

STRUCTURAL RACISM AND DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN COMPANIES: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR AN INCLUSIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

RACISMO ESTRUTURAL E A GESTÃO DA DIVERSIDADE NAS EMPRESAS: DESAFIOS E ESTRATÉGIAS PARA UM AMBIENTE DE TRABALHO INCLUSIVO

RACISMO ESTRUCTURAL Y GESTIÓN DE LA DIVERSIDAD EN LAS EMPRESAS: RETOS Y ESTRATEGIAS PARA UN ENTORNO LABORAL INCLUSIVO

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DOI: 10.54899/dcs.v22i84.3687

Recibido: 30/10/2025 | Aceptado: 03/11/2025 | Publicación en línea: 25/11/2025.

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the impact of structural racism on diversity management in organizations, proposing strategies to promote equal opportunities and inclusive environments. Adopting an exploratory and descriptive approach, it is based on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) comprising 161 articles published between 2020 and 2025 in the Scopus, Web of Science, Spell, and CAPES Portal databases. Thematic analysis identified key categories and organizational practices related to racial inclusion. The results reveal that structural racism remains present in policies and practices that hinder the access and career advancement of Black professionals. Diversity initiatives implemented by companies are mostly superficial and lack transformational depth. The study highlights the importance of consistent affirmative policies, inclusive leadership, indicator monitoring, and coherence between discourse and practice. Cases such as Magazine Luiza's exclusive trainee program and Petrobras's ESG reports illustrate effective practices. The originality of this research lies in integrating the debate on structural racism into strategic diversity management, offering both theoretical and practical contributions. As a limitation, the study is based exclusively on literature review, suggesting the need for future empirical research

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Keywords: Structural Racismo. Diversity Management. Equal Opportunities. Racial Inclusion in Organizations. Inclusive Work Environment.

RESUMO

Este estudo analisa o impacto do racismo estrutural na gestão da diversidade em organizações, propondo estratégias para promover igualdade de oportunidades e ambientes inclusivos. Com abordagem exploratória e descritiva, fundamenta-se em uma Revisão Sistemática da Literatura (RSL) com 161 artigos publicados entre 2020 e 2025 nas bases Scopus, Web of Science, Spell e Portal CAPES. A análise temática identificou categorias centrais e práticas organizacionais relacionadas à inclusão racial. Os resultados revelam que o racismo estrutural ainda está presente em políticas e práticas que dificultam o acesso e a ascensão de profissionais negros. As ações de diversidade adotadas pelas empresas, em sua maioria, são pontuais e carecem de profundidade transformacional. O estudo destaca a importância de políticas afirmativas consistentes, lideranças comprometidas com a inclusão, monitoramento de indicadores e alinhamento entre discurso e prática. Casos como o programa de trainee exclusivo do Magazine Luiza e os relatórios ESG da Petrobras ilustram boas práticas. A originalidade da pesquisa está em integrar o debate sobre racismo estrutural à gestão estratégica da diversidade, oferecendo subsídios teóricos e práticos. Como limitação, o estudo baseia-se apenas em revisão bibliográfica, sugerindo a realização de pesquisas empíricas futuras.

Palavras-chave: Racismo Estrutural. Gestão da Diversidade. Igualdade de Oportunidades. Inclusão Racial nas Organizações. Ambiente de Trabalho Inclusivo.

RESUMEN

Este estudio analiza el impacto del racismo estructural en la gestión de la diversidad en organizaciones, proponiendo estrategias para fomentar la igualdad de oportunidades y entornos inclusivos. Con enfoque exploratorio y descriptivo, se basa en una Revisión Sistemática de la Literatura con 161 artículos publicados entre 2020 y 2025 en las bases Scopus, Web of Science, Spell y Portal CAPES. El análisis temático identificó prácticas organizacionales vinculadas a la inclusión racial. Los resultados muestran que el racismo estructural persiste en políticas y culturas corporativas que dificultan el acceso y la progresión de personas negras. Las iniciativas de diversidad, en su mayoría, son superficiales y carecen de profundidad transformadora. El estudio destaca la necesidad de políticas afirmativas consistentes, liderazgo comprometido, monitoreo de indicadores y coherencia entre discurso y práctica. Casos como el programa de trainee exclusivo de Magazine Luiza y los informes ESG de Petrobras ilustran prácticas exitosas. La originalidad del estudio reside en integrar el debate sobre racismo estructural en la gestión estratégica de la diversidad, aportando bases teóricas y prácticas. Como limitación, se reconoce la dependencia de fuentes bibliográficas, lo que sugiere futuras investigaciones empíricas para validar y ampliar los hallazgos.

Palabras clave: Racismo Estructural. Gestión de la Diversidad. Igualdad de Oportunidades. Inclusión Racial en las Organizaciones. Entorno Laboral Inclusivo.



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INTRODUCTION

Structural racism operates as an institutionalized system that preserves historical inequalities and restricts access for racialized groups to social and economic opportunities (Banaji *et al.*, 2021; Braveman *et al.*, 2022). In organizations, this phenomenon manifests itself silently through exclusionary policies, biased selection processes, informal barriers to promotion, and a scarce presence of Black leaders (Crenshaw, 2002; Griffith *et al.*, 2007), perpetuating cycles of exclusion that compromise the construction of truly inclusive environments. Diversity management has established itself as a strategic element for companies aiming for innovation and competitiveness in multicultural markets (Suroviec, 2020; Opada *et al.*, 2024). In addition to fostering numerical representation, this management requires cultural and structural transformations that value plurality as a source of creativity, problem-solving, and retention of diverse talents (Mazzei and Ravazzani, 2012; Patrick and Kumar, 2012; Olutimehin *et al.*, 2024). Given this scenario, the study seeks to answer the following question: How does structural racism impact diversity management and the promotion of equal opportunities in organizations, and what strategies can be adopted to address it? To this end, the overall objective is to analyze the impact of these practices and propose effective strategies that promote equity and inclusion. Theoretically, the study contributes by deepening the debate on intersections between structural racism and organizational practices, advancing in the fields of management, diversity, and social justice (Hardy and Woodcock, 2023; Mehari *et al.*, 2024). In practical terms, it offers guidance for inclusive organizational policies that strengthen both institutional performance and social impact (Elamin *et al.*, 2024; Sun *et al.*, 2024). Methodologically, an exploratory and descriptive approach was adopted, based on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), where initially 1,625 publications were identified and, after exclusion, 161 articles published between 2020 and 2025 in the Scopus, Web of Science, Spell, and CAPES Portal databases were included. Thematic analysis allowed the identification of patterns, gaps, and organizational practices relevant to the promotion of equity (Moher *et al.*, 2009; Braun and Clarke, 2006).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Structural Racism in Organizations: Foundations and Implications

Structural racism constitutes a system of domination embedded in institutional norms, policies, and practices that perpetuate racial inequalities and restrict marginalized groups' access to resources (Bastos & Lima, 2020, p. 4724; Brito *et al.*, 2021, p. 5). Distinct from individual prejudice, it operates systemically and often invisibly, maintaining hierarchies under the guise of neutrality (Banaji *et al.*, 2021, p. 330; Braveman *et al.*, 2022, p. 384; Bécares *et al.*, 2022, p. 19). Within organizations, this manifests in the underrepresentation of Black professionals in leadership roles, biased recruitment, and ostensibly neutral policies (Crenshaw, 2002, p. 1345; Bailey *et al.*, 2017, p. 770). These practices harm the psychological well-being of racialized workers, leading to stress, anxiety, and depression from microaggressions and daily discrimination (Lea *et al.*, 2021, p. 1363; Adams & Thorpe, 2023, p. 25; Yelton *et al.*, 2022, p. 9). The repercussions extend beyond workplaces. In the justice system, punitive selectivity results in racial surveillance and disproportionate incarceration (Crenshaw, 2002, p. 1352). In healthcare, institutional biases limit equitable access and quality of care (Cené *et al.*, 2023, p. 48). Educational inequalities—manifested in underfunding and exclusionary curricula—further constrain the advancement of Black students (Lea *et al.*, 2021, p. 1364; Arroyo, 2010, p. 58).

Intersectionality amplifies these inequities, particularly for Black women facing the dual burdens of racism and sexism (Schouler-Ocak *et al.*, 2021, p. 163). Addressing them demands intersectoral action grounded in evidence-based public and institutional policies (Gee & Hicken, 2021, p. 931; Powell *et al.*, 2022, p. 6; Ben *et al.*, 2022, p. 15). In education, anti-racist strategies must value plural narratives, adopt intersectional perspectives, and foster critical teacher training (Caputo, 2022, p. 31; Kohli *et al.*, 2017, p. 181; Rosa, 2013, p. 99). The inclusion of Black voices in academia strengthens belonging and challenges epistemic invisibility (Gee & Hicken, 2021, p. 931). Other forms of oppression, such as ableism, reinforce structural inequalities. Inclusive education depends on equitable pedagogical practices, assistive technologies, and teacher training (Menezes, 2015, p. 43; Santarosa *et al.*, 2016, p. 52; Sobrinho *et al.*, 2023, p.3), yet remains constrained by insufficient resources and inadequate infrastructure (Tavares *et al.*, 2016, p. 57; Vieira-Rodrigues & Sanches-Ferreira, 2017, p. 7). Universal design advocates accessible, participatory environments that ensure autonomy and dignity for people with disabilities (Feitosa

& Righi, 2016, p. 12; Aleixo *et al.*, 2020, p. 89; Morano & Santiago, 2018, p. 94; Nuzzi *et al.*, 2024, p. 11). Still, urban and housing insecurity continue to limit mobility and the right to adequate housing (Valderrama-Ulloa *et al.*, 2025, p. 19; Guerrero *et al.*, 2025, p. 44). In tourism, inclusive experiences such as adapted wine tourism require appropriate infrastructure and professional preparation (Bizinelli *et al.*, 2014, p. 6; Lansley, 2003, p. 41).

Confronting structural racism demands institutional transformation, coordinated public policies, and deep cultural change. Social justice depends on valuing diversity, promoting equity, and sustaining the ongoing struggle against inequality.

How Racism Manifests Structurally in the Corporate World

Structural racism in the corporate world operates through institutional practices and cultural norms that reproduce racial inequalities, frequently without intentional discrimination (Banaji *et al.*, 2021, p. 32). This phenomenon sustains racial hierarchies and limits access to power and opportunities for marginalized groups (Braveman *et al.*, 2022, p. 10; Álvarez *et al.*, 2022, p. 24). In organizations, it is expressed in exclusionary recruitment, underrepresentation of Black and Indigenous professionals in leadership (Griffith *et al.*, 2007, p. 45), pressures to distance from racial peers (Carbado & Gulati, 2009, p. 180), and unconscious bias affecting promotions and wages (Skinner *et al.*, 2023, p. 13). Its impacts extend across social domains such as health, education, and housing (Feagin & Bennefield, 2014, p. 914; Brito *et al.*, 2021, p. 3), reflecting historical economic exploitation (Bécares *et al.*, 2022, p. 6), with discriminatory systems legitimized even through statistical representations (Knight *et al.*, 2021, p. 5). Combating this structure requires identifying organizational biases, encouraging inclusive cultures, and establishing accountability mechanisms (Ruggs *et al.*, 2022, p. 76; Onyeador *et al.*, 2021, p. 237). Strategic diversity management is essential (Silva & Barbosa, 2022, p. 202), as diverse teams, despite communication challenges, can be more innovative and effective (Stahl & Maznevski, 2021, p. 248; Mazibuko & Govender, 2017, p. 105). Authentic inclusion demands belonging and shared decision-making power (Opada *et al.*, 2024, p. 23; Sun *et al.*, 2024, p. 18; Lea *et al.*, 2021, p. 75). Effective strategies include salary audits, cultural training, and inclusive communication (Powell *et al.*, 2022, p. 114; Patrick & Kumar, 2012, p. 318; Mehari *et al.*, 2024, p. 31), supported by inclusive leadership (Sun *et al.*, 2024, p. 21; Bollinger, 2007, p. 112; Morris, 2023, p. 57) and continuous development (Jones *et al.*, 2020, p. 64; Elamin *et al.*, 2024, p. 39). Diversity also

represents a global competitive advantage (Suroviec, 2020, p. 289; Li & Tang, 2022, p. 141), reinforced by anti-harassment policies and support networks (Ezeafulukwe *et al.*, 2024, p. 12). Ultimately, inclusion surpasses legal compliance and constitutes an ethical and strategic commitment to equity (Konrad, 2006, p. 4; Daya & April, 2017, p. 221).

The Evolution of Diversity Management in the Organizational Context

Diversity management has evolved from a legalistic approach to an organizational value strategy, driven by demographic transformations, legal advancements, and recognition of its benefits for institutional performance (Mehari *et al.*, 2024). Initially focused on compliance with anti-discrimination legislation, it has come to be understood as a factor of innovation, creativity, and competitive advantage (Patrick; Kumar, 2012; Silva; Barbosa, 2022). Currently, diversity management seeks to build inclusive cultures, value individual differences, promote equity, and encourage collaboration (Kossek; Pichler, 2009). Effective policies go beyond demographic representation: they confront biases, develop inclusive leadership, and ensure safe spaces for the expression and contribution of ideas (Sun *et al.*, 2024). Instead of merely tolerating differences, the focus is on leveraging them to drive more effective and innovative decisions (Mazzei; Ravazzani, 2012). However, contexts such as the French one still face barriers to fully institutionalizing this appreciation (Hardy; Woodcock, 2023).

Diversity on boards of directors has gained prominence, encompassing gender, ethnicity, and experiences, reflecting a broader commitment to inclusion (Nisiyama; Nakamura, 2018). Inclusive action also extends to relationships with clients, suppliers, and communities, aligning organizational practices with principles of social justice. This process requires constant monitoring and continuous evaluation to ensure its effectiveness (Patrick; Kumar, 2012). Historically, diversity management has its roots in affirmative action and equality policies that emerged in the United States in the 1960s, expanding to areas such as public administration, marketing, and social sciences (Mousa, 2020). The work of Kandola and Fullerton (1994) consolidated the concept as a strategic resource, influencing corporate policies aimed at managing plurality (Kharroubi, 2020). The rhetoric of diversity, in particular, contributed to reformulations in civil rights legislation, demonstrating the power of institutional language in promoting change (Edelman *et al.*, 2001). However, cultural diversity within teams does not automatically guarantee better performance. Its impact depends on the context and how differences are managed (Stahl;

Maznevski, 2021). Therefore, organizations investigate its effects on internal culture, acceptance of diversity, and individual and collective outcomes (Mazzei; Ravazzani, 2012). Globalization has broadened this scope, incorporating the diversity of the international workforce and different cultural contexts (Kharroubi, 2020). In the hospitality sector, diversity ethnic, cultural, and gender has been explored as a competitive differentiator and driver of organizational transformation (García-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2020). Inclusive companies attract talent, improve customer service, increase satisfaction, and make more strategic decisions (Kim, 2006). Furthermore, diverse environments stimulate creativity and agility in responding to the market. Cultural diversity in the workplace has recently become a growing qualitative field, focusing on the role of management in building innovative and inclusive spaces (Morris, 2023). Because it is multidisciplinary, diversity management requires integration between areas such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, law, and administration. This approach reinforces the notion that diversity is not only a social value but also a strategic lever for innovation, competitiveness, and organizational sustainability (Elamin *et al.*, 2024).

History and Approaches to Diversity in Companies

Diversity in organizations has evolved from a legalistic and demographic focus to a strategic approach centered on innovation, productivity, and social responsibility (Silva; Barbosa, 2022). Initially associated with compliance with anti-discrimination legislation, it has come to be recognized as an intangible asset that enhances creativity, improves decision-making, and strengthens organizational resilience (Mehta; Saxena, 2025). The concept has expanded to include cultural, social, and professional aspects, as well as gender and ethnicity (Mazzei; Ravazzani, 2012; Nisiyama; Nakamura, 2018). This expansion is driven by interactions of the triple helix—university, productive sector, and government—as an engine of innovation (Etzkowit; Zhou, 2017). In this context, diversity becomes a catalyst for competitive advantage (Patrick; Kumar, 2012; Sun *et al.*, 2024). To generate impact, cultural transformation, the adoption of inclusive leadership, and policies that value differences are required (Li; Tang, 2022). Inclusive environments tend to exhibit greater engagement, innovation, and financial performance (Elamin *et al.*, 2024). The literature reinforces that diversity goes beyond legal requirements, configuring itself as a competitive differentiator (Diversity is about more than observing the letter of the law, 2005; Suroviec, 2020).

Nevertheless, challenges persist, such as interpersonal conflicts and communication barriers, which demand effective strategies (Bassett-Jones, 2005; Hardy; Woodcock, 2023). Inclusive leadership is essential to attract diverse talent, ensure psychological safety, and promote equity (Sharma *et al.*, 2023; Sun *et al.*, 2024). Intercultural communication and capacity-building programs help develop skills and reduce noise (Patrick & Kumar, 2012). Initiatives such as mentoring and affinity groups strengthen integration and mutual support (Ezeafulukwe *et al.*, 2024; Konrad, 2006). Companies that align diversity with inclusive leadership not only improve their indicators but also contribute to a more just society (Kolachi & Akan, 2014; Mazibuko & Govender, 2017). Thus, diversity asserts itself as an ethical imperative and a competitive advantage in the globalized scenario (Alvarez-Robinson, 2001; Lee, 2002; Liu *et al.*, 2023; Sahadevan & Sumangala, 2021).

Challenges of Racial Inclusion in HR Practices and Organizational Culture

Promoting inclusion goes beyond formal policies: it requires confronting unconscious biases, tokenism, and microaggressions that sustain racial inequalities (Crenshaw, 2002, p. 14; Silva; Barbosa, 2022). These factors impact selections, promotions, and the organizational climate, reducing racialized individuals to symbols without an effective voice (Christo *et al.*, 2019; Silva *et al.*, 2017). Diversity does not equate to inclusion, as representation does not guarantee belonging (Sun *et al.*, 2024; Opada *et al.*, 2024). Inclusive leadership is essential to create psychologically safe environments (Sun *et al.*, 2024), with measures such as selection reviews, mentoring programs, and effective reporting channels (Onyeador *et al.*, 2021; Marco *et al.*, 2016). Institutional accountability and recognition of inclusive practices foster more equitable cultures (Patrick; Kumar, 2012), and genuinely diverse environments enhance innovation, engagement, and satisfaction (Diversity is about more than observing the letter of the law, 2005).

Going beyond the law requires continuous training and structured onboarding of new employees (Ezeafulukwe *et al.*, 2024). Strategic internal communication strengthens a sense of belonging (Nisiyama; Nakamura, 2018), while reviewing hiring, promotion, and compensation criteria reduces bias (Mehari *et al.*, 2024; Singh *et al.*, 2023). Companies have revamped job descriptions and interviews, with examples from SAP, Microsoft, and JP Morgan Chase (Krzeminska *et al.*, 2019; Opada *et al.*, 2024). While diversity fosters creativity and innovation, it also presents challenges such as intercultural conflicts and noise, requiring sensitive

management (Stahl & Maznevski, 2021; Jones *et al.*, 2020). Diverse teams in contexts of mutual respect demonstrate greater problem-solving capacity (Patrick & Kumar, 2012). Furthermore, diverse organizations exhibit better financial performance, attract talent, and expand their global reach, with particular emphasis on the positive effects of gender diversity (Bollinger, 2007; Suroviec, 2020). Investing in training strengthens empathy, reduces bias, and improves communication (Etzkowitz & Zhou, 2017; Sohail *et al.*, 2011). For lasting results, institutional engagement, defined metrics, indicator monitoring, and manager accountability are necessary (Mazibuko & Govender, 2017; Patrick & Kumar, 2012). By prioritizing diversity, organizations enhance innovation, relevance, and sustainability (Tapp; Rayment, 2016; Kossek; Pichler, 2009).

Corporate Policies to Combat Racism and Promote Diversity

Corporate policies are fundamental to promoting diversity and addressing institutional racism, influencing the work environment and broader social norms (Nisiyama; Nakamura, 2018; Silva; Barbosa, 2022). In the current context of valuing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), companies have integrated these guidelines into strategic planning, reviewing recruitment practices, eliminating biased language in job descriptions, and adopting structured interviews to reduce bias (Opada *et al.*, 2024). Measures such as diversity training, mentoring programs, and support networks, while relevant, do not guarantee equity on their own (Richard *et al.*, 2013; Sun *et al.*, 2024). Genuine inclusion requires broader strategies, such as partnerships with institutions focused on historically excluded groups, anonymous resume reviews, and transparent selection processes (Onyeador *et al.*, 2021). Anti-racist training and leadership programs are central to preparing diverse professionals for management positions through mentoring, sponsorship, and networking (Morris, 2023; Fagun, 2025). Accountability structures, such as affirmative action plans and diversity committees, reinforce the sustainability of these initiatives (Kang; Kaplan, 2019). Despite criticisms and legal challenges to affirmative action policies and quotas (Olbrich, 1980), mentoring programs and affinity groups, when well-structured and with leadership involvement, have proven effective in promoting inclusion (Conboy; Kelly, 2016; Whittaker *et al.*, 2015). These actions broaden respect, representation, and opportunities for professional advancement (Hartog *et al.*, 2015). The effectiveness of these policies depends on continuous monitoring, with data collection and analysis on representation, promotions, compensation, and satisfaction (Dobbin *et al.*, 2007). By placing diversity at the center of their strategy, companies

strengthen inclusive cultures, increase innovation, improve financial performance, and contribute to positive social transformations (Diversity Is About More Than Observing the Letter of the Law, 2005).

Strategic Benefits of Racial Diversity in Companies

Racial diversity in companies goes beyond legal compliance, becoming a strategic imperative for organizational success (Silva; Barbosa, 2022). Its implementation requires planning aligned with culture and strategic direction (Opada *et al.*, 2024), encompassing not only gender and ethnicity, but also cultural aspects, life experiences, and professional perspectives (Bruno, 2004; Nisiyama; Nakamura, 2018). Effective diversity management depends on creating inclusive environments that value all individuals, foster innovation, and improve financial performance (Bollinger, 2007; Mehari *et al.*, 2024). The inclusion of neurodiverse talent, for example, broadens perspectives and boosts creativity (Krzeminska *et al.*, 2019). Inclusive environments increase engagement, customer satisfaction, and financial results (Diversity is about more than observing the letter of the law, 2005; Sun *et al.*, 2024). However, diversity needs to be accompanied by authentic inclusion, guaranteeing belonging and fair opportunities, otherwise it risks conflict, dissatisfaction, and high turnover (Suroviec, 2020; Opada *et al.*, 2024; Patrick; Kumar, 2012; Stahl; Maznevski, 2021). Promoting racial diversity is therefore both an ethical demand and a competitive advantage: diverse teams outperform competitors in profitability and innovation (Olutimehin *et al.*, 2024; Dinwoodie, 2005; Liu *et al.*, 2023). Inclusive leadership is essential to eliminate systemic barriers, create psychological safety, and ensure transparency in decision-making (Sun *et al.*, 2024). This awareness must reach all levels through training on unconscious biases, intercultural communication, and respect for differences (Li; Tang, 2022; Ezeafulukwe *et al.*, 2024), supported by metrics and continuous review of practices (Singh *et al.*, 2023). While reflecting internal values, actions in favor of diversity strengthen reputation and social legitimacy (Crittenden *et al.*, 2020). Leaders should act as inclusive role models and promote equal opportunities (Sun *et al.*, 2024; Swartz *et al.*, 2019). Proactive diversity and inclusion policies make organizations more equitable, productive, and innovative, consolidating their competitiveness and sustainability in the global arena (Mazzei; Ravazzani, 2012).

Equal Opportunities and Organizational Justice

Distinguishing between equality and equity is essential for understanding social and organizational justice. While equality implies uniform treatment, equity recognizes initial inequalities and proposes differentiated support to guarantee real opportunities (Petroni, 2017). Social justice, therefore, requires the correction of historical inequalities, rational criteria, and the fair distribution of benefits (Yu-qiao, 2013). These principles directly influence gender, ethnicity, and age relations, demanding organizational structures that ensure fair treatment and proactive corrective actions (Zejnuni, 2014; Sun *et al.*, 2024). In the organizational environment, this translates into equitable access to professional development and recognition, which constitutes organizational justice. This is composed of three dimensions: distributive (perception of fairness in salaries, promotions), procedural (equity in decisions), and interactional (respect and transparency in interpersonal relationships) (Qi *et al.*, 2023; Lam *et al.*, 2024). Failures in decision-making processes tend to compromise the perception of fairness in the results (Lam *et al.*, 2024). Social exchange theory argues that environments perceived as fair foster reciprocity, trust, and engagement (Lee & Rhee, 2023; Qi *et al.*, 2023). This requires adopting transparent decision-making, fair compensation, and consolidating an inclusive organizational culture (Andrade *et al.*, 2018). Procedural justice, even when outcomes do not favor the individual, is valued if the criteria are consistent and representative. Interactional justice complements this process by demanding relationships based on respect, honesty, and good communication. A high perception of justice strengthens the bond with inclusive leadership and the feeling of belonging (Júnior & Pinheiro, 2023).

Monitoring and Evaluating Diversity

Building inclusive organizational environments requires tools to measure the impacts of affirmative action (Formanek, 2021; Kang & Kaplan, 2019). In this sense, practices such as sensitivity training, mentoring programs, and career development strategies for minority groups have become widespread (Richard *et al.*, 2013; Dobbin *et al.*, 2007). Systematic data collection and analysis, with stakeholder participation, guides effective policies and strengthens the organizational environment (DeLisa & Lindenthal, 2012; Guillaume *et al.*, 2013). Strategic diversity management contributes to innovation, psychological safety, engagement, and financial

performance (Sohail *et al.*, 2011; Diversity is about more than observing the letter of the law, 2005). However, the heterogeneity of profiles also generates challenges, such as conflicts and communication breakdowns. Overcoming these challenges requires inclusive leadership and cultural mediation strategies (Jones *et al.*, 2020; Stahl; Maznevski, 2021). Diversity must be aligned with the organization's culture and objectives, and incorporated into HR policies (Silva; Barbosa, 2022; Mehari *et al.*, 2024). Companies like SAP and Microsoft stand out for reducing biases in selection processes and promoting the inclusion of neurodivergent professionals (Krzeminska *et al.*, 2019). Inclusive leadership, by valuing uniqueness, enhances innovation, belonging, and commitment (Sun *et al.*, 2024; Sharma *et al.*, 2023). To maximize the gains from diversity, it is essential to monitor indicators, correct gaps, and align goals (Patrick; Kumar, 2012). Diversity in boards and executive teams strengthens decision-making and improves organizational performance (Olutimehin *et al.*, 2024; Bollinger, 2007). Environments where everyone feels respected and empowered to contribute fully overcome the legalistic view of inclusion and transform it into a competitive advantage (Ezeafulukwe *et al.*, 2024; Opada *et al.*, 2024; Suroviec, 2020; Morris, 2023). Transformational leaders recognize diversity as a strategic advantage and foster psychological safety and creativity (Li; Tang, 2022; Daehn; Selig, 2023). Managing diversity requires constant review of policies and practices, as well as sensitive leadership and continuous organizational commitment, creating conditions for all people to thrive (Mazzei; Ravazzani, 2012; Qi *et al.*, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as its main method, aiming to identify, evaluate, and synthesize scientific evidence on monitoring mechanisms, indicators, and management frameworks for ethnic-racial diversity in the corporate environment, with an emphasis on practices aimed at confronting structural racism in organizations. To ensure the methodological rigor characteristic of systematic reviews, the steps proposed by Galvão and Pereira (2014) were followed: formulation of the research question; literature search; article selection; data extraction and synthesis; methodological quality assessment; evidence evaluation; and writing and publication of results. The research is exploratory, descriptive, and quantitative in nature, as it aims to deepen the understanding of the topic, describe in detail the characteristics of the reviewed studies, and quantify relevant aspects of the analyzed corporate practices. By

synthesizing the available information, the study seeks to offer a comprehensive and critical view of ethnic-racial diversity strategies, contributing to the development of more inclusive corporate policies aligned with the fight against structural racism.

Databases

Databases with broad coverage and recognized academic rigor were selected, focusing on the areas of administration, sociology, organizational psychology, and applied social sciences. The following platforms were consulted: Scopus, Web of Science, JSTOR, Emerald Insight, SPEL, in addition to the CAPES Periodicals Portal, allowing access to national and international publications, both empirical and theoretical (Tranfield; Denyer; Smart, 2003).

Search Strategy

To maximize the scope and relevance of the results, a combination of keywords and Boolean operators (AND, OR) was used, in both Portuguese and English, as follows:

- "structural racism" AND "diversity management" AND "companies"
- "structural racism" AND "diversity management" AND "corporate"
- "equal opportunities" AND "inclusive work environment"
- "equal opportunities" AND "inclusive workplace"
- "racial prejudice" AND "organizations"
- "racial bias" AND "organizations"
- Complementary terms: "inclusive hiring policies", "recruitment and diversity", "affirmative action", "diversity indicators", among others.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

- Publications between May 2020 and May 2025.
- Scientific articles (journals and conferences), theses, dissertations, books, and book chapters.

- Empirical and theoretical studies that address structural racism, ethnic-racial diversity, inclusion in the workplace, affirmative action, and organizational accountability.
- Languages: Portuguese and English, Spanish primarily, with the inclusion of other languages through feasible translation.

Exclusion Criteria

- Opinion articles, journalistic reports, book chapters, dissertations, blog posts, or non-scientific materials.
- Studies disconnected from the organizational context or that address diversity in a generic way, without an ethnic-racial approach.

Study Selection Process

Initially, 1,625 publications were identified. After applying the filters: 606 articles were excluded because they were not fully available in PDF format; 483 duplicate articles were removed; 125 articles contained keywords outside the thematic scope; 250 articles were outside the defined time window (2020–2025). In the end, 161 articles were considered eligible, comprising the corpus of the analysis. The initial screening was conducted independently by two reviewers, who read titles and abstracts. Texts deemed relevant were read in full. Disagreements were discussed until consensus was reached, with the assistance of a third reviewer when necessary (Moher *et al.*, 2009).

Reference Management

The Endnot 21 software was used for bibliographic organization, duplicate removal, and subject classification. The systematized management of sources facilitated the structured extraction of evidence.

Data Analysis

The following information was extracted from each study: authorship, year, type of study,

country of origin, theoretical framework used, methodological approach, type of organization analyzed, ethnic-racial indicators employed, diversity practices adopted, and main results. For the qualitative and categorical analysis of the data, the thematic analysis technique was used, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), with the aid of NVivo software. The emerging categories reflected three main dimensions: 1 Mechanisms for monitoring diversity; 2 Ethnic-racial indicators and accountability; 3 Management models and organizational frameworks, 4 The word cloud visually highlights the most recurring concepts and themes in the articles analyzed during the period. Larger terms reflect greater frequency and relevance in the studies.

Figure 1

Word Cloud - Keywords from Articles (2020-2025)



The prominence of terms such as “diversity,” “inclusion,” “organizational,” and “workplace” in recent literature reflects the consolidation of diversity and inclusion as central themes in corporate research agendas, driven by global ESG expectations and social pressures for equitable management practices (Roberson, 2019). The strong presence of terms like “discrimination,” “inequality,” and “structural racism” indicates a deepening analytical focus on systemic barriers and institutionalized exclusion mechanisms within hiring, promotion, and organizational policies, reinforcing the need to confront historically embedded inequalities in corporate spaces (Atewologun *et al.*, 2018). Complementary concepts—including “social,” “cultural,” “leadership,” and “equity”—highlight the multidimensional nature of diversity work, emphasizing that inclusion extends beyond representational metrics to encompass cultural belonging, equitable access to opportunities, and inclusive leadership behaviors (Mor Barak, 2022). At the operational level, the recurrence of “employee,” “training,” “management,” and “practice” underscores the importance of organizational policies and continuous capability

building to foster inclusive climates where employees feel valued and empowered. Together, these patterns reveal a scholarly and managerial shift toward transformative, socially responsible, and culturally competent organizational models capable of addressing contemporary justice-oriented challenges. The increasing emphasis on equity and systemic analysis suggests opportunities for longitudinal, comparative, and interdisciplinary research, particularly in emerging economies and transitional institutional contexts.

Analysis of the Main Authors

Based on the frequency count, the most frequently cited authors in the analyzed production were: Gianna May Sanchez 4; Anne Althaus 4; Karin Lucke 4; Brianna Harrison 4; Rosemary Lane 4; M. Zaghi 4; Susana Gomez 4; Rodney Kort 4; Mary T. Bassett 4; Alejandra Salemi 4; Margareta Matache 4; Konstantinos Tararas 4; Kim Moore Bailey 3; Rena Payan 3; Laura Rodriguez 3.

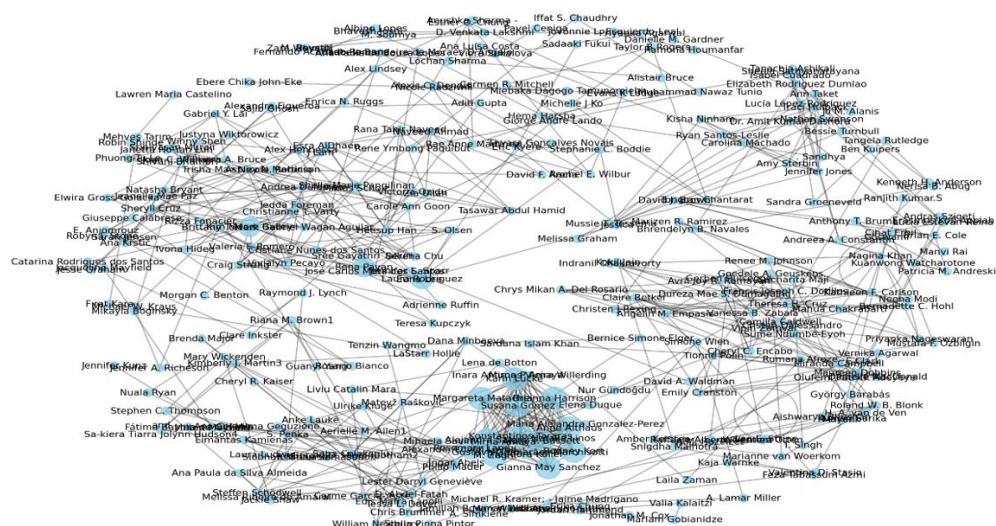
- The group of authors with the highest number of publications (4 articles) suggests strong collaborative networks or a focus on convergent thematic lines, especially in diversity and inclusion. The prominence of terms related to **inclusion**, **equity**, and **structural racism** reflects a growing academic concern with addressing systemic inequalities in the corporate environment.
- The presence of repeated authors indicates consistent leadership or research groups, potentially relevant for future collaborations or systematic reviews.

The authors Gianna May Sanchez, Anne Althaus, Karin Lucke, Brianna Harrison, Rosemary Lane, M. Zaghi, Susana Gomez, Rodney Kort, Mary T. Bassett, Alejandra Salemi, Margareta Matache, and Konstantinos Tararas each presented four articles, positioning themselves as the most prolific in the sample. This consistency suggests strong engagement in collaborative research agendas, possibly linked to international groups or networks focused on themes such as diversity, inclusion, social justice, and organizational policies. Beyond quantitative production, this consistency indicates a greater capacity for fundraising and leadership in multicenter projects, characteristics valued in competitive academic environments (Vogel *et al.*, 2020). The authors Kim Moore Bailey, Rena Payan, and Laura Rodriguez, with three articles each, also stand out, suggesting relevant participation, but possibly in more restricted groups or in transition to greater prominence. The high productivity of these researchers

implies strong potential for influence in directing diversity and inclusion policies in corporate and academic environments, as well as greater international visibility. The uniform distribution at the top among three to four articles shows that collaboration, more than isolated action, is a key factor for consolidating scientific impact on sensitive social issues. Figure 2 of the co-authorship network highlights the connections between authors who published together in the articles analyzed between 2020 and 2025. The larger nodes indicate the authors with the highest number of publications and centrality, especially highlighting the top 15.

Figure 2

Co-authorship network



Here is the **co-authorship network**, highlighting the connections between authors who published together on the analyzed articles (2020–2025). The larger nodes indicate the authors with the most publications (especially the top 15). Among the most influential authors are **Gianna May Sanchez, Anne Althaus, Karin Lucke, Brianna Harrison, Rosemary Lane, M. Zaghi, Susana Gomez, Rodney Kort, Mary T. Bassett, Alejandra Salemi, Margareta Matache, Konstantinos Tararas, Kim Moore Bailey, Rena Payan, and Laura Rodriguez.**

Centrality analysis reveals that these authors have a higher degree of connectedness, suggesting activity within broad collaborative networks, which may indicate leadership or active participation in established research groups. Furthermore, the high betweenness centrality of some of these authors suggests that they play strategic roles in integrating different subgroups, acting as bridges between areas or institutions.

Construction of the Author Framework

A table was compiled with the 161 most relevant authors, considering frequency of citation and theoretical impact on the topic, as per “List of Articles 05-2020 to 05-2025.pdf” for your analysis.

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:us:28652ace-08a0-4e89-881f-f33d0cb143f7> .

References include authors such as Onyeador *et al.* (2021), and applied case studies such as Faria and Torres (2021) on Magazine Luiza and Oliveira and Santos (2023) on the Racial Diversity Seal. Table 1 presents emblematic examples of diversity and racial inclusion programs, policies, and strategies implemented by public and private organizations in Brazil and abroad.

Table 1

With case studies carried out

Case Study	Reference
Magazine Luiza – Trainee Program Exclusively for Black People	FARIA, A.; TORRES, M. Racial diversity and affirmative action in companies: the Magazine Luiza case. <i>Revista Administração em Diálogo</i> , [sl], v. 23, n. 2, p. 45–59, 2021. Available at: https://doi.org/10.20946/rad.v23i2.55579 . Accessed at: Sept. 2025.
JP Morgan – Advancing Black Pathways Program	ONYEADOR, IN; HUDSON, STJ; LEWIS, NA Moving beyond implicit bias training: Organizational accountability for diversity, equity, and inclusion. <i>American Psychologist</i> , [sl], v. 76, no. 3, p. 451–464, 2021. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000812 . Accessed at: Sept. 2025.
Petrobras – ESG Indicators with an Ethnic-Racial Perspective	PETROBRAS. <i>Sustainability Report 2022</i> . [S. l.], 2023. Available at: https://www.investidorpetrobras.com.br/pt/gri . Accessed: Sept. 2025.
SAP – Global Diversity Strategy 2025	MAZZEI, Alessandra; RAVAZZANI, Silvia. Leveraging diversity through corporate communication. <i>Corporate Communications: An International Journal</i> , [sl], v. 17, no. 3, p. 347–360, 2012. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1108/13563281211253584 . Accessed at: Sept. 2025.
City Hall of São Paulo – Racial Diversity Seal	OLIVEIRA, MA; SANTOS, JF. Public management and racial inclusion: an analysis of the Racial Diversity Seal in São Paulo. <i>Revista Gestão Pública e Cidadania</i> , [sl], v. 28, n. 1, p. 112–130, 2023. Available at: https://doi.org/10.12660/gpc.v28n1.2023.89234 . Accessed at: Sept. 2025.

Recent case studies exemplify how affirmative action and diversity strategies have transitioned from symbolic commitments to structured, measurable corporate policies. In Brazil, Magazine Luiza's exclusive trainee program for Black professionals marked a milestone in racial equity debates by directly addressing leadership underrepresentation and aligning with global demands for racial accountability (Faria & Torres, 2021). In the United States, JP Morgan's Advancing Black Pathways illustrates a strategic shift toward organizational accountability, emphasizing tangible results beyond implicit bias training (Onyeador *et al.*, 2021). Petrobras

reinforces this movement by incorporating ethnic-racial indicators in its ESG framework, promoting transparency and institutional responsibility (Petrobras, 2023). Internationally, SAP's long-term diversity strategy highlights inclusive communication and global representativeness as central pillars for sustainable diversity management (Mazzei & Ravazzani, 2012). Complementarily, the City of São Paulo's Racial Diversity Seal evidences the importance of state involvement in mobilizing private organizations toward racial equity (Oliveira & Santos, 2023).

These initiatives converge in positioning diversity as an integrated governance priority, requiring cross-departmental coordination, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms. Publication patterns corroborate this evolution: a rise from 15 publications in 2020 to 52 in 2022 reflects heightened academic and institutional attention fueled by global racial justice movements and ESG pressures (Onyeador *et al.*, 2021; Kang & Kaplan, 2019; Roberson, 2019). Subsequent stabilization suggests consolidation and methodological refinement, reinforcing diversity and inclusion as a maturing field of inquiry and practice. Collectively, the cases and publication trajectory highlight the strategic relevance of evidence-based, monitored policies to advance racial equity and embed diversity into organizational culture and governance.

Maintenance and Consolidation

Academic production on organizational diversity shows a trajectory of growth followed by consolidation and selective refinement. The peak in 2022 and subsequent slight decline to 47 publications in 2023 indicate thematic maturity and stable prioritization of diversity and equity as strategic research axes, aligning with the global recognition of structural racism in organizational systems (Álvarez *et al.*, 2022; Braveman *et al.*, 2022). In this phase, studies begin to emphasize impact metrics, program effectiveness, and applied cases, such as Magazine Luiza's affirmative recruitment strategy (Faria & Torres, 2021) and the Racial Diversity Seal initiative (Oliveira & Santos, 2023), reflecting recommendations for evidence-based approaches to dismantling systemic inequities (Bastos & Lima, 2020; Crenshaw, 2002). In 2024, the reduction to 28 publications appears to signal a transition to more robust research designs, including longitudinal and intersectional analyses, consistent with trends in emerging research domains as they evolve beyond exploratory stages (Banaji *et al.*, 2021; Sun *et al.*, 2024). This stabilization suggests the integration of diversity topics into mainstream management and public policy agendas, reinforcing their strategic relevance for institutions and organizations (Dobbin *et al.*,

2007; Morris, 2023). The trend also highlights opportunities for cross-national studies and pre- and post-policy comparisons, particularly in multicultural and emerging-economy contexts, echoing calls for deeper empirical validation and policy-driven interventions in corporate environments (Hardy & Woodcock, 2023; Silva & Barbosa, 2022). Overall, the evolution of publications indicates not only the durability of diversity research but its increasing sophistication and institutionalization as a critical field for advancing equity and organizational transformation.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The results of this study indicate that, even in the face of normative advances and declared initiatives for diversity and inclusion, structural racism remains deeply entrenched in Brazilian organizations, corroborating the analyses of (Banaji *et al.* 2021; Braveman *et al.* 2022). These authors emphasize that structural racism is not limited to individual attitudes, but stems from a complex system of policies, practices, and institutional structures that reproduce inequalities and restrict access to opportunities for Black people and other racialized groups. Contemporary literature, Onyeador *et al.* (2021) and Kang and Kaplan (2019), points out that isolated initiatives, such as unconscious bias training, are insufficient when not accompanied by structural changes and organizational accountability. The present study reinforces this perspective, showing that merely symbolic actions, such as superficial diversity programs, can result in tokenism and do not generate effective transformations in the work environment (Crenshaw, 2002; Christo *et al.*, 2019). Another relevant point is the importance of consistent corporate policies with clear goals, monitoring mechanisms, and evaluation indicators, as advocated by Richard *et al.* (2013) and Oliveira & Santos (2023). The case of Petrobras, for example, by including ethnic-racial breakdowns in its ESG reports, demonstrates the relevance of measurable institutional commitments (Petrobras, 2023). The role of inclusive leadership also proved central. Leaders committed to equity are able to create psychologically safe environments, stimulating innovation, engagement, and a sense of belonging (Sun *et al.*, 2024; Opada *et al.*, 2024). Data from the study indicate that the lack of inclusive leadership contributes to hostile environments, hindering the retention and advancement of Black professionals, aligning with the conclusions of Mazzei & Ravazzani (2012) and Mehari *et al.* (2024). Furthermore, the results show that integrating diversity as a central strategy, and not just as a human resources goal, enhances innovation, creativity, and organizational performance (Patrick & Kumar, 2012; Suroviec, 2020). The

comparison with the case of Magazine Luiza (Faria & Torres, 2021), whose trainee program exclusively for Black people broke down structural barriers, illustrates the effectiveness of bold affirmative action measures, challenging the status quo to generate effective representation. The need for alignment between discourse and corporate practice also stands out. The inconsistency between declared values and effective practices can undermine the credibility of companies, generate cynicism, and disengagement among employees (Dobbin *et al.*, 2007; Daya & April, 2017). Thus, combating structural racism requires profound and sustainable measures, with articulation between affirmative action policies, continuous monitoring, inclusive leadership, and a genuinely anti-racist organizational culture.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of structural racism on corporate diversity management and proposed strategies to promote equity and inclusion. Based on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), findings demonstrate that structural racism operates beyond individual prejudice, embedded in organizational practices, policies, and cultures that reinforce inequality (Banaji *et al.*, 2021; Braveman *et al.*, 2022). Although diversity initiatives have advanced, many remain superficial or symbolic, failing to address systemic roots (Onyeador *et al.*, 2021; Crenshaw, 2002). Effective transformation requires robust corporate policies, measurable goals, and accountability mechanisms, as evidenced by initiatives at Magazine Luiza (Faria & Torres, 2021) and Petrobras (Petrobras, 2023). Inclusive leadership is central to fostering psychological safety and innovation (Sun *et al.*, 2024; Opada *et al.*, 2024). The study achieved its purpose by identifying structural barriers and proposing strategies such as affirmative policies, equitable recruitment and promotion processes, mentoring programs, affinity networks, continuous racial equity training, and rigorous diversity metrics. These actions aim not only to increase representation but to ensure meaningful participation and career advancement for historically marginalized groups. Academically, the research advances understanding of the intersection between structural racism and diversity management, highlighting the need for systemic and sustainable approaches (Mazzei & Ravazzani, 2012; Hardy & Woodcock, 2023). Practically, it offers organizations a roadmap to build more effective diversity policies aligned with contemporary social demands, with potential competitive advantages and reputational benefits. A key limitation is the predominance of qualitative evidence, suggesting the need for empirical

studies assessing the effectiveness of proposed strategies across organizational contexts. Future research should include longitudinal designs, in-depth case studies, and quantitative models to evaluate diversity initiatives and their impact on performance and inclusion climates. Ultimately, confronting structural racism in organizations requires ongoing commitment, courageous leadership, and integrated policies capable of transforming workplaces into genuinely equitable and inclusive environments.

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