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DOUBLE ENTENDRE: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN CONTEMPORARY FRANCE

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ABSTRACT

Diversity and Inclusion is at the forefront of prevalent topics in today's globalized economy. All throughout the world there are varying discourse about what the definition of diversity is, and how it can be addressed to ensure inclusive action. In the professional world, as the pioneers for diversity and inclusion in a workplace, the human resource function of any large organization is tasked with addressing diversity, and developing a plan of action for inclusion. In France, due to its long-standing historical and cultural difficulties with the subject of diversity and its role in French society today, does not provide a substantial basis for what diversity is and how to address it. The central question that cuts to the core of the contents of this paper is: In a nation that does not conceive of itself as a diverse nation, cultivate inclusion? By extension, how can the Human Resource function of any organization define diversity and implement inclusivity, given societal and legislative limitations? This thesis will attempt to answer these questions and more by assessing the historical and legislative impact of the French nation's attitude toward diversity and inclusion and professional world case studies.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

We all have particular traits and characteristics that make us unique and different than the other individuals around us. These different traits and characteristics, that are never the same from one person to another, can be referred to as diversity. As humans, we are quite literally, surrounded by diversity, and are, therefore, very familiar with it and the way it influences our everyday lives. On an individual level we would all describe diversity a bit differently; however, we have six different primary dimensions and eight additional fluid dimensions in which we can identify diversity. The six primary characterizations of diversity as defined by Litvin are age, ethnicity, gender, physical appearance/abilities, race, and sexual orientation (Litvin, 1997). The fluid dimensions, which are often less visible, are education, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs and work experience (Litvin, 1997). Based on these fluid dimensions there stems values, beliefs, and attributes which include personality, and cognitive and behaviors styles.

When applied to the professional world, these varying demographic dimensions can be used to describe all workers, along with additional criterions concerning diversity specific to the workplace. For instance, within organizations additional diversity is applied through task-related knowledge and abilities, and status within the organization (Point & Singh, 2003). With this being said, diversity can be more specifically defined as a cluster of attributes (1) demographic related, (2) value and belief related, (3) personal cognition and behavior related, and (4) job and status-related.

Along with its many other roles within an organization, it is the role of the Human Resource function of any organization to address and understand the diversity present within the company, as well as, relay that message to the public, employees and clientele. Although a company's stance on diversity plays a very important role in the way in which they are perceived, many companies have a plethora of working definitions of diversity, and therefore, have varying motivations for implementing and sustaining inclusion in their workplace. As opposed to diversity, the definition of inclusion is much more straightforward but has many ways of being implemented into a workplace. The Society for Human Resource Management, otherwise known as SHRM, describes inclusion as separate from diversity, “the achievement of a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources and can contribute fully to the organization’s success” (“Diversity and Inclusion”, 2019). Thus, the combination of these two definitions is the traits and qualities that make people unique paired with the actions and behaviors that make them feel welcome. With this being said, within an organization it is not only Human Resources’ role to address diversity, but to provide a means of inclusion into the work environment.

In the United States, we consider ourselves a “melting-pot”, a home to many different populations of people from many different backgrounds and beliefs. The United States is full of diversity, and as a nation where everyone is constitutionally free, we shed light and pride ourselves in our ability to not only recognize diversity but also accept and embrace it. This diversity and inclusion expands passed the general in that we understand diversity and flows into the professional world. Every large employer in the United States, with a Human Resources department and who must abide by US legislation, has a diversity and inclusion statement that addresses the nation's definition of diversity and offers a means of inclusion to its workers and

clientele. On the contrary, France, a member of the European Union with a complicated past, possesses a differing viewpoint on diversity and inclusion and its role in the French workplace. Because France has a complicated history with defining diversity and implementing inclusion as a nation, it has been proven difficult for the Human Resource functions of many national and multinational companies in France to foster an inclusive environment. The issue that envelops the Human Resource function is France's inability, as a nation, to recognize diversity, or foster an inclusive environment, thus making it difficult for the Human Resource function of many companies based in and out of France, to do the same.

So how exactly does Human Resource Management address the subject of Diversity and Inclusion in France, and how does it differ from the United States? This central question can be addressed by assessing the role of historical and legislative limitations in France, as well as, conducting a comparative analysis of the discourse presented by national and multinational companies and their commitment to Diversity and Inclusion.

Diversity and Inclusion within a company is extremely important for the economic and social functioning of a corporation. It is a valuable asset to discuss diversity and show that it exists, as well as, establish an environment that sustains it. There are many components that affect the effectiveness of the Human Resource function within an organization and there are limitations placed on them that make it difficult to carry out their function. These limitations can be anything from historical and legislative, to systematically woven into the framework of the organization. The Human Resource function can only be as effective as the environment around it is; meaning that if the organization and the country that it is situated in do not have a strong grasp on diversity, the Human Resource function will be nearly useless in implementing initiatives for inclusion. Consistently throughout the corporate world it has been seemingly more

attractive to investors and clientele for an organization to market themselves, and for market competition purposes, to be, more diverse. Therefore, it is in an organization's best interest to focus its efforts and invest in inclusion for the overall success of the organization both internally and externally.

Chapter 2

History

Historically, as a nation, France has not had the same approach to diversity and inclusion and its role in society as a whole. During the Second World War, prior to the control of the Vichy Regime, the nation of France took a census that had a particularly insidious effect on minority populations in France. This census intentionally targeted Jewish citizens living in France, which ultimately led to the deportation of many Jewish people from France. Needless to say, since the atrocities that occurred during the Second World War, the idea of a census or any form of demographic information, is quite a sensitive subject in France. For this reason, following the end of the Second World War, in France there have been no public policies that target benefitting or confirming recognition of groups defined by race. In addition, following the Second World War, between the 1940s and early 1970s, France became a much more ethnically diverse society when millions of migrants from French colonial areas (until the 1950s and 1960s) migrated to France to take up jobs. These areas include North Africa, sub-Saharan Asia, and South-East Asia, along with individuals from Turkey and French overseas departments (Bleich, 2001). These immigrants were originally viewed as temporary economic migrants, but have since then increasingly have been accepted as permanent residents in France, and many of whom have taken up citizenship and brought over families and children to France. This has led to the transformation of France into a multi-ethnic and multicultural society, which is a key element of French society today. Regardless of these changes in society, many continue to refer to non-whites in the country as “immigrants” even if they were born in France, solely based on the color of their skin.

The first essential component in understanding France's conceptualization of diversity and inclusion is that, unlike many English-speaking and other Western European immigrant societies, France has intentionally avoided the implementation of racially conscious policies. This can be attributed to the nation's official "color-blind" ideals behind its policies and its irrefutable refusal to recognize ethnicity and race as social constructions. To further unpack the idea of "color-blindness" in the face of the law it is essential to understand France's constitutional principle of equality which, as it stands, rejects references to national, racial, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (Jansen, 2016). This model projects that the state should interact with its citizens on an individual level, not groups and communities, in order to provide equal treatment to all. This form of governance is attempting to establish "absolute equality" among citizens to ensure integration to benefit the interests of the citizens and the state itself. As a result of these ideologies, French authorities have rejected any form of targeted measure of ethnic, religious or linguistic groups (Jansen, 2016).

Legally, this "equity principle" has been interpreted as a prohibition on the French government from collecting data or statistics related to racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds under any circumstances. A 1978 law integrated into the French constitution regarding "data files, processing and individual liberties", which explicitly prohibits the collecting and processing of personal data that, directly or indirectly, reveals the racial and/or ethnic origins, or religion, of any individual. In essence, this means that there are no reliable existing statistics involving racial, ethnic and religious group information, and by extension, no statistics pertaining to discrimination against these groups. Although it is widely assumed that the French government established this type of law to prevent the events of WWII from occurring again, France's color-blind policy is detrimental to its societal growth as it fails to recognize the

diversity and the growing multiculturalism of the nation. Currently in France due to these color-blind policies and their implementation, conflict involving ethnic minorities is viewed as an immigration problem that conceals the racial discrimination inflicted on non-white “foreigners”, rather than cutting to the core of the issue at its source, the refusal of France, as a nation, to be inclusive.

Another very important aspect of France’s constitution is the law of *laïcité*, established in 1905. “Laïcité”, which in French literally means “secularity”, establishes a clear division between Church and State. At the time it was integrated into the constitution it was very beneficial because it separates France from its monarchical past, but in current French society has been the focal point of various debates concerning religious expression in France, particularly for Islamic migrants. For Muslim families who migrated to France the veil is not only a religious symbol but also a part of everyday life. Because the law of *laïcité* establishes a clear line between Church and State it, by extension, creates a separation between the State and religion as a whole. On April 11, 2011, France enacted a ban on the concealment of one’s face in public spaces which is punishable by a fine and/or the requirement of taking a class on the meaning of citizenship. Although *laïcité* has not directly been cited as having any part in the French government’s decision for the ban, this principle is central to the deeply ingrained value of freedom of religion. Its authority limits religious expression in public spaces. It is described by Emory Law, as a form of “fundamentalist secularism”, in a society in which *laïcité* functions as a tool of coercive cultural uniformity... especially among the immigrant population” (Nanwani, 2011). Although this may be an extreme view on the meaning of *laïcité*, it may help create an idea of how the French constitutional values are fundamentally built against those who

are not “traditionally French”, and therefore, do not fit into “traditional French society” even if they were born there.

While France’s *laïcité* law may intentionally, or unintentionally, target immigrant population as does color-blind public policy that fails to recognize diversity and its societal role. If the expression of diversity is prohibited, how is it expected that citizens recognize it? If we are unable to document diversity, it is difficult to prove it exists, and therefore by extension, prevent discrimination against it, achievable through inclusion. The issue is that because France as a nation cannot recognize diversity itself, it is impossible to justify that there is racism and religious bias present in the population because there is no way to prove that it exists. Therefore, of course, it’s clear on an individual level, through the color of someone’s skin, their name, and possible linguistic variation, that they are diverse, in the eyes of the law they are to be treated without difference, but not necessarily equal. These are fundamentals of French society and legislation that sets limitations on the job of any Human Resources function much more difficult and complex.

Chapter 3

Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

There are tangible and intangible reasons that a company might choose to invest in diversity Human Resource Management programs. The economic-focused components of investment in HR Management diversity and inclusion programs are usually tangible and can be measured in monetary terms. These tangible benefits are *increased market share, productivity and innovation*, and *employee attraction and retention*. Having a diverse workplace allows companies to effectively market to and communicate with groups with different cultural, racial, and religious backgrounds, which in turn could allow access to diverse markets and could lead to increases in sales and profit (Morley, 2018). To that effect, according to a qualitative study done by Dass and Parker in 1999, “44 percent of managers in 34 multinational firms believed that the most compelling reason to implement diversity programs was to tap into diverse markets and customers” (Dass & Parker, 1999). Diversity also widens viewpoints and accounts for different ideas and perspectives, which translates to the creation of richer solutions, obtaining better results, and maximizing productivity and innovation. In terms of employee attraction and retention, diversifying the recruitment process pool of applicants increases a company’s chances of finding the best fit for the job. Once established as an employee, it is crucial that individuals feel valued and respected because individuals who are part of an inclusive work environment are less likely to leave. In conjunction these things can successfully help reduce expenses related to recruitment and retention.

In addition to the tangible benefits of integrating diversity and inclusion programs, there are equally as important intangible benefits that are oftentimes subjective and not measurable monetarily. These intangible benefits include improved *employer brand and reputation*, a

positive and healthy work environment, and opportunities for employee growth and development (Morley, 2018). It is crucial within an organization that fair treatment is exercised as employees value it, and a diverse workforce can make an employer more attractive to potential investors and improve the company's public image. In many organizations diversity can allow for a more tolerant and accepting atmosphere which is a catalyst for enhanced teamwork and mutual understanding. Lastly, when diversity is integrated into a workspace employees may feel positively challenged by exposure to new ideas and perspectives which stimulates and encourages personal growth.

It is irrefutable that diversity is an essential part of the functioning of an organization, but the way in which inclusion is implemented is oftentimes not uniform, particularly in France. Being that France as a nation scoots around the idea of diversity and inclusion in a general sense, it makes Human Resource Management's job much more complex and multifaceted. If a French company chooses to integrate a diversity and inclusion statement and take steps toward inclusion, not only does the Human Resource function have to define what diversity is in the context of that organization without competing with the national discourse of diversity, but also a way to go about creating an inclusive environment of that specified diversity. Based on the intangible and tangible benefits presented above that render a company much more attractive to the public and potential investor, there is no reason a company would not want to be more competitive, but there are three identifiable problems that make diversity and inclusion difficult for companies. The first obstacle to this is the French nation's definition of diversity which creates inconsistency in a companies' definitions of diversity and therefore, competing discourses about it among companies. Secondly, the implementation of inclusion itself because there are no formal guidelines set by the nation or the overarching intergovernmental

organization (i.e.-European Commission). Then the third problem which ties both of the above problems is the fact that since the 1978 law France as a nation is not allowed to conduct demographic studies on its inhabitants, neither can organizations. This problem is especially crucial because just as the nation itself experiences difficulty in defining diversity, as do corporations, which creates differing discourses concerning how to deal with discrimination against it.

For multinational companies there are particular facets of diversity that, when they chose to establish inclusivity, and by extension, market themselves as diverse and inclusive, focus heavily on. Facets of diversity in the sense that companies focus on particular demographic groups that are specific enough to be diverse, but broad enough to touch a significant amount of individuals, which is consistent with the nation's definition of diversity. The most prominent diversity initiatives focused upon organizations with their headquarters in France, but that have existing locations in other countries, are gender equality, handicapped person integration, equal representation of generation in the workforce, social inclusion, and LGBTQ. It is essential to note that these are the diversity initiatives for French companies who have a presence in countries other than France, and so, therefore, market to individuals from various countries with competing and/or convergent ideas of diversity as France and among themselves. This means that a particular initiative that may be present in America and that has undergone a lot of progress, may not be as present and progressed in France, or at other organizational sites. This creates a lot of intraorganizational miscommunication as this presents the impression that there is more than one way to integrate inclusion, as well as, offers conflicting ideas of the company as a whole and its commitment to diversity. This could go both ways in the way that it could give a false impression that the company is very progressive in its approach to diversity, or that it is not

doing nearly enough in terms of its commitment to diversity. Many multinational organizations in France who are at least publicly diverse and inclusive are not shy about portraying that they are in the way that they market their inclusive progress.

Marketing material can take many forms, such as statistics, initiative, signed contracts and awards. For example, many organizations will offer statistics about the diversity of their company, but will not attribute credit to a source, nor offer information as to the methods used to come to their numerical conclusion. As previously stated in this paper, organizations in France are not permitted to take demographic information pertaining to race and ethnicity or religion from any of its workers, and so, therefore, we can assume that none of these statistics include individuals who these diverse qualities living in France, unless they did so voluntarily and without organization pressure. Although these statistics are essential to understanding the diversity present within an organization, they can be a false and/or incomplete representation of the true diversity and inclusive efforts of an organization. In addition to offering statistics, organizations will also offer information regarding initiative petitions they have signed, but do not express their devotion to it. Such as, an organization might say “signed the contract of diversity”, but will not include its impact on the organization as a whole. Following that idea, there are some initiatives that are country-specific, and so, therefore, the awards are equally country-specific. This is particularly true about organizational branches in America concerning the LGBTQ community. Because America is one of the pioneers of diversity and inclusion in the Human Resource Management field, many American branches of organizations have been very successful in the analysis of diversity trends in the United States. This is why American branches of French organizations have been very successful in inclusive strategies concerning the LGBT

community in comparison to its French branch counterparts, and although French organizations will market this as a success it is only a small representation of progress in that area.

Obviously it is difficult to capture the entirety of an organization's diversity and inclusion in just one, or a few website links, but it is essential for organizations to form a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Although it is difficult for any one company to be completely devoted to every aspect of diversity in their organization, the more effort that is placed on describing differences, and including it, the more effective an organization will be.

Dass and Parker offer us a view of four diversity perspectives that organizations adopt that portrays their strategic response to diversity. TABLE BELOW.

DIVERSITY PERSPECTIVES	PROBLEM STATEMENT	INTERNAL DEFINITION	PRESCRIPTION	DESIRED OUTCOME	STRATEGIC RESPONSE
Resistance perspective	Diversity as non-issue or threat	Not "us"	Sustain homogeneity	Protect the status quo	Reactive
Discrimination and fairness perspective	Differences cause problems	Protected groups	Assimilate individuals	Level the playing field for members of protected groups	Defensive
Access and legitimacy perspective	Differences create opportunities	All differences	Celebrate differences	Access to employees and consumers	Accommodative
Learning perspective	Differences and similarities offer opportunities and bear costs	Important differences and similarities	Acculturate; pluralism	Individual and organizational learning for long term effect	Proactive

FIGURE 2
Diversity Perspectives and Associated Strategic Responses

This table is crucial to understanding the way in which a company's perspective about diversity is associated with the way they respond to it. Although this chart was intended for companies, it can be extended to describe the French nation. The way in which the nation of France responds to diversity, at least on a racial/ethnic and religious level, is with a resistance

perspective. This means that the problem statement that the French republic, intentionally or unintentionally, projects to its citizens is that diversity is not an issue and that diversity (particularly on the immigration level) could potentially be seen as a threat. France uses this internal rhetoric of “not us” as if they are not ethnically and racial diversity to sustain homogeneity to protect the status quo of the nation. The resistance perspective is characterized by denial and avoidance, which is precisely what France has been doing to avoid the responsibility it has to recognize and strengthen efforts for inclusion.

National organizations seem to follow the French nation's ideals when faced with the subject of diversity and inclusion, therefore, enacting a resistant or discrimination and fairness perspective. Multinational French organizations, who tend to have more experience working with diversity due to their diverse clientele and employees, have a much different approach to diversity. Many multinational French organizations are somewhere between the discrimination and fairness perspective and the access and legitimacy perspective. Very few large organizations have gone as far as to be considered have a learning perspective of diversity and proactive response as there is still a discrepancy between the perspective of diversity a company has, and the levels of discrimination within them.

Because diversity on a racial, ethnic and religious level is avoided in France, these topics are also avoided when it comes to discrimination in the workplace. Particularly in recent years, there has been a great level of discrimination in the workplace that goes unnoticed or unreported within organizations, which is detrimental to inclusivity. Because diversity is seen as a threat to society, this same type of mentality trickles over into the workplace and diversity is seen as a threat in organizations on French soil and who are under the French constitution. Because individuals and organizations feel threatened by potential diversity, there is room for direct and

indirect discrimination on the part of the organizations and/or the individuals within it. Direct discrimination refers to when an individual is treated unfavorably because of a protected attribute. Indirect discrimination is much subtler and much more difficult to detect in the workplace. Indirect discrimination occurs when regulatory rules and practices, that were accepted for economic and functional reasons, has a discriminatory impact on an employee, or employees with a protected attribute. Understanding the difference between the two is extremely important because, whereas one is overt, the other is much more systemic. The term indirect discrimination is almost directly linked to the term systemic discrimination brought forth in the United States which refers to the patterns of behavior that are part of the organization structure and practices, and which creates or perpetuates disadvantage for racialized persons. Although in the United States we are allowed to talk about systemic discrimination, particularly against racialized persons, because racial diversity is not recognized under French national law companies cannot talk about it either, and therefore the issue becomes more of a problem because they cannot prove that it exists in the organizational context. This is what makes it so difficult for Human Resource Management because even if a member of a disfavored group files that they were discriminated against, management can say that under the law they are not a member of a protected group, and are therefore not able to seek help for wrongdoings.

Discrimination in the workplace can take many forms and can be overt and less overt. Discrimination that goes under the umbrella of indirect and systemic discrimination are things like: discriminatory barriers in the recruitment and hiring process, restricted access to management trainee programs and higher-level jobs, and exclusion of qualified women from traditionally male-dominated fields of work. To reduce discrimination within the recruitment process, since January 2017, after the law of “Égalité et Citoyenneté” was passed in July 2016, in

companies with 50 employees or more, individuals in charge of recruitment must partake in non-discrimination training every 5 years. France has passed a law concerning the equal treatment of women and men in the workplace, as well as, antidiscrimination against handicapped persons. French organizations are also extremely concerned with the right to work for people from different generations and equal opportunity for students just starting out in the workplace because the French republic places high importance on it. Equal opportunity among generations is one of the focal points for many French organizations when advocating for diversity and inclusion, among many other issues that are seen as core issues, not only in the workplace but in the society as a whole.

Now that we have established the potential components of diversity and inclusion in its many forms in an organization in France, it is essential that we are able to see them in application. In the proceeding chapter using all of these particular elements of diversity in the workplace, I will present case studies that encompass the possible shortcomings and successes multinational companies possess when presenting the issue of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Chapter 4

Case Studies

There are many major components of diversity and inclusion described above that will be used during this case study that will portray the shortcomings and successes that multinational corporations have when integrating and describing their take of diversity and inclusion. The first aspect of the organization that I will address is their target audience, or the particular demographics that they focus their efforts, or are working towards supporting. Following, I will examine if the target audience is country-specific (i.e.- only applies in America or another country), in conjunction with their statistics and awards on said demographic, and analyze the methods and where the statistics and awards were attained, if the information is available. After that, using Dass and Parker's table, I will offer an analysis of the company's diversity perspectives that ultimately portray their strategic response to diversity. Lastly, I will then examine Human Resources' role and how there are limitations that make it difficult for them to effectively examine the diversity of their company and identify potential strategies that could have a lasting impact on the organization as a whole. Many different organizations have differing discourses about what diversity is, and how to go about implementing it. Large corporations that have a presence in more than one country have branches that have particularly divergent discourses about the way in which diversity is approached organization-wide.

L'Oréal Case Study

One organization that is particularly interesting when addressing the subject of diversity and inclusion is the multinational corporation founded in France in 1909, L'Oréal. L'Oréal takes the title as the largest cosmetic and beauty company in the world whose headquarters can be found in Haut-de-Seine, France. This organization currently employs more than 87,000

individuals worldwide in over 140 countries, and therefore needless to say, has an extremely diversified employee network. L'Oréal has a very specific way of marketing diversity and inclusion to its employees and to the general public that is interesting and gives the company a pristine image. It is clear in viewing the L'Oréal website, intended for both American and French viewers, that the organization places high importance on the topic of diversity and inclusion and makes a conscious effort to portray it to its employees and the rest of the world. To unpack this further I will provide an analysis of the way in which L'Oréal produces messages about diversity and inclusion throughout its website to both its French and American audiences. Since L'Oréal is a multinational corporation, it is difficult to navigate through specific aspects of diversity and inclusion that exist in some countries that may be nonexistent or different in another. In the English and French versions of the website, L'Oréal is extremely consistent and portrays the same messages about diversity and inclusion to its American audience as it does its French one, which means the target audience and demographics the organization is trying to capture in its diversity and inclusion campaigns are the same in both countries. For French and American audiences, the website's section devoted to diversity and inclusion is structured as follows: Diversity and Inclusion, key figures, strategy, and key examples. The "Diversity and Inclusion" for both the French and American audiences addresses the organizational goal of being an inclusive environment and provides viewers with a video that describes people through their names visually, without using actual people or actors, touching on current workplace issues by putting a particular emphasis on individuality in the workplace.

Being that L'Oréal is a beauty and cosmetic company and its products are primary marketed towards women, their main target audience is primary women as well. This is something the diversity and inclusion task force is able to capitalize on when creating a

demographic to support and target, which is exactly what they do in the key figures section of the website. The “key figures” section of the organization contains statistics that portray initiatives to which L’Oréal is devoted and has improved upon in the context of the organization. These two demographics include gender equality, specifically in the case of women, and handicapped persons. The first initiative that L’Oréal places a huge amount of emphasis on is gender equality in the context of the work environment signaling improvements on women in top management, women’s career development, and women in the total workforce, which have all improved since 2010. In addition, they provide statistics to both the American and French audiences about all entities based solely in France, of the evolution of the median gender salary gap that was claimed to be 10% in 2007 that is now 0% in 2019 (*L’Oréal Key Figures, 2020*). However, in analyzing the mean salary there is a discrepancy that reveals a pay gap that favors men in all categories (2,4%) in 2019 (*L’Oréal Key Figures, 2020*). The organization then discusses parental leave for women and new parents specific to 4 countries in which L’Oréal is located: France, USA, Sweden, and the UK. In addition, it is discussed that L’Oréal has certifications in 30 countries, of the 130 countries they operate in, concerning Gender Equality (*L’Oréal Key Figures, 2020*).

After discussing improvements in women’s diversity throughout the organization, the website continues into the second initiative that the organization relies heavily upon, handicapped persons. Statistics, with a focus on France, show that there have been improvements in the total and direct employment of handicapped persons, and that there are a total of 1,280 handicapped persons working at L’Oréal (*L’Oréal Key Figures, 2020*). It is important to note that following the research on women and handicapped persons, L’Oréal does not offer in-depth statistics about any other diverse groups, but rather their initiatives and commitment to inclusion, offering statistics on solidarity and people’s engagement with diversity within the organization.

Following the “key figures” page, is the “strategy” page in which L’Oréal describes in more depth its commitment to diversity through the identification of 3 primary diversity categories where again we see women and handicapped persons, with the addition of social, economic and multicultural origins. Within the strategy section the statistics on women and handicapped persons are reiterated with further emphasis on the specific L’Oréal initiatives toward these efforts. In the context of social, economic and multicultural origins, L’Oréal identifies itself as a founding member of the first Diversity Charter in France in 2004 along with a statement, “As a global enterprise, L’Oréal is inherently multi-cultural. Since we provide beauty products for people from every background and every continent, diversity within our company is not only fair, it is good business” (“L’Oréal Diversity”, 2020), acknowledging not only the diversity itself but also the fact that it is “good business” to have that diversity within the organization.

Following the “strategy” website page, after having established its core initiatives as a whole, L’Oréal then zeros in on specific countries that have taken diversity initiatives external from the organization that helps affirm its diversity and inclusion initiatives. This is particularly interesting because it is quite specific and elaborates on the positives of their diversity campaign in specific countries, but evades the possible negatives in other countries that were not mentioned. All of these elaborations are in L’Oréal’s three defining diversity initiatives, with an addition of LGBTI initiatives specifically in the United States and Mexico. This is important to note that LGBTI rights are few and far between in many of the countries that L’Oréal operates out of, which asserts further my claim, that these are extremely specialized initiatives that only apply to specific countries only. It is important to note further that since at its core this is a French organization, there is no mention of ethnicity or race as being any type of factor in

diversity. This goes back to the French nation's inability to recognize an individual's race. Because L'Oréal is at its core a French organization when marketing its diversity and inclusion and in doing so as uniform as possible across operating countries, it is difficult for the Human Resource function of L'Oréal to come right out and talk about protected persons under American law based on race. By using the umbrella term "multicultural origins" is still somewhat integrating race by skirting the actual terms which are not allowed to be used under French law.

When examining L'Oréal's public approach to diversity and inclusion under the lens of the Dass and Parker model, the organization, at least overtly, would be seen to have an access and legitimacy perspective of diversity with an accommodative strategic response to it. This means that their problem statement is one that reflects that differences create opportunity in which the prescription is to celebrate differences with a desired outcome of access to employees and consumers with an accommodative strategic response to diversity. Within the organization's "strategy" page, it states "Studies have also proven that the more diverse the team, the more effective the decisions they make: The greater the variety of viewpoints the greater the chances for success. We see evidence of it every day" ("L'Oréal Diversity", 2020), which legitimizes its accommodative strategic response to diversity. With this statement, L'Oréal proves to its employees and clients that diversity enhances the effectiveness and success of the organization, which is something that they see every day at L'Oréal because of the diverse perspectives that the organization has at its disposal. Although L'Oréal does appear accommodative and that it values diversity and wants to foster inclusion, this may be the case for specifically protected and recognized demographic groups, and not for others. As we have seen, L'Oréal's main focus demographics are women, handicapped persons, and people of every social, economic, and multicultural origin. Of course these are important demographics to focus efforts, but there have

been countless laws in France that have in previous years made it essential to have at least a significant percentage of the organization be composed of women and this is something that can easily be tracked through data analysis. Handicapped persons is something that France as a nation has been working towards giving accessibility, and so it is fitting that L'Oréal would focus on making its organization much more accommodative to individuals with disabilities. This is another demographic group that is also much more trackable, as there is data available on the subject on the L'Oréal website. Women and handicapped persons are demographics that can somewhat be categorized within the organization with statistics, but once we reach the subject of social, economic, and multicultural origin, it becomes much more difficult to track as this is a very broad category that encompasses a plethora of individuals. The only type of statistic mentioned on the L'Oréal website that is associated with this topic is that the organization has individuals of 168 nationalities spread across 78 subsidiaries (source). While this may be an extraordinary number of nationalities present within the organization, it does not really reflect the breakdown of diverse groups. This is due to the Human Resource function to actually produce data on the more specific diverse groups within the organization due to the ban on the production of statistics that have anything to do with race in France. Going back to the fact that L'Oréal is a French organization they stay away from that topic entirely and address it more as an overarching, or umbrella category rather than a specific category. My argument is that L'Oréal has these 3 overarching categories and focuses its efforts on topics that can produce statistics to portray how diverse they are without being hindered by their inability to take statistics on certain demographic groups within the organization. While this information may be available in America because of some company rights, they cannot do this in their French branches, which makes it difficult for the organization to accommodate groups that they

technically are not allowed to recognize as being diverse. This produces a catch 22 on the part of the organization because although the organization does not want to single out certain individuals as different, L'Oréal cannot be inclusive to these individuals without recognizing their diversity. With that being said, L'Oréal has worked to build its multinational corporation with attention to diversity and the means of making the organization inclusive in spite of all of the laws prohibiting them to recognize particular facets of diversity within the organization.

Monoprix Case Study

The next company that I will be analyzing is Monoprix. Monoprix is a major national retail company based in France founded in 1932. Monoprix's parent company is Group Casino which is a multinational corporation, but Monoprix operates almost exclusively in France with a few subsidiaries scattered in other parts of the world. For purposes of this paper we will focus solely on the Monoprix stores that operate within France to offer a national example of diversity and inclusion in France as we have already looked at diversity and inclusion from the multinational perspective with L'Oréal in our last case study. The Monoprix website is not as organized and specific as the L'Oréal website when it comes to diversity and inclusion, but it can be argued that this is due to the fact the Monoprix is a French national organization and does not have influence from other countries (i.e.- America or UK) on diverse perspectives and tactics from inclusion. Since Monoprix operates almost entirely nationally and its website targets French people, Monoprix offers a prime example for well-known French national organizations with a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Monoprix's website, Monoprix.fr, written in French and intended for a French audience, offers statistics and initiatives that the company has established in recent years. The initiatives that Monoprix establishes are centered around

recruitment methods within the organization. What the organization has established as important initiatives are equality for women and recruitment among younger generations and older generations. This is consistent with French labor laws encouraging companies to hire younger and older workers, and of course, maintain a specific amount of women in employee positions. The first statement on Monoprix's website is that the human resource function of the organization puts a great deal of emphasis on equal opportunity, the fight against discrimination and the promotion of diversity at the heart of all actions ("Monoprix L'égalité", 2020). Following, they state that since they have a presence in over 80% of French cities induces a strong mix of populations within its workforce: disability, cultural diversity, sexual orientation... which testifies to the richness of the brand and allows the affirmation of the organization positioning itself as a corporate citizen and social responsibility ("Monoprix L'égalité", 2020). With this statement they affirm their target audience as the French population and their employees, and establish that they believe integrating diversity and inclusion is a corporate and social responsibility. Continuing through the page, they then list all of the diversity accomplishments they have had since 2005 within the organization. For example, they discuss how they have made changes in recruitment methods since 2005 that promote a more diverse workforce, how they have signed the charter of diversity and the charter of LGBT community workplace engagement and various other charters. The website proceeds to describe their initiative for workplace equality for women with statistics showing that 52.1% of managers are women with a statement that reads, "the law for the freedom to choose one's professional future of September 5, 2018, makes pay equality between men and women an obligatory for companies" ("Monoprix L'égalité", 2020), affirming that they do abide by this law. Continuing on this webpage we see the two remaining initiatives: the employment of young and old citizens.

For young people and students, Monoprix has created an organization geared toward students pursuing a culinary university degree to allow for real-world experience in the culinary field while getting their schooling paid for. For adults over the age of 50, they note that Monoprix's human resources hiring team is aware of this popular in need of work ("Monoprix L'égalité", 2020) and is, therefore, cognizant of older workers' role within the organization. On this page, they do not address any other demographics that are present within the organization, nor any initiatives associated with them.

Following this page, Monoprix has another diversity page that Monoprix has received the "label of diverse" for the first time, according to "the state" (the nation of France), following a company audit of diversity. This label announcement is accompanied by a video, much like the video done by L'Oréal in the previous case study, which provides viewers with a video titled "Vous avez pas tout vu!", which in English means, "You haven't seen it all!". This video describes people through their names visually, without using actual people or actors, promoting individuality within the workplace setting at Monoprix touching slightly on group defined diversity like handicapped, seniors and young people, political opinion, and sexual orientation.

When examining Monoprix's public approach to diversity and inclusion under the lens of the Dass and Parker model, the organization, at least overtly, would be seen to have a discrimination and fairness perspective of diversity with a defensive strategic response to it. This means that their problem statement is one that reflects that difference causes problems and therefore has more of an "assimilate individuals" tactic for diversity than the celebration of differences. I say this because all throughout their webpage on diversity and inclusion they touch upon difference, but do not actually go into the benefits of difference, discussing only their compliance with laws and their specific role in creating a more diversified workplace. In contrast

to L'Oréal who makes it a point to celebrate differences and offer reasons as to why there should be diversity within the workplace, they only provide one-sided information as to what they have done in the fight against discrimination. The fight against discrimination and the invitation of diversity are two completely different things and while L'Oréal proves an accommodative strategy to diversity in making everyone feel welcomed into the organization, Monoprix possesses a strategy that portrays diversity as possible grounds for discrimination.

It seems that much of the statistics and initiatives Monoprix offers are those that reflect the wants of the French government. There are laws that are in place for every single one of the groups for which they provide assistance, and they make it known that these are the groups to which they focus their efforts. This could be in part due to pressure from the government, as well as, the ban on the production of statistics that have anything to do with race in France. Monoprix does not so much as mention anything that has to do with race or ethnicity anywhere throughout their website and does not allude to this even being a diversity factor. This factor makes it difficult for the organization to accommodate groups that they technically are not allowed to recognize as being diverse under the French law, and so, therefore, they do not even address them and target rather diverse groups that are recognized by the French state.

Contrasting the two organizations brings about very interesting areas of observation concerning a variety of different issues. For example, the fact that Monoprix is a national corporation and L'Oréal is a multi-national corporation. If we unpack this idea, of course, we would assume that L'Oréal would be perceived as more diverse because they are so large and truly do have more diversity than Monoprix. L'Oréal also has influence from countries that have strong implementation guidelines for diversity and inclusion, such as the United States and the United Kingdom that allow for diverse perspectives on the matter. Monoprix does not have that

type of luxury and must operate within the bounds of its host country's laws and overall definition of diversity and inclusion. It can also be argued that L'Oréal has a much broader audience to appeal to and therefore takes a much more accommodative stance to diversity. Monoprix is only appealing to a French audience, and although there is a huge amount of diversity in France particularly in recent years, they are only appealing to the "traditionally French society" with little to no initiatives for other diverse groups. Monoprix also references state-mandated laws that affirm their actions in terms of diversity as a corporation, which comes off as less effective than if they were employing these initiatives solely for the good of the organization and its employees.

One similarity between these organizations is that they both utilize videos to portray that workers are all diverse but work for the same organization which in turn makes them similar in the eyes of the organization. This can be seen as a push for heterogeneity as to say that if everyone is diverse than no is, which renders these initiatives unnecessary. The most important similarity between these organizations is that they are both limited by their inability to recognize certain aspects of diversity, particularly when it comes to race. Since the corporations cannot consider race as a form of diversity and provide statistics on the amount of racial diversity that exists within an organization, it is difficult to combat the existence of discrimination against it. With that being said, since these organizations do not recognize that race is a factor of diversity when discrimination does occur due to the race of an individual, it cannot technically be classified as discrimination and is therefore very difficult to prove. For racial discrimination to occur within a workplace that is predominantly French, in France, the victim must have concrete evidence of the event occurring, which can be difficult to attain. Each of these examples of French organizations, national or multinational, offers us interesting perspectives on how

diversity and inclusion work in the context of an organization. These example also gives us a better understanding of the limitations posed by the French government and its standards of diversity on a corporation. It is evident that the French state has much more influence on corporations that operate only on French soil, but also influences the action of multinational corporations based out of it.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Diversity plays a huge role in our everyday lives and in the workings of an organization. In and out of an organizational context it is apparent that diversity plays a huge role in the constitution of a culture. Within the context of an organization, diversity is influential as it provides diverse perspectives to enhance the work environment and further success of a corporation. It is essential that diversity be defined and valued in an organization through the implementation of inclusive initiatives. As we have established through the case studies, diversity and inclusion plays an integral role in the workings of an organization. An organization that cultivates and appreciates the diversity it is given can thrive and succeed when placed in the right conditions. There has been much light brought to issues such as gender equality, equal pay for women, and assistance of handicapped persons, because of the role the French government has taken to establish these initiatives as important under the law. We saw this first hand at L'Oréal and Monoprix as both of these organizations have taken a stance on these issues.

This goes to show that the French government has a huge influence on the way in which the human resource function of an organization manages diversity. For French organization, it is important that the organizational definition of diversity fit the definition set forth by the French government. Being that the government has produced laws concerning certain aspects of diversity, it is the top priority of most French organizations to provide an inclusive environment for them to abide by the laws (i.e.- gender equality and handicapped persons). Although the French government enhances these types of initiatives, due to its past and other current laws, it

makes it difficult for the Human Resource function to recognize certain aspects of diversity, such as race, within a workplace even if it would diminish discrimination in that area within the organization. It is also prohibited for the Human Resource function to collect data in this demographic, making it difficult to prove that it exists in the first place.

Discrimination is something that is very prevalent in our world today and it is something that will worsen if we do not recognize it. It is essential that the French government addresses the differences within its nation and stray from its “color-blind” policies, as they have proven ineffective when protecting minority groups. The French government cannot pick and choose the demographics it protects; it has a responsibility to protect all of its citizens. Since France has become much more multicultural in recent years it can no longer rely on its colorblind policies to fix all of the issues that involve diversity and discrimination within its population. The more that France embraces its diversity, the more individuals will embrace and learn to respect it as well. This will open many doors, not only for the government but society as a whole. Inclusion is essential to any functional society that can only be achieved by defining and accepting diversity.

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ACADEMIC VITA

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EDUCATION

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- Intensive study: conversation, grammar, literature and culture.
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Strasbourg, France, IFE: Institute for Field Education

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- 5 weeks of intensive interdisciplinary courses, 12-week full time internship in Human Resources.

WORK & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Quality Formation

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- Pilot and organize recruitment processes.
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The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA

PNC Leadership Development Center

Industrial/Organizational Psychology Undergraduate Research Assistant

February 2018- Present

- Create and organize necessary documents for assessment center participants.
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Department of Communication Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate Research Assistant "Antibiotic Resistance Team"

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- Co-author of "Explaining Diagnosis Treatment in Outpatient Visits for Upper Respiratory Tract Infections: Providers' Strategies and their Implications for Antibiotic Stewardship" accepted in the 69th Annual International Communication Association (ICA) Conference.
- Analyze data using various communicative coding schemes to assess the way in which doctors talk to their patients about the use of antibiotics and other drugs in a clinical setting.
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- Promote and encourage professional exploration and development among Communication Arts and Sciences majors.

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President and Business Manager (May 2018-May 2019), Social Media Chair (May 2017-May 2018)

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Schreyer Honors College Peer Mentor

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- Guide current gateway Schreyer Honors Scholars on their path to success in the Schreyer Honors College and created a plan to help them make an effective transition into the program.

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Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, Lambda Pi Eta Honor Society, Soroptimist International of Indian Rock Continuing Education Scholarship, Sam Family Fast Start Award and B1 DELF Certification, O'Brien Memorial Award in Communication Arts and Sciences, Nancy J. Metzger Award in the College of Liberal Arts.

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