits is considered easier, and hence more convenient (Harrison et al., 1998; Jackson et al., 2003; Pelled, 1996). In addition to the benefits associated with operationalization, scholars also claim that demographic attributes and their effects on organizations are much easier to measure than cognitive diversity (Harrison et al., 1998; Jackson et al., 1995; Milliken & Martins, 1996; Pelled, 1996).

### **2.2.3 Ambiguous Effects of Diversity**

The literature review of this thesis concludes that there are inconsistent findings about the effects of diversity (Cox & Blake, 1991; Harrison et al., 1998; Horwitz, 2007; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). This section presents how scholars' studies found ambiguous effects of possessing a diverse workforce. Furthermore, I highlight challenges that may come with increasing diversity and present criticism raised by some scholars.

One common benefit of diversity is the enhanced creativity and innovation within teams (Phillips, 2014; Richard, 2000). Richard (2000) specifies further that in particular cultural diversity has a great potential to positively impact team performance. Especially if an organization has customers in foreign countries, the knowledge of culturally diverse workers can be leveraged to, e.g., help match a product to a new market. In addition, scholars acknowledge the unique cognitive attributes (deep-level diversity) which individuals bring to the team, encouraging constructive debates and hereby potentially leading to improved decision quality (Cox & Blake, 1991; Richard, 2000; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998).

Not only scholars, but also practitioners, commonly in the form of management consultancies, have contributed with research findings regarding the effects of diversity. One study by Cloverpop (2017), an enterprise decision-making platform, reports that teams that are gender, age, and ethnically diverse make better decisions up to 87% of the time. Moreover, McKinsey & Company has conducted a study analyzing the financial effects of diversity. The study found that a diverse workforce within an organization outperforms non-diverse workforces financially (Hunt et al., 2015). The insight that also practitioners research the effects of diversity is of value for this thesis since it demonstrates that there is an interest in diversity research from both the academic and practical side. Further, the two studies



mentioned above showcase that practitioners predominantly focus on researching the business case of diversity. I would assume that this is due to the fact that financial impacts spark the greatest interest of organizations.

However, managing a diverse workforce comes at a cost. Phillips (2014) notes that key-challenges of social diversity can include discomfort, less cohesions, and rougher interactions within a group, hereby contrasting the aforesaid view of constructive discussions held in diverse teams. Other scholars address these issues more generically as ‘friction and conflicts’ that might arise as a consequence of increased diversity (Harrison et al., 1998; Jackson, 2011; Pelled, 1996). Ultimately, these endanger the performance of a business, since requiring time to reach consensus, can delay the process of decision making, for example (Horwitz, 2007).

In addition to the inconsistent findings of how diversity effects work in organizations, scholars also raise criticism concerning the settings and design of diversity research. That is that the findings are not widely applicable due to the different meanings of diversity and its management in different cultures (Francesco & Gold, 2005; Magoshi & Chang, 2009; Mor Barak, 2016). Jonsen et al. (2011) and Roberson (2019) add that the diversity research itself is not diverse, since most diversity studies are conducted in Anglo-Saxon countries and rarely in multi-national settings. Of course, this clearly calls into question how universally research findings can be applied when they have been conducted under a very specific context. Despite the Anglo-Saxon dominance in diversity research, according to Klarsfeld et al. (2014), there is, however, no significant divergence in the shape of diversity practices on a global scale.

Notwithstanding the uncertainties about the effects of diversity, scholars converge in one interesting notion. They argue that positive effects of a diverse workforce are not achieved by hiring, e.g., more cultural or gender diverse employees alone (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004). Instead, they emphasize how important the role of inclusive diversity management is, which aligns with the previously mentioned statement: “diversity is the mix, inclusion is making the mix work” (Tapia, 2009: p. 12). In summary, it can therefore be concluded that diversity can generate strong benefits for a company, as long as the company does not stop at diversity but takes the extra step of inclusion.

## **2.3 Assessing Diversity in Organizations**

An organizational diversity assessment refers to the evaluation of diversity related policies and practices within an organization. This assessment process is considered as an essential measure to determine strong- and weak-performing areas within an organization, and ultimately derive areas for improvement (e.g. Olavarria et al., 2005; Truong et al., 2017). The process of assessing diversity in organizations can, however, be rather complicated. This chapter therefore discusses common practices and considerations for conducting an organizational assessment to gain a comprehensive overview of the process. For this purpose, I divided the chapter into three sections.

First, I provide relevant distinctions between various forms of assessment and accentuate the overall importance of conducting an assessment. Afterward, the subsequent two sections look into how organizations can conduct assessment process through an instrument. Here, various factors that need to be taken into consideration when setting up a diversity assessment tool are addressed in Section 2.3.2. Then, I discuss in Section 2.3.3 how organizations should use such a tool and what they should take into account to make the assessment as fruitful as possible.

### **2.3.1 Definitions and Importance of Organizational Assessments**

Despite a growing interest in diversity management over the past decades (e.g. Yadav & Lenka, 2020), there is limited research on organizational diversity assessments found in the literature (Comer & Soliman, 1996; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012). However, since organizational assessment is a process not exclusively relevant in diversity management, there are other fields on which I can draw upon to paint a comprehensive picture of how to prepare and conduct an organizational assessment.

One predominant field outside of diversity management that I encountered during my literature review is cultural competence. Pearson et al. (2007, p. 54) provide the following definition for cultural competence within an organizational context, which clearly demonstrates how closely related it is to diversity management:

*“Culturally competent practices are a congruent set of workforce behaviours, management practices and institutional policies within a practice setting resulting in an organisational environment that is inclusive of cultural and other forms of diversity.”*

- Pearson et al. (2007, p. 54)

Cultural competence emerged in the health care context and contrary to diversity management, organizational assessment is a well-developed approach in the field of cultural competence (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012). This strong cultural competence focus, particularly related to health care, becomes overt in the next subchapter. Despite Harper et al.'s (2006) argument that there is congruence in definitions and approaches to organizational assessment in both fields, the strong focus on health care can affect the implications that can be drawn from the cultural competence field onto diversity management.

### ***Assessment Forms***

There are several forms an assessment can take. For this thesis, it is crucial to provide some clarifications between these forms and explicitly highlight the terminology I use throughout this study. In particular, I clarify the meanings of three opposing forms of assessment: *individual vs organizational* assessment, *internal vs external* assessment, and *quantitative vs qualitative* assessment. There are, of course, further distinctive characteristics that can exist between assessment instruments, some of which are discussed in Section 2.3.2.

The first clarification relates to the difference between an *individual* and an *organizational* assessment. Apart from the obvious distinction between an individual person opposed to an organization, Olavarria et al. (2005) differentiate them further. According to the authors, individual assessments observe personal attitudes and behaviors, whereas organizational assessments evaluate “a set of congruent attitudes, practices, policies, and structures that come together in a system or agency” (Olavarria et al., 2005: p. 3). Consequently, an organizational assessment is capable of, and very likely to, incorporate the evaluation of individuals in its process in order adequately comprehend the attitudes and practices within an organization.

Surprisingly, however, according to LaVeist et al. (2008) and Kalev et al. (2006), there seems to be a stronger focus on individual rather than organizational assessment of cultural competence and diversity in the literature. While the authors unfortunately do not provide any justifications for this phenomenon, I assume that it could be explained by the increased shift from diversity towards inclusion, and thus the focus of the individual (see Section 2.2.1). Nonetheless, I am surprised by this dominance since the individual and organizational assessments are so closely related to each other and support for diversity and cultural competence is required at all levels of the organizations, not only at the individual level (Harper et al., 2006).

The second fundamental clarification I want to provide is a distinction between *internal* and *external* organizational assessments. In the literature, these two terms are not that frequently used, but instead distinguished through the prefix ‘self’, consequently referring to *self-assessment* and *assessment*. The difference between the two forms is fairly simple and self-explanatory. A *self-assessment* describes the holistic evaluation process of an organization conducted by the organization itself (internally), whereas *assessment* refers to the evaluation conducted by an outside (external) party or with their assistance (Ford & Evans, 2006). Traditionally, this outside assistance consist of support by consultants, who, particularly in the field of diversity, frequently happen to have a strong scholarly background (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012).

Even though deciding to conduct an *external* assessment is certainly more expensive than an *internal* assessment, it brings two main benefits with it. Firstly, an external party reduces potential bias by providing an independent perspective to a process (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012). Secondly, and potentially as consequence of the first argument, the involvement of consultants transmits more credibility within an organization, meaning that it gives legitimacy to the assessment (Ford & Evans, 2002). Interestingly, some organizations decide to hire external consultants to develop and/ or conduct an organizational assessment, even though they possess an existing, readily available tool in the company (Ford & Evans, 2002). That is because these organization believe that the findings will be more credible to the leadership and employees if they were obtained by someone who counts as an expert in the field.

Although not strongly emphasized in the literature, I want to clarify that organizations do not necessarily have to conduct a purely *internal* or *external* assessment. External assistance can, for example, only be sought during the development process of an assessment tool. The actual assessment process could then be conducted internally. Truong et al. (2017, p. 473) touch on this topic briefly by stating that some organizational assessment tools have “potential for self-assessment”, meaning that organizations can use an assessment instrument without external help once they comprehend it sufficiently. In that way, organizations have the possibility to convey credibility among their employees if they affiliate an assessment tool with a renowned consulting company or scholar, for example (Ford & Evans, 2002).

The third distinction that needs to be made is between *quantitative* and *qualitative* assessments. When preparing for and going through an organizational assessment,

organizations need to decide if the components of their tool should be of a qualitative or quantitative nature. Quantitative indicators typically include the measurement of percentages or quotas, while qualitative indicators assess more intangible aspects like perceptions or attitudes (Landwehr, 2016). Interestingly, the distinction between quantitative and qualitative indicators is also reflected in the use of differing terminology. Quantitative indicators typically speak of ‘measurement’, which can be defined as the “assignment of numbers to properties (or characteristics) of objects based on a set rule” (Hubbard, 2004; p. 32). On the contrary, it can be observed that qualitative indicators use words like ‘assessment’ or ‘evaluation’ instead. This distinctive terminology clearly underlines the difference between assessments of a quantitative and qualitative nature. As the next subchapter will show, however, in practice, organizations commonly use a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators, and thus do not restrict themselves to one set of indicators only.

In this thesis, I predominately use the terminology *organizational assessment* and refer to this form of assessment even when I only use the term *assessment*. Individual assessments were discarded as the focus of the thesis, particularly in the empirical section, as the overall goal is to study the business context from a broader, organizational perspective. When I use the term organizational assessment, I do not specifically refer to an externally conducted assessment, but rather the concept of assessment itself. The party responsible for completing an assessment is something I considered to be of secondary importance. Therefore, I clearly specify whether I refer to a self-assessment or an assessment process conducted by an outside party whenever this distinction is relevant for a particular context. Since both qualitative and quantitative indicators can form part of an organizational assessment, I do not restrict myself to either one of the two assessment forms. However, I predominantly sought assessments of a qualitative nature since Business Finland’s Talent Boost Index mainly characterizes as such. It is for this reason that I avoid using quantitatively coined terms like ‘measurement’ throughout this thesis but use terms like ‘evaluation’ or ‘assessment’ instead.

### ***Relevance of Organizational Assessments***

Conducting an organizational assessment brings numerous advantages with it. First and foremost, many scholars point out that an assessment serves to derive an organization’s strengths and weaknesses, which then guide organizations towards areas that require improvement (Ford & Evans, 2002; Olavarria et al., 2005; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012; Truong et al., 2017). If an organizational assessment is conducted more than once,

organizations are also able to examine their improvements over time and observe their growth (Olavarria et al., 2005). Mathews (1998) builds up on this argument and considers the evaluation of diversity practices a systematic and strategic approach to solve diversity issues. Instead of trying to implement quick solutions, organizations can derive more grounded decisions that can lead to more effective and meaningful change (Mathews, 1998). This relates to an argument raised by Cukier et al. (2012) that an organizational diversity assessment goes beyond evaluating diversity progress within Human Resources, but in fact affects the whole value chain (i.e. diversity is relevant in multiple business core functions). Lastly, an organizational assessment can also have a positive impact on the internal work climate. Truong et al. (2017) found that the implementation of an assessment instrument leads to “raised awareness among staff of the value and importance of cultural competence” (p. 472).

### **2.3.2 Setting up a Diversity Assessment Tool**

The process of evaluating diversity is typically guided by an assessment tool or instrument. When preparing for the evaluation process and setting up the instrument, there are numerous things that need to be taken into consideration. Among other things, these include defining methods of data collection, agreeing on the domains to be covered by the tool, as well as acknowledging the limitations of adopting existing tools. Given the limited research in the diversity field, I once again draw on the field of cultural competence in this section.

Conducting an organizational diversity assessment can be a complex and very extensive process. Logically, this high degree of complexity and comprehensiveness is likely to be reflected in the actual assessment tool as well. However, scholars urge to keep the tools’ design as simple and non-abstract as possible (Ford & Evans, 2002), hereby ensuring that the assessment can be conducted in a timely and inexpensive way (Olavarria et al., 2005).

Deciding which indicators to prioritize and include in an assessment tool is not an easy task. Hubbard (2004) provides guidance on how many indicators could approximately be included in a tool. According to Hubbard (2004) the ideal quantity of indicators for an effective assessment of diversity lays between 20 and 25. While selecting these 20 to 25 indicators is important, Hubbard concedes that the process of getting there requires organizations to define significantly more indicators. This ensures that organizations have a full set of indicators to choose from for the particular setting of the assessment and are thus more flexible for change.

Several scholars also point out the danger of choosing the wrong diversity indicators for an assessment tool (Ford & Evans, 2002; Hubbard, 2004; Olavarria et al., 2005). Deciding what to assess is paramount for the success of an overall diversity strategy because selecting wrong indicators can portray a false reflection of the performance of diversity initiatives and lead managers towards erroneous conclusions (Ford & Evans, 2002; Hubbard, 2004). To prevent this, scholars recommend to test assessment indicators on their validity, i.e. that indicators accurately evaluate what should be evaluated, and reliability, i.e. that indicators consistently evaluate the same content (Ford & Evans, 2002; Olavarria et al., 2005). To strengthen the validity and reliability of indicators, Olavarria et al. (2005) stress the importance of making the selection of the indicators a dynamic process. This means that organizations should regularly inform themselves about current research findings and best practices in the field to potentially revise indicators accordingly.

### ***Methods of Data Collection***

In order to conduct a thorough organizational assessment, organizations have multiple options for collecting the necessary data. The data collection methods most frequently mentioned by scholars include interviews, focus groups, document reviews, and questionnaires (Ford & Evans, 2002; Olavarria et al., 2005; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012; Truong et al., 2017; Wentling, 2000). However, it is important to highlight that organizations do not necessarily have to limit themselves to one data collection method only. Depending on the available resources, organizations can, and are in fact encouraged to, use multiple data collection methods as this reduces the potential for bias by being more likely to reflect actual practice (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012).

Ford & Evans (2002) elaborate why questionnaires are frequently used, but also clarify the limitations they have. In comparison to interviews and focus groups, questionnaires are a rather simple data collection method, allowing organizations to even have one and the same person for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the data. This makes questionnaires an ideal assessment method for organizations that have little time at hand and want to involve managers in the process. On the other side, the simplicity of the process might lead to the potential disadvantage that the evaluation could be completed too easily. Managers might rush through the completion of the assessment and not take sufficient time to thoroughly reflect on and identify areas of improvement. (Ford & Evans, 2002)

In the empirical part of my thesis, questionnaires are of particular importance. Therefore, I evaluate different response format options that can be implemented in a questionnaire. In

general, survey responses can be divided into closed and open formats. For organizational assessment tools, closed response formats are typically yes/no answers or Likert scales, while open responses are commonly designed as free-text fields (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012). Likert scales can serve as scoring measures and help organizations with the identification of weak-performing areas, and consequently assists in prioritizing improvement measures (Harper et al., 2006). They provide more structured, detailed information than yes-no responses but the obtained information of Likert scales are far from being as informative as open responses can potentially be (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012). While organizations can, of course, include multiple response options in a questionnaire, they have to critically reflect the objective of each question and how detailed the responses should be. Ultimately, I believe that organizations face an important predicament during the process of setting up a diversity assessment tool: a tradeoff between simplicity and detail.

### ***Domains of an Organizational Assessment Tool***

Multiple scholars have conducted studies and reviews of organizational assessment in the fields of diversity and cultural competence. To gain insights from the literature into what areas are considered relevant to include in an organizational assessment tool, a sample of six studies are presented in Table 1. The table lists the author(s) of the reviews, the publication date and title, as well as the research design and the domains that the authors suggest including in an organizational assessment tool. A domain refers to a major content area in which issues need to be addressed (Siegel et al., 2002). In some studies, these domain suggestions by the authors are deduced by reviewing and combining existing instruments (e.g. Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2005), whereas other studies created their own organizational assessment instruments based on primary data such as expert interviews or focus groups (Bowen, 2004; Hubbard, 2004). It should also be highlighted that the majority of the studies included a review of organizational assessment literature during the process of deriving suggested domains.

When looking at the titles and publication dates of the analyzed studies, it becomes evident that there is a clear lack of recent reviews on organizational diversity assessment practices. The majority of the studies located for this review stem from the cultural competence field, most of the studies were published between 2004 and 2006, and even the newest study (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012) already dates back eight years. These findings underline the existence of a research gap of current organizational assessment reviews, particularly related



to diversity. Hereby, it supports the academic purpose of my thesis, which is to contribute findings of an up-to-date comparison of diversity assessment tools.

**Table 1. Sample of Organizational Assessment Domains**

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Domains</b>
Trenerry & Paradies (2012)	Organizational Assessment: An Overlooked Approach to Managing Diversity and Addressing Racism in the Workplace	<i>Focus:</i> Cultural competence within a health care context <i>Process:</i> Analysis of tools found through literature review <i>Sample:</i> 8 tools	(1) Human Resource Practices (2) Organizational Values and Commitment (3) Organizational Strategy, Policy, Procedures and Governance (4) Diversity/ Cultural Competency Training (5) Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation
Harper et al. (2006)	Organizational Cultural Competence: A Review of Assessment Protocols	<i>Focus:</i> Cultural competence within a health care context <i>Process:</i> Analysis of tools found through National Center of Cultural Competence's online resource database + literature review <i>Sample:</i> 17 tools	(1) Organizational Values (2) Policies/ Procedures/ Governance (3) Planning/ Monitoring/ Evaluation (4) Communication (5) Human Resources Development (6) Community & Consumer Participation (7) Facilitation of a Broad Service Array (8) Organizational Infrastructure/ Supports
Olavarria et al. (2005)	Organizational Cultural Competence: Self-Assessment Tool for Community Health and Social Service Organizations	<i>Focus:</i> Cultural competence in community health and social service organizations <i>Process:</i> Literature review + analysis of tools <i>Sample:</i> 3 tools	(1) Organizational Norms, Principles, and Policies (2) Asset and Need Identification (3) Human Resources and Management: Policies and Practices (4) Services and Service Delivery (5) Community Consultation, Partnership, and Information Exchange
Hubbard (2004) (Book)	The Diversity Scorecard: Evaluating the Impact of Diversity on Organizational Performance	<i>Focus:</i> Measurement of Diversity Initiative Impact <i>Process:</i> Literature review + personal consulting experience <i>Sample:</i> -	(1) Financial Impact (2) Diverse Customer/ Community Partnership (3) Workforce Profile (4) Workplace Climate/ Culture (5) Diversity Leadership Commitment (6) Learning and Growth

**Table 1. Sample of Organizational Assessment Domains (cont'd)**

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Domains</b>
Bowen (2004) <i>(Doctoral Thesis)</i>	Assessing the Responsiveness of Health Care Organizations to Culturally Diverse Groups	<i>Focus:</i> Cultural responsiveness within a health care context <i>Process:</i> Literature review + test site study (interviews, focus group, observations, survey) → tool development <i>Sample:</i> -	(1) Human Resources (2) Education and Training (3) Language Access Service (4) Information for Clients and Community (5) Organizational Framework and Integration (6) Data Collection (7) Evaluation and Research (8) Participation of the Community
Wheeler (1996)	Corporate Practices in Diversity Measurement	<i>Focus:</i> Diversity Measurement <i>Process:</i> Analysis of multinational companies through interviews and focus groups <i>Sample:</i> 32 companies	(1) Demographics (2) Organization Culture (3) Accountability (4) Productivity/ Profitability (5) Benchmarking (6) Programmatic Measures

In order to properly evaluate an organization's strengths and weaknesses, an organizational assessment must be highly comprehensive (Siegel et al., 2003). Drawing onto the cultural competence field, Siegel et al. (2003) point out that an assessment tool should cover three key levels that exist in an organization: (1) the administrative level, which relates to the governance of an organization, (2) the service level, which refers to the products or services offered by an organization as well as how they are delivered, and (3) the individual level, which relates to the people involved in the product/ service delivery.

The six analyzed studies presented in Table 1 align with this comprehensive approach to organizational assessment tools that is suggested by Siegel et al. (2003). Multiple authors include at least one domain that corresponds to the administrative level, calling such domains 'Organizational Strategy, Policy, Procedure and Governance' (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012), 'Policies/ Procedures/ Governance' (Harper et al., 2006), or 'Organizational Norms, Principles, and Policies' (Olavarria et al., 2005). In terms of the service level, the authors list a variety of domains to evaluate diversity or cultural competence across all kind of organizational functions. Here, the most common domain seems to be 'Human Resources', either listed namely or in form of one of its characteristic activities like recruiting. Other domain themes covered by some of the authors include 'training', 'monitoring & evaluation', or 'community engagement'. Lastly, some of the authors also include domains that address the role of individuals within organizations. In contrast to the other domains, these domains are of a quantitative nature, however, and are only addressed by two of the six studies. Hubbard (2004) and Wheeler (1998) evaluate domains such as 'Demographics' or 'Workforce profile' respectively, which rather than focusing on the actual individual attitudes and behaviors, can be seen as metrics that assess individuals as part of the organization.

The review of the six studies also grants scholarly insights into the recommended quantity of domains to be covered in a tool. It can be observed that all reviews suggest including between five and nine domains. Olavarria et al. (2005) highlight that organizational assessment tools commonly break down the domains into concrete indicators or standards that should be evaluated. However, a concrete set of indicators were not provided by all authors, which is why there were not included in Table 1. Potential reasons for the authors not providing a list of specifically recommended indicators are discussed at the end of this subchapter. Nonetheless, when setting up a diversity assessment tool, organizations can, of

course, take Hubbard's (2004) suggestion of including 20 to 25 indicators as additional guideline into consideration.

Another aspect worth mentioning is that Table 1 solely shows those domains that the authors suggest to include in an organizational assessment tool. However, some scholars also address domains that are hard to evaluate, and thus difficult to include in an assessment tool. The profitability and productivity of diversity strategies represent one of the hardest areas to evaluate (Wentling, 2000; Wheeler, 1996). These difficulties can be explained by the fact that both an increase of profitability and productivity are influenced by numerous factors and can hardly be traced back to specific, isolated diversity activities (Wentling, 2000). In addition to being influenced by multiple factors, productivity is also often tied to measures that are less tangible such as enhanced problem-solving capabilities of diverse groups (Wheeler, 1996). Consequently, making a solid business case by proving the bottom-line impact of diversity is challenging.

Aside from these difficulties in evaluating profitability and productivity, Wentling (2000) highlights the "internal readiness to launch diversity initiatives" (p. 445) as another factor that is hard to assess. Internal readiness means that employees and managers are ready to embrace diversity inside the organization. Of course, internal readiness for diversity could be evaluated by conducting sample interviewees or surveys with employees. Nonetheless, I understand and share Wentling's (2000) concern that a valid and effective statement on the internal readiness is difficult to make, especially in larger organizations where a sample not necessarily displays a proper reflection of a whole organization.

### ***No one-fits-all Assessment Tool***

The most predominant consideration related to assessment tools covered in the literature is that there does not exist a one-fits-all solution for an organizational assessment. Many scholars stress the idea that specific contextual differences, such as the industry, size, or organizational settings that define an organization, can hinder the development of a uniform assessment tool (Harper et al., 2006; Hubbard, 2004; Olavarria et al., 2009; Wheeler, 1996). The differences in legislative and social policies described in Chapter 2.1 are an example of such contextual differences. Additionally, organizational assessment tools can vary in their scope, or level of detail (Ford & Evans, 2002). This means that some tools might evaluate particular areas of an organization only, and do not necessarily focus on all functions across the values chain (see Cukier et al., 2012, Section 2.3.1).

Maj (2017a) and Wheeler (1996) discuss the role of potentially differing phases of organizational maturities. Naturally, organizations that are more progressed or mature in terms of their diversity efforts, are more likely to aspire evaluating more complex aspects than an organization that just recently started paying attention to managing and assessing diversity (Maj, 2017a; Wheeler, 1996). This might also be reflected in the data collection methods an organization wants to use. Organizations that are more committed to diversity might be more willing to allocate sufficient resources to conduct a more in-depth analysis by, e.g. conducting interview or focus groups. Limitations in organizational resources can therefore potentially hinder the one-to-one application of existing assessment tools.

Another interesting difference between organizational assessment tools is brought up by Perry & Li (2019). The authors found that diversity assessment instruments can vary in terms of the type of diversity dimensions that they address. In particular, the authors highlight that some organizations focus on diversity generally, while others target their tools at one or multiple specific diversity attributes like ethnicity, age, or gender. In a similar vein, Cachat-Rosset et al. (2017) made some interesting findings concerning the number of diversity attributes covered in diversity assessment tools. Their study revealed that across the 52 empirical studies that they reviewed solely 12 of them included more than one diversity attribute in their instrument. Perry & Li's (2019) and Cachat-Rosset et al.'s (2017) findings let me conclude two important things. First, diversity assessment tools seem to be primarily focused on surface-level diversity attributes. And second, within these surface-level diversity attributes, organizations appear to both focus on specific diversity attributes as well as the diversity generally, which might complicate the use of other existing instruments.

As a consequence of the context specificness and all the potential variations between the tools mentioned above, organizations find themselves in an ambiguous situation. They can (1) accept the limitations of existing instruments, (2) develop their own instrument, (3) try to adapt existing instruments, or (4) buy an external instrument and use it as it is (Olavarria et al., 2009; Truong et al., 2017). While it could, of course, be argued in favor of developing a universally applicable diversity assessment tool to save organizations the time and costs of developing their own tool or adapting existing ones, I would strongly advise against this. I fully believe that the aforementioned arguments as well as the listing of exemplary domains in Table 1 show that the settings of organizational assessments vary greatly and there does not, and maybe should not, exist a "master tool" for diversity evaluation.

### **2.3.3 Using a Diversity Assessment Tool**

In the last section, I outlined several factors that require careful consideration when setting up a diversity assessment tool. In this subchapter, I now provide relevant guidelines that are essential when using a diversity assessment tool. Although the logistics of a diversity assessment vary greatly depending on the setting in which it is conducted, there are some considerations mentioned in the literature that should be taken into account during the process of using a diversity assessment tool. In particular, these are discussions about who should conduct the assessment, why it is important to report and follow-up on the results, what role the leadership plays in the process, and lastly, how financial commitment is important for this process.

#### ***Defining Assessor(s)***

When conducting the actual diversity assessment in an organization the first and foremost question is: Who actually executes the assessment? In the literature, there is no uniform answer to this question of responsibility. While some scholars argue in favor of completing the assessment with a committee, others encourage to rely on an individual assessor – the former being the prevalent opinion. Proponents of using a committee base their argumentation on the benefits of gaining a cross-sectional view and the reduction of bias (Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2005; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012). Gathering an assessment committee with members coming from different levels and departments of the organization ensures that multiple perspectives can be considered in the process. Contrary to this point of view, advocates of conducting the assessment with an individual assessor speak for using someone in a leadership position (e.g. the manager) as they have the best knowledge of the business processes and power dynamics between committee members would be avoided (Ford & Evans, 2002). Especially for the latter case, it is crucial to ensure that the tool is designed in a simple design and can be completed quickly (see Section 2.3.2). To make the process of conducting the assessment as smooth as possible, Trenerry & Paradies (2012) point out that the responsibility of the committee should ideally include the development of the tool as well. In that way assessors are already familiar with the tool when completing the assessment.

Despite these opposing views regarding the responsibility of conducting an assessment, I believe both perspectives converge in one interesting aspect: In one way or another manager or the leadership are always involved in the assessment process. That is because organizations logically require assessors who have sufficient knowledge of the organization.

Also, I could imagine that the likelihood of gathering an assessment committee instead of using an individual assessor increases the bigger and more complex an organization is.

### ***Reporting & Following-up***

Once an organization has assigned one or multiple assessor(s) and completed the evaluation, organizations transition to a crucial subsequent step: reporting and follow-up. Earlier in this chapter (Section 2.3.1), I clarified that conducting a diversity assessment aims at comprehending an organization's strengths, weaknesses, and consequently areas for improvements. Without documenting and reflecting on the obtained results, however, the usefulness of a diversity assessment is clearly restricted. It is for this reasons that the literature points out the paramount importance of reporting and follow-up. In terms of reporting, organizations typically compile the findings of the assessment in a written feedback report (Ford & Evans, 2002). Based on the written feedback report, organizations can follow-up on the results. One possible option to turn them into practice is for organizations to develop a comprehensive and explicit planning guide that assists an organization to interpret and apply the results by including concrete next steps (Ford & Evans, 2006; Harper et al., 2006). The duty for both activities commonly lies with the respective assessor(s) that were responsible for conducting the assessment (Olavarria et al., 2005).

Closely related to reporting and follow-up, Ford & Evans (2002) discuss the different options organizations have in terms of assessment frequency. Basically, organizations can either see the assessment as a one-time event or conduct it repeatedly. Of course, going beyond a one-time evaluation and conducting an assessment in regular intervals (e.g. annually) would encourage organizations to systematically seek improvement, hereby treating diversity as a strategic issue (Mathews, 1998). For the case of recurring assessments, Ford & Evans (2002) distinguish between two different types of follow-up actions that are closely linked to the concepts of single- and double-loop organizational learning. Single-loop follow-up refers to performance related "quick fixes", meaning that detected problems during the assessment are immediately steered against. Double-loop follow-up, on the other hand, represents a more preventive approach. Building up on the immediate follow-up actions, an organizational assessment can also trigger organizations to question fundamental organizational processes or long-established assumptions. (Ford & Evans, 2002).



### ***Leadership Commitment***

As discussed above, the leadership is very likely to be involved in the diversity evaluation process of an organization. Regardless of their direct or indirect participation as assessors, there is a shared opinion among scholars that leadership commitment assists in the process of diversity evaluation and represents a crucial factor needed to drive diversity change (Buttner et al., 2006; Hubbard, 2004; Wentling, 2000). For the specific case of diversity, leadership commitment can be defined as “demonstrated evidence and actions taken by leaders to support, challenge, and champion the diversity process within their organization” (Hubbard, 2004: p. 147). In practice, leaders show this commitment by holding themselves accountable for the diversity efforts in an organization and by allocating sufficient resources (Hubbard, 2004). As Wentling (2000) found in her study of diversity initiatives in multinational corporations, this commitment and accountability of the leadership can even be seen as an indicator for success of diversity initiatives. A diversity initiative, such as conducting a diversity assessment, that does not count with commitment from the top is doomed to fail.

However, leaders alone are not solely responsible for ensuring the success of diversity initiatives and making diversity change happen. Hubbard (2004) argues that diversity advocates and other employees serve as facilitators of diversity change as well. I can therefore conclude that conducting a diversity assessment and achieving progress in diversity requires both top-down as well as bottom-up commitment within organizations. This aligns nicely with the argument that lasting and successful change is driven by internal motivations (Olavarria et al., 2005; Roosevelt 1999).

### ***Allocation of Funding***

In the definition above, leadership commitment is characterized by accountability and support through the allocation of resources. One specification that I would like to make relates to the financial commitment of the leadership. Some scholars explicitly highlight that a successful workplace diversity requires a strategic, long-term pledge of funding by the leadership (Kreitz, 2008; Olavarria et al., 2005; Thomas, 1990). In reality, however, it is not uncommon that organizations lack this commitment and do not even allocate separate funding for diversity management (Maj, 2017a). One possible explanation for this shortcoming could be attributed to the cross-sectional function of diversity management. Maj (2017b) points out that diversity management is rather a horizontal strategy, influencing various sectors of an organization. I assume that this cross-sectional nature of diversity

management complicates a proper allocation of funding in the case that diversity management is not acknowledged as a separate entity but rather divided into the particular projects. Consequently, this lack of separate funding makes it more difficult for organizations to launch individual diversity projects.

But even when there is explicit and sufficient funding for diversity, Hubbard (2004) criticizes how this budget is spent. According to the author, evaluating the impact of diversity initiatives is usually an afterthought and prioritized last (Hubbard, 2004). Instead, organizations heavily invest into activities like diversity awareness training, recruitment or other initiatives, only to realize at a later point that they are not able to demonstrate the impact generated by these initiatives. Naturally, a strong diversity evaluation system would assist organizations in this case to demonstrate the obtained benefits of these initiatives and potentially even showcase the bottom-line impact.

## **2.4 Summary of the Findings**

In this chapter, the findings of my literature review are summarized. Further, conclusions from the literature review are drawn and the findings are linked to my underlying research question. In that way, this chapter serves as a helpful transition to the empirical part of my thesis.

In the first part of the literature review I created an understanding of the global context of diversity management by highlighting three particular factors that influence diversity management. In Section 2.1.1, I showed that the compliance with laws, particularly anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity laws, represents a crucial factor that drives organizations to address diversity management (e.g. Klarsfeld et al., 2014; Mor Barak, 2016). An elaboration of such laws was essential since there does not exist direct legislation for diversity management in organizations (Louvrier, 2013). In Section 2.1.2, I then demonstrated that there are also more intrinsically, morally driven rationales for addressing diversity, namely social policies (Burstein, 1994). These policies are commonly also referred to as affirmative actions and aim to achieve social justice for groups that have been discriminated in the past (Mor Barak, 2016). In Section 2.1.3, I discussed global demographic trends and what consequences they have for organizations. In brief, it can be concluded that there are over- and underpopulated countries in the world due to the varying fertility and mortality rates, which leads to unemployment and a demand for workforce in respective countries (United Nations, 2019). Due to this and multiple other reasons,

populations across the world migrate. Such international migration flows lead to workforces becoming increasingly diverse which consequently requires effective diversity management practices in organizations (Mor Barak, 2016; United Nations, 2019). In Section 2.1.4, I then conclude by defining four main perspectives to diversity management: (1) social justice, (2) business case, (3) needs, and (4) compliance. These perspectives represent the core rationales for addressing diversity and were derived by converging the opinions of multiple scholars.

The second part of the literature review introduced the research field of diversity, provided an overview of possible diversity definitions, and discussed the diverging opinions on the effects of diversity. In Section 2.2.1, I explicated how the diversity research has received increased interest over the past decades (Jonsen et al., 2011; Yadav & Lenka, 2020), and shifted from a problem-oriented to an inclusive and more individual focused research field (Otake-Ebede, 2018). In Section 2.2.2, I presented different types of diversity definitions and distinguished between two diversity dimensions: surface-level and deep-level diversity (Harrison et al., 1998). Whereas the former is understood as visible characteristics of diversity like age, gender, or ethnicity, the latter one encompasses diversity definitions that are more psychological like personality, value, or attitudes (Harrison et al., 1998). In diversity research, almost 90% of the studies are limited to surface-level diversity definitions (Jackson et al., 2003) since these demographic traits are easier and more convenient to measure than deep-level diversity attributes (Harrison et al., 1998; Pelled, 1996). In alignment with this argument, I chose to define diversity in this thesis by limiting it to surface-level diversity attributes. In Section 2.2.3, I established that there are ambiguous and inconsistent findings about the effects of diversity on business performance in the literature (e.g. Cox & Blake, 1991; Harrison et al., 1998; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). On the one hand, many scholars argue in favor of positive effects connected to increased diversity, highlighting improved creativity and innovation in teams (Phillips, 2014; Richard, 2000), better decision making (Cloverpop, 2017) or financial benefits (Hunt et al., 2015), for example. On the other hand, diversity at the workplace can cause discomfort and rougher interactions, which can lead to social frictions and conflicts (e.g. Jackson, 2011; Pelled, 1996; Phillips, 2014).

The third and last part of the literature review presented valuable insights into how organizations can conduct a diversity assessment. In Section 2.3.1, I laid a foundation for diversity assessment by explaining different assessment forms and clarifying that

organizational assessment is in the focus of this thesis. Further, I elaborated on the importance of organizational assessments and highlighted that they commonly serve to derive organizations' strengths and weaknesses in order to then identify potential areas of improvement (e.g. Ford & Evans, 2002; Truong et al., 2017). In Section 2.3.2, I then outlined helpful guidelines and considerations to set up a diversity assessment tool. Since there is limited research on organizational assessment found in the diversity field (Comer & Soliman, 1996; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012), I drew on multiple studies from the cultural competence field here (e.g. Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2005; Pearson et al., 2007). Among other things, I established that scholars recommend conducting an assessment that is as comprehensive, or holistic, as possible and evaluates multiple functional areas of organizations (Siegel et al., 2003). In addition, the analysis discussed how many domains and indicators scholars suggest to include in an assessment tool, and also revealed that there is strong evidence that there does not exist a universally applicable diversity assessment tool due to the individual contexts of each organization (e.g. Harper et al, 2006; Wheeler, 1996). As result of the analysis, it also became clear that there is a lack of current organizational diversity assessment studies. Lastly, in Section 2.3.3, I presented numerous recommendations concerning the use of diversity assessment tools. What became clear during this section, is that organizations should approach a diversity assessment from a strategic perspective (Mathews, 1998), which is why it is crucial to report and follow-up on the obtained results of the assessment (e.g. Ford & Evans, 2002). Moreover, I pointed out that the leadership plays a crucial role in the process of using a diversity assessment tool (e.g. Buttner et al., 2006; Hubbard, 2004). While leadership most likely is involved as an assessor in this process, it is equally important for the success of an assessment to obtain leadership commitment – both accountability and resource-wise (e.g. funding) (e.g. Wentling, 2000).

This literature review was guided by my underlying research question of this thesis. While this question will mainly be answered by the findings of my multiple case study of diversity assessment tools, this literature review already granted some interesting insights from the academic perspective. The question that I investigated is:

*RQ: How do diversity assessment tools compare globally?*

Overall, this literature review demonstrated the complexity of the diversity research, including organizational diversity assessments. From an academic standpoint, it became

clear that there is no universal approach to assess diversity and that there does not exist a one-fits-all assessment tool (e.g. Harper et al, 2006; Wheeler, 1996). This is caused by multiple factors. Firstly, there are different perspectives that drive organization to address diversity (e.g. business case or compliance), which consequently should be taken into account in an assessment tool as well. Secondly, there are many other contextual factors like an organization's industry, company size, or their available resources to conduct an assessment, that can have an impact on how a diversity assessment tool is designed. Ultimately, these differences can cause assessment tools to serve different purposes leading to varying characteristics in terms of content, structure, or length of the tool that should be matched to the individual needs and goals of each organization.

The main findings of this literature review are evaluated and put into comparison in the empirical part of this research. Jointly with the empirical findings, I can then derive an answer to my research question. However, before I move to my empirical research and analysis, the next chapter provides an overview of the methodological choices I made in this thesis.

### **3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter explains the methodological foundations of my qualitative research and is structured as follows. First, I introduce my onto-epistemological perspective to position my thesis philosophically and explicate the research design that I chose for my study. Second, I emphasize on my data collection methods, particularly highlighting the search and selection process of the diversity assessment case tools. Third, my data analysis process is described clarifying the crucial distinction between within-case and cross-case analysis. Finally, I highlight relevant research evaluations and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Philosophical Positioning and Research Design**

As in any empirical study, research design begins and flows from the researcher's philosophical assumptions and the research question(s). Research methodology, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques need to be carefully linked to the research question and philosophical assumption (Forman & Damschroder, 2007). Justifying the seemingly logical steps and undertaken decisions, as well as critically reflecting on these decisions, is crucial to ensure the validity of the research design (Yin, 2016). Especially since the research process, particularly during the data collection and analysis stage, is known to be an iterative and circular rather than linear process, it is important to maintain a transparent working style throughout the research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Harley, 2004).

Therefore, it is worthwhile to determine the nature of my research question and explicate my overall research philosophy. According to Dillon's (1984) distinction between descriptive, comparative, explanatory, and normative type of research questions, I would classify my research question as comparative since the goal of the research clearly is to find comparable characteristics between several diversity assessment tools. For this study, I mainly follow a positivist ontological perspective, in which the nature of reality is based on existing data and the context is accepted as reality. Since the primary method of data collection is secondary textual data, this approach has been the logical choice. Further elaborations on the data collection methods and their ontological perspective are provided in the next section.

Since this study is evidently of a comparative nature which aims at comparing diversity assessment tools across a variety of parameters, a qualitative research approach was the

logical consequence for these purposes. In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative methods predominantly aim at interpreting and understanding phenomena, rather than explaining causal relationships behind them (Eriksson, & Kovalainen, 2008). Quantitative research methods could be applied in a continuing study to validate hypotheses, which could be formulated after qualitative research has been conducted and gathered the necessary insights (Portugal, 2013).

In general, scholars typically distinguish between two different designs for case studies: *single* and *multiple* (e.g. Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Yin, 2016), or *intensive* and *extensive* case studies (e.g. Stoecker, 1991). After reviewing both terminologies, I concluded that they are being used rather interchangeably. Whereas single or intensive case studies intend to understand as much as possible about one case, multiple or extensive case studies focus on mapping out common aspects concerning particular phenomena across multiple cases (Stoecker, 1991). These characteristics of an extensive or multiple case study justify perfectly why multiple case studies are the most suitable methodology for my study since they align well with the comparative nature and goals that I have for my research question. Logically, to understand how diversity assessment tools compare globally, this research needs to take multiple cases into consideration.

Therefore, multiple case studies have been chosen as the methodology for this research. In very general terms, case studies can be defined as a bounded system that is clearly defined with regards to the place and time (Creswell, 1998). The researcher has many liberties in bounding the case, meaning that e.g. an organization, event, process, group or, individual can be classified as a case. For this study, a case is defined as a diversity assessment tool and the respective organization that developed the tool. For example, Business Finland's Talent Boost Index will represent one case. In accordance with Eisenhardt's (1989) suggestion of limiting the number of cases to four to ten cases, eight diversity assessment tools were chosen for this multiple case study. Cases were selected based on clearly defined case inclusion criteria. The overall search and selection process of the case is described in detail in the next chapter.

### **3.2 Data Collection**

This chapter presents the process of data collection of my multiple case study. To comprehensively elaborate on this process, I divided this chapter into three parts: (1) the search process, (2) selection process, and (3) presentation of the case tools. Before going

into the detail of the diversity assessment case tools, however, the next paragraphs will outline more generally which data collection methods I utilized in my research.

To find an answer to the research question, my study utilized an approach that encompasses the collection of data from multiple sources. As argued by Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008), such a multiple data collection approach for case studies enables a richer and more holistic strain of argumentation of the researched topic. Patton (1999) accredits the use of multiple data collection sources with an enhanced validity to comprehend the understanding of phenomena and describes it as one form of triangulation. Further explanations of the different forms of triangulation will be provided in the last section of this paper.

Empirical data can be divided into *primary* and *secondary* data, both of which I collected during my research. Whereas primary data refers to data collected by the researchers themselves (e.g. through interviews), secondary data entails the collection of already existing empirical data (e.g. textual data in form of documents, transcripts, or diaries) (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

As the primary data collection method for this multiple case study, I conducted a thorough analysis of secondary data. Since the diversity assessment tools are surveys or PDF documents available online, I encountered limitations with regard to the degree of detail that I was able to obtain about the background of the diversity assessment tools. That is, for example, that a tool did not specify for what purpose or in what context it was developed. To mitigate this limitation and gain additional knowledge about the tools, my secondary data collection encompassed not only the diversity assessment tools themselves but other textual material such as the organization's website or media text concerning the tool too (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). In this context, it is also important to recall my study's main research philosophy: positivism. Since this aforementioned probability of limited knowledge about the diversity assessment tools exists, the available textual data sources represent the objective reality. This is not necessarily better or worse than another research philosophy but should at least be made clear to fulfill my ethical duty of research transparency.

To complement the findings obtained through the secondary data collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted as an additional, primary data collection method. This method lies between fully unstructured, open interviews and fully structured, standardized interviews. Semi-structured interviews incorporate elements from both ends and usually have a clearly defined outline of the underlying topics, issues or, themes (Adams, 2015). Simultaneously, however, the method reserves the possibility to modify the interview



questions moderately (e.g. order of questions, change in wordings) and potentially ask follow-up questions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). It is for these reasons of having a flexible interview process paired with comparability between the different interviewees that I perceived semi-structured interviews as the most suitable interview method for this study.

In practice, I conducted semi-structured interviews with two different types of people. On one side, I conducted four interviews with diversity and inclusion experts (Appendix C.1). The interviewees were identified through multiple ways. One of the interviewees was within my network. Two further interviewees were gathered through the support and contacts of employees from Business Finland. Out of these three interviews, one of the participants connected me with a contact for a fourth interview. This technique of gathering interview participants is also known as network sampling (Patton, 1990).

The expert interviews were predominantly focused on the interviewees' experience with diversity assessment tools and their observations of how diversity can be assessed in an organization. An interview guideline was used for all of the four interviews (see Appendix D). Overall, the interviews lead to the study gaining an additional understanding of which components of diversity are considered to be of greater importance from a practitioner's perspective. They thus complement the academic perspective presented in the literature review as well as the empirical comparison of the diversity assessment tools. Given the extraordinary circumstances of the Coronavirus, all interviews were conducted via a digital application. After the explicit consent of the interviewees, all interviews were recorded, which eased the transcription and ensured that the obtained information were verifiable. The duration of the interviews ranged between 58min and 1h35min.

The second type of interviews were conducted with people that were involved in the conceptualization and development of Business Finland's Talent Boost Index. These interviews contributed to understanding the structural reasoning and logic behind their diversity assessment tool better. Ideally, employees that were involved in the development of the respective other diversity assessment case tools would have been interviewed as well. However, this proved to be difficult and unrealistic, which is why interviews were not used as the primary research method.

Some relevant considerations for conducting the expert interviews in this thesis particularly concern informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Before starting the interviews, I provided the participants with a research outline and explicitly asked for their consent to participate. Of course, the participants were also

informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any desired point. Besides, I discussed with all interviewees whether they would like to participate anonymously or not in this research. In the end, all interview participants agreed to be included with their name and profession in an interview participant overview table (see Appendix C.1), while their interview content is only disclosed in the thesis in an anonymous manner. Lastly, to ensure that I interpreted the interview findings correctly, the conclusions drawn from the interviews were discussed with each participant. Scholars call this process of validity *communicative validation* (Mayring, 2003) or *member checking* (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

The next three subchapter will now provide more in-depth information concerning the search and selection process of the diversity assessment tools chosen for this multiple case study.

### **3.2.1 Search process**

To identify diversity assessment tools like the Talent Boost Index, particular keywords were used during the initial search process. Since this thesis is written in cooperation with Business Finland, the goal was to find similar tools to the Talent Boost Index for the comparison. Therefore, in my initial search I included terms like ‘index’, ‘indices’ or ‘measurement’, among the rather obvious terms ‘diversity’ and ‘tool’. Quickly I realized that these keywords led me to diversity assessment tools that tried to measure diversity in quantitative terms, i.e. by focusing on metrics such as quotas only. Since the Talent Boost Index assesses diversity in a rather qualitative form, i.e. by asking about motivations or particular practices, these search words were excluded for the further search. Instead, terms like ‘evaluation’, ‘assessment’, ‘diversity climate’ or ‘diagnosis’ were used. The best search results were obtained using the search term 'diversity assessment tools'.

In contrast to online databases (e.g. Scopus or Web of Science) used for the literature review, the search for diversity assessment tools was primarily conducted through an extensive internet search. This is mainly due to the fact that little information on diversity assessment tools were obtained during the literature review. By assuming that many tools were developed by public institutions and private organizations, rather than by scholars, I expected more success through an internet search.

In line with the theme of my thesis, diversity, I was able to carry out the search for diversity assessment tools in different languages. Since most of the literature about diversity stems from the Anglo-Saxon region (e.g. Jonsen et al., 2011) and this domination was thought to be similar regarding the tools, the search was primarily conducted in English. In addition,

the search was expanded to the two other languages I speak, German and Spanish. While the search in German did not yield in any relevant findings of diversity assessment tools, the search in Spanish led me to one highly interesting tool, which ended up being one of the case tools. Nonetheless, the search in German was still helpful since I was able to find relevant literature on measuring diversity and about national policies (e.g. Diversity Charters). The utilized keywords for the search in German and Spanish were equal to the English ones (word-to-word translations).

In addition to using varying keywords and different languages during the search for diversity assessment tools, I also employed multiple search engines. Google has been used as primary search engine. Secondly, Bing, Yahoo, and DuckDuckGo have been employed. These search engines, however, did not expose me to any additional tools as the search results were fairly similar to what I already found through the Google search. I decided to start with Google, the largest search engine, to gain the best overview of the overall diversity assessment tool landscape from the beginning. The other smaller search engines were then used to assess whether I can find any additional tools due to the search engines' varying search algorithms.

Lastly, I also tried to gain additional insights into diversity assessment tools by asking in academic and general topic question forums such as Researchgate or Quora. But unfortunately, I only received answers after the end of my tool search and selection phase, and the respondents recommended only articles and not any tools. An overview of the forums in which I asked questions can be found in Appendix E.

Overall, my search process for diversity assessment tools had an approximate duration of seven weeks. It started at the beginning of April 2020 and closed at the end of May 2020, once sufficient tools for the case analysis have been found. As elaborated in the methodology section 3.2, Eisenhardt's (1989) recommendation of choosing four to ten cases for a multiple case study, served as numeral threshold for my study, and thus guided the search and selection process of the tools.

In conclusion, all the aforementioned measures demonstrate how they add to the robustness of my research. By expanding my search process in multiple areas (keywords, language, search engine, question forums), I did not rely solely on the results of a single source, hereby designing my study as robust as possible.

### 3.2.2 Selection process

Before deliberately thinking of selection criteria for the tools, I compiled a list of all the potential diversity assessment tools that I came across during the initial search process. At the end of the search period, a total of 23 potential tools, including the Talent Boost Index, were located for this analysis. The list of potential tools is displayed in Table 2. The special role of Business Finland's Talent Boost Index is indicated through the dotted line.

**Table 2. List of potential case tools**

No	Organization	Tool Name
1	American Hospital Association	A Diversity and Cultural Proficiency Assessment Tool
2	American Institute of Certified Public Accountants	Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model
3	Association of American Medical Colleges	Diversity Engagement Survey: Measuring Diversity and Inclusion in Academic Medicine
4	Australian Human Rights Commission	Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool
5	Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia	Diversity & Inclusion Self-Assessment Tool
6	The Centre for Global Inclusion	Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks
7	Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel	A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Organizational Self-Assessment Tool
8	International Federation of Red Cross	Gender and Diversity Organisational Assessment Toolkit
9	MacWilliams, Schmidt, McArthur	Wisconsin Diversity Assessment Tool
10	Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network	Assessing Workforce Diversity
11	National Association of Colleges and Employers	Diversity & Inclusion Self-Assessment
12	Nova Scotia Works	Diversity Assessment Tool
13	Red Acoge	Analysis of diversity management in the practice of Spanish companies ( <i>translated from Spanish</i> )
14	Ryerson University Diversity Institute	Diversity Audit Tool
15	Thomsen & Reuters	Diversity & Inclusion Index
16	University of California	Self-Assessment Tool
17	Universum	Diversity & Inclusion Index: World 2019
18	Victorian Health Promotion Foundation	Workplace diversity and anti-discrimination assessment tool
19	Vendor Resource Management University	Diversity & Inclusion Self-Assessment
20	York Region	A Self-Assessment Tool

**Table 2. List of potential case tools (cont'd)**

No	Organization	Tool Name
21	Young Women's Catholic Association Minneapolis	Diversity and Inclusivity Organizational Self-Assessment Tool
22	Young People's Learning Agency	Leading Inclusion EDI Audit Tool
23	Business Finland	Talent Boost Index

When reviewing the list of tools, I realized that by identifying these tools as 'potential', I subconsciously had already established some selection criteria. Clearly, the biggest criteria had been that the tools are publicly available and free of charge as I did not look any further into tools for which I would have had to pay. Further, I realized that many of the tools that I considered as 'potential' addressed diversity on an organizational rather than individual level. Presumably, this can be explained by my intention of finding similar tools to the Talent Boost Index for the analysis, a tool that assesses diversity on an organizational level. For an elaboration of the differences between an individual and organization assessment please refer to Chapter 2.3.1.

Therefore, to become aware of my subjectivity and limit it as much as possible during the tool selection process, I needed to identify case inclusion criteria. In order to ensure that a comparison between the tools would be possible, it was important to determine what similarities between the tools were desired and crucial, and where the tools could vary. For this purpose, inclusion criteria have been formulated, which are partly based on an existing review of organizational assessment tools by Trenerry & Paradies (2012).

The selection of the case tools was based on the following inclusion criteria:

- the tool focuses on the organizational rather than the individual level;
- the tool shows a great level of detail;
- the tool encompasses a relatively broad context; and
- the tool is publicly available for this review.

Given the fact that the number of potential tools found was rather small (23), the inclusion criteria were defined as broad as possible to distinguish between the tools, while not excluding the vast majority of them. It was important that all the case tools focus on the organizational rather than the individual level and are publicly available. In addition, the level of detail of the tool was considered relevant, meaning that a tool with the approximate length of the Talent Boost Index was preferred. To determine the length of the tools, the number of questions or indicators, as well as the questions' complexity, were taken into

account. Lastly, the tool had to encompass a relatively broad context, meaning that the questions or items of the tools are not too narrowly focused on one diversity attribute or a specific industry only.

Two additional inclusion criteria were initially considered to be included but later discarded for various reasons. One additional criterion I took into consideration was that only tools that provide sufficient information on their development would be chosen. This is because in the preliminary search process, I found some tools which among their questions only provided very few paragraphs on background information about the tool. However, given that the questions of the tool can still be highly insightful, this inclusion criterion was discarded. The second consideration was not to include tools in the form of checklists. At the very beginning of the thesis process, I aimed at finding diversity assessment tools similar to the Talent Boost Index. Therefore, initially, I perceived any tools that were designed in a different form than an online survey as unsuitable for the analysis. After looking into the checklist tools, however, I realized that the tool's content and components are still interesting to look into. Also, many of the potential tools were designed in form of checklists. Hence, not including checklists in the analysis was also discarded as a case inclusion criterion because it would have restricted the tool selection too much and could have led to reduced findings.

While searching for and picking out case tools that are sufficiently similar, I also aimed at maintaining a certain degree of variety between the tools. Firstly, it was of no importance what diversity attributes were addressed by the tool. As previously mentioned, the questions should not be too narrowly focused, but whether gender diversity, cultural diversity, or any other diversity attribute were in the focus of the tool, was of secondary importance. Secondly, the background information on the development of each tool, particularly the purpose of it, was permitted to vary and even more interesting if it did. Gaining insights into why the individual tools were created as well as comprehending what issues they are trying to solve, was considered a fruitful divergence for the analysis.

One final remark with regards to the selection process is that the different foci of the tools were embraced. The Talent Boost Index, for example, connects a diversity assessment of Finnish companies to the measurement of the organization's capabilities in recruiting international talents and leading a multicultural work community. Initially, tools that share this connection to internationalization were thus desired to be found for the analysis. However, it quickly became evident in the search process that such a tool inclusion criterion

would be unfavorable. That is because no tools with obvious ties to internationalization were identified during the search process. Of course, the link might exist in some of the tools, but at least they were not as obvious and explicitly stated as in the Talent Boost Index. Therefore, tools with all different kinds of foci were accepted for further analysis.

### 3.2.3 Case tools

Based on the aforementioned inclusion criteria, eight out of the 23 tools were chosen to be part of the analysis. There were more than eight promising tools under the total 23, but due to the time and resource constraints of my thesis, I concluded that eight cases will provide me with sufficient data. The eight chosen tools were considered the most promising tools and hence selected. Two of the 23 potential case tools – the ones developed by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation and York Region – represented borderline cases but were discarded due to being closely linked to the tools of the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel respectively.

Table 3 lists the chosen eight case tools that formed part of the empirical analysis.

**Table 3. Overview of case tools**

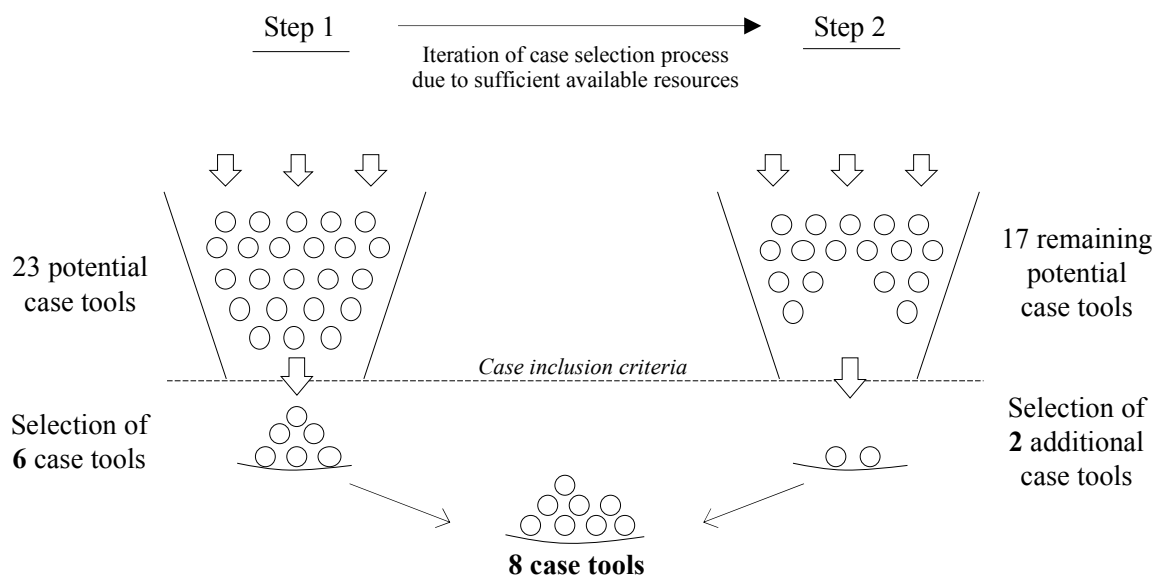
No	Organization	Tool Name
1	American Institute of Certified Public Accountants	Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model
2	Australian Human Rights Commission	Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool
3	The Centre for Global Inclusion	Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks
4	Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel	A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Organizational Self-Assessment Tool
5	Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network	Assessing Workforce Diversity: A Tool for Mental Health Organizations on the Path to Health Equity
6	Red Acoge	Analysis of diversity management in the practice of Spanish companies ( <i>translated from Spanish</i> )
7	Ryerson University Diversity Institute	Diversity Audit Tool
8	Business Finland	Talent Boost Index

The selection of the case tools consisted of multiple iterations. At first, only six tools were chosen for the analysis. Despite the tools' great level of detail with regards to their questions, a preliminary analysis of these tools demonstrated, however, that the information which I could get out of each tool was limited. In other words, I realized that by analyzing a tool's

themes, question types, or structure, the obtained information were certainly valuable, but less rich than expected. Of course, the background information of each tool still fed into the analysis. But still, I concluded that I would have the capacity to analyze additional tools.

Thus, this insight led to a re-examination of the initially discarded tools in order to evaluate if other tools could be valuable for the analysis. After reviewing the tools again, two more assessment tools were picked for the analysis. The tool developed by the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network was initially discarded because the content of the questions appeared to have a too strong focus on mental health organizations. For the Ryerson University Diversity Institute tool, the exclusion criterion was similar. Their diversity audit tool seemed to be too narrowly focused on gender diversity in the Canadian information and communications technology sector. Nevertheless, after a more thorough analysis, both tools proved to have a balanced ratio between industry-specific, and general diversity questions. I considered both tools valuable for this analysis and therefore, they were chosen as additional case tools.

Figure 4 visualizes the selection process of the eight chosen case tools.



**Figure 4. Overview of the case selection process**

On a closing note, it is to be noted that surely a lot more than 23 diversity assessment tools have been developed worldwide. However, given the limited search period and a bound case number between four and ten, internet search hits were only investigated until saturation of sources was reached. This means that in consideration of the limited timeframe of the thesis, I gathered sufficient case tools for the analysis. Naturally, there are countless more



combinations of further search keywords and presumably, many more tools remained unfound due to Google’s search algorithms. The Talent Boost Index, for example, does not include any of the typically used keywords in its name, and thus was unable to be found without specifying ‘Business Finland’ with it.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

The analysis process of my research was divided into two main phases. At first, each case underwent a *within-case* analysis, which was then followed by a *cross-case* analysis (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). During the within-case analysis, each diversity assessment tool was analyzed individually across a number of analysis criteria. In the latter phase, the cases were then cross-analyzed to determine differences and similarities between them (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). During the cross-case analysis, I also put the findings obtained by the case tool analysis into comparison with the insights gained from the literature review and the conducted expert interviews. Dividing the data analysis into two phases was indispensable since the ultimate goal of my data analysis phase was to derive an empirically founded global comparison of diversity assessment tools. Naturally, the tools thus needed to be analyzed individually first.

To guide both the within- and cross-case analysis, I defined numerous analysis parameters, which are presented in Figure 5. Existing reviews of organizational assessments from the diversity and cultural competence field served as inspiration for defining these analysis criteria (Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2005; Trenerry & Paradies, 2012).

<b>Background Information</b>	<b>Analysis of the Tool</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Context</li> <li>○ Brief introduction               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Organization behind the tool</li> <li>○ Date published</li> <li>○ Purpose of the tool/ problems trying to solve</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Development process</li> <li>○ Striking characteristics</li> <li>○ Approach to diversity based on background information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Structure</li> <li>○ Administration               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Type of tool</li> <li>○ Target group</li> <li>○ Response format(s)</li> <li>○ Report</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Themes (domains &amp; indicators)</li> <li>○ Other striking characteristics</li> <li>○ Approach to diversity inside the tool</li> </ul>

**Figure 5. Analysis criteria for the empirical research**

Due to the project background of the Talent Boost Index, a special emphasis of the analysis laid on the evaluation and comparison of the themes covered in the diversity assessment tools. In other words, I aimed to compare what kind of domains and indicators the

organizations behind the case tools considered relevant assessing. Nonetheless, I considered it equally important to analyze further criteria in order to understand, e.g., what organizations stand behind the tools, how the development process of the tools took place, and for what purpose they were developed. Therefore, I divided the analysis criteria into two larger categories which served as a structural guide for the reporting of the within-case analysis. Consequently, I provide a more elaborated description of the analysis criteria in the chapter introduction of the within-case analysis (Chapter 4).

For the analysis of my empirical data, qualitative content analysis served as my analytic technique. The technique consists in analyzing, reducing, and reorganizing textual data to draw conclusions from it (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Typically, qualitative content analysis is divided into three phases: immersion, reduction, and interpretation (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994). During the immersion phase, I familiarized myself with the collected data and document my first impressions. During the reduction phase, which forms the heart of the content analysis process, I reduced the vast amount of data into only what is relevant for the research question. To assist in this process and reduce the data systematically, I defined codes and broke down the data into emerging themes. Lastly, during the interpretation phase, I then interpreted the reduced and coded data and to draw my conclusions from it. (Forman & Damschroder, 2007)

Therefore, codes represented the classification system for the qualitative content analysis of my data. In general, codes can be either *inductive* or *deductive*, where the former emerge during the immersion in the data and the so-called *preliminary coding* process, and the latter are constructed or identified from a theoretical framework (Forman & Damschroder, 2007). For my study, I followed a mix of both concepts. The previously mentioned analysis criteria served as codes for the analysis of the case tools but also the interview data. They were partly based on existing organizational assessment reviews (e.g. Harper et al., 2006), and thus of a deductive nature. At the same time, by including the analysis criteria “striking characteristics”, I remained an open mindset during the analysis process and did not restrict myself to the bounded criteria, and thus codes, only. Consequently, by maintaining this open mindset, further topics emerged during the analysis of the case tools and interviews, which led me to define additional codes. Thus, the assigning of codes was an iterative process that characterized by being both inductive and deductive.

Thematic analysis has been discarded as a suitable analysis method for the secondary data because the emphasis of this analysis method is too much on finding shared meanings and

experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Even though thematic analysis looks into finding patterns and similarities across the sample, something useful for my analysis, I felt that the method is more suited for the analysis of primary data (e.g. interviews). For the analysis of the four conducted expert interviews, however, I analyzed the interviews using the qualitative content analysis by applying the predefined codes (parameters) while yet remaining open for deducting codes during the analysis. Similarly, secondary data, such as media texts related to the case tools, were also analyzed in a straightforward way following the codes.

A fundamental concept to remember during the qualitative content analysis is the circular nature of my research. This research, and thus analysis phase, did not follow a linear structure. After acquiring sufficient knowledge in an initial literature review, I conducted the data collection and analysis. As a result of the analysis of the case tools, I obtained further inspiration for the literature review. Consequently, after a preliminary data analysis phase, I returned to conducting a more thorough literature review that aligns with the content areas identified in the empirical part of my thesis. The new insights from the literature then served as foundation for the comparison of my empirical findings with the literature (see Chapter 5).

### **3.4 Research Evaluation, Limitations and Ethics**

After some research considerations such as circularity, transparency, or validity have already been briefly addressed throughout the previous sections, final ethical considerations are presented in this section.

Triangulation represents a very common procedure to validate research and create a more holistic work. Patton (1999) distinguishes between four kinds of triangulation: Method triangulation, triangulation of sources, analyst triangulation, and theory triangulation. While it is recommended to apply triangulation of all four kinds to obtain the most verified findings, Patton (1999) concedes that most research studies have budget or time constraints and are thus unable to conduct all four kinds of triangulation. In my thesis, I used multiple data collection methods, examined different textual data (diversity assessment tools, websites, and media text) as part of my secondary data analysis, and conducted member checking with my interview participants to verify the correctness of my interpretations. Therefore, I used three out of four triangulation methods. If I would have had a second analyst verifying my interpretation of the data, I could have improved the analyst triangulation even more. Only

the theory triangulation, an approach to use multiple theories to analyze the data, was not used in my thesis.

An additional factor that can influence the research outcome, and hence requires reflection, is my role in the research. Glesne (1999) distinguishes these forms of involvement within business research as *insider* and *outsider* roles. My role in the research lies somewhere in between the two roles. In the analysis of the secondary data, for example, I took the role of an outsider because I analyzed the diversity assessment tools from a rather neutral perspective. More generally, however, I am not in a pure outsider role either since I have been commissioned for this research by Business Finland and am working towards providing them with recommendations for actions. The fact that the results of this thesis will be published by Aalto University and Business Finland underlines that my role in the research lies in between the insider and outsider role.

Hence, it was my ethical responsibility to clearly communicate my relationship with Business Finland and the purposes of this study when I conducted interviews with participants outside the company. Further, Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008, ch. 5, p. 7) argue that sponsorship can lead to a “bias in the research paradigm” if a particular research method or setting is favored. While this is partly true since the methodology of multiple case studies has been chosen because of the Talent Boost Index, I would still argue that the goals of my study remained largely academic. However, I could face accusations of alleged case selection bias, which is why I defined the case inclusion criteria and was very transparent about any decision making at all times.

Lastly, I want to point out that ethical considerations go beyond the empirical context (e.g. handling of data, participants, case organization). It is equally important to report the truth and cite other researchers correctly at any time of the thesis process (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). For this purpose, Aalto University has published a Code of Academic Integrity, which I followed throughout my entire research process (Aalto University, 2013).

## 4 FINDINGS OF WITHIN-CASE ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I present one part of the findings of my qualitative research on diversity assessment tools. Given that this part focuses on the within-case analysis, each of the eight case tools is thoroughly analyzed on its own. Here, the analysis is not solely focused on the content of each tool but also evaluates the context in which each tool emerged. As elaborated in the methodology Section 3.3, I applied certain criteria during this analysis process. These criteria will now serve as a structural guideline to present the findings of the analysis.

Each tool description starts with an elaboration of background information. Among other things, I emphasize which organization stands behind each tool and how the development process of the tool took place. By analyzing the tools through the lens of the four perspectives of diversity management that I defined in Section 2.1.4 (social justice, business case (benefits), needs, and compliance), I also evaluate the approach each organization takes to diversity.

In the second step, I present a more specific analysis of the tools themselves. Among the content of each tool, here, I go into aspects like the structure of the tools, their intended target group, and the response formats used. At this point, I also re-evaluate the perspectives from which each organization addresses diversity inside their tool. This re-evaluation serves to assess whether organizations use the same approach to diversity in support documents (e.g. their website) and the tool itself, or if they may vary. For example, an organization might promote diversity from the business case perspective on their website, but the questions of their assessment tool may then be phrased in such a way that they rather promote diversity from a needs perspective.

Within the respective in-depth analyses, each tool is visualized with a figure that entails its main components. For these overview figures, the tools have been simplified while remaining in their original structure. For example, if components of one tool were numbered, then the numbering was transferred into the figure. The figures are designed as vertical flowcharts to display each tool's components in a chronological order. I decided to include a relatively thorough elaboration of the tool's components inside the overview figures to ensure that the content of the tools could be understood in the most appropriate context. To simplify the tool's component even further, I also created overview figures of the emerging themes in each tool. These models serve to comprehend from what angles each organization addresses diversity, which will be important for the cross-case analysis.

While the analysis criteria served as a great guideline for the analysis process and granted me sufficient uniformity between the tools, I would like to highlight that they were not used as a universal template. By including analysis criteria like ‘striking characteristics’, I ensured to keep an open-mindset during the analysis process and not limit myself to the bounded criteria too strictly. In fact, my goal of the within-case analysis was to highlight the uniqueness factor of each tool. It is for this reason that I point out the distinctive characteristics of each tool in a concluding paragraph of each case analysis.

In the following section, the tool developed by Business Finland is analyzed first. Afterwards, the case tools are presented based on the alphabetical order of the organizations that developed them. To clearly distinguish the tools from each other, I assigned descriptive headings to each section which explicate the purpose that each tool serves.

#### **4.1 Business Finland**

##### **– A tool to evaluate Finnish organizations’ capabilities to hire foreigners**

###### ***Background Information***

Finland is currently facing a nationwide labor shortage in some industries, predominantly in SMEs (TEM, n.d.-a). While this shortage is partly caused by the decreasing birth rates and the retirement of the post-war generation within the Finnish population (Statistics Finland, 2020), the country also lacks foreigners to fill vacant job positions (TEM, n.d.-b). Obviously, a national labor shortage is not desired by the Finnish Government as it endangers the country’s economic growth and global competitiveness. As birth rates and retirements are of course much harder to combat compared to hiring more foreign professionals, the government has taken it upon itself to promote employment-related immigration.

It is for this reason that the Finnish Government launched a cross-administrative governmental initiative called *Talent Boost Program* in 2017 (TEM, n.d.-a). Among other things, the program aims at branding Finland as an internationally attractive place to live, study, and work, as well as supporting Finnish companies to become capable of recruiting foreign professionals (TEM, n.d.-b). The main coordinators of the program are two Finnish ministries: The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Education and Culture. The responsibility for coordinating nationwide business services for the *Talent Boost Program* lies, however, with Business Finland, a Finnish Government organization mainly focusing on internationalization and innovation activities (Business Finland, n.d.).

As one of their services, Business Finland launched an online survey in 2020 called *Talent Boost Index*, which helps companies to explore their “organization’s capabilities in recruiting international talents and leading a multicultural community” (Business Finland, 2020). The questionnaire is mainly targeted at SMEs since they are believed to have the biggest struggles with hiring foreign workforce. Participation in the questionnaire is anonymous, but organizations can indicate their e-mail address in order to receive a performance report upon completion of the survey (Business Finland, 2020).

One special property of the *Talent Boost Index* is its development process. Business Finland created the tool in a joint effort with the Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce<sup>1</sup> (Business Finland, 2020). In multiple discussions that I had with project representatives from both organizations, I found highly interesting details on the testing procedures, which were undertaken during the development process. During the one-year long development process, Business Finland collected feedback from companies and individual diversity experts on various occasions (E-Mail extract Ainla & Salonen, 2020a). These feedback rounds, which were conducted in the form of one-day-workshops, provided Business Finland with valuable suggestions for improvement from their intended target audience. Especially employees in HR or management positions of SMEs from various sectors were invited to the workshops, as they are the ones who should ultimately fill out the survey for their company (E-Mail extract Ainla & Salonen, 2020). The collected feedback was very positive and led to the revision of some questions. For instance, some questions were added or removed to make the flow of the questionnaire smoother, and particular terms used in the survey were revised (E-Mail extract Ainla & Salonen, 2020).

The aforementioned aspects demonstrate clearly what approach to diversity Business Finland takes with the *Talent Boost Program*. By highlighting the underlying issue of the labor-shortage and communicating the goal to promote employment-related immigration, Business Finland portrays diversity from a needs-perspective, aiming to encourage organizations to consider hiring foreigners. At the same time, this desire to increase immigration could also be interpreted as a business case perspective since the migrants could be beneficial for an organization’s performance. From which perspective diversity is

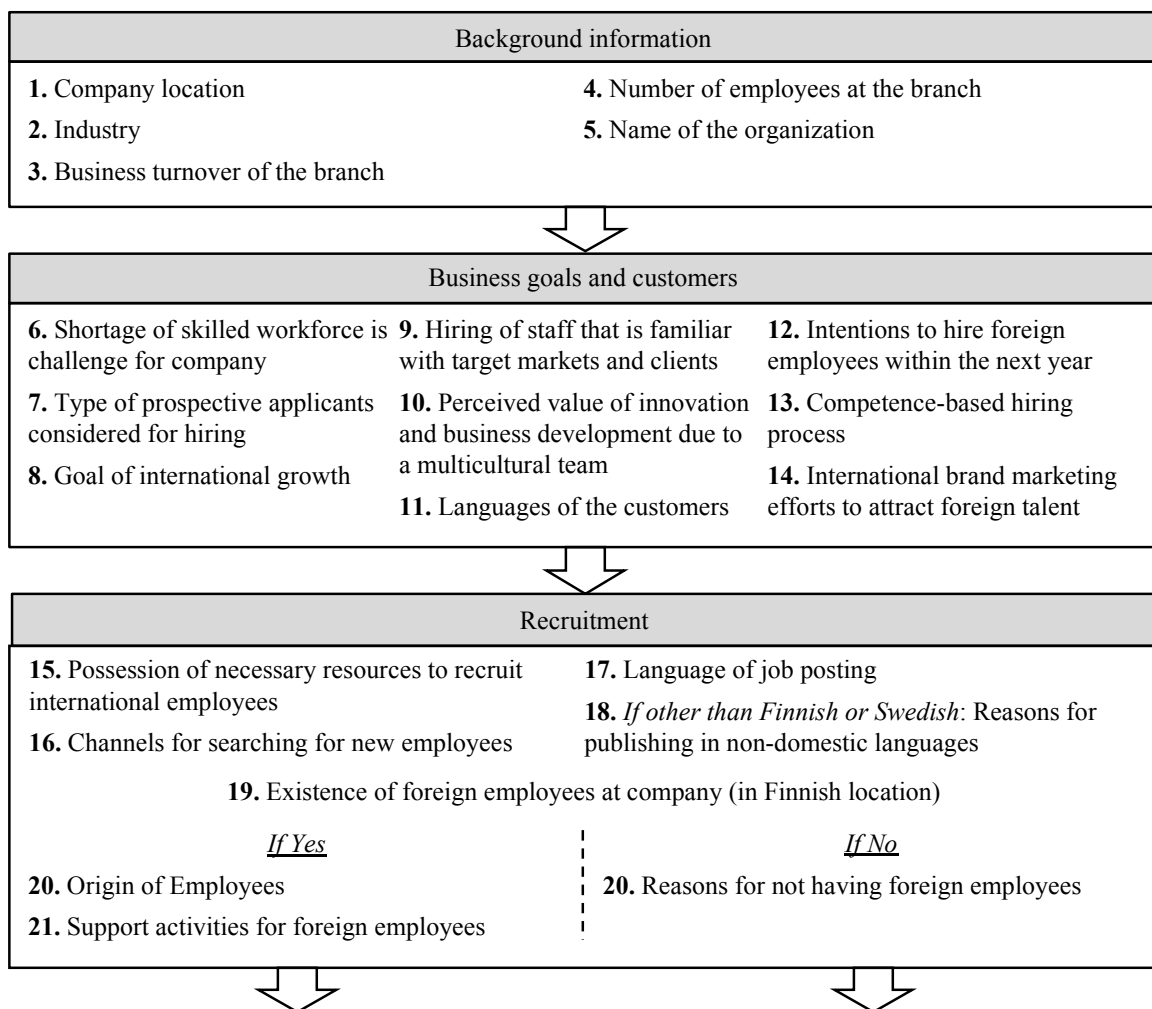
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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of simplicity and readability, only Business Finland will be named in the further course of the thesis as Business Finland has been the leading organization in the *Talent Boost Index* project.

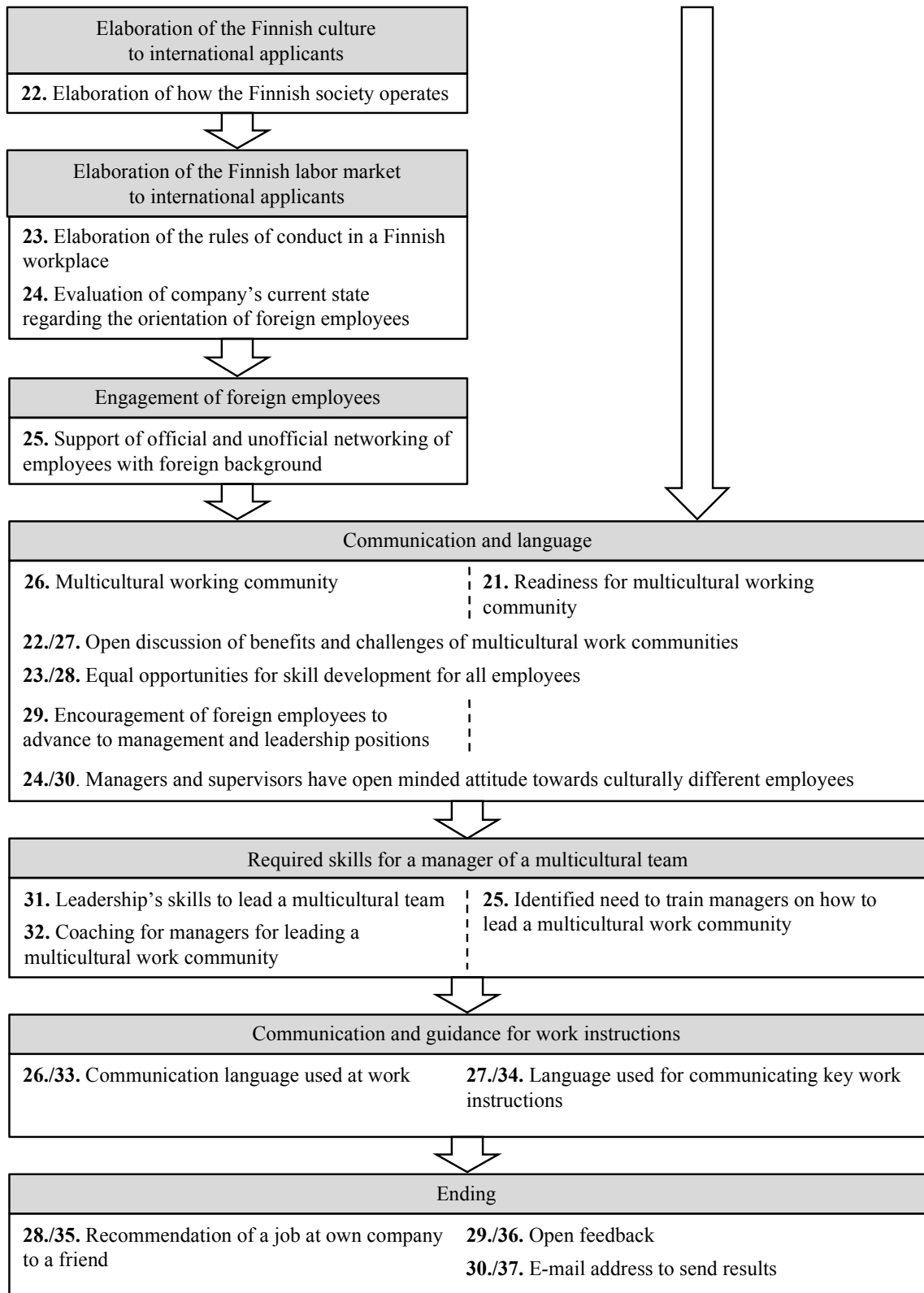
addressed inside the *Talent Boost Index*, meaning how the content of the actual tool approaches diversity, will be elaborated in the next subsection.

### ***Analysis of the Tool***

The *Talent Boost Index* is an online survey predominantly aimed for Finnish SMEs. Given the fact that the tool is offered online, there are some specialties about it. One of them that is crucial to mention at this point already, is that online surveys, as compared to offline PDF documents, can easily implement trigger questions, meaning that different responses to a question lead to varying following questions. The *Talent Boost Index* includes such questions. Accordingly, the number of questions and categories to be answered by the participating organizations can vary greatly. In total, the *Talent Boost Index* encompasses up to 37 questions, of which eight questions serve to request general information on the survey-taking organization. A chronological overview of the tool's question is illustrated in Figure 6.







**Figure 6. Business Finland: Tool overview**

As Figure 6 shows, the *Talent Boost Index* includes two trigger questions (Question 17 and 19), of which the latter one is of significant importance since it causes a highly varying number of questions. The question analyzes if the survey-taking organization employs any

foreign workers. This is a key question for Business Finland as the questionnaire's main goal is to evaluate an organization's capabilities to recruit and lead foreign talents. Naturally, an organization that already has experience with foreigners and multiple cultures, needs to be asked different questions than an organization that is yet to employ its first foreigner. Consequently, depending on the response to Question 19, organizations complete either 22 or 29 content-related questions across 5 or 8 categories respectively. To display both triggered sequences of questions, I decided to apply a parallel counting system in Figure 6. Whenever a question lists two numbers, this means that the question is asked to both, organizations that do not yet employ foreigners and organizations that already do.

The *Talent Boost Index* is designed in a very modern and simple design. There is only one question visible at a time and by scrolling down or clicking on an arrow, organizations get to the next question. In addition, a sidebar is permanently visible, which visualizes the progress made and the number of questions. While I personally find the design very appealing, I got the feeling that it came at the cost of reduced functionality. That is because the *Talent Boost Index* does not use permanently visible headings, which could help the participants to guide along the themes of the questionnaire easier. In addition, Business Finland unfortunately does not outline in the tool's introduction which topics are queried in the questionnaire. This means that the survey-taking organization has no information about what exactly it can expect in terms of the content. Within the survey, however, organizations are informed about the upcoming questions. For this purpose, each new category of questions is introduced with the name of the topic as a heading and a smaller explanatory paragraph.

That the target audience of the *Talent Boost Index* are Finnish SMEs has been discussed already above. However, it is worth mentioning that the focus on SMEs is also reflected inside the survey's question. The previously mentioned Question 19, for example, evaluates if an organization already employs foreigners. If the survey was aimed at multinational enterprises, this question would obviously be redundant. In the introduction part of the tool, Business Finland also points out who ideally should complete the *Talent Boost Index*. That is employees in human resources or managerial positions.

As mentioned earlier, one possibility of using an online tool is to incorporate trigger questions. Another possibility connected to the *Talent Boost Index* being designed as an online tool is that Business Finland can directly collect data on the participating organizations if they give consent. This direct access to the survey data permits them to

provide organizations with a performance report. To evaluate the performance and overall maturity of an organization to recruit foreigners and lead multicultural teams, Business Finland defined five different profiles, which range from 'First steps' to 'Forerunner'. Based on predefined classification criteria, the respective responses of the organizations automatically determine to which profile the organization belongs. In addition to the profile description that outlines the performance of the organization, the report also includes links to various services that can be used by organizations to improve their capabilities in recruiting international talent and leading a multicultural workforce.

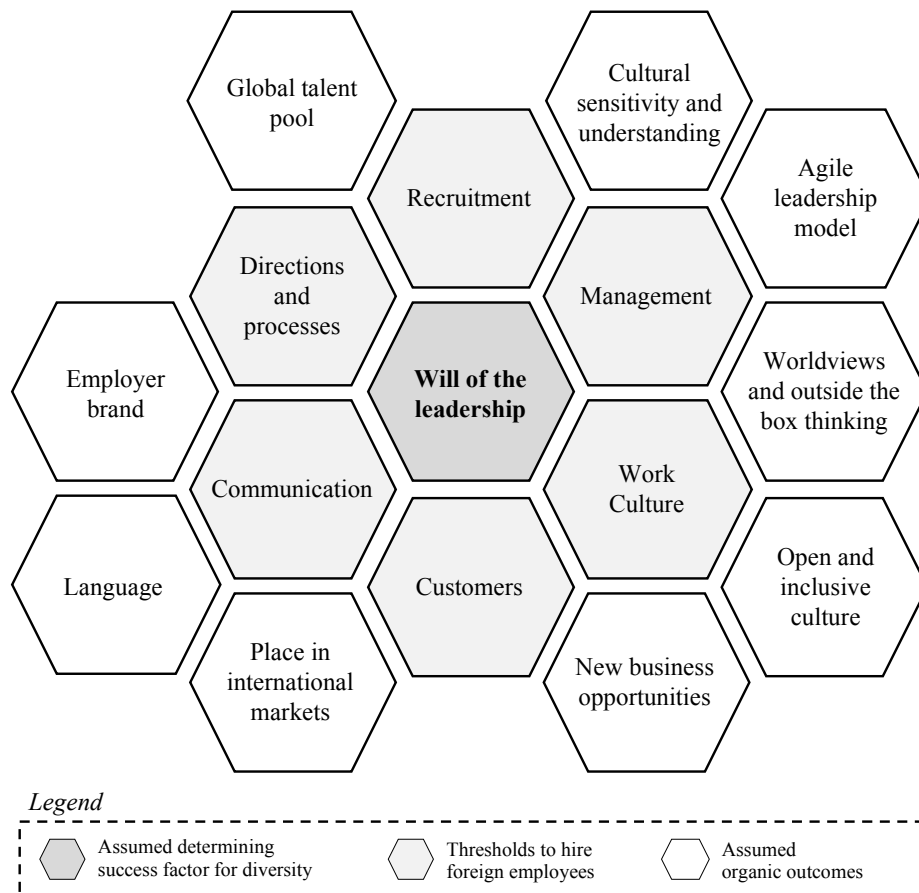
Throughout the *Talent Boost Index* multiple response formats are used. In total, the tool uses four different types of responses: Yes/No responses, list responses (single- and multiple-answer), open-ended responses, and matrix responses.

In the following, I want to briefly discuss the matrix-format questions, which caught my particular attention when I analyzed the *Talent Boost Index*. Roughly half of the content-related questions are assessed in the form of a matrix. For these questions, Business Finland lists a statement and then asks the organization to rate this statement in an *importance/agreement-matrix*. Question 6, for instance, states "A shortage of skilled workforce is a challenge for our company" and organizations can then indicate how important they perceive this issue and how much they agree with this statement. Personally, I find this question type unique because it goes beyond the typical "ticking of boxes" that I commonly face in surveys. Through this format, I believe participants are granted a lot more flexibility in their responses as they can place their answer anywhere in the four quadrants.

Regina Ainla, a Business Finland employee and one of the coordinators of the *Talent Boost Program*, elaborated the purpose of the matrix-format in an interview with me. She told me that Business Finland wanted to design the survey in the most ideal way to evaluate the organizations' motivation to internationalize and diversify. Their partnering software development company then came up with this design suggestion of a matrix, since they have had prior experience with motivational surveys, when they conducted an evaluation on the Finnish parliament elections. What Business Finland ultimately perceived as the main benefits of the matrix-format is that it permits a prioritization for both the survey-taking organization and Business Finland itself. Participants are able to compare their responses of all matrix-questions and can identify what they classified as their weakest areas. Therefore, the matrix-questions help them to prioritize next implementation steps. For Business

Finland, the responses assist in determining the biggest bottlenecks among the participants and determining where their services would be required. (Interview with Ainla, 2020)

A closer look at the different categories of the *Talent Boost Index* displayed in Figure 6 shows that the questionnaire covers several themes. For the more comprehensive analysis of the survey's themes, I will not use Figure 6, however, but the following illustration that Business Finland provided me.



**Figure 7. Business Finland: Tool themes**

Figure 7 shows what Business Finland perceives as important when evaluating an organization's capabilities to hire foreign talent and to manage multicultural teams. The questions and categories of the *Talent Boost Index* are based on this figure. As I was told in the interview, the illustration was built on opinions collected by the companies that participated in the workshops during the development process of the *Talent Boost Index*, as well as on some research conducted by Business Finland. Business Finland believes that the 'Will of leadership' is the determining factor for an organization to become internationally diverse. They argue that it is a choice or decision that is enforced by the leadership and then

carried over to the rest of the organization. The six boxes of the second level represent the reasons and “excuses” that organizations commonly use to not become more internationally diverse. (Interview with Ainla, 2020). For example, an organization might complain that a non-Finnish employee would be inconvenient for their organization as the contact with the customers, the communication within the organization, and all of their processes are dominated by the Finnish language and would not be desired in English. Lastly, the outer white boxes stand for some of the organic outcomes that organizations can generate when they actively address the six core areas. For instance, if an organization was to put more emphasis on their work culture and embrace the diversity of their staff, this could organically expose them to an increased creativity in form of out of the box thinking since an inclusive and open culture would be present, which ultimately may lead to new business opportunities. (Interview with Ainla, 2020)

What cannot be seen in the illustration, but was mentioned by Ainla in the interview too, is that Business Finland originally possessed a list of over 60 potential survey questions. But ultimately, the organization decided that the questionnaire should be as short as possible to reduce the threshold for organizations to complete it fully. Therefore, additional themes were unable to be included in the tool. (Interview with Ainla, 2020)

The perspective from which Business Finland approaches diversity inside the *Talent Boost Index* is highly interesting. In contrast to the clear communication in supporting documents (e.g. Business Finland’s website), Business Finland evaluates diversity in the survey in a very subtle manner. The first content-questions of the survey are not directly related to diversity and assess, e.g., an organization’s motivation to grow internationally. Only after a few questions, diversity (in terms of nationality) starts to be evaluated. The use of the matrix-question format is beneficial for this subtle approach. The statements that organizations are asked to rate are phrased in a positive way, meaning that organizations have to indicate a low important/agreement response if they perceive diversity as irrelevant. It seems like the *Talent Boost Index* tries to crystalize through these matrix-questions whether hiring international workforce is perceived as a need or a potential benefit (business case) by the participating organizations. Therefore, I conclude that Business Finland addresses diversity from two different facets: the needs and business case perspective. This approach becomes visible within and outside the *Talent Boost Index*.

To conclude, the Talent Boost Index stands out in multiple ways. The development of the tool was shaped by a thorough testing process, in which D&I experts as well as the intended target audience of the Talent Boost Index were involved. The tool itself is specifically targeted at Finnish SMEs and it solely addresses one diversity attribute: nationality. Moreover, the multiple question types, particularly the unique matrix-format, are a distinguishing feature of the Talent Boost Index. Lastly, I find the hybrid approach to diversity that Business Finland takes highly interesting. Business Finland manages to communicate diversity from two different perspectives through the abovementioned subtle approach.

## **4.2 American Institute of Certified Public Accountants**

### **– A tool to promote a proactive approach to diversity**

#### ***Background Information***

The U.S. population is growing increasingly diverse. Research by the U.S. Census Bureau projects that more than half of the nation's population will belong to a minority group by 2044. During that year, the population will be comprised of 24.6% Hispanic, 13.1% black, 7.9% Asian and 3.8% multiracial, the study states. Only slightly more than 49% of the population will be White alone (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). As leaders across different industries come to understand this increasing diversity of their workforce and the importance to address the issue, they often face a similar predicament. That is the uncertainty of what to do next. They lack support in how to address D&I at the workplace in order to mitigate the risks and maximize the benefits of a culturally diverse workforce (Tysiac, 2014).

However, there are institutions that equip companies with tools and frameworks to assist in their change process. One of them is the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), which represents an advocative body of the Certified Public Accountant community. Among other things, the AICPA serves as representation of the Certified Public Accountant profession in the U.S. in the processes of setting new standards and developing new rules (AICPA, n.d.-a). Further, the AICPA is committed to providing educational guidance materials to its members and to promoting D&I within the CPA profession and its workforce (AICPA, n.d.-b). For this purpose, the AICPA has developed a variety of D&I tools and resources. The developed material ranges from a general D&I assessment tool and a recruitment and retention toolkit, over an online mentoring program, to webcasts or a LGBTQ networking group (AICPA, n.d.-c).

For this thesis, AICPA's D&I assessment tool, the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model*, is of particular interest and has been analyzed further. The tool assesses an organization's progress in D&I and indicates where a company is heading with their current practices (AICPA, n.d.-c). An anonymized database of the responses of other participating organizations also allows organizations to benchmark their practices (Tysiac, 2014). Organizations can access and take the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* after setting up a free user account, and receive a personalized report upon completion of the survey. As the next step, organizations can leverage other by the AICPA provided resources such as the *recruitment and retention toolkit*, for instance, which assists in developing a concrete D&I strategy and in implementing actions (AICPA, n.d.-c).

The publication date of the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* is not stated on the website of the AICPA and causes confusion. While some press articles write about the tool already in 2014 (e.g. Tysiac, 2014), other press releases argue that the tool was initially developed in 2015 (e.g. CPA Practice Advisor, 2019). The exact release date is not of too much importance, however, as the tool has been updated since then and a new revamped version of the tool was launched by the AICPA. The improvement measures included an adaption to more current D&I practices as well as a more user-friendly handling of the tool, which was achieved by streamlining questions (CPA Practice Advisor, 2019). Since there are no two versions of the tool available online, it can be assumed that the version used for this analysis represents the revamped version of the tool.

In addition to the not explicitly stated release date of the tool, other background information concerning the development process of the tool is rather scarce too. Limited Information is provided by the AICPA and the information that is available is solely focused on the purpose of the tool and the areas that it covers. Only when looking a little deeper into press articles or other resources, one can find out more details about the tools such as the release date, for example. One additional, relevant fact about the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* is that during the development process of the tool input from accounting leaders was sought to (Tysiac, 2014).

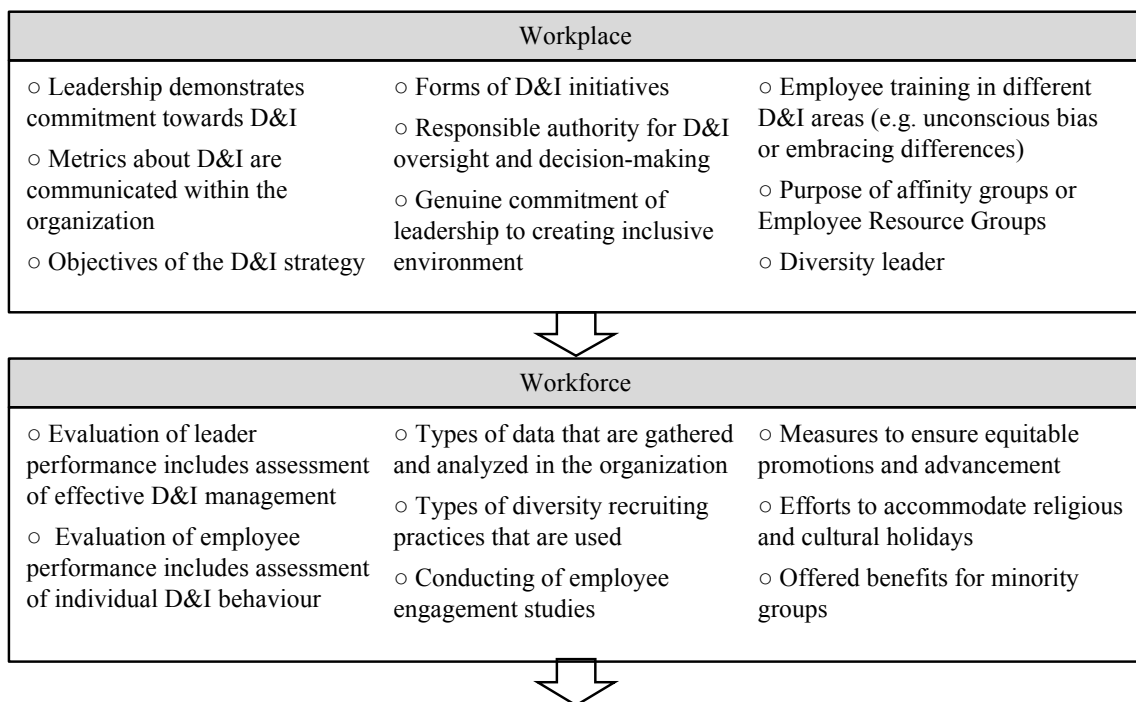
Given the rather limited background information on the tool, it is hard to derive with full certainty, which issues the tool intends to solve. However, the fact that the AICPA refers in one of multiple blog posts to the previously mentioned trend of increasingly becoming diverse workforce in the U.S. (see AICPA, 2020a; AICPA, 2020b), it could be concluded that the institute is aware of the growing importance of addressing D&I at the workplace and

thus, intends to promote a proactive approach to diversity. Perhaps the AICPA knows that the window of opportunity for organizations to become as diverse and inclusive as possible is closing, since an inclusive work environment can serve as a clear competitive advantage. Maybe this is why they raise awareness for the necessity to address the issue.

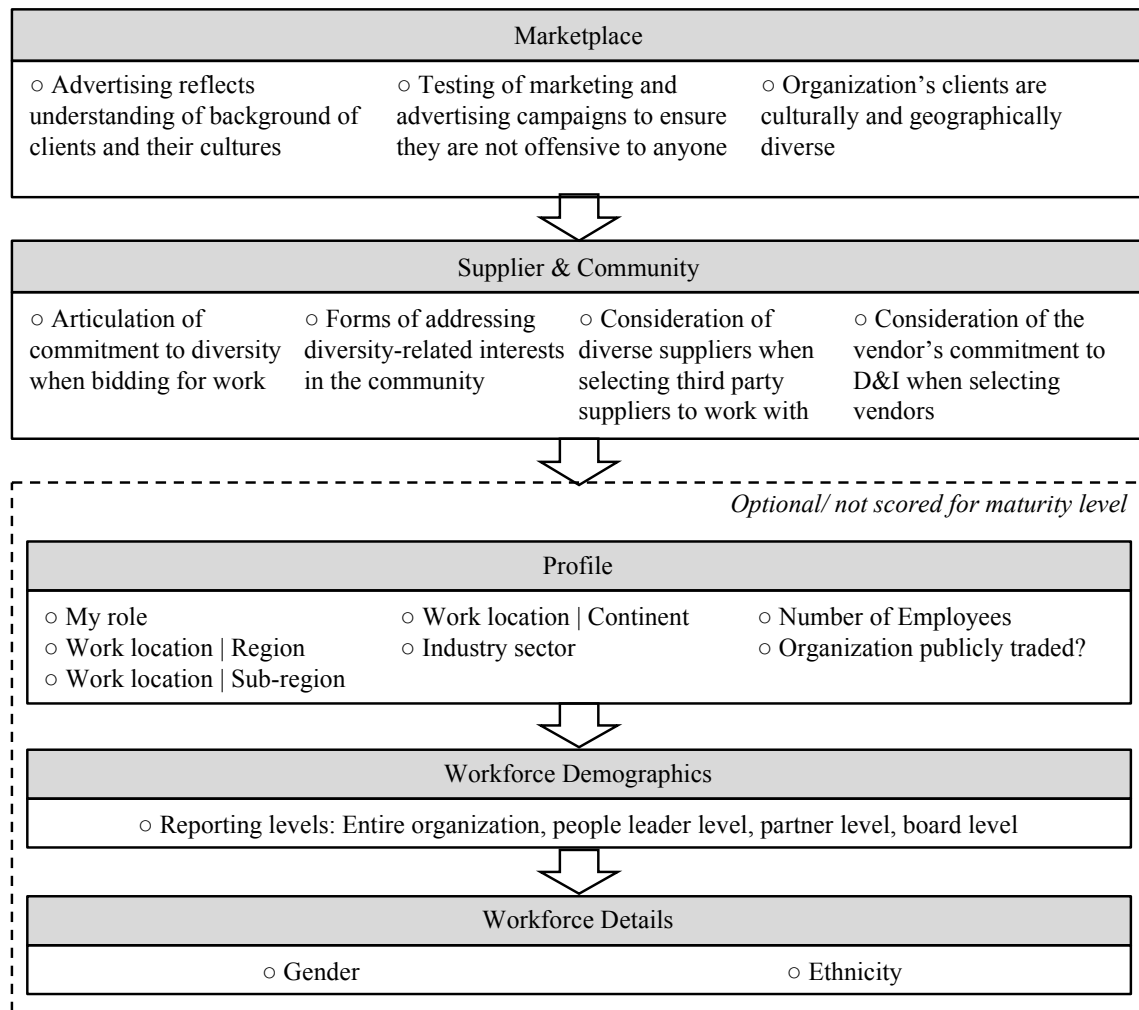
***Analysis of the Tool***

The *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* assesses D&I practices in organizations and expresses their performance in the form of a maturity model score. The tool is divided into four sections that are evaluated to determine an organization’s maturity level. Organizations are asked to reflect on their practices in the (1) workplace, (2) workforce, (3) marketplace, and (4) in community and supplier relations. Each core area entails a different number of questions. The ‘workplace’ and ‘workforce’ sections are more emphasized than the other two sections. In total, the tool incorporates approx. 24 items across these four sections that are assessed to determine the organization’s overall performance. Depending on the respective responses of a company, follow-up questions may be asked, which is why the number of questions can vary among the participants. In addition to the questions relevant to determine the maturity score, background questions about the participating organizations are also being asked.

The following Figure 8 provides a comprehensive overview of the tool’s structure and the different components.







**Figure 8. American Institute of Certified Public Accountants: Tool overview**

After answering all questions of the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model*, organizations receive a downloadable, personalized report. The report includes their maturity model score and a personalized summary that incorporates details, resources, and tools for improving their performance in each core area. The maturity score itself is expressed in the form of a percentile, meaning that it is a direct peer-to-peer comparison with other organizations that completed the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model*. This score is provided for each of the four categories and the overall performance. Further, to assist with the interpretation of the score, the AICPA classified the scores into four categories that range from Aspiring (low score) to Optimizing (high score). To give an example, an organization could achieve a maturity score of 94% in the ‘workforce’ category. This means that their ‘workforce’-related D&I activities are better than the activities of 94% of the organizations that also took the self-assessment. Consequently, with this score they would fall into the highest category: Optimizing.

Another characteristic of the tool that is worth mentioning are its diverse questions. Like the *Talent Boost Index*, the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* uses multiple question formats and response types throughout the tool. Here, these varying response formats are Likert-scales (frequency, likelihood, and importance), lists (single- and multiple-answer) and free-text fields. I find this interesting because many tools are restricted to one response format only, either by choice or design (see Section 3.3.2). Online tools commonly have more flexibility, which is why I positively noticed that the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* leverages this opportunity and uses multiple response formats.

In the performance report that the AICPA issues, the organization provides a brief summary of the underlying themes of their tool. This overview is presented in Figure 9.

<p><b>Workplace (Culture)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership and Accountability</li> <li>○ Communication</li> <li>○ Strategy &amp; Implementation</li> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Affinity Groups</li> </ul>	<p><b>Workforce (People)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruiting &amp; Retention</li> <li>○ Advancement</li> <li>○ Performance</li> <li>○ Metrics</li> <li>○ Benefits</li> </ul>
<p><b>Marketplace (Clients)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advertising</li> <li>○ Marketing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supplier &amp; Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supplier diversity</li> <li>○ Community engagement</li> </ul>

**Figure 9. American Institute of Certified Public Accountants: Tool themes**

What I find interesting about the themes of the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* is that they are fairly few but still very expressive and diverse. In a sense, the tool manages to evaluate a broad-reaching combination of topics with a minimum number of questions. The focus is clearly on the four different categories but within each category, no theme is assessed with more than two questions. All themes appear well-thought through and clearly separated. Personally, I enjoyed this briefness while I took the assessment. It avoided dullness and ensured that the overall time required for completion of the tool was not excessive.

What I additionally liked about the AICPA’s tool is the fact that it runs on a platform and the advantages that this brings along. Being able to log into a personalized account that permits the participating organization to save their responses and review their progress over time, clearly is an added value. In fact, the AICPA recommends in the provided personalized report that the tool should be retaken after a year to evaluate one’s progress. In addition, the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* convinces through a very smooth interface that is very user-friendly and intuitive. In contrast to the *Talent Boost Index*, this online tool permanently

displays the headings of each section, which makes skipping and coming back to sections much easier.

When it comes to the perspective from which the AICPA approaches D&I, I already clarified above that the organization's approach was hard to determine based on the background information. After the analysis of the tool's components, however, it becomes very clear from what angle the AICPA addresses D&I. Particularly the scale questions are phrased in such a way, that D&I are described as a best practice and participants need to select "negative" responses (e.g. never or strongly disagree) if their organization has not achieved that ideal D&I situation yet. Therefore, I conclude that the AICPA approaches D&I in their *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* by indirectly communicating it as a need.

To summarize, the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* is a platform-based self-assessment tool that was created in the context of increasing diversity in the U.S. The AICPA promotes a proactive approach to diversity in their supporting documents, while subtly communicating the need to tackle diversity issues through their tool. Unfortunately, the AICPA provides very little background information on the tool itself, but in turn, has developed numerous D&I tools and resources. Moreover, the tool convinces with its compact but extensive structure, which facilitates an intuitive and user-friendly handling. Lastly, the *Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model* stands out for its anonymously benchmarked maturity score and the possibility of plotting one's progress over time, which both are only possible because the tool is accessible via a platform.

### **4.3 Australian Human Rights Commission**

#### **– A tool to address diversity and anti-discrimination practices in Australia**

##### ***Background Information***

Racial discrimination continues to be a pressing issue in Australia, significantly impacting the wellbeing and health of many Australian citizens (Paradies, 2006). Especially in organizational contexts, where diverse employees of all kinds naturally meet, race-based discrimination is likely to occur (Paradies et al., 2009). At the same time, however, organizations can also play a crucial role in creating and enforcing anti-discrimination standards and enhancing diversity (Trenerry et al., 2010). Why organizations should be interested in possessing a diverse workforce and creating a welcoming environment for their employees, has already been discussed comprehensively in Section 2.2.3. Despite the

promising benefits of diversity, however, Australian organizations seem to continue to struggle with racial discrimination and diversity.

In view of this necessity to address workplace diversity and anti-discrimination practices in Australian organizations, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has developed an assessment tool in cooperation with the Diversity Council Australia and Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth).<sup>2</sup> The *Workplace cultural diversity tool* was launched in 2014 and is “designed to help organizations measure themselves against best practice standards in workplace cultural diversity, effectively manage a culturally diverse workforce, plan their business development and chart their progress over time” (AHRC, n.d.). The tool is available on a website that was designed specifically for the tool. It allows participating organizations to take an online survey, based on which the organization then receives an automatically generated performance report.

There are three major characteristics of the *Workplace cultural diversity tool* that stand out in particular. One special property of this tool is its academic development. The AHRC's tool is a revised version of an already existing tool called *Workplace diversity and anti-discrimination assessment tool*, which was developed by two Australian scholars, Paradies and Trenerry (AHRC, n.d.). Both scholars have conducted multiple studies in the discrimination and diversity field, including a joint extensive review on how to best evaluate workplace practices related to anti-discrimination and diversity (Trenerry et al., 2010). One of the study's key findings was that there was no available tool to assess diversity and anti-discrimination workplace practices within an Australian context (Trenerry et al., 2010). Ultimately, this finding led to the development of the *Workplace diversity and anti-discrimination tool*, and consequently to the creation of the *Workplace cultural diversity tool*.

The second special characteristic of the tool is its strong institutional background and support. This becomes evident not only by looking at the three partners of the AHRC's project but also by taking a closer look at the original version of the tool. The development of Paradies and Trenerry's tool was commissioned by VicHealth for a program called *Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD)*. LEAD, a timely-bounded program carried out between 2009 – 2013, aimed at supporting diversity and reducing race-based discrimination in Australia (VicHealth, 2014). For this purpose, VicHealth developed a

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<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of simplicity and readability, only the AHRC will be named when referring to project partners as the AHRC has been the leading organization in the project.

number of resources and tools, like the *Workplace diversity and anti-discrimination tool*. Sponsorship and support institutions for the tools and the overall LEAD project included i.e. the Australian Government Department of Social Services, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, and the University of Melbourne (VicHealth, 2015).

Lastly, besides the scholarly foundation and institutional background, the tool is also characterized by an intensive testing process. In a first step, VicHealth piloted the original version of the tool with two Victorian local councils. During the revision phase of the AHRC, the tool was then tested with a wider range of non-profit and corporate organizations across Australia, based on which modifications were made. (AHRC, n.d.)

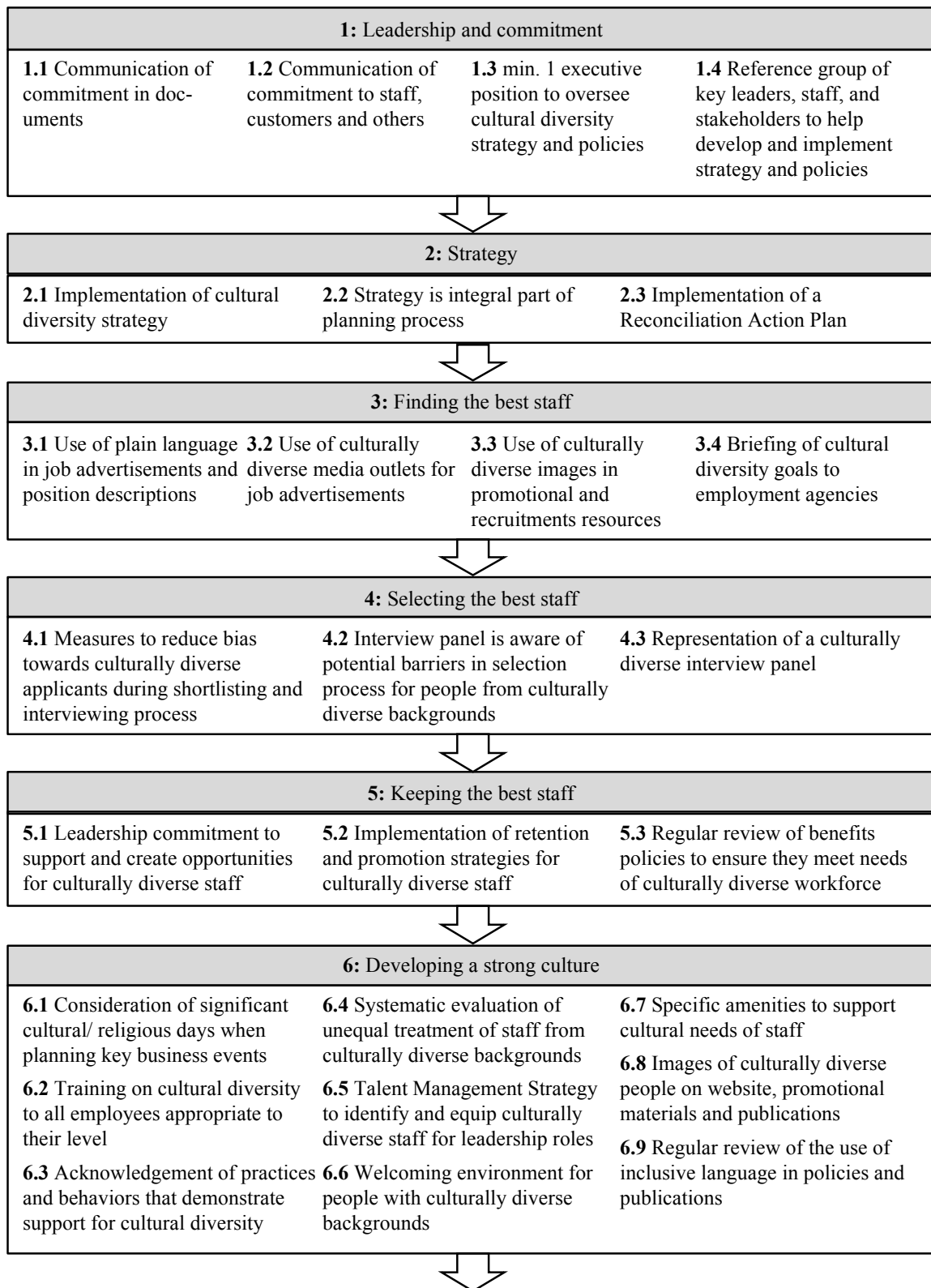
The aforementioned characteristics of the tool shed light on the underlying issues that the tool intends to solve. Clearly, the AHRC, Diversity Council Australia, and VicHealth identified a necessity to develop a tool to assist Australian organizations in the challenges of their increasingly diverse workforce. Since the tool derived from an anti-discrimination program (LEAD), it can, therefore, be concluded that the AHRC addressed diversity from a needs perspective.

At the same time, however, the AHRC does highlight the business case of diversity as well. On the tool's landing page, several statements put emphasis on the benefits of diversity. There, the AHRC refers, i.e., to findings of a consultancy study which found that when employees perceive a strong commitment to diversity of their employer and feel included at work, business performance improves (Deloitte Australia & Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012). In summary, it can thus be deduced that the AHRC highlights diversity on the tool's website from two facets: the needs and business case perspective. The next section will outline details of the tool and assess how these two perspectives are incorporated throughout the tool.

### ***Analysis of the Tool***

For this thesis, the *Workplace cultural diversity tool*, which is the more recent version out of the two tools mentioned above, was analyzed. The *Workplace cultural diversity tool* consists of 30 items across seven sections. Each item lists a best practice standard and three options that provide examples that demonstrate the standards for organizations. These are categorized in: starting out, developing, and advanced. Organizations then simply select one of the three options that they believe represents the level that their organization has already achieved. Alternatively, if a question is not relevant for the organization, a company can also

select *N/A* (not applicable). Besides the 30 items, real-life examples of good practice can be viewed in each of the sections throughout the tool. Figure 10 provides a thorough overview of the tool’s 30 items and seven sections. The figure only includes the best practice standards, which have been simplified, and does not include the respective response options.



7: Ensuring that your strategies work			
7.1 Exit processes that are sensitive to culturally diverse employees	7.2 Evaluation of the progress on cultural diversity strategy	7.3 Collection of quantitative and qualitative data to analyze progress towards diversity goals	7.4 Action steps are formulated if there is a significant gap between the reality and the goals

**Figure 10. Australian Human Rights Commission: Tool overview**

While the AHRC clarifies that the use of its tool is not restricted to companies from a particular industry or of a specific size, they also concede that some of the standards may be more relevant to larger organizations. To fully benefit from the tool, the AHRC also recommends completing the tool with a group of employees from different areas of the company and different cultural backgrounds. (AHRC, n.d.)

Upon completion of the assessment tool, the participating company receives an automatically generated report. The focus of the report is the overall performance of the organization, including a score overview of the respective sections. In addition, organizations receive encouragement to work out implementation ideas based on their performance and to convert them into an action plan. To potentially see a tangible improvement in an organization’s progress, the AHRC also recommends retaking the survey after one year. Lastly, the score report includes a list of resources. These cover other tools and fact sheets, as well as relevant studies conducted in the Australian diversity and anti-discrimination field.

Across the sections of the tool, different themes of the assessment tool’s components emerge, which I summarized in Figure 11.

<b>Leadership &amp; Commitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication</li> <li>○ Representatives</li> </ul>	<b>Culture Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cultural &amp; religious tolerance</li> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Evaluation systems</li> <li>○ Talent Management Strategy for cultural minorities</li> <li>○ Media (language &amp; images)</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy</b>	
<b>Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Media (language &amp; images)</li> <li>○ Cultural sensitivity</li> <li>○ Representative interview panel</li> </ul>	<b>Sustainable culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exit processes</li> <li>○ Progress evaluation</li> <li>○ Data collection (quantitative &amp; qualitative)</li> <li>○ Committed actions on insufficiencies</li> </ul>
<b>Retention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership commitment</li> <li>○ Retention strategies</li> <li>○ Benefit policies</li> </ul>	

**Figure 11. Australian Human Rights Commission: Tool themes**

The *Workplace cultural diversity tool* conducts a holistic assessment of diversity measures in organizations. Within the underlying themes, a wide variety of practices are examined. The tool evaluates, i.e., the representation of culturally diverse images across media channels, the commitment and guidance of the leadership to implement a diversity strategy, or the general sensitivity of employees to equally treat staff from culturally different backgrounds. Overall, the items aim to critically evaluate inclusive and non-discriminating behavior across all kinds of business activities.

Interestingly, the 30 items of the tool evaluate the diversity practices within organizations solely from the problem-oriented perspective. Activities in which potential bias and unequal treatment towards culturally diverse staff can occur, are mainly assessed. The business case of diversity, meaning that the benefits of diversity are outlined throughout the tool, is not represented in the tool's items.

One conspicuousness with regards to the sections is the uneven distribution of items. While six of the sections incorporate three to four items each, the tool has a strong focus on 'Developing a strong culture' (nine items), which accounts for almost 1/3 of all the items. This strong emphasis on culture can potentially be explained by the tool's overall focus, which lies in cultural diversity.

Another noteworthy characteristic of the tool that became clear during the analysis is its very user-friendly design and handling. Just like in the tool of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, a permanently visible overview bar of the seven sections, which also indicates in which section the participating organization currently is at, adds structure to the tool and ensures intuitive handling. In addition, the responses are saved and can be modified since the tool is managed through a platform that is only accessible after setting up a free user account. By logging into such an account, the report is therefore constantly available and permits, i.e., the possibility of reviewing the responses if an organization desires to implement action steps.

In conclusion, the AHRC tool has many particular characteristics. A strong theoretical foundation, institutional background, and testing process with the tool's intended target audience shaped the development phase of the tool. The tool itself stands out for its strong focus on cultural diversity and the aim to reduce unequal treatment and discrimination at the workplace. This focus is reflected in the emerging themes of the tool, which includes i.e. the assessment of cultural sensitivity at the workplace of organizations and throughout their



complete recruiting process. Additionally, the property of being an online survey is special as organizations receive a performance report upon completion. Lastly, the tool convinces with its clear structure and intuitive handling.

#### **4.4 The Centre for Global Inclusion**

**– A tool to serve as a global resource for diversity and inclusion research and education**

##### ***Background Information***

The previously described diversity assessment tools were predominantly created in a national context to assist in solving larger issues connected to D&I. This is different for the following tool that approaches D&I from a global perspective.

With the mission to “serve as a resource for research and education for individuals and organizations in their quest to improve diversity and inclusion practices around the world” (Diversity Collegium, 2020), the Centre for Global Inclusion was founded in the U.S. in 2017. The Centre is a non-profit, charity organization that has distributed their free resources to individuals, businesses, governments, academia, and NGOs worldwide (The Centre for Global Inclusion, 2017a). The core-piece of their offered resources is a PDF document called *Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World* (GDIB). Its purpose is to help organizations around the world to develop and implement D&I best practices (O’Mara & Richter, 2017).

There are three characteristics of the GDIB that I find particularly remarkable. First, it is fruitful to look into the extensive history of the tool. While the current edition of the GDIB is from 2017, the origin of the tool dates back to 1993. Back then, The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) developed a unique set of diversity benchmarks. Roughly ten years later, the practitioners Julie O’Mara and Alan Richter found these benchmarks in their desire to develop a tool themselves that improves the quality of D&I work globally. They considered the benchmarks by the TVA as valuable but concluded that the benchmarks were too U.S.-focused for their global tool as well as partly outdated with the maturation of the D&I field. Therefore, with the help of 47 D&I experts, O’Mara and Richter reworked the TVA’s tool and updated the tool to represent the relevant D&I best practices. In 2006, they then published the first edition of the GDIB and started to disseminate it globally. Since then, the tool has been revised four times, hereby making the current version from 2017 the fifth edition of the GDIB. A sixth edition of the tool will be released in 2021. In the respective

revisions over the years, only the best practices were modified to ensure their current relevance. The structure of the tool remained identical since the first edition from 2006. (The Centre for Global Inclusion, 2017b)

The second remarkable characteristic of the GDIB is the extensive involvement of D&I experts in the development process of the tool. As described above, a large group of D&I experts assisted in the initial development of the tool in 2006. Over the past years and editions of the tool, this number increased constantly. The current version of the GDIB was developed with the assistance of 95 expert panelists from all over the world (O'Mara & Richter, 2017). For the upcoming sixth edition of the GDIB, 114 persons were invited to serve as expert panelists (The Centre for Global Inclusion, 2020). The panelists are people with year-long experience in the D&I field and come from diverse world regions, different types and sizes of organizations, and represent various diversity dimensions (The Centre for Global Inclusion, 2020). Choosing an expert panelist group that encompasses a broad variety of backgrounds and areas of expertise was essential for the authors since the GDIB represents the panelists' collective point of view (O'Mara & Richter, 2017). With this knowledge at hand that almost 100 D&I experts were involved in the development of the best practices, I can confidently conclude that the GDIB has an extremely strong validity.

The last major characteristics, and in my opinion most impressive one, is the immense scope of the GDIB. In the 80-page long document, the authors list a total of 266 D&I best practices across 14 categories (O'Mara & Richter, 2017). Further, the GDIB stands out for visualizing the relationship between the categories with a well-thought-out model. More information about the broad scope of the GDIB and its content are presented in the following analysis section.

As briefly mentioned at the beginning of this section, the GDIB takes a different approach to diversity than other diversity assessment tools. The goal of the GDIB is to improve D&I practices across the world. It does not promote the business case of diversity, nor does it try to solve any issues related to D&I. Instead, I would describe the GDIB's approach to diversity as purely educational.

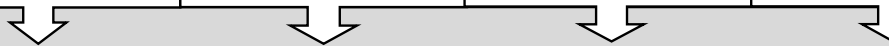
### ***Analysis of the Tool***

The GDIB is a very comprehensive self-assessment tool. Organizations have the opportunity to assess their D&I progress across 14 different categories, which are organized into four groups. In each category, numerous benchmarks are listed across five different levels, with

the benchmarks at Level 5 considered best practice. Organizations then select those benchmarks that, according to their best knowledge, reflect their organization's current standard the closest. In that sense, the GDIB functions like a checklist. By ticking the respective benchmarks within the five different groups, the GDIB gives an indication of how good an organization's D&I practices are at present. In total, organizations can evaluate their D&I progress across 266 benchmarks, which are distributed across the five levels of the 14 categories. An overview of the tool's categories and a sample of benchmarks is provided in Figure 12.

In contrast to the previous three diversity assessment tools, the GDIB is not an online tool or survey. Instead, the tool is provided as an offline PDF document, allowing anyone to download, read, and use the GDIB. Only when using the tool for other purposes than analyzing one's own D&I progress, as in the case of my thesis, permission must be requested. Given the fact that the tool is offline and therefore does not transmit the responses to the Centre for Global Inclusion, the GDIB does not include a performance report as their service.

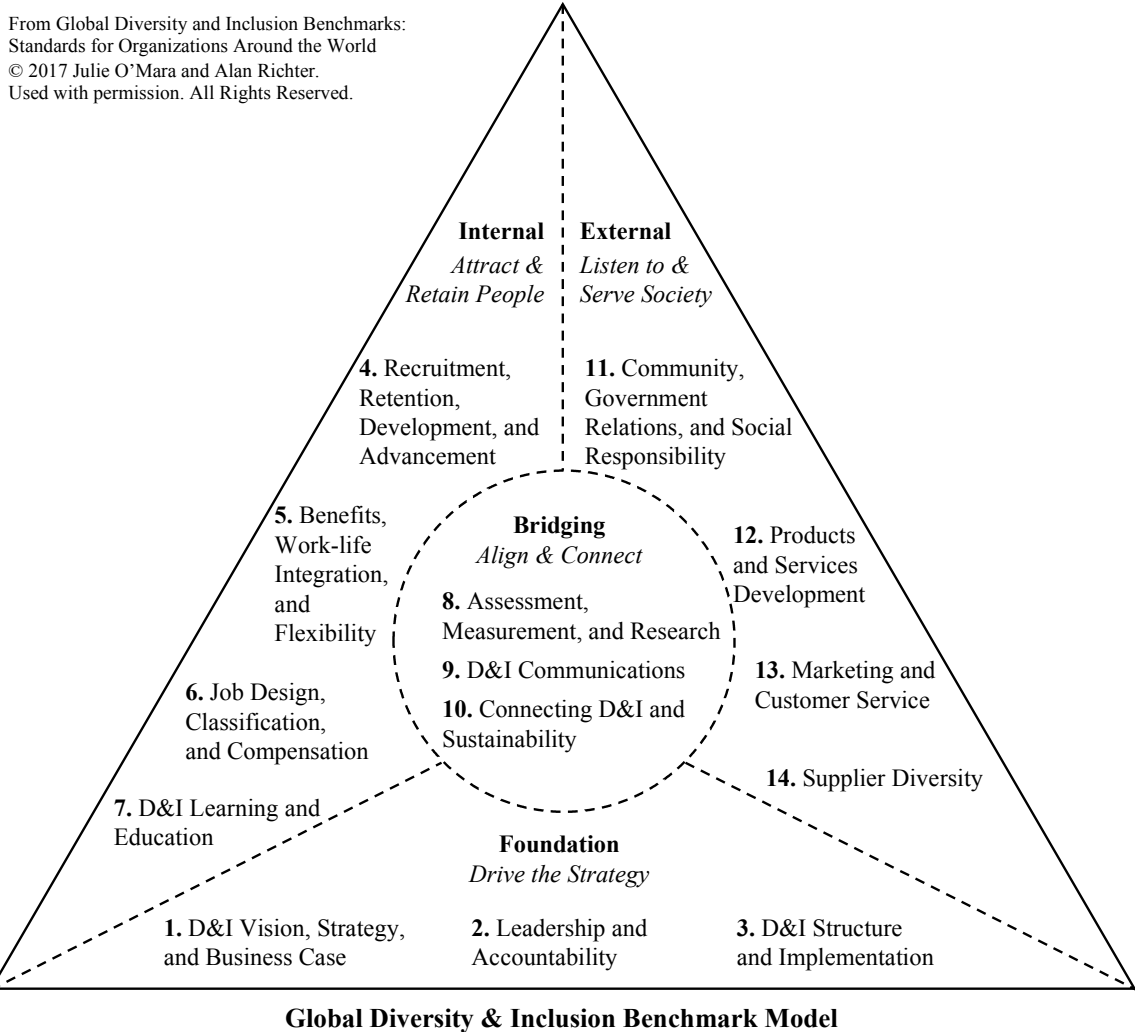
Regarding the target group of the GDIB, O'Mara and Richter specify that their tool is for all sectors, sizes, and types of organizations around the world. However, they also concede that some benchmarks may be more likely to be achieved by larger companies. Information about what role responsibility the person filling out the tool should ideally have, is not provided by the authors.

4 Groups			
Foundation Drive the Strategy	Internal Attract & Retain People	Bridging Align & Connect	External Listen to & Serve Society
14 Categories and Concrete Actions			
<b>1. D&amp;I Vision, Strategy, and Business Case</b>	<b>4. Recruitment, Retention, Development, and Advancement</b>	<b>8. Assessment, Measurement, and Research</b>	<b>11. Community, Government Relations, and Social Responsibility</b>
Sample actions: ○ Regular reviews of D&I work components (e.g. Vision or Strategy) ○ Contribution of the D&I strategy to specific accomplishments ○ Communication of D&I vision, strategy and businesses case to staff	Sample actions: ○ Awareness of and reflection on diversity-related bias ○ Special advancement support for underrepresented groups	Sample actions: ○ In-depth assessment of D&I behavior, attitude, and perception ○ Measuring of D&I progress ○ Conducting and sharing of D&I research	Sample actions: ○ Community support (e.g. scholarships) ○ Support of other company's D&I initiatives in the community
<b>2. Leadership and Accountability</b>	<b>5. Benefits, Work-life Integration, and Flexibility</b>	<b>9. D&amp;I Communications</b>	<b>12. Products and Services Development</b>
Sample actions: ○ Management performance and compensation is tied to D&I indicators ○ Management support of diversity initiatives, even when controversial	Sample actions: ○ Availability of flexible work arrangements ○ Policies and practices guard against favoritism	Sample actions: ○ Branding of D&I ○ Easy accessibility to D&I topics on the website ○ Frequent and innovative D&I communication	Sample actions: ○ Diverse composition of products and services teams ○ Organization shows link between diversity and innovation
<b>3. D&amp;I Structure and Implementation</b>	<b>6. Job Design, Classification, and Compensation</b>	<b>10. Connecting D&amp;I and Sustainability</b>	<b>13. Marketing and Customer Service</b>
Sample actions: ○ Support of D&I initiatives from leaders of all levels ○ Existence of diversity networks	Sample actions: ○ Equitable compensation ○ Classification and compensation systems address conscious and unconscious bias	Sample actions: ○ Consideration of D&I as integral to overall long-term success and sustainability of company ○ Measuring and reporting of D&I and sustainability progress	Sample actions: ○ Use of analysis techniques to respond to diverse customer base ○ Awareness of needs and perspectives of diverse customer groups
	<b>7. D&amp;I Learning and Education</b>		<b>14. Supplier Diversity</b>
	Sample actions: ○ D&I learning material ○ Continuous D&I training curriculum		Sample actions: ○ Diversity is considered when selecting suppliers ○ Supplier diversity strategy
			
<b>266 Total Benchmarks at 5 Levels</b> Best Practices   Progressive   Proactive   Reactive   Inactive			

**Figure 12. The Centre for Global Inclusion: Tool overview**

Beside the immense scope of the GDIB, the depth of the tool also caught my attention. I found it interesting to observe that the tool possesses two levels of categorization. As observed in the previous diversity assessment tools, questions or best practices were so far classified under one sort of category only. Here, however, the 14 categories of the tool are

additionally classified into four groups. And the categories are not just divided into the groups, but also put into relationship to each other. This relationship between the four groups and their respective categories is illustrated by the GDIB Model below, which represents the core-element of the 80-page document.



**Figure 13. The Centre for Global Inclusion: Tool themes**

O'Mara and Richter explain that the model is designed as an equilateral triangle to symbolize equality and strength. The *Foundation* categories form the base of the triangle and demonstrate that they are indispensable for the effective operation of all other categories. Counting with the commitment of the leadership and a clear D&I strategy inside an organization, for instance, are crucial requirements to have an effective D&I program. The *Internal* group is often associated with human resource activities like recruitment, compensation management, or training. Contrary, the *External* group encompasses customer and other stakeholders related issues. O'Mara and Richter highlight that the *External* categories are particularly crucial because they have the biggest impact on the D&I business

case. The *Bridging* group is positioned in the center and connects all other three groups. That is because activities like D&I-related communication or the assessment of D&I initiatives are aspects that are relevant in the other groups too. The dotted lines that separate the four groups are a symbol for how interconnected and permeable D&I work should be in organizations.

Personally, I find the GDIB model highly astonishing. The model is an extremely simple, strongly symbolic, and easily understandable summary of the extensive 80-page document. O’Mara and Richter provide a thorough explanation of the relationship between the groups, which is very special as the previous diversity assessment tools did not put their themes or categories into relation. Ultimately, the GDIB model clearly demonstrates how holistically D&I is addressed in the tool.

One additional aspect that fascinated me about the GDIB is that besides the 266 best practices, it also outlines different approaches to D&I and explains how the motivation to address D&I can differ significantly. These approaches, which were defined by O’Mara and Richter with the assistance of the 95 panel experts, are displayed in Figure 14.

<b>Competence</b> Improving skills, knowledge, and ability	<b>Compliance</b> Complying with laws and regulations	<b>Dignity</b> Affirming the value and interconnectedness of every person
	<b>Organization Development</b> Improving organizational performance	<b>Social Justice</b> Treating people equitable & ethically

**Figure 14. Approaches to Diversity and Inclusion**  
(Based on O’Mara & Richter, 2017: p. 5)

The authors argue that the ultimate goals of D&I activities are driven by these different perspectives. While many organizations might combine multiple approaches, others start their D&I journey with a motivation inspired by only one approach, such as compliance or social justice. This demonstrates that the perspective towards D&I is influenced by the respective context or circumstances in which an organization finds itself in. Further, O’Mara and Richter clarify that the five approaches overlap a lot and function as a system. In other words, it is not always clear to identify the approach to D&I by only one of the perspectives, and one approach may impact another approach.

The perspectives mentioned in the GDIB are very similar to the four perspectives introduced in the literature review, namely social justice, business case, needs, and compliance (see

Chapter 2.1.4). In my opinion, the competence and organization development perspectives represent an equivalent to the business case perspective. Interestingly, the GDIB also puts emphasis on the individual by addressing the perspective of dignity.

In summary, the GDIB fascinated me in many ways and has numerous unique properties. First of all, the tool stands out for its immense scope and its sophisticated model. The GDIB elaborates in an impressive manner how their categories stand in relationship to each other. In addition to the scope and depth of the tool, the GDIB also stands out with its long history dating back to 1993, as well as the extensive involvement of D&I experts in the development phase of the tool. Further, the presentation of the different approaches to D&I are special about the GDIB. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the Centre for Global Inclusion takes an interesting approach to D&I themselves. It seems to me that the non-profit organization considers the purpose of their GDIB as an educational instrument to improve D&I related practices on a global scale.

#### **4.5 Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel**

##### **– A tool to support the implementation of a Charter and achieve regional equity in Canada**

###### ***Background Information***

The regional municipality Peel, located west of the city of Toronto with a population of over 1.3 million people (Statistics Canada, 2016), is one of Canada's most diverse, rapidly changing and fastest growing regions (Mohanty, 2009). Due to the constant immigration over the past decades, the region has changed from a predominantly white neighborhood to a region that inhabits people of all races and cultures (Mohanty, 2009). For instance, nowadays there are more than 90 languages spoken in the region and 56.8% of the population are visible minorities<sup>3</sup> (Peel Region, 2011). This diversity can create both challenges and opportunities for the region.

To ensure that more opportunities than challenges are created by diversity and that everyone who lives or works in the region feels included, the Regional Diversity Roundtable of Peel developed and launched the Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016a). Since the project launch in 2012, the D&I Charter of Peel has continuously worked towards achieving social justice across all levels of the municipality such as political

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<sup>3</sup> The Canadian Government defines *visible minority* as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour" (Statistics Canada, 2015).

institutions, health and education systems, or businesses (D&I Charter of Peel, 2015a). The core of the project represents, of course, the charter itself. Organizations that sign the D&I Charter commit to numerous action steps that ensure the promotion, support, and integration of a diverse, equitable and inclusive region (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016a).

To assist organizations with the implementation process of the charter's commitments, the D&I Charter of Peel provides a variety of additional comprehensive resources such as research, reports, or toolkits (D&I Charter of Peel, 2015b). One of these resources is an assessment tool called *A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Organizational Self-Assessment Tool*<sup>4</sup>, which was analyzed in this thesis. Completing the tool is one possible way how organizations that endorse the D&I Charter of Peel can act on their commitment (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016b). That is because organizations can use the tool to both identify areas for improvements as well as celebrate the progress in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) that they have already made (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016b). The abbreviation "DEI" is used throughout the analysis of the tool since it goes beyond an assessment of diversity and inclusion and evaluates equity as well.

The *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* was uploaded onto the Charter's website in the form of a PDF document in 2016 (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016b). Just like some of the previously described tools, the tool of the D&I Charter of Peel is rooted in governmental activities and funded by the state. On the Charter's website, the *Region of Peel*, which is the municipal government, is listed as the sole funder of the project. However, the website also includes a long list of collaborative project partners, which are mainly public institutions. (see D&I Charter of Peel, 2015a)

One interesting observation that I made during the research process concerns the surprisingly large difference between the amount of project related background information provided by the D&I Charter of Peel in comparison to other websites. Whereas the Charter itself convinces through an extremely extensive description of the project, there is almost no information about the D&I Charter of Peel available through other websites. While one can naturally argue that it is common for an organization to provide most of the project-related background information itself, it still struck me how hard it was to find information related to the D&I Charter of Peel outside its website. I believe that this lack of cross-referencing to other websites can put into question how big the effect of the tool can actually be, if the

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<sup>4</sup> For reasons of simplicity, the abbreviated name *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* will be used throughout the thesis.



threshold of finding it through the internet is rather high. However, there may, of course, be offline channels (e.g. promotion of the Charter in a local event) or other online channels to raise awareness that I am simply not aware of.

One additional aspect about the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* that particularly caught my attention relates to the development process of the tool. In the acknowledgement section inside the tool's PDF document, the D&I Charter of Peel (2016b) comments that the tool is a revised and extended version of an in 2013 drafted self-assessment tool by the Regional Diversity Roundtable of Peel. More interestingly, however, the Charter also acknowledges that the design of their tool has been adapted from a diversity self-assessment tool developed by the Regional Municipality of York, which is another municipality that is located next to Toronto (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016b).

The fact that the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* was adapted from a tool by the Regional Municipality of York is striking for three reasons. Firstly, the diversity self-assessment tool of the York Region was located during the initial tool search process of this study too and therefore, forms part of the potential tool list as well. Secondly, the York tool has a similar background to the tool of the Peel Region, which is that both highly diverse regions share the same community goals: To create an inclusive and equitable region for all. And lastly, I simply found the fact that a neighboring region adapts another region's tool interesting. That is because this adaption of the tool demonstrates collaboration across municipalities as well as the sharing of resources and best practices.

However, I decided to not include both tools for this analysis. That is because their design and background is too similar, which would have mitigated the added value of looking into both tools. The decision of choosing the tool of the Peel region over the tool of the York Region was firstly due to the Charter of Peel providing more background information on their tool, and secondly because their tool is more recent than the in 2014 published tool of the York Region (York Region, 2014). However, even though I discarded the York Region's tool for the analysis, I was still able to identify a highly insightful characteristic of the tool that distinguishes itself from the Charter of Peel tool. Contrary to the Charter of Peel tool, the York Region's tool provides the organization taking the self-assessment with a very extensive list of online resources and books that are relevant for each section (see York Region, 2014). What I found most unusual about it, but certainly practical, was the location where these references were positioned, that is directly underneath each section of the tool and not at the end of the PDF document. Personally, I would imagine this to be extremely

helpful for the organization that is filling out the self-assessment as they have an easy and direct access to enlightening material, in case they encounter any difficulties or would simply like to enhance their knowledge.

Lastly, I want to discuss the approach that the D&I Charter of Peel takes in addressing diversity. As stated by the organization itself, the Charter is a “regional initiative to foster inclusiveness and equity in Peel” (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016a). Paired with the previously described background of the project, this statement clearly demonstrates that the D&I Charter of Peel works towards achieving equity of all levels in their region. However, I did not perceive that the Charter is communicating this vision with extreme urgency or as a highly pressing issue. Instead, I got the feeling that the Charter considers DEI as a delicate issue, which should particularly be intrinsically driven by the organizations themselves. This assumption would align with the nature of a charter in general, which is that organizations voluntarily decide to commit to certain actions.

### ***Analysis of the Tool***

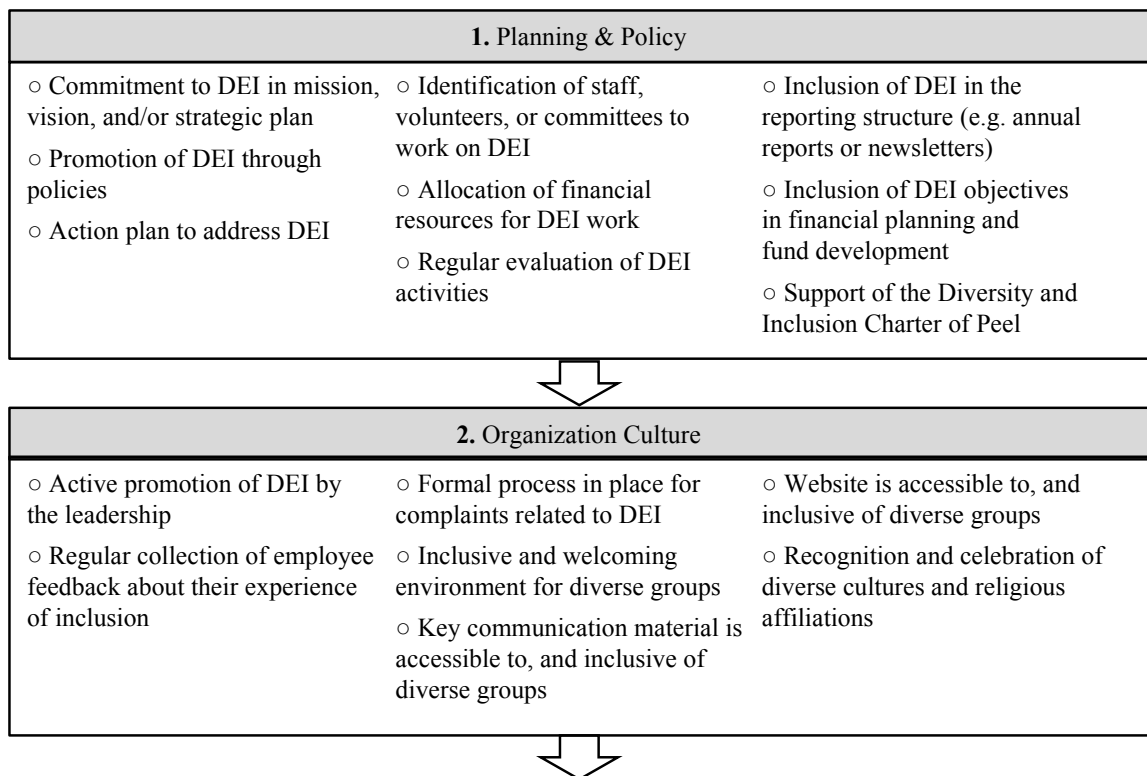
As the name of the tool already reveals, the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* serves organizations to evaluate their DEI practices by themselves. The D&I Charter of Peel provides organizations with a set of DEI indicators across eight different categories and designed the tool in the form of an offline PDF checklist, just like the GDIB. Within each category, organizations are asked to indicate the extent to which they comply with each DEI indicator. What these categories are and what indicators they include is demonstrated in Figure 15 and discussed later on.

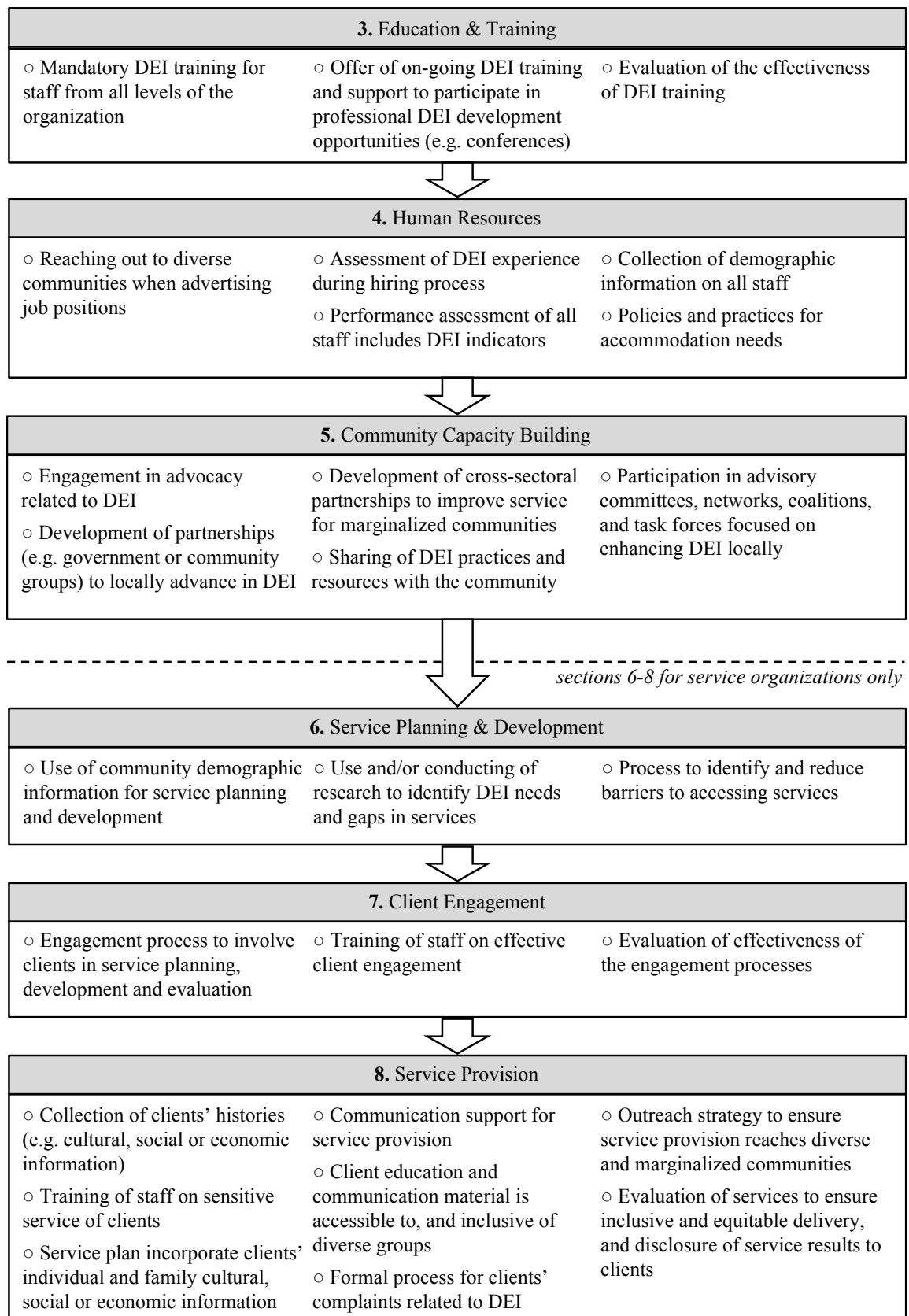
To rate the extent of compliance with each indicator, organizations use a scoring scale from 1 to 5, which ranges from ‘No action’ to ‘Full action’ taken. If an indicator does not apply to an organization, it can rate the indicator as ‘Not applicable’ and exclude it for the calculation of the average assessment score. To assist the organization’s in the self-rating process, the tool provides space next to each indicator so that evidence can be documented that led to the self-rated score. After entering a score for each indicator across the eight sections, organizations can calculate their overall average assessment score for each section. The interpretation of the score follows the same logic and ranges from 1 to 5 accordingly. A score of 5 represents the embodiment of the commitments outlined in the D&I Charter of Peel, while a lower score indicates different levels of improvement for an organization.

Upon completion of the tool and the review of the achieved score in each category, organizations also have the opportunity to formulate specific action steps to improve their DEI performance. For this purpose, the D&I Charter of Peel provides an action planning guide that assists in identifying three priority areas for improvement and deduce the required people and resources for each priority.

The target group of the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* is very broad. The tool is meant for any type of organization, regardless of their size, industry, or progress in DEI activities. Further, the D&I Charter of Peel clarifies who should complete the tool. In the introduction of the tool, they write that “any individual with knowledge of an organization can answer the questions” (D&I Charter of Peel, 2016a; p. 2). While they obviously do not favor any specific individual to fill out the tool, the D&I Charter of Peel does voice a recommendation. They encourage organizations to include staff from multiple departments and levels of the organization in the assessment process. This ensures that the most accurate picture of the organization’s DEI performance can be drawn.

*DEI – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*





**Figure 15. D&I Charter of Peel: Tool overview**

As Figure 15 demonstrates, the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* consists of 43 indicators across eight different sections. However, the D&I Charter of Peel elaborates that

not all the eight sections are intended for all types of organizations to complete. In fact, only sections 1 to 5 are meant to be used by any kind of organization since sections 6 to 8 are focused on service-oriented organizations such as banks, health care providers, or educational institutions only. Therefore, the following analysis of the tool’s themes excludes sections 6 to 8 as this thesis evaluates D&I tools that are as broad as possible.

<p><b>Planning &amp; Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mission, vision &amp; strategy</li> <li>○ Policies</li> <li>○ Action plan</li> <li>○ Role responsibilities</li> <li>○ Financial funds</li> <li>○ Evaluation</li> <li>○ Reporting</li> <li>○ Support of D&amp;I Charter</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organization Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership commitment</li> <li>○ Employee feedback collection</li> <li>○ Complaint management</li> <li>○ Communication material</li> <li>○ Cultural &amp; religious tolerance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Human Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advertising</li> <li>○ Recruiting</li> <li>○ Performance assessment</li> <li>○ Demographic assessment</li> <li>○ Needs assessment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Education &amp; Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training (mandatory &amp; ongoing)</li> <li>○ Professional development opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Capacity Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advocacy</li> <li>○ Partnerships</li> <li>○ Resource &amp; best practice sharing</li> </ul>

**Figure 16. D&I Charter of Peel: Tool themes**

A look into the themes of the respective sections shows that the D&I Charter of Peel addresses DEI very thoroughly and holistically. The five categories of the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* are clearly separated and cover very diverse domains. In contrast to the previously analyzed tool by the Centre for Global Inclusion, however, this tool only possesses one level of categorization again. The categories of the tool are presented separately, and the D&I Charter of Peel does not create any relationship between them.

When it comes to the perspective towards DEI, the D&I Charter of Peel takes a slightly different approach in the tool as compared to in the provided background information. As mentioned earlier, the Charter has the vision to achieve equity of all levels within the Peel Region but does not communicate it on their website and in supporting documents with urgency. In the tool, however, organizations rate indicators that represent best practices that need to be fulfilled in order to embody the commitments that are outlined in the actual D&I Charter. Therefore, I would assume that an organization that scores low in the self-assessment, potentially feels intrinsically motivated to improve their DEI measures. It is for this reason that I would describe the D&I Charter of Peel’s approach to diversity as a hybrid. The Charter treats the topic delicately and does not address the issue too strongly, while

indirectly communicating a need for improvement through the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool*.

To conclude, the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* is an instrument that emerged in a very local context. The D&I Charter of Peel developed the tool to achieve full equity inside the Peel Region. What I find striking about the tool is that its development process is based on an already existing tool from a neighboring region. This showcases an insightful example of best practice and resource sharing in the D&I field. The quick analysis of York Region's tool also revealed another highly interesting insight, i.e., providing organizations with relevant references at the end of each section. Lastly, the *DEI organizational self-assessment tool* stands out for including a template for upcoming action steps at the end of their tool.

#### **4.6 Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network**

##### **– A tool to foster diversification and accomplish health equity in the U.S.**

###### ***Background Information***

As previously discussed in Section 4.2, the U.S. population is growing increasingly diverse and many companies face uncertainty on how to address diversity within their organizations. The Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTCC) Network is another organization, just like the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), that assists U.S. companies in their process of becoming more diverse. As can be deduced from the name of both organizations, however, the MHTTC Network serves a fundamentally different clientele than the AICPA.

The MHTTC Network is rooted in the field of mental health services. Among other things, the organization develops resources, provides trainings, and advances alliances on a regional and national level (MHTTC Network, 2020). Mental illness prevention, treatment and recovery support are in the focus of these services (MHTTC Network, 2020). But the MHTTC Network also highlights the importance of a diverse workforce for mental health organizations and has developed a tool for that purpose. The tool is called *Assessing workforce diversity: A tool for mental health organizations on the path to health equity*<sup>5</sup> and serves as a diversity self-assessment tool for mental health organizations. As the name of the tool indicates, the MHTTC Network perceives the current situation of mental health services

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<sup>5</sup> For reasons of simplicity, the abbreviated name *Assessing workforce diversity tool* will be used throughout the thesis.

as inequitable. The Network argues that there are “clear disparities in mental health access, service and outcomes across diverse populations” (MHTTC Network, 2018; p. 1).

To tackle these disparities, the MHTTC Network highlights the importance of increasing workforce diversity. For this purpose, the MHTTC Network refers to a recent statement by the American Psychiatric Association in the introductory paragraphs of their tool. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2017), gender, ethnic, and sexual minorities repeatedly suffer from poor mental health access, services, and outcomes. As decisive factors for these disparities the American Psychiatric Association (2017) lists, e.g., the discrimination these minorities face, a lack of awareness about mental health in their communities, or simply the inaccessibility of high-quality mental health services. As anyone can imagine, these disparities could be drastically reduced if the staff of mental health providers would reflect the diversity of the community that they serve. Therefore, increasing workforce diversity is a crucial process to achieve equity across mental health services.

Ultimately, the *Assessing workforce diversity tool* was developed to encourage mental health organizations to diversify their workforce and assess their implementation of workforce diversity strategies (MHTTC Network, 2018). The tool was launched in 2018 and represents one of several initiatives of the MHTCC Network (MHTTC Network, 2020). The MHTCC Network itself was established in the same year; the program is timely bounded for five years, however (ATTC Network, 2018). Information about a possible extension or alternative course of the project after the five years are not available.

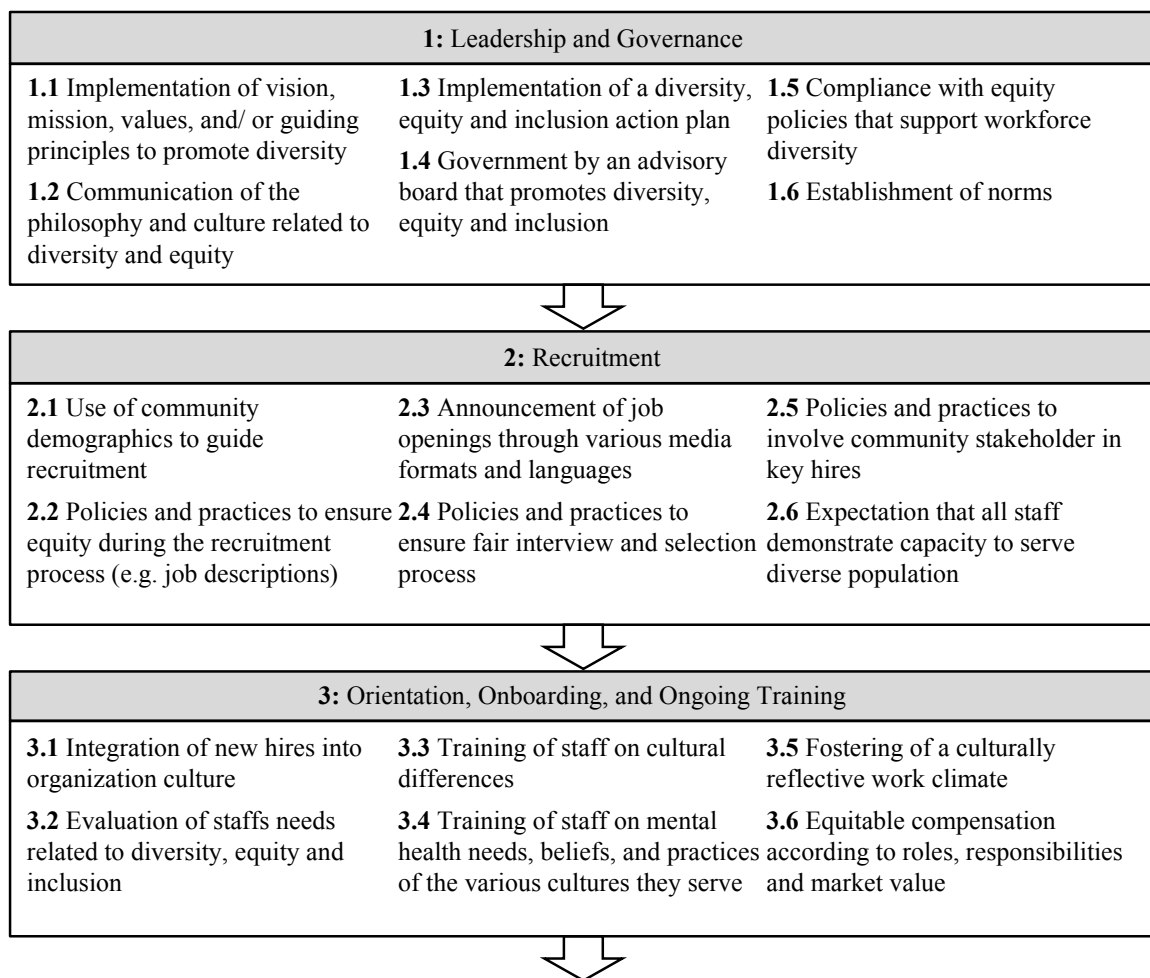
All the MHTTC Network’s services, including the *Assessing workforce diversity tool*, are offered free of charge. Resources like the tool can be downloaded in the form of PDF documents directly from the Network’s website. The reason for the services being offered at no cost can potentially be explained by the organization’s sponsorship as the MHTTC Network is state funded. The sole financial sponsor of the project is the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which is a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (MHTTC Network, 2020).

The previous paragraphs clearly demonstrate what issues the MHTTC Network combats. The *Assessing workforce diversity tool* aligns with the organization’s vision to achieve more equitable mental health services for the increasingly diverse U.S. population. With the tool, mental health organizations assess their current performance with regards to diversity actions and are encouraged to further diversify their workforce to ultimately mitigate the

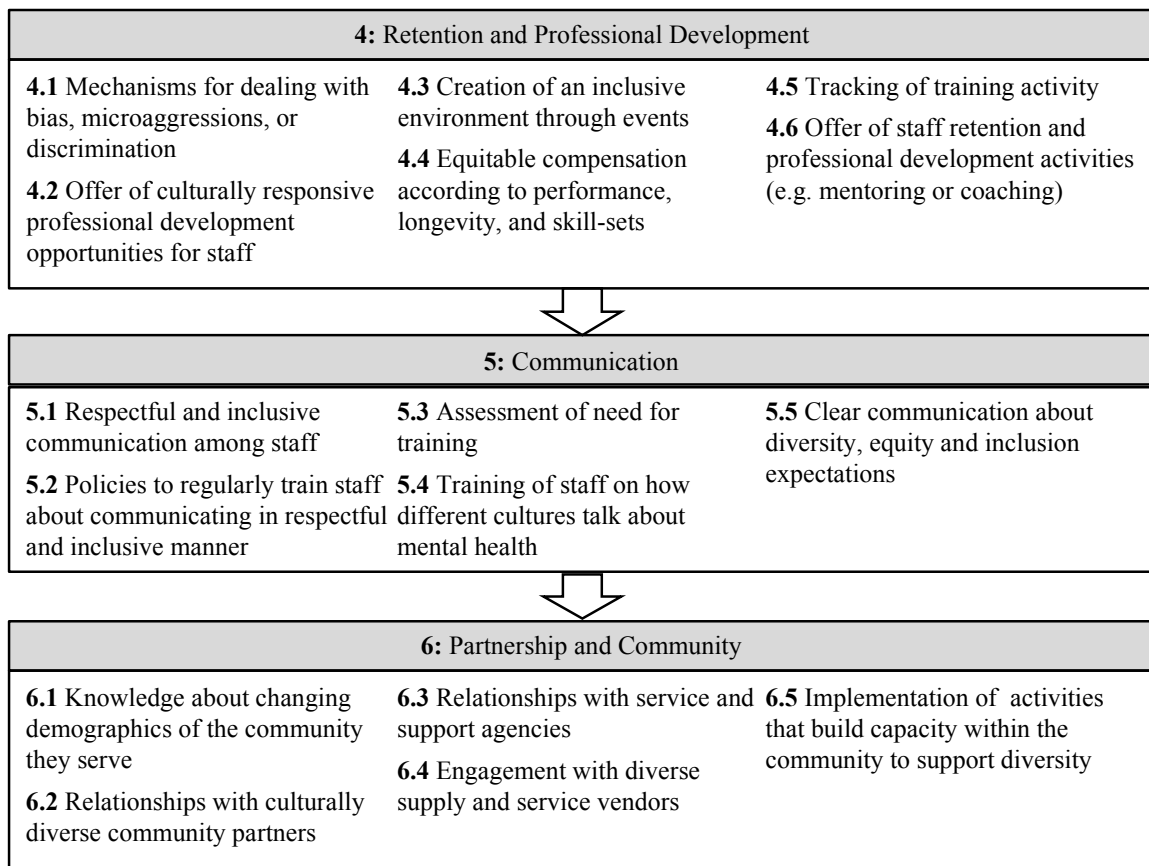
aforementioned disparities between minorities and majorities. Therefore, it can be concluded that the MHTTC Network approaches diversity from a social justice or needs perspective.

***Analysis of the Tool***

To evaluate the extent to which an organization is implementing workforce diversity strategies, the MHTTC Network defined six core areas of analysis. The *Assessing workforce diversity tool* covers the following topics: (1) Leadership and Governance, (2) Recruitment, (3) Orientation, Onboarding, and Ongoing Training, (4) Retention and Professional Development, (5) Communication, and (6) Partnership and Community Engagement. Across these six sections, 34 general statements are evenly distributed. For an overview of all statements, please refer to Figure 17.







**Figure 17. Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network: Tool overview**

Participants are asked to indicate the accuracy of each statement for their own organization through a 4-point likelihood Likert scale, which ranges from ‘Not True’ to ‘Always True’. As stated by the MHTTC Network in the instructions of the tool, organizations, most commonly mental health organizations, should always respond to the statements in terms of how the current D&I situation in their organization is. Of course, this is done to their best possible knowledge.

The instructions of the tool also elaborate what type of organization should complete the *Assessing workforce diversity tool* and what kind of employees should be involved. According to the MHTTC Network, the target group of the tool are organizations that provide mental health services. While I understand that this is the desired target group of the tool since the tool was developed in that context, I do believe that the tool could also be used by organizations of other industries. That is because only two of the 34 statements of the tool are mental health specific (statement 3.4 and 5.4). Therefore, I am convinced that the statements are general enough to be applied to other industries.

Within each organization, the MHTTC Network recommends conducting the assessment with a team that incorporates staff from all levels of the organization. After completing the

*Assessing workforce diversity tool*, this team should then review the findings, identify strong- and weak-performing areas, and formulate concrete action steps to improve the weak-performing areas. For this purpose, the MHHTC Network has attached additional resources to the tool, which support organizations in this process. Given the fact that the tool is provided in the form of a PDF document, just like the tool of the Centre for Global Inclusion and D&I Charter of Peel, the *Assessing workforce diversity tool* does not offer a performance report to the organizations. Since the tool is completed “offline” and there is therefore no interaction between the MHHTC Network and the participant, this is simply not possible.

<p><b>Leadership and Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mission, vision &amp; values</li> <li>○ D&amp;I philosophy &amp; culture</li> <li>○ Action plan</li> <li>○ Advisory board</li> <li>○ Policies</li> <li>○ Norms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Retention and Professional Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complaint management</li> <li>○ Professional development opportunities</li> <li>○ Work environment</li> <li>○ Tracking of training activity</li> <li>○ Retention measures</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demographics</li> <li>○ Policies</li> <li>○ Interview process</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Policies</li> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Expectations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Orientation, Onboarding, and Ongoing Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Onboarding</li> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Work climate</li> <li>○ Compensation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Partnership and Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community partners</li> <li>○ Service &amp; support agents</li> <li>○ Supply &amp; service vendors</li> <li>○ Partnerships</li> <li>○ Community growth activities</li> </ul>

**Figure 18. Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network: Tool themes**

As Figure 18 shows, the *Assessing workforce diversity tool* also evaluates D&I very extensively and from many facets. It becomes clear that many of the themes and sections listed above overlap with those of other analyzed tools. However, I feel it is worth mentioning that interestingly there are some themes within the *Assessing workforce diversity tool*, such as Training or Policies, that are evaluated in multiple sections.

Similar to some of the other analyzed diversity assessment tools, the statements of the *Assessing workforce diversity tool* are phrased positively, in a sense like best practices. For example, the statement evaluating an organization’s compensation practices goes:

*Our organization ensures compensation that is fair and equitable, according to roles, responsibilities, and market value.*

By applying a Likert-scale to a best practice statement, organizations who have to select a lower score or a slightly negative response, might then feel uncomfortable. In that way, the MHHTC Network indirectly promotes the urgency of the issue even stronger. Thus, the

design of the *Assessing workforce diversity tool* aligns perfectly with the vision of the MHTTC Network that is communicated by the Network in many other forms: To offer more equitable mental health services by increasing workforce diversity.

To sum up, the *Assessing workforce diversity tool* was developed by the MHTTC Network to foster the diversification of mental health organizations. Hereby, the MHTTC Network actively works towards achieving equity across mental health services in the U.S. This vision is explicitly communicated by the Network both in the tool and on the website. Ultimately, this clear social justice perspective towards diversity makes this tool special.

#### **4.7 Red Acoge**

##### **– A tool to evaluate the diversity management practices of Spanish companies**

###### ***Background Information***

Cultural diversity and migration have been on Spain's agenda for years. According to the Spanish National Institute of Statistics, in 2019 10.4% of the country's population were immigrants; a large proportion of them stems from the Ibero-American region (INE, 2019). This high percentage is not only due to the refugee crisis in 2015, but dates back to decades of immigration to Spain, in which many foreigners sought economic or political stability, for example (Romero-Valiente, 2018). That managing cultural diversity can be a challenging task for organizations, has already been addressed extensively throughout this thesis. However, as can be observed with some of the previously described tools, it is not uncommon for a country's government to assist organizations with their challenges related to diversity management.

This is also the case for Spain. To ensure that Spain leverages its culturally diverse workforce successfully, the Spanish Government commenced a project in 2008 called *Sensitize: Sensitization and measurement of the cultural diversity management in companies*<sup>6</sup> (Sensitize) (La Vanguardia, 2017). Its main goal is to promote policies that integrate diversity as a key factor in generating value in the workplace (La Vanguardia, 2017). *Sensitize* is co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Spanish Ministry of Employment and Social Security, and steered by the federation Red Acoge, which advocates the rights of immigrants and refugees in Spain since 1991 (Red Acoge, n.d.).

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<sup>6</sup> Translated from Spanish.

As part of the *Sensitize* project, Red Acoge developed three major services that they currently offer: (1) a management self-assessment tool that enables companies to design, implement, and assess D&I practices and policies, (2) a D&I index that measures progress in diversity management, and (3) a collaborative network, which allows organizations committed to diversity management to share ideas, experiences, and initiatives (Red Acoge, n.d.). For this analysis, both the self-assessment tool and the D&I index could have been interesting to evaluate. However, both services are, unfortunately, not publicly available and hence, did not fulfil the case inclusion criteria. Nevertheless, I was able to find a relevant publicly available resource that was also developed as part of the *Sensitize* project and is linked to the self-assessment tool and index.

This resource is a report on D&I with the name *Analysis of diversity management (DM) in the practice of Spanish companies*<sup>7</sup>. The report consists of a survey and the results of qualitative interviews that were conducted with 41 Spanish companies between 2013 and 2014. In 2015, Red Acoge then published the report, in which the federation drew conclusions, e.g., about how companies conceive diversity management in practice, to what extent they evaluate their diversity management performance, or what their overall attitude towards the topic is. Further, in the introduction of the report, Red Acoge specifies the relevance of the conducted survey and interviews. That is, in fact, that they both served as fundamental sources that contributed to the development of their self-assessment tool and D&I index. Therefore, I believe the survey is of great relevance, despite the fact that it cannot be taken by organizations anymore. (Red Acoge, 2015)

One small detail that I positively noticed about the federation Red Acoge is that they not only promote cultural diversity to other organizations but demonstrate commitment themselves. They do so by being signatory of the Spanish Charter of Diversity (Red Acoge, n.d.).

The aforementioned paragraphs briefly highlight in what context the *Sensitize* project, and thus the survey that is being analyzed, was developed. Red Acoge adopts a support function for Spanish companies to manage culturally diverse employees and more generally raises awareness for D&I. Ultimately, it becomes very clear that the federation actively promotes the business case of diversity and intends to encourage organizations to reflect on their

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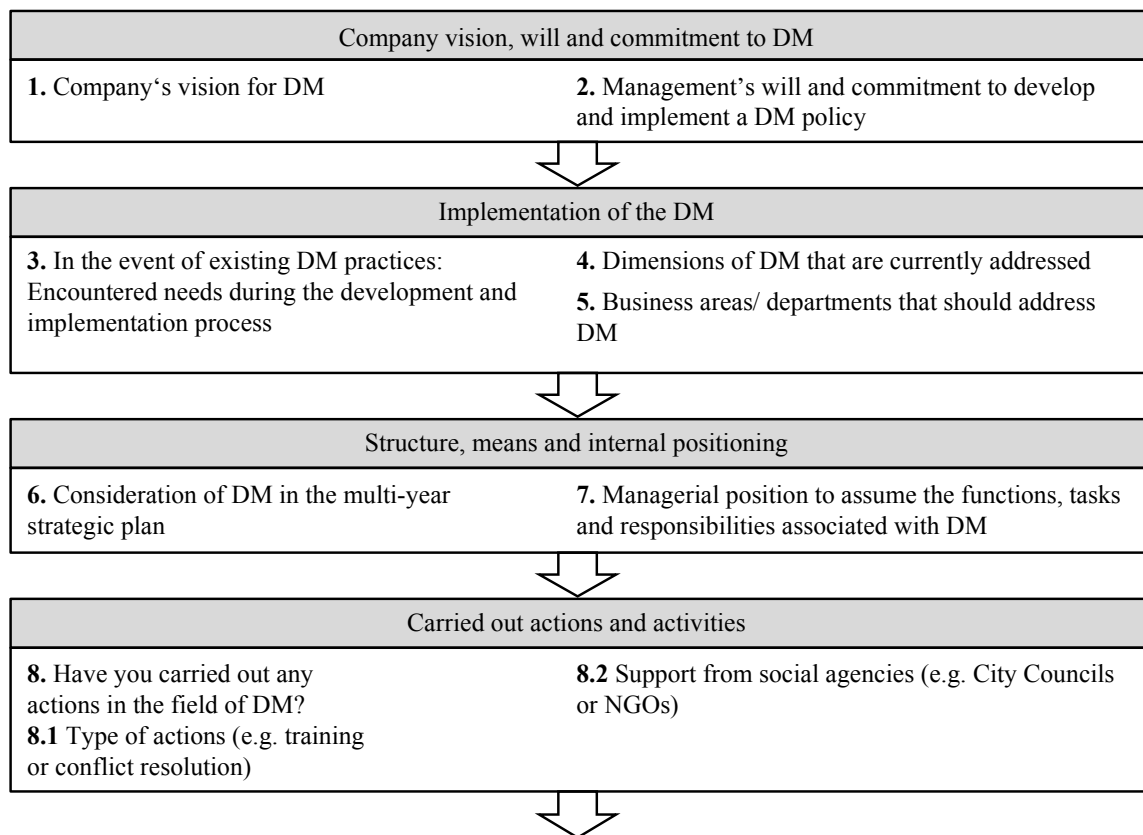
<sup>7</sup> Translated from Spanish.

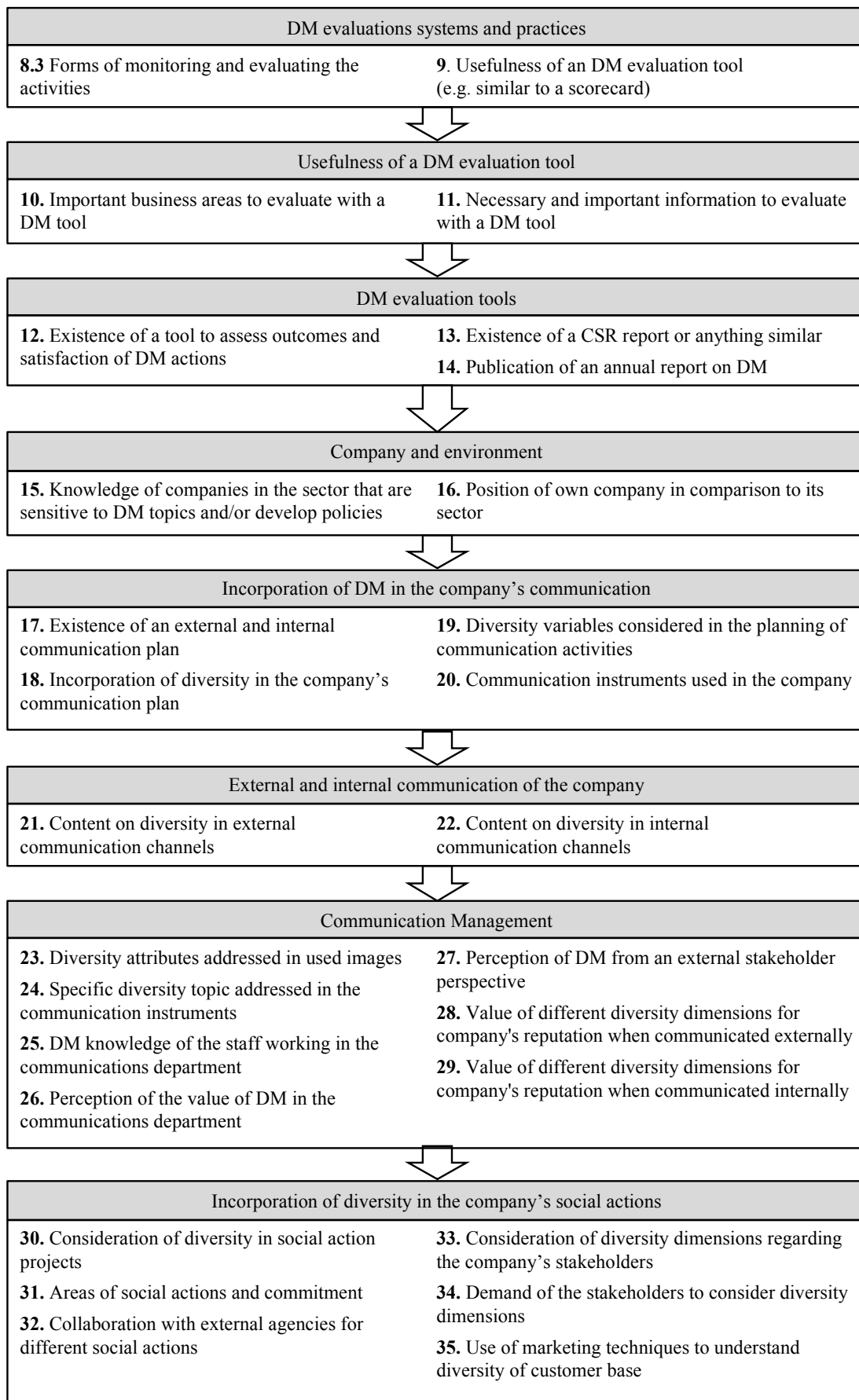
diversity management practices by demonstrating the potential benefits of D&I. Whether this approach to diversity is reflected in the survey too, will be assessed in the next section.

***Analysis of the Tool***

The results of the study on the *Analysis of DM in the practice of Spanish companies* are structured inside the report into 14 different categories. With the term ‘category’ I refer to the different headings displayed on the top of each report page. Under each category, Red Acoge lists some questions that were asked in the survey for the respective category and interprets these paired with findings from the qualitative interviews. In total, the report entails 35 survey questions across the 14 categories. Of course, I do not know whether the questions were actually asked in the order that they are listed in the report and if the survey originally encompassed more questions. However, I decided to maintain the original structure of the report for the overview of the survey’s questions in Figure 19. Aspects of the qualitative interviews will not be included in this analysis, which is why they are not presented in the figure.

DM – Diversity Management





**Figure 19. Red Acoge: Tool overview**

As mentioned earlier, the *Analysis of DM in the practice of Spanish companies* is a study that had been conducted between 2013 and 2014. This is important to reiterate because all the other six tools presented so far are services that are currently still available. The fact that Red Acoge's survey is closed grants different kind of insights, however. For example, Red Acoge provides a concrete profile of the participating companies as compared to an intended target group that is described in the other diversity assessment tools. The 41 Spanish companies that completed the survey and participated in the qualitative interviews characterize by being medium- to large-sized (>150 employees in most cases) and by coming from very different sectors. The contact persons from each company, and thus the respondents of the survey, were employees in management positions in Human Resources, Corporate Social Responsibility or Communication departments.

Another aspect which is interesting from the perspective that the survey has already been closed, is the topic of performance reports. In some of the presented diversity assessment tools, performance reports are provided to the participating organizations. While Red Acoge provides no information about whether organization received an individual report upon completion of the assessment, organizations did receive a comparison of their response with other participants. That is in the form of the published *Analysis of DM in the practice of Spanish companies* report itself, which presents the survey responses of all 41 participating Spanish companies.

Throughout their survey, Red Acoge only used one form of response type. All of the 35 survey questions were list-questions, meaning that they could be answered by selecting one, and sometimes multiple, response options. Personally, I am surprised that Red Acoge did not make more out of the opportunities of an online survey. For instance, the federation could have included scale-questions, as is the case with the surveys of Business Finland and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. However, I must concede that I do not have enough insights into the development process of the tool at hand. Perhaps there is a concrete reason (e.g. consistency) why Red Acoge only used one response type throughout the entire survey.

During the theme analysis of the survey, I realized that some categories assessed fairly similar topics. Therefore, I merged and dropped some of the 14 categories to present the themes of the survey as concise as possible.

<b>Vision &amp; Will and Commitment for policies</b>	<b>DM &amp; Social actions</b>
<b>Internal DM Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stakeholders</li> <li>○ Partnerships</li> <li>○ Diversity variables</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Diversity variables</li> <li>○ Business areas/ departments</li> <li>○ Responsibilities</li> </ul>	<b>DM Activities</b>
<b>Communication management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Conflict management</li> <li>○ Compensation management</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication plan</li> <li>○ Diversity variables</li> <li>○ Media</li> <li>○ Communication instruments</li> <li>○ DM knowledge</li> </ul>	<b>DM Evaluation</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Practices</li> <li>○ Tools</li> <li>○ Support documents</li> </ul>

**Figure 20. Red Acoge: Tool themes**

What is, once again, directly noticeable in the themes of the survey, is that Red Acoge addresses diversity management in a holistic approach. Similar to the other presented tools, the survey addresses themes like vision and commitment, communication management, or training activities, for example. However, one distinguishing aspect that caught my attention during the theme analysis is Red Acoge’s detailed emphasis on diversity variables inside the tool. How frequent the diversity variables are addressed becomes visible in the detailed tool overview in Figure 20. What I perceive even more interesting than the frequency, is which diversity variables are integrated in Red Acoge’s survey. Whenever Red Acoge asks about diversity, the federation addresses four diversity variables in their survey: gender, age, disability, and cultural origin or nationality. I find this conspicuous as none of the other tools addresses diversity variables in such decomposed form. Instead, typically only one variable is addressed or, more commonly, diversity is referred to as a whole.

The perspective from which diversity management is addressed inside the survey differs from Red Acoge’s approach represented in their overall communication and the *Sensitize* project. In the survey, diversity is not approached from a business case perspective. Instead, I perceived the questions of the survey as rather neutrally phrased. Only in some questions I detected a similar phenomenon to what I already described in previous tool analysis: Questions were positively phrased, which means that organizations that do not yet have an advanced diversity management had to select negative answers.

In conclusion, the *Analysis of DM in the practice of Spanish companies* is a report that presents the findings of conducted qualitative interviews and an already closed survey. The context of the *Sensitize* project lies in cultural diversity, but interestingly, Red Acoge addresses numerous diversity variables inside the report. This decomposed evaluation of



diversity variables represents a clear distinguishing factor to the other case tools. The federation Red Acoge itself stands out for demonstrating their commitment to D&I by being signatory of the Spanish Charter of Diversity. Furthermore, it caught my attention that Red Acoge uses a neutral approach to diversity in the report, contrary to the subtle communication of diversity as a need, which is employed by most of the case tools.

#### **4.8 Ryerson University Diversity Institute**

##### **– A tool to evaluate diversity and inclusion policies and practices particularly related to gender diversity**

###### ***Background Information***

It is widely known that equitable gender diversity continues to be a globally unsolved issue. The following example of Canada shows that countries all over the world still have a long way to go until reaching full equity between women and men. Because even in a highly developed country like Canada, women are unevenly represented in leadership positions, despite the fact that in some industries they account for the majority of a company's workforce. In Canada's finance sector, which together with the insurance sector represents the most progressed industries with regards to the percentage of women board directors, this unequal distribution of women and men is visible (The Conference Board of Canada, 2018). Although women represent almost 60% of the workforce in financial companies, they only occupy less than 40% of board positions (Canadian Bankers Association, 2020).

In the context of assessing gender diversity in Canadian companies, an instrument named *Diversity Audit Tool* was created in 2009 by the Ryerson University's Diversity Institute in partnership with the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance Women in Technology. The tool was created as part of a project on increasing women's participation in the information and communications technology sector. However, it was designed in such a general way that the tool had been applied to numerous other Canadian sectors (e.g. financial services or education) since its development. Therefore, the *Diversity Audit Tool* serves as assessment instrument for organizations of any industry. (Cukier et al., 2012)

There are three characteristics of the *Diversity Audit Tool* that particularly caught my attention. Firstly, the way how the tool was published stands out. In contrast to all the other case tools analyzed in this thesis, the *Diversity Audit Tool* is not promoted in a specially written report or on a separate website. Instead, it is published inside an academic paper, in which it was used as a methodology to benchmark D&I practices of Canadian financial

companies. This paper does not represent the first publication of the tool, however, as it focuses on the financial sector and not the information and communication technology sector. The original publication from 2009, which is also cited inside the present paper, is unfortunately not available free of charge. (Cukier et al., 2012)

The second special aspect of the tool became clear to me when I took a closer look at the authors of the article. Both the original publication of the *Diversity Audit Tool* and the paper from 2012 were predominantly written by one scholar: Wendy Cukier. As it turns out, Cukier is one of Canada's leading experts in innovation and diversity and also the founder of the Ryerson University Diversity Institute (Ryerson University, n.d.-a). She mainly works as a consultant but is also very active in academia. Both she, as an individual, and the Institute have been instrumental in advancing the issue of diversity in Canada through countless research papers and projects in recent years (Ryerson University, n.d.-b). Given this extensive involvement of Cukier in the development of the tool, I can thus conclude that the *Diversity Audit Tool* stands out through its strong scholarly foundation.

The last aspect that surprised me about the tool relates to the provided background information on its development. Interestingly, neither the paper by Cukier et al. (2012) nor the Ryerson Diversity Institute provide comprehensive information on the development of the *Diversity Audit Tool* beyond the information mentioned above. While it is possible that the development processes might be emphasized stronger in the original publication of the tool, I was still surprised about how little information is provided on the Institutes website, for example.

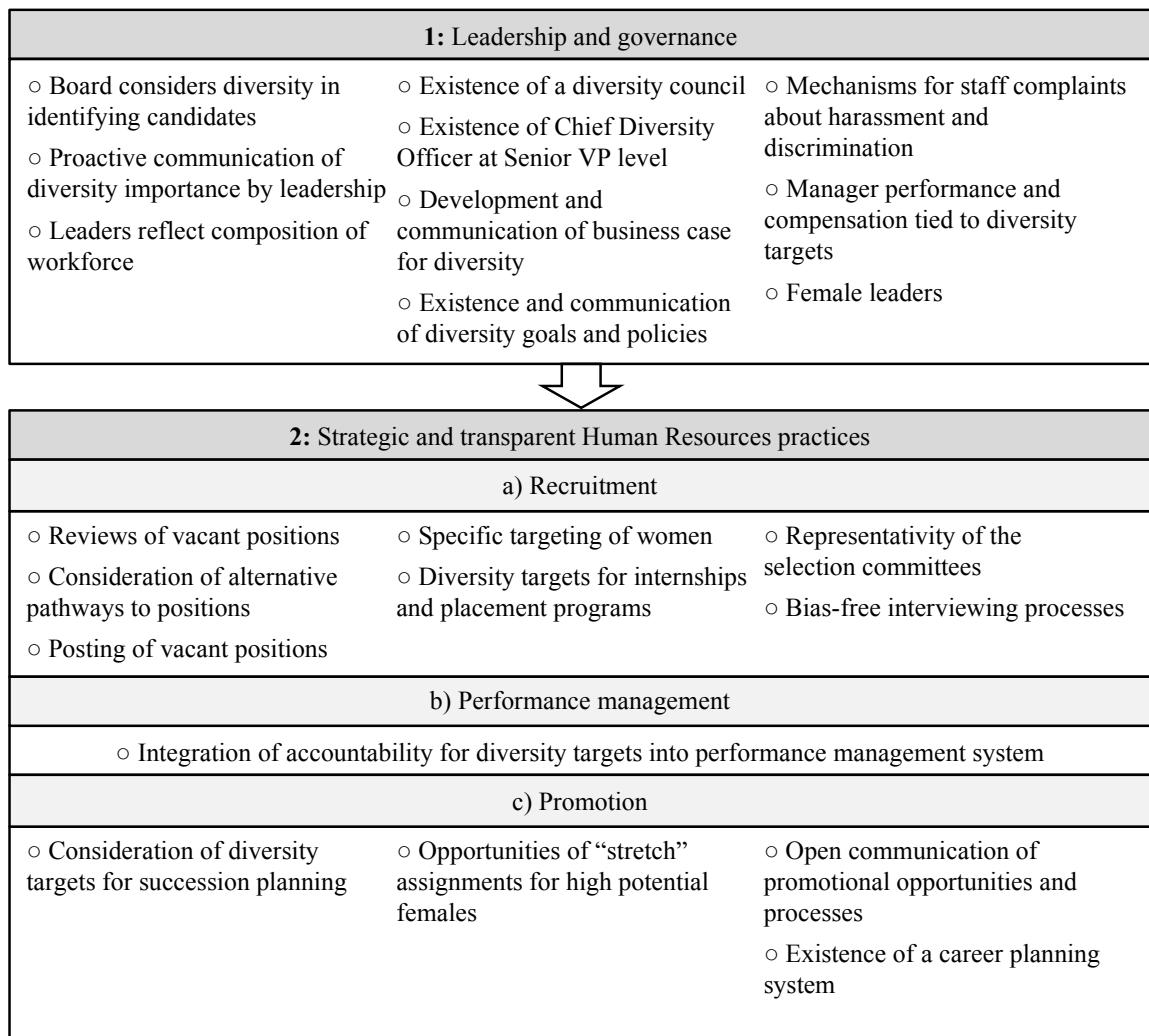
Given the limited information about the *Diversity Audit Tool* it is hard to determine with full certainty what issues the tool intends to solve and what approach to diversity the Ryerson Diversity Institute takes. Based on the available information about the tool inside the publication, I would argue that diversity is definitely addressed rather from a needs than benefits perspective. Outside the tool's context, however, the Ryerson Diversity Institute promotes on their website D&I as a key-factor to Canada's competitiveness (Ryerson University, n.d.-b). The next section will look into the components of the tool and provide some clarifications on how diversity is actually approached in the *Diversity Audit Tool*.

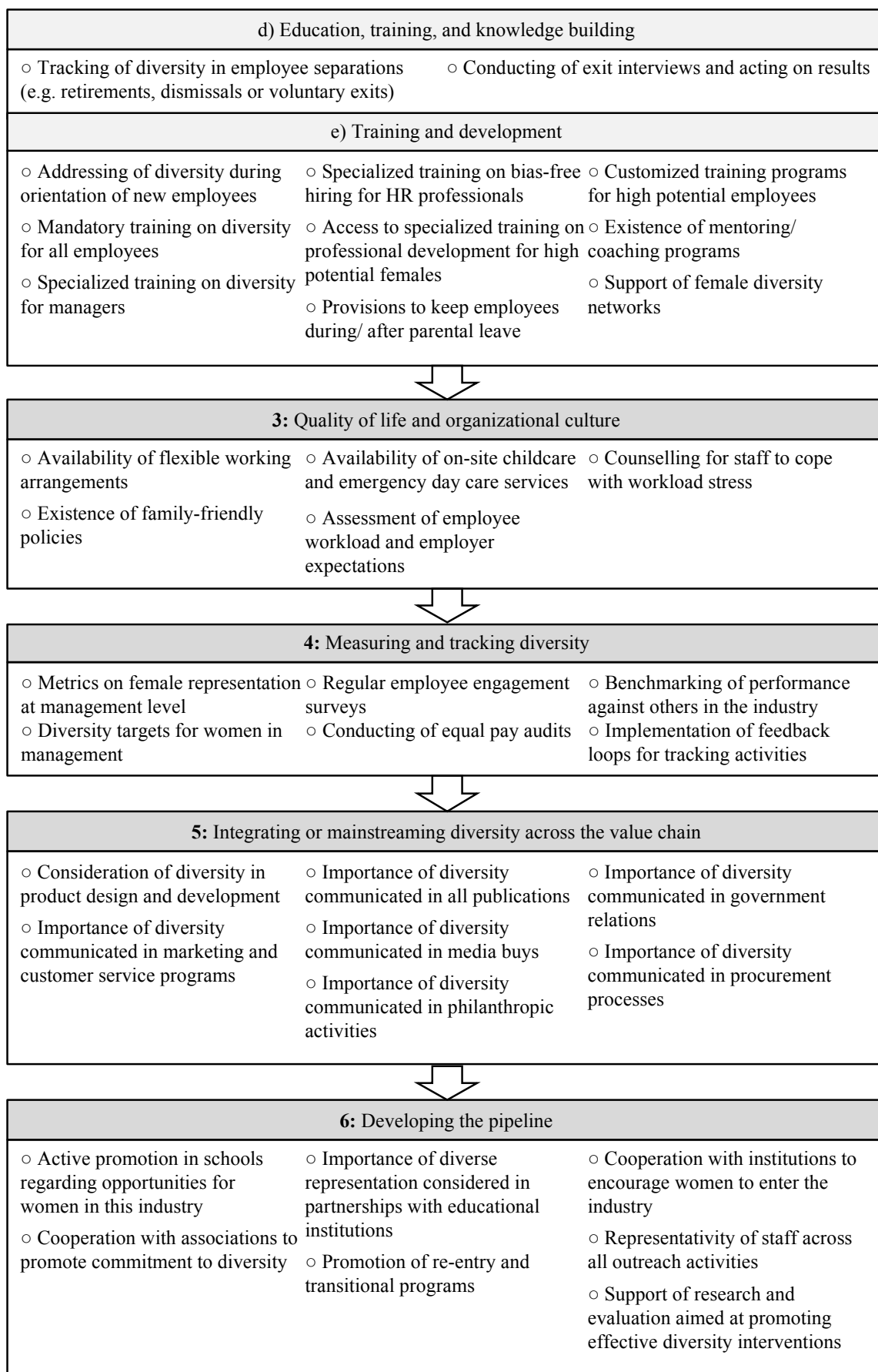
### ***Analysis of the Tool***

The *Diversity Audit Tool* is divided into six categories. Across these categories, a total of 58 questions are evaluated. It is important to clarify at this point that the *Diversity Audit Tool*

does not fulfill the purpose of a self-assessment tool. Instead, the organizations that were evaluated in the academic paper were analyzed through an assessment conducted by a third party – the authors of the article. Since all 58 questions are phrased as Yes/No-questions, Cukier et al. only filled in the questions where the organizations had active efforts and initiatives to show. To verify the affirmative responses, they listed evidence for these efforts and initiatives next to the question.

This outside assessment by a third-party demonstrates that the *Diversity Audit Tool* is not an empty template but, in its present form, an already filled out tool. However, this does not mean that organizations cannot benefit from the tool anyway. As Figure 21 demonstrates, the sole overview of the tool’s questions can serve as a valuable source already. And since the questions are not scored in any way and the organization therefore does not receive a performance report, I believe that organizations could still utilize the *Diversity Audit Tool* as a self-assessment tool.





**Figure 21. Ryerson University Diversity Institute: Tool overview**

Even though the target group of the *Diversity Audit Tool* is not explicitly specified by Cukier et al., the conducted assessments by the authors permit an assumption on what kind of organization could potentially be evaluated by the tool. Cukier et al. (2012) state that the *Diversity Audit Tool* has been applied to numerous sectors. In the original publication of the tool, organizations of the information and communications technology sector were assessed. The present paper conducted the evaluation of three large Canadian banks. Therefore, I can safely conclude that the *Diversity Audit Tool* is suitable for any industry. Only about the size of the companies that are typically assessed by the tool, I can make no statement as I have this information solely on the present article.

With its 58 questions, the *Diversity Audit Tool* represents one of the most detailed diversity assessment tools of this case study. To keep the following theme overview Figure 22 as simple as possible, I therefore had to exclude several questions. However, despite this exclusion it is still visible that the Ryerson University Diversity Institute managed to approach diversity from a very holistic perspective.

<p><b>Leadership and governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication</li> <li>○ Representative composition</li> <li>○ Diversity council</li> <li>○ Role responsibilities</li> <li>○ Business case for diversity</li> <li>○ Diversity goals and practices</li> <li>○ Complaint management</li> <li>○ Compensation management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organization culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work-life balance offers</li> <li>○ Counselling</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Measuring and tracking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Metrics</li> <li>○ Diversity targets</li> <li>○ Employee engagement surveys</li> <li>○ Benchmarking against industry</li> <li>○ Feedback loops</li> </ul>
<p><b>Human Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Recruitment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ E.g. representative selection committee</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) Performance management</li> <li>c) Promotion               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ E.g. transparent communication</li> </ul> </li> <li>d) Education, training, and knowledge building</li> <li>e) Training and development               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ E.g. bias-free hiring training or mentoring</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Diversity across the value chain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Product design and development</li> <li>○ Marketing and customer service programs</li> <li>○ Government relations</li> <li>○ Supply chain</li> <li>○ Media</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Proactive diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promotion in schools</li> <li>○ Cooperation and partnerships</li> <li>○ Research support</li> </ul>

**Figure 22. Ryerson University Diversity Institute: Tool themes**

One aspect that stands out is that the *Diversity Audit Tool* categorized its questions under the ‘Human Resources’ into additional categories. Even though the tool only possesses this two-level categorization in one of its six sections and is thus not as extensive as the categorization in the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks, this still represents a clear distinguishing factor compared to the other six case tools.

Just like some of the other tools, the *Diversity Audit Tool* addresses diversity from a different angle inside the tool as compared to in other sources. As elaborated earlier, the Ryerson University Diversity Institute promotes diversity related issues on their website by highlighting the benefits connected to it. In the tool itself, however, this perspective is not at all represented. Given the fact that the questions are of a Yes/No-format, the *Diversity Audit Tool* indirectly transmits the necessity to address diversity. That is because naturally organizations become aware where actions are required, if certain questions are answered with 'No'. The only exception for highlighting the benefits of diversity in the 58 questions of the tool is perhaps the question in the 'Leadership and Government' section that evaluates if an organization developed and implemented the business case for diversity. But even here, once again, organizations rather realize where they are in need of improvements than that the benefits of diversity are emphasized.

In summary, the *Diversity Audit Tool* was developed in the context of gender diversity but serves to evaluate D&I practices of all kind. Interestingly, the tool is not a self-assessment tool but, to my knowledge, has only been completed by third parties. This represents a clear distinguishing factor to the other case tools. A scholarly foundation defines the development process of the *Diversity Audit Tool*, since the tool was developed by scholars and published inside an academic article. While the tool stands out for this peculiar publication format, it comes at the cost of providing extremely little background information on the development process and intended use of the tool. Lastly, it is worth highlighting that the *Diversity Audit Tool* stands out by classifying some of their categories into two-levels. This showcases that the Ryerson University Diversity Institute partly puts the underlying themes of their tool into relation to each other and does not solely present them as silos.

## **5 CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

This cross-case analysis compares the case tools of this study and identifies differences and similarities between them. For this study, this cross-case analysis is combined with the discussion chapter. This means that the empirical findings, both from the diversity assessment tools as well as from the expert interviews, are directly linked to the findings of the literature review and critically discussed.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, the findings of the cross-case analysis and discussion are presented. Thereafter, I introduce a model that illustrates relevant domains to be included in a holistic diversity assessment tool. Lastly, due to Business Finland's special role in this research, I present a separate evaluation of the Talent Boost Index and derive recommendations how the tool could be improved.

### **5.1 Findings of the Cross-case Analysis**

The comparison of the case tools demonstrates that all the tools possess unique features. Especially the context in which each tool emerged varies greatly since the tools are embedded in local projects. This suggests that a universally applicable diversity assessment tool does not exist – at least no among the case tools. However, the analysis also reveals great overlaps between them. For example, most tools are suitable for a broad range of organizations, and all of the tools focus on an assessment of surface-level diversity attributes. Similar to the within-case analysis, the presentation of the cross-case analysis findings roughly follows the structure of the predefined analysis parameters (see Chapter 3.3). Additionally, some findings that emerged during the literature review and analysis of the expert interviews are discussed.

#### **5.1.1 Background Information**

In this section, I address background information concerning the diversity assessment case tools and discusses these in the light of the findings of the literature review and expert interviews. Five different areas are covered here: (1) organization type & origin, (2) development process, (3) publication dates, (4) context & purpose, and (5) perspectives to diversity.

### ***Organization type & origin***

The organizations behind the case tools are mostly public institutions or organizations that are funded by national governments. This finding does not surprise me, however, since one of the case selection criteria was that the tools are publicly available and free of charge. Assuming that private companies such as consultancies also possess diversity assessment tools, it would be reasonable that they might be less interested in sharing their tools for free. Ultimately, this strong focus of my analysis on tools that were developed by public institutions raises the question whether tools from private companies differ from the analyzed ones, and if so, how.

The geographical origin of the organizations that developed the case tools aligns with the Anglo-Saxon dominance of diversity literature (Jonsen et al., 2011; Roberson, 2019). Most of the eight case tools stem from an Anglo-Saxon country, with three tools from the U.S., two from Canada, and one from Australia. The two exceptions represent the tools by Business Finland (Finish) and Red Acoge (Spanish). Once again, I believe that this distribution was partly influenced by my case search and selection process, in this case, the use of English search terms. Through the English language search, I was only able to locate Anglo-Saxon tools. Business Finland's tool did not show up when using the typical search words (see Chapter 3.2.1), and Red Acoge's tool was found when using Spanish search words. However, as with the type of organization behind the tool mentioned above, this strong dominance in terms of geographical location also raises the question how tools from other regions of the world might differ.

### ***Development process***

Most of the organizations elaborate either in the tool or in support documents how the development process of their instrument took place. There are three different characteristics that became evident. Firstly, some tools were not created from scratch but are modified versions. This can be that their tool was either created on the basis of an existing tool of another organization (e.g. AHRC; D&I Charter of Peel) or that it is an updated, follow-up version of their own tool (e.g. AICPA; The Centre for Global Inclusion). Secondly, some tools actively involved scholars and/or diversity and inclusion experts in the development process (e.g. Business Finland; The Centre for Global Inclusion). And thirdly, prior to launching the tool, some organizations conducted a thorough testing of their tools with the intended target audience of the respective tools (e.g. AHRC; Business Finland). As the



examples above show, these three factors are by no means mutually exclusive but, in turn, can coexist to increase the reliability and validity of the tool. I also want to add that for those organizations that did not specify their development process, any of the above characteristics could apply.

When taking a closer look at the literature, an interesting synthesis can be made. Earlier in this thesis, I established that an organization can increase the credibility of their tool by affiliating it with an expert in the field (e.g. scholars) (Ford & Evans, 2002). In fact, some organizations behind the case tools underwent exactly this process. By transparently providing information concerning the development process of their tool, those organizations improved the credibility of their tool. This applies for any of the three characteristics mentioned above.

Since the majority of the case tools elaborated on the development process of their tools, it can be concluded that it is a common practice to openly provide this information to the public. Therefore, I believe that those organizations that have not done so (MHTTC Network; Red Acoge; Ryerson University Diversity Institute), could certainly benefit from sharing insights on the creation process to gain more credibility.

### ***Publication Dates***

All the eight analyzed tool versions were published between 2012 and 2020. However, as mentioned before, multiple tools are based on another, older tool or have been updated over the years. The tool by the Centre for Global Inclusion, for example, dates back to a diversity assessment tool from 1993. What the publication dates of the tools demonstrate is that conducting a diversity assessment is certainly a timely but by no means a new matter. This finding can be verified by the studies on organizational diversity assessment introduced in the literature review. Already in the 1990s there were studies on how to evaluate diversity practices (e.g. Wheeler, 1998). Nonetheless, contrary to the tools, there seems to be lacking literature on diversity assessment in the recent years. The reviews of organizational diversity assessments located for this literature are rather scarce and old.

### ***Context & Purpose***

The biggest differences between the eight case tools can be observed when analyzing the context in which each of the eight case tools emerged. All but one tool were developed for specific local contexts. The tool developed by the AHRC, for example, was created after a study concluded that there was no available instrument to evaluate diversity and anti-

discrimination practices within an Australian context. Business Finland's tool, on the contrary, was created as part of a project to evaluate the readiness of Finnish SMEs to hire foreign talent. The only exception represents the tool of the Centre for Global Inclusion, which was developed in a global scope to serve as educational resource.

Understanding that a diversity assessment tool is usually created in a very specific context is of great importance since it may hinder the use of that tool in a different context. While the content of the tool, meaning the domains and indicators, may of course be highly general, it is likely that in one way or another each diversity assessment tool is somewhat specific to the context in which it emerged. This does, of course, not restrict organizations to still use other diversity assessment tools since they serve at least as helpful inspiration for the development of their own tool.

In a similar vein, it is worth highlighting some considerations from the literature concerning the contextual differences in which a diversity assessment tool is used. Multiple scholars argue that the individual context in which a tool is used also hinders the development of a universal assessment tool (e.g. Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2009; Wheeler, 1996). These include, for example, the industry or size of the organization that uses the tool, as well as legislation or social policies that may vary greatly across regions. Moreover, the tools can diverge significantly in terms of their scope and level of detail (Ford & Evans, 2002).

Regardless of the local contexts from which the tools emerged and what contextual factors influence organizations when using a diversity assessment tool, the case tools do share a similar purpose, however. In one way or another, all of the tools serve as support instruments to help organizations evaluate and improve their diversity efforts in times of increasing diversity. The fact that all of them are offered free of charge underlines this argument. By being offered for free, the organizations encourage that their tools are shared. Ultimately, all tools thus aim to improve the diversity practices in organizations, albeit for their very specific reasons (e.g. fight labor shortage).

### ***Perspectives to Diversity***

Closely related to the context and purpose of the case tools, it is fruitful to analyze the perspectives from which diversity is addressed in each tool. This is important in order to derive conclusions in terms of what "tone" organizations prefer to use in diversity assessment tools.

In Chapter 2.1.4, I defined four different perspectives to diversity: social justice, business case (benefits), needs, and compliance. Before evaluating which of these, and maybe other, perspectives were addressed in each case tool, I need to make one fundamental clarification. In the literature review, these perspectives describe rationales that lead an organization to address the topic of diversity, and potentially conduct a diversity assessment. For my empirical analysis, however, this is different. Given the fact that the diversity assessment tools are services offered to third parties, my analysis of perspectives to diversity did not analyze what rationales drive the participating organizations to address diversity, but instead, from what perspective the tool providers promote and rationalize their own tool.

That being said, my evaluation of diversity perspectives in the within-case analysis was divided into two parts. First, I evaluated the approach each organization takes to diversity based on background information provided about the tool (e.g. website or other support documents). In a second step, I then analyzed the approach to diversity inside the tool as well. Conducting this two-fold evaluation followed my assumption that the perspectives between background information and the actual tool may vary, which is why I perceived it as valuable for the research.

Analyzing the perspectives to diversity from these two lenses did pay off. As it turns out, most tools use different approaches to diversity in their supporting documents as compared to inside the tool. In the supporting documents, organizations promote diversity and their tools mostly from a business case (Red Acoge) and needs perspective (AICPA; Business Finland). Interestingly, some of the organization address both rationales and not exclusively one of them (AHRC; Ryerson University Diversity Institute). Rationalizing diversity from a social justice perspective is only done by two organizations (D&I Charter of Diversity; MHTTC Network). As mentioned in the previous section, one of organizations stands out by promoting their tool from a perspective not yet mentioned before: an educational perspective (the Centre for Global Inclusion). Here, the distinction between tool provider and the organization that completes the tool needs to be taken into account. Logically, a tool provider can promote their tool as educational resource, but this is not a perspective to diversity suitable for a comparison with the other perspectives derived in the literature review.

In the actual tools, however, the respective approaches were not that clearly communicated anymore and for most tools there was a shift in perspective. Almost all organizations address diversity from a need perspective inside the tool's questions and indicators. Interestingly, this is done in a very subtle way. This is achieved by phrasing questions or statements

positively, in a sense like best practices. An organization that does not comply with the best practice, will then have to select a rather negative response. In that way, it may transmit an uncomfortable feeling of self-awareness, which subtly communicates to the participating organization that there is a need to improve their diversity activities.

Therefore, the question can be raised why organizations predominantly address diversity as a need inside the tools and why they do this in such a subtle approach. Perhaps, the tool providers aspire that the organizations that complete the tool conclude themselves that they have a clear need to work on their diversity practices, as this might result in a stronger motivation to address the issue.

One final observation that can be made is that the compliance perspective is not addressed by any of the case tools. This does not surprise me, however, since organizations should already be aware of their diversity related legislative environment such as equal employment opportunity or anti-discrimination laws. Certainly, it is an important rationale for addressing diversity, but it should neither be the role of an external service provider to remind an organization of the requirement to comply with laws nor to assess such compliance.

### **5.1.2 Administration**

After the previous section presented findings concerning the background of the tools, this section discusses multiple topics related to the administration of diversity assessment tools. I elaborate on the following four aspects: (1) type of assessment tool, (2) target group, (3) response formats, (4) reporting & follow-up.

#### ***Type of Assessment Tool***

While all of the case tools fall under the category of diversity assessment tools, there are some differences between them in terms of how they are provided to organizations. Out of the eight case tools, five are offline tools, i.e. downloadable PDF documents to fill out, and three tools are to be completed online. Clarifying this difference is important since online tools enjoy some more advantages over offline tools such as the opportunity of collecting data directly from the participating organizations.

This brings me to another crucial clarification that needs to be made. All of the analyzed diversity assessment tools are instruments that are provided to organizations. Therefore, to phrase it in the terminology addressed in Chapter 2.3.1, the organizations that complete the survey conduct an *internal (or self-) assessment* while using an *external* instrument. The

only exception to this is the tool offered by the Ryerson University Diversity Institute, which is used by the Ryerson University Diversity Institute to conduct *external assessments* of other organizations. With the exception of this tool, all other seven case tools fall under the category of diversity self-assessment tools.

As elaborated in the literature review, the most common data collection methods for conducting a diversity assessment are interviews, focus groups, document reviews, and questionnaires (e.g. Olavarria et al., 2005; Truong et al., 2017). The diversity assessment tools analyzed in this empirical study can all be described as some sort of questionnaire which the participating organizations fill out based on their best possible knowledge. Additionally, some tools include the possibility of listing proof (D&I Charter of Peel; Ryerson University Diversity Institute), hereby indirectly adding the data collection method of document reviews. Organizations may, of course, use interviews or focus groups as additional data collection methods to complete assessment in the most realistic way. However, given the fact that the tool providers are external parties and organizations then conduct the assessment internally, this is out of control of each tool provider and can only be recommended. Logically, the most appropriate reflection of an organization's diversity practices can be achieved the more time an organization has to complete the assessment and the more data collection methods can thus be included.

### ***Target group***

Almost all of the organizations of the study specify for what kind of organization their tool is suitable. Most of the tools are suitable for organizations of all sizes and industries. Only Business Finland points out that their tool is focused on SMEs, and the Australian Human Right Commission concedes that some parts of their tool are more relevant to larger organizations.

The argument that a diversity assessment tool might be more suitable for larger organization was addressed by one of the interview participants as well. The interviewee suggests that this focus may be caused by the fact that larger organizations possess more diversity related practices that can be evaluated.

*“In the corporate or the multi-national company, they are more diverse because they are much bigger, and they operate in a lot of different locations. They already have their commitments, policies, goals, trainings, and everything in place, but not necessarily inclusion.”*

At the same time, the interviewee also points towards another interesting topic of discussion: large organizations are diverse, but not always inclusive. This aspect is picked up in Section 5.1.3, when the role of inclusion is discussed separately.

Even though most tools state that they are suitable for organizations of all sizes and industries, they might be limited, however, in terms of the particular countries where there could be used. That is because the language in which the tools were published may limit a global distribution of a tool. Of course, it would be unrealistic to demand that all diversity assessment tools should be available in multiple languages, and most organizations would certainly not be interested in this. However, it is worth highlighting the tool of the Centre for Global Inclusion, the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks, which was developed as a global education tool. This tool is, in fact, also offered in French and Portuguese, and the Centre for Global Inclusion is currently working on the Spanish version. In the defense of the other case tools it should be clarified, however, that the tool of the Centre for Global Inclusion represents the only tool of this case study that is not grounded in a local context, but clearly defined their scope as global. This specific global context, which was demonstrated earlier in this chapter, represents another aspect that may prohibit a global distribution of diversity assessment tools as there may be particular elements of a tool that are not universally applicable.

Besides addressing the target group in terms of organizations, most of the organizations also specify their recommended assessor(s) to complete the tool. Similar to the literature, where scholars' opinions diverge between conducting the assessment with a committee (e.g. Harper et al., 2006) or an individual assessor (e.g. Ford & Evans, 2002), there were mixed, but evenly distributed recommendations among the case tools. Three of the tools suggest conducting the assessment with individual staff in Human Resource or leadership positions (AICPA; Business Finland; Red Acoge), while another three encourage organizations to complete the tool in a team which, ideally, represents staff from all levels of an organization (AHRC; D&I Charter of Peel; MHTTC Network). Two of the tools did not address this issue (The Centre for Global Inclusion; Ryerson University Diversity Institute).

Personally, I believe that it is hard to conclude which of these two options is more favorable since the ideal assessor(s) of each organization heavily depends on context specific issues such as the size of an organization, its available resources for the assessment process, or the overall purpose of conducting the assessment. Ultimately, an organization should assign one or multiple people that are most suitable to conduct the assessment. Nonetheless, as the

literature review and also the findings of my empirical analysis show, managers or leaders tend to be involved in the assessment process in one way or another since they commonly have a holistic understanding of an organization and are thus very suitable for conducting the diversity evaluation.

### ***Response formats***

The tools assessed in this case study used a variety of response formats. As discussed in the literature review, there are two types of response formats, open-ended and closed responses, which can then be broken down into specific forms (Trenerry & Paradies, 2012).

Across the eight tools, the following response formats were used: yes/no, lists, checklists or tick boxes, Likert-scales, matrices, and free-text fields. What is interesting to observe is that all the offline tools used one response format only, whereas the online tools employed multiple response formats. However, since none of the offline tools specified why they chose their respective response formats, I can, of course, only speculate whether this was an intentional decision or not. Personally, I could imagine that an offline assessment tool might only use one response format to keep the evaluation process as simple as possible, which also alleviates the interpretation of the results. That is because in an offline tool the responses cannot be transferred to the external provider of the tool but remain with the internal party. In addition to including various response types in the tool, online tools also proved to be more flexible since they can include for example trigger questions as was the case with Business Finland's tool.

Another striking finding is that most organizations created some sort of scale or best practice for the responses, regardless of the individual response format used. For example, even in the checklists (e.g. AHRC; The Centre for Global Inclusion), which usually are not scaled, the responses are classified into categories. In the case of the Centre for Global Inclusion, for instance, organization tick benchmarks across five levels that range from 'Inactive' to 'Best Practice'. As presented in Chapter 2.3.2, such a categorization which commonly is simply done through Likert scales, serves as some sort of scoring mechanisms which ultimately assist organizations in interpreting the results and identifying their strengths and weaknesses (Harper et al., 2006).

### ***Reporting & follow-up***

In the literature, there is a uniform recommendation to report and follow-up on the results of an organizational assessment (e.g. Ford & Evans, 2002). Without reporting and following-

up, the usefulness of conducting an assessment is clearly restricted and may even be considered redundant. Several authors highlight that reporting and follow-up can be done in form of writing a feedback report as well as developing a comprehensive planning guide for concrete improvement measures (Ford & Evans, 2006; Harper et al., 2006).

When analyzing the topic of reporting and follow-up for the case tools, it needs to be taken into account whether a tool is to be completed online or offline (i.e. a downloadable PDF document). As the respective within-case analyses have shown, all of the online tools provide performance reports to the participating organizations upon completion of the tool. Obviously, this is only possible with online tools since the organizations are in possession of the organization's data. However, some offline tools compensate this limitation by providing the organizations with instructions and templates on how to self-evaluate the performance based on the responses (e.g. D&I Charter of Peel). The scoring nature of most of the response formats (see earlier section) assists here.

One additional aspect that caught my attention concern the topic of benchmarking. It was interesting to see that two of the online tools (AICPA; AHRC) included in their performance reports next to each question the average answer of other participating organizations. While this is not possible for the offline tools, these provided some sort of benchmark in the sense that they used a lot of best practices through the tool.

Even though organizations can of course consider a diversity assessment as a one-time event, it is encouraged to conduct the assessment repeatedly (Ford & Evans, 2002). In that way, organizations are capable to see their progress over time and seek systematic improvement, hereby treating diversity management as a strategic issue (Mathews, 1998). From my analysis it can be overserved that multiple of the case tools include an encouragement to retake the tool regularly to evaluate one's progress.

Another aspect worth mentioning is that several tools provide additional services in connection with their tools (e.g. AICPA; D&I Charter of Peel). These serve particularly the purpose of assisting in the follow-up process and help determine where to make changes. Such services include, for example, conducted research in the diversity field, industry report, or other documents created by the tool offering organizations. This demonstrates that most of the tools are no stand-alone instrument but form part of a larger project.



### 5.1.3 Role of Inclusion and Diversity Dimensions

In this section, I discuss what role inclusion and the different diversity dimensions play in an organizational diversity assessment. Interestingly, these two topics were not actively assessed during the analysis of the case tools but emerged during the analysis of the expert interviews and existing literature.

#### *The Role of Inclusion*

One topic that was heavily discussed by the interview participants, and thus led me to analyze it more in-depth, is the role of inclusion in organizations. To start this discussion, I want to present a very strong argument that was raised by one of the interview participants:

*Diversity in itself is not of any use if you don't make those people that are different or unique in the way of thinking or how they appear included. These people will leave. They can be however talented, and their talent can match the needs of the company as well as possible, but if they don't feel that they belong, they will leave."*

I find this comment interesting for two reasons. First of all, it demonstrates that the interviewee considers a distinction between the different dimensions of diversity as important. Taking into account unique ways of thinking, i.e. deep-level diversity, also affects greatly whether individuals feel included and welcomed in an organization or not. The second aspect that caught my attention is that the interviewee creates a causality between inclusion and job exits.

In a similar vein, one interviewee highlights with the example of foreigners in Finland that the lack of inclusion might lead to someone not taking a job or deciding to work in a specific location.

*"The companies are ready to take diverse employees but they don't really understand how to manage them and how to make them feel included. And there was a lot of attrition happening because of that. People were always looking for jobs in some other countries where they would feel much better, where they have a bigger community of their own country."*

While these comments both suggest a high importance of inclusion, inside the case tools, meaning in the domains and indicators, inclusion is not that strongly addressed. Only half of the tools include an evaluation of inclusion in some form (AHRC; the Centre for Global Inclusion; D&I Charter of Peel; MHTTC Network). Here, the focus lies on domains like 'organizational culture' (D&I Charter of Peel), 'recruiting' (AHRC) or 'retention' (MHTTC Network). The way inclusion is addressed there is by evaluating if, e.g. an organization is

culturally sensitive and inclusive, uses inclusive language in market material, or conducts regular employee feedback rounds to assess their experience of inclusion.

Personally, I am surprised that inclusion is not addressed more strongly by the case tools. As the literature review has highlighted, there is a growing importance of inclusion in diversity research (Otaye-Ebede, 2018), and more importantly also a consensus among scholar that organizations are required to go the extra step of inclusion in order to leverage the full potential benefits of possessing a diverse workforce (Winters, 2014).

One final aspect I want to discuss is the role of inclusion in relationship to the size of an organization. As discussed earlier under the target group section, one of the interviewees suggests that large and diverse organizations are not necessarily inclusive. The same interviewee adds that inclusion is easier to manage in SMEs.

*„That's why I always say that startups should be looking out for an inclusive workplace culture in the beginning, because when you start growing bigger, that is something you miss.“*

While this thesis does not include literature that discusses this relation between inclusion and the size of an organization, the case tools can be used as reference here. As discussed earlier, most tools target organizations of all sizes, yet the Talent Boost Index is aimed for SMEs only. This may permit organizations that complete the Talent Boost Index to nurture an inclusive workplace culture from the very beginning. Additionally, the arguments raised above align with one conclusion drawn from the literature. That is that inclusion is an active process based on a voluntary basis that requires action from organizations (Tapia, 2009).

### ***Diversity Dimensions***

Inspired by the literature, I also decided to analyze which diversity dimension and how many diversity attributes are addressed in the case tools. Based on Perry & Li's (2019) and Cachat-Rosset et al.'s (2017) studies, I was already able to conclude in the literature review that (1) diversity assessment tools appear to be mainly focused on surface-level attributes and (2) within the surface-level diversity attributes, organizations evaluate both diversity in general and specific diversity attributes (see Section 2.3.2). This focus on surface-level attributes within assessment tools overlaps with the dominance of diversity studies on surface-level diversity (Jackson et al., 2003) and is most likely caused by the same reason, i.e., that surface-level diversity is easier to evaluate than deep-level diversity (e.g. Harrison et al., 1998; Pelled, 1996).

This empirical study verifies the findings of the literature review. All of the case tools assess diversity practices only in terms of surface-level diversity attributes. Moreover, most of the tools refer to diversity generally. The only exceptions are Business Finland, which focuses predominantly on nationality, the Ryerson University Diversity Institute, which puts a slight focus on gender diversity, and finally the tool by Red Acoge, which stands out by addressing four concrete diversity variables. What can be criticized about the tools that addressed diversity generally is that most of them lack a clear definition of diversity inside the tool. However, when interpreting these findings, it needs to be taken into account that one of the selection criteria for the case tools was that they address diversity in the most general way possible. Thus, generalizing conclusions concerning which and how many diversity attributes are addressed in diversity assessment tools, should be drawn carefully.

In a perfect world, organizations would evaluate all kinds of attributes how their employees are diverse. Therefore, in order to make their employees feel belonged and included, it would, of course, be fruitful for organizations to comprehend not only the apparent characteristics of their employees, but also their attitudes, values, or personality. This could intensify the positive effects of diversity such as innovation or creativity, for example, since friction between staff could be reduced and everyone could perform in their best possible way.

This thesis shows, however, that in reality organizations are far from reaching this scenario. Personally, I don't think this should be interpreted too negatively, however. Because as shown in the literature review, there is a growing interest in diversity both academic- and practice-wise, which presumably also leads to more organizations evaluating diversity. Therefore, I assume that over the course of time there might be a stronger focus on the assessment of deep-level diversity. Further, it has to be critically reflected whether an evaluation of deep-level diversity attributes is valuable in terms of the potential benefits that could be achieved due to the assessment in contrast to the time that would have to be put in. This time extensiveness and the complications of assessing deep-level diversity are the reasons why studies on deep-level diversity only account for roughly 10% of diversity research (Jackson et al., 2003). One recommendation I personally see how organizations could assess some of the deep-level diversity attributes are personality tests. With the voluntary participation of the employees, organizations could conduct standardized, existing personality tests in order to explore how their staff likes to work, what roles they commonly assume, etc.

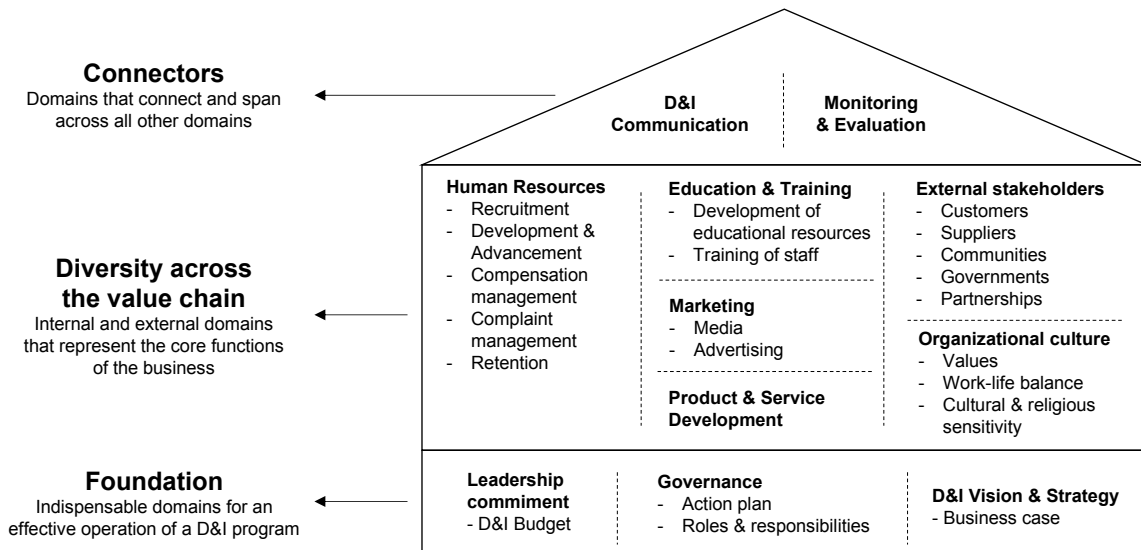
For the time being, I therefore believe that a strong focus on surface-level diversity in assessment tools is justifiable. However, I agree with the criticism raised by one of the interviewees who stated that “unfortunately, I think many tools even only focus on gender”. While this comment is focused on gender specifically, it does underline the reduction of diversity to only one surface-level diversity attribute. I share this opinion and believe that the focus of a diversity assessment tool should not be on one diversity attribute only. On the contrary, I argue that an assessment tool should assess diversity across multiple diversity attribute since the practices may, of course, diverge greatly between specific attributes such as gender diversity and ethnic diversity, for example. Consequently, I recommend that organizations break down diversity into several, concrete attributes. The tool developed by Red Acoge serves as a great example of this.

## **5.2 Model for a Holistic Diversity Assessment**

In this chapter, I present a model that entails core domains to conduct a holistic diversity assessment in an organization. This model is primarily based on the eight case tools of my qualitative study but also incorporates the findings of the conducted expert interviews as well as the literature review. From the case tools, I extracted the relevant information by synthesizing their domains and indicators, which were thoroughly present in each within-case analysis. In the interviews, participants were asked to talk about their experiences with diversity assessment tools. If an interviewee had never seen or worked with a diversity assessment tool before, I conducted a creative exercise with the participant in which I discussed what they would include in a diversity assessment tool if they were to develop their own. From the literature, I gained relevant insights in terms of what broader assessment areas are commonly included in a diversity assessment tool.

Given the extensive discussion throughout this thesis that there does not – and maybe should not – exist a universally applicable tool for diversity assessment, my model serves as a guideline and source of inspiration rather than a template for a diversity assessment tool. Organizations could utilize the model as a starting point when exploring their options of how to conduct a diversity assessment in their organization. When setting up the assessment tool it is crucial that organizations adapt the domains based to their own needs and maturity in terms of diversity.

In the following, I now present my model for a holistic diversity assessment and elaborate on the respective parts of the model. After the presentation of the model, I conclude this section by explicating some important considerations for a holistic diversity assessment.



**Figure 23. Model for a Holistic Diversity Assessment**

During the creation of the holistic model, I followed one crucial assumption. I assumed that a holistic diversity assessment should cover all those areas of an organization where diversity is present and affects the way business is done. Ultimately, a successfully diverse and inclusive organization is required to have their diversity practices deeply attached to all of their business core functions.

Although the previous chapters of the cross-case analysis demonstrate that the diversity assessment tools differ in many aspects (e.g. context, development process, response formats), the consistency in the tool's themes suggest a certain degree of consensus on the key characteristics of a holistic diversity assessment. However, the cross-case analysis also shows that, with the exception of the Centre for Global Inclusion, all case tools lack an explanation of the relationship between their tool's themes. In my opinion, it is crucial for organizations to understand how certain domains are related to each other, which is why I believe that survey providers should try to communicate this to the participating organizations stronger.

It is for this reason that I decided to design a model that lists the most important diversity assessment domains while visualizing the relationship between them. In total, the model for a holistic diversity assessment consists of 11 domains that are subordinated into three different categories: (1) foundation, (2) diversity across the value chain, and (3) connectors.

In the following subsections, I now elaborate what each of these categories entails and how the categories are related to each other. Ultimately, these elaborations will clarify why I designed the model in the shape of a house.

### ***Foundation***

The foundation for a holistic diversity assessment tool, depicted as the foundation of the house, incorporates all those domains that are indispensable for an effective D&I program. Without some minimum progress in these domains, the other areas of an organization are doomed to fail. There are three domains that stood out in particular during the analysis of the case tools. These are leadership commitment, governance, and D&I vision and strategy. All of the case tools included an assessment of leadership commitment in their domains. The perception that leadership commitment is crucial for the success of diversity progress was also echoed by all of the interview participants. When I asked the interviewees about one of the best diversity practices that they have observed in their professional career, one of the participants responded:

*“The best scenarios are the companies where there is a true will and where there are resources to address these questions. There is time, money, and people who are in charge. There are clear responsibilities. Those are the companies who actually will create change.”*

This comment matches with the recommendation raised by some scholars that a successful workplace diversity requires long-term allocation of funding by the leadership (Kreitz, 2008; Thomas, 1990). Further, it aligns with Hubbard’s (2004) and Buttner et al.’s (2004) argument that leadership commitment represents a crucial factor needed to drive diversity change. Another interviewee commented on the importance of the leadership commitment by stating that “all leaders need to be on board with the whole concept”, referring to increasing diversity in the workplace.

One interesting discussion that emerged during the interviews was the question whether diversity can be considered a top-down or bottom-up approach. Based on the literature review, I concluded that in order to conduct a successful diversity assessment, both bottom-up and top-down commitment is required (e.g. Hubbard, 2004). Yet, most of the literature points out the specific importance of leadership commitment rather than the attitude or commitment of the employees. One of the interviewees, however, emphasizes the importance of the employees too.

*„So yes, it is top down because the power of making change happen lies with the leadership. But the power of implementing is mostly with the employees. If they don't implement, if the whole company doesn't implement, it will not work.“*

Moreover, two interviewees addressed the attitude of the leadership more generally, saying:

*“If there is no intention, then there is no action.”*

*“There is literally no way I would work with a client who does not want to develop, change, or transform.”*

In addition to leadership commitment, many tools perceived it as relevant to assess whether the governance structure within an organization takes diversity into account or not. This means that an organization has clearly assigned roles for diversity responsibilities (e.g. diversity officers) and outlines an action plan for how they intend to improve diversity related practices in the organization. In this context, one interviewee suggests the implementation of diversity boards that “oversee how diversity strategies are put into practice” and ensure that these strategies “actually deliver what they are supposed to”. The importance of clearly assigned responsibilities is also addressed in the first quote of this subsection.

Closely related to the governance, almost all tools included a domain that evaluated whether organizations developed a strong rationale for a D&I vision and strategy, and if it is aligned to the organizational goals. Here, some of the case tools also suggested to evaluate whether an organization has made a business case for diversity by setting diversity related performance goals, for example.

Interestingly, all three foundational domains were addressed by most of the tools at the beginning of the tool. Even though the tools did not classify these domains under any category, this may imply that organizations consider them to be of special importance.

### ***Diversity across the value chain***

The domains under the category ‘diversity across the value chain’ represent a wide range of domains that, in one way or another, all contribute to the core functions of a business. As Figure 23 shows, these domains are built on top of the three foundational domains mentioned before. The terminology ‘value chain’, originally introduced by Porter in 1985, was used in the tool of the Ryerson University Diversity Institute. Even though not all of the domains represent primary functions of a value chain, I still considered this terminology an appropriate summary of the domains.

Under the Human Resources domain, it can be assessed how diversity is embedded in the recruitment process, for example, or if there is a system for diversity complaints in place. Human Resource activities are also the ones that are most affected by legislative requirements such as equal employment opportunities. Therefore, it is fruitful to assess if an organization goes beyond compliance with laws or only invests the minimum. The Education and Training domain is suitable to evaluate existing diversity training efforts for staff or developed educational resources. The Marketing domain analyzes media and advertisement efforts such as if diverse and inclusive language is used. Product & Service Development evaluates if the products cater a diverse customer group and if the services are inclusive. External Stakeholders represent a relatively large domain, assessing for example how diverse customers and suppliers of an organization are, or if an organization actively promotes diversity in local communicates or through partnerships. According to the Centre for Global Inclusion, such stakeholder relationship as well as other external domains like marketing are known to have the biggest impact on the business case for diversity. Lastly, the Organizational Culture domain looks into the inclusiveness of an environment, which is expressed, for example, through showing cultural and religious sensitivity.

The relevance of multiple of the abovementioned domains is affirmed by the interviewed diversity and inclusion experts. One of them promotes the importance of evaluating Human Resource practices, and comments:

*“Then another diversity aspect could maybe be called diversity audit, looking at HR processes, for instance, and breaking it down by demographics. How many ethnic minorities do we meet in the job interview base? How many are employed? How will they proceed? What bottlenecks do we have? Where do people get stuck in the organization?”*

Further, two interviewees suggest focusing on the feeling of inclusiveness of employees and also highlight the role of training and marketing. This aligns with the ‘Organizational Culture’, ‘Education and Training’, and ‘Marketing’ domains of the model.

*“And we then need to somehow assess, like, how the employees are feeling? Do they feel included? (...) Then how the trainings are doing? (...) What is the rate of success and how sensitive or how empathetic are the employees? (...) Are their job advertisements inclusive? Is the media or PR that they are doing inclusive?”*

*“And then another perspective to diversity measurements would be the inclusion part. How does our personnel experience different situations in their work life?”*

As these elaborations show, the domains of the ‘diversity across the value chain’ category, similar to the ‘foundation’ category, find support by the interviewees. Similarly, it is fruitful



to recall the three perspective for a comprehensive organizational assessment, which were introduced by Siegel et al. (2003) in the literature review. The three suggested levels are the administrative, service, and individual level, all of which are also covered in the model (see Chapter 2.3.2 for more information).

### ***Connectors***

The connectors are domains that connect and span across all other domains. Therefore, they are depicted as the roof of the house model (see Figure 23) since they affect both the domains in the ‘foundation’ as well as the ‘diversity across the value chain’ categories.

The D&I Communication domain assesses whether an organization is considerate and inclusive in their communication measures. This refers to all internal and external communication, which is why this domain is not listed under the ‘diversity across the value chain’ section. An example of what a D&I communication indicator could assess is the reporting of the achieved D&I progress or if the internal communication measures are in alignment with the rest of the diversity practices.

The Monitoring and Evaluation evaluates whether an organization has metrics and other measurements in place that track the progress of diversity within an organization and whether the progress is critically evaluated. One form of Monitoring and Evaluation can also include the assessment of employees’ attitudes or opinions, which demonstrates the clear link between this ‘connector’ domain and the Organizational Culture. The importance of having appropriate diversity related metrics in place was echoed by all interviewed diversity and inclusion experts.

### ***Important Considerations for a Holistic Diversity Assessment***

To conclude this section, I want to reiterate some important considerations that I perceive as relevant for conducting a holistic diversity assessment. First of all, it is crucial to point out that the model discussed in this chapter is not a diversity assessment tool and should not be copied as such in a one-to-one fashion without reflecting on which domains are most suitable to assess in the individual context. The claim that there does not exist a one-fits-all diversity assessment tool is voiced by many scholars (e.g. Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2009; Wheeler, 1996) and supported by this thesis. In alignment with this, two of the diversity experts affirm the importance of not carelessly copying a diversity assessment tool.

*“But it really depends on the maturity of the organization. (...) I think to get the best out of these kind of measurements {diversity assessments}, we would also need*

*to have different sets of measurements for companies and different levels on their diversity journeys.”*

*“And your challenges might be different in different parts of the organization. So organizations have to avoid the temptation to start following best practices from other companies and trying out something that somebody else had tried out (...)”*

Nonetheless, I can conclude insights on how many domains might be considered ideal to include in a diversity assessment tool. Based on the comparison of organizational assessment reviews from the diversity and cultural competence field (see Chapter 2.3.2), I demonstrated that the authors suggest including between four and nine domains. Hubbard (2004) adds that the number of recommended indicators should range around 25.

This aligns closely with the number of domains and indicators included in the diversity assessment case tools. With the exception of the highly detailed, educational tool of the Centre for Global Inclusion, the tools were mostly of a similar length, and thus level of detail. The number of domains span from four to 14, and most of the tools include around 30 indicators in their tool. Ultimately, this corroborates Ford & Evans’s (2002) suggestion of designing an organizational assessment tool that is as simple as possible. Moreover, Hubbard’s (2004) concession that organizations typically should develop significantly more indicators to then be able to “pick & choose” based on the given circumstances of the assessment is a relevant consideration for organizations. In fact, Business Finland has undergone exactly such process. In the interview with Ainla (2020) she told me the following:

*“Originally, we had more than 63 questions in the survey, but had to exclude many of them to design a tool with an as low as possible threshold.”*

- Interview with Ainla (2020)

To conclude, this section introduced a model for a holistic diversity assessment, which provides an overview of eleven important diversity domains and visualizes the relationship between them. It is designed in the shape of the house since there are foundational domains in which a certain progress of diversity is indispensable. On the foundation of these domains, the core functions of an organization are based. Naturally, across such functions diversity is present and can be assessed. Lastly, the roof of the house are the connectors that connect all of the other domains and ensure a smooth functioning across the other domains.

### **5.3 Implications for the Talent Boost Index**

In this chapter, I now relate the findings of my qualitative research on diversity assessment tools to the tool developed by Business Finland. First, I critically evaluate the Talent Boost Index in light of these findings. Based on this evaluation, I then derive recommendations for potential improvement measures to the Talent Boost Index. Both the evaluation of the Talent Boost Index as well as recommendations for improvements represent two practically oriented objectives of my thesis since this research is commissioned by Business Finland.

#### **5.3.1 Evaluation**

In the first part of this evaluation, I highlight similarities and distinguishing factors of the Talent Boost Index across the analysis parameters of my research. In the second part, I then discuss the underlying structure and themes of the Talent Boost Index by comparing them to the model for a holistic diversity assessment that was discussed in Chapter 5.2.

##### ***General Evaluation***

Outside the Talent Boost Index's content, there are three similarities between the Talent Boost Index and the other seven case tools that I want to point out in particular.

Firstly, it became evident that just like Business Finland, most of the other organizations that stand behind the case tools are public institutions, or organizations that are largely state funded. While this needs to be critically assessed against the selection criteria that tools had to be publicly available, it still shows that local governments are taking an active role in improving diversity and inclusion in their countries. This finding is supported by the fact that most of the tools were developed as part of larger projects and are thus no stand-alone instrument. Just like the Talent Boost Index serves as a crucial resource for the Talent Boost program, other organizations offer their tools in combination with other services as well. Secondly, it can be observed that the perspective from which Business Finland promotes diversity coincides with multiple of the case tools. Addressing diversity primarily from a needs perspective, particularly within the tool itself, appears to be a common practices among diversity assessment tools. Thirdly, I found that the concept of scoring and classifying respondents into particular profiles is a common approach not only used in the Talent Boost Index, but by multiple of the case tools. Presumably, the organizations have realized that such scoring measures can assist in the process of identifying strong- and weak-

performing areas, and consequently support in deriving and prioritizing the most effective improvement measures (Harper et al., 2006).

Along these three main similarities, there are numerous characteristics of the Talent Boost Index that distinguish it from the majority of the case tools and make it unique. The following paragraphs highlight six of these differentiating characteristics.

One of the differences can be found in the context in which the Talent Boost Index was developed. It has been established throughout this thesis that diversity management, and thus also the assessment of diversity practices, is affected by multiple factors such as legislation, social policies, or global demographic changes. Not surprisingly, the analysis of this research therefore demonstrates that the Talent Boost Index is the only tool that was created in the context of migration and with the overall objective of closing a labor shortage in a country since every tool emerged in its own specific context. Closely related to the individual context of the Talent Boost Index, a second differentiating characteristic is that the Talent Boost Index is the only case tool that specifically targets SMEs. All of the other tools are suitable for organizations of all sizes. As a third factor, the specific focus of the Talent Boost Index on assessing readiness can be pointed out. None of the other tools aims at evaluating how ready managers and employees are to embrace diversity within the organization. Perhaps, this can be explained by the fact that internal readiness is known to be hard to assess (Wentling, 2000).

Fourth, it is to be noted that the Talent Boost Index belongs to the minority of the tools that underwent a thorough testing process with target group organizations as well as D&I experts. In that way, Business Finland increases the validity and reliability of their tool (see Ford & Evans, 2002). Additionally, if Business Finland would transparently inform the participants of the development process of their tool, they could also gain an improved credibility. As a fifth distinguishing characteristic, the Talent Boost Index stands out for its use of diverse response types. It is the only tool among the three online tools that uses trigger questions, and the only tool that uses a matrix as response format. This showcases that Business Finland leverages the opportunities they have of offering a diversity assessment tool online. Lastly, I want to point out that the Talent Boost Index is the only case tool that clearly focuses on one attribute of diversity only, in this case nationality. While I understood from internal discussions with Business Finland employees that this focus on nationality is intended, I believe this could be communicated more strongly to the participants, for instance in the introductory part of the tool. That is because some organizations which may want to conduct

a diversity assessment that covers multiple diversity attributes could criticize Business Finland for this narrow focus and be disappointed.

### ***Evaluation of the Themes of the Talent Boost Index***

In the within-case analysis, I presented Business Finland's underlying model of the Talent Boost Index, which was provided to me for this thesis. The model consists of three layers. In the center of the model, Business Finland positioned the 'will of leadership' since they believe that the willingness of the leadership determines whether an organization becomes internationally diverse or not. Around the 'will of leadership', Business Finland listed six core areas that, according to them, represent the key reasons for organizations to not become internationally diverse. Given that the Talent Boost Index evaluates an organization's capabilities to hire foreign professionals, these six reasons were considered most fruitful to assess and thus represent the core domains of the tool. These six domains are: (1) recruitment, (2) management, (3) work culture, (4) customers, (5) communication, and (6) directions and processes. The third layer of the model lists organic outcomes that can be achieved when an organization actively tackles these six core areas. This third layer will not be of importance for this analysis, however, since the effects of diversity are not in the focus of this thesis. For an overview of the model and a more extensive elaboration, please refer to Figure 7 in Chapter 4.1.

This research shows that the will of leadership is indeed of crucial importance for organizations. As extensively discussed in the previous chapters, this finding was verified by all of the three data sources: existing literature, the case tools, and the expert interviews. However, this research does not verify, if the will of leadership is the sole or most dominant factor that drives organizations to address diversity management and increase the diversification of their workforce. In turn, both the literature and interviewed experts point out that diversity can be a top-down and bottom-up approach. Therefore, I can conclude that the foundation of Business Finland's model is certainly correct, and the will of leadership is likely to be a predominant factor for an organization to become internationally diverse. Yet, the attitude of employees may represent another determining factor, and there might be additional factors not analyzed in this thesis that may cause the diversification of an organization (e.g. changes in legislation or competitive pressure).

In terms of the domains covered by the Talent Boost Index, it can be concluded that the tool conducts a holistic diversity assessment since it covers many of the domains listed in the model that I introduced in Chapter 5.2. All of the six core domains of the Talent Boost Index

are represented in the model. Additionally, there were other areas addressed in the Talent Boost Index, albeit not listed in Business Finland's model, which coincide with the holistic model for diversity assessment (e.g. 'Education & Training' or 'Governance'). Given that the Talent Boost Index only lacks four of the domains included in the holistic model ('D&I Vision & Strategy', 'External Stakeholders', 'Product & Service Development', and 'Monitoring & Evaluation') and includes domains from each of the level of the model (Foundation, Diversity across the value chain, Connectors), I therefore concluded that the Talent Boost Index is a holistic tool for diversity assessment, albeit for nationality related diversity only.

### **5.3.2 Recommendations**

The previous section evaluated the Talent Boost Index in comparison to the other case tools, the literature, as well as the conducted expert interviews. Multiple strengths were identified, but some areas for improvement did emerge as well. Since Business Finland plans to revamp the Talent Boost Index and launch a second version of the survey sometime in 2021, in this section, I therefore present four areas in which I see the biggest improvement potential for the Talent Boost Index. My recommendations consist of working on the following aspects of the tool: (1) content, (2) structure and user-friendliness, (3) performance report, and (4) name. While they are presented in this order, I consider them all equally relevant recommendations.

First, I recommend to discuss the current content of the Talent Boost Index and explore the possibility of adding additional domains. As presented in the previous section, the Talent Boost Index already covers fundamental domains for a holistic diversity assessment. However, there are four domains of the holistic diversity assessment model that are not yet addressed in the Talent Boost Index: 'D&I Vision & Strategy', 'External Stakeholders', 'Product & Service Development', and 'Monitoring & Evaluation'. Therefore, I believe that it would be fruitful to evaluate whether including one, or multiple, of these domains into a Talent Boost Index 2.0 could be of value for Business Finland.

Second, I encourage Business Finland to improve the structure and user-friendliness of the survey through two concrete measures: permanently visible headings and a category outline. As elaborated in the within-case analysis (see Chapter 4.1), the Talent Boost Index is constructed in a very simple and modern design, which may come at the cost of reduced functionality in the sense that it is hard to follow in what section one is currently in. The

other case tools, both offline and online, are more structured in that sense since the headings, or domains, are permanently displayed. If technically feasible, I therefore recommend making the survey's headings permanently visible in order to improve the user-friendliness of the Talent Boost Index. Further, many of the case tools characterize by briefly mentioning their categories in the introduction. Thus, I also recommend implementing one paragraph in the introduction or welcoming message that outlines what a survey-taking organization can expect in terms of the content of the Talent Boost Index.

Third, I suggest updating the performance report by focusing on two issues: benchmarking and encouragement to retake. On the one hand, the analysis has shown that organizations are interested in comprehending how they are performing in comparison to other organizations of their size or industry. Some of the case tools, for example, include a scoring system that benchmarks an organization's performance. Therefore, I would recommend relating the individual performance of an organization to the anonymized performance of other participating organizations. On the other hand, inspired by multiple of the case tools, I would add a sentence in the performance report which encourages organizations to retake the Talent Boost Index after a certain period of time (e.g. one year). In that way, organizations could benefit by being able to see their progress over time. Ultimately, this would allow organizations to approach diversity more strategically and seek systematic improvement rather than just quick fixes (see Mathews, 1998).

Last but not least, I advise to consider a change of name of the Talent Boost Index to enhance the searchability of the survey through search engines. The overview of the selected case tools in Table 3 (see Section 3.2.3) demonstrates that the Talent Boost Index is the only diversity assessment tool in this multiple case study that does not include 'diversity' or 'inclusion' in its name. While the existence of these two words in the name of the case tools may, of course, be partly caused by the diversity and inclusion related search words I used, it does represent one minor flaw of the Talent Boost Index. I believe that right now the Talent Boost Index might go fairly unnoticed by the algorithms of search engines. To prevent this in the future, I therefore recommend a change of name. By renaming the survey into *Talent Boost Diversity Index*, for example, I am convinced that the searchability through search engines could already be enhanced significantly while the original name of the survey would not be tempered with and the clear connection to the Talent Boost program would still be recognizable.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

As the example of the Black Lives Matter movement has demonstrated this year, racial inequalities and discrimination are still present in institutional and social structures, and organizations across the world are far from being equitable workplaces for diverse groups of any kind (Faragher, 2020). Coupled with the fact that global workforces are becoming even more diverse due to growing populations and global migration flows (e.g. Mor Barak, 2016), logically, more and more attention is being paid to diversity management. As a result, understanding how diverse and inclusive an organization's policies and practices are, becomes increasingly relevant as well. Therefore, this study on organizational diversity assessment addresses a timely research topic.

The purpose of this thesis was to conduct a global review of diversity assessment tools and to examine how these tools compare across a number of analysis criteria. Consequently, I chose to carry out a multiple case study of eight diversity assessment tools, which was complemented by insights gained from four semi-structured interviews with diversity and inclusion experts. Driven by the empirical objectives of this thesis, I reviewed existing literature on the global context of diversity management, examined the research field of diversity more in-depth, and particularly discussed prior studies on organizational diversity assessment to establish how diversity assessment tools can be set up and used. These insights from the literature review served as fundamental input for the discussion of the empirical findings gained through the case tool analysis and expert interviews.

This chapter summarizes the main results of the thesis and provides an answer to the underlying research question of this study. Further, I explicate the theoretical and practical implications of my research. Lastly, I discuss the limitations of my study and derive suggestions for future research.

### 6.1 Main Findings

Throughout this study, I was guided by the following research question: "*How do diversity assessment tools compare globally?*". Given the open-ended nature of this question, specific analysis parameters were defined prior to starting the data analysis. These parameters served to find a systematic answer to the research question and will now guide the summary of my main findings, highlighting relevant similarities and differences between the tools. A more detailed overview of the key findings of this research is provided in Appendix A.



The main conclusion of this study is that there does not exist a one-fits-all diversity assessment tool, and consequently no universally applicable approach to assess organizational diversity. This finding verifies the opinions of various scholars (e.g. Harper et al., 2006; Olavarria et al., 2009; Wheeler, 1996) and is rooted in numerous distinguishing factors discussed in this thesis. In the literature review, it became evident that diversity management is influenced by varying legislative and social policies. Further, the way how a diversity assessment tool is designed should carefully be linked to an organization's size, the industry in which they operate, or simply the available resources they have at their disposal.

My research attests similar findings and shows that the biggest difference between the case tools lies in the individual, local context in which each tool emerged. Most tools are embedded in local projects, which may hinder an applicability of that tool outside its context. Another interesting difference between the tools concerns their varying development processes, with some tools involving scholars or D&I experts in the process, for instance.

The most important similarity between the analyzed diversity assessment tools concerns the domains that they cover. This consistency suggests a certain degree of consensus on the key components of a diversity assessment tool, which enabled me to develop a model for a holistic diversity assessment. While the creation of the model was primarily based on the analysis of the eight case tools, the included domains strongly align with the opinions of the four interviewed diversity and inclusion experts as well as existing studies on organizational assessment. The model conceptualizes eleven crucial domains to be considered for an organizational assessment. It also visualizes the mutual relationship between these eleven domains as they are subordinated into three categories, which are depicted in the structure of a house. The 'Foundation', which includes domains such as Leadership Commitment or Governance, represents indispensable domains that require a certain progress in order to ensure an effective operation of a D&I program. On the basis of these foundational domains, the 'Diversity across the value chain' category encompasses domains that reflect the core functions of an organization. These are, for instance, Human Resources, Marketing, Product & Service Development or External Stakeholders. Lastly, the roof of the house, the 'Connectors', includes the domains of D&I Communication and Monitoring and Evaluation, which connect and span across all other domains of the model.

Besides the overlap in the domains, this research reveals further noteworthy similarities between the case tools. First, most tools were developed by public institutions and stem from the Anglo-Saxon region, which aligns with the strong Anglo-Saxon dominance in diversity

research (Jonsen et al., 2011; Roberson, 2019). Second, according to all but one of the case tools, diversity assessment tools seem to be tailored for organizations of all industries and sizes. Third, all tools characterize by only addressing surface-level attributes of diversity and most of tools define diversity in general terms. Hereby, my study verifies previous findings of Cachat-Rosset et al. (2017) and Perry & Li (2019) who found a similar focus on surface-level attributes in diversity assessment tools. At last, the tools also share, in one way or another, the same purpose. That is that all tools serve as support instruments to help organizations evaluate their diversity efforts in times of increasing diversity.

To conclude, the previous arguments provide a clear answer to the underlying research question of this study. On a global level, diversity assessment tools share many similarities, particularly in terms of their domains. However, they differ in crucial factors, which prohibit the existence of identical or universally applicable diversity assessment tools. Taking into account that organizations across the world that conduct a diversity assessment are subject to varying contextual factors, it is also unlikely that there will ever exist such one-fits-all diversity assessment tool. Nonetheless, organizations can, of course, leverage existing tools and adopt them according to their own needs. The model for a holistic diversity assessment that is provided in this thesis can serve for such purposes.

## **6.2 Theoretical and Managerial Implications**

This study followed the notion of Cormer & Soliman (1996) and Trenerry & Paradies (2012) that there is limited research on organizational assessment in the field of diversity, despite the growing interest in diversity management research over the past decades (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). Trenerry & Paradies (2012) themselves conducted the most recent review on organizational assessment that I was able to locate within the scope of this literature review, Yet, their study had a focus on cultural competence within a health care context. Other reviews on organizational assessment from the diversity and cultural competence field date back as far as to the mid 2000s and even late 1990s (e.g. Hubbard, 2004; Olavarria et al., 2005; Wheeler, 1996). Consequently, there is a clear need of current reviews on organizational assessment in the research field of diversity.

Based on this identified research gap, this research contributes to existing literature by constituting a recent study of organizational diversity assessment, with a particular focus on diversity assessment tools. The eight diversity assessment tools analyzed in this study were all published between 2012 and 2020, yet many of the case tools are based on other diversity

assessment tools or have been updated in form of a revamped version. The fact that these diversity assessment tools are constantly being updated to incorporate the current changes in the diversity field, underlines the importance of regularly conducting research in this area as well. Consequently, I believe that the findings of this study on how diversity assessment tools compare globally are relevant for scholars. Particularly the holistic model for diversity assessment, which was created based on a synthesis of multiple data sources (i.e. eight diversity assessment tools, four expert interviews, and existing research), provides a valuable resource. The model conceptualizes eleven relevant domains for a diversity assessment and visualizes their mutual relationship by subordinating them in three categories.

For leaders of organizations, this study has multiple implications as well. First of all, the included review of literature provides managers with clear instructions and recommendations on how to set up and use a diversity assessment tool. Besides these instructions, the literature review also explicates why conducting an organizational assessment of diversity practices is crucial, i.e. to identify strengths and weaknesses and derive areas for improvement (e.g. Ford & Evans; Truong et al., 2017).

More importantly, in form of the model for a holistic diversity assessment, the empirical part of my thesis provides a valuable resource that can be used by managers. The study shows that the tools converge in terms of the domains that they typically include in a diversity assessment, even though my study also suggests that there is no one-fits-all tool for diversity assessment. Therefore, the model could serve as a guideline rather than a template for a diversity assessment tool. Organizations could use the model to explore their options of diversity assessment and design their own instrument for this purpose based on my model.

In addition, this research permits managers to comprehend how crucial their own role, the role of leadership, is in the process of using a diversity assessment tool and for the overall success of diversity management. Effective diversity management is supported by leadership through clear commitments in terms of accountability and resources (i.e. time and funding) (Wentling, 2000). Ideally, managers also identify diversity management as a strategic activity and conduct diversity assessments in continuous cycles (Mathews, 1998).

Lastly, this study demonstrates to managers that external assistance for evaluating diversity, e.g. by consultants, is not necessarily required. As the eight case tools of this empirical analysis as well as the literature review have shown, there are plenty of diversity assessment tools and relevant information available free of charge. Similar to the model for a holistic diversity assessment, such assessment tools should, however, not be blindly copied but

adapted to the respective purpose and defined needs of the respective organizations. One great educational resource that is freely available and most certainly worth looking into for any manager are the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks developed by the Centre for Global Inclusion. By harnessing free resources, managers can ultimately reduce costs (e.g. no consultancy fees), while still gaining credibility within the organization if the used resource has been proven to be reliable and valid.

### **6.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

The findings of my thesis need to be interpreted against a backdrop of limitations, which generate new avenues for future research. Based on my methodological approach, I define multiple limitations for this study.

First, this multiple case study is based on eight diversity assessment tools and four expert interviews. While the research yielded valuable findings on how diversity assessment tools compare, due to the qualitative nature of the conducted research, these findings cannot be considered representative but should rather be seen as an exploration of the topic. Thus, the findings of this research are only generalizable with limitations. In order to establish more proof of validity and reliability of my findings, further analysis and testing of my findings is required. In particular, it would be beneficial to conduct a quantitative analysis with a larger representative sample of organizations. Since this thesis has also demonstrated that there is a clear need for more recent research on organizational assessment in the field of diversity, this specific suggestion of validating my research findings aligns with my overall recommendation of conducting more research on organizational diversity assessment.

Second, aside from the sample size, the generalization of the findings is also limited due to the strong Anglo-Saxon focus of the research. This emphasis is not only represented in the case tools but also the literature used for this study. Even though Klarsfeld et al. (2014) found that globally there is no significant divergence in the shape of diversity practices, the findings of my thesis, which were based predominantly on Anglo-Saxon case tools, may not represent an adequate representation of global diversity assessment practices. Thus, for future global reviews of diversity assessment tools, I suggest including a more geographically representative sample of case tools in the study. For example, it might be fruitful to identify at least one tool per continent in such a research since diversity management is known to be culture specific (Garcia-Prieto, 2003). Of course, this recommendation requires the researcher to have sufficient knowledge in the language each

tool was published in since I consider it crucial that the tools can be analyzed in their original language to avoid misinterpretations due to linguistic reasons.

Third, this research may also be limited by the dominance of diversity assessment tools that were developed by public institutions. As explicated in Chapter 5.1.1, it is indeed plausible that tools developed and offered by private companies might differ from tools that are developed by public institutions. Certainly, research on private companies could generate valuable insights. In a similar vein, I also second Roberson's (2019) suggestion of studying diversity in a nonbusiness context. It would be interesting to see if the model for a holistic diversity assessment provided in this thesis, which is very business oriented since many domains assess diversity across the value chain, would still be applicable and relevant in a nonbusiness context.

Fourth, the holistic model for diversity assessment created in his research implies that all domains are of equal value in an assessment tool. Future research could explore whether there are domains that are more relevant to assess than others. Potentially, recommendations could be derived that support organizations in prioritizing assessment domains in accordance with the respective context and available resources of an organization. In connection to the business case for diversity, researchers could also analyze in which domain improved progress would have the greatest impact for an organization.

Fifth, I agree with Otaye-Ebede (2018) who states that there may be an overlap of assessment models and research from the diversity field with other research fields. While this research intentionally focuses on the field of diversity, particularly in the empirical part, I also draw on the cultural competence field in the literature review. Nonetheless, it would most certainly be fruitful to verify the findings concluded in this research by exploring additional research fields closely related to diversity, such as inclusion, for example.

These limitations notwithstanding, this research makes an important contribution that has theoretical and managerial implications by being a recent review on organizational assessment in the field of diversity. The findings of my thesis constitute interesting insights on how diversity assessment tools compare globally across numerous parameters. Further, this thesis provides a holistic model for diversity assessment which has its foundation in multiple data sources and conceptualizes what domains are crucial for a holistic diversity assessment and how they may be connected to each other. Therefore, I highly recommend the use of the holistic model for diversity assessment and encourage further refinement and validation of the model in future diversity research and practice.

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## **APPENDICES**

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## A SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The table below lists the key findings of my research, which are based on the analysis of the eight diversity assessment tools, the four expert interviews, and the review of existing literature.

Analysis Parameter	Key Findings
Background Information	
Organization Type & Origin	<p>Case tools are mostly public institutions</p> <p>Case tools predominantly stem from the Anglo-Saxon region, which aligns with the Anglo-Saxon dominance of diversity literature (e.g. Jonsen et al., 2011)</p>
Development Process	<p>Case tools characterize by being based on other tools, and/or developed by scholars, and/or having gone through a prior testing process with the intended target audience/ D&amp;I expert</p> <p>Organizations that affiliate their tools to experts and communicate this clearly can increase credibility (Ford &amp; Evans, 2002)</p>
Publication Dates	<p>Case tools were published between 2012 and 2020 but are partly based on older versions, which demonstrates that diversity assessment is a timely but not new matter</p> <p>Studies on organizational diversity assessment are rather scarce and old (e.g. studies located during literature review were mainly published between 2004 and 2006, the most recent study is from 2012)</p>
Context & Purpose	<p>Biggest difference among the analysis parameter</p> <p>All but one tool were developed for a specific local context, yet, all case tools serve as support instruments to help organizations evaluate their diversity efforts in times of increasing diversity</p> <p>Diversity assessment tools are subject to varying contextual differences such as legislation, social policies or organizations' industries (e.g. Harper et al., 2006)</p> <p>One interviewee argues that diversity assessment should be adopted based on organizations' different levels on their diversity journeys/ progress</p>
Perspectives to Diversity	<p>Four perspectives defined based on literature review: social justice, business case, needs, and compliance</p> <p>In support documents or on website: diversity is mostly addressed from a business case and needs perspective</p> <p>Inside the tools: diversity is mostly addressed from a needs perspective</p>
Administration	
Type of Assessment Tool	<p>Case tools are questionnaires/surveys and represent one form of data collection for a diversity assessment besides interviews, focus groups, or documents reviews for a diversity assessment (e.g. Truong et al., 2017)</p> <p>Literature distinguishes between individual/organizational, internal/external, and qualitative/quantitative assessment forms;</p> <p>Case tools are with one exception organizational, internal (or self-) assessment tools that include both qualitative and quantitative indicators;</p> <p>Three of the case tools are offered online, five offline</p>

## Summary of Key Findings (cont'd)

Analysis Parameter	Key Findings
Administration	
Target Group	<p>All but one tool are suitable for organizations of all sizes and industries</p> <p>Mixed recommendations both from the case tools as well as literature in terms of the assessor(s) to complete the tool: either individual (mostly manager) or assessment committee (see e.g. Trenerry &amp; Paradies, 2012)</p> <p>According to one interviewee, MNEs are more diverse, but not more inclusive, and possess more diversity related practices that can be evaluated</p>
Response Formats	<p>Different response formats used: yes/no, lists, checklists or tick boxes, Likert-scales, matrices, and free-text fields</p> <p>Offline tools used one response format only, online tools used multiple</p>
Reporting & Follow-up	<p>Reporting &amp; follow-up represents a crucial step to achieve tangible progress in diversity (Ford &amp; Evans, 2002), retaking an assessment permits organizations to see progress over time, approach diversity more strategically, and seek systematic improvement (Mathews, 1998)</p> <p>All online tools provide performance reports; some offline tools provide self-evaluation instructions and templates</p>
Role of Inclusion and Diversity Dimensions	
Inclusion	<p>Inclusion considered important by interview participants, but barely addressed in the case tools</p> <p>“Diversity is the mix, inclusion is making the mix work” (Tapia, 2009, p. 12); inclusion relies on voluntary action (Winters, 2014); in order to leverage potential benefits of diverse workforces, employees need to feel included</p>
Diversity Dimensions	<p>Diversity assessment tools seem to be mainly focused on surface-level (Cachat-Rosset et al., 2017; Perry &amp; Li, 2019)</p> <p>Case tools focus on surface-level diversity, with most assessing diversity in general and no specific diversity attribute</p>
Model for a Holistic Diversity Assessment	
Domains	<p><i>Model includes 11 domains across 3 categories:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Foundation</u>: Leadership Commitment, Governance, D&amp;I Vision &amp; Strategy</li> <li>- <u>Diversity across the value chain</u>: Human Resources, Education &amp; Training, Marketing, Product &amp; Service Development, External Stakeholders, Organizational Culture</li> <li>- <u>Connectors</u>: D&amp;I Communication, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</li> </ul> <p>Existing literature and interviewees’ perception support importance of these domains</p>

## Summary of Key Findings (cont'd)

Analysis Parameter	Key Findings
Model for a Holistic Diversity Assessment	
Quantity	Case tools include between 4 and 14 domains and around 30 indicators/questions Literature suggests between 4 and 9 domains (see Table 1) and around 25 indicators (Hubbard, 2004); Diversity assessment tools should be designed as simple as possible (Ford & Evans, 2002)

## B LIST OF CASE TOOLS (INCL. URLS)

No	Organization	Tool Name	URL
1	American Institute of Certified Public Accountants	Accounting Inclusion Maturity Model	<a href="https://www.aicpainclusion.com/default.aspx">https://www.aicpainclusion.com/default.aspx</a>
2	Australian Human Rights Commission	Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool	<a href="https://culturaldiversity.humanrights.gov.au/">https://culturaldiversity.humanrights.gov.au/</a>
3	Business Finland	Talent Boost Index	<a href="https://survey.zef.fi/x7axsja4/index.html">https://survey.zef.fi/x7axsja4/index.html</a>
4	The Centre for Global Inclusion	Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks	<a href="https://centreforglobalinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/GDIB-V.090517.pdf">https://centreforglobalinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/GDIB-V.090517.pdf</a>
5	Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel	A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Organizational Self-Assessment Tool	<a href="http://www.dicharter.rdrpeel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/DEI-Organizational-SAT-Jan-8-Booklet-Final-Copy.pdf">http://www.dicharter.rdrpeel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/DEI-Organizational-SAT-Jan-8-Booklet-Final-Copy.pdf</a>
6	Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network	Assessing Workforce Diversity: A Tool for Mental Health Organizations on the Path to Health Equity	<a href="http://www.cars-rp.org/_MHTTC/docs/Assessing-Workforce-Diversity-Tool.pdf">http://www.cars-rp.org/_MHTTC/docs/Assessing-Workforce-Diversity-Tool.pdf</a>
7	Red Acoge	Analysis of diversity management in the practice of Spanish companies <i>(translated from Spanish)</i>	<a href="https://www.redacoge.org/mm/file/GESTI%C3%93N%20DE%20LA%20DIVERSIDAD_MEN%C3%9AS/INFORME%20FINAL%20ESTUDIO%20INTEGRADO%20-%20GD%20GRAN%20EMPRESA_Dic_15.pdf">https://www.redacoge.org/mm/file/GESTI%C3%93N%20DE%20LA%20DIVERSIDAD_MEN%C3%9AS/INFORME%20FINAL%20ESTUDIO%20INTEGRADO%20-%20GD%20GRAN%20EMPRESA_Dic_15.pdf</a>
8	Ryerson University Diversity Institute	Diversity Audit Tool	<a href="https://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/diversity/AODAforms/Publication/2012/2012_D11_34405_UsingtheDiversityAuditTooltoAssesstheStatusofWomenintheCanadianFinancialServicesSector_final%20AODA.pdf">https://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/diversity/AODAforms/Publication/2012/2012_D11_34405_UsingtheDiversityAuditTooltoAssesstheStatusofWomenintheCanadianFinancialServicesSector_final%20AODA.pdf</a>

## C PRIMARY DATA SOURCES

### C.1 Expert Interviews

N <sup>o</sup>	Name	Job description	Date	Duration
1	Dr. Jonna Louvrier	Diversity and Inclusion Consultant <i>Founder &amp; CEO of Includia Leadership</i>	May 4, 2020	59 min
2	Priyanka Banerjee	Diversity and Inclusion Consultant <i>CEO and co-founder of BusinessWiz</i>	May 7, 2020	1h2min
3	Kamilla Sultanova	Diversity and Inclusion Consultant	May 12, 2020	1h35min
4	Anneli Karlstedt & Bharti Mittal	Inclusion and Diversity Leader at Nokia  Inclusion & Diversity Manager at Nokia	May 27, 2020	58 min

### C.2 Talent Boost Index related data sources

N <sup>o</sup>	Name	Data Type	Topic	Date
1	Regina Ainla & Satu Salonen*	Memory Protocol	Discussion of the Talent Boost Index Structure	March 9, 2020
2	Regina Ainla & Satu Salonen	E-mail Extract	Talent Boost Index Questions & Answers	May 26, 2020
3	Regina Ainla	Video Interview	Talent Boost Index Creation Process	June 7, 2020

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## **D INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EXPERT INTERVIEWS**

### **Introduction**

- Thank the participant for taking the time.
  - Reassure the consent to record interview and the use of the collected data for the thesis.
  - Elaborate the objective and structure of the interview.
  - Point out why they have been chosen for this interview.
  - Ask the participant if he/she is still willing to participate in this interview.
  - Tell participant that he/she can stop or break at any time and let me know if there are any questions he/she does not like to answer.
  - Ask if the participant has any questions prior to starting the interview.
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### **Part 1: Professional experience**

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your academic and/or practical experience in the diversity field?
2. Can you think of any particular example where diversity was handled in an organization especially good or bad?

### **Part 2: Diversity Assessment Tools (*clarify what DAT means*)**

3. Have you ever used or been in contact with a diversity assessment tool?
  - If no, move to Part 3, if yes continue –
4. Can you elaborate which tool that was and in what context you have used it?
5. If you can remember, how was the diversity assessment tool structured?
6. What were the questions or components of the tool about?

### **Part 3: Assessing diversity in an organization**

7. How could diversity and inclusion be assessed in a company in your opinion?
8. (Optional): What criteria would you suggest to analyze or measure?
9. What role does the attitude towards diversity play within an organization in your opinion?
10. Can you think of any possibility to assess such motivation towards diversity?
11. How would you describe the relationship between leadership and diversity within an organization?

### **Part 4: Outlook**

12. Considering the development of diversity over the past years and your own expertise:  
How do you see the future of diversity?

### **Part 5: Closing**

13. Is there any other topic you would like to discuss?

## E LIST OF QUESTION FORUMS

Forum	Date posted	Focus	Response?	Language
Researchgate.net	01.05.2020	Academic	3 responses	English
Ask.fm	02.05.2020	Many topics	No response	English
Brainly.com	02.05.2020	Academic	No response	English
Gutefrage.net	02.05.2020	Many topics	No response	German
Quora.com	02.05.2020	Many topics	No response	English
Yahoo Answers	02.05.2020	Many topics	No response	English