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Representative Bureaucracy in Government Contracting: Examining Supplier Diversity Policy Implementation

Evelyn Trammell

Florida International University, etram003@fiu.edu

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

REPRESENTATIVE BUREAUCRACY IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING:
EXAMINING SUPPLIER DIVERSITY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

by

Evelyn Trammell

2020

To: Dean John F. Stack, Jr., Ph.D.
Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Evelyn Trammell, and entitled Representative Bureaucracy in Government Contracting: Examining Supplier Diversity Policy Implementation, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgement.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

Aya Chacar

Susannah Ali

Nazife Ganapati

Mohamad Alkadry, Co-Major Professor

Meredith Newman, Co-Major Professor

Date of Defense: June 12, 2020

The dissertation of Evelyn Trammell is approved.

Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs

Andres G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2020

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DEDICATION

To my family, for their support throughout this journey, and to Maddox, for keeping me company throughout the many late nights of data crunching and writing. A special dedicatory note to my grandfather, who always pushed me to pursue and further my education above all else. He said it is the only thing that can never be taken away.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

REPRESENTATIVE BUREAUCRACY IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING:
EXAMINING SUPPLIER DIVERSITY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

by

Evelyn Trammell

Florida International University, 2020

Miami, Florida

Professor Meredith Newman, Co-Major Professor

Professor Mohamad Alkadry, Co-Major Professor

Government organizations have struggled to balance democratic values of inclusiveness and equity with an efficient and effective bureaucracy since the early years of the administrative state. A representative bureaucracy offers a solution where effective and efficient public service delivery can be achieved while reflecting the interests of historically underrepresented social groups in policy decisions. The theory of representative bureaucracy states that organizational actors that share characteristics with constituents are more likely to respond to their interests through policies and implementation activities. Employing a mixed methodology, this study examines whether and how representativeness of local government decision-makers affects contracting policy implementation by assessing the degree of supplier diversity of local governments. Supplier diversity contracting policies aim to enhance access, limit discrimination, correct historical injustices, and empower traditionally underserved populations.

This study contributes to the broader understanding of representative bureaucracy in the local government contracting environment and yields actionable recommendations

for public managers. The contracting environment is often driven by efficiency and guided by legal stipulations. The results of this study demonstrate that even while operating within the constraints of this environment, minority representation at the street level is related to active implementation. Additionally, street level bureaucrats who assume a minority representative role are more likely to have greater motivation for supplier diversity. Elected officials also have an important role driving supplier diversity from the top. However, this is a product of the political nature of contracting decisions where the push from elected officials is likely an effort to be responsive to their constituents.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
FTE	Full Time Employees
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NIGP	NIGP: The Institute for Public Procurement
NPM	New Public Management
NR	No Response
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Government organizations have struggled to balance democratic values of inclusiveness and equity with an efficient and effective bureaucracy since the early years of the administrative state (Frederickson, 1996). A representative bureaucracy offers a solution in which effective and efficient public service delivery can be achieved while reflecting the interests of diverse and historically underrepresented social groups in policy decisions (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Riccucci, Van Ryzin, & Li, 2015). The theory of representative bureaucracy states that organizational actors that share characteristics with constituents (passive representation) are more likely to respond to their interests through policies and implementation activities (active representation) (Mosher, 1968; Krislov, 1974; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser, Wilkins, Meier, & Holland, 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Riccucci et al., 2015; Bishu & Kennedy, 2019). The assumption of representative bureaucracy theory is that passive representation will lead to active representation (Mosher, 1968; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Meier & Bohte, 2001). Bradbury and Kellough (2008) indicate that the premise for active representation is derived from the similarity between demographics and social backgrounds of bureaucrats and the public served. This influences attitudes and values of bureaucrats, and consequently, impacts their policy decisions and implementation activities. Another facet of representative bureaucracy is symbolic representation. In this case, constituents perceive bureaucratic actions as legitimate because of shared demographic characteristics, identification, and/or experiences regardless of whether

purposeful actions are taken by the bureaucrat (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009; Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Riccucci, Van Ryzin, & Lavena, 2014; Riccucci et al., 2015).

Within local governments, the supplier diversity environment is unique in that it is subject to the effects of representative bureaucracy and the overall contracting environment (Brudney, Fernandez, Ryu, & Wright, 2005; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez, Malatesta, & Smith, 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Supplier diversity refers to government contracting initiatives aiming to enhance access, limit discrimination, correct historical injustices, and empower disadvantaged small business owners (McCrudden, 2004; Fernandez et al., 2012). It is a socio-economic equity initiative operating in the contracting environment where efficiency is key and often mandated (Brown, Potoski, & Van Slyke, 2006). The contracting environment is also constrained by legal stipulations and is political in nature, making it necessary to balance stakeholder preferences and competing priorities.

The purpose of the present research is to further examine active representation by assessing contracting practices—namely, women and racial/ethnic minority owned business contracting—of local governments in the United States. The present research contributes to representative bureaucracy theory and government contracting literature by demonstrating how social equity and inclusion can be integrated with existing public service delivery processes of local government agencies. Findings also have implications for local government contracting practice where efficiency often trumps equity.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Government spending impacts the community and local economy. In 2018, state and local governments spent approximately 1.8 trillion dollars (United States Department

of Labor, 2019). Sixty four percent of spending was directed toward procurement of goods and services (United States Department of Labor, 2019). This spending power can be used to achieve policy goals that extend beyond the purchase of goods and service provision and address issues directly impacting communities (e.g. climate change, affordable housing, inequality, and economic development). Yet, adoption and implementation of procurement policies to address pressing issues affecting communities vary across local governments in the United States (Prier, Schwerin, & McCue, 2016; Alkadry, Trammell, & Dimand, 2019; Trammell & Dimand, 2019).

Local governments can utilize contracting policies and programs as tools to achieve policy goals and specific outcomes across a range of policy areas (Prier et al., 2016; Alkadry et al., 2019). In contracting, however, efficiency is often the driving force behind contract awards. This sometimes results in disparities in which certain social groups unable to compete for contracting opportunities. In order to address these contracting disparities, local governments adopt supplier diversity policies.

Supplier diversity policies aim to balance equity and efficiency in government contracting. Local governments implement supplier diversity to mitigate contracting disparities while also enhancing their local economy. These intentional policies encourage active participation in government contracting opportunities for underrepresented groups such as businesses owned by women, racial/ethnic minority groups, and other disadvantaged social groups (United States Small Business Administration, 2017). The present research specifically addresses supplier diversity policies for businesses owned by women and racial/ethnic minority groups (hereafter referred to as *minority* groups).

Women and minority owned businesses have created jobs and increased income for disadvantaged groups as a result of opportunities granted by supplier diversity policies (Rice, 1992; Terman, 2014). In 2012, minority owned firms comprised approximately 17% of all businesses with employees nationwide, employed approximately 7.1 million people in the United States, and generated approximately \$1.2 trillion in receipts (United States Department of Commerce, 2016). As of 2012, women owned business enterprises comprised approximately 14% of all businesses with employees nationwide, employed approximately 6.7 million people in the United States, and generated approximately \$994.5 billion in receipts (National Women's Business Council, n.d.).

While women and minority owned businesses comprise approximately half of all firms in the United States, the access and opportunities to participate and compete in government contracting continues to be problematic. As lowest cost purchasing remains embedded in government procurement, the challenge of balancing efficiency with inclusiveness and equity in local government contracting persists. When minority and women owned businesses are unable to compete, a large number of businesses are omitted from contracting and competitive bidding opportunities.

Providing greater opportunities for women and minority owned businesses to participate in government contracting is beneficial for the local government agency, women and minority owned businesses, and for members of the community. First, this helps local governments address issues of social equity and economic development in their community. Second, more competition in the market can lead to better prices for governments. Third, contracting with women and minority owned businesses provides

jobs, which helps to maintain and even grow these businesses. Finally, these contracts generate revenue for employees of these businesses, who often reside in these communities.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The present research examines the extent that representativeness of local government decision-makers impacts implementation of local government contracting policies by assessing supplier diversity. Supplier diversity refers to government contracting initiatives aiming to enhance access, limit discrimination, correct historical injustices, and empower disadvantaged small business owners (McCrudden, 2004; Fernandez et al., 2012). This research builds on the theory of representative bureaucracy, examining the extent to which social equity is incorporated in contracting—an environment where balancing social equity and efficiency remains a challenge.

While studies on representative bureaucracy have examined various facets of theory (passive, active, symbolic) in several policy areas (Stein, 1986; Selden, 1997; Hindera & Young, 1998; Brudney, Hebert, & Wright, 2000; Weiher, 2000; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Andrews, Boyne, Meier, O'Toole, & Walker, 2005; Riccucci et al., 2014), few have examined the impact of representative bureaucracy in contracting—where efficiency is key and often mandated. Furthermore, research on representative bureaucracy in contracting has been limited to quantitative analysis at the federal level of government (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Smith et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). The present study expands on both contracting and representative bureaucracy research (i.e., Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Brown et al., 2005; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Smith et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018).

Existing research on representative bureaucracy in contracting has provided evidence that minority representation within federal government agencies is a significant predictor of increased contracts being awarded to minority owned firms (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Fernandez et al., (2012) noted that female passive representation, however, did not translate into active representation. More recent research on representative bureaucracy in contracting in federal government has demonstrated effects across different races and ethnicities (Brunjes & Kellough, 2018).

The present study effectively contributes to the broader understanding of representative bureaucracy in the contracting environment. First, this research employed mixed methodology to comprehensively analyze the extent to which social equity and inclusion have been integrated into public service delivery processes of local governments. I established an index to measure contract policy implementation of local governments through assessment of supplier diversity activity—subsequently incorporating case study research. Second, this research examined the impacts of representative bureaucracy in the local government contracting environment, where various factors influence policy goals and outcomes. Local governments are subject to institutional, organizational, and environmental influences that differ from those impacting the federal level of government. The model of representative bureaucracy is distinct in this environment. Finally, this research yields actionable recommendations for public managers seeking to effectively implement social equity in contracting policies of their organizations.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework utilized in this research draws from representative bureaucracy to examine how diversity at multiple levels in local government agencies impacts supplier diversity policy implementation. According to the theory of representative bureaucracy, bureaucratic actors that share demographic characteristics with the population they serve (passive representation) respond to the interests of these constituents through various policies and implementation activities (active representation) (Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Riccucci et al., 2015; Bishu & Kennedy, 2019). The assumption of the theory of representative bureaucracy is that passive representation leads to active representation. Another facet of representative bureaucracy is symbolic representation. Gade and Wilkins (2013) noted that, “passive representation can also translate into symbolic representation, where representation may change the attitudes and behaviors of the represented client without any action taken by the bureaucrat” (p. 267).

Previous literature has identified the conditions necessary for passive representation to translate to active representation (Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). First, the “demographic characteristic should be highly salient” (Meier, 1993, p. 393-394). Second, bureaucrats should have some decision-making authority in how to perform their jobs. This is referred to as bureaucratic discretion. Third, the policy decision should be relevant to the demographic characteristic that is represented by the bureaucrat. Fourth, research has demonstrated that active

representation is more likely to occur at the street level than at higher levels in the organization (Thompson, 1976; Meier, 1993; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Street level bureaucrats are often front-line workers that “make decisions about the direct provision of services” (Sowa & Selden, 2003, p. 700). In the present research, those with direct engagement in supplier diversity—procurement heads and related supplier diversity program staff—have an important role in implementation activities as street level bureaucrats. Finally, Meier (1993) noted the need for political support for active representation to occur.

Additionally, studies on representative bureaucracy have determined that only certain circumstances provide the necessary environment for active representation to occur, and that circumstances may differ in cases of female and minority representation (Selden, 1997; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Fernandez et al., 2012). Further differentiation is necessary within the minority grouping as well. It is important to recognize that not all minorities should be viewed the same (Selden 1997; Watkins-Hayes, 2011; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Distinct minority groups are affected by different things, and have unique preferences, identities, history, socialization experiences, and values. For example, Selden (1997) found varying experiences for Native Americans, Hispanics, African Americans, and Asians in allocation of resources by the Farmers’ Home Administration. Experiences can differ based on political, economic, and social status within a racial community as well (Watkins-Hayes, 2011; Vinopal, 2019). This is reflected, for example, through “differences in parenting and access to cultural capital and developmental opportunities,” which affects life

experiences related to “health, education, income, crime, and others” (Vinopal, 2019, p. 2).

An administrator assuming a representative role can also impact whether passive representation translates into active representation (Selden, 1997; Selden, Brudney, & Kellough, 1998; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003). The representative role “refers to the willingness of bureaucrats to see themselves as advocates for, or representatives of” minority or gender interests (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008, p. 698). Prior research has found that adoption of the representative role has a greater impact on active representation than the race/ethnicity or gender of administrators themselves (Selden, 1997; Selden et al., 1998; Keiser et al., 2002; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008).

On the other hand, Meier (1993) noted that passive representation does not always translate into active representation for several reasons. First, the degree of routinization in the organization may limit the amount of discretion a bureaucrat has in performing tasks (Meier, 1993). Second, minorities and women may not be positioned to influence policy outcomes. Third, minorities and women that have reached upper level positions may have experienced organizational socialization—in which their personal values have been superseded by agency values (Meier, 1993; Fernandez et al., 2012).

Research has also indicated that the organizational and institutional context impacts the extent to which active representation exists (Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty, & Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Krause, Feiock, & Hawkins, 2016; Vinopal, 2019). Keiser et al. (2002) noted that bureaucrats are “shaped and constrained by the contingencies of context and circumstance” (p. 555). Furthermore, “institutional structures help to determine the

purpose and scope of bureaucrats' work and how much discretion they have carrying out their tasks" (Kieser et al., 2002, p.555).

Contracting policies, in particular, are subjected to institutional influence in the local government setting—where policy decisions and actions “are guided and constrained by law” (Martin, Berner, & Bluestein, 2007, p. 511). These policies can be driven by local ordinances and fiscal federalism—where federal and state funding is contingent on ordinance compliance by local governments (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Blount & Hill, 2015). Because the present research examined representative bureaucracy in the contracting environment, the organizational and institutional context of local government organizations was included in the theoretical framework.

Research on representative bureaucracy in contracting has identified the role of minority representation when examining federal contract awards (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Smith and Fernandez (2010) noted the importance of minority representation in federal agencies for the promotion of “equity in government contracting” (p. 94). These works build on previous studies on representative bureaucracy, noting direct benefits to minority owned businesses through contract awards when key procurement and contracting staff are minorities (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018).

Bishu and Kennedy (2019) stated that broader “application of representative bureaucracy theory is needed to better understand its strengths and limitations” (p.2). Supplier diversity operates in a unique environment where efficiency has historically been highly valued (Brown et al., 2006). To obtain a comprehensive understanding of

representative bureaucracy in the contracting environment of local government in the United States, the conceptual framework developed for the present study accounted for individual, organizational, and environmental factors. The extent that diversity at multiple levels in the organization impacts supplier diversity policy implementation in local governments was included in the conceptual framework. Gender and racial/ethnic representation are the main predictors and are accounted for at the following levels: elected official, city manager/chief executive officer (CEO), and procurement head.

1.5 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The supplier diversity environment is unique in that it is subject to the effects of representative bureaucracy and the effects of the overall contracting environment (Brudney et al., 2005; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Blount & Hill, 2015; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). In general, efficiency has been viewed as a key principle in contracting (Brown et al., 2006). A representative bureaucracy is one way that equity and efficiency can be balanced within this environment.

The present research builds on the theory of representative bureaucracy by examining how diversity of elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads impacts supplier diversity policy implementation. Supplier diversity, in this research, specifically refers to initiatives encouraging participation of women and minority owned businesses in contracting opportunities of local governments. This study assessed whether active representation is present and assessed the extent to which active representation occurs.

The following research questions were investigated:

- 1) What factors impact supplier diversity policy implementation of local governments?

2) Does decision-maker diversity play a role in supplier diversity policy implementation?

Based on prior research on representative bureaucracy, the following hypotheses are presented.

H1: Local governments with more diverse leadership will have a higher degree of supplier diversity than local governments with less diversity.

H2: Local governments with more diversity at the procurement head level are more likely to actively implement supplier diversity than those with diversity at other leadership levels.

1.6 Research Design

This research employed mixed methodology to examine the impacts of representative bureaucracy on contracting policy—namely, supplier diversity—in local governments in the United States. This approach is instrumental in providing a more comprehensive understanding of representative bureaucracy in the local government contracting environment. In describing the benefits of a mixed methodology, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007) noted that the collective data obtained through quantitative and qualitative techniques provide a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the research topic. Hesse-Biber (2010) further noted that mixed methodology can be used to validate findings. Comparing the findings of the two methods helps researchers find convergence or contradictions and provides a better overall picture of the research topic.

My research design included two phases: a survey and two case studies. The survey was conducted first. The target population for the survey were chief procurement

officers or head of procurement operations in local governments nationwide. Then, case studies were conducted of two large cities with varying demographics: City of Portland (Oregon) and City of San Antonio (Texas). In the City of Portland, local government staff were interviewed for the case study. In the City of San Antonio, local government staff and stakeholders external to the agency were interviewed. A public meeting related to supplier diversity was also audited in the City of San Antonio.

The data for the quantitative phase were obtained from various sources. First, a survey instrument was used to obtain diversity, organizational, and supplier diversity data of local governments. This survey was distributed with the assistance of NIGP: The Institute for Public Procurement (NIGP). NIGP is the largest professional organization for public procurement professionals in the United States. Second, the United States Census Bureau was utilized to obtain data comprising the environmental context outlined in the study. Third, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Election Data and Science Lab database provided data on voting outcomes of the 2016 Presidential election. This captured the political preference of the community.

Surveys were emailed to the chief procurement officer or head of procurement in local government organizations throughout the United States in November 2018. NIGP facilitated the survey distribution to its membership. NIGP has approximately 3,000 member agencies. For the present study, the survey was emailed to 1,983 member agencies that represent local governments. Four hundred thirty-six agencies responded, yielding a 22% response rate. Following Prier et al. (2016), cases with missing values were excluded in efforts to be more conservative with conclusions drawn from this analysis. This resulted in 187 usable cases.

This study utilized one dependent variable. This variable is an additive index referred to as Supplier Diversity Activity Index. This is a count variable reflecting the number of supplier diversity activities in which an organization engages. The index includes 11 activities.

The independent variables were grouped into three categories: individual, organizational, and environmental. The main independent variables examined gender and racial/ethnic diversity of elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads. Organizational and environmental variables are control variables. The organizational variables include discretion of procurement staff, dedicated staff for supplier diversity, and number of full-time employees in the organization. The environmental context includes legal/compliance factors as well as community characteristics. Both are present in the contracting environment and can guide or constrain supplier diversity policy implementation.

Following the survey, two case studies were conducted: City of Portland (Oregon) and City of San Antonio (Texas). Case study sites were identified by utilizing a stratified sampling technique that considered population size, population demographics, and extent of supplier diversity policy implementation. This technique is further detailed in Chapter 3. These case studies included semi-structured interviews with key representatives from the local government that are knowledgeable about supplier diversity initiatives of their respective agency. In addition, key members of the San Antonio community were interviewed. They were identified and included by the Chief Procurement Officer because of their unique insight into this subject. The Chief Procurement Officer for the City of Portland opted to only include representatives from the City government for their

case study. Semi-structured interviews are beneficial because they allow for direct interaction and provide an opportunity for follow-up questions immediately following a response. The semi-structured format also allows for probing questions and deviation (adding/subtracting questions). The case studies provided additional insight on factors impacting supplier diversity policy implementation and confirmed certain findings of the quantitative analysis.

1.7 Outline of Dissertation Chapters

Chapter 2 provides a literature review of representative bureaucracy. First, an overview of the theory of representative bureaucracy is provided—detailing the types of representative bureaucracy (i.e., passive, active, and symbolic) and the relationship between them. Then, a deeper investigation of active representation is provided. This includes a discussion of the conditions necessary to achieve active representation and factors that may impact it. Finally, prior research on representative bureaucracy in contracting is examined, and the conceptual model for this study is introduced.

Chapter 3 summarizes the research methods employed in this study. Data collection and analysis occurred in two separate phases. First, justification for the choice in methodology is provided. Second, this chapter lists the research questions and details the study's hypotheses. Third, the research design of the quantitative methodology is described. This includes a discussion on the design of survey instrument, operationalization and measurement of variables included in the study, sampling, and survey administration and response rate. Fourth, the process involved in conducting case studies is explained. This includes site selection, access to the case study sites, semi-structured interview process, and qualitative data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the quantitative data analysis. This chapter outlines the operationalization of variables included in this study. Chapter 5 presents the results of the qualitative data analysis. These findings complement the quantitative results and provide an in-depth account of factors that impact supplier diversity.

The final chapter, Chapter 6, provides a discussion and conclusions for this study. Findings from the present study are compared to prior studies to identify implications for the theory of representative bureaucracy. Moreover, implications for practice are described. In addition, study limitations are outlined. Finally, recommendations for future research are provided.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This study builds on the theory of representative bureaucracy to assess the impacts of organizational representation on the implementation of contracting policy as it relates to supplier diversity. The research on representative bureaucracy is extensive, but research on representative bureaucracy in the local government contracting environment is scarce. This context provides insight into how the theory of representative bureaucracy applies in a setting that is driven by efficiency and guided by legal stipulations.

First, this chapter explains supplier diversity and different ways in which these policies are implemented by local governments. Second, an overview of the history of representative bureaucracy is provided. Definitions of types of representation are included in this section. An outline of developments, applicability, and implications across varying policy areas is also provided. Third, the manifestation of representative bureaucracy in the contracting environment is examined. I then provide a review of relevant contracting literature and literature specific to representation in contracting. Fourth, gaps in the literature are identified. Finally, the different factors affecting active representation are explained, and the research questions, hypotheses, and conceptual model are presented.

2.2 Supplier Diversity Contracting Initiatives of Local Governments

Supplier diversity refers to contracting policies aiming to enhance access, limit discrimination, correct historical injustices, and empower traditionally underserved populations (McCrudden, 2004; Fernandez et al., 2012). These policies encourage contracting with businesses owned by women, minority groups, and other disadvantaged

social groups (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2017). The present research focused on policies promoting contracting with women and minority owned businesses.

Prior research has suggested that there are two main rationales for supplier diversity: social equity and economic development (Celec, Voich, Nosari, & Stith, 2000; McCrudden, 2004; Martin et al., 2007; Brammer & Walker, 2011; Fernandez et al., 2012; Nijaki & Worrel, 2012). Supplier diversity efforts aim to decrease contracting disparities by redistribution of contracting dollars. This diversifies the vendor pool, instills diversity in the market, and enhances fairness and access in contracting for small business owners from disadvantaged groups (Celec et al., 2000; McCrudden, 2004; Brammer & Walker, 2011; Nijaki & Worrel, 2012).

Supplier diversity yields benefits for government agencies and for women and minority owned businesses. Greater diversity in the market effectively maintains competitive pricing of goods and services because it drives for-profit businesses to reduce their costs and increase quality to provide the best value for their product (Rice, 1992; Selden, 2006; Amirkhanyan, 2010; Terman, 2014; McCue, Prier, & Swanson, 2015). This may lead to more efficient pricing for government procurement. Contracting with women and minority owned businesses also provides jobs and generates revenue, helping to maintain and grow these businesses and benefit their employees.

Local governments have policies and programs that aim to achieve supplier diversity. These programs are formal and informal initiatives allowing varying degrees of discretion in their implementation. I reviewed literature and professional reports to identify common supplier diversity initiatives (Celec et al., 2000; Insight Center for Community Economic Development, 2007; Martin et al., 2007; Smith & Fernandez,

2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Terman, 2014; Blount & Hill, 2015; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). This includes: set asides, price evaluation credits, preference points, setting goals for contracting with women and minority owned businesses, tracking utilization of these firms, publishing this utilization, penalizing contractors for fraud, outreach events, offering or facilitating technical assistance and other developmental opportunities, formulating large contracts so that parts of the contract may be bid on rather than the whole, and advertising contracting opportunities in two or more platforms. These initiatives represent dedication, support, and active efforts by local governments toward achieving supplier diversity. Each initiative is described in greater detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Set asides are contracts that are exclusively reserved for groups meeting certain criteria. Price evaluation credits and preference points provide an adjustment to certain qualified firms during the bid evaluation process. Setting contracting goals, tracking utilization, and publishing utilization are part of good faith efforts by local governments to increase contracting dollars or percentage of contracts being awarded to women and minority owned businesses.

Local governments penalize contractors for fraud to demonstrate a commitment to transparency and effectiveness in their supplier diversity programs. Some contractors attempt to bypass policies and procedures meant to provide opportunities for women and minority owned businesses in government contracting. In these cases, the fraudulent contractors use shell companies or obscure company ownership so that it will appear—and qualify—as women owned or minority owned.

Outreach events are efforts by the local government to inform women and minority owned businesses about contracting or other opportunities (e.g., technical development) available to these groups. On a related note, local governments may offer or facilitate technical assistance and other developmental opportunities specifically for women and minority owned businesses. For example, these firms may be qualified to perform the work under a contract, but they may need guidance on how to produce the proposal required to bid on such projects. In these cases, the local government may offer assistance or have an existing partnership with an organization in the community that can assist.

Another supplier diversity initiative of local governments is to design large contracts so that smaller businesses can bid on parts of the contract—rather than the whole. This allows firms with less financial resources and/or capacity to bid on specific portions of a contract, while allowing larger firms to bid on the entire contract or a portion that requires greater financial resources and/or capacity.

Finally, local governments are required to advertise contracting opportunities. However, certain bidding platforms used to manage the advertising and proposal submission process require a fee. This may deter certain firms from participating. To remedy this problem, local governments advertise these opportunities on additional platforms that do not include fees, which expands their reach.

Based on key features of the theory of representative bureaucracy, the present study examined how diversity of local government leadership impacts implementation of these initiatives. The following sections provide a literature review of representative bureaucracy, examine its application to contracting, and identify gaps in the literature.

The conceptual model based on the literature review is presented in the final section of this chapter.

2.3 History and Developments of Representative Bureaucracy Theory

The theory of representative bureaucracy posits that bureaucratic actors sharing demographic characteristics with members of the community are more likely to reflect the interests of these constituents (Mosher, 1968; Krislov, 1974; Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Riccucci et al., 2015; Bishu & Kennedy, 2019). A representative bureaucracy reconciles “the need for bureaucracy with the normative requirements of democracy” (Meier, 1993, p. 393), and helps to provide legitimacy to the decisions and actions of bureaucrats (Meier, 1993; Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Bishu & Kennedy, 2019). A bureaucracy that reflects the same characteristics as the public provides a way for citizens to be heard in the policy process because citizens feel linked to their government (Sowa & Selden, 2003). These shared characteristics constitute shared values and understanding of experiences and needs.

Early notions of representative bureaucracy can be traced to Kingsley (1944). According to Kingsley (1944), representative bureaucracy should mirror the dominant groups in society (Meier, 1975). Since this time, there have been several advancements to the theory of representative bureaucracy. While Kingsley (1944) proposed for bureaucracy to mirror dominant groups in society, others argued that bureaucrats should mirror the population they serve (Long, 1952; Van Riper, 1958; Pitkin, 1967). By mirroring the population, bureaucrats would more likely represent the values and act in the interest of this population. Mosher (1968) further developed the theory of

representative bureaucracy, noting the distinction and relationship between passive and active representation, and formed the foundation for the theory of representative bureaucracy seen today (Bishu & Kennedy, 2019).

There are three main categories of research on representative bureaucracy: passive, symbolic, and active (Bishu & Kennedy, 2019). Passive representation occurs when the demographic characteristics of organizational actors mirror those of the public they serve (Mosher, 1968; Stein, 1986; Saltzstein, 1989; Stewart, England, & Meier, 1989; Meier, 1993; Riccucci & Saidel, 1997; Weiher, 2000). Demographic characteristics can consist of race, ethnicity, sex, and education. A recent study by Vinopal (2019) also incorporated socioeconomic status as a category of representation. Passive representation research provides varying ways in which to measure representativeness. This includes, for example, creating an index measuring percent of a demographic group in the work force divided by percent of the same demographic group in the population; an index measuring percent of a demographic group at higher levels of an organization divided by percent of the same demographic group at lower levels of the same organization; and an index measuring percent of a demographic group in specific categories of jobs divided by percent of the same demographic group in the total workforce (Riccucci & Saidel, 1997).

Studies on passive representation have mainly focused on factors affecting representativeness or underrepresentation of different demographic groups in public agencies (Saltzstein, 1989; Stewart et al., 1989; Riccucci & Saidel, 1997). In some cases, organizational representation is a function of the available population to fill certain positions (Stewart et al., 1989). This translates to representation across varying positions. For example, Stewart et al. (1989) found that more Black residents in a community leads

to more Black representation in school board positions. Consequently, this led to greater Black representation in administrator positions, which—in turn—led to greater Black representation in teaching positions.

In their study on passive representation, Riccucci and Saidel (1997) found that gender and racial disparities exist when examining representation in top level and career positions across state agencies. Reconfiguring a measure of representation, Riccucci and Saidel (1997) found greater disparities than what has been reported in prior studies that measured overall representation in the agency. Women are often appointed to lead agencies with gendered goals (e.g., human rights, labor, human resources), but they are vastly underrepresented in public safety fields (Riccucci & Saidel, 1997). The same trend applies to race/ethnicity with minorities mainly employed in lower levels in corrections, utilities, transportation, police, and welfare agencies. These findings speak to the importance of passive representation for equitable representation.

Active representation occurs when policies and implementation activities of bureaucrats reflect the interests of constituents with whom they share demographic characteristics (Mosher, 1968; Meier, 1993; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). Shared demographic characteristics between bureaucrats and constituents impact the values and beliefs of bureaucrats because of shared experiences and socialization processes. This often results in favorable outcomes for the represented groups. Research has demonstrated that passive representation can translate to active representation in different settings (Mosher, 1968; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Hindera & Young, 1998; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Smith & Fernandez,

2010; Fernandez et al., 2012). Determinants of active representation in different settings are detailed in Section 2.6.

Symbolic representation, another facet of representative bureaucracy theory, focuses on the symbolic significance of passive representation (Riccucci & Sidel, 1997; Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009; Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Riccucci et al., 2015). Symbolic representation is based on perceived legitimacy that occurs through shared demographics characteristics, identification, and/or experience. Frederickson, Smith, Larimer, and Licari (2016) noted that when “bureaucrats share the identification, experience, and characteristics of a portion of the public, that audience will perceive the actions of those bureaucrats as legitimate, even if the bureaucrats are not purposefully representing that group” (p. 64). This provides an avenue for bureaucratic legitimacy without purposeful action by the organization or bureaucrat.

Symbolic representation focuses on how commonalities between members of the public and bureaucrats affects the attitudes, behaviors, and actions of the public (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009; Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Bishu & Kennedy, 2019). Recent scholarship has posited that symbolic representation is important for trust, cooperation, and coproduction (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009; Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Riccucci et al., 2014; Riccucci et al., 2015). For example, in the case of law enforcement, police actions by Black police officers were perceived as legitimate by Black citizens, which mirrored White citizens’ perceptions of White police officers (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). In the case of local recycling, female leadership of the program increased female citizens’ willingness to cooperate with the agency, leading

to a relationship of coproduction (Riccucci et al., 2015). Symbolic representation demonstrates that passive representation, like active representation, can lead to benefits for the public (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009; Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Kennedy, 2013; Riccucci et al., 2014; Riccucci et al., 2015).

2.4 Representative Bureaucracy in Contracting

Government contracting practices emerged as an important topic in public administration with the New Public Management (NPM) movement in the 1990s, which called for public sector reform aimed at achieving efficiency and effectiveness through a more market-centered approach to public administration (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Frederickson, 1996). The use of alternate public service delivery mechanisms, like contracting and privatization, were mainly utilized to reduce government waste, improve public sector productivity, and foster competition (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). While contracting practices generally reflect the main tenets of NPM (e.g., award contracts to suppliers that offer the lowest bid), contracting is being utilized more and more as a strategic tool for governments to achieve policy goals and outcomes that go beyond the tenets of NPM. Supplier diversity, for example, spans economic, social, political, and normative justifications. These are policy initiatives often aimed at alleviating disparities that arise from the contracting process while boosting the local economy.

The present study builds on three major works on representative bureaucracy in contracting: Smith and Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; and Brunjes and Kellough, 2018. Prior research on representative bureaucracy has demonstrated that diversity of key personnel impacts contract awards in federal government agencies (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Smith

and Fernandez (2010) investigated the impact of a representative bureaucracy on contracting with minority owned businesses; they found that minority representation at the senior executive level of federal government agencies increases the number of contracts awarded to minority owned businesses. Representativeness in leadership positions shapes priorities of the agency and influences the actions of contracting staff at the street level (Smith & Fernandez, 2010). Representation at higher levels has a greater impact in federal agencies than representation at lower levels (Smith & Fernandez, 2010).

Building on Smith and Fernandez (2010), Fernandez et al. (2012) explored whether minority and gender representation in federal government agencies impact contracting with minority and women owned businesses, respectively. Fernandez et al. (2012) found evidence that minority representation in the entire organization and at senior executive levels is statistically significant in this setting, but gender representation is not. Minority representation at the senior executive level also increases the number of contracts dollars awarded to women owned businesses (Fernandez et al., 2012). Gender representation was assessed at several levels in the federal government agencies and in no instance were findings significant. Fernandez et al. (2012) offered possible explanations for this finding, stating that programs emphasizing contracting with minority owned businesses are more prominent and established than programs aimed to promote the interests of women owned businesses. Therefore, women in these agencies have competing programmatic goals and priorities. Fernandez et al. (2012) also noted that women in federal government agencies may be subjected to organizational socialization and align their behavior with the goals of the organization or with the majority in the organization. Furthermore, because federal procurement tends to be male dominated,

females may fear assuming an advocacy role and showing gender bias to avoid negative repercussions and maintain a positive image in a male dominated industry.

Brunjes and Kellough (2018) also examined representative bureaucracy in federal government contracting, but disaggregate races/ethnicities noting varying effects among specific races/ethnicities. Brunjes and Kellough (2018) demonstrated that minority representation is statistically significant. Findings are also statistically significant when groups within the minority category are examined separately. In addition, they found strong evidence that minority representation in key positions is related to contracting decisions benefitting minority owned businesses. Specifically, minority representation of those with direct oversight of contract management has greater influence over contracting decisions benefitting minority owned firms than representation in other positions of the organization. Brunjes and Kellough (2018) also accounted for educational attainment of minorities and their position within the organization. Overall, research on representative bureaucracy and federal level government contracting has demonstrated the significance of minority representation, and a negative or insignificant relationship between female representation and contract awards to female-owned businesses or minority owned-businesses (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018).

Smith and Fernandez (2010) called for exploration of representative bureaucracy in local government contracting stating that “localities have less formalized procurement processes and should grant greater bureaucratic discretion and create additional opportunities for active representation to occur” (p. 94). The present study builds on prior research (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018)

and explores the impact of a representative bureaucracy on local government contracting initiatives aimed to promote contracting with women and minority owned businesses. It was expected that local governments with more diverse leadership will have a higher degree of supplier diversity than local governments with less diversity.

2.5 Gaps in Representative Bureaucracy Literature

Bishu and Kennedy (2019) found that representative bureaucracy has been mainly examined in the following domains: education, law enforcement, housing finance, and other unspecified policy. Additionally, these studies have only examined either race/ethnicity or gender. Fewer studies have examined both diversity dimensions. In addition, the level of bureaucracy assessed in these studies was mostly manager or street-level. Few studies have examined multiple levels in the organization. Empirical research on representative bureaucracy has found that not every circumstance provides the necessary environment for active representation (Selden, 1997; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Fernandez et al., 2012). The theory of representative bureaucracy applies differently across policy areas, hierarchical level in the bureaucracy, and for minority and gender representation. Overall, broader “application of representative bureaucracy theory is needed to better understand its strengths and limitations” (Bishu & Kennedy, 2019, p.2).

Findings of prior research on representative bureaucracy have been inconsistent and vary across policy areas. In law enforcement, Wilkins and Williams (2008) found that racial profiling actually increased with the presence of African American police officers. In this case, norms and beliefs of the law enforcement profession superseded individual values. On the other hand, other studies found consistent results demonstrating

that bureaucratic representation increases benefits to represented groups in the community in specific fields (Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012). These studies found that active representation occurs in the fields of education (Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002), agriculture (Sowa & Selden, 2003), congressional committees (Bell & Rosenthal, 2003), local government administrators in Georgia cities (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008), state agencies (Saidel & Loscocco, 2005), and federal contracting (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012); however, these findings are contingent on, for example, organizational structures, discretion, and political support, among other factors.

Differences between findings of prior studies were also present in investigations of varying hierarchical levels within an organization. Riccucci and Saidel (1997) called for inclusion of multiple bureaucratic levels, including top ranking leaders for a more accurate picture of representativeness. Sowa and Selden (2003) acknowledged the importance of representation at higher levels, noting that administrators “translate vague legislative mandates into organizational procedures” (p. 700). They can arrange organizational procedures to benefit represented populations. However, according to Thompson’s (1976) theory (also supported by Meier, 1993), minorities in higher levels of an agency have been subjected to more work and time in the agency—leading to their rise in position and, therefore, decreasing their likelihood of engaging in active representation. Certain divisions and levels may have a higher degree of organizational socialization, which can minimize a bureaucrat’s adherence to personal values. In this

case, the actions of bureaucrats at higher levels in the agency are more reflective of the agency's mission and norms. On the other hand, street level bureaucrats, who are mainly at lower levels in the agency, are more likely to actively represent minority interests.

Furthermore, prior research has found that environments for female and minority active representation vary. For example, Fernandez et al. (2012) found that minority representation leads to active representation in federal contracting, but female representation does not. Keiser et al. (2002) only examined the gender dimension in their study, but acknowledged that findings may vary when tested against minority representation.

Research on representative bureaucracy is scarce in the area of local government contracting policy. This environment is unique because it is a setting driven by efficiency and guided by legal stipulations. Furthermore, local governments are political institutions in which policymakers and bureaucrats often need to balance competing priorities and preferences while being responsive and accountable to the community. In this case, a representative bureaucracy may critically influence the extent to which implementation of supplier diversity contracting initiatives and active representation occur. The present research addresses gaps present in the contracting policy area and includes dimensions of gender and minority representation and representation at multiple levels in the organization. Understanding the applicability of representative bureaucracy in local government contracting has implications for representative bureaucracy theory and also for contracting practice—where efficiency often trumps equity.

2.6 Determinants of Active Representation

According to the theory of representative bureaucracy, passive representation leads to active representation (Mosher, 1968; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012). However, research on representative bureaucracy has demonstrated that only certain circumstances provide the necessary environment for active representation to occur, and that circumstances may differ for female and minority representation (Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). Additionally, research on representative bureaucracy has focused on the racial and gender dimensions of representation and, in many instances, minority bureaucrats adopt and implement policies that alleviate disparities faced by minorities in society (Stein, 1986; Selden, 1997; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). On the other hand, previous research on the gender dimension of representation shows mixed results (Dolan, 2002; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003). Shared demographic characteristics are key components of the theory of representative bureaucracy and the main explanatory variables for this study; however, in the following sections, I outline additional conditions that are conducive for active representation (Saltzstein, 1989; Stewart et al., 1989; Meier, 1993; Riccucci & Saidel, 1997; Selden, 1997; Selden et al., 1998; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Grissom et al., 2009; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018; Vinopal, 2019).

Salience of Demographic Characteristics and Policy Type

Meier (1993) noted that “demographic characteristics should be highly salient” (Meier, 1993, p. 393-394). Additionally, the type of policy being examined should be relevant to a specific demographic group. For example, Keiser et al. (2002) indicated that there are societal issues “defined as women’s issues through the political process” (p. 556). A gendered policy (e.g., childcare) is a policy more relevant to women (Keiser et al., 2002; Riccucci et al., 2015). In the case of supplier diversity, contracting with women and minority owned businesses is relevant to specific demographic groups. Additionally, the demographic characteristic of interest is clearly defined in this case.

Discretion

Several facets of discretion must be considered in this context. While it does not guarantee it, discretion makes active representation possible (Meier & Bohte, 2001). Bureaucrats have discretion to act where organizational rules are unable to cover contingencies and various situations. For representative bureaucracy, this means that active representation is more likely to occur in an environment where bureaucrats have some decision-making authority in how their job is carried out (Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Sowa & Selden, 2003). Bureaucrats are able to rectify deficiencies of elected officials partly through the discretion they have to implement policies (Sowa & Selden, 2003). The assumption is that shared characteristics, experiences, values, attitudes, and beliefs of bureaucrats will translate to decisions and actions that benefit represented groups through discretionary activities.

Bureaucratic discretion can occur at various levels in the organization (Meier, 1993; Sowa & Selden, 2003). At higher levels in the organization, Sowa and Selden

(2003) noted that administrators “translate vague legislative mandates into organizational procedures” (p. 700). At these levels, however, organizational socialization is more prevalent, and administrators may adhere more to the agency mission than their personal values (Meier, 1993). On the other hand, street level bureaucrats often make decisions related to service provision on a daily basis (Sowa & Selden, 2003). They have exposure and interaction with the represented population. According to Meier (1993), street level bureaucrats are better positioned to advocate and act on behalf of constituents because of less exposure to organizational socialization. Street level bureaucrats tend to be further from the higher echelons of an organization and have less tenure in the organization (Meier, 1993). Therefore, they are more likely to strongly relate and maintain attitudes reflective of their demographic origins and advocate on behalf of constituents with backgrounds that are similar to their own (Meier, 1993).

Studies on bureaucratic discretion have found that organizations with environments that allow discretion produce better outcomes for represented groups (Meier & Bohte, 2001; Sowa & Selden, 2003). Meier and Bohte (2001) found that minority students performed better when organizational structures of schools in Texas promoted discretion of minority teachers. In their study on representative bureaucracy in the Department of Agriculture’s Farmer’s Home Administration, Sowa and Selden (2003) examined the direct effect of discretion on active representation, and they found that administrators who have discretion are more likely to act in ways that represent minority interests. Brunjes and Kellough (2018) noted that even though the contracting environment is subject to rules and regulations, contracting officials still maintain discretion in various aspects of their jobs (e.g., setting specifications of products and

services, establishing bid and evaluation criteria, contractor selection and oversight).

Procurement officials at the street level have “substantive expertise on the type of work to be performed in the contract and familiarity with the contracting processes and contractors” (p. 521). Therefore, those involved in the contracting process can impact decisions regarding contracting initiatives and contracted firms.

While discretion of the procurement head is not directly measured in the present study, the assumption is that discretion is available in the case of supplier diversity. This assumption was based on similar assumptions in studies by Smith and Fernandez (2010), Fernandez et al. (2012), and Brunjes and Kellough (2018). Several programmatic initiatives (see Section 2.2) provide leeway in implementation and provide an organizational structure that promotes discretion.

Representative Role

Related to shared demographic characteristics and discretion, an administrator assuming a representative role can impact whether passive representation translates into active representation (Selden, 1997; Selden et al., 1998; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003). The representative role “refers to the willingness of bureaucrats to see themselves as advocates for, or representatives of” minority or gender interests (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008, p. 698). Individuals who hold positions in which they are expected to be the voice and act on behalf of specific groups are more likely to adopt the representative role (Sowa & Selden, 2003).

Political and Executive Support

Studies have found that political representation often impacts passive representation at other levels in the organization (Saltzstein, 1989; Stewart et al., 1989;

Meier, 1993; Riccucci & Saidel, 1997). In the case of urban school districts, district elections with a high level of Black population promoted Black representation on school boards (Stewart et al., 1989). This led to an increase in Black school administrators, which subsequently led to an increase in Black teachers (Stewart et al., 1989). Findings follow a similar pattern in law enforcement (Saltzstein, 1989), generalized studies on schools across the nation (Polinard, Wrinkle, & Longoria, 1990; Meier, 1993), and federal agencies (Kellough, 1990).

While political representation is important for passive representation, Meier (1993) noted the significance of political support. Political support facilitates active representation (Meier, 1993). Saidel and Loscocco (2005) noted that the dynamics in the political realm are different than appointed levels in the organization. Elected officials often face competing pressures and they are held accountable by voters (Saidel & Loscocco, 2005). These top-level decision-makers are able to set priorities and provide continuing support to existing operations (Saidel & Loscocco, 2005). For representative bureaucracy, this means that these decision-makers will support issues that they can relate to through their demographic characteristics, shared values, experiences, and issues relevant to their gender or race/ethnicity (Saidel & Loscocco, 2005). In an investigation of state agency leaders and representative bureaucracy, Saidel and Loscocco (2005) found that women were nearly twice as likely as men to prioritize issues relevant to the advancement of women. At the department head level, 50% of women set policy priorities intended to promote female interests compared to 35% of male department heads. Overall, Saidel and Loscocco (2005) found that a “substantial proportion of women appointees are both ‘standing for’ (passive representative bureaucracy) and

interested in ‘acting for’ (active representative bureaucracy) women in the general population” (p. 166).

The theory of representative bureaucracy is specific to the bureaucratic levels in government organizations. However, studies have demonstrated the importance of political representation and political support for policy implementation (Saltzstein, 1989; Stewart et al., 1989; Meier, 1993; Riccucci & Saidel, 1997; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005). An analysis of representativeness of elected officials was included in the present study because representation and commitment at the highest levels of decision-making impacts the priorities of the organization.

Organizational/Institutional Context and the Contracting Environment

Contextual factors play a role in the extent to which active representation occurs (Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Grissom et al., 2009; Krause et al., 2016; Vinopal, 2019). In this section, I discuss organizational and the institutional context in which supplier diversity operates. The contracting environment is of particular interest due to the nature of supplier diversity.

Two components central to contracting are public law and organizational structures (Brown et al., 2006). Public laws and organizational structures dictate the tools and resources available to bureaucrats in contracting processes (Brown et al., 2006). Keiser et al. (2002) noted that bureaucrats are “shaped and constrained by the contingencies of context and circumstance” (p. 555). Furthermore, “institutional structures help to determine the purpose and scope of bureaucrats’ work and how much discretion they have carrying out their tasks” (Kieser et al., 2002, p. 555).

In the contracting environment, these mechanisms of control may limit the ability of organizational actors to act on behalf of constituents. Contracting policies are particularly subjected to institutional influence in the local government setting where policy decisions and actions are mandated by legislation and subject to legal oversight (Sowa & Selden, 2003; Martin et al., 2007). Public law sets operational boundaries outlining what is permitted, authorized, and required in the contracting process (Brown et al., 2006). Additionally, contracting decisions may also be routinized and restricted by organizational rules and regulations so that discretion in certain roles is minimized (Meier, 1993).

On one hand, studies have noted that where law is involved, discretion necessary for active representation to occur may not be available because managers are bound by rules and regulations (Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001). “As the law establishes what is authorized and prohibited, it also defines a manager’s zone of discretion, either through legal ambiguity or direct delegation” (Brown et al., 2006, p. 325). On the other hand, Brunjes and Kellough (2018) noted that staff who work within the contracting environment still have discretion where the law and policy do not specifically guide actions to be taken. This can require public managers to make value-laden decisions at their discretion, including: defining the scope of work and specifications, establishing contractor qualifications, bid evaluation, contractor selection, defining renewal provisions, and specifying incentives, and outlining compliance requirements, and program implementation (Brown et al., 2006; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018).

Local government may enact their own policies restricting or facilitating implementation of supplier diversity or these policies can be driven by federal and state requirements as well (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Blount & Hill, 2015). For example, in the case of federal and state requirements, funding can be used as an incentive for compliance by local governments. Because the present research examined representative bureaucracy in the contracting environment, the institutional context of local government organizations was included in the theoretical framework.

While public law and organizational structures guide or constrain contract policy implementation, previous research on contracting out has found that contracting decisions are often political (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016). Local government agencies are often responsive to the demands of their residents and the well-being of their community (Boyne, 1998; Wang, Van Wart, & Lebrede, 2014). Because local governments are political systems charged with balancing priorities of stakeholders, citizen political ideology and pressures from interest groups in the community can drive decisions and preferences of organizational actors (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016; Alkadry et al., 2019). In the case of supplier diversity, citizens or interest groups promoting contracting with women or minority owned businesses may seek to shape priorities of policymakers to align with their position. In this environment, public managers must consider stakeholder preferences and weigh values like equity and efficiency (Brown et al., 2006).

The environment in which the local government operates can also impact contracting decisions. Certain population characteristics may favor or constrain the contracting environment and, therefore, impact supplier diversity. This includes factors

such as citizens' preferences/ideology, population subgroups, population incomes, and population size (Ferris & Graddy, 1986; Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Krause et al., 2016).

Boyne (1998) included the average income of the population, poverty, and measures for disadvantaged populations in order to measure public preferences. On one hand, populations with higher incomes support contracting out because these groups often demand higher quality services of which contractors are better equipped to supply (Ferris & Graddy, 1986). On the other hand, contracting out may lead to cost savings and lower operational costs for governments, which can result in reduced spending (Ferris & Graddy, 1986). This may be the best option for poorer cities unable to collect adequate tax revenue to support these functions internally (Ferris & Graddy, 1986). Another assumption is that certain groups prefer a larger role for their local government (Brudney et al., 2005). Specifically, populations in poverty and/or racially/ethnically disadvantaged groups generally favor direct service provision from their local government (Boyne, 1998).

Brudney et al. (2005) noted that larger populations may lead to increases in services required of their government. Due to capacity, contracting out may be the necessary solution for local governments to provide services effectively to their community. Cities with larger populations are also related to larger local government organizations with a greater capacity to focus exclusively on efforts related to supplier diversity (Krause et al., 2016).

Finally, sufficient organizational capacity will ensure that organizations have personnel—equipped with knowledge, experience, and understanding of supplier

diversity efforts—who are dedicated to contracting tasks (e.g., formulating contracts, coordinating services, negotiating with contractors, managing contract performance, and implementing related programs) (Brown et al., 2006). Organizations with human capital dedicated to contracting can effectively manage and implement contract related tasks and minimize failed contracts (Brown et al., 2006). Organizations with greater commitment to supplier diversity are also more likely to have a dedicated unit to implement related programs (Krause et al., 2016). This enhances human capital available for supplier diversity policy implementation.

2.7 Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Conceptual Model

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between organizational representativeness and contract policy implementation by assessment of supplier diversity of local governments in the United States. The research questions for this study are:

- 1) What factors impact supplier diversity policy implementation of local governments?
- 2) Does decision-maker diversity play a role in supplier diversity policy implementation?

Explanatory Variables

Based on the theory of representative bureaucracy, the main explanatory variables in the model for this research are demographic characteristics. Minority status and gender of elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads were captured for this measure. It was expected that agencies with more diversity at the elected official, city

manager/CEO, and procurement head level would more actively implement supplier diversity policies.

Hypothesis 1: Local governments with more diverse leadership will have a higher degree of supplier diversity than local governments with less diversity.

The second research question was guided by Thompson's (1976) theory, supported by subsequent works (Meier, 1993; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018), which found that active representation is more likely to occur at levels closer to the actions on the ground (street level). The present study examined three main levels in the organization: elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads. Although procurement heads are mainly at the top of their departments, they are viewed as street level bureaucrats in the present study. Procurement heads are often involved in setting departmental priorities, establishing how policies will be implemented, potentially interact with contractors, and have considerable discretion in evaluation and contract award decisions. While research has demonstrated the importance of political representation and support for facilitating active representation (Saltzstein, 1989; Stewart et al., 1989; Meier, 1993; Riccucci & Saidel, 1997; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005), street level representation is posited to have a greater impact than diversity presented at higher levels. Based on this, I developed the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Local governments with more diversity at the procurement head level are more likely to actively implement supplier diversity than those with diversity at other leadership levels.

Control Variables

To determine how diversity at the level of elected official, city manager/CEO, and procurement head can impact degree of supplier diversity implementation, control variables were included—which accounted for factors in the organizational, institutional, and contracting environment. Previous literature identified three main components central to local government contracting: (1) public law (Keiser et al., 2002; Martin et al., 2007; Brown, et al., 2006); (2) organizational structures (Meier, 1993; Keiser et al., 2002; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016); and, (3) responsiveness to the needs and preferences of citizens and the community (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016). Public laws and organizational structures determine the purpose, scope of work, discretion, and resources that bureaucrats have in performing their duties (Keiser et al., 2002; Brown et al., 2006). Additionally, local governments have direct interaction and responsibility to their community. They are also expected to be responsive to the needs of the community and represent stakeholder values.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for this study is illustrated in Figure 1 below. Two aspects of representative bureaucracy are of particular interest: passive representation and street level representation. First, passive representation was captured by examining the minority status and gender of elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads. Based on the literature review, I expected that local governments with more diverse leadership would have a higher degree of supplier diversity than local governments with less diversity (Hypothesis 1). Second, because the procurement head position has the

most direct interaction with the contracting process and with contractors, I expected that local governments with more diversity at the procurement head level would be more likely to actively implement supplier diversity than those with diversity at other leadership levels (Hypothesis 2). These are the explanatory variables for the model. Due to the political nature and organizational and institutional factors involved in local government contracting, I included the organizational context, external stakeholder environment, and legal context in the model as control variables.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This research utilized mixed methodology to examine the relationship between decisionmaker diversity and the implementation of supplier diversity programs in local governments in the United States. In order to answer both research questions comprehensively, data collection was conducted in two phases. Phase I consisted of data collection via a survey instrument—distributed to procurement officials in local government agencies nationwide—and use of secondary data from the United States Census Bureau and MIT Election Data and Science Lab. Phase II consisted of two case studies of local governments: City of Portland (Oregon) and City of San Antonio (Texas). This chapter details the rationale for quantitative and qualitative methods employed in this research and describes the research design for each method.

3.2 The Mixed Methods Approach

Johnson et al. (2007) noted that combined data collected through quantitative and qualitative techniques provide a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the research topic. In the present study, the survey instrument was used to “obtain a representative sample, with the goal of enhancing the generalizability of qualitative findings” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 265). The case study sites were a subsample of the quantitative study sample. This approach directly links both studies. Hesse-Biber (2010) further noted that linking quantitative and qualitative studies through mixed methodology can validate and enhance the reliability of findings. The mixed methods approach utilized in this study is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Mixed Methods Design (Adapted from Hesse-Biber, 2010)

Comparing findings of the two methods helps researchers find convergence or contradictions in the data and provides a better overall picture of the research topic. Mixed methodology can help triangulate findings between the two approaches (Hesse-Biber, 2010). Examining whether the conclusions of the case studies agree with findings of quantitative analysis aids in validation of the research findings. Overall, mixed methodology contributed to the theoretical understanding of a representative bureaucracy in supplier diversity policy implementation.

3.3 Phase I: Quantitative Research

Phase I of this study consisted of quantitative research. This analysis aimed to answer both research questions below.

- 1) What factors impact supplier diversity policy implementation of local governments?
- 2) Does decision-maker diversity play a role in supplier diversity policy implementation?

3.3.1 Unit of Analysis

Representative bureaucracy and contracting have been examined in federal government agencies, but research in this area has been scarce in the context of local

governments. The unit of analysis for the present research is local government agencies in the United States. These agencies are subject to pressures from public law and operate within similar organizational structures and contracting environments. Analysis in this setting provided important insight on supplier diversity.

3.3.2 Sources of Data and Survey Design

The data for this research were obtained from various sources and analyzed to determine the relationship between decision maker diversity and supplier diversity implementation in local government agencies. A national survey of local government agencies was used to collect data on individual and organizational level data. Survey questions were informed by the literature review. Prior to distribution, the survey was pre-tested by six procurement professionals in the United States representing agencies in Florida, Oregon, Virginia, Ohio, and New York. Survey questions were revised based on feedback obtained.

The survey was distributed nationally in 2018. It consisted of Yes/No and Likert-type scale questions. The items queried: supplier diversity activities taking place; the demographic composition of elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads; pressures to implement supplier diversity; and organizational characteristics.

The target population for this study was procurement officials of local government agencies. The sample of agencies for this research was obtained from NIGP membership. NIGP is the largest public procurement professional organization—with approximately 3,000 member agencies in the United States, Canada, and outside of North America (NIGP, 2019).

Two main assumptions exist regarding the sample. First, a comprehensive list of all procurement practitioners does not exist; however, because NIGP is the largest professional association for procurement professionals in the United States, it is expected that NIGP membership reflects appropriate cases for this research. Another assumption of the sample was that respondents were agency representatives most familiar with supplier diversity policies and implementation of these policies, and respondents were also knowledgeable about specific characteristics of their agency. Therefore, NIGP membership was the most appropriate population for this study.

The survey was emailed by NIGP to 1,983 local government member agencies nationwide. Four hundred thirty-six agencies responded to the survey—yielding a 22% response rate. Following Prier et al. (2016), data with missing values were dropped for a more conservative interpretation of results. In total, data collection yielded 187 usable cases (N=187) for the overall analysis.

Figure 3 presents the distribution of the sample by U.S. Census Bureau Divisions. All census divisions are represented in the sample. The majority of responding agencies represent the South Atlantic (36%), Mountain (15%), and Pacific and East North Central (both 11%) regions.

Figure 3. Sample Distribution by U.S. Census Bureau Divisions

Data were also obtained from the United States Census Bureau and MIT Election Data and Science Lab. United States Census Bureau was utilized to obtain data on community characteristics such as population, affluence, and demographics. MIT Election Data and Science Lab was utilized to gather data on 2016 presidential election results by county.

3.3.3 Quantitative Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted using Stata 15 statistical software. The dependent variable in the model is an additive index labeled Supplier Diversity Activities. This is a count variable reflecting the number of supplier diversity activities in which a local government organization engages. Respondents indicated local government engagement in up to 11 supplier diversity activities: set asides, price evaluation credit, preference points, establishment of contracting goals, track utilization, publish utilization, penalize contractors for fraud, outreach events, technical assistance and other development opportunities, formulate large contracts so that parts may be bid on rather than the whole, advertise contracting opportunities in two or more platforms.

Count data typically have a Poisson distribution. An assumption of Poisson distributions is that the mean and variance are equal. When Poisson regression analysis was conducted, the mean was 3.871658 and the variance was 8.381289. The variance is nearly twice the mean, which signifies overdispersion. To address this limitation of Poisson, negative binomial regression were utilized for quantitative data analysis (Zeileis, Kleiber, & Jackman, 2008). Results of the negative binomial regression are detailed in Chapter 4.

3.4 Phase II: Qualitative Research

Phase II of this research includes case studies. The purpose of a case study is to conduct an in-depth investigation of a “single unit with an aim to generalize across a larger set of similar units” (Gerring, 2004, p. 341). The case study approach provides the opportunity to understand how study participants perceive themselves, their roles, and interact with their environment (Hesse-Biber, 2010). It also helps the researcher gain insight into participants’ social reality.

In the present research, two case studies were conducted to determine whether and how representativeness of local government decision-makers affects the implementation of contracting policies by assessing the degree of supplier diversity of local governments. The case studies complement the quantitative data collection. It was expected that findings would emerge from the stories and lived experiences of study participants.

The two case studies were conducted to identify what is unique about these cases, but also to identify the general aspects about them (Gerring, 2004). This serves as a basis for comparison across organizations and aids in description of how representative

bureaucracy manifests in different organizations. Both case studies reflect variation on the dimensions relevant to the theory of representative bureaucracy and provide a greater understanding of supplier diversity.

There are several benefits of case studies. First, the benefit of the case study is that it provides “depth of analysis,” which means that it contains rich details aiding in a more complete understanding of the phenomena being studied (Gerring, 2004, p. 348). Supplier diversity can be a sensitive topic because it is a policy established to address discriminatory contracting practices, and some aspects are difficult to capture through a survey. Due to the unique history of each city, variation in local government programs related to supplier diversity, and the complexity of the contracting environment, the case study approach was beneficial for obtaining different perspectives on the topic. Second, it is useful for identifying casual mechanisms through process-tracing and pattern-matching activities (Gering, 2004). While causation cannot be established, causal mechanisms (i.e., what connects individual level factors to active supplier diversity implementation) can be identified. Third, some have argued that case studies contain a small N. However, this is not the situation in the present study. One case study contains multiple units, which results in multiple observations per case study. This provides support for conclusions drawn.

3.4.1 Site Selection

The case study sites were identified by utilizing a stratified sampling technique in combination with purposive sampling from the sample utilized for the quantitative analysis. This sampling technique considered population size, population demographics, supplier diversity activity participation, and extent of implementation. First, 30 cities with

the highest populations were identified using data from the United States Census Bureau “2017 Population Estimates-Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Incorporated Places of 50,000 or More” (United States Census Bureau, 2017). Then, demographic information was obtained for these cities from the United States Census Bureau Community Facts data search (United States Census Bureau, 2010). These cities were then ranked by demographic data, which is categorized into Minority and Nonminority groupings. The Minority group consists African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Alaska Native, Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiian, Asian Pacific Americans, and Subcontinent Asian Americans. These groups are recognized by the United States Small Business Administration as minorities (United States Small Business Administration, 2017). The top ten Nonminority cities and top ten Minority cities were identified next. The following step in site selection was to note the supplier diversity activity index score and minority owned business implementation score that pertains to the counties of the top ten Nonminority and Minority cities identified. The supplier diversity activity index score and minority owned business policy implementation score are measures developed for the quantitative phase of this research to determine if there is a high degree of supplier diversity. These are measures of formal and informal supplier diversity policies. Figure 4 illustrates the stratified and purposive sampling technique utilized to select the case study sites. Site access was requested starting from the top of each list (Nonminority and Minority cities previously identified). Further confirmation that the local government agencies selected have a particularly robust supplier diversity program was obtained through a search on their website and/or from media coverage on these programs.

Figure 4. Sampling Technique for Case Study Selection

The cities provide cases where: (1) demographic characteristics of the public are majority Nonminority and (2) demographic characteristics of the public are majority Minority (Figure 5). These specific sites were selected because they represent cases with active implementation. This provided a more in-depth understanding of the intricacies involved in supplier diversity and helped to identify best practices in supplier diversity policy implementation. In addition, case studies provide a basis for comparison of the factors that impact supplier diversity policy implementation in local governments in the United States. Each case study site is situated in a unique environment/community that is subject to various influences and challenges. Additionally, the comparison of the two sites provided an opportunity to gain further insight into how varying components of representative bureaucracy (e.g., administrative discretion and diversity) play a role in supplier diversity policy implementation.

Figure 5. Case Study Selection

Based on the sampling technique, case studies sites were identified. The Executive Director of NIGP assisted with an email introduction to the head of procurement of the cities identified. The first Nonminority city contacted, City of Portland, agreed to the case study immediately. Three Minority cities were contacted to request permission for a case study. One did not respond and two declined. The City of Memphis declined for political reasons, and the City of Dallas declined because they were undergoing a disparity study, which could greatly affect supplier diversity initiatives in their city. They did not want to provide responses that could change given their disparity study. The fourth Minority city contacted, City of San Antonio, agreed to participate in the case study.

In summary, case studies were conducted with the City of Portland and City of San Antonio. Both represent large cities with over 500,000 people and have an active supplier diversity program. City of Portland's population is majority Nonminority. Whereas, City of San Antonio's population is majority Minority.

3.4.2 Qualitative Data Collection

Data collected through case studies included primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from interviews with varying City staff and relevant external stakeholders in the local government agencies serving as case study sites. Because supplier diversity operates mainly through the Procurement Services Department in the City of Portland, the Chief Procurement Officer was the point of contact. For the City of San Antonio, supplier diversity is managed mainly by the Economic Development Department. The point of contact for the City of San Antonio was the Assistant Director of Economic Development. The interview questions were provided to each site approximately one month prior to my arrival. City officials at each site determined who would be the most knowledgeable about the research topic, and interviews were scheduled accordingly. Six interviews were conducted at the City of Portland. Thirteen interviews were conducted at the City of San Antonio. The interviewees at the City of San Antonio included external stakeholders. Whereas, this option was not provided by the City of Portland. This accounts for the difference in quantity of interviews at each site. Additionally, an audit of a Diversity Action Plan meeting at the City of San Antonio was conducted. This was not previously planned and was an impromptu invitation by the Assistant Director of the Economic Development Department. There was no comparable event occurring at the City of Portland during the time of the case study, and there were no recordings of prior, relevant meetings available for inclusion in the current research.

Interviews were either face-to-face or conducted by phone if the interviewee was not available to meet in person. The interview questions were semi-structured and included open ended questions. Twelve main questions were asked. Based on responses

to the questions, follow-up or probing questions were included. Interview questions are included in the appendix. The interviews were audio recorded, so that interview content can be transcribed immediately afterwards and referenced during the data analysis phase of this research. Interviews occurred in the local government agencies' premises, except in the case of one interviewee, who asked to be interviewed offsite at their office. Each interviewee was provided an informed consent form and guaranteed anonymity.

Secondary data were obtained from respective City websites and documentation that was provided by interviewees. Data were triangulated with interviews and secondary data. Interviews with city staff and relevant stakeholders were conducted until saturation was reached. Saturation occurs when no new details emerge from data collection.

3.4.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

The data collected from interviews was transcribed in its entirety. Any identifying information was redacted from transcriptions. Then, transcriptions were uploaded into NVivo 12 software and coded by recurring themes. Secondary data consisted of program details, background materials to understand the legal context in which supplier diversity was initiated, policies, and strategic plans. These documents were also uploaded and coded in NVivo 12. The results of the qualitative data analysis are described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

This chapter outlines results from the quantitative phase of the study. First, variables included in the model are described and their operationalization is explained. Then, the results of the negative binomial regression are presented. Finally, I detail the factors impacting the number of supplier diversity activities in which local governments engage.

4.1 Operationalization of Variables

The operationalization of the dependent variable, explanatory variables, and control variables are detailed in the sections below. The dependent variable for this study is an additive index labeled Supplier Diversity Activity Index. The main independent variables captured gender and ethnic/racial diversity of elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads of local government agencies. Control variables in the model captured factors present in the organizational context, external stakeholder environment, and legal context of local government agencies.

Dependent Variable-Supplier Diversity Activity Index

The dependent variable in the model is an additive index: the Supplier Diversity Activity Index. Data for this measure were obtained through the survey instrument described in Chapter 3. To create this index, I used data collected in the quantitative phase from survey respondents—who were asked to select the supplier diversity activities in which their organizations engage. A list of 11 items was provided. Each item on this list carries equal weight because they each represent an effort to support the interests of women and minority owned businesses. The list was created based on a review of literature and professional reports, which were used to identify common supplier

diversity initiatives (Celec et al., 2000; Insight Center for Community Economic Development, 2007; Martin et al., 2007; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Terman, 2014; Blount & Hill, 2015; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018).

The Supplier Diversity Activity Index is a count variable reflecting the number of supplier diversity activities in which an organization engages. The list included 11 local government activities: set asides, price evaluation credit, preference points, establishment of contracting goals, track utilization, publish utilization, penalize contractors for fraud, outreach events, technical assistance and other development opportunities, formulate large contracts so that parts may be bid on rather than the whole, advertise contracting opportunities in two or more platforms. Cronbach alpha was calculated to test the internal reliability of this measure. The Cronbach alpha is 0.7922, which signifies high internal reliability.

The distribution of the Supplier Diversity Activity Index is presented in Table 1. Figure 6 geographically illustrates the variance in supplier diversity activities conducted by local government agencies included in the study sample.

Table 1. Distribution for the Supplier Diversity Activity Index (Dependent Variable)

# of Supplier Diversity Activities	Frequency	Percent
0	34	18.18
1	10	5.35
2	24	12.83
3	24	12.83
4	20	10.70
5	19	10.16
6	16	8.56
7	17	9.09
8	12	6.42
9	5	2.67
10	3	1.60
11	3	1.60

Figure 6. Variance in Sample-Supplier Diversity Activity Index

Source: 2018 NIGP Survey

Explanatory Variables-Leadership Diversity

Gender and ethnic/racial diversity of organizational leadership are the main independent variables. Gender and ethnic/racial composition of three organizational

levels were captured: elected official, city manager/CEO, and procurement head. In the present study, there are two categories for ethnic/racial composition: minority and nonminority. Groups within the minority category include Hispanic, African American, Asian, and Native American. These are categories recognized by the United States Small Business Administration as socially disadvantaged groups and eligible for certification as minority-owned or disadvantaged small businesses (United States Small Business Administration, 2017).

The data for these measures were captured through the survey described in Chapter 3. The elected official variable was captured through percentage. The survey respondents were asked to provide the percent of female elected officials in their organization, and then provide the percent of minority elected officials in their organization. City manager/CEO and procurement head are dichotomous variables that were assigned a value of 0 if the individual is male and 1 if the individual is female; a value of 0 was assigned if the individual is not a minority and 1 was assigned if the individual is a minority. Survey respondents were asked to select the appropriate response for their agency.

Figure 7 demonstrates the percent of elected officials, city managers/CEOs, and procurement heads in the sample that are minority and female. On average, minorities comprise 23% of elected officials, 19% of city manager/CEO positions, and 21% of procurement head positions in local government organizations included in this analysis (Figure 7). On average, females comprise 34% of elected officials, 23% of city manager/CEO positions, and 51% of procurement head positions in local government organizations included in this analysis (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Minority and Female Representation in Local Governments

Control Variables

Previous research was reviewed to identify variables that may impact supplier diversity activity implementation and may be relevant to the contracting environment. These were grouped into organizational context, external stakeholder environment, and legal context. These control variables are included in the framework.

The first group of control variables captured the organizational context of contract implementation. Factors such as organization type, organizational size, organizational capacity, and discretion of procurement staff were included in this model to account for the organizational context. Organization type is a categorical variable differentiating between city/town, county, school system, utility, and special authorities. Organizational capacity was measured by number of full-time employees (FTEs) in the organization. Following previous research (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Krause

et al., 2016), this model included a variable for agencies with designated staff who exclusively focused on supplier diversity efforts. Based on previous research (Krause et al., 2016), agencies with dedicated staff for supplier diversity initiatives are likely to prioritize—and be more active in—supplier diversity efforts. This is a dichotomous variable, which was assigned a value of 0 for no dedicated staff and a value of 1 for dedicated staff. Finally, previous research has demonstrated the importance of bureaucratic discretion for policy implementation that reflects minority interests (Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Sowa & Selden, 2003). It was expected that those involved in the contracting process can impact the actions related to supplier diversity initiatives. Bureaucratic discretion of procurement staff was included in this model for the possible effects stemming from that bureaucratic level. Bureaucratic discretion is a Likert-type scale measure that examines the extent of discretion (i.e., no discretion, low discretion, moderate discretion, high discretion, very high discretion) that procurement staff have over supplier diversity policy implementation.

The second group of control variables captured the environment in which local government contracting operates. The contracting environment is subject to influence from various sources external to the organization (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016). Because local governments are political systems charged with balancing priorities of stakeholders, several factors can drive decisions and preferences of organizational actors and impact contract implementation (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016). This includes citizen political ideology, pressures from interest groups in the community, and community characteristics requiring government responsiveness. There is evidence that political

ideology of the population plays a role in engagement in sustainable procurement (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016; Alkadry et al., 2019). Alkadry et al. (2019) included women-owned and minority-owned business contracting in their operationalization of sustainable procurement. Political ideology of the residents was captured through the percent of the population in the respective county that voted for Clinton in the 2016 presidential election (Alkadry et al., 2019). The model for this study additionally captured community affluence, population size, population demographics, and population subgroups that exert pressure on supplier diversity to account for the contracting environment.

Varying factors in the community can also impact how the local government agency implements contracting initiatives and balances stakeholder preferences (Ferris & Graddy, 1986; Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Krause et al., 2016). The assumption was that populations with higher incomes support contracting out because these groups often demand higher quality services—which contractors are better equipped to supply (Ferris & Graddy, 1986). On the other hand, populations that include low socioeconomic status groups and/or racially/ethnically disadvantaged groups generally favor a larger role and direct service provision from their local government (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005). Affluence of the community was included as a control variable in this study and measured as median household income.

Additional population characteristics included in this study are population count and population demographics. Brudney et al. (2005) noted that larger populations may lead to increases in services that the community requires from their government. Due to capacity, contracting out may be necessary for local governments to effectively provide

services to their communities. Cities with larger populations are also related to larger local government organizations with a greater capacity to focus exclusively on efforts related to supplier diversity (Krause et al., 2016). Population size is a log transformed count of the total population. Population demographics were measured through percent of the population that is White Nonminority.

In the case of supplier diversity, citizens or interest groups promoting contracting with women or minority owned businesses may seek to shape priorities of policymakers to align with their position. A variable capturing business group pressure was included in the model to account for external pressures present in the contracting environment that also steer contracting decisions. This is a Likert-type scale measure capturing the extent in which business groups exert pressures to engage in supplier diversity. Survey respondents were asked to rate the influence/pressure from business groups to engage in supplier diversity (i.e., strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree).

Previous research on contracting has demonstrated that the legal context impacts the extent to which active representation exists (Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). According to Keiser et al. (2002), these “structures help to determine the purpose and scope of the bureaucrats work and how much discretion they have in carrying out their tasks” (p. 555). Variables capturing the legal context of supplier diversity include presence of local government ordinance(s) mandating supplier diversity and higher-level government funding to incentivize supplier diversity. A dichotomous measure, assigned a value of 0 for no ordinance and 1 for local government ordinance, was included in the

model to capture whether a local ordinance mandates that agencies implement supplier diversity activities. In addition to local ordinances, local governments can face pressure to engage in supplier diversity from federal and state governments. This typically occurs in the form of compliance as a condition for funding (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Blount & Hill, 2015). These factors can impact the prioritization and effort directed toward supplier diversity by local governments and commonly steer contract decisions and policies. Higher level funding is a Likert-type scale measure (i.e., strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree) capturing the extent to which funding from higher levels of government (i.e., federal, state) exerts pressure to engage in supplier diversity.

A summary of the variables included in the model, description, and operationalization are included in Table 2. Descriptive statistics for these variables are detailed in Table 3.

Table 2. Description and Operationalization of Variables

Variable Type	Variable Name	Description and Operationalization	Source of Data
Dependent Variable	Supplier Diversity Activity Index	Additive index reflecting the number of supplier diversity activities a local government agency engages in	Survey
Main Explanatory Variables	Elected Officials-Minority	Percent of elected officials that are minority	Survey
	City Manager/CEO-Minority	Dichotomous variable capturing minority status of city manager/CEO	Survey
	Procurement Head-Minority	Dichotomous variable capturing minority status of procurement head	Survey
	Elected Officials-Female	Percent of elected officials that are female	Survey
	City Manager/CEO-Female	Dichotomous variable capturing gender of city manager/CEO	Survey
	Procurement Head-Female	Dichotomous variable capturing gender of procurement head	Survey
Control Variables	City/Town	Dichotomous variable capturing the type of local government agency-City/town	Survey
	County Govt	Dichotomous variable capturing the type of local government agency-County	Survey
	School System	Dichotomous variable capturing the type of local government agency-School system	Survey

Utility	Dichotomous variable capturing the type of local government agency-Utility	Survey
Special Authority	Dichotomous variable capturing the type of local government agency-Special authority	Survey
Procurement Staff Discretion	5-point Likert-type scale measure examining the extent of discretion procurement staff has over supplier diversity implementation	Survey
Dedicated Supplier Diversity Staff	Dichotomous variable capturing whether a local government agency has dedicated staff to implement supplier diversity	Survey
FTE (log)	Log transformed number of full-time employees in the local government agency	Survey
Local Ordinance	Dichotomous variable capturing whether a local ordinance mandates an agency implement supplier diversity	Survey
Business Group Pressure	5-point Likert-type scale measure capturing the extent to which business groups exert pressure to engage in supplier diversity	Survey
Higher Level Funding Requirement	5-point Likert-type scale measure capturing the extent in which funding from higher levels of government (i.e., federal, state) exert pressure to engage in supplier diversity	Survey

Population (log)	Log transformed count of the population	U.S. Census Bureau
White, Nonminority Population	White, Nonminority population	U.S. Census Bureau
Median Household Income	Median household income	U.S. Census Bureau
2016 Presidential Vote (Pct Clinton)	Percent of the population that voted for Clinton in the 2016 Presidential election	MIT Election Data and Science Lab

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Supplier Diversity Index	3.871	2.895	0	11
Elected Officials-Minority (Pct)	23.518	26.072	0	100
City Manager/CEO-Minority	0.187	0.391	0	1
Procurement Head-Minority	0.208	0.407	0	1
Elected Officials-Female (Pct)	34.133	24.746	0	100
City Manager/CEO-Female	0.229	0.421	0	1
Procurement Head-Female	0.508	0.501	0	1
County Govt*	0.278	0.449	0	1
School System*	0.176	0.382	0	1
Utility*	0.032	0.176	0	1
Special Authority*	0.064	0.245	0	1
Procurement Staff Discretion	2.267	1.245	1	5
Dedicated Supplier Diversity Staff	0.144	0.352	0	1
FTE (log)	6.706	1.43	1.098	11.604
Local Ordinance	0.208	0.407	0	1
Higher Level Funding Requirement	3.299	1.065	1	5
Business Group Pressure	2.962	1.069	1	5
Population (log)	12.89	1.301	9.346	16.123
White, Non-Minority Population	73.775	14.177	27.9	96.4
Median Household Income	61394.92	16768.62	29001	129588
2016 Pres. Vote (Pct Clinton)	49.797	13.738	15.017	85.039

N=187

*Reference Group: City/Town Govt (Pct 44.39)

4.2 Negative Binomial Regression Results

The dependent variable in this study is a count variable. Count data typically have a Poisson distribution. The values of the dependent variable are nonnegative values ranging from 0 to 11. An assumption of a Poisson distribution is that the mean and variance are equal. In the present study, the mean is 3.871658 and the variance is 8.381289. The variance is more than twice the mean, which signifies overdispersion. To further confirm overdispersion, a generalized model of Poisson was run in Stata 15

statistical software to obtain the Pearson's chi-squared statistic (Hardin & Hilbe, 2014). If the (1/df) Pearson statistic is greater than 1, there is evidence of overdispersion. In this case, the (1/df) Pearson statistic is 1.63. To address this violation, a negative binomial regression model is utilized. In the generalized model for negative binomial regression, the (1/df) Pearson statistic is 1.13. This illustrates that the negative binomial regression is a better fit than the Poisson model.

Prior to performing the negative binomial regression, data was checked for outliers, goodness of fit and robustness checks were conducted. and tests for multicollinearity were performed. First, outliers were omitted. Then, variables were examined for multicollinearity using variance inflation factors (VIF) and a correlation matrix. The VIF for the variables in the model did not exceed 10, which is the common threshold for multicollinearity (UCLA Institute for Digital Research & Education, 2020). Correlation between independent variables included in the model was also calculated. Variables with large correlation coefficients (greater than or equal to .5) were examined further and removed if appropriate (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2015). This, for example, resulted in the removal of unemployment rate, which was highly correlated with median household income. Following previous literature, median household income remained in the model as a measure of community affluence (Ferris & Graddy, 1986; Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Krause et al., 2016). Although Percent White, Nonminority was highly correlated with Percent of the population that voted for Clinton in the 2016 Presidential election (.54), both variables were kept due to the theoretical underpinnings of these variables for representative bureaucracy (Mosher, 1968; Krislov, 1974; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Frederickson et al., 2016) and for

contracting (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Alkadry et al., 2019).

The correlation matrix for the final model is presented in Table 4.

Survey research can be subject to nonresponse bias. Nonresponse can sometimes produce bias and result in a sample that may not be representative of the full population. To assess nonresponse bias, systematic differences between respondents, partial respondents, and nonrespondents were examined (Prier et al., 2016). These differences included community characteristics such as population, education, labor force, poverty rate, unemployment rate, median age, median household income, percent of the population that is minority and nonminority, and political preference of the population.

Examination of characteristics of nonrespondents, partial respondents, and respondents showed that the sample utilized for this research has a diverse range and is representative of NIGP membership. Following the Prier et al. (2016) analysis of sustainability practices, “non-responses were dropped in order to be conservative with the data” and to “deflate the concerns over Type I errors” (p. 324). Therefore, there is confidence in the generalizability of the results.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix

	Elected Officials- Minority (Pct)	City Manager- Minority	Proc. Head- Minority	Elected Officials- Female (Pct)	City Manager- Female	Proc. Head- Female	County Govt~	School System~	Utility~	Special Authority~
Elected Officials-Minority (Pct)	1.000									
City Manager-Minority	0.399	1.000								
Procurement Head-Minority	0.233	0.159	1.000							
Elected Officials-Female (Pct)	0.183	0.104	0.031	1.000						
City Manager-Female	0.038	0.259	0.095	0.003	1.000					
Procurement Head-Female	-0.089	0.006	-0.021	-0.164	0.055	1.000				
County Govt~	-0.045	-0.053	-0.172	-0.199	-0.056	0.133	1.000			
School System~	0.028	0.138	0.039	0.293	0.080	0.035	-0.287	1.000		
Utility~	0.036	-0.087	0.205	0.006	-0.027	-0.003	-0.113	-0.084	1.000	
Special Authority~	-0.089	0.042	0.134	-0.110	0.064	0.039	-0.163	-0.121	-0.048	1.000
Procurement Staff Discretion	-0.012	0.051	-0.015	0.050	-0.067	0.040	-0.038	0.002	0.107	0.032
Dedicated Supplier Diversity Staff	0.104	0.115	0.239	0.071	0.209	-0.052	0.017	0.009	-0.075	0.079
FTE (log)	0.057	0.108	0.102	0.293	0.018	-0.130	0.059	0.280	-0.077	-0.323
Local Ordinance	0.261	0.024	0.061	-0.041	0.126	0.031	0.063	-0.134	-0.019	-0.081
Business Pressure	0.053	0.145	0.141	-0.079	0.174	0.036	0.033	-0.050	-0.022	-0.073
Higher Level Funding Requirement	-0.013	0.123	-0.058	-0.138	0.109	0.086	0.083	-0.144	0.137	-0.156
Population (log)	0.084	0.095	0.153	0.211	0.043	-0.249	-0.142	0.038	0.104	0.145
White, NonMinority Population	-0.342	-0.138	-0.281	-0.139	-0.065	0.178	0.030	-0.013	0.013	-0.055
Median Household Income	-0.156	-0.173	-0.095	0.141	-0.100	-0.061	-0.015	0.075	0.053	-0.040
2016 Presidential Vote (Pct Clinton)	0.311	0.144	0.245	0.287	0.127	-0.234	-0.192	0.001	0.000	0.093

	Proc. Staff Discretion	Dedicated SD Staff	FTE (log)	Local Ordinance	Business Pressure	Higher Level Funding Req.	Population (log)	White, NonMinority Population	Median Household Income	2016 Presidential Vote (Pct Clinton)
Elected Officials-Minority (Pct)										
City Manager-Minority										
Procurement Head-Minority										
Elected Officials-Female (Pct)										
City Manager-Female										
Procurement Head-Female										
County Govt~										
School System~										
Utility~										
Special Authority~										
Procurement Staff Discretion	1.000									
Dedicated Supplier Diversity Staff	0.144	1.000								
FTE (log)	0.081	0.285	1.000							
Local Ordinance	0.112	0.388	0.060	1.000						
Business Pressure	0.181	0.285	0.070	0.141	1.000					
Higher Level Funding Requirement	0.114	0.171	0.024	0.103	0.444	1.000				
Population (log)	0.068	0.144	0.155	0.079	-0.031	-0.121	1.000			
White, NonMinority Population	0.025	-0.242	-0.203	-0.127	-0.070	-0.041	-0.221	1.000		
Median Household Income	0.030	0.039	0.091	-0.053	-0.044	-0.071	0.141	0.043	1.000	
2016 Presidential Vote (Pct Clinton)	0.101	0.269	0.137	0.205	0.031	-0.035	0.447	-0.543	0.203	1.000

This study was also subject to common method bias. Common method bias occurs when the same survey respondent provides information for measures of the dependent and independent variables (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015). This can “inflate correlations between variables, resulting in biased findings” (George & Pandey, 2017, p. 245). Jakobsen and Jensen (2015) offered solutions for common method bias when different sources for the dependent and independent variable is not possible. Jakobsen and Jensen (2015) noted that, when possible, respondents with the expertise to answer survey questions should be selected. Then, the survey concepts and language should be clear and concise and query current activities instead of past activities. In addition, asking questions that would prompt socially desirable responses should be avoided. These points were addressed during the survey design phase. In addition to addressing possible issues with common source bias in the survey design phase, supplier diversity policies of a subsample of agencies surveyed were manually checked to confirm accuracy of survey responses related to the dependent variable. This check was conducted through the agencies’ website. Finally, the qualitative components of this study—outlined in Chapter 3—also helped address common method bias.

The results of negative binomial regression are demonstrated in Table 5. To provide more meaningful results, Table 6 presents the percent of expected change in the count of supplier diversity activities for variables that are significant.

Table 5. Negative Binomial Regression Results

Supplier Diversity Activity Index	Coef.	Std. Err.
Elected Officials-Minority (Pct)	.004**	.002
City Manager/CEO-Minority	-.025	.142
Procurement Head-Minority	.275**	.126
Elected Officials-Female (Pct)	-.003	.002
City Manager/CEO-Female	.074	.124
Procurement Head-Female	.081	.106
County Govt~	.226*	.119
School System~	-.279*	.162
Utility~	.096	.282
Special Authority~	.142	.231
Procurement Staff Discretion	.104**	.039
Dedicated Supplier Diversity Staff	.280*	.154
FTE (log)	.027	.040
Local Ordinance	0.112	0.131
Business Group Pressure	.061	.049
Higher Level Funding Requirement	.123**	.052
Population (log)	.089**	.044
White, NonMinority Population	.000	.004
Median Household Income	-1.42E-06	3.25E-06
2016 Presidential Vote (Pct Clinton)	.003	.005
_cons	-1.272	.766

~Reference Group: City/Town Govt

*p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.001

Table 6. Percent of Expected Change

Variables	IRR	% Change
Elected Officials-Minority (Pct)	1.004**	0 %
City Manager/CEO-Minority		
Procurement Head-Minority	1.317**	32 %
Elected Officials-Female (Pct)		
City Manager/CEO-Female		
Procurement Head-Female		
County Govt~	1.254*	25 %
School System~	0.756*	-25 %
Utility~		
Special Authority~		
Procurement Staff Discretion	1.110**	11 %
Dedicated Supplier Diversity Staff	1.323*	32 %
FTE (log)		
Local Ordinance		
Business Group Pressure		
Higher Level Funding Requirement	1.131**	13 %
Population (log)	1.093**	9 %
White, NonMinority Population		
Median Household Income		
2016 Presidential Vote (Pct Clinton)		
~Reference Group: City/Town Govt		
*p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.001		

Negative binomial regression was utilized to analyze the effects of the independent variables in the model on number of supplier diversity activities in which local governments engage. Because negative binomial regression mainly provides relationship direction between the independent variables and the dependent variable and significance for the relationship, the percent of expected change was calculated to provide a more specific interpretation of the results. The main predictors in the model are minority and gender representation variables. The control variables captured the

organizational, external stakeholder environment, and legal context in which local government agencies operate.

Results from analyses of representation variables are discussed first. Gender representation is not statistically significant at any decision-making level included in the analysis; however, the model does demonstrate a negative relationship between female representation at the elected official level and supplier diversity activities. This nearly mirrors the findings of prior research on representative bureaucracy in contracting at the federal level (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Although not statistically significant in the current model, prior research has generally produced statistically significant findings demonstrating that female representation at the senior executive level and/or department head level has no effect on minority-owned business contracting and negative effects on female-owned business contracting (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). Fernandez et al. (2012) offered possible explanations for the null findings for gender representation, which may also apply in the local government setting. Programs benefitting minority-owned businesses are more established than those for women-owned businesses. Additionally, programs for minority-owned businesses have been more consistently supported and prioritized than those for women-owned businesses. For example, women-owned business programs were not prioritized by the George W. Bush administration, which withdrew a proposed rule addressing the federal government's women-owned business program. However, the Obama administration did address this and bring the women-owned business program into compliance with the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 2000 (Fernandez et al., 2012). Another possible explanation may

come from self-categorization theory — where group members align their behavior with the majority to avoid possible conflict and the appearance of bias (Fernandez et al., 2012). The organizational levels analyzed in this model have been historically dominated by males. In the case of elected officials and city managers/CEOs, males still dominate these positions (Figure 7).

On average, results demonstrate that minority representation at the procurement head level is statistically significant ($p < .05$) and has a positive relationship with the count of supplier diversity activities taking place when holding all other variables constant. More specifically, minority representation at the procurement head level is associated to a 32% increase in supplier diversity activities (Table 6). Additionally, minority representation at the elected official level is statistically significant ($p < .05$) and has a positive relationship with supplier diversity activities. However, it is not related to a significant increase in the count of supplier diversity activities (0%) (Table 6). This result is impressive given that minorities only make up 21% of procurement heads and 23% of elected officials.

Next, the results of control variables are discussed. Results demonstrate that county governments and school systems are significantly different in the number of supplier diversity activities in which they participate ($p < .10$). County governments are associated with a 25% increase in count of supplier diversity activities in comparison to city/town governments ($p < .10$). School systems, however, are associated with a 25% decrease in count of supplier diversity activities when compared against city/town governments ($p < .10$). Bureaucratic discretion of procurement staff to implement supplier diversity is also significant ($p < .05$) and is related to an 11% increase in number of

supplier diversity activities. The results demonstrate that dedicating staff to supplier diversity is significant ($p < .10$) and is related to a 32% increase in count of supplier diversity activities. Funding from higher level government as a condition of compliance with supplier diversity is significant ($p < .05$) and is related to a 13% increase in supplier diversity activities. Finally, the size of the population is significant ($p < .05$) and related to a 9% increase in count of supplier diversity activities.

4.3 Factors Impacting Supplier Diversity

Supplier diversity is a contracting policy at the intersection of efficiency and social equity. The theory of representative bureaucracy offers a way to balance these two values. Representative bureaucracy theory posits that bureaucrats that share demographic characteristics with constituents are more likely to adopt and implement policies that reflect the interests of those constituents (Mosher, 1968; Krislov, 1974; Selden, 1997; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Frederickson et al., 2016). This research aimed to identify the factors that impact supplier diversity policy implementation of local governments and, more specifically, aimed to explore whether decision-maker diversity plays a role in supplier diversity policy implementation. The findings are described below in greater detail.

Minority Representation

Results of this study demonstrate the importance of minority representation for active implementation of supplier diversity (as measured by count of supplier diversity activities taking place). Minority representation is particularly important at the procurement head level, where it relates to a 32% increase in count of supplier diversity activities. This is similar to results yielded by previous research on the impact of

representation on federal contracting of minority-owned and women-owned businesses (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018).

Minority representation at the elected official levels is also significant, but has a greater impact at the procurement head level. While minority representation at the elected official level is statistically significant, it is not associated with an increased count in supplier diversity activities. Similar to the findings of Saidel and Loscocco (2015), the present findings may indicate that top-level decision-makers are able to set priorities and provide continuing support to existing operations.

These findings support the hypotheses presented in this dissertation. The results of the quantitative phase of this research finds that local governments with more diverse leadership have a higher degree of supplier diversity than local governments with less diversity (Hypothesis 1). Additionally, local governments with more diversity at the procurement head level are more likely to actively implement supplier diversity than those with diversity at other leadership levels (Hypothesis 2).

Discretion of the Procurement Staff

In addition to minority representation at the elected official and procurement head level, there is evidence that the institutional and organizational context in which an organization operates can impact the extent to which supplier diversity is implemented. Bureaucratic discretion of procurement staff is statistically significant and related to an increase of 11% in supplier diversity activities of local government agencies. The analysis in this study is limited to the levels of elected official, city manager/CEO, and procurement head; however, the statistically significant finding relating to bureaucratic discretion of procurement staff indicates that, within an organization, those with more

direct engagement in supplier diversity (i.e., procurement staff) play an important role in implementation activities.

Because demographic characteristics for procurement staff were not captured in this study, it is unclear whether the impact of discretion on supplier diversity is explained by the theory of representative bureaucracy or related to the expertise required in the contracting process. For example, Brunjes and Kellough (2018) noted that even though the contracting environment is subject to rules and regulations, contracting officials still maintain discretion in various aspects of their jobs. Procurement officials at the street level have “substantive expertise on the type of work to be performed in the contract and familiarity with the contracting processes and contractors” (Brunjes & Kellough, 2018, p. 521). Procurement officials are often relied on to use discretion when performing their jobs and applying rules, standards, and best practices where applicable. This discretion can impact implementation of contracting initiatives.

Dedicated Supplier Diversity Staff

The findings of this study demonstrate that dedicating staff to supplier diversity implementation is related to an increase of 32% in the number of supplier diversity activities in which an organization engages. Dedicated staff represents a priority and commitment to the related task (Krause et al., 2016). In this case, it represents a greater commitment to supplier diversity. In addition, prior research has found that investment in human capital for contracting efforts is related to effective management and implementation of contract related tasks (Brown et al., 2006).

Fiscal Federalism

The findings of this research demonstrate that higher-level governments (i.e., federal and state) hold some power over the number of supplier diversity activities of local governments. Local governments operate in a different environment than higher level governments. They are subject to pressures from the community in which they operate, as well as state and federal governments, which may influence policies of local governments. Fiscal federalism may influence local government activities as a condition of funding or through mandates (Peterson, 1995). For example, this is common in transportation projects requiring state funding or emergency relief reimbursements from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (United States Department of Homeland Security, 2019). The results of the quantitative analysis demonstrate this may also apply in the case of supplier diversity.

Population Size

The findings of this study demonstrate that population size is statistically significant and related to a 9% increase in the number of supplier diversity activities in which a local government agency engages. Contracting literature has noted that cities with larger populations may lead to an increase in services that the community required from their government (Brudney et al., 2005). Contracting out may be the necessary solution for local governments to effectively provide services to their community. Supplier diversity activities can be advantageous for an agency that contracts out frequently because it promotes the participation of more vendors and helps to develop more qualified firms to compete in the market.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

This chapter presents case study results from the qualitative research phase. Case studies were conducted with the City of Portland (Oregon) and the City of San Antonio (Texas). The goal in each case study was to identify what factors impact supplier diversity policy implementation (Research Question 1). It was expected that the answer to Research Question 2 would holistically emerge from the interviews held as part of the case studies. The case studies provided opposite cases: (1) where demographic characteristics of the public are majority Nonminority and (2) where demographic characteristics of the public are majority Minority (Figure 5). Both cases have a high level of supplier diversity policy implementation. Case studies provide a basis for comparison of the factors that impact supplier diversity policy implementation of local governments in the United States. Each case study site is situated in a unique environment/community that is subject to different influences and challenges. Furthermore, findings of the case studies complement findings of the quantitative research conducted for this study.

The qualitative research included 19 semi-structured interviews with public administrators and stakeholders knowledgeable about supplier diversity programs of their respective cities and, for the City of San Antonio, I observed a Diversity Action Plan meeting. As discussed in Chapter 3, participants were identified by the point of contact at each site. The point of contact was provided interview questions approximately one month prior to my arrival at each site. They each determined who would be the most knowledgeable about the interview topic, and staff at each site scheduled interviews accordingly. Interview questions are included in the Appendix.

Six interviews were conducted with the City of Portland. Two of these interviews were with representatives from Prosper Portland, which is the City's economic and urban development agency. The remaining four interviews were conducted with personnel from the City's procurement services office. The average department size for the City of Portland's procurement services is 45 employees. The average department size for Prosper Portland is 18 employees.

Thirteen interviews were conducted with the City of San Antonio. The City of San Antonio's supplier diversity programs are all housed under the Economic Development Department. This department has approximately 38 employees. Interviewees included representatives from: Alamo Colleges, which hosts a supplier diversity related program sponsored by the City of San Antonio; San Antonio Water System; Small Business Advisory Committee; South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency; Associated General Contractors of America—a large local union; Tejas Premier Building Contractors, Inc. & Maestro Entrepreneur Center—a small woman-owned business and a nonprofit providing support for startups and entrepreneurs, respectively; project manager from a large construction company working on one of the City of San Antonio's capital projects; and the City's Economic Development Department. Additionally, an audit of a Diversity Action Plan meeting at the City of San Antonio was conducted.

All interviews at both sites, and the Diversity Action Plan meeting at the City of San Antonio, were audio recorded. Informed consent was obtained from interviewees prior to each interview. Written consent was obtained from participants who were interviewed in-person, and verbal consent was obtained from participants who were

interview via phone. Each interview was approximately 45-60 minutes. All of City of Portland's interviews were conducted in-person. Eleven of the interviews with the City of San Antonio were conducted in person, with two additional interviews conducted over the phone—at the request of participants that could not be present at the site. Content analysis of documentation related to the supplier diversity policies or existing programs was also conducted for both sites. This documentation was either retrieved from the City's website or provided by interviewees.

To protect the identity of interviewees, names and identifying information has been redacted from transcripts and the dissertation. Because city names have been revealed, interviewees are referred to as “Anonymous City interviewee” or “Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee” throughout the text. City characteristics and demographic characteristics of interviewees are presented in Table 7 and Table 8. Differences in sites and demographic characteristics of interviewees are highlighted due to the nature of the topic and theoretical relevance of demographic characteristics.

Table 7. Case Study Site and Interviewee Characteristics-City of Portland

City of Portland Population: 647,805 Demographics: Minority: 25.3%; NonMinority: 74.7%								
Interviewee	Respondent Type	Age	Education	Ethnicity	Race	Gender	# of Years in Local Govt.	# of Years in Current Org.
1	City	26-35	Master's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Male	13	1
2	City	46-55	Some college	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Female	20+	5
3	City	46-55	Bachelor's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Female	20	11
4	City	36-45	Bachelor's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Female	21	21
5	City	26-35	Master's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Female	12	11
6	City	36-45	Master's degree	Hispanic or Latino	NR	Male	15.5	15.5

Table 8. Case Study Site and Interviewee Characteristics-City of San Antonio

City of San Antonio Population: 1,511,946 Demographics: Minority: 74.4%; NonMinority: 25.6%								
Interviewee	Respondent Type	Age	Education	Ethnicity	Race	Gender	# of Years in Local Govt.	# of Years in Current Org.
1	City	36-45	Bachelor's degree	Hispanic or Latino	White	Female	13	9
2	City	26-35	Master's degree	Hispanic or Latino	White	Female	6	5
3	City	36-45	Master's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Female	8	8
4	City	26-35	Master's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Male	9	9
5	City	NR	Bachelor's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Female	3	3
6	City	NR	Juris Doctor	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Male	18	NR
7	City	NR	Master's degree	Hispanic or Latino	White	Female	20+	20+
8	External stakeholder/partner	NR	Master's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Female	8	10

9	External stakeholder/ partner	46-55	Master's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Male	8	8
10	External stakeholder/ partner	56-65	Bachelor's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Male	30+	25
11	External stakeholder/ partner	36-45	Bachelor's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Male	0	8
12	External stakeholder/ partner	46-55	Bachelor's degree	Hispanic or Latino	White	Female	13	13
13	External stakeholder/ partner	NR	Bachelor's degree	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Male	0	21

To understand supplier diversity and the factors impacting its implementation, this research draws from literature on representative bureaucracy and contracting. A key assumption of the theory of representative bureaucracy was that shared demographic characteristics between organizational actors and constituents leads to policy adoption and implementation efforts reflecting the interests of those constituents (Mosher, 1968; Krislov, 1974; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Frederickson et al., 2016). The interviewees at each site reflect a range of demographic characteristics and represent public administrators and external stakeholders/partners impacting and impacted by supplier diversity. These cases provide an opportunity to learn from different perspectives relating to the focus of the present study. While interview questions were structured around key aspects identified in the literature review, the use of open-ended questions allowed for themes and concepts to emerge holistically.

The data (i.e., transcripts and secondary source documentation) were analyzed using NVivo 12 software. The analysis of transcripts comprised of interviewees' experience and knowledge of their respective supplier diversity programs. Through an iterative process, the interviewees' responses were categorized by themes and subthemes (Barnes & Henly, 2018; Foley & Williamson, 2018). The findings were organized around Research Question 1. It was expected that a response to Research Question 2 would emerge through the use of open-ended and probing questions. To reiterate, the following research questions guided this study:

- 1) What factors impact supplier diversity policy implementation of local governments?
- 2) Does decision-maker diversity play a role in supplier diversity policy implementation?

It was expected that motivations for implementation of supplier diversity programs would differ based on differences between case study sites, in terms of city size and demographic characteristics of the community. Yet, themes that emerged from interviews are similar across sites. The findings are described in greater detail in the sections that follow.

5.1 Community Feedback

The most commonly cited factor mentioned by interviewees driving program revisions and implementation is feedback from members of the community. Feedback is obtained from the efforts of local government agencies. In some cases, advocacy committees and workgroups are created. The local government agencies also conduct focus groups with a variety of stakeholders to obtain feedback relating to their supplier diversity programs. Feedback is also obtained from community members who directly voice their concerns at council meetings or reach out directly to elected officials and other management staff in the local government agency. These community members can be individuals or representatives from community-based organizations like Hispanic Chambers of Commerce (San Antonio) or the National Association for Minority Contractors (Portland).

In both cases, community feedback prompted the City of Portland and the City of San Antonio to develop and better implement their supplier diversity programs. For example, four programmatic recommendations for the City of Portland's Prime Contractor Development Program were the result of a workgroup consisting of City staff, contractors, consultants, and representatives from interested community organizations. Changes to the City of Portland's Workforce Program also resulted from community

feedback. While the City of Portland’s initial disparity study did not result in a specific goal setting process, they conducted interviews and held focus groups to collect anecdotal information about barriers facing specific groups of contractors in doing business with the City of Portland. This led to several programs that the City of Portland implemented.

In the City of San Antonio, the initial round of formal feedback came through a disparity study, which solicited feedback from the community to include trade association representatives like the Associated General Contractors group, which has traditionally opposed these types of programs. After the disparity study concluded, the City of San Antonio continued to solicit feedback from the business community on disparity study findings through an extensive process—hosting several meetings and public hearings. The purpose of this stakeholder process was to help to develop and prioritize remedies for the issues that were identified by the disparity study. The City was interested in input from the business community on the best and most appropriate solutions to address these barriers. The existing City ordinance addressing supplier diversity emerged from this process (i.e., disparity study and feedback). The process is even described in the City’s supplier diversity ordinance.

In a similar fashion, the City of San Antonio developed a Five-Year Diversity Action Plan in collaboration with 20 stakeholder groups, the Small Business Advocacy Committee, and the Diversity Action Plan Subcommittee. The purpose of the Diversity Action Plan is to “increase the number of minority and women owned businesses bidding and participating on City contracts” (City of San Antonio Economic Development Department, 2019). The City Council adopted this plan in 2018. One interviewee, who owns a minority-owned business, noted that through participation in the Small Business

Advocacy Committee, she was able to, as a business owner, identify and voice her issues/concerns with the existing supplier diversity policies and programs. In San Antonio, as well as Portland, advocacy groups continue to play an important role in facilitating communication between the local governments and the community.

In other instances, key community members voice their opinions without being prompted by a local government agency. These community members include, but are not limited to, laborers, contractors, unions, and members of local business and other community groups. An interviewee from the City of Portland noted:

[I have heard] frequently from communities of color in Portland that they are just not getting opportunities that they need and they are just not getting any of the notification to bid on projects to be involved in some of the larger projects that are going on in the city. (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/30/19)

Other interviewees noted that contractors provided feedback such as:

Where are the opportunities for us? You've already kicked us out of our neighborhoods. You already tore down our homes. You already tore down our business center. And now you are putting up this other gigantic building and there are no people of color working on it. (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/30/19)

We saw that the City was giving out work and we're not getting it. (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19)

While the respective cities prompt the feedback in some cases, City staff realize that any programmatic changes would not occur without the external sources pushing these changes. One interviewee from the City of Portland noted that if they "wanted to do any changes related to the program, that feedback is going to come more from external

sources, and not necessarily internal sources” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/30/19). Another interviewee provided a similar statement, noting that external feedback is what pushes the agenda. While stakeholders may have competing interests, the success of the City’s implementation efforts is dependent on support that local government agencies receive from community organizations and trade unions.

Community feedback is also seen as a way for the government agency to measure whether the programs are making an impact and if any changes related to implementation are necessary. An interviewee from the City of Portland noted:

Community feedback is one critical source where we can measure ourselves because we do have a lot of folks who are very verbal about where we have been and how we can do better...It tells us that what we are doing is actually working and it’s valuable. (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/30/19)

5.2 Political and Executive Support

While community feedback arguably plays the largest role in driving implementation and holding the local government agencies accountable, action could not be taken by the local government agency without political and executive support. Interviewees at both sites asserted the importance of City leadership for the success of the program. One interviewee at the City of Portland stated, “the program is only as successful as your leadership.” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19).

In Portland, the social equity program was spearheaded mainly by the Mayor at the time, and since that time, subsequent elected officials have been supportive of the programs. An interviewee at the City of Portland noted that their social equity contracting

initiative originated from the elected officials, while also crediting the leadership of their Chief Procurement Officer. This interviewee stated that, “in order to make it (the program) successful, they need the blessing of council members” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/30/19). Another interviewee noted that “the people at the top tell you where they are headed...change is forced from the top...your leaders tell you where you need to be going, and then you implement” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19). A third interviewee noted that the “City Council micromanages a lot” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19). These comments demonstrate the involvement of elected officials in City of Portland’s program.

Similarly, political and executive support is key in the City of San Antonio. One interviewee from the City of San Antonio noted that the City Council and Mayor “takes it seriously... it all started with the council. We have had a very strong, really motivated council and mayor who supported the inclusivity and who supported this” (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/16/19). The interviewee also noted that the “impetus (of the City’s program) was the stakeholders, but then the City Council kind of took it over.” Once the City Council supports it, the rest of the departments fall in line, even though some departments may resist it at one point or another. Another interviewee also praised the City of San Antonio’s elected officials, stating: “I’ll always give them (city council) credit because they approve everything and so they will stop things if that is not what they want to see. We couldn’t do it without them” (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/17/19).

The push for supplier diversity programs and active implementation is a combination of efforts from the city council and people in the community. One

interviewee, who represents a minority business owner in San Antonio, stated that the “City Council was pushing for it, but we had to individually educate them” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/18/19). This interviewee also noted that she encountered “amazing staff who listened and changed” the way the program is implemented based on the feedback received from an advocacy committee she was on. In the City of San Antonio, the business community pushes policy but also partners with the City on these efforts. Another interviewee noted that the City deserves credit for “going back and putting together programs that they believe the business community will support” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/18/19). City leadership is open to feedback and will revise programs to benefit the business community within the constraints of law. The interviewee noted several times that the Economic Development Department’s leadership, and the willingness of elected officials to work with the business community, has had a great impact. Another interviewee stated: “we’ve had a city council who over the years have been more than willing to learn” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/16/19). An important note: although interviewees at both case study sites credit elected officials for the success and push for the implementation of supplier diversity programs, the drive to implement supplier diversity more actively comes more from leadership being open to community engagement, feedback, and collaboration while basing decisions on hard and anecdotal evidence—as required by Supreme Court rulings in this arena of economic inclusion policies.

The present findings support previous research on contracting out that found contracting decisions are often political (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al.,

2006; Krause et al., 2016). Elected officials are subject to pressures from various groups in the community, and this can drive decisions, preferences, and priorities (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016; Alkadry et al., 2019). As evidenced in both case study sites, local government agencies are held accountable to the demands of their residents and the well-being of their community (Boyne, 1998; Wang et al., 2014).

The analysis suggests that community feedback and political support for supplier diversity go hand in hand. Community feedback plays an informative and educational role as well. This feedback makes elected officials aware of the problem and facilitates understanding of the barriers faced by certain groups. The feedback is only effective if the elected officials are willing to listen and learn. Once the officials are aware of the problem, they are driving forces for supplier diversity programs setting priorities and providing continuing support to existing operations (Saidel & Loscocco, 2005). Although diversity of elected officials did not emerge as a factor impacting supplier diversity, it is clear that support of elected officials facilitates implementation. Instead, political and executive support is the result of operating in the contracting environment.

5.3 City Mandate

Overall, city mandate reflects the legal environment in which supplier diversity programs exist and outlines the constraints of law. It is a major tool for implementation and helps the local government agency with compliance from contractors and program participants. One interviewee noted that city mandates can be “legally binding” when included in a contract as well (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/17/19).

The City of San Antonio has four complementary ordinances that address the state of business diversity. These force contractors to “be responsible and to be a community person” (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/16/19) One interviewee—a legal expert in these matters—noted that the City of San Antonio “thought that was the best way to go given the very rigorous standards the courts imposed on these kinds of policies...A significant portion of the ordinance is devoted to recounting the factual predicate” (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/17/19). The interviewee further noted:

[these policies must] meet the strict scrutiny standard that the Supreme Court adopted from the Croson decision. Strict scrutiny basically requires any local government that has a race or gender conscious policy for contracting to demonstrate that they have a strong basis in evidence to support a compelling interest for government to consider the use of race or gender conscious policy elements. That comes out of the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/17/19)

The final version of the City of San Antonio’s main ordinance outlines the various programs, process in which the programs developed, and multiple options for implementation.

This finding aligns with research on the contracting environment, which states that public law dictates the tools and resources available to bureaucrats in contracting processes (Brown et al., 2006). In addition to adhering to the precedent set by the Supreme Court in the Croson decision, local government may enact their own policies restricting or facilitating implementation of supplier diversity (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Blount & Hill, 2015). This means that supplier diversity policy

decisions and actions are mandated by legislation and subject to legal oversight (Sowa & Selden, 2003; Martin et al., 2007). These mechanisms of control may limit an organizational actor's ability to act on behalf of constituents. Instead, local government agencies rely on hard and anecdotal evidence of past and present barriers identified in disparity studies to justify, support, and defend supplier diversity programs. Local government agencies are also careful to not overstep with supplier diversity initiatives due to the strict legal scrutiny applied to these programs. Case study interviews demonstrate that city mandates are a strong tool for enforcing and implementing supplier diversity initiatives.

5.4 Social Equity and Discrimination

Inclusion of minority and women-owned businesses in contracting opportunities of local government agencies has social and economic implications for these suppliers, these agencies, and the community. While the main push for accountability and implementation of supplier diversity programs stems from communication between elected officials and community members, the reasons these programs exist is because there is anecdotal and hard evidence of discrimination and injustices that certain groups have encountered in both cities. In the City of San Antonio, the data show significant evidence of disparity, discrimination, and barriers for certain ethnic groups. One interviewee, who had a key role during the development of the City's ordinance and related supplier diversity programs, stated that:

[Barriers identified include] everything from unequal access to bonding, unequal access to capital, good ole boys' networks that could adversely affect subcontracting participation by minority and women owned firms,

unnecessary restrictive bid specifications that had the effect of locking out minority firms being able to bid on certain contracts. (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/17/19)

Another interviewee described a time when there were “zero dollars that was spent with African-American in the areas of construction, architecture and engineering, and this caused a huge alarm. It was unacceptable for the seventh largest city to have zero dollars spent with African-Americans” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/16/19). This occurred as late as 2011. The evidence of discrimination is even cited in the City’s ordinance, which states “the City of San Antonio continues to have a compelling interest to remedy the ongoing effects of marketplace discrimination against M/WBE businesses and to avoid becoming a passive participant in private sector discrimination” (City of San Antonio Ordinance 2016-05-19-0367, 2016).

Similar to the City of San Antonio, the City of Portland also has a history of discrimination toward certain groups (City of Portland, n.d.). An interviewee from the City of Portland noted that:

[The state of Oregon has been] very racist towards African-Americans, Chinese, and Japanese people. There have been some pretty heinous acts. There has been a lot of displacements. So there is not a lot of trust within the community, especially African-Americans people, when they are dealing with the government...I think the community groups feel like this is finally an opportunity for the City of Portland, the government, to rectify historical mishaps. (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19)

Another interviewee provided a similar account of unfair treatment of certain groups noting that the City, particularly the Economic Development Agency in Portland, has a “long, long history of treating communities of color very, very poorly. And in that history, a lot of the feedback that we’ve gotten from the community over the decades has focused around exactly that” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/30/19). This interviewee reported hearing statements from contractors like “did I even have a fighting chance?” In the City of San Antonio, an interviewee, who is a minority business owner, echoed this sentiment, stating that they are “considered high risk from before walking through the doors” and many times they just “didn’t give me a fair chance” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/18/19).

A problem that still exists in the City of San Antonio, as recited by interviewees, is that there is discrimination among minority groups. Their program has seen issues emerge that were not considered in the past. San Antonio is a majority minority city where Hispanic groups have a “powerful rank structure” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/16/19). Statements from interviewees detailing this issue include: “It’s not a model of true diversity” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/16/19). “Certain segments of the minority business community were doing fine, but others were anemic” (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/17/19). “I know that an issue across the board is trying to do business with African-American businesses and just reaching out to the community to educate them about opportunities with our agencies” (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/16/19). One interviewee went further to note:

My African-American business peers say that the true minority in San Antonio isn't the Hispanic minority because they actually have the numbers and they have the power. And so it's interesting, though, when we use the term minority businesses, that includes Hispanics. Then, oftentimes, the spirit of the council, the spirit of the community will say yes. But if we didn't talk about the Hispanic community in San Antonio and made the minority community Black, Native-American, Asian-American, then I don't think we would see the same support. And even when we talk about the leaders who are in charge of city departments, city manager's office and our elected officials, they do not really understand at any of those levels, the true nature of what African-American businesses have to go through. (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner interviewee, 09/16/19)

As a result of previous injustices encountered by certain groups, the general consensus from interviewees at the City of Portland is supplier diversity programs are “the right thing to do, at a minimum” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19).

Leadership and management in the City of Portland are now actively thinking about the barriers that the City has created because the mindset has shifted and they want to play a role in making the community better. The City of Portland now develops programs that support removing those barriers. The City of Portland asserts their commitment to social equity by using the following guiding questions when implementing one of their programs: “1. Does the Program expand opportunity for minority and women contractors? 2. Does the Program effect systemic change? 3. Does the Program have any

unintended consequences for certain populations and/or communities?” (City of Portland, 2019). One interviewee at the City of Portland noted that now “social equity is just a part of what they do” (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19).

In both cases, economic development is related to the local government agencies’ focus on social equity. Once these underutilized firms are provided opportunity, they can grow and help to build community wealth. Both case study sites also have workforce development programs with this same goal in mind. One interviewee from the City of San Antonio noted:

Because part of the rationale for these programs is not just that you're fixing what's wrong or your remedying the discrimination. It's also that you want a robust marketplace where all segments of business population have meaningful participation. That is when you maximize job creation. You maximize tax revenues. You maximize the quality of life. You enhance the quality of life for everyone. And I always say, if you show me a community that has a lot of high crime, poor schools, crumbling infrastructure, I'll show you a community has got an underdeveloped business community. (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/17/19)

The City of San Antonio’s ordinance relating to supplier diversity solidifies the commitment, not only to social equity but also to promoting “a robust and inclusive economy” (City of San Antonio, 2016). In the case of Portland and San Antonio, they were able to demonstrate the value added to the community by developing and providing opportunities to women and minority owned businesses.

5.5 Diversity

Findings support prior research on representative bureaucracy noting the importance of the representative role and street level representation for active representation (Thompson, 1976; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Selden et al., 1998; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). Street level bureaucrats in the supplier diversity environment often interact with the represented population and often make decisions related to service provision on a daily basis (Sowa & Selden, 2003). The street level bureaucrats interviewed strongly relate to and maintain attitudes reflective of their demographic origins and advocate on behalf of constituents similar to themselves. These interviewees assumed a representative role, which means that they “see themselves as advocates for, or representatives of,” minority or gender interests (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008, p. 698). This aligns with prior research demonstrating that individuals who assume a representative role can impact whether passive representation translates into active representation (Selden, 1997; Selden et al., 1998; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003). Their advocacy and their actions are reflective of the interests of the groups they represent.

Interviewees described two sides of the story and demonstrated the importance of diversity and representation. One side came from the minority business owner perspective, and the other came from City employees who are minorities. One interviewee, who represents a minority business owner in San Antonio, noted the importance diversity for supplier diversity efforts by local government: “having diversity of small business owners on the boards and commission is a must, so that you’re getting a perspective that is beyond the process” (Anonymous external stakeholder/partner

interviewee, 09/18/19). An interviewee at the City of Portland encapsulated the overall sentiments of City staff and members of the business community regarding diversity:

I think when you have people in supervisory or leadership or management roles that are diverse, you're going to bring the best of those cultures to the table and you're not going to leave anybody out. I mean, I think we sit here sometimes and we act like we represent communities. But if you don't have true representation at the table, then how are you possibly representing somebody that's not represented in the conversation?

(Anonymous City interviewee, 07/29/19)

A minority City employee noted:

There's a certain aspect to this particular kind of job where there were some days where I was feeling a little tokenized, where it's like you're the person of color, go talk to the people of color. Go talk to your people about the opportunities that you have here. You're talking head that they sent out because you're a person of color, but it's about being able to get through that and speak with authenticity. You take the message that they are telling you back your organization and then make the organization change a little bit to accommodate their needs. And we've been able to do that really well. My credibility as a contributor to that and our organization's credibility is starting to rise really fast with those communities that have been our staunchest critics in the past. (Anonymous City interviewee, 07/30/19)

Even though this interviewee felt tokenized, he was able to advocate on behalf of the City's program. He knew that he could connect to the group he was speaking to because he was like them. Similarly, another minority employee for the City of San Antonio noted that her background as a female minority is how she "connects with them. You are just like me. As so that really motivated my passion to help and also just seeing the impact that our programs had on them and their families. That was a big motivation for me" (Anonymous City interviewee, 09/16/19).

5.6 Summary

In summary, key factors that impact supplier diversity policy implementation are community feedback, political and executive support, city mandate, social equity, and diversity at certain levels in the organization. While it was expected that each site would provide vastly different motivations for supplier diversity program implementation, there were several commonalities between the two. Overall, community feedback and political support are the catalysts for development, revision, and implementation of supplier diversity. The program is further facilitated and advanced by city mandate, the need for social equity and the effort to correct historical injustices, and the diversity of bureaucrats. The city mandate for supplier diversity provides a tool for enforcement of these policies. The history and recognition of past and current discriminatory practices—communicated through community feedback, disparity studies, or other reports—provide justification for the program. Diversity of bureaucrats involved in supplier diversity initiatives helps to keep the program active. Findings demonstrate that bureaucrats who assume the minority representative role are advocates for supplier diversity; these bureaucrats push for active implementation of supplier diversity.

A word frequency query was performed on interview transcripts and documentation, and nodes relating to both case study sites using NVivo 12 to represent the findings. The query was used to create a word cloud. Several key words emerged (i.e., community, people, ordinance, equity, disparity, council), demonstrating the importance of these factors for supplier diversity (Figure 8). The words *community* and *people* refer to the community feedback referenced above. The word *ordinance* refers to city mandate or formalized policy. *Equity* and *disparity* refer to the motivation to correct historical injustices and the current presence of barriers for women and minority owned businesses. Finally, the word *council* refers to the support of elected officials for supplier diversity commonly noted by interviewees at both sites.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The purpose of the dissertation was to examine the factors impacting supplier diversity policy implementation of local governments, and then to identify whether decision-maker diversity plays a role in the implementation of supplier diversity policy programs. This chapter provides an overview of the study and presents implications for research and practice. Limitations and avenues for future research are also presented in the sections that follow.

6.1 Overview

According to the theory of representative bureaucracy, organizational actors that share certain characteristics with constituents (passive representation) are more likely to respond to their interests through policies and implementation activities (active representation) (Mosher, 1968; Krislov, 1974; Meier, 1993; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Sowa & Selden, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Bradbury & Kellough, 2008; Riccucci et al., 2015; Bishu & Kennedy, 2019). Prior literature has identified various instances in which passive representation leads to active representation (Mosher, 1968; Meier, 1993; Selden, 1997; Meier & Bohte, 2001; Keiser et al., 2002; Bell & Rosenthal, 2003; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012). The premise for active representation is derived from the similarity between demographics and social backgrounds of bureaucrats and the public served (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). These shared characteristics influence attitudes and values of bureaucrats.

This dissertation examined how representative bureaucracy manifests in the contracting environment by assessing supplier diversity policies of local government

agencies in the United States. The contracting environment is unique for two main reasons. First, contracting practices are constrained by organizational structures and public law at local, state, and federal levels (Brown et al., 2006; Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Blount & Hill, 2015). Public laws and organizational structures dictate the tools, resources available, and the amount of discretion bureaucrats have in their work (Keiser et al., 2002; Brown et al., 2006). Contracting policies, such as supplier diversity, are subject to strict legal oversight (Martin et al., 2007). Second, previous research on contracting out has found that local government contracting decisions are political and conducted in response to the demands of their residents and the well-being of their community (Boyne, 1998; Wang et al., 2014). In this scenario, decision-makers must balance priorities of stakeholders and public service values like equity and efficiency (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016; Alkadry et al., 2019). Utilizing mixed methodology, the present research demonstrates the relationship between organizational representativeness and supplier diversity implementation within the constraints of the local government contracting environment.

6.2 Implications for Research and Practice

The findings of this research have implications for the theory of representative bureaucracy and for practice. The contracting environment is often driven by efficiency and guided by legal stipulations. The results of this study demonstrate that even while operating within the constraints of the contracting environment, diversity and representation within the bureaucracy still remain an important avenue for inclusion of

minority groups in local government contracting. Additionally, elected officials play a significant role through their advocacy and support for supplier diversity.

The quantitative analysis shows that minority representation has a larger effect at the procurement head level, but that it is also significant at the elected official level.

These findings support the relationship between representation at the procurement level and active implementation of supplier diversity. The qualitative analysis supports the notion that minority representation of bureaucrats closer to the street level affects supplier diversity implementation because these bureaucrats have assumed a representative role. Specifically, street level bureaucrats who assume a minority representative role are more likely to have greater motivation for supplier diversity. This demonstrates that active representation (defined by implementing programs supporting minority interests) can occur in the local government contracting environment. This supports previous research demonstrating that minority representation in procurement positions—particularly those with direct oversight of supplier diversity programs, —is related to benefits for minority owned businesses (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). While previous research (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018) was conducted at the federal level of government, the current research shows that the effects of representative bureaucracy in contracting translates to the local level of government as well.

Qualitative analysis further demonstrates the important role elected officials have in driving supplier diversity from the top. However, interviews attribute the push of elected officials in support of supplier diversity to the political system, where elected officials aim to be responsive to their constituents (Boyne, 1998; Wang et al., 2014). This

supports previous research on the politics of contracting out (Boyne, 1998; Brudney et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2006; Krause et al., 2016). Local government agencies are often responsive to the demands of their residents and the well-being of their community. This is apparent in the case of supplier diversity. Taken together, this signifies the importance of minority representation at the procurement head and related street levels and importance of push and support from top level leadership within the organization.

The present study is among the first to explore the impact of representative bureaucracy on local government contracting policies. Although the operating environment of local governments differs from that of the federal government, findings nearly mirror that of previous contracting research performed at the federal level (Smith & Fernandez, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2012; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). The results of the present study demonstrate that even while operating within the constraints of the contracting environment, minority representation at the street level is important for active implementation. This supports previous research demonstrating that street level bureaucrats are better positioned to advocate and act on behalf of constituents (Meier, 1993; Sowa & Selden, 2003). The results demonstrate the importance of a representative bureaucracy for balancing equity and inclusion in environments where efficiency is key. Supplier diversity enables not only market competition, but also inclusion and empowerment of minority owned businesses.

The findings of this study provide important implications for practice as well. The study highlights the role of leadership in responding to constituent needs and setting priorities for the organization. Engaging with and listening to constituent needs are key for providing the direction for a program like supplier diversity. This research also

highlights the importance of the procurement function and procurement personnel. It demonstrates that diversity at the procurement head level and related street levels can facilitate active implementation for supplier diversity. An increased investment in diverse hiring in procurement roles may produce a more robust supplier diversity program. Shared characteristics between bureaucrats and constituents helps to provide an understanding of the barriers faced by certain groups and is related to decisions and actions that promote the interests of these groups.

6.3 Limitations

This section outlines the limitations of this research. There are four main limitations. First, the minority classification for the representation variable groups all minorities into one group. However, it is important to recognize that minorities comprise a diverse and heterogenous population of numerous races and ethnicities (Selden 1997; Watkins-Hayes, 2011; Brunjes & Kellough, 2018). As evident from case study findings, what affects one group may not be the same as what affects another group. Identities, history, experiences also vary. Findings that emerged from interviews noted that digging deeper into the data illustrates that disparities within minority groups still exists. Second, interaction between minority and gender variables were not tested due to the sample size. Assessing different components of diversity can provide greater insight and contribute further to the theory of representative bureaucracy. Third, there is an imbalance of data obtained for the case studies; this research did not include a meeting observation at the City of Portland or interviews with external stakeholders/members of the community in Portland. No relevant, comparable meeting—present or past—was available for the City of Portland. Data from the City of Portland case study are from the perspective of City

staff only. In contrast, data from the City of San Antonio case study are from the perspective of City staff and external stakeholders/members of the community. Finally, it is important to note that the current research is limited to two case study sites. Therefore, findings may only be transferable to other sites with similar characteristics and those aiming to answer similar research questions.

6.4 Future Research

Future research can expand on the present study in several ways. First, future research can disentangle the effects of organizational representation on government contracting by examining individual minority groups. Second, the interaction between gender and minority groups should be explored. These can yield significant contributions and greater understanding for the theory of representative bureaucracy. Third, the impact of organizational representation on individual minority groups by contract type can identify where disparities exist in contracting services. Certain contract types yield more revenue than others (e.g., construction). Fourth, interviews provided insight into several barriers faced by women and minority owned business and the importance of communication with the local government leadership to promote their interests. A more in-depth examination of barriers and facilitators for women and minority businesses owners to participate in contracting opportunities can produce actionable recommendations for government decisionmakers to promote a more inclusive contracting process.

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APPENDIX

Case Study Interview Questions

- 1) Can you please tell me about your social equity contracting or supplier diversity program? **Probe:** How were these initiatives/policies introduced?
- 2) What factors do you think played the most important role in its adoption? **Probe:** How did the supplier diversity policy originate or how was the program introduced? Or how was it developed? **Probe:** When did it originate? **Probe:** Who were the champions of this program at this time?
- 3) What does your agency **currently or most actively** do as it relates to supplier diversity?
- 4) What motivates/influences/affects the current implementation of your social equity contracting programs? **Probe:** What are some of the issues that you face in implementation of this program?
- 5) How do you monitor and evaluate your program? **Probe:** Are there different measures for each group (women and minorities)? **Probe:** What do you consider as success?
- 6) What do you consider as your biggest achievements? (top 3 achievements)
Probe: Can you elaborate of these?
- 7) What aspects have been challenging in terms of implementation? (top 3 challenges) **Probe:** Can you elaborate on these? **Probe:** How have these challenges been addressed and/or resolved?

- 8) How do you advertise or inform women and minority owned businesses about your initiatives? **Probe:** Are there specific initiatives aimed at one group versus the other or are they the same for all? Explain (if different).
- 9) What do you think is the biggest challenge facing women and minority owned business contractors in **participating** in government contracting opportunities? **Probe:** Do you think they face challenges in **undertaking and completing** the work? Please elaborate.
- 10) Who are the biggest champions of supplier diversity in your agency?
- a. What do you think motivates them to be champions?
 - b. How diverse is your unit?
 - c. In what ways does this affect implementation?
- 11) What is the role, if any, of third-party organizations for the implementation of your supplier diversity program?
- a. When did the partnership begin?
 - b. What specifically do these third-party organizations do to foster supplier diversity in your organization?
- 12) What pressures external to (or outside of) the organization impact supplier diversity policy implementation? **Probe:** How do these pressures impact supplier diversity policy implementation (positively and negatively)?

VITA

EVELYN TRAMMELL

2010	BA, International Relations, Religious Studies Florida International University Miami, Florida
2013	MPA Florida International University Miami, Florida
2015	Certificate in Public Procurement Florida Atlantic University Boca Raton, Florida
2018	Adjunct Instructor Florida International University Miami, Florida
2019	Dissertation Year Fellowship Florida International University Miami, Florida
2020	Founders' Fellowship American Society for Public Administration
2020	PhD, Public Affairs Florida International University Miami, Florida

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Alkadry, M., Trammell, E., & Dimand, A. (2016, June). *The Power of Public Procurement: Social Equity and Sustainability as Externalities and as Deliberate Policy Tools*. Social Equity Leadership Conference. San Francisco, CA.

Trammell, E. (2018, November). *An Implementation Perspective to Supplier Diversity Government Contracting*. Poster presentation at Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Conference. Washington, D.C.

Trammell, E. (2019, March). *Representative Bureaucracy in Government Contracting: Examining Supplier Diversity Policy Decision and Implementation*. American Society for Public Administration Conference. Washington, D.C.

Alkadry, M., Trammell, E., & Dimand, A. (2019, June). *Social Capital, Political Values or Organizational Capacity? Indicators of Engagement in Sustainable Procurement at the Local Level*. Public Management Research Conference. Chapel Hill, NC.

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