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## Your Pie Chart

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- Purpose:*
1. To increase awareness of your own cultural background and how it compares to that of others.
  2. To raise awareness of the importance of self-identity based on affiliations with groups.
  3. To consider the influence of self-identity on individuals' experiences in organizational settings.

*Preparation:* None

*Time:* 30 to 45 minutes

### BACKGROUND

Personal characteristics (some changeable, others not), which may influence individuals' basic self-image and sense of identity, may also influence experiences in the workplace. **Primary dimensions of diversity** are essentially unchangeable personal characteristics (e.g., sex, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities). **Secondary dimensions of diversity**, on the other hand, are changeable personal characteristics that are acquired and may be modified or abandoned throughout life (e.g., education, income, marital and parental status, religion, political affiliation, work experience). People also distinguish themselves in many other ways, such as in their choices of collegiate fraternities or sororities, hobbies, activities, clothing and grooming style,

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and music. Of course, secondary characteristics are not completely self-determined; educational background, work experience, income, and marital status are affected by others' decisions. However, people generally have more control over secondary dimensions of diversity than over primary dimensions.

Because individuals' sense of identity is influenced by self-selected groups, this exercise examines how people categorize themselves in their group affiliations along the many different dimensions of both types of diversity.

## PROCEDURE

1. Working individually, create a pie chart identifying group affiliations that have some importance in your self-concept. These affiliations may be based on any of the primary or secondary dimensions of diversity mentioned above or on some other personal characteristic that is particularly important to you (e.g., cat or dog lover, fan of favorite sports team or musician). Indicate the approximate importance of each group affiliation by the size of the slice of pie that you assign to it. (10 minutes)
  
2. Participate in a discussion based on the following questions: (remaining time)
  - a. What did you learn about yourself?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What surprised you the most?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. What group affiliations were mentioned the most?

d. What did you learn about others that surprised you?

e. How does your self-identity influence your experiences in organizational settings?

## REFERENCE

Loden, M., & Rosener, J. B. (1991). Chapter 2, Dimensions of diversity. In *Workforce America: Managing employee diversity as a vital resource* (pp. 17–35). Homewood, IL: Business One Irwin.