Deakin Research Online

This is the authors’ final peer reviewed (post print) version of the item published as:


Available from Deakin Research Online:

http://hdl.handle.net/10536/DRO/DU:30052175

Reproduced with the kind permission of the copyright owner.

Copyright: 2013, Emerald Group Publishing
Towards a diversity justice management model: integrating organizational justice and diversity management

Yuka Fujimoto, Senior Lecturer at the School of Management and Marketing, Deakin University, Burwood East, Australia

Charmine E.J. HärteI, Professor and Management Cluster Leader at the University of Queensland Business School, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Fara Azmat, Senior Lecturer at the School of Management and Marketing, Deakin University, Burwood East, Australia

Abstract

Purpose – Contemporary organizations are increasingly paying attention to incorporate diversity management practices into their systems in order to promote socially responsible actions and equitable employment outcomes for minority groups. The aim of this paper is to seek to address a major oversight in diversity management literature, the integration of organizational justice principles.

Design/methodology/approach – Drawing upon the existing literature on workforce diversity and organizational justice, the authors develop a model based on normative principles of organizational justice for justice-based diversity management processes and outcomes.

Findings – The paper proposes that effective diversity management results from a decision-making process that meets the normative principles of organizational justice (i.e. interactional, procedural and distributive justice). The diversity justice management model introduced in this article provides important theoretical and practical implications for establishing more moral and just workplaces.

Research limitations/implications – The authors have not tested the conceptual framework of the diversity justice management model, and recommend future research to take up the challenge. The payoff for doing so is to enable the establishment of socially responsible workplaces where individuals, regardless of their background, are given an equal opportunity to flourish in their assigned jobs.

Practical implications – The diversity justice management model introduced in this paper provides organizational justice (OJ)-based guidelines for managers to ensure that OJ can be objectively benchmarked and discussed amongst diversity stakeholders to continuously improve actual and perceived OJ outcomes.

Social implications – The social implication of this conceptual paper is reduction of workforce marginalization and establishment of socially responsible organizations whereby those marginalized (e.g. people with disabilities) can effectively work in their organizations.

Originality/value – This is the first attempt to establish a diversity justice management model, which incorporates normative principles of organizational justice into diversity management processes and outcomes.

Keyword(s): Justice; Social responsibility; Workforce diversity; Diversity management.
Introduction

Diversity management has often been referred to as managerially-initiated programs and/or human resource management (HRM) policies and practices that seek to empower the diverse workforce by integrating multiple social groups (Kelly and Dobbin, 1998; Kossek and Lobel, 1996; Gilbert et al., 1999; Prasad et al., 2011; Thomas and Ely, 1996). Underlying the rhetoric, the critical notion is that there should be a fair and socially responsible decision-making process behind every diversity program, policy and practice that seeks to empower everyone, unhindered by group identities such as race, gender, disability and religion (see Ivancevich and Gilbert, 2000; Kandola and Fullerton, 1994; Kossek and Lobel, 1996; Lorbiecki and Jack, 2000; Shapiro, 2000).

Unfortunately, despite the introduction of corporate diversity policies and practices and the legal enforcement of Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA), the statistics from the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia tell us that their original intent has rarely been achieved (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2009; Chartered Management Institute, 2010; EEOC, 2010). For example, data from the Australian Human Rights Commission suggests that the number of discrimination claims by minority group members in Australia has almost doubled in the years 2004 to 2009 (AHRC, 2009), and similarly, in the United States, work discrimination claims are also on the rise (EEOC, 2010).

As indicated on Table I, according to the US Department of Labor (2010) and US Census Bureau (2010), Anglo-Americans (or white) still hold a much larger proportion of management and professional positions (78.2 percent) than do other racial minority group members namely African-Americans (or Black) and Hispanics/Latino Americans. Table I indicates that non-Anglo Americans except for Asian Americans are disadvantaged in the managerial/professional occupations in retrospect of their employment and population ratio.

In the United Kingdom, the gender pay-gap is said to be still 57 years away from equality as male pay currently surpasses female pay by 24 percent at the senior level (Chartered Management Institute, 2010). These figures indicate that there is still a long way to go before diverse organizations can administer fairness between minority and majority employees. In this article, we use the term “minority group members” to refer to those within an organization whose social category characteristics are given less privilege within the organization and its societal context, in contrast to “majority group members”, who represent those social category characteristics holding more privileged status. The commonly recognized minority group members in diverse organizations include (but are not exclusive to) women, people with disabilities, people of racial and ethnic minorities, people with lesbian, gay, bisexual/pansexual and transgender (LGBT) identity and people discriminated on the basis of age also referred to as “ageism”. Ageism or age discrimination can affect people of any age- young or old, however, in advanced nations, older workers, and to a lesser extent new, labor market entrants, are generally affected by such discrimination (Garstka et al., 2005). Like other advanced nations, Australia is facing the challenges of an aging population meaning more people will have to work later in their lives particularly with longer life expectancies, yet ageist attitudes are very much rife in both the society and organizations (Easteal et al., 2007; The Age, 2004).

Based upon a business ethics view of organizational justice (OJ) and socio-psychological theories of OJ within the context of workforce diversity literature, this article proposes that the likelihood of diversity management achieving its objectives will depend on the extent to which justice-responsive organizations involve diversity stakeholders (i.e. minority members, majority members and key decision-makers) in creating fairness amongst their diverse employees.

This article begins with a brief background of the workforce diversity literature followed by a discussion of OJ, its different typologies and their theoretical underpinnings for managing diversity. Based upon the business ethics view of OJ and socio-psychological theories of OJ, we then develop a
model of Diversity Justice Management within the context of a diverse workforce. The model highlights the OJ-based decision-making process amongst key diversity stakeholders as a key moderator between diversity and key work outcomes, such as employees' job performance, commitment, communication and integration in diverse organizations. The paper concludes by discussing the practical and theoretical implications of the paper.

Understanding workforce diversity and organizational justice (OJ)

The question of justice in managing diversity is particularly important as diversity management in organizations is most effective if managers can address the sources of unfairness amongst diverse employees (e.g. DiTomaso et al., 2007; Linnehan and Konrad, 1999). Research clearly demonstrates that a degree of perceived fairness either pulls people together or pushes people apart by fostering inclusion or exclusion (Bies and Moag, 1986; Cropanzano and Byrne, 2001; Cropanzano et al., 2001; Tyler, 1999). OJ research demonstrates that individuals deprived of perceived fairness tend to lose their sense of belonging and existence in a given context and tend to become lonely, depressed and anxious and, over time, withdraw (Krehbiel and Cropanzano, 2000; Koper et al., 1993; Lind and Tyler, 1988; Tyler and Smith, 1998; Weiss et al., 1999). This phenomenon is particularly relevant to workforce diversity where minority group members tend to report more work marginalization and discrimination than majority group members (Wooten and James, 2004). In considering the creation of justice in workforce diversity, we argue that the use of organizational justice principles for the objective benchmarking of fairness in a workplace will reduce unfair incidents in diverse organizations. In an attempt to address this issue, we integrate OJ typologies and theories into workforce diversity research.

Workforce diversity

Diversity is a contested term and is often classified along with observable dimensions such as race/ethnicity, age and gender as well as non-readily observable dimensions such as values, information, perspectives, functional and educational background (Milliken and Martins, 1996; Harrison et al., 1998; van Knippenberg and Schippers, 2007; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). Notably, work discrimination and injustice work incidents often emanate from organizations failing to manage observable dimensions of diversity such as gender, race, and people with disabilities (Wooten and James, 2004; Workforce Victoria, 2008).

The workforce diversity research is replete with inconsistent empirical evidence of the positive and negative effects of diversity (Milliken and Martins, 1996; van Knippenberg and Schippers, 2007; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). The effects of diversity are often acknowledged in terms of positive cognitive outcomes such as the greater creativity, ideas and innovation that employees from different social backgrounds can bring (e.g. Cox, 2001; Herring, 2009), whereas the negative effects of diversity are often acknowledged in terms of negative affective and behavioral outcomes such as relational conflicts, less social cohesion and higher staff turnover resulting from employees' perceived dissimilarity, out-group categorization, and negative stereotypes about dissimilar others (e.g. Jehn et al., 1999; Tsui et al., 1992). These paradoxical effects of diversity are often explained by social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1972; Turner, 1987), social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986) and similarity attraction theory (Byrne, 1971) in relation to negative effects; and by information processing perspective (van Knippenberg and Schippers, 2007) in relation to positive effects. However, the diversity initiatives that overcome pervasive work marginalization and discrimination against minority group members have received little attention to date (Kalev and Dobbin, 2006; Wooten and James, 2004). It is this void in relation to counteracting the negative effects of diversity that we attempt to fill by applying OJ principles to managing diversity.
Organizational justice

Organizational justice concerns employees' perceptions of fairness in workplaces and has become a popular concept in understanding workplace attitudes and behavior (Ambrose et al., 2007; Cropanzano and Rupp, 2003). It has been researched widely in relation to employees' justice perceptions of HR issues such as recruitment and selection (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998), downsizing (Paterson and Cary, 2002), layoffs (Brockner, 1990), employees' voice (Brockner et al., 2001), and stress (Judge and Colquitt, 2004). However, only a small amount of research has examined OJ in relation to managing diversity (Richard and Kirby, 1999; Roberson and Stevens, 2006).

The organizational justice literature describes three dominant justice types, namely, distributive justice (Adams, 1965; Homans, 1961), procedural justice (Leventhal et al., 1980; Thibaut and Walker, 1975), and interactional justice (Bies and Moag, 1986). Distributive justice refers to employees' perceived fairness about work outcomes (e.g. pay, performance rating, promotion and termination). Procedural justice refers to employees' perceived fairness about the authority's decision-making processes, and the HR policies and practices that subsequently affect their work outcomes, such as pay, promotion and performance appraisal ratings (see Lind and Tyler, 1988, for a review). Interactional justice refers to employees' perceived fairness in relation to the quality of the interpersonal interaction with which employees are treated by authority (Bies, 1987; Bies and Moag, 1986). Interactional justice is often further separated into interpersonal and informational justice. Interactional justice refers to employees' perceived fairness about the quality of interpersonal treatment that employees receive from authority (Bies, 1987; Bies and Moag, 1986). Interactional justice is often further separated into interpersonal and informational justice. Interpersonal justice is the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity and respect by authorities (e.g. supervisors or managers) or third parties (e.g. human resource managers) involved in executing procedures or determining outcomes, and informational justice refers to the explanations provided to people that convey information about why certain procedures were used or why outcomes were distributed in a certain way (Bies and Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001; Tyler and Lind, 1992).

Though these OJ typologies concern fairness in organizations, the mainstream OJ research refers to these typologies as employees' perceived fairness regarding past events (i.e. outcomes, procedures and treatments) rather than using OJ principles to create fairer future events (Hosmer and Kiewitz, 2005; Shapiro and Brett, 2005). In particular, the business ethics/OJ scholars (Bies and Tripp, 1995; Fortin and Fellenz, 2008; Hosmer and Kiewitz, 2005) raise concerns that a focus on the fairness of past events would inevitably offer managers greater power and control over managing past unjust events in the workplace. For instance, they argue that managers can overpower employees in the course of communication about past unjust events; use their power status to prevent employees from raising their concerns about unjust events; or even subtly normalize employees' fairness perceptions by constructing symbols, languages and practices to make unjust events seem just (Bies and Tripp, 1995; Fortin and Fellenz, 2008). In this way, organizations, which perpetrate unjust events (e.g. inequality in gender pay and racial discrimination) can potentially be viewed as moral and just organizations (Fortin and Fellenz, 2008; Watson, 2003). Furthermore, Atkinson (1999) argues that mere partnership and empowerment is insufficient to genuinely empower those in lower power status in a societal/historical context. Often, empowerment communication without a conscious intervention can form an “internalised self-censorship (i.e. silence)” of those in a status of inferior power relationships to those in authority (p. 67).

This phenomenon can be exacerbated in heterogeneous workplaces where there is a presence of minority group members who have often experienced additional exploitative factors such as being historically marginalized in a social system (DiTomaso et al., 2007). In particular, the structural characteristics of power and status differences between majority and minority groups in organizations often determine the “group dynamics of who talks to whom, who notices whom, who favors whom” and “who gets access to organizational decision-making processes” in such a way that the higher status, majority group members can maintain their hierarchical social relationships. The lower status,
minority group members then perceive workplace inequality as a system not to be challenged (DiTomaso et al., 2007, p. 475; Jost et al., 2004; Ridgeway, 1991; Sidanius et al., 2006).

In order to ensure workplace fairness within diverse organizations, therefore, we argue that proactive, OJ-based diversity management is necessary. In order to counteract the lack of OJ implementation in diverse organizations, we introduce the new term pre-informational justice to refer to a proactive, OJ-based decision-making process amongst diverse stakeholders which is designed to reflexively establish actual OJ rather than allowing for ambivalent perceptions of OJ in diverse organizations.

In the next section, we develop the Diversity Justice Management Model by integrating OJ typologies and theories into diversity management processes and outcomes.

**Diversity Justice Management Model**

This section establishes the Diversity Justice Management Model (see Figure 1), which encompasses the following five dimensions:

1. diversity-oriented work events;
2. OJ as a mediator of the link between diversity-oriented work events and outcomes;
3. pre-informational justice as a moderator of the link between diversity-oriented work effects and outcomes;
4. OJ-referent outcomes; and
5. diversity-referent work outcomes.

System-referent, supervisory-referent and person-referent outcomes, as shown in the model, are predicted to interrelate with one another. For example, an employee who perceives the promotion procedure as unfair will distrust the organization (system-referent). In the event that the supervisor decides not to promote this employee, the distrust of the organization (system-referent) is reinforced and, moreover, distrust will be developed toward the supervisor (supervisor-referent). Simultaneously, the employee will be dissatisfied with the promotion decision (person-referent). The combination of system-referent, supervisory-referent and person-referent outcomes is predicted to produce the overall work outcomes (see Figure 1).

By linking the OJ-referent outcomes to diversity-referent outcomes, work outcomes can be further categorized into affective, behavioral and cognitive outcomes (see Figure 1). Justice perceptions are found to influence affective outcomes such as:

- organizational/supervisory commitment, trust, anxiety, stress, perceived support and inclusion (Cropanzano et al., 2001;Cropanzano and Prehar, 1999; Folger and Konovsky, 1989; Masterson et al., 2000; Rhodes and Eisenberger, 2002);
- behavioral outcomes such as communication integration and organizational citizenship behaviors (Niehoff and Moorman, 1993); and
- cognitive outcomes such as job performance, knowledge and problem-solving skills (Adams, 1965; Byrne and Cropanzano, 2001;Lind et al., 1990).

In order to present the importance of OJ-based diversity management processes and outcomes, we first categorize diversity-oriented work events based upon OJ typologies. Next, based upon past workplace diversity research, we present key propositions regarding the mediating effect of OJ (i.e. distributive justice, procedural, and interactional justice) on OJ-referent and diversity-referent work outcomes. We further delineate the proposition regarding the moderating role of pre-informational justice based upon a business ethics view and the socio-psychological theories of OJ.
Diversity-oriented work events

In order to assess the effectiveness of managing diversity for “actual” OJ, we classify diversity-oriented work events into diversity-oriented distributive events, diversity-oriented procedural events, and diversity-oriented interactional events (see Figure 1). These events refer to employees' heuristic experiences of diversity-oriented work incidents, which tend to establish their fairness judgment about their organizations and the trustworthiness of their supervisors and managers (see Lind, 2001; Van den Bos et al., 2001).

Based on distributive justice, we propose the term diversity-oriented distributive events to refer to intergroup comparison of any work outcomes amongst different social groups, such as comparative pay, promotion and recognition (e.g. women versus men; minority race versus majority race). Based on procedural justice, we propose the term diversity-oriented procedural events to refer to the experience of diverse employees of how their work outcomes (e.g. pay and performance rating) have been influenced by the authority's decision-making processes and the execution of the organization's diversity-related policies and practices (e.g. equal employment opportunity, affirmative action policies, reward and performance appraisal systems). Based on interactional justice, we propose the term diversity-oriented interactional events to refer to the interpersonal or intergroup encounters between supervisors and workers, and between co-workers from different social backgrounds, which include both the treatment and justification or communication process pertaining to diversity-oriented procedural events.

Organizational justice as a mediator of diversity effects

Needless to say, employees' heuristic experience of each diversity-oriented event (i.e. procedural, distributive and interactional event) would lead to the potential fulfillment or violation of procedural, distributive and interactional justice which, in turn, would influence individuals' socio-psychological processes in ways that facilitate either positive or negative work outcomes such as organizational commitment and work satisfaction. For this reason, our model predicts that OJ will mediate the relationship between diversity-oriented events and OJ-referent outcomes. The mediational effects of OJ (i.e. distributive, procedural and interactional justice) between diversity-oriented work events and OJ-referent outcomes are discussed next.

Mediational effect of distributive justice

Research findings and discrimination claims repeatedly reveal that, compared to members of majority groups, minority group members suffer more discrimination by organizations in relation to fair work outcomes such as hiring and promotion (AHRC, 2009; CMI, 2010; EEOC, 2010; Greenhaus et al., 1990; Pelled, 1996; Roberson and Stevens, 2006; Wooten and James, 2004). Even when minority group members are recruited under AA and EEO regulations, organizations fail to retain and promote minority group members, such as women and employees from ethnic minorities, to higher organizational status (Castilla, 2005; Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990). Furthermore, research findings report that women and racial minorities tend to earn less than the mainstream workers at all levels, even when holding similar job qualifications (Brief, 1998; CMI, 2010; Friedman and Krackhardt, 1997; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), 2008). For example, despite equal work participation by women and men in recent years in Australia, women's progression to the managerial level (29.8 percent) is still significantly less than men's (71.2 percent) (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, 2009). Therefore, these findings clearly demonstrate that minority group members often experience violations of distributive justice in diverse organizations.

Organizational justice scholars have shown that distributive justice is the best predictor of person-referent outcomes such as one's satisfaction with one's pay rise and promotion (Lind and Tyler, 1988).
For this reason, perceived injustice in relation to diversity-related distribution is predicted to mediate the relationship between the minority's diversity-oriented distributive work events and person-referent outcomes (see Figure 1). Thus, we propose that:

P1. The relationship between minority group members' experience of diversity-oriented distributive work events and person-referent outcomes such as satisfaction with pay and promotion will be mediated by their perceptions of distributive justice.

Mediational effect of procedural justice

Social inference theory (Tyler and Cain, 1981) and theories of interdependence (Thilbaut and Kelley, 1959) suggest that individuals use their perceptions of the fairness of policies to determine the fairness of the organizations that produce those policies. These judgments, in turn, determine whether individuals will want to interact with an organization in the future (Cropanzano et al., 2001). Unfortunately, the evidence is replete with ambivalent HR and diversity policies, practices and programs in organizations, potentially contributing to employees' perceived injustice toward the organizations that use those policies (Cropanzano and Wright, 2003; Lynch, 2002; Roberson and Stevens, 2006). Several studies imply that formal HR procedures (e.g. hiring and promotion processes) are often infused with bias, in-group favoritism, and the decision-makers' subjective filtering processes (e.g. Cox, 2001; Heneman et al., 1996; Lyness and Heilman, 2006; Powell and Butterfield, 1994). Research indicates that a minority employee with multiple social identities (e.g. race, gender and social class) tends to experience compounded employment barriers (Pager et al., 2009; Poster, 2008). For example, even if a diversity initiative is in place to recruit racially-diverse candidates (e.g. use of greater advertising efforts to attract minority races), the decision-makers' social class bias would still lead to systematic exclusion of racial minority candidates who tend to hold lower social class status than racial majority members (Heneman et al., 1996; Powell, 1987).

OJ scholars have shown that people's perceptions of procedural justice produce more system referent (organizational) outcomes such as higher organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors beneficial to the organization (Lind and Tyler, 1988; Masterson et al., 2000). Therefore, we propose that perceived procedural justice mediates the relationship between minority employees' diversity-oriented procedural events and system-referent (organizational) outcomes, such as organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors (Lind and Tyler, 1988; Masterson et al., 2000). This leads to the following propositions:

P2. The relationship between minority group members' experience of diversity-oriented procedural events and system-referent outcomes, such as organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors, will be mediated by their perceptions of procedural fairness.

Mediational effect of interactional justice

A recent study by Roberson and Stevens (2006) confirms that minority experiences of management's mistreatment and poor work relationships are the most commonly-reported negative diversity-oriented events. The past research also supports this finding such as black women valuing greater dignity and respect than the rest of employees in studied organizations (Simpson and Kaminski, 2007); racial/ethnic minority members feeling victimized by racial or cultural jokes (Korn/Ferry International and Columbia Business School, 1998), racial/ethnic minority employees receiving unequal turns in communication within culturally-diverse workgroups (Oetzel, 1998); and low-status employees producing greater workplace deviant behaviors than high-status employees due to their perceived interactional injustice (Aquino et al., 2004).

Further, diversity-oriented informational events (justification of diversity programs and management decisions) are also apparent in the workforce diversity literature (Gopinath and Becker, 2000). For example, Singer (1992) found that when an appropriate justification of affirmative action (AA) was
provided for preferential treatment, individuals from different ethnic backgrounds (European and Asian) responded more positively to the AA procedure. A study by Richard and Kirby (1999) shows that an unjustified diversity program produced negative general attitudes from African-Americans even when they experienced a positive distributive outcome (i.e. being hired through the program). These findings indicate the importance of the justification process expressed by managers for selected diversity programs, policies and practices.

Justice scholars have demonstrated that interactional justice is the best predictor of supervisory-referent outcomes such as commitment to one's supervisor and citizenship behaviors that are beneficial to the supervisor (Maltesta and Bryne, 1997). Based upon the social justice literature, an interactional fairness judgment is made about other parties who interact with people in the organization such as immediate co-workers (Mill, 1961a,b). Hence, we propose that minority employees' perceive interactional injustice mediates the relationship between their diversity-oriented interactional events and the supervisory-referent and co-worker-referent outcomes (see Figure 1). Thus, we propose that:

P3. The relationship between minority group members' experience of diversity-oriented interactional events and supervisor/co-worker commitment will be mediated by their perceptions of interactional justice.

In the next section, we propose that the pre-informational justice, or OJ-based decision-making process amongst diverse stakeholders, will moderate the relationship between minority group members' diversity incidents and diversity-referent affective, behavioral and cognitive outcomes. In particular, we propose that its intervention will reduce negative affective and behavioral outcomes of workforce diversity, such as minority group members' low organizational commitment, high turnover and absenteeism.

Moderating effect of pre-informational justice

In the pursuit of establishing fairer work events, some diversity scholars claim that the diversity management process needs to incorporate the full range of perceptions, knowledge, identities, practices, and power relations in a workplace, taking a bottom-up instead of top-down diversity management approach (Humphries and Grice, 1995; Jones and Stablein, 2006). Notably, Roberson and Stevens' (2006) study has also revealed that discrimination claims are often derived from one's negative experience in relation to others' behaviors such as a disrespectful work relationship, or management's mistreatment and unfair decision-making processes, rather than the kind of HR policies, practices or programs per se. In a similar vein, we posit that the decision-making process amongst diversity stakeholders (i.e. minority members, majority members and key decision-makers) in relation to fairness of diversity-oriented work events is a critical process of creating fairer diverse organizations.

The justice-based principles identified for the decision-making process are derived from the literature on distributional justice, procedural justice and interactional justice. These OJ principles would objectively help decision-makers to address the fairness of diversity-oriented work events. We propose that OJ principles would be implemented when each event (i.e. procedural, interactional and distributional) is talked through in advance with key diversity stakeholders. Concerning a business ethics view of OJ which emphasizes the importance of considering stakeholders' welfare in creating moral organizations (Hosmer and Kiewitz, 2005; Werhane and Freeman, 1999), and minimizes authoritative power over employees' fairness perceptions about the past events (Fortin and Fellenz, 2008), we propose an OJ-based decision-making process in which those assigned with the responsibility of diversity management (e.g. diversity managers and diversity committees) heuristically establish justice-based work events in systematic consultation with diversity stakeholders. The participation and involvement of diversity stakeholders in managing diversity (to enhance the fairness of diversity-oriented work events) can serve as an objective benchmarking
process for the fairness of work events and enhancing fairness in future work events (Fortin and Fellenz, 2008; Hosmer and Kiewitz, 2005).

In the following sections, we justify the importance of pre-informational justice by applying the key principles drawn from socio-psychological theories of OJ, namely, the referent cognitions theory/fairness theory (Folger, 1986; Folger and Cropanzano, 2001), and the fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001) to the OJ-based decision-making process.

**Referent cognitions theory/fairness theory: involvement of diversity stakeholders**

According to Referent Cognitions Theory/Fairness Theory (Folger, 1986; Folger and Cropanzano, 2001), perceived unfairness results from individual beliefs that more favorable outcomes would have resulted from an alternative procedure that should have been used (Cropanzano et al., 2001). The theory also highlights the individual belief that there is one accountable (e.g. one supervisor, one organization) for the procedures and this person/organization could have executed alternative procedures. This theory integrates procedural justice and distributive justice, holding decision-makers accountable for the final outcome. In particular, fairness theory states that social justice occurs when a person can hold someone accountable for the situation in which their economic or psychological well-being has been threatened (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998, 2001). In order to define events as unjust, the fairness theory states that:

- unfavorable conditions must be present in the “eyes of the victim” in terms of a discrepancy between the actual events (i.e. distributive event, procedural event, and interactional event) and the perceived alternatives to the events;
- one must “determine who is accountable” for the injustice. The one accountable could be a juristic person (the organization), a supervisor, or a third party (e.g. diversity consultant, HR manager); and
- there was unethical interpersonal treatment such as racist comments, violence or sexual harassment.

Notably, Freeman (1984), who laid the foundation for stakeholder theory, posits that stakeholders include those “affecting” (primary stakeholders) and those “affected” (secondary stakeholders). Therefore, we posit that the likelihood of diversity management achieving its fairness objectives will depend on the extent to which organizations foster diversity stakeholders’ involvement and participation (i.e. managers and HR managers as potential primary stakeholders, and minority and majority employees as potential secondary stakeholders) in the establishment of fair work incidents.

**Fairness heuristic theory: heuristic formation of diversity-oriented events**

Given the “fundamental social dilemma” (Lind, 2001), that is, individuals submitting to an authority make themselves open to the possibility of exploitation and rejection, Van den Bos et al. (2001) attempted to organize individuals' heuristic fairness judgment process into three stages. In the pre-formation stage, individuals gather information about the trustworthiness of the authority. In the formation stage, individuals seek information about their inclusion or exclusion in the workplace. In the post-formation phase, the perceived fairness judgment about the group and the authority has been formed, resulting in a heuristic framework that generates automatic responses (positive or negative) to subsequent events. As briefly discussed under the diversity-oriented work events, fairness heuristic theory reveals the tendency of individuals to make fairness judgments from the information “readily” available (Cropanzano et al., 2001). The fairness heuristic theory is, therefore, particularly relevant to our proposal for an OJ-based decision-making process for managing diversity, as it implies the need for organizations to consider communication strategies for the fairness formation of future diversity-oriented events (i.e. procedural, interactional, and distributive events).
Moreover, some research in OJ indicates that individuals tend to gather information about the trustworthiness of authority and the fairness of past events by exchanging opinions and gathering information amongst colleagues who are close to them and those having similar justice perceptions concerning past work events (Brass et al., 2004; Lind and Tyler, 1988; Van den Bos et al., 2001). In a workforce where diverse employees tend to affiliate with those with similar attributes (e.g. race, gender and hierarchical status) and similar justice perceptions, such accounts further signify the importance of involving diverse stakeholders, which intentionally breaks homogeneous justice perceptions to objectively create fairer work events in the future.

Thus, to establish fairness in managing the diversity process, authorities need to:

- establish or re-establish their trustworthiness through decision-making strategies about future outcomes, procedures and treatment with minority and majority employees; and
- facilitate communication integration among diversity stakeholders in establishing fairer diversity-oriented work events in the future.

The justice-based decision criteria that decision-makers need to consider align with the event type. The decision criteria, based upon diversity/organizational justice, refer to the fulfillment of OJ in each diversity-oriented event. In other words, a diversity-oriented distributive event requires the fulfillment of distributive justice, whereas a diversity-oriented procedural event requires the fulfillment of procedural justice. Likewise, a diversity-oriented interactional event requires the fulfillment of interactional justice, including informational justice and interpersonal justice. Thus, the remaining key propositions contained in the model (see Figure 1) are as follows:

P4. Diversity-oriented distributive events that incorporate distributive justice criteria will lead to higher levels of diversity referent outcomes relating to satisfaction in job performance, knowledge and problem-solving skills than diversity-oriented distributive events that do not incorporate distributive justice criteria.

P5. Diversity-oriented procedural events that incorporate procedural justice criteria will lead to higher levels of diversity referent outcomes relating to organizational commitment, trust and organizational citizenship behaviors than diversity-oriented procedural events that do not incorporate procedural justice criteria.

P6. Diversity-oriented interactional events that incorporate interactional justice criteria will lead to higher levels of diversity referent outcomes relating to commitment to one's supervisor and more organizational citizenship behaviors than diversity-oriented interactional events that do not incorporate interactional justice criteria.

As all diversity-oriented events become fairer through OJ-based interactive decision-making sessions amongst diversity stakeholders, we contend that the diversity-oriented work events will be seen to be fairer through the eyes of diverse employees including minority and majority group members. The social justice literature from the sociology scholarship also supports our line of argument by claiming that justice is about “the flourishing of all members of the community” (Finnis, 1980, p. 174), respecting others' happiness (Mill, 1961a,b), respectful reasoning to pursue a collective will (Kant, 1983), freedom of speech regardless of members' social status or position (Rawls, 1971), fostering social relationships (St Thomas Aquinas, 1964), and it is to be debated by groups of people with others consciousness (Plato, 1951). As the social justice research collectively stresses the importance of the justice-based social relationships for ensuring others' freedom and dignity, this scholarship accentuates the importance of justice-based decision making processes amongst diverse stakeholders. Social justice scholarship promotes consideration of what justice may mean in a variety of social and historical contexts (Coperheart and Dragan, 2007). In order to practice justice-based diversity management in a workplace, therefore, we contend that connections, communication and discussion amongst stakeholders in a diverse workplace are necessary interventions.
Based upon the socio-psychological theories of justice discussed above, we propose the final proposition:

P7. Pre-informational justice (i.e. justice-based decision-making process amongst diverse stakeholders) will produce fairer diversity oriented events, greater employee-perceived fairness and better work outcomes than in the absence of pre-informational justice.

Conclusion

Given the fact that organizations are struggling with the development of policies that promote a fair and socially-inclusive workplace (Prasad et al., 2006a,b), there is an urgent need to deliver evidence-based guidelines to organizations which enable them to successfully address this organizational and social imperative within the increasingly diverse workforce. In this article, we integrate organizational justice typologies and key theories with the workforce diversity literature in order to explicitly include normative organizational justice principles or criteria in conceptualizations of diversity justice management. The resulting model of diversity justice management provides an important theoretical and practical tool for establishing more socially responsible and just organizations as discussed below.

Theoretical contributions

This article makes a theoretical contribution to the integration of OJ typologies and theories into workforce diversity research. In particular, diversity-oriented work events are established based upon OJ typologies, the mediational effects of OJ are proposed by referring to past workforce diversity studies, and the moderational effects of pre-informational justice are proposed based on a business ethics view and the socio-psychological theories of OJ. The resulting Diversity Justice Management Model links these dimensions by relating its effects to OJ-referent and diversity-referent outcomes.

By considering pervasive workforce discrimination, a key contribution this paper makes to workforce diversity and OJ literature is its treatment of informational justice. To date, most of the informational justice literature concentrates on how agents “react” to, or gives accounts of the fairness of past work experience of employees. We argue that informational justice should not be treated as a mere reaction to employees' possible perceived unfairness of past events. Rather, a “proactive” communication management strategy should ensure that fairness of work events is created through accountable communication or decision-making processes amongst diversity stakeholders. Thus, the additional typology of OJ, pre-informational justice, is introduced.

Last, a number of scholars have criticised the phrase “diversity management” (Jones, 2004; Humphries and Grice, 1995; Liff, 1999; Lorbiecki and Jack, 2000). The critical discourse analysis of linguistics, for instance, provides a socio-political interpretation of the phrase (Fairclough, 1992), inferring there is a power difference between “those who are diverse (i.e. diversity)” and “those who manage (i.e. authorities)”. It advocates that the discourse of diversity management could, if not treated carefully, be subsumed under the assumption that diversity is to be managed through the one-sided lens of economically and politically-privileged group members (Lorbiecki and Jack, 2000). This assumption, unfortunately, reflects the large status demarcations in organizations and society and the fostering of homogeneous politically-privileged authority. By incorporating justice principles into the concept of diversity management, this paper attempts to address these criticisms.

Practical implications

Diverse employees' negative affective and behavioral responses are the likely outcome of perceived unfairness of work events (Cropanzano et al., 2001). We propose that a proactive and continuous decision-making process with diversity stakeholders (i.e. majority and minority employees, authorities and HR managers) in relation to diversity-oriented work events will reduce unnecessary costs
associated with employees' perceived unfairness in a workplace. By implementing an OJ-based
decision-making process with diversity stakeholders, organizations will be able to engage in a
continuous improvement process in relation to their effort to establish an OJ-based workplace.

Researchers and practitioners concur that, first and foremost, senior management needs to have an
open mindset toward diversity, and a vision and commitment to ensure that the organization executes
justice-based diversity events to fully utilize the diverse knowledge, skills and talents of the workforce
(see Cox, 2002; Gilbert and Ivancevich, 2000; Guillory, 2002; Thomas, 2001; Thomas and Ely,
2001). Furthermore, Kalev and Dobbin's (2006) study on efficacy of diversity policies and practices
has found that assigning specific responsibility in organizations over managing diversity (e.g.
diversity managers, diversity committees) is the key to successful implementation of diversity policies
and practices.

Thus, we contend that management vision and specific structural accountability for fairness of work
incidents will foster the formation and implementation of OJ-based diversity management processes
and, in turn, create fairer diverse organizations. Senior management support for incorporating OJ into
managing diversity is crucial because the managers have the decision-making authority to make
diversity justice part of the organization's key philosophy and strategy. They can also allocate
resources (e.g. time, finances and human resources) to diversity justice management processes as a
strategic approach to empowering a diverse workforce (Arredondo, 1996; Gilbert and Ivancevich,
2000). For instance, senior managers can establish monthly focus groups to openly discuss issues
related to diversity-oriented distributive, procedural and interactional work events. An open invitation
to everyone interested can be issued so that anyone who wants to discuss diversity incidents is
welcome to attend the meeting, share their experience and make suggestions for new diversity
initiatives. The information exchanged in the focus groups would then be taken up by the managers
assigned the responsibility to continuously improve diversity management efforts based upon
employees' contributions.

The Diversity Justice Management Model introduced in this paper provides OJ-based guidelines for
managers to ensure that OJ can be objectively benchmarked and discussed amongst diversity
stakeholders to continuously improve actual and perceived OJ outcomes. By enhancing OJ-based
work events in diverse organizations, minority group members will experience less work
discrimination and unfairness. We contend that an OJ-based decision-making process will serve as a
critical aspect of diversity management, which ultimately, will encourage the positive effects of
workforce diversity.

As discussed above, the proposed model of diversity justice management provides an important
theoretical and practical tool for establishing more socially responsible and just organizations.
Ultimately, the realization of actual and perceived fairness depends upon the extent to which a justice-
based decision-making process is present or absent in an organization, and relies heavily on the
presence of justice responsive managers (Fortin and Fellenz, 2008). We have not tested the conceptual
framework of the Diversity Justice Management Model, and recommend future research to take up the
challenge. The payoff for doing so is to enable the establishment of socially responsible workplaces
where individuals, regardless of their background, are given an equal opportunity to flourish in their
assigned jobs.
Figure 1 Diversity justice management model

Table I Managerial/professional occupation ratio by race in comparison with employment and population ratio by race in the US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Employment in managerial/professional occupations (%)</th>
<th>Employment (%)</th>
<th>Population (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglo American</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>72.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino American</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: US Department of Labor (2010); US Census Bureau (2010)

References


Freeman, R.E. (1984), Strategic Management: Stakeholder Approach, Pitman/Ballinger, Boston, MA.


Kant, I. (1983), Perpetual Peace and Other Essays, Hackett, Indianapolis, IN, .


Further Reading


Copeland, L. (1988), "Valuing diversity: making the most of cultural differences at the workplace", Personnel, Vol. 65 No.6, pp.52-60.


