

San Jose State University

**SJSU ScholarWorks**

---

Master's Theses

Master's Theses and Graduate Research

---

Fall 2020

## **Supervisor and Coworker Support: Their Moderating Roles on the Relationship Between Diversity Climate Perceptions and Retention-Related Outcomes**

Sarah Crouse

*San Jose State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd\\_theses](https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses)

---

### **Recommended Citation**

Crouse, Sarah, "Supervisor and Coworker Support: Their Moderating Roles on the Relationship Between Diversity Climate Perceptions and Retention-Related Outcomes" (2020). *Master's Theses*. 5142.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.vjed-8b4f>

[https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd\\_theses/5142](https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/5142)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Graduate Research at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@sjsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@sjsu.edu).

SUPERVISOR AND COWORKER SUPPORT: THEIR MODERATING ROLES ON  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIVERSITY CLIMATE PERCEPTIONS AND  
RETENTION-RELATED OUTCOMES

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Sarah Crouse

December 2020

© 2020

Sarah Crouse

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The Designated Thesis Committee Approves the Thesis Titled

SUPERVISOR AND COWORKER SUPPORT: THEIR MODERATING ROLES ON  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIVERSITY CLIMATE PERCEPTIONS AND  
RETENTION-RELATED OUTCOMES

by

Sarah Crouse

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2020

Dr. Megumi Hosoda      Department of Psychology

Dr. Howard Tokunaga      Department of Psychology

Dr. Paul Price      California State University,  
Fresno

## ABSTRACT

### SUPERVISOR AND COWORKER SUPPORT: THEIR MODERATING ROLES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIVERSITY CLIMATE PERCEPTIONS AND RETENTION-RELATED OUTCOMES

By Sarah Crouse

The purpose of the present study was to examine perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support as moderators of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and retention-related outcomes (affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions). Results from a self-report survey of 150 participants showed that neither perceived supervisor support nor perceived coworker support moderated the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and these outcomes. However, the results showed diversity climate perceptions were positively related to perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support, and independently predicted these retention-related outcomes. Results also showed that perceived supervisor support was more strongly related to these retention-related outcomes than perceived coworker support. These results suggest that employees' diversity climate perceptions, perceptions of their supervisors, and perceptions of their coworkers all contribute to an employee's choice to remain with their organization. For organizations focused on retaining employees, it is valuable to facilitate a positive diversity climate as well as ensure employees perceive that their supervisors and coworkers are supportive.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to thank my thesis committee for their guidance, support, and patience throughout the process of building this thesis. Most importantly, I would like to thank Megumi for always pushing me to make this thesis as good as it could be. Your feedback and guidance were always appreciated and your kind spirit and vast interests have inspired me. I am so grateful to have been afforded the opportunity to work with you. Howard, thank you for your support and for always being the voice of reason, not only throughout this thesis process, but throughout graduate school. Your down to earth attitude and sense of humor has propelled me through this program when things could have been too overwhelming to manage. Dr. Price, thank you for always supporting and encouraging my education. I would have never considered graduate school without your encouragement and although I have still never officially been your student, you have impacted my education and future more than words could express.

I would also like to thank my friends and family who relentlessly cheered me on and tried their best to keep me focused. I would especially like to thank Jessica Almanza who motivated me to keep going and was always willing to let me bounce ideas off her and talk statistics in the middle of the night. Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful husband, Brian. You have never doubted me and have always been my biggest supporter. Thank you for tolerating my late-night writing, calming me down when I was feeling overwhelmed, and reading every draft with me, even when you were falling asleep in your chair. I could not have accomplished everything I have without you!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables .....	viii
Introduction.....	1
Definition of Diversity Climate Perceptions.....	3
Outcomes of Diversity Climate Perceptions: Employee Retention.....	4
Affective commitment .....	6
Organizational identification .....	7
Turnover intentions.....	8
Moderators of the Relationships Between Diversity Climate Perceptions and Outcomes.....	9
Race/ethnicity .....	9
Other-group orientation .....	11
Procedural justice .....	12
Social Support.....	14
Perceived supervisor support.....	14
Perceived coworker support .....	18
The Present Study .....	22
Method .....	24
Participants.....	24
Procedure.....	26
Measures .....	27
Diversity climate perceptions .....	27
Affective commitment .....	28
Organizational identification .....	28
Turnover intentions.....	29
Perceived supervisor support .....	29
Perceived coworker support.....	29
Demographic variables .....	30
Results.....	31
Descriptive Statistics.....	31
Pearson Correlations .....	32
Tests of Hypotheses .....	34
Perceived supervisor support .....	35
Perceived coworker support.....	39
Discussion.....	45
Summary of Findings.....	45
Perceived supervisor support .....	45
Perceived coworker support.....	48
Theoretical Implications .....	51

Practical Implications.....	53
Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions .....	55
Conclusion .....	59
References.....	60
Appendix.....	67

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographic and Background Characteristics of Survey Respondents .....	25
Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among the Variables.....	32
Table 3. Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Supervisor Support on Affective Commitment.....	35
Table 4. Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Supervisor Support on Organizational Identification.....	37
Table 5. Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Supervisor Support on Turnover Intentions .....	38
Table 6. Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Coworker Support on Affective Commitment.....	40
Table 7. Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Coworker Support on Organizational Identification.....	41
Table 8. Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Coworker Support on Turnover Intentions .....	43

## **Introduction**

The business case for diversity argues that organizations can maximize their innovation, creativity, and eventual profitability through effectively facilitating and managing diversity (Armstrong et al., 2010). For example, organizations that are diverse and inclusive are 33% more likely to outperform organizations in the bottom quartile for diversity and inclusion (Hunt, Prince, Dixon-Fyle, & Yee, 2018). Additionally, over three years, diverse and inclusive organizations have shown cash flows 2.3 times higher per employee than their less diverse and inclusive counterparts (Bersin, 2015).

However, the benefits diversity brings often depends on the employees' perception of the climate for diversity within the organization. Employees' diversity climate perceptions are defined as "employees' shared perceptions that an employer utilizes fair personnel practices and socially integrates underrepresented employees into the work environment" (McKay, Avery, & Morris, 2008, p. 350). Prior research has found that diversity climate perceptions are important to organizations because adverse diversity climate perceptions can have negative implications for employees, such as job dissatisfaction, stress, and burnout (Sliter, Boyd, Sinclair, Cheung, & Mcfadden, 2014), while positive diversity climate perceptions are related to preferable employee outcomes, including employee performance (Shore et al., 2009), satisfaction, and employee retention (Brimhall, Lizano, & Barak, 2014).

Employee retention has been a focus in many studies on diversity climate perceptions (Jauhari & Singh, 2013; Kaplan, Wiley, & Maertz Jr., 2011; McKay et al., 2007) as these perceptions can impact whether employees choose to turn over, especially for minority individuals (Avery et al., 2013; Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009; McKay et al., 2007). High turnover among minority employees can hurt organizations, as cultivating demographically diverse organizations facilitates greater innovation, increases productivity, and reduces absenteeism and turnover (Armstrong et al., 2010). Moreover, retaining diverse groups of employees can be challenging given that minority employees are 30% more likely to turn over than White employees (Hom, Roberson, & Ellis, 2008). Thus, failing to retain employees can be operationally (e.g., time, resources) and financially costly (McKay et al., 2007). Perceptions of diversity climate have been shown to be related to job attitudes that predict turnover. These attitudes include affective commitment (Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009), organizational identification (Cole, Jones, & Russell, 2016), and turnover intentions (Stewart, 2011).

Though researchers have investigated the relationships between diversity climate perceptions and various outcomes, little research has been conducted to investigate potential moderators of these relationships (Cole et al., 2016; McKay et al., 2007; Pugh, Dietz, Brief, & Wiley, 2008; Singh & Selvarajan, 2013). Thus, the present study seeks to add to the research on the moderators of diversity climate perceptions by hypothesizing that social support, in the form of perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support, moderates the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and the

outcomes related to retention (i.e., affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions).

The sections that follow define diversity climate perceptions, review the literature on the outcomes of diversity climate perceptions on affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions. It also describes the known moderators of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and outcomes (e.g., race, gender).

### **Definition of Diversity Climate Perceptions**

As mentioned earlier, diversity climate perceptions are defined as “employees’ shared perceptions that an employer utilizes fair personnel practices and socially integrates underrepresented employees into the work environment” (McKay et al., 2008, p. 350). In other words, diversity climate perceptions are an employee’s interpretation and evaluation of how the organization works to facilitate a diverse and inclusive atmosphere (Hicks-Clarke & Iles, 2000). As the term diversity climate has been defined as “employees’ shared perceptions of the policies, practices, and procedures that implicitly and explicitly communicate the extent to which fostering and maintaining diversity and eliminating discrimination is a priority in the organization” (Pugh et al., 2008, p. 1423), diversity climate is often used interchangeably with the term diversity climate perceptions. Additionally, with research on the topic of diversity climate being a relatively new topic within the literature, it has also been defined utilizing other terms, such as diversity promise fulfillment (Buttner, 2010) and perceived organizational value of diversity (Avery, 2013).

Diversity refers to social and cultural differences among people (e.g., age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation) and inclusion has been defined as the degree to which employees feel involved in organizational processes, including having access to information and resources, feeling a sense of connectedness to supervisors and coworkers, and being able to partake in the decision-making process (Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998). Diversity climate perceptions are fostered by ensuring management promotes diversity through valuing characteristics that make employees different and ensuring these differences do not hinder opportunities for them (Kaplan et al., 2011). The following section describes the literature on the outcomes related to diversity climate perceptions, specifically those relating to employee retention.

### **Outcomes of Diversity Climate Perceptions: Employee Retention**

Diversity-mindful organizations that take steps to express their value in and support of diversity are more likely to be viewed positively by their employees, leading to positive employee and organizational outcomes (Mckay et al., 2007). For example, employees who work in diverse and inclusive climates are more likely to have higher job satisfaction, career commitment, supervisor satisfaction, career satisfaction, and career future satisfaction (Hicks-Clarke & Iles, 2000), involvement in their work (Yang & Konrad, 2011), increased performance (McKay et al., 2008), and lower turnover rates (Stewart, 2011). Alternatively, those who feel their organization does not value or is not effective at managing diversity are more likely to feel less valued, integrated, and represented by the organization, and are thus more likely to leave the organization (Cox, 1993).

Much research on diversity climate perceptions agrees that their outcomes are a function of social exchange theory (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015a; Avery et al., 2013; Cole & Salimath, 2013). Social exchange theory “refers to those voluntary actions of actors that are motivated by the returns they are expected to elicit from others” (Blau, 1964, p. 91). According to this theory, a bond is created between the employee and the organization where the organization meets the needs and values of the employee and in turn the employee responds with positive organizational outcomes, as social exchange elicits the felt obligations and the norm of reciprocity (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015a). If employees believe their organization values differences among them and involves them in organizational processes, they will respond to positive diversity climate perceptions with positive outcomes in the form of employee attitudes and behaviors, such as increased job satisfaction and performance (Brimhall et al., 2014; Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013; Kaplan et al., 2011; Lee & Mowday, 1987; McKay et al., 2007; Stewart, 2011).

In recent years, much diversity climate research has focused on turnover and the retention of employees, as many of the positive employee outcomes related to diversity climate have been shown to be predictors of retention (Jauhari & Singh, 2013; Kaplan et al., 2011; McKay et al., 2007). Employee retention or reduction of turnover is important to organizations’ bottom line, as there are high costs associated with the recruiting, training, and orienting of new employees (Fakunmoju, Woodruff, Kim, Lefevre, & Hong, 2010). Some of the most predictive variables of retention are affective commitment (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015b; Simosi, 2012), organizational identification (Cole et al.,

2016; Mael & Ashforth, 1995), and turnover intentions (Abrams, Ando, & Hinkle, 1998; Kaplan et al., 2011; McKay et al., 2007; Stewart, 2011).

**Affective commitment.** Affective commitment has been defined as the identification with and involvement in an organization that results from the degree to which a person is emotionally attached to his or her organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). In other words, affective commitment refers to an emotional bond employees feel with the organization they work for (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015b).

Research has found that diversity practices and climate perceptions are related to affective commitment (Cox, 1993; Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009). For example, Newman, Nielsen, Smyth, Hirst, and Kennedy (2018) found that diversity climate was related to affective commitment among refugee employees. The authors argued that a supportive diversity climate discourages discrimination and provides refugee employees with personal psychological resources such as hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience, which leads to feelings of attachment and commitment to the organization.

In another study, Wolfson, Kraiger, and Finkelstein (2011) evaluated the potential of diversity climate perceptions to predict affective commitment. The authors suggested that a climate for diversity fosters an inclusive culture by which employees feel their individual identities are valued and their needs are fulfilled, leading to positive attitudes and feelings toward the organization. Their results showed that diversity climate perceptions were strongly and positively associated with affective commitment, suggesting that creating a positive diversity climate with policies that support inclusion are valuable to fostering an emotional bond to the organization.

**Organizational identification.** Organizational identification is defined as “the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization in which he or she is a member” (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, p. 104). In other words, organizational identification involves the psychological merging of the employee and the organization into a concept of “we,” such that the employee feels that they are a part of the organization as much as the organization is a part of themselves (van Knippenberg, 2000). As people identify themselves with the organization, the organization’s values, norms, interests, and goals are incorporated into their self-definition (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Through this, the organization’s goals become incorporated into the employee’s identity.

Organizational identification is developed when employees’ socio-emotional needs, such as the need to be valued, respected, and cared for, are satisfied (Frenkel & Yu, 2011). Although organizational identification and affective commitment have similarities, the most distinct difference is centered in the fact that identification involves an individual’s self-definition, by which the organization is incorporated into the employee’s self-concept, whereas affective commitment is based on emotional attachment to the organization with the understanding that the individual and the organization are separate entities psychologically (van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006).

Diversity climate perceptions have been shown to be related to organizational identification (Cole et al., 2016). According to Cox’s (1993) theoretical interactional model of cultural diversity (a framework that suggests the type of diversity in an organization will interact with characteristics of the climate, leading to positive or

negative organizational outcomes), diversity climate perceptions have an impact on individuals' affective reactions such as their level of organizational identification due to how employees feel about themselves and their appraisal of their organization. For example, a study by Cole et al. (2016) found a positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification. The authors suggested this relationship was due to organizations signaling and promoting a value for diversity through policies and procedures that led employees to perceive their organization as fair and just, meeting their individual values and needs and matching their psychological need to maintain a positive perception of self.

**Turnover intentions.** Turnover intention may be defined as the intention of an employee to leave his or her employer (Hom et al., 2008). Intention to leave has been found to be the best predictor of actual voluntary turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Lee & Mowday, 1987). Employee turnover has been a key outcome studied in diversity literature as evidence has shown that turnover can be a substantial problem for organizations. Given that the cost of employee turnover for U.S. employers is expected to increase from \$600 billion in 2018 to \$680 billion by 2020 (Tarallo, 2018), retaining employees has become critical for organizational success.

Diversity climate perceptions have been found to have a negative relationship with turnover intentions. For example, McKay et al. (2007) found a negative relationship between perceived diversity climate and turnover intentions. Similarly, Gonzalez and Denisi (2009) found a negative relationship between diversity climate and intention to quit in minority employees. A negative relationship between diversity climate

perceptions and turnover intentions was also found in a study by Stewart (2011), who suggested this relationship occurs because a positive diversity climate signals to diverse employees that they are cared for by fulfilling a psychological contract (implicit or unwritten expectations or promises that an employee forms with the organization) and providing a sense that employees are part of and fit in with the organization, leading to a decrease in the desire to turn over.

Although research has shown that diversity climate perceptions are related to affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions, research has also shown that such relationships vary as a function of various demographic factors (Avery et al., 2013; Kossek & Zonia, 1993; McKay et al., 2007) and organizational factors (Avery et al., 2013; Buttner, Lowe, & Billings-Harris, 2010; Guerrero, Sylvestre, & Muresanu, 2013). The following section describes studies that have examined moderators of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and outcomes.

### **Moderators of the Relationships Between Diversity Climate Perceptions and Outcomes**

Few studies have been conducted on the potential moderators of diversity climate perceptions (McKay et al., 2007). However, when the moderators of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and outcomes are studied, much of the research has focused on the race and gender of employees (Dwertmann, Nishii, & van Knippenberg, 2016).

**Race/ethnicity.** Research has shown that individuals in minority groups are more likely to be influenced by the diversity climate perceptions they hold of the organization than non-minority groups of employees (Avery et al., 2013). Historically, diversity and

inclusion initiatives have focused on minority individuals, with the goal of increasing representation of women and ethnic minorities, especially in positions of power. This was initially driven by Equal Employment Opportunity laws and affirmative action obligations, but diversity management has recently been motivated by the organizational benefits that have been the consequence of employee and leadership diversity (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015b). Because of this, employee outcomes related to diversity management and diversity climate perceptions have been connected to their demographic status, particularly their racial and gender demography (Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009).

Gonzalez and Denisi (2009) found a moderating effect of race/ethnicity on the relationship between diversity climate and affective commitment. Their results found a positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, but the relationship was stronger for African American employees than for employees of other race/ethnicities. The authors suggested that minority individuals might be more aware of dissimilarities between them and others within the organization and question their sense of belongingness to the organization, leading to lowered levels of affective commitment.

In another study, Cole et al. (2016) found that having a racially dissimilar supervisor moderated the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification, such that individuals with high diversity climate perceptions had lower organizational identification when their supervisor was racially similar to themselves than when their supervisor was racially dissimilar to themselves. That is, if White employees perceive that their organization values diversity, but their supervisor is the same

race/ethnicity (also White), they are less likely to identify with their organization, compared to if their supervisor is a different race/ethnicity (minority). The authors suggest that this occurs because supervisors are seen as agents of the organization and having a racially dissimilar supervisor acts as a reinforcement or fulfillment of the organization's commitment to facilitating a positive diversity climate. This suggests that individuals who value diversity are likely to identify themselves more with the organization when they hold positive diversity climate perceptions and the organization actively shows their support for diversity (i.e., having diversity in supervisors) because the organization is meeting the employees' needs and aligning with their individual values.

Race of employees may have an impact on an employee's choice to remain with the organization. McKay et al. (2007) examined how race might affect diversity climate perceptions in predicting employee retention. Their results showed that although diversity climate perceptions were negatively related to turnover intentions, regardless of the employee's race, the relationship was strongest among Black employees. These results suggest diversity climate perceptions are a strong factor in predicting employee retention overall; however, employees of some racial groups (e.g., Black employees) are more influenced by this than employees of other racial groups.

**Other-group orientation.** Avery et al. (2013) reported that other-group orientation, defined as the extent to which individuals interact and feel comfortable with other ethnic groups, was a moderator of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and job-pursuit intentions (intentions to apply for a job). More specifically, they hypothesized

that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and job-pursuit intentions would be stronger for individuals with higher other-group orientation than those with low other-group orientation. They hypothesized that other-group orientation would have a moderating effect on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and job-pursuit intentions because individuals high in other-group orientation are inclined to look for organizations that advertise a positive value of diversity, whereas those low in other-group orientation are unlikely to seek employment with more diverse organizations.

Their results showed support for their hypothesis as there was a stronger positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and job-pursuit intentions for those with higher other-group orientation, suggesting that job seekers who are other-group oriented are more likely to pursue jobs at organizations that appear to value diversity than job seekers who are less other-group oriented.

**Procedural justice.** Buttner et al. (2010) conducted a study to explore what drove employee outcomes for racial minorities as a result of diversity climate perceptions. The authors argued that employees form a psychological contract that for minority employees includes expectations regarding the diversity climate of the organization they work for. According to the authors, a positive diversity climate facilitates employee perceptions that the organization utilizes fair personnel practices, setting expectations that there will be fair decision-making processes, such as job assignment or resources allocation. However, if these expectations are not met, the incongruence of expectations and reality may lead employees to perceive a psychological contract violation. This violation

involving issues of unfair procedures is known as procedural injustice (Buttner et al., 2010).

Procedural justice is an individual's perception of organizational fairness in regards to decision-making systems (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002). Procedural injustice often leads employees to feelings of betrayal, decreased loyalty, and higher levels of turnover (Buttner et al., 2010). Because of this, the authors hypothesized that procedural justice would moderate the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational commitment, such that the relationship would be stronger when procedural justice was perceived as high than when it was low.

Using 182 business school faculty members, their results supported this hypothesis. They found that procedural justice moderated the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational commitment such that the relationship was stronger when procedural justice was low than when it was high. More specifically, organizational commitment was highest when both diversity climate perceptions and procedural justice were high, and organizational commitment was lowest when both were low. However, organizational commitment was relatively high when diversity climate perceptions were high and procedural justice was low. This suggests that maintaining a positive diversity climate through diversity climate perceptions is especially important for organizational commitment when employees are not confident in the procedural justice within the organization.

Some researchers (e.g., Cole et al., 2016; Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009; Guerrero et al., 2013) have begun to investigate more social or relationship-focused moderators of diversity on employee and organizational outcomes. Though little research has investigated the moderating role of support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and employee outcomes, social support has been found to have a promising moderating effect on organizational outcomes (Chiu, Yeh, & Huang, 2015).

### **Social Support**

Social support is defined as “information that leads a person to believe that he or she is cared for and loved, esteemed and a member of a network of mutual obligations” (Johari, Ahmad Ramli, Wahab, & Bidin, 2019, p. 4). Social support has been shown to operate as a buffer for employee stressors and strains (Hobfoll, 2002; Kawai & Mohr, 2015), as well as offer many of the resources a positive diversity climate provides, such as feelings of inclusion (Guerrero et al., 2013).

**Perceived supervisor support.** Perceived supervisor support has been defined as the degree to which employees regard their managers as being appreciative of their contributions, supportive, and caring of their well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Little research has evaluated perceived supervisor support as a moderator of outcomes related to diversity climate perceptions. However, some studies have shown that perceived supervisor support can have a moderating influence on various organizational and attitudinal outcomes, including the relationship between perceived investment in employee development and work behaviors (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010), perceived organizational support and organizational commitment (Adair Erickson & Roloff, 2008),

and perceived organizational support and turnover (Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, & Allen, 2007).

In their study, Kuvaas and Dysvik (2010) investigated the relationship between perceived investment in employee development (employee perception of an organization's commitment to help employees obtain new skills and competencies) and work behaviors, including work effort, work quality, and organizational citizenship behavior. The authors suggested that the relationship between perceived investment in employee development and work behaviors occurs based on social exchange theory, where organizations invest in employees and those employees reciprocate with positive work behaviors. The authors hypothesized that perceived supervisor support would moderate the relationship between perceived investment in employee development and work behaviors, such that the relationships between these would be stronger with higher perceived supervisor support than with lower perceived supervisor support. The strengthening effect of perceived supervisor support was hypothesized because employees view supervisors as responsible for implementing HR practices and as agents of the organization. Their results supported their hypothesis such that the positive relationship between perceived investment in employee development and work behaviors was stronger when perceived supervisor support was high than it was low.

Moreover, research has shown that supervisor support can have an influence on retention-related variables (Adair Erickson & Roloff, 2008; Maertz et al., 2007). In their study, Adair Erickson and Roloff (2008) were interested in investigating the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee organizational commitment after

a reduction in workforce. They argued that organizations that conduct a reduction in workforce face high turnover by employees who remain with the organization after the downsizing. This is likely to foster low morale among these employees. However, the authors suggested that effective communication and organizational support could buffer some of the negative consequences of a reduction in workforce. In particular, the authors suggested that perceived supervisor support might lessen some of the negative consequences for employees who remain with the organization after a reduction in workforce by providing them with other outlets to garner support. The authors argued that supervisor support might compensate for lack of perceived support provided by the organization by sending signals that employees are valued when employees perceive the organization as hostile or indifferent. Results showed support for their hypothesis and found that the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment was weaker when perceived supervisor support was high.

Similarly, Maertz et al. (2007) studied the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover. They suggested that perceived organizational support is related negatively to turnover because employees who perceive support from their organization have greater positive associations with and feelings of obligation to their organization, thus reducing their desire to turn over. These authors hypothesized that perceived supervisor support would moderate the negative relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover, such that the relationship would be stronger when perceived supervisor support is low, and weaker when perceived supervisors support is high. They argued that as supervisors have more frequent and

direct contact with employees than the organization as a whole, supervisor support or lack thereof would be more salient to employees than perceived organizational support, because supervisors are often associated with the provision of resources and benefits, such as recognition, feedback, consideration, assignments, schedules, and recommendations.

In other words, the authors suggested that regular supervisor contact may overshadow perceived organizational support, making it less of a factor when employees make turnover decisions, weakening the perceived organizational support-turnover relationship. Their results showed support for their hypothesis, such that the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover was stronger when supervisor support was perceived as low and weaker than when supervisor support was perceived as high, suggesting that there was a compensatory framework available for employees seeking out sources of support when making turnover decisions. In this way, when employees perceive lack of support from the organization, they may compensate it with supervisor support.

These studies suggest that perceived supervisor support could be a factor in evaluating the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and retention-related outcomes. Perceived supervisor support has been shown to counteract lack of perceived support provided by the organization through providing resources (Maertz et al., 2007), sending signals that employees are valued, and fostering perceptions of inclusion (Adair Erickson & Roloff, 2008). In other words, perceived supervisor support may be able to moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective

commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions, because it may be able to compensate for lack of resources and feelings of inclusion and value that are missing when diversity climate perceptions are low or adverse that lead to turnover and be a strengthening factor for positive organizational attitudes and behaviors when diversity climate perceptions are high or positive. Thus, the following hypotheses are tested:

*Hypothesis 1a:* Perceived supervisor support will moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment will be stronger when perceived supervisor support is high than when it is low.

*Hypothesis 1b:* Perceived supervisor support will moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification will be stronger when perceived supervisor support is high than when it is low.

*Hypothesis 1c:* Perceived supervisor support will moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions, such that the negative relationship will be weaker when perceived supervisor support is high than when it is low.

**Perceived coworker support.** Perceived coworker support has been defined as employees' beliefs of the extent to which their coworkers provide work-related and emotional assistance (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). Much of the literature examining the influence of support on various outcomes has focused on perceived organizational

support or supervisor-subordinate relationships rather than coworker relationships (Ladd & Henry, 2000). In many studies, perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support have not been differentiated from perceived organizational support (Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011). Because of this, some researchers have called for greater clarity in distinguishing between the measurement of supervisor and coworker support (Kim, Hur, Moon, & Jun, 2017; Kossek et al., 2011). Employees' interactions with their coworkers are often more frequent than their interaction with their supervisors and may have strong implications for employee well-being (Frenkel & Yu, 2011), employee organizational behaviors (Chiu et al., 2015), organizational attachment, and turnover intentions (Ahmad, Bibi, & Majid, 2016).

Like supervisor support, coworker support has also received little attention in the diversity climate literature (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). However, research on the moderating role of perceived coworker support suggests that it may provide employees with resources that can be utilized under adverse conditions (Chiu et al., 2015). Much of the research on perceived coworker support as a moderator has focused on stressor-strain relationships.

Some research (e.g., Chiu et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2017) suggests that, like supervisor support, employees utilize coworker support as social resource whereby they gain emotional and instrumental support from coworkers that may impact employee outcomes. For example, a study by Kim et al. (2017) found that the positive relationship between deep acting (an emotional state where felt and displayed emotions are congruent) and job performance was strengthened when employees perceived a higher level of coworker

support than a low level of perceived coworker support. The authors argued that coworker support is a resource that enables employees to cope with stressors by depending on coworkers when times are difficult at work. Indeed, they suggested that coworker support provides employees with emotional concern, instrumental aid, and information to help solve job-related problems more efficiently. Thus, the negative consequences of stressors are likely to be reduced when coworker support is available.

Moreover, Chiu et al. (2015) found that perceived coworker support weakened the relationship between role stressors and employee deviance. The authors explained that coworker support functions as a social resource that can be utilized to buffer the negative effects of role stressors such as role conflict (incompatible demands of employees relating to their job or position), role ambiguity (unclear expectations of an employee's role), and role overload (assumption of a role or multiple roles where the employee lacks the time, knowledge, skills, or ability to perform) that lead to employee deviant behaviors like production deviance (attacks on organizational processes, e.g., absenteeism, lateness, withholding effort), sabotaging equipment, gossiping about coworkers, and interpersonal aggression. In this way, coworker support has a buffering effect on the relationship between stressors and stress reactions, because it helps employees cope with role stressors. Despite this, little research has investigated the moderating effect that coworker support can have outside of research regarding stressors and strain.

Research has also found that coworker support plays a vital role in other employee and organizational outcomes, such as in boosting organizational commitment. Ahmad et al. (2016) investigated how support from coworkers moderated the relationship between

compensation, transactional leadership (leadership style that motivates by reward and punishment), and organizational commitment. They argued that the sharing of knowledge, skills, and received positive outcomes derived from coworker support (i.e., decreased job stress, improved job efficiency, and increased motivation) lead to feelings of reciprocity toward the organization by means of increased commitment. Their results showed that the positive relationship between compensation and organizational commitment was stronger when coworker support was high than when it was low. The authors also found that the positive relationship between transactional leadership and organizational commitment was stronger when coworker support was high than when it was low.

Although coworker support has often been overlooked in the support literature, these studies provide evidence that it can have an influence on workplace outcomes when employees experience low or adverse diversity climate perceptions. As coworker support has been shown to provide employees with similar resources as a positive diversity climate, such as emotional and instrumental resources (Kim et al., 2017), as well as operate as a coping method to buffer the negative effects of resource loss in the face of adverse conditions (Chiu et al., 2015), it may be able to moderate the relationships between diversity climate perceptions and the retention-related outcomes. In other words, perceived coworker support may be able to moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions. This is because support may be able to compensate for lack of resources and feelings of inclusion and value that are missing when diversity climate perceptions are

low or adverse that lead to turnover and be a strengthening factor for those feelings and perceptions when diversity climate perceptions are high or positive. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 2a:* Perceived coworker support will moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment will be stronger when perceived coworker support is high than when it is low.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Perceived coworker support will moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification, will be stronger when perceived coworker support is high than when it is low.

*Hypothesis 2c:* Perceived coworker support will moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions, such that the negative relationship will be weaker when perceived coworker support is high than when it is low.

### **The Present Study**

Given that much of the existing research has ignored the moderating potential of supervisor and coworker support in the diversity climate literature, this study aims to fill that gap by investigating the potential moderating role of perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and three outcomes: affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intention. Some research (Chiu et al., 2015; Maertz et al., 2007) has shown that

supervisor and coworker support may provide employees with valuable social resources such as feelings of being valued and included and resources for coping with resource loss that are the same as those provided by positive diversity climate perceptions. To the researcher's knowledge, no studies have examined perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support as a moderator of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and outcomes. Thus, the present study seeks to add to the research on the moderators of diversity climate.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

A total of 204 individuals participated in this study. The participant pool was composed of individuals from my personal and professional network. Participants who did not meet the criteria (currently employed, have been working at their current company for six or more months, and those 18 years of age or older) as well as those with a large amount of missing data were excluded from further analysis. Thus, the final sample consisted of 150 participants.

Table 1 reports the demographic and background information of the participants. Most participants (58.7%) identified their race/ethnicity as White or Caucasian, followed by Hispanic or Latino (18%), Asian (9.3%), and multi-racial (6%). The sample consisted mainly of women (67.3%), followed by men (30.7%) and non-binary (2%). The most frequently reported age range was 25 to 34 (48%), followed by 35 to 44 (30%).

The respondents worked in a variety of industries, including healthcare or pharmaceuticals (30.7%), computer science (12%), education (12%), and engineering (6%). The organizational tenure of the participants ranged widely; the most frequently reported tenure of the participants at their current company was 6 months to two years (31.3%), followed by 2 years to 5 years (23.3%), 5 years to 8 years (18%), and more than 14 years (16%). Most participants (64%) worked as individual contributors at their company, followed by being a manager or supervisor (30%) or an officer or director (6%). The majority of the participants were full-time employees (88.7%), while 11.3%

Table 1

*Demographic and Background Characteristics of Survey Respondents*

	Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Race/Ethnicity	White/Caucasian	88	58.7%
	Hispanic/Latino	27	18.0%
	Asian	14	9.3%
	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	4	2.7%
	Black/African-American	3	2.0%
	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	2	1.3%
	Two or more races	9	6.0%
	Prefer not to respond	3	2.0%
Gender	Female	101	67.3%
	Male	46	30.7%
	Non-Binary	3	2.0%
Age	18-24	8	5.3%
	25-34	72	48.0%
	35-44	45	30.0%
	45-54	11	7.3%
	55 years or older	14	9.3%
Industry	Healthcare/Pharmaceuticals	46	30.7%
	Computer Science	18	12.0%
	Education	18	12.0%
	Engineering	9	6.0%
	Sales/Retail	8	5.3%
	Finance/Insurance	5	3.3%
	Other	46	30.7%
Tenure	6 months - 2 years	47	31.3%
	2 years - 5 years	35	23.3%
	5 years - 8 years	27	18.0%
	8 years - 11 years	12	8.0%
	11 years - 14 years	5	3.3%
	More than 14 years	24	16.0%
Role Type	Individual Contributors	96	64.0%
	Manager or Supervisor	45	30.0%
	Officer or Director	9	6.0%
Work Type	Full-Time	133	88.7%
	Part-Time	17	11.3%
Work Location	In Office	77	51.3%
	Remote Due to COVID-19	66	44.0%
	Remote Not Due to COVID-19	7	4.7%

---

Note. *N* = 150.

were part-time employees working 29 or fewer hours per week. Furthermore, participants were asked if they were working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most employees indicated they were still working in the office (51.3%); however, 44% indicated they were working from home due to the pandemic, while 4.7% indicated they regularly work from home not related to the pandemic. In sum, the average participant identified themselves as a White/Caucasian, 25 to 34-year-old woman, who worked full-time as an individual contributor, in the office in the healthcare/pharmaceuticals industry for 6 months to 2 years.

### **Procedure**

An online survey created on Qualtrics was distributed to participants. A short description of the survey accompanied by an anonymous link to the study was shared with my personal and professional contacts via Facebook, LinkedIn, and Slack. Participants were asked to share the survey with their network of friends, family, and coworkers.

Participants who clicked the link were directed to a consent notice that included information regarding the purpose of the study, participation requirements, contact information for questions, and the risks and benefits of the study. Participants indicated their willingness to participate in the study by choosing the “I consent, begin the survey” button at the bottom of the consent form which would then direct them to the beginning of the study. By choosing “I do not consent,” participants were directed out of the study and thanked for their time.

Participants who selected that they agreed to participate were asked questions regarding affective commitment, organizational identification, turnover intentions, diversity climate perceptions, perceived supervisor support, perceived coworker support, and questions regarding their demographics. Participants who completed the survey were thanked for their participation and all responses were logged in Qualtrics. Participants who chose to participate in the study were able to opt not to answer any question and could leave the survey at any time.

### **Measures**

All the variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 5 = *Strongly agree*).

**Diversity climate perceptions.** Diversity climate perceptions are defined as “employees’ shared perceptions that an employer utilizes fair personnel practices and socially integrates underrepresented employees into the work environment” (McKay et al., 2008, p. 350) and were measured using a 4-item scale developed by McKay et al. (2008). The items included, “I trust the company to treat me fairly,” “The company maintains a diversity friendly work environment,” “The company respects the views of people like me,” and “Top leaders demonstrate a visible commitment to diversity.” The responses were combined and averaged to create a composite score. Higher scores indicated that participants perceived that their organization fostered an inclusive work environment and maintained a positive climate for diversity through utilizing fair personnel practices. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for this scale was .87, indicating high reliability.

**Affective commitment.** Affective commitment is defined as the identification with and involvement in an organization that results from the degree to which a person is emotionally attached to his or her organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990) and was measured using an 8-item scale by Meyer and Allen (1991). Sample items included, “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization,” “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own,” and “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.” Some items in the measure were reverse scored. The responses were combined and averaged to create a composite score. Higher scores indicated that participants felt more emotionally connected to their organization. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for this scale was .90, indicating high reliability.

**Organizational identification.** Organizational identification is defined as “the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization in which he or she is a member” (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, p. 104) and was measured utilizing a 5-item scale developed by Mael and Ashforth (1995) previously used in military research. As the scale was originally developed for military use, “Army” was changed to “the company” for this study. Sample items included, “When someone criticizes the company, it feels like a personal insult,” “When I talk about the company, I usually say “we” rather than “they,”” and “The company's successes are my successes.” The responses were combined and averaged to create a composite score. Higher scores indicated that participants felt more oneness with and belonging to their organization, such that the organization is incorporated into their self-definition. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for this scale was .88, indicating high reliability.

**Turnover intentions.** Turnover intentions are defined as the intention of an employee to leave one's employer (Hom et al., 2008) and were measured with a 5-item scale developed by Crossley, Bennett, Jex, and Burnfield (2007). Scale items included, "I intend to leave this organization soon," "I will quit this organization as soon as possible," and "I do not plan on leaving this organization soon." The last item was reverse scored. The responses were combined and averaged to create a composite score. Higher scores indicated that participants were more likely to intend to leave their organization. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for this scale was .93, indicating high reliability.

**Perceived supervisor support.** Perceived supervisor support is defined as the degree to which employees regard their managers as being appreciative of their contributions, being supportive, and caring of their well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and was measured with an 8-item scale developed by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986). Sample items included "My supervisor really cares about my well-being," "Even if I did my best job possible, my supervisor would fail to notice," and "My supervisor cares about my general satisfaction at work." Some items in the measure were reverse scored. The responses were combined and averaged to create a composite score. Higher scores indicated that participants felt more cared for and supported by their supervisors. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for this scale was .96, indicating high reliability.

**Perceived coworker support.** Perceived coworker support is defined as employees' beliefs of the extent their coworkers provide work-related and emotional assistance (Ng & Sorensen, 2008) and was measured with a 9-item scale developed by Ladd and Henry (2000). Sample items included, "My coworkers care about my general satisfaction at

work,” “My coworkers show very little concern for me,” and “My coworkers care about my opinions.” Some items in the measure were reverse scored. The responses were combined and averaged to create a composite score. Higher scores indicated that participants felt more cared for and supported by their coworkers. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for this scale was .88, indicating high reliability.

**Demographic variables.** Participants were asked to respond to eight demographic and background questions, which include participants' race/ethnicity, gender, age, industry, tenure, role type (e.g., individual contributor, manager, director), work type (e.g., full-time, part-time), and work location (e.g., in office, remote).

Data collected were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25). The data were analyzed utilizing Pearson correlations and hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 displays descriptive statistics for the measured variables. Participants on average reported that they perceived moderately high diversity climate within their organization ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = .86$ ). Participants also reported that they were somewhat affectively committed to their organization ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = .88$ ), experienced moderate levels of organizational identification ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SD = .91$ ), and reported low levels of turnover intentions ( $M = 2.44$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ). In terms of perceived support, participants reported that they perceived moderately high levels of support from their supervisor ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = .93$ ), along with moderately high levels of support from their coworkers as well ( $M = 3.93$ ,  $SD = .69$ ).

Overall, the participants in this study felt that their organization supported diversity and facilitated inclusion. They showed moderate levels of attachment, were identified with their organizations, and did not intend to leave or quit their current organizations. They reported higher levels of support both from their supervisors and coworkers.

Table 2

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among the Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Diversity Climate Perceptions	3.70	.86	--					
2. Affective Commitment	3.34	.88	.62 ***	--				
3. Organizational Identification	3.46	.91	.54 ***	.81 ***	--			
4. Turnover Intentions	2.44	1.09	-.48 ***	-.70 ***	-.55 ***	--		
5. Perceived Supervisor Support	3.84	.93	.53 ***	.62 ***	.50 ***	-.57 ***	--	
6. Perceived Coworker Support	3.93	.69	.45 ***	.48 ***	.33 ***	-.44 ***	.60 ***	--

Note.  $N = 150$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

### **Pearson Correlations**

The Pearson correlations of the measured variables are presented in Table 2.

Diversity climate perceptions had a strong positive relationship with affective commitment ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ) and organizational identification ( $r = .54, p < .001$ ), and a strong negative relationship with turnover intentions ( $r = -.48, p < .001$ ). These results showed that the more participants perceived that their organizations fostered an inclusive work environment and maintained a positive climate for diversity through utilizing fair personnel practices, the more they felt emotionally attached to their organizations, identified with and defined themselves in terms of their organization, and were less likely to leave their organizations. The three outcome variables (affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions) were strongly related to one another, ranging from the correlations of  $-.55$  to  $.81$ .

In regards to the moderators of this study, perceived supervisor support was highly related to perceived coworker support ( $r = .60, p < .001$ ), such that the more participants regarded their managers as being appreciative of their contributions, supportive, and caring of their well-being, the more they perceived their coworkers provided them with work-related and emotional assistance. Perceived supervisor support had a strong positive relationship with diversity climate perceptions ( $r = .53, p < .001$ ), such that the more participants felt their supervisors appreciated and cared about them, the more they perceived their organizations as one that fostered inclusion and valued diversity.

Perceived supervisor support was significantly related to all three outcome variables. Perceived supervisor support had a strong positive relationship with both affective commitment ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ) and organizational identification ( $r = .50, p < .001$ ), and a strong negative relationship with turnover intentions ( $r = -.57, p < .001$ ), such that the higher participants rated their perceptions of support from their supervisors, the more they felt emotionally attached to their organizations and identified themselves with it, and were less likely to report intentions to leave their organizations.

Perceived coworker support was significantly positively related to diversity climate perceptions ( $r = .45, p < .001$ ), such that the more participants reported feeling cared for and supported by their coworkers, the higher their perceptions of diversity climate within their organizations. Perceived coworker support also had a significant relationship with all three outcome variables. Perceived coworker support had a positive relationship with affective commitment ( $r = .48, p < .001$ ) and organizational identification ( $r = .33, p < .001$ ), and a negative relationship with turnover intentions ( $r = -.44, p < .001$ ), such that

the more participants felt their coworkers cared for and supported them, the more they felt emotionally committed to their organizations and identified with their organizations, and the less they had intentions to leave their organizations. Additionally, the relationships between perceived supervisor support and the outcome variables seem to be stronger than the relationships between perceived coworker support and the outcome variables. This suggests that perceived support from supervisors might have a greater influence on employees' decisions to stay with their organizations and identify themselves with their organizations than support from coworkers.

### **Tests of Hypotheses**

A hierarchical multiple regression (MRC) analysis was conducted to test each hypothesis (H1a through H2c), using three steps. Diversity climate perceptions were entered in the first step in order to determine if diversity climate perceptions had a significant relationship with a particular outcome variable (i.e., affective commitment, organizational identification, turnover intentions). The moderator variable, either perceived supervisor support (for H1a through H1c) or perceived coworker support (for H2a through H2c), was entered in the second step. In the third step, the cross-product of diversity climate perceptions and either perceived supervisor support or perceived coworker support was entered to test for a moderating effect.

**Perceived supervisor support.** Hypothesis 1a stated that perceived supervisor support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment would be stronger when perceived supervisor support was high than when it was low. Table 3 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 3

*Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Supervisor Support on Affective Commitment*

	Predictor	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1	Diversity Climate Perceptions	.62 ***	.62 ***	.38 ***	.38 ***
Step 2	Perceived Supervisor Support	.70 ***	.40 ***	.50 ***	.12 ***
Step 3	Diversity Climate Perceptions x Perceived Supervisor Support		-.20	.50 ***	.00

*Note.*  $N = 150$ . \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

The first step of the analysis showed that diversity climate perceptions accounted for 38% of the variance in affective commitment,  $R^2 = .38$ ,  $R^2_{adj} = .37$ ,  $F(1, 148) = 90.02$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that diversity climate perceptions significantly contributed to the prediction of affective commitment among employees. The second step of the analysis showed that perceived supervisor support accounted for an additional 12% of the variance in affective commitment above and beyond the effect of diversity climate perceptions,  $\Delta R^2 = .12$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 147) = 33.66$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that an employee's perception of support from their supervisor significantly contributed to the prediction of

feelings of affective commitment above and beyond diversity climate perceptions. However, the third step of the analysis did not reveal a significant moderating effect of perceived supervisor support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 146) = .25$ ,  $p = .62$ . This suggests that the moderating effect did not account for a significant amount of the variance above and beyond the direct effects of diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support. Thus, the results did not show support for Hypothesis 1a. Overall, the results showed that although diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support each significantly contributed to the prediction of affective commitment in employees, perceived supervisor support did not moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment.

Hypothesis 1b stated that perceived supervisor support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification would be stronger when perceived supervisor support was high than when it was low. Table 4 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 4

*Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Supervisor Support on Organizational Identification*

	Predictor	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1	Diversity Climate Perceptions	.54 ***	.54 ***	.29 ***	.29 ***
Step 2	Perceived Supervisor Support	.60 ***	.29 ***	.35 ***	.06 ***
Step 3	Diversity Climate Perceptions x Perceived Supervisor Support		.01	.35 ***	.00

Note. *N* = 150. \**p* < .05 \*\* *p* < .01 \*\*\* *p* < .001.

The first step of the analysis showed that diversity climate perceptions accounted for 29% of the variance in organizational identification,  $R^2 = .29$ ,  $R^2_{adj} = .29$ ,  $F(1, 148) = 61.59$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that diversity climate perceptions significantly contributed to the prediction of employee organizational identification. The second step of the analysis showed that perceived supervisor support significantly accounted for an additional 6% of variance in organizational identification above and beyond the effect of diversity climate perceptions,  $\Delta R^2 = .06$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 147) = 14.17$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that an employee's perception of support from their supervisor significantly contributed to the prediction of organizational identification among employees above and beyond diversity climate perceptions. The third step of the analysis did not reveal a significant moderating effect of perceived supervisor support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 146) = .00$ ,  $p = .98$ . This suggests that the moderating effect did not account for a significant amount of the

variance above and beyond the direct effects of diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support. Thus, the results did not show support for Hypothesis 1b. Overall, the results showed that although diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support each significantly contributed to the prediction of organizational identification in employees, perceived supervisor support did not moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification.

Hypothesis 1c stated perceived supervisor support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions, such that the negative relationship would be weaker when perceived supervisor support was high than when it was low. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

*Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Supervisor Support on Turnover Intentions*

	Predictor	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1	Diversity Climate Perceptions	.48 ***	-.48 ***	.23 ***	.23 ***
Step 2	Perceived Supervisor Support	.60 ***	-.43 ***	.36 ***	.13 ***
Step 3	Diversity Climate Perceptions x Perceived Supervisor Support		.24	.36 ***	.00

*Note.*  $N = 150$ . \* $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The first step of the analysis showed that diversity climate perceptions accounted for 23% of the variance in organizational identification,  $R^2 = .23$ ,  $R^2_{adj} = .23$ ,  $F(1, 148) = 44.32$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that diversity climate perceptions significantly contributed

to the prediction of turnover intentions. The second step of the analysis showed that perceived supervisor support significantly accounted for an additional 13% of variance in turnover intentions above and beyond the effect of diversity climate perceptions,  $\Delta R^2 = .13$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 147) = 31.13$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that an employee's perception of support from their supervisor significantly contributed to employees' intentions to leave their organization above and beyond diversity climate perceptions. The third step of the analysis did not reveal a significant moderating effect of perceived supervisor support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 146) = .00$ ,  $p = .58$ . This suggests that the moderating effect did not account for a significant amount of the variance above and beyond the direct effects of diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support. Thus, the results did not show support for Hypothesis 1c. Overall, the results showed that although diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support each significantly contributed to the prediction of turnover intentions in employees, perceived supervisor support did not moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions.

**Perceived coworker support.** Hypothesis 2a stated that perceived coworker support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment would be stronger when perceived coworker support was high than when it was low. Table 6 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 6

*Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Coworker Support on Affective Commitment*

	Predictor	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1	Diversity Climate Perceptions	.62 ***	.62 ***	.38 ***	.38 ***
Step 2	Perceived Coworker Support	.66 ***	.26 ***	.43 ***	.05 ***
Step 3	Diversity Climate Perceptions x Perceived Coworker Support		.15	.43 ***	.00

*Note.*  $N = 150$ . \* $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The first step of the analysis showed that diversity climate perceptions accounted for 38% of the variance in affective commitment,  $R^2 = .38$ ,  $R^2_{adj} = .37$ ,  $F(1, 148) = 90.02$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that diversity climate perceptions significantly contributed to the prediction of affective commitment among employees. The second step of the analysis showed that perceived coworker support significantly accounted for an additional 5% of variance in affective commitment above and beyond the effect of diversity climate perceptions,  $\Delta R^2 = .05$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 147) = 13.38$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that an employee's perception of support from their coworkers significantly contributed to employees' affective commitment above and beyond diversity climate perceptions. The third step of the analysis did not reveal a significant moderating effect of perceived coworker support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 146) = .11$ ,  $p = .74$ . This suggests that the moderating effect did not account for a significant amount of the variance above and beyond the direct effects of diversity

climate perceptions and perceived coworker support. Thus, the results did not show support for Hypothesis 2a. Overall, the results showed that although diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support each significantly contributed to the prediction of affective commitment in employees, perceived coworker support did not moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment.

Hypothesis 2b stated that perceived coworker support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification would be stronger when perceived coworker support was high than when it was low. Table 7 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 7

*Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Coworker Support on Organizational Identification*

	Predictor	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1	Diversity Climate Perceptions	.54 ***	.54 ***	.29 ***	.29 ***
Step 2	Perceived Coworker Support	.55	.11	.30	.01
Step 3	Diversity Climate Perceptions x Perceived Coworker Support		.13	.30	.00

*Note.* *N* = 150. \**p* < .05 \*\* *p* < .01 \*\*\* *p* < .001.

The first step of the analysis showed that diversity climate perceptions accounted for 29% of the variance in organizational identification,  $R^2 = .29$ ,  $R^2_{adj} = .29$ ,  $F(1, 148) =$

61.59,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that diversity climate perceptions significantly contributed to the prediction of organizational identification among employees. The second step of the analysis showed that perceived coworker support did not account for a significant amount of additional variance in organizational identification above and beyond the effect of diversity climate perceptions,  $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 147) = 1.99$ ,  $p = .16$ . This suggests that an employee's perception of support from their coworkers did not significantly contribute to the prediction of organizational identification in employees above and beyond diversity climate perceptions. The third step of the analysis did not reveal a significant moderating effect of perceived coworker support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 146) = .07$ ,  $p = .79$ . This suggests that the moderating effect did not account for a significant amount of the variance above and beyond the direct effect of diversity climate perceptions. Thus, the results did not show support for Hypothesis 2b. Overall, the results showed that diversity climate perceptions significantly contributed to the prediction of organizational identification in employees, but perceived coworker support did not add incremental predictive power to the prediction of organizational identification. Moreover, perceived coworker support did not moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification.

Hypothesis 2c stated that perceived coworker support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions, such that the negative relationship would be weaker when perceived coworker support was high than when it was low. Table 8 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 8

*Hierarchical MRC for the Moderating Role of Perceived Coworker Support on Turnover Intentions*

	Predictor	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1	Diversity Climate Perceptions	.48 ***	-.48 ***	.23 ***	.23 ***
Step 2	Perceived Coworker Support	.54 **	-.28 **	.29 **	.06 **
Step 3	Diversity Climate Perceptions x Perceived Coworker Support		.07	.29 **	.00

*Note.*  $N = 150$ . \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

The first step of the analysis showed that diversity climate perceptions accounted for 23% of the variance in affective commitment,  $R^2 = .23$ ,  $R^2_{adj} = .23$ ,  $F(1, 148) = 44.32$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that diversity climate perceptions significantly contributed to the prediction of turnover intentions among employees. The second step of the analysis showed that perceived coworker support significantly accounted for an additional 6% of variance in turnover intentions above and beyond the effect of diversity climate perceptions,  $\Delta R^2 = .06$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 147) = 12.50$ ,  $p < .01$ . This suggests that an employee's perception of support from their coworkers significantly contributed to employees' intentions to leave their jobs above and beyond diversity climate perceptions. The third

step of the analysis did not reveal a significant moderating effect of perceived coworker support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $\Delta F(1, 146) = .02$ ,  $p = .89$ . This suggests that the moderating effect did not account for a significant amount of the variance above and beyond the direct effects of diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support. Thus, the results did not show support for Hypothesis 2c. Overall, the results showed that although diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support each significantly contributed to the prediction of turnover intentions among employees, perceived coworker support did not moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions.

## Discussion

Diversity climate perceptions have become an essential focus for organizations as these perceptions have been shown to be related to employee retention (Kaplan et al., 2011; McKay et al., 2007). Much diversity climate research has focused on the retention of employees, as many of the positive employee outcomes related to diversity climate perceptions have been shown to be predictors of retention, such as affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions.

Although researchers have examined the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and outcomes, little research has focused on factors that might moderate this relationship. Some research (e.g., Cole et al., 2016; Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009; Guerrero et al., 2013; Maertz et al., 2007) has indicated that social support might have an influence on retention-related variables. Thus, the present study proposed and tested if perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support moderated the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and outcomes related to retention (affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions).

### Summary of Findings

**Perceived supervisor support.** Hypothesis 1a stated that perceived supervisor support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment would be stronger when perceived supervisor support was high than when it was low. This hypothesis was not supported as the results

of the interaction between diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support on affective commitment was not statistically significant.

However, the results showed that diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support independently contributed to the prediction of affective commitment. These results indicate that the more organizations were perceived to be facilitating a diverse and inclusive atmosphere and the more supervisors were perceived to be supportive, the more employees were affectively committed to their organizations. The finding that diversity climate perception was positively related to affective commitment is consistent with Gonzalez and Denisi (2009). Prior research has suggested that perceived supervisor support leads to perceived organizational support that increases affective commitment (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002); however, the results of this study indicate that perceptions of supervisor can directly impact the emotional attachment employees feel with their organization.

Hypothesis 1b stated that perceived supervisor support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification would be stronger when perceived supervisor support was high than when it was low. This hypothesis was not supported as the results of the interaction between diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support on organizational identification was not statistically significant.

However, results showed that diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support independently contributed to the prediction of organizational identification. These results indicate that the more organizations facilitated a diverse and inclusive atmosphere and the more supervisors were perceived to be supportive, the more employees identified with their organization. These results are consistent with past findings, where Cole et al. (2016) found diversity climate perceptions were significantly related to organizational identification. van Knippenberg, Van Dick, and Tavares (2007) also found a strong positive relationship between perceptions of supervisor support and organizational identification. As their study also found organizational identification to be a strong predictor of turnover intentions, these results indicate that perceived supervisor support may be an important factor to retain employees.

Hypothesis 1c stated perceived supervisor support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions, such that the negative relationship would be weaker when perceived supervisor support was high than when it was low. This hypothesis was not supported as the results of the interaction between diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support on turnover intentions was not statistically significant.

However, results showed that diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support independently contributed to the prediction of turnover intentions. These results indicate that the more organizations were perceived to facilitate a diverse and inclusive atmosphere and the more supervisors were perceived to be supportive, the less likely employees were to have intentions to leave their jobs. These results are consistent with

those of Stewart (2011) who found diversity climate perceptions were negatively related to turnover intentions and Maertz et al. (2007) who found a negative relationship between perceived supervisor support and turnover intentions. This suggests that employees' perceptions of their supervisors should not be overlooked when analyzing what types of support have the greatest impact, as it is likely that these perceptions directly impact turnover decisions.

**Perceived coworker support.** Hypothesis 2a stated that perceived coworker support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment would be stronger when perceived coworker support was high than when it was low. This hypothesis was not supported as the results of the interaction between diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support on affective commitment was not statistically significant. Instead, results showed that diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support independently contributed to the prediction of affective commitment. These results indicate that the more organizations were perceived to facilitate a diverse and inclusive atmosphere and the more coworkers were perceived to be supportive, the more likely employees felt emotionally attached to their organization. These results are consistent with Ng and Sorensen (2008), who similarly found a direct effect of perceived coworker support on affective commitment. This suggests that interactions with coworkers may have an impact on the level of emotional attachment employees feel towards their organization.

Hypothesis 2b stated that perceived coworker support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions on organizational identification, such that the positive relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational identification would be stronger when perceived coworker support was high than when it was low. This hypothesis was not supported as the results of the interaction between diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support on organizational identification was not statistically significant. Only diversity climate perceptions were directly related to organizational identification. Perceived coworker support did not account for additional variance in organizational identification above and beyond diversity climate perceptions. This may be because organizational identification is contingent on a perceived shared similarity and future with the organization where organization's values, norms, interests, and goals are incorporated into their self-definition (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Organizational identification is focused on a relationship with the organization, and therefore influence from coworkers may not pose as much salience to employees' perception of identifying with the organization and aligning themselves with it.

Hypothesis 2c stated that perceived coworker support would moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and turnover intentions, such that the negative relationship would be weaker when perceived coworker support was high than when it was low. This hypothesis was not supported as the results of the interaction between diversity climate perceptions and supervisor support on turnover intentions was not statistically significant. However, results showed that diversity climate perceptions

and perceived coworker support independently contributed to the prediction of turnover intentions. These results indicate that the more organizations were perceived to facilitate a diverse and inclusive atmosphere and the more coworkers were perceived to be supportive, the less likely employees were to have intentions to leave their jobs. These results are consistent with those of Karatepe (2012), who found a strong negative relationship between perceived coworker support and turnover intentions. These results indicate that although coworker support does not appear to have as strong of an effect on employee's decisions to leave the organization as supervisor support, the support garnered from coworkers is still a valuable resource for employees facing the decision to leave the or not.

The lack of support for Hypotheses 1a through 2c may be due to a strong relationship between diversity climate perceptions and both perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support. Because the two moderator variables were highly correlated to diversity climate perceptions, the interaction effect of diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support did not add much to the prediction of each outcome in addition to the main effect of these variables individually. There is also a conceptual similarity between diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor and coworker support as both consist of employees' perceptions that they are valued, cared about, and respected. This may also lead to the strong relationship between diversity climate perceptions and the two moderator variables.

## **Theoretical Implications**

This study contributes to the existing literature in that it is the first study to look at perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support as moderators of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions. Although some research has suggested that perceived supervisor support has the potential to act as a moderator because it offers employees emotional and tangible resources that send signals that employees are valued (Adair Erickson & Roloff, 2008), the results of this study did not support this research. There was no significant moderating effect of perceived supervisor support between diversity climate perceptions and any of the retention-related variables. Similarly, research has suggested that coworker support might also act as a moderator as it provides employees with emotional and instrumental resources that can buffer adverse conditions (Chiu et al., 2015). The results of the current study were not consistent with this research as perceived coworker support did not act as a moderator.

The current study showed that although perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support did not act as moderators, direct effects of diversity climate perceptions and perceived supervisor support were found on affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions. In addition, direct effects of diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support were found with affective commitment and turnover intentions, but not on organizational identification. Consistent with prior research by Ng and Sorensen (2008), perceived supervisor support was found to have a stronger relationship with diversity climate perceptions and the retention-related variables

than perceived coworker support. These findings indicate that diversity climate perceptions, perceived supervisor support, and perceived coworker support play an independent role in predicting employee retention, with perceived supervisor support perhaps being more important than perceived coworker support for these outcomes. This last finding supports past research suggesting that perceptions of supervisor support may be more salient to employees than perceptions of coworker support because supervisors are associated with the provision of resources and benefits (Maertz et al., 2007) and are seen as agents of the organization (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010).

These results are consistent with the tenets of the social-exchange theory. That is, when employees perceive that the organization meets the needs of and values its employees, they feel obligated to return favorable treatment in the form of positive organizational outcomes (e.g., affective commitment) (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015b). Employees who perceive their organization as one that facilitates a diverse and inclusive atmosphere, perceive their supervisors as valuing their contributions and being supportive and caring of their well-being, and have coworkers who offer them emotional and work-related support are likely to reciprocate these positive perceptions with positive organizational outcomes, such as being affectively committed to their organization, identifying themselves with their organization, and developing intention not to leave the organization.

The results of the present study add to the literature on diversity climate perceptions because they are positively related to perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support. To my knowledge, no studies have looked at the direct relationship

between diversity climate perceptions and perceived coworker support. These results indicate that if employees perceive their organizations facilitate a diverse and inclusive atmosphere, they are also likely to perceive that their supervisors and coworkers are supportive.

### **Practical Implications**

Although the results of this study did not support the hypotheses that perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support moderate the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and the retention-related employee outcomes (affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions), there are still practical implications of this research. One practical implication can be found in the results that showed diversity climate perceptions were significantly and positively related to affective commitment and organizational identification, and negatively related to turnover intentions. As these outcomes have been shown to be strong indicators of employee retention, this suggest that organizations should focus attention on fostering positive perceptions of the diversity climate within their organization among employees.

The results also showed that perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support were significantly related to diversity climate perceptions and all three retention-related variables. This suggests that employees' perceptions of their supervisor and coworkers might be an important factor in creating a positive diversity climate and in an employees' choice to remain with their organization. Moreover, results showed that both perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support had a unique individual contribution to the prediction of the retention-related variables. This suggests that

organizations that are working to increase employee retention should not only work to ensure diversity climate perceptions are positive, but also work to ensure employees have a positive perception of their supervisor and coworkers. If diversity climate perceptions are low, organizations may be able to retain employees by ensuring that perceptions of supervisor and coworker support are high.

For example, Maertz et al. (2007) suggested that perceived supervisor support might compensate for lack of perceived support provided by the organization. Chiu et al. (2015) also suggested that perceived coworker support might provide employees with resources that can be utilized to buffer the effects of adverse conditions. These ideas can be applied to low diversity climate perceptions. Under those conditions, ensuring that perceptions of supervisor and coworker support are high may help organizations retain employees. Organizations can work to build high perceptions of supervisor support by ensuring supervisors provide benefits that employees deem valuable, such as consideration, favorable assignments and schedules, feedback, and recognition along with emotional support through availability and listening (Maertz et al., 2007).

A direct relationship was found between perceived coworker support and affective commitment and turnover intentions. As affective commitment and turnover intentions are strong indicators of employee retention, this suggests that a focus on a positive diversity climate and facilitating support between coworkers can be important to retaining employees. Organizations can facilitate high perceptions of coworker support by encouraging open communication throughout the organization, building trust and perceptions of competency among coworkers through team training interventions, and

setting an example of trust and comradery by means of supervisor-subordinate relationships through a consistent work environment (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2015).

Perceived supervisor support was found to have a stronger relationship with diversity climate perceptions and the retention-related variables than perceived coworker support. This suggests that for organizations focusing on retaining employees, it is valuable to facilitate a positive diversity climate and ensure employees perceive that their supervisors are supportive. Because of this, organizations looking to increase employee retention should focus more on supervisor support than coworker support, as it is likely to have greater impact on employee outcomes. Employees view supervisors as agents of the organization responsible for implementing HR practices (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010), providing them with resources and benefits, and outlets to garner support from (Maertz et al., 2007). Organizations can facilitate greater perceptions of support by investing in supervisors through mentorship programs for both leaders and subordinates, coaching supervisors on management styles that integrate and engage their team, and by encouraging employees to get to know and support their fellow coworkers through team building and facilitating communication.

### **Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions**

One strength of the study is the contribution to the literature, as this study is the first to examine perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support as moderators of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions. Though some moderators of the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and organizational outcomes have

been examined, such as race/ethnicity (Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009), other-group orientation (Avery et al., 2013), and procedural justice (Buttner et al., 2010), perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support have not been explored.

This study expands on the diversity climate literature by exploring the impact social support, in the form of perceived supervisor and coworker support, can have on diversity climate perceptions. Additionally, as researchers have called for greater distinction regarding where support is garnered from for employees (Kim et al., 2017; Kossek et al., 2011), this study expands the research on coworker support, which is often not distinguished from organizational support and supervisor support. This contributes to the literature, as it narrows down what type of support is most valuable to employees, where employees are garnering support, and what type of support has the greatest impact on organizational outcomes, thus informing where employers and researchers should focus attention to have the greatest impact on employee and organizational outcomes.

As with most studies, this study has its limitations. One limitation of this study is that it is a cross-sectional study with self-report survey data. Cross-sectional studies take a snapshot of a sample in time that looks at relationships. Because of this, causal inferences cannot be made utilizing this type of study design (Levin, 2006). Similarly, despite their strong relationships, it cannot be inferred that diversity climate perceptions causes the retention-related outcome variables despite. Most of these variables (i.e., diversity climate, commitment, identification, and supervisor and coworker support) are based on employee perceptions, objective measures of these variables would be difficult to obtain, therefore, a cross-sectional design is the most appropriate design for this study. However,

a longitudinal study could be utilized to determine causation by measuring the changes in these perceptions over time to determine if changes in diversity climate, supervisor support, and coworker support affects the retention related variables, affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions.

There are also concerns with utilizing online self-report survey data as these types of studies can have problems with exaggerated answers, various biases, social desirability, lack of choice flexibility, and the potential for questions to be misunderstood (Podsakoff & Organ, 2016), thus reducing the reliability and validity of the survey responses.

Despite this, as this study's focus was on employee's perceptions, a self-report survey was the most appropriate design to utilize. One way to reduce the problems associated with an online self-report survey would be to administer the survey in person so that participants are able to more easily clarify statements or questions they may not fully understand. In person administration may also focus respondents, reducing exaggerated answers.

Another limitation of the current study is the high correlations among the variables. The moderators of the study, perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support, were highly correlated to diversity climate perceptions. When there is a strong correlation between predictor variables, it indicates that changes in one variable will be related to changes in the other, leading to high multicollinearity between those variables (Alin, 2010). Because of this, the interaction effect of diversity climate perceptions and each of the moderators did not add much in addition to the main effect of diversity climate perceptions. Thus, the hypotheses within this study were not supported. Future

research is suggested to include moderators of the relationship that are less related to diversity climate perceptions to more accurately fill the gap in the literature, as little research has investigated these moderators. Other variables (e.g., job satisfaction, employee engagement) should be considered as they have been shown to moderate relationships with employee retention and turnover.

Although perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support did not have a moderating effect in this study, the results showed direct effects of diversity climate perceptions, perceived supervisor, and perceived coworker support. As no other studies have examined the relationships among these variables, future research should further examine why these variables are related and what impact these variables might have on other organizational outcomes not directly related to retention, such as work behaviors (e.g., organizational citizenship behaviors, burnout, productivity) in order to understand the impact diversity climate perceptions can have on other areas of the organization. Because growing demand for diversity and inclusion has made it essential to understand how it affects all aspects of work-life within organizations, understanding the outcomes of employee perceptions related to diversity and inclusion will allow organizations to magnify their positive consequences.

## **Conclusion**

With the current emphasis on equality, it is more important than ever for organizations to look at their workforce and ensure that diversity is valued and employees feel included. How employees perceive the diversity climate is critical. Not only is ensuring a positive climate for diversity the right thing to do, but it has beneficial organizational and employee consequences such as employee retention. This outcome can be extremely important to organizations, as failing to retain employees can be costly.

The goal of the current study was to examine the moderating effect of perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support on the relationship between diversity climate perceptions and the retention-related variables of affective commitment, organizational identification, and turnover intentions. Although this study did not find the predicted moderating effects, the results showed a direct relationship between diversity climate perceptions, perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support, and the retention-related variables. These findings have important theoretical and practical implications and highlight the potential of perceived supervisor and coworker support to impact employee retention. This research also supports the need for further research on the possible relationships diversity climate perceptions have with other variables to create a better experience for employees and reduce costs for organizations.

## References

- Abrams, D., Ando, K., & Hinkle, S. (1998). Psychological attachment to the group: Cross-cultural differences in organizational identification and subjective norms as predictors of workers' turnover intentions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *24*, 1027-1039. doi:10.1177/01461672982410001
- Adair Erickson, R., & Roloff, M. E. (2008). Reducing attrition after downsizing. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, *15*, 35-55. doi:10.1108/19348830710860147
- Ahmad, A., Bibi, P., & Majid, A. H. A. (2016). Co-worker support as moderator on the relationship between compensation and transactional leadership in organizational commitment. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *10*, 695-709.
- Alin, A. (2010). *Multicollinearity* (Vol. 2). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, *63*, 1-18. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x
- Armstrong, C., Flood, P. C., Guthrie, J. P., Liu, W., Maccurtain, S., & Mkamwa, T. (2010). The impact of diversity and equality management on firm performance: Beyond high performance work systems. *Human Resource Management*, *49*, 977-998. doi:10.1002/hrm.20391
- Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *The Academy of Management Review*, *14*, 20-39. doi:10.2307/258189
- Ashikali, T., & Groeneveld, S. (2015a). Diversity management for all? An empirical analysis of diversity management outcomes across groups. *Personnel Review*, *44*, 757-780. doi:10.1108/PR-10-2014-0216
- Ashikali, T., & Groeneveld, S. (2015b). Diversity management in public organizations and its effect on employees' affective commitment: The role of transformational leadership and the inclusiveness of the organizational culture. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *35*, 146-168. doi:10.1177/0734371X13511088
- Avery, D. R., Volpone, S. D., Stewart, R. W., Luksyte, A., Hernandez, M., McKay, P. F., & Hebl, M. R. (2013). Examining the draw of diversity: How diversity climate perceptions affect job-pursuit intentions. *Human Resource Management*, *52*, 175-193. doi:10.1002/hrm.21524

- Bersin, J. (2015). Why diversity and inclusion will be a top priority for 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshbersin/2015/12/06/why-diversity-and-inclusion-will-be-a-top-priority-for-2016/#1064f7ca2ed5>
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. New York: NY: Wiley.
- Brimhall, K. C., Lizano, E. L., & Barak, M. E. M. (2014). The mediating role of inclusion: A longitudinal study of the effects of leader-member exchange and diversity climate on job satisfaction and intention to leave among child welfare workers. *Children and Youth Services Review, 40*, 79-88.
- Buttner, E., Lowe, K., & Billings-Harris, L. (2010). The impact of diversity promise fulfillment on professionals of color outcomes in the USA. *Journal of Business Ethics, 91*, 501-518. doi:10.1007/s10551-009-0096-y
- Chiu, S.-F., Yeh, S.-P., & Huang, T. C. (2015). Role stressors and employee deviance: the moderating effect of social support. *Personnel Review, 44*, 308-324. doi:10.1108/PR-11-2012-0191
- Chrobot-Mason, D., & Aramovich, N. P. (2013). The psychological benefits of creating an affirming climate for workplace diversity. *Group & Organization Management, 38*, 659-689. doi:10.1177/1059601113509835
- Cole, B., Jones, R. J., & Russell, L. M. (2016). Racial dissimilarity and diversity climate effect organizational identification. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 35*, 314-327. doi:10.1108/EDI-09-2015-0072
- Cole, B., & Salimath, M. (2013). Diversity identity management: An organizational perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics, 116*, 151-161. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1466-4
- Cox, T. (1993). *Cultural diversity in organizations: theory, research, and practice* (1st ed. ed.). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Crossley, C. D., Bennett, R. J., Jex, S. M., & Burnfield, J. L. (2007). Development of a global measure of job embeddedness and integration into a traditional model of voluntary turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*, 1031-1042. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.92.4.1031
- Dwertmann, D. J. G., Nishii, L. H., & van Knippenberg, D. (2016). Disentangling the fairness & discrimination and synergy perspectives on diversity climate: Moving the field forward. *Journal of Management, 42*, 1136-1168. doi:10.1177/0149206316630380

- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*, 500-507. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.71.3.500
- Eisenberger, R., Stinglhamber, F., Vandenberghe, C., Sucharski, I. L., & Rhoades, L. (2002). Perceived supervisor support: Contributions to perceived organizational support and employee retention. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 565-573. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.87.3.565
- Fakunmoju, S., Woodruff, K., Kim, H. H., Lefevre, A., & Hong, M. (2010). Intention to leave a job: The role of individual factors, job tension, and supervisory support. *Administration in Social Work, 34*, 313-328. doi:10.1080/03643107.2010.500948
- Frenkel, S. J., & Yu, C. (2011). Managing coworker assistance through organizational identification. *Human Performance, 24*, 387-404. doi:10.1080/08959285.2011.614301
- Gonzalez, J. A., & Denisi, A. S. (2009). Cross-level effects of demography and diversity climate on organizational attachment and firm effectiveness. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 30*, 21-40. doi:10.1002/job.498
- Griffeth, R. W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium. *Journal of Management, 26*, 463-488. doi:10.1177/014920630002600305
- Guerrero, S., Sylvestre, J., & Muresanu, D. (2013). Pro-diversity practices and perceived insider status. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal, 20*, 5-19. doi:10.1108/13527601311296229
- Halbesleben, J. R. B., & Wheeler, A. R. (2015). To invest or not? The role of coworker support and trust in daily reciprocal gain spirals of helping behavior. *Journal of Management, 41*, 1628-1650. doi:10.1177/0149206312455246
- Hicks-Clarke, D., & Iles, P. (2000). Climate for diversity and its effects on career and organisational attitudes and perceptions. *Personnel Review, 29*, 324-345. doi:doi:10.1108/00483480010324689
- Hobfoll, S. E. (2002). Social and psychological resources and adaptation. *Review of General Psychology, 6*, 307-324. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.6.4.307
- Hom, P. W., Roberson, L., & Ellis, A. D. (2008). Challenging conventional wisdom about who quits: Revelations from corporate America. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*, 1-34. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.93.1.1

- Hunt, V., Prince, S., Dixon-Fyle, S., & Yee, L. (2018). *Delivering Through Diversity*. Retrieved from [https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/organization/our%20insights/delivering%20through%20diversity/delivering-through-diversity\\_full-report.ashx](https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/organization/our%20insights/delivering%20through%20diversity/delivering-through-diversity_full-report.ashx)
- Jauhari, H., & Singh, S. (2013). Perceived diversity climate and employees' organizational loyalty. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 32, 262-276. doi:10.1108/EDI-12-2012-0119
- Johari, J., Ahmad Ramli, F. Z., Wahab, H. A., & Bidin, M. F. (2019). Social support, pay satisfaction, work ability, and intention to stay: A case of return to work program participants. *Journal of Management*, 55, 1-16.
- Kaplan, D. M., Wiley, J. W., & Maertz Jr., C. P. (2011). The role of calculative attachment in the relationship between diversity climate and retention. *Human Resource Management*, 50, 271-287. doi:10.1002/hrm.20413
- Karatepe, O. M. (2012). The effects of coworker and perceived organizational support on hotel employee outcomes: The moderating role of job embeddedness. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 36, 495-516. doi:10.1177/1096348011413592
- Kawai, N., & Mohr, A. (2015). The contingent effects of role ambiguity and role novelty on expatriates' work-related outcomes. *British Journal of Management*, 26, 163-181. doi:10.1111/1467-8551.12089
- Kim, H.J., Hur, W.M., Moon, T.W., & Jun, J.K. (2017). Is all support equal? The moderating effects of supervisor, coworker, and organizational support on the link between emotional labor and job performance. *BRQ Business Research Quarterly*, 20, 124-136. doi:10.1016/j.brq.2016.11.002
- Kossek, E., Pichler, S., Bodner, T., & Hammer, L. (2011). Workplace social support and work-family conflict: A meta-analysis clarifying the influence of general and work-family-specific supervisor and organizational support. *Personnel Psychology*, 64, 289-313. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.2011.01211.x
- Kossek, E. E., & Zonia, S. C. (1993). Assessing diversity climate: A field study of reactions to employer efforts to promote diversity. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 14, 61-81.
- Kuvaas, B., & Dysvik, A. (2010). Exploring alternative relationships between perceived investment in employee development, perceived supervisor support and employee outcomes. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 20, 138-156. doi:10.1111/j.1748-8583.2009.00120.x

- Ladd, D., & Henry, R. A. (2000). Helping coworkers and helping the organization: The role of support perceptions, exchange ideology, and conscientiousness *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30*, 2028-2049. doi:10.1111/j.1559-1816.2000.tb02422.x
- Lee, T. W., & Mowday, R. T. (1987). Voluntarily leaving an organization: An empirical investigation of steers and Mowday's model of turnover. *The Academy of Management Journal, 30*, 721-743. doi:10.2307/256157
- Levin, K. A. (2006). Study design III: Cross-sectional studies. *Evidence Based Dentistry, 7*, 24-25. doi:10.1038/sj.ebd.6400375
- Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13*, 103-123. doi:10.1002/job.4030130202
- Mael, F. A., & Ashforth, B. E. (1995). Loyal from day one: Biodata, organizational identification, and turnover among newcomers. *Personnel Psychology, 48*, 309-333. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.1995.tb01759.x
- Maertz, C. P., Griffeth, R. W., Campbell, N. S., & Allen, D. G. (2007). The effects of perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support on employee turnover. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 28*, 1059-1075. doi:10.1002/job.472
- McKay, P., Avery, D., & Morris, M. (2008). Mean racial-ethnic differences in employee sales performance: The moderating role of diversity climate. *Personnel Psychology, 61*, 349-374.
- McKay, P. F., Avery, D. R., Tonidandel, S., Morris, M. A., Hernandez, M., & Hebl, M. R. (2007). Racial differences in employee retention: are diversity climate perceptions the key? *Personnel Psychology, 60*, 35-62. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.2007.00064.x
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review, 1*, 61-89. doi:10.1016/1053-4822(91)90011-Z
- Mor Barak, M. E., Cherin, D. A., & Berkman, S. (1998). Organizational and personal dimensions in diversity climate: Ethnic and gender differences in employee perceptions. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 34*, 82-104. doi:10.1177/0021886398341006
- Newman, A., Nielsen, I., Smyth, R., Hirst, G., & Kennedy, S. (2018). The effects of diversity climate on the work attitudes of refugee employees: The mediating role of psychological capital and moderating role of ethnic identity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 105*, 147-158.

- Ng, T. W. H., & Sorensen, K. L. (2008). Toward a further understanding of the relationships between perceptions of support and work attitudes: A meta-analysis. *Group & Organization Management, 33*, 243-268. doi:10.1177/1059601107313307
- Podsakoff, P. M., & Organ, D. W. (2016). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Management, 12*, 531-544. doi:10.1177/014920638601200408
- Pugh, S. D., Dietz, J., Brief, A. P., & Wiley, J. W. (2008). Looking inside and out: The impact of employee and community demographic composition on organizational diversity climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*, 1422-1428. doi:10.1037/a0012696
- Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 698-714. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.698
- Shore, L. M., Chung-Herrera, B. G., Dean, M. A., Ehrhart, K. H., Jung, D. I., Randel, A. E., & Singh, G. (2009). Diversity in organizations: Where are we now and where are we going? *Human Resource Management Review, 19*, 117-133. doi:10.1016/j.hrmr.2008.10.004
- Simosi, M. (2012). Disentangling organizational support construct. *Personnel Review, 41*, 301-320. doi:10.1108/00483481211212959
- Singh, B., & Selvarajan, T. (2013). Is it spillover or compensation? Effects of community and organizational diversity climates on race differentiated employee intent to stay. *Journal of Business Ethics, 115*, 259-269. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1392-5
- Sliter, M., Boyd, E., Sinclair, R., Cheung, J., & McFadden, A. (2014). Inching toward inclusiveness: Diversity climate, interpersonal conflict and well-being in women nurses. *A Journal of Research, 71*, 43-54. doi:10.1007/s11199-013-0337-5
- Stewart, R. (2011). You support diversity, but are you ethical? Examining the interactive effects of diversity and ethical climate perceptions on turnover intentions. *Journal of Business Ethics, 99*, 453-465. doi:10.1007/s10551-010-0663-2
- Tarallo, M. (2018). How to reduce employee turnover through robust retention strategies. Retrieved from <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/how-to-reduce-employee-turnover-through-robust-retention-strategies.aspx>
- van Knippenberg, D. (2000). Work motivation and performance: A social identity perspective. *Applied Psychology, 49*, 357-371. doi:10.1111/1464-0597.00020

- van Knippenberg, D., & Sleebos, E. (2006). Organizational identification versus organizational commitment: self-definition, social exchange, and job attitudes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27, 571-584. doi:10.1002/job.359
- van Knippenberg, D., Van Dick, R., & Tavares, S. (2007). Social identity and social exchange: Identification, support, and withdrawal from the job. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 37, 457-477. doi:10.1111/j.1559-1816.2007.00168.x
- Viswesvaran, C., & Ones, D. (2002). Examining the construct of organizational justice: A meta-analytic evaluation of relations with work attitudes and behaviors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 38, 193-203. doi:10.1023/A:1015820708345
- Wolfson, N., Kraiger, K., & Finkelstein, L. (2011). The relationship between diversity climate perceptions and workplace attitudes. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 14, 161-176. doi:10.1080/10887156.2011.546170
- Yang, Y., & Konrad, A. M. (2011). Diversity and organizational innovation: The role of employee involvement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 32, 1062-1083. doi:10.1002/job.724

## Appendix

### Demographic and Background Questionnaire

Are you currently employed?

- I am currently employed, working 30 or more hours per week
- I am currently employed, working 1-29 hours per week
- I am not currently employed

How long have you been employed at your organization?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months – 2 years
- 2 years – 5 years
- 5 years – 8 years
- 8 years – 11 years
- 11 years – 14 years
- More than 14 years

Please indicate your age

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55 years or older

What race/ethnicity do you identify with?

- Hispanic/Latino
- Black/African-American
- Asian
- White/Caucasian
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- Two or more races
- Race and Ethnicity unknown
- Prefer not to respond.

What gender do you most identify with?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to respond

What type of role are you currently in?

- Individual Contributor
- Manager or Supervisor
- Officer or Director
- Please indicate the industry you work in
- Computer Science
- Education
- Engineering
- Finance/Insurance
- Healthcare/Pharmaceuticals
- Manufacturing
- Sales/Retail
- Other (Please specify):

Are you currently working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes, I am working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- No, I am working in the office.
- I regularly work from home not related to the pandemic.

## Scale Items

### **Perceived Supervisor Support Items**

- My supervisor values my contribution to its well-being.
- My supervisor fails to appreciate any extra effort from me.
- My supervisor would ignore any complaint from me.
- My supervisor really cares about my well-being.
- Even if I did my best job possible, my supervisor would fail to notice.
- My supervisor cares about my general satisfaction at work.
- My supervisor shows very little concern for me.
- My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work.

### **Perceived Coworker Support Items**

- My coworkers are supportive of my goals and values.
- Help is available from my coworkers when I have a problem.
- My coworkers really care about my well-being.
- My coworkers are willing to offer assistance to help me perform my job to the best of my ability.
- Even if I did the best job possible, my coworkers would fail to notice.
- My coworkers care about my general satisfaction at work.
- My coworkers show very little concern for me.
- My coworkers care about my opinions.
- My coworkers are complimentary of my accomplishments at work.

### **Diversity Climate Perception Items**

- I trust the company to treat me fairly.
- The company maintains a diversity friendly work environment.
- The company respects the views of people like me.
- Top leaders demonstrate a visible commitment to diversity.

### **Organizational Identification Items**

- When someone criticizes the company, it feels like a personal insult.
- I am very interested in what others think about the company.
- When I talk about the company, I usually say "we" rather than "they."
- The company's successes are my successes.
- When someone praises the company, it feels like a personal compliment.

### **Affective Commitment Items**

- I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
- I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.
- I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
- I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one.
- I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization.

I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization.  
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.  
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.

**Turnover Intentions Items**

I intend to leave this organization soon.  
I plan to leave this organization in the next little while.  
I will quit this organization as soon as possible.  
I do not plan on leaving this organization soon.  
I may leave this organization before too long.