ABSTRACT

Experts generally agree that workforce diversity can produce positive outcome such as novel and diverse ideas. However, research evidence indicates that workforce diversity can lead to undesirable outcomes as well. For example, research indicates that performance of a sample of managers was lower when assigned to a group with diverse backgrounds. Another research finding suggests that, while performance of some women is higher in a mix-sex group than in same-sex group, men's performance is higher in an all-male group. Another study found that men in a diverse workgroup have lower job satisfaction and commitment than their counterparts in a homogenous workgroup. The main purpose of this paper is to put forward an analytical framework that can help to explain diverse employees' behaviour in organization. The framework yields research and practical implications for managing diversity.

TOWARDS EXPLAINING DIVERSE EMPLOYEES' BEHAVIOR IN AN

ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING

Many researchers and practitioners agree that workforce diversity can produce

positive outcomes (eg Copeland, 1988; 1988a; Cox, 1991; Cox and Blake, 1991;

Fitzsimmons and Eyring, 1993; Heery, 1994; Jackson, LaFasto, Schultz, & Kelley.

1992; Maruyama, 1994; McNerney, 1994a; 1994b; Powell, 1998; Stephenson and

Krebs, 1993 Thomas, 1990; 1993; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992; Tung, 1993). In spite of

this optimism, the relationship between workforce diversity and positive outcome is

not always as clear as it seems (Richard, 2000). For example, research indicates that

performance of a sample of managers was lower when assigned to a group with

diverse backgrounds (Earley, 1993). Similarly, evidence suggests, while

performance of some women is higher in a mix-sex group than in same-sex group,

men's performance is higher in an all-male group (Wood, 1987). Another study

found that men in a diverse workgroup have lower job satisfaction and commitment

than their counterparts in a homogenous workgroup (Tsui, et al 1992). Similarly,

evidence associates workforce heterogeneity with management turnover (Wiersema

and Bird, 1993), health problems, and lower productivity (James, et al 1994;

Kasschau, 1977). In a study of the impact of diversity on organizational

performance, Richard (2000: 171) reported, "The results demonstrate that the

positive impact of racial diversity on firm performance has to do with context. In

the absence of consideration of context, a negative relationship between cultural

diversity and firm outcomes may emerge. Diversity can increase coordination cost,

and the leaders of no growth or negative growth firms should be particularly aware

of the performance implications of a clash between diversity and downsizing.   In sum, the same resources that offer some firms competitive advantage can be a performance detriment to others".

On the other hand, demographic similarity can engender to group solidarity and greater integration and interpersonal communication (Back, 1959; Lott and Lott, 1961). In fact cross-cultural studies revealed that similarity leads to reduction in uncertainty and anxiety, and generates reciprocal feelings (Bobad and Wallbott, 1986; Brewer and Campbell, 1976), which are essential for job satisfaction and employee productivity. The greater the difference between two cultures the more difficult it would be for people to interact effectively with one another (Black, Mendenhall & Oddu, 1991) and empirical evidence generally confirmed this view (Babiker, Cox & Miller, 1980; Gudykunst, 1985). Also, research evidence revealed that cultural similarity generates reciprocal feelings and that people who are similar culturally tend to like each other (Brewer and Campbell, 1976). And differences in values and beliefs can generate discrimination against out-groups (Fernandez, 1981; Greenberg, Pyszczynski & Solomon, 1986; Katz and Hass, 1988).

The case for diversity has been made for many reasons, not least for its strategic contribution to organizational competitiveness (Cox, 1991; Cox and Blake, 1991; Powell, 1998; Maruyama, 1994). The strategic importance of diversity has been interpreted in terms of specific qualities, which diverse employees can provide. Typical of such inputs are novel ideas, taking on extra responsibilities by virtue of

diverse employees' "unique" backgrounds. Arguably, these inputs fall into the category of extra-role behaviour. Behaviour that can sometimes be described as *beyond the call of duty.* Indeed Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch (1994) argued that extra-role behaviour (Organisational Citizenship Behaviour) is underlined by the importance of organizational innovation, flexibility, productivity and responsiveness to changing external conditions. And extra-role behaviour has been argued to be critical for organisational effectiveness because managers cannot foresee all the contingencies that may desire employees to perform (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). In a recent article Brickson (2000: 82) argued "Our understanding of the underlying processes that leads to positive or negative results *in a diverse setting*, however, remains extremely limited. What we lack is a strong theoretical framework…"

In the light of the conflicting outcomes of diversity and the growing need for theoretical development on the topic, this paper puts forward an analytical framework that can improve our understanding of the issue. The key question this paper hopes to address is: Given that extra-role behaviour is one of the main desirable outcomes from a diverse workforce, what would influence a diverse employee to engaged in extra-role behaviour? To achieve this objective, a multidisciplinary approach will be adopted. The literature on social exchange theory and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) will guide our quest for answer to the question of *why diversity does not always achieve desired outcomes*. The two theories will help to explain why and how diverse employees would respond to how they are treated by the organization and its members.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Although organizational practice can influence employees' commitment and OCB, current theories do not adequately explain the relationship between diverse employees' affective commitment and their OCB. We believe social *exchange theory* and the idea of *integration*, provide building blocks for developing a framework that can help to explain how organisational practices and dominant groups' attitudes and behaviour towards diverse employees relate to commitment and OCB. We believe the framework will throw more light on why a diverse employee would not engage in extra-role behaviour. Similarly, it offers a partial explanation to why diverse workforce does not always lead to desirable outcomes. This is simply because personal and organisational factors can hinder diverse employees' integration and commitment, which are essential for desirable outcomes such as OCB. In the following sections we define and analyse the relevant theories and concepts that inform our analytical framework.

Figure 1 illustrates the factors that can influence diverse employees' extra-role behaviour in a work setting. We propose that diverse employees' level of *integration* in the workplace will depend on *organizational factors* and *employee factors*. *Integration* is defined in terms of diverse employees' perception and feelings of fairness, belonging, inclusion, respected and freedom to behave normally. Using social exchange theory, we argue that diverse employees who have positive perception and feeling of *integration* would reciprocate by *moral* and *affective commitment* to their

organization. In fact Hicks-Clarke and Iles (2000) found that perception of organisational justice strongly predicts organizational commitment. And research by Singh (1998) suggests that when employees feel that they are treated unfairly, their foundation of future psychological contract change. Such employees are more likely to be concerned primarily with their personal wellbeing. It has being argued that committed employees work harder and better because organizational commitment is a measure of their psychological state, which is important in determining their subsequent behaviour and responses at work (Etzioni, 1964; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Singh, 1998). Therefore, in line with research evidences (Morrison, 1994; Schwartz & Tessler, 1992; Tsui et al 1997), we posit that a diverse employees' moral and affective commitment will ultimately influence their organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

Background

Diversity: In its basic form, diversity refers to the variety of gender, age, race and cultural backgrounds of employees in the workplace. However, McNerney (1994a) argues that workforce diversity includes sexual orientation, physical disability, attitudes, work styles and functional roles. Similarly, Laudicina (1993) includes educational level and socio-economic status as some of the elements that constitutes workforce diversity. Similarly, Jackson et al (1992) includes other categories of employees such as retirees and contract workers as part of workforce diversity. Diversity has also been conceptualised to include psychological backgrounds (Mamman, 1996) and multiple suppliers and stakeholders who can impact positively or negatively on the performance of the organization (Kramar, 1998). In this paper *workforce diversity* is conceptualised as the diversity of employees' demographic (eg sex and age) socio-cultural (eg culture and subculture), psychological (eg personality) backgrounds and work related *qualities* (eg education, skills, occupation/profession), which have the potential to add value to organizational activities. This paper does not concentrate on select attributes of the workforce (Blau, 1977; O'Reilly et al 1989); instead it takes the view that most individual characteristics can be relevant to employee performance and integration in an organizational setting (Kramer, 1993). As Lau and Murninghan (1998: 326) pointed out "examining only a single demographic attributes or set of attributes singly may cause analysts to miss the potential impact of other attributes or their interactions". And taking a broader perspective of the concept is necessary for capturing the strategic significance of workforce diversity. And the broader perspective helps to

capture the essence of what being different means to employees and how the organization can utilizes the differences in a strategic sense.

Social exchange theory

According to Blau (1964) social exchange is a relationship that is based on unspecified future obligations. And such exchange does not occur on a quid pro quo basis. Holmes (1981) also argued that social exchange entails trust between parties in the exchange believing that each will discharge their obligations in the long run. Blau (1964) posit that trust, commitment, and loyalty are the bedrock of social exchange without which the exchange will not take place. Other writers who subscribe to many versions of exchange theory include Goodman (1974), Adams (1963), Homans (1974) and Jacques (1961). I believe social exchange theory provides a means of understanding how diverse employees will react to how they are treated by the organization and its members. When a diverse employee joins an organization, explicit and implicit contracts are involved. The former relates to specific exchange such as hours of work for specific amount of money ie economic exchange (Blau, 1964). The latter is a social exchange (Blau, 1964) based on unspecified obligation such as extra-role behaviour in return for organizational support, recognition and protection (Rousseau, 1989). As Rousseau and Parks (1993) pointed out, relational psychological contract entails open ended and long-term obligations based on exchange of socio-emotional elements such as loyalty and support. Although the relationship is not based on quid pro quo, failure to meet the obligation will provoke reciprocation. Indeed, many researchers have indicated that

when employees feel that they are unfairly treated by the organization, they exhibit lower organizational commitment, decreased work effort and higher turnover (Brockner, Tyler, & Cooper-Schneider, 1992; Sign, 1998). Therefore, failure to provide a diverse employee with the support and protection needed when discriminated against or harassed could result in withdrawal from OCB.

Description of OCB

According to Organ (1988), OCB is a constructive behaviour that is not rewarded explicitly and they fall outside the employee's job description. Also employees do not receive training in order to exhibit OCB. OCB is argued to be critical to organizational functioning because organizations can no longer rely on blueprints of prescribed behaviour (Katz, 1964). Graham (1989) put forward four dimensions of OCB. They are interpersonal helping; individual initiative in communication; personal industry beyond the call of duty; and promotion of organizational image to outsiders. Organ (1988) categorised OCB into *Altruism*, *Compliance*, *Sportsmanship*, *Courtesy*, and *Civic virtue*. *Altruism* refers to behaviours directed at helping co-workers. Why would a diverse employee who is harassed and discriminated against voluntarily help others? In fact, because of the employee's background, he/she might not have the opportunity to offer help. When such help is offered it might not be accepted or valued by some members of the organization. In fact research by Tsui et al (1992) and Greenhaus et al (1990) revealed that minority employees tend to be less psychologically committed and less satisfied with their career. Thus, diverse employees might not engage in OCB if organizations fail to provide the environment

for such behaviour to occur. Hence the relevance of organizational factor in influencing diverse employees' integration.

Compliance refers to employee's conscientiousness beyond enforceable expected standards. Van Dyne et al. (1994) used the term *obedience* to refer to similar behaviour ie adherence to organisational rules and policies. While employees do not always have much option but to comply with organizational rules, there are few situations when they can have the opportunity to choose between obedience and disobedience. In such situation, their level of affective and moral commitment would influence their decision. I posit that the higher their level of commitment the more likely that they will chose to obey organizational rules and vice-versa. As depicted in the framework, commitment is influenced by diverse employee's level of integration.

Sportsmanship is tolerance of inconveniences from the job (Organ, 1988). Many diverse employees as well as their counterparts in the dominant group are subjected to poor working conditions. The level of their affective and moral commitment to the organization would influence their tolerance of such inconveniences at work. In line with social exchange theory, it is the level of their integration that will influence their commitment to the organization. In other words, high level of integration will be reciprocated by affective and moral commitment, which would lead to tolerance of inconvenience in the workplace. If the inconvenience is in the form of prejudice or negative stereotype, the diverse employee would withhold OCB or withdraw

his/her service to the organization altogether (Elsass & Graves, 1997). However, if diverse employees are integrated and they feel part of a collective whole, they would tolerate other types of inconvenience such as unsociable working hours. Indeed Wiersema and Bird (1993) pointed out that the focus on shared group beliefs and the value attached to group affiliation and cooperation may encourage individual members to tolerate high levels of personal discomfort or alienation.

Courtesy refers to consulting others before making decisions that affects them. Like altruism, diverse employees' willingness to engage in courtesy would be influenced by the opportunity to do so. It would also depend on whether their effort to consult others is valued by the organization and its members. Being different, a diverse employee would have an added difficulty to gain the opportunity to consult and his/her consultation to be valued. Therefore, to ensure this dimension of OCB to occur, the employee has to be integrated and committed to the organization.

And finally, *Civic virtue* refers to the active participation in organization's affairs. Van Dyne et al (1994) used *Social Participation* to refer to the same thing. Active participation in organizational activities would be influenced by the diverse employee's affective and moral commitment, which is derived from his/her level of integration in the organization.   It is difficult to conceive a situation in which an alienated employee is actively participating in organizational affairs. For example, Elsass and Graves (1997) argued that diverse employees might experience low quality social exchange relationships leading to exclusion pattern of exchanges. The

authors cited research by Cox (1993) and Heilman (1983) which indicate that some

diverse employees contribute to group tasks at a lower level, make fewer influence

attempts, are less likely to be selected as leaders, and are less committed to group

outcomes. Another category of OCB put forward by Van Dyne et al (1994) is

Advocacy and Functional Participation. The former refers to innovative behaviour and

the later relates to volunteering. In both situations, employees' level of integration

and commitment is essential. It is perhaps important to note that some support for

Organ's and Dyne et al conceptualisations has been found (see MacKenzie et al 1991;

Van Dyne et al, 1994).

The Relevance of OCB to Diversity

 For the purpose of this paper, OCB is the preferred mode of behaviour not only

because organizations are increasingly focusing on proactive employee behaviour

(Organ, 1988), but also because there is a high possibility that diverse employees

would fail to engage in OCB. This is because the requirements for and difficulties in

eliciting OCB will be higher in a diverse workforce than in a homogenous one. And

there would be high potential for alienation and exclusion in a diverse workforce

that can hinder employees to engage in OCB. For example, Elsass and Graves (1997:

955) pointed out "racio-ethnic and gender differences in access to organizational

resources, including information or political contacts, may lead to the exclusion

pattern. Majority group members belong to informal networks that provide

information or other resources, but women and people of colour typically do not".

Another reason for the relevance of OCB is the difficulty (or impossibility) of

incorporating all the potential benefits of diverse backgrounds into a contract of employment and job description. For example, an organization cannot effectively incorporate innovative behaviour into a job description. Thus, OCB is an indicator of response to a successful social exchange between the diverse employee and the organization. I believe in-role behaviour (represented by explicit job description) will be inadequate to capture and assess the response of diverse employees who felt mistreated, discriminated and alienated by the organization and its members. This is because, due to lack of option, especially during high unemployment, diverse employees would continue to offer their service to the organization anyway, but concentrating on in-role behaviour only. However, when diverse employees are treated fairly, they would reciprocate by engaging in OCB (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Van Dyne et al 1994).

Indeed, explaining the theoretical basis for the relationship between OCB and distributive justice, Organ (1988; 1990) suggested that employees would respond to inequity and unfairness by decreasing the exhibition of OCB. In fact many researchers suggested that employee perception of procedural justice would influence OCB (Fahr, Podsakoff & Organ, 1990; Moorman, 1991; Moorman, Organ & Niehoff, 1991; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). And researchers have demonstrated empirically, that when employees feel they are treated well by their organization, they reciprocate by helping the organization and its members (Van Dyne et al 1994; Van Dyne & Ang, 1998). And empirical investigation by Sanchez and Brock (1996) found a strong correlation between perceived discrimination among Hispanic

employees and their organisational commitment. We believe voluntaristic behaviour (OCB) is more likely to be influenced by attitude than by explicit contract of employment. In other words, employees who behave because of their contract of employment are likely to do so irrespective of their attitude. Although doubt has been expressed regarding the efficacy of attitude (eg affective commitment) in influencing behaviour, recent meta-analytical study of 88 attitude-behaviour researches indicates that attitude can predict future behaviour (Kraus, 1995).

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTOR

Many organizational factors can impinge on employee productivity in a diverse workforce. In this section we highlight the following:

Breadth **and** *Depth* **of Workforce Diversity**

Breadth of diversity refers to the diversity of the workforce across the lateral structure (eg units, departments, functions) of the organization. *Depth* refers to the diversity of the workforce across the vertical structure (hierarchy) of the organization. As will be demonstrated shortly, both categories can influence diverse employees' level of integration. Researchers have argued that under-representation of women in organization is associated with increased performance pressure, isolation and stereotyped role (Ely, 1995; Kanter, 1977; Wharton, 1992). And researchers on organisational demography speculated that over-representation of men in high-status positions can reinforce the devaluation of women's jobs (Pfeffer, 1983; Ridgeway, 1998). Degree of workforce diversity is relevant because it can

determine the extent of social support for the diverse employee. And social support often moderates the effects of work stressors (Beehr et al 1990; George et al 1993; Kiremyers & Dougherty, 1988). But minorities face significant difficulties in gaining social and instrumental support in the work setting (Thomas & Alderfer, 1989) and that leads to failure in career advancement (Fernandez, 1991; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990).

Blau (1977) argues that demographic characteristics of the organization can influence the nature and pattern of interactions between members of the organization. Evidence indicates that demographic dissimilarity can lead to negatives outcomes such as low job satisfaction and commitment (Tsui, et al, 1992) and employee turnover (Wiersema and Bird, 1993). Similarly, evidence suggests that low level of heterogeneity (tokenism) can produce negative consequences to employee adjustment in a work setting (Blau, 1977; Kanter, 1977; 1990; Morrison et al, 1987; Pettigrew and Martin, 1987). Conversely, high level of heterogeneity, especially across the organizational hierarchy will provide role models and mentors, which can be important for diverse employees' adjustment (Horgan, 1989; Van Velsor and Hughes, 1990). It has been argued that in a cosmopolitan situation strangers are more likely to adjust easily because the majority of the population will be used to diversity (Gudykunst and Kim 1984). It can be argued therefore that the more diverse the workforce, the more likely that its members will be familiar with and tolerant of differences between people. Researchers have also found that current composition of the workforce can affect future levels of minority segregation (Perry

et al. 1994). Thus, low level of heterogeneity (tokenism) can produces negative outcomes (alienation and pressure), while "appropriate" level of heterogeneity will produce positive outcomes (inclusion and social networks) (Blau, 1977; Kanter, 1977).

> **Proposition**: Other things being equal, the higher the diversity across all structures of the organization the higher the level of diverse employee's integration would be.

Organizational and Job Design

That organizational structure and job design can influence employee integration has already been acknowledged (Kanter, 1977; 1990; Pettigrew and Martin, 1987). For example, job design and method of communication can enhance or diminish diverse employees' opportunity to interact with other employees. And the work context can influence employee's creative behaviour (Amabile, 1982; 1987; Amabile et al, 1990). Indeed Stone & Colella (1996: 373) argued "… systems that value standardisation and impersonalisation (eg bureaucratic system) may place disabled persons at a disadvantage relative to others because disabled individuals may be unable to comply with inflexible rules and procedures. Therefore, we predict that disabled persons will experience more obstacles to job performance and greater treatment related problems in bureaucratic organizations than in those organizations that value flexibility and personalisation".

The salience of an *in-group* preference diminishes with increase in inter-group interaction (Blum et al, 1994). And formal job ladders create "rational" mechanism that sustains gender segregation (Baron, et al, 1986; Charles, 1992; Konrad and Linnehan, F, 1995). In other words, organizations structured to encourage interaction are more likely to have employees who are integrated. For example, face-to-face communication is likely to breakdown cultural barriers than communication through memo or telephone and email. This is because face-to-face communication provides the parties the opportunity to understand each other and correct any misconception and misinformation regarding their backgrounds. Indeed experts have already encouraged organizations to design their jobs to ensure total integration of the workforce (Pettigrew and Martin, 1987). Perhaps the most significant attempt to theorise the relationship between organizational structure and diversity was by Shelley Brickson. Brickson (2000) argued that an atomised organisational structure in which individual's separation from others is more significant than their integration with others, organizational members will have to rely more and more on themselves than on network relationship or others for resources or information. And "When organizational structure is such that integration between groups is weaker than boundaries separating them, categorization is encouraged and individuals are apt to view themselves primarily in terms of their group membership" (Brickson, 2000: 90). Brickson is of the view that demographic distinctions may be more consequential in organizations that activate a collective identity orientation. The author maintained that "Relational identity orientation will be promoted by an organizational structure emphasizing dense and

integrated networks of relationships… and dense and integrated networks will reduce categorization tendencies. They will make it less likely that individuals see themselves as members of distinct groups and will increase the extent to which individuals view themselves as relationship partners" (pp 92).

Literature on expatriate adjustment indicates that the level of interpersonal contact can influence adjustment in a new setting (Adler, 1991; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985). Some jobs require constant interaction with members of the organization (e.g. managerial and supervisory jobs) while others do not (eg Laboratory Researchers). Level of employee integration in a diverse workforce will be critical to employee productivity especially if successful execution of tasks require constant interaction with several members of the organization. Indeed, it has been argued that working in groups can provide an employee with an opportunity to use others as resource to augment own knowledge (Woodman, et al, 1993).

> **Proposition:** A diverse employee's level of integration will be influenced by job design and organizational structure. Other things being equal, the less rigid is the structure, the quicker diverse employees would integrate.

Organizational Culture

Organisational culture represents, among other things, the values the organization holds regarding fairness and equity. When such values conflicts with employee's values, then the employee is less likely to engage in extra-role behaviour. Indeed Deckop (1999: 422) argues, "when the values of individuals are tightly aligned with

those of the organization, the employment exchange is social rather than economic, and OCB may not be perceived as a cost". In an article devoted to the development of a model of factors affecting the treatment of disabled people in organizations, Stone & Colella (1996: 373) posit that: "Organizational norms and values may influence the experiences of disabled individuals in organizations. The primary reason for this is that an organization's norms and values identify the types of behaviours that are appropriate and provide moral justification for organizational policies and practices. For example values associated with equity, standardization, impersonality, and separation of job and job holder define the policies and practices in a bureaucratic organization". Mayer and Schoorman (1992) similarly posit that belief in and acceptance of organisational values will lead to willingness to exert considerable effort on the part of the organization. In fact Deckop et al (1999) found negative impact of pay for performance on OCB for employees low in value alignment with their organization. In a study of organisational climate for diversity, Hicks-Clarke & Iles (2000: 341) reported, "It seems from the above analysis that a positive climate for diversity (as indicated by perceptions of policy support, organisational justice, support for diversity and recognition of the need for diversity) is strongly related to the presence of positive organisational, job and career attitudes. In particular, the perception of organizational justice strongly predicts organizational commitment, satisfaction with manager, career satisfaction, and career future satisfaction".

Also evidence indicates that innovative tendency of employees is significantly influenced by organizational climate (Abbey and Dickson, 1983; Paolillo and Brown, 1978; Siegel and Kaemmerer, 1978; Scott and Bruce, 1994). Amabile and Gryskiewicz (1987) suggested that collaboration among peers is essential for idea generation. And few decades earlier, Rogers (1954) posit that group cohesiveness can influence employee's perception of freedom to introduce new ideas. These assertions demonstrate the relevance of organisational culture and climate in realising the benefits of diversity. A diverse employee would need a collaborative and cohesive environment in order to engaged in *advocacy participation* (ie innovative behaviour as described by Van Dyne et al, 1994).

Certain organizational cultures tend to have preferred management style and "ways of doing things" which inadvertently exclude certain categories of employees (Marshall, 1993). Harris (1994) argued that cultures that are stable provide fertile ground for developing effective diversity programs. This is because diversity programs require time and "stability" to bear fruit. Harris argues that volatile culture is characterised by high turnover, which is not conducive for developing effective diversity program.

Proposition: Organizational culture that values diversity will make it easier for diverse employees to integrate.

Organizational Policy and Practice

A number of researchers have explored the impact of HRM policy and practices on employee behaviour such as productivity and turnover (Jones & Wright, 1992; Kleiner, 1990). Specific working practices such as comprehensive employee recruitment and selection, incentive compensation and performance management systems, extensive employee involvement and training have been argued to improve employees' knowledge, skills and abilities which will subsequently increase their level of motivation and willingness to stay (Huselid, 1995; Jone & Wright, 1992). The relevance of organisational policy and practice vis-à-vis workforce diversity is anchored in theoretical and empirical evidences, which suggest that organisational policy, and practice can influence employee attitudes and behaviour. For example, organisational policy and practice can either support or hinder employee integration and commitment. In other words, policies and practices can be support mechanism that can provide the diverse employee with the condition to behave beyond contract. Inadequacy or total absence of such support mechanism would generate perception and feeling of alienation and exclusion. In fact social exchange theorists argued that perceived organisational support could lead to extra-role behaviour. This is because organisational support is an indication of how the organization values the employee (Eisenberger et al, 1990). Using social exchange theories, Eisenberger et al (1986) posit that perceived organisational support underlie employees' inference concerning their organization's commitment to them, which in turn contribute to employees' commitment to their organization. Wayne et al (1997) maintained that: "High level of perceived organizational support create feelings of obligation, whereby employees not only feel that they ought to be committed to their

employers, but also feel an obligation to return the employer's commitment by engaging in behaviours that support organizational goals. That is employees seek a balance in their exchange relationships with organizations by having their attitudes and behaviours commensurate with the degree of employer commitment to them as individuals".

Eisenberger et al (1986) and Wayne et al (1992) found strong relationship between commitment, innovation and OCB. Moorman, et al (1998) also found a relationship between procedural justice and perceived organizational support, and between perceived organizational support and OCB. These findings offer support for our framework that suggests a relationship between attitude (commitment) and behaviour (OCB). Tsui et al (1997) hypothesized that OCB will be higher under the mutual investment employee-organization relationships than under other types of relationships. The authors argued that in a mutual employment relationship "The inducement an employer offers go beyond short-term monetary rewards. They include an extended consideration of an employee's well being as well as an investment in the employee's career within the firm. In exchange, the employee's obligations and contributions include working on the job assignments that fall outside of prior agreements or expertise, assisting junior colleagues, accepting job transfers when requested by the employer to do so, and, in general being willing to consider the unit's or organization's interests as important as core job duties" (pp 1092). Reporting support to their hypothesis, Tsui et al (1997: 1114) maintain "The overall pattern of our result provides general support for what we have termed the

mutual investment approach, where open-ended inducements provided by employers are balanced by open-ended contributions from employees. Employees under mutual investment employee-organization relationships generally performed better, as rated by both supervisors and peers, and had more favourable attitudes than employees managed under any of the other three employee-organization-relationships approaches". Tsui et al (1997: 1114) also reported that their results indicate that, "relative to employees in jobs characterized by any of the other three employee-organization relationships approaches, employees in jobs characterized by mutual investment demonstrated the highest levels of core task performance and OCB. The mutual investment approach involving a combination of social and economic exchange, seems to yield the most returns in terms of productivity at the job level as well as the firm level…"

It has been widely argued that Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA) policies can improve employee integration in the workplace. However, the impact of these policies can depend on the type of policies (Konrad and Linnehan, 1995) and the power of the person championing them (Perry et al, 1994). For example, Konrad and Linnehan (1994) found that identity conscious EEO and AA structures are more likely to produce positive outcomes for women and people of colour than identity blind structures. Training and education can lead to proper understanding of differences between groups which in turn lead to acceptance of differences and lower interpersonal conflict (Black and Mendenhall 1990; Black et al, 1991). The more the organization is committed to valuing diversity

the more likely its policies and practices regarding training will encompass multicultural training for example. In fact some organizations provide training programs to enable their employees adjust to the growing diversity of the workplace (Cox, 1991; Harris, 1994; Jackson, et al, 1992; Smith, 1994; Stephenson and Krebs, 1993; Tung, 1993). And such effort has been found to reduce conflict, which leads to improvement in employee adjustment.

Proposition: Where appropriate and effective policy and practice exists, diverse employees are more likely to integrate quickly.

Organizational recruitment and selection policies can indirectly impact on employee integration (Harris, 1994; McNerney, 11994a). Organizations that recruit from one source are more likely to end up with a homogenous group of employees (Smith, 1994). Similarly, an organization, which concentrates on "technical" skills in its selection process, is more likely to hire people with limited cultural and interpersonal skills to get on with people from diverse backgrounds. Thus, organization's selection policies that encompass technical as well as social skills would indirectly affect employee integration. Similarly, recruitment and selection policy and practice would relate to the level of heterogeneity of the workplace, which in turn would influence the level of diverse employee's integration.

Proposition: Other things being equal, a diverse employee's level of integration would be indirectly influenced by organization's recruitment and selection policy and practice.

Experts have advocated the use of mentoring to enhance adjustment and integration of diverse employees (eg Harris, 1994; Heery, 1994; Jenner, 1994). Mentoring has been widely used in organizations to influence employees' behaviours and performance. In fact, recent evidence indicates that mentors can improve minority adjustment and development in a heterogenous workplace. For example, in a comparative study of expatriates, repatriates and domestic workers, Feldman and Holly (1993) found a significant positive relationship between mentoring and employee satisfaction with supervisor, job security, psychological well-being and ability to work with diverse workforce. Therefore such policies should relate positively with employee integration.

> **Proposition**: Diverse employees who have mentors would integrate quicker than those who do not have mentors.

Internal Contingencies

It has been argued that large and unionised firms tend to provide regularised and well exercised forms for resolving workplace problems, while small and non-unionised firms tend to rely on particularistic and arbitrary procedures to resolve workplace disputes (Gwartney-Gibbs and Lach, 1994; Westin and Felieu, 1988). It can be argued that unionised organizations are more likely to address discrimination related conflicts than nonunionized organizations. Some researchers (Pfeffer, 1983) have acknowledged the influence of unions on organizations and its members. Level of union solidarity would ensure early adjustment and integration in the workplace. For example, there are many instances when shop stewards champion

sexual harassment and racial discrimination issues. Therefore, the level and extent of union solidarity can determine the level of employee adjustment and integration in a workplace. Indeed, sometimes minority groups especially women rely on their union officials for protection and social, and instrumental support. Also unions have been known to champion the course of sexual and racial equality in the workplace. Having said that, it is perhaps worth noting that in the past, some unions, at the very least, caste a blind eye on discrimination. For example, in a study of gender-based wage and promotion discrimination in Israel, Bamberger, Admati-Dvir and Harel (1995: 1757) reported, "On the whole, our findings suggest that female employees in unionised firms may experience no less gender-based wage and promotion discrimination than their colleagues in similar, non-union firms…. However, we also found that the impact of promotion discrimination on earnings was less severe in the unionised firm than in the non union firm". Thus, the impact of unionism on employee adjustment in a workplace will depend on factors, such as union power, orientation, strategy, objectives and scope of collective bargaining.

It has been argued that formal employment arrangements often generate segregation. And larger organizations are more likely to have formal employment arrangements. This would imply that large organizations are more likely to segregate than smaller ones. Evidence supports this argument (Baron et al, 1986). Since formalization tend to increase with size and age of the organization, it would seem reasonable to argue that the older and larger the organization the more likely it would have a formalized system for regulating employment. Given that formalized

rules do not necessarily mean equity and equality, the existence of formal rules does not necessarily lead to integration or lack of it. However, existence of equitable formal rules would lead to integration, whereas unequitable formal rules would lead to dissatisfaction and lower integration. Another dimension of organizational contingencies pertain to litigation associated with discrimination and sexual harassment. Researchers have found that, organizations, which are sued and/or monitored, are more likely to pay attention to diversity issues than those who are not (Baron et al, 1991; Konrad, and Linnehan, 1995). It can be argued therefore that the degree of employee integration and subsequent commitment would be influenced by the experience of the organization with diversity issues.

Ownership of the organization could also impact on employee level of integration and commitment and subsequent behaviour. Arguably, given that government institutions are more likely to be under strict regulation on equal opportunity, other things being equal, they are more likely to address employees' concerns regarding adjustment in the workplace. Similarly, it can be argued that family run businesses are less likely to be concerned with equity and equal opportunity issues as would publicly owned companies. This is because public companies are more likely to be subject to scrutiny than family-owned businesses. The above argument is in line with both institutional and resource dependence theories of the firm. Proponents of these theories argue that organizations would adopt systems and structure of management in order to gain legitimacy or resources necessary for survival

(DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Pfeffer& Salancik, 1978; Pfeffer & Blake, 1987; Zucker, 1987).

Proposition: Organizational contingencies such as ownership, size, and unionisation can influence employee level of integration.

EMPLOYEE FACTOR

Diverse employee's Knowledge

Knowledge is one of the most important factors that can influence individual attitudes and behaviour. It is widely agreed that the acquisition and use of knowledge can influence the process and outcome of social interaction (Detweiler, 1980; Mendenhall and Oddou 1986; Singer 1987; Triandis, 1976; 1977). People process information through categorisation, which is, to a certain degree, determined by one's background (Gertsen, 1990; Gudykunst and Kim, 1984; Oddou and Mendenhall, 1984; Singer 1987; Triandis, 1976). Therefore diverse employees need to acquire knowledge of other people's background in order to improve the effectiveness of their social interaction (Detweiler, 1975), and evidence supports the utility of this proposition (Detweiler, 1978; Detweiler, 1980). Therefore when in a diverse workforce an employee should be aware of the differences between and within groups. Indeed even within the same culture understanding of differences between men and women and between old and young is important (Gudykunst and Kim 1984; Kim, 1977; Segall et al, 1990; Triandis et al, 1993). Appreciation of these differences is necessary for accurately interpreting others attitudes and behaviour. Apart from the acquisition of the knowledge of national culture, knowledge of

organizational culture and group norms can also enhance a diverse employee's interaction.

Proposition: Employees who have adequate knowledge of other people's backgrounds are more likely to adapt and integrate quickly in the workplace.

Diverse employee's behaviour

Why and how people behave is one of the key determinants of the outcome of any social interaction. It is now clear that many cases of intercultural and interethnic conflict are caused by failure to understand each other and behave appropriately. Rules governing social behaviour vary within and across groups. Therefore experts underscore the significance of demonstrating "socially appropriate" behaviour when interacting with people from a diverse background (Brien and David 1971; Hammer, et al. 1978; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1986; Ruben 1976). Rather than acquiring new values, a diverse employee should acquire new social skills for use in the work setting and discard them if need be (Furnham and Bochner, 1986). Some of the behavioural dimensions that can enhance interaction adjustment as identified by researchers (eg Gudykunst and Hammer, 1984; Hammer 1987; Hammer et al, 1978) include (a) the ability to establish interpersonal relationships. This consists of the ability to develop and maintain satisfying interpersonal relationships with "strangers", accurately understand their feelings, effectively work with them, empathise and effectively deal with their different social customs; (b) the ability to effectively communicate. This includes the ability to enter into meaningful dialogue, initiate interaction and deal with misunderstandings and interpersonal conflict and

different communication styles. Given the diversity of the workforce, what will be considered as appropriate behaviour can vary with the backgrounds of the workforce (eg, cultural background, ethnicity, gender, age, group/professional/ occupational norms). Effective interaction therefore will require developing a range of social skills to deal with the heterogeneity of the workforce.

> **Proposition:** Diverse employees who can demonstrate "appropriate" behaviour are less likely to experience inter and interpersonal conflict. And lower level of conflict will lead to higher integration.

Diverse Employee's Attitudes

Knowing and doing is not enough to guarantee successful outcome in any social interaction. This is even more so if one party interprets and attach meanings to the other party's knowledge and behaviour. Researchers argue that the acquisition and demonstration of appropriate social skills should be complemented with the right attitude and personality (Brislin, 1981; Ruben, 1976). This is because strangers may face situations, which will demand unique attitudes and traits. Among the personality and attitudinal factors are flexibility, self-confidence, self-efficacy, openness, motivation, orientation to knowledge, cultural empathy, openness to information and optimism. Developing appropriate attitudes as described above can be essential in a heterogenous work setting. For example, as a minority, self-confidence and self-efficacy will be vital for managing socio biological background. This is because, without self-confidence for example, a diverse employee is likely to confirm the negative stereotype others may hold about him/her. Also, a diverse

employee will need empathy to appreciate the dominant group's attitudes and behaviours. Without empathy, the employee is likely to misinterpret others' attitudes and behaviour. This can result in interpersonal conflict and psychological stress consequently leading to low productivity, absenteeism and turnover.

Proposition: Employees who have the "right" personality and attitude are more likely to adjust to the diverse workforce, which, in turn would lead to integration.

Diverse Employee's Experience

A diverse employee's attitude and behaviour can be influenced by prior experience. For example, people moderate their attitude and behaviour towards others if they had prior positive experience with them. It has been argued that people who have had prior experience with foreign settings are more likely to find it easier to adjust to unfamiliar environments than those who have not (eg Black et al, 1991; Furnham and Bochner, 1986; Klineberg, 1981). Research on cross-cultural interaction indicates that familiarity with host culture can act as a buffer against the effects of perceived discrimination (Mendoza, 1989; Sanchez & Fernandez, 1993). Thus, it can be argued that a diverse employee's prior experience with a diverse workforce could enhance his/her integration. Similarly, a diverse employee's tenure in the workplace could affect his/her integration and general adjustment. This is because research indicates that adjustment in a new environment is influenced by the duration of stay in the new setting (Adler, 1975; Bardo and Bardo, 1980; Dodd, 1982; Kim, 1977; Torbiorn, 1982). The longer one stays or is expected to stay in the new environment the more

likely it will be that he/she will put an extra effort to adjust to the environment (Dodd, 1982).

Proposition: Experience in working in a diverse workforce will lead to better understanding of diversity and lower conflict and integration.

Diverse Employee's Technical Ability

Evidence from expatriate adjustment indicates that confidence in ability to accomplish tasks leads to higher adjustment (Bardo and Bardo, 1980; Hawes and Kealey, 1981; Hays, 1971; Tung, 1981). It is reasonable to expect that the more technically competent an employee is, the more likely that he will be perceived as socially attractive by the members of the organization, this should lead to psychological well-being, integration and OCB. Feeling of technical competence can influence willingness to stay. This is partly because employees who are less competent are less likely to receive the support of the workgroup this will trigger desire to leave.

Proposition: Technically competent diverse employees are more likely to be socially attractive this will lead to integration. Similarly, feeling of competence should lead to higher psychological wellbeing and integration.

Diverse Employee's Cultural Background

It is widely acknowledged that adjustment in a new setting is significantly influenced by the culture novelty of the setting (Black et al. 1991; Gullahorn and

Gullahorn, 1963; Torbiorn, 1982; Dinges, 1983). The greater the difference between two cultures the more difficult it would be for people to interact effectively with each other (Black et al, 1991), and empirical evidence generally confirms this proposition (Babiker et al, 1980; Gudykunst, 1985). For example, Gudykunst (1985) found that culturally similar people display high attribution confidence and shared network, which in turn reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Similarly, Bobad and Wallbott (1986) note that there is high degree of anxiety associated with interactions with people who are unfamiliar than with people who are familiar with each other. Also, research evidence revealed that cultural similarity generates reciprocal feelings; people who are similar culturally tend to like each other (Brewer and Campbell, 1976). It has also been argued that differences in values and beliefs can bring about discrimination against out-groups (Fernandez, 1981; Greenberg et al, 1986; Katz and Hass, 1988). Values and beliefs that emphasises conformity to group norms are more likely to alienate "others" than values which are less conformist. Indeed Wiersema and Bird (1993: 1001) argue, "groups in collectivist societies are likely to strongly encourage conformity. One consequence of that practice may be greater sensitivity to differences that an outsider might consider trivial".

> **Proposition:** Level of employee integration in a diverse workforce will be influenced by the degree of culture-gap between him and the members of the organization. A diverse employee from conformist culture would integrate slower because he/she would expect the dominant group to leave up to his/her standard or expectations.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) argued that the primary unit of consciousness in individualistic society is personal identities. In a collectivist society on the other hand, the primary unit of consciousness and identification is membership of a group. The authors are of the view that primary unit of consciousness "are most significant in regulating behaviour and are assumed both by the actor and the observer" (Markus and Kitayama, 1991: 226). Thus, a diverse employee's culture could influence his/her interpretation of and reaction to how he/she is treated by the dominant group.

> **Proposition**: Compared to individualists, collectivists are more likely to be affected by the dominant group's negative attitudes towards their ethnic or racial group for example. This is because, individualists define themselves as autonomous entity independent of groups, whereas collectivists define themselves in relation to others. When a member of their group is criticised, they may find it difficult to isolate themselves from the criticism.

Chatman and Barsade (1995) found that collectivists cooperated significantly more under a cooperative rather than uncooperative organizational culture, whereas individualists were less cooperative irrespective of the organizational culture. This is a further indication that culture can influence diverse employee's reaction to the organization and its members.

Proposition: Where organizational culture is cooperative, diverse employees from collectivist culture will reciprocate by affective and moral commitment culminating in OCB.

Diverse Employee's Demographic Background

Given that social network is a resource that can help adjustment and integration in a work setting, a diverse employee's demographic background can influence their level of integration. For example, experts argue that interpersonal similarity enhances ease of communication, improves predictability of behaviour and fosters trust and reciprocity (Ibarra, 1995). And Marsden (1988) maintained that minorities have much smaller set of same-race others with whom to have informal interaction (Ibarra, 1995). Even if minorities form relationships across race, Thomas (1990) argued that that cross-race relationship tends to be weaker than same race relationships. Thomas also revealed that racial differences were often an obstacle for white mentors in identifying positively with their African American protégés. Others reported that similarity could affect supervisor 's personal attraction to and identification with subordinates (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989). And Kanter (1977) in her seminal work on the experience of women managers suggested that demographically different individuals feel least socially integrated in the work setting.

Rather than delve into detailed discussion of the negative experience of diverse employees in organization, it is perhaps more useful at this level of analysis to provide theoretical explanation to why and how diverse employees' backgrounds

can affect their integration. The relevance of employees' demographic backgrounds can be understood from at least three dimensions: Others' attitudes towards diverse employees' backgrounds; diverse employees' self-conception of their backgrounds; diverse employees' disposition.

Others' Attitudes. Basically, others' attitudes towards a diverse employee's backgrounds can be explained using the concepts of stereotype, ethnocentrism, and prejudice. Stereotype is a social process in which people are assigned attributes solely on the basis of their group identity (Tajfel, 1969; Wiseman, et al, 1989). Stereotype can take the form of positive as well as negative attributes, or both. For example, a study of the mutual perceptions of Arabs and Jews indicates that both groups agree that Jews excel intellectually rather than socially, while the opposite holds true for the Arabs; and Jews emphasise their intellectual advantage while the Arabs emphasise their social superiority (Bizman and Amir, 1982). Because people try to justify the stereotype they hold about others, even to the extent of "inventing differences" (Summer, 1906) and "projecting similarity" (Adler, 1991), the stereotypical image of an employee's background held by others can influence attitudes and behaviours during interaction. Thus, integration can be influenced by the nature and extent of stereotype. If the coworkers hold a positive stereotype of an employee's demographic background, the outcome of interaction is likely to be positive and vice-versa, and this will affect his/her integration and commitment.

According to Summer (1906), ethnocentrism relates to positive feelings towards one's own group and negative feelings towards others. Others, such as Adler (1991) and Gudykunst and Kim, (1984) view ethnocentrism as a tendency to identify one's "in-group" behaviour, and to evaluate "out-groups" (others) according to that standard. Empirical evidence supports this view. For example, studies have revealed that people generally like their own groups best and perceive them in the most positive light and perceive "out groups" less favourably (Brewer and Campbell, 1976; Marjoribanks and Jordan, 1986). Those who concur with Summer's definition view ethnocentrism as an attitude inspired by negative feelings (Mayer, 1984). Going by the above definitions, other things being equal, employees are likely to receive unfavourable attention if their demographic backgrounds and behaviour differ markedly from that of the others. However, this should depend, in part, on the level of ethnocentrism, which tends to vary across cultures.

Proposition: The higher the level of ethnocentrism, the lower would be diverse employees' level of integration.

According to Allport (1958:10), prejudice is "an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalisation. The net effect of prejudice is to place the object of prejudice at some disadvantage not merited by his/her own misconduct". Similarly, Adler (1991) argues that people can have stereotypes, which can be extremely difficult to modify. Because of the false and inflexible assumptions about other people's identity, prejudice is likely to have a greater consequence on diverse employees' adjustment than ordinary stereotype and ethnocentrism.

Proposition: When a diverse employee is interacting with co-workers who have false and inflexible view of his/her background, his/her level of integration will be circumscribed.

Self-concept. The extent to which co-workers' attitudes can affect a diverse employee's integration would depend on his/her self-concept. In other words, co-workers' attitude is not likely to operate in isolation to how the diverse employee reacts to their attitude. Self-concept (the meaning people attach to their own backgrounds) is an interactive structure that moderates how people behave and feel in a social context (Markus and Wurf, 1987; Schenkler, 1985). It has been argued that a person's self concept may be composed of a variety of identities which evolves from membership in different social groups such as race, gender or age (Breakwell, 1986; Stryker and Serpe, 1982). People's self-conception usually influences their attitude and behaviour during social interaction. Dutton, et al (1994) argue that a person's well-being and behaviour are affected both by the attributes they ascribe to themselves and by those they believe others infer about them from their membership of a particular social group. Citing Cialdini et al (1976), Dutton et al (1994) made the point that when people believe that outsiders see their social group in a positive light, they "bask in the reflective glory" of the group and this can lead to desirable outcomes such as positive mental and psychological state. However, when people believe that outsiders see their social group in a negative light, they experience negative personal outcomes such as depression and stress which could lead to other negative outcomes (Dutton et al, 1994; Hirschaman, 1970; Kahn, 1990).

Proposition: Because people want to maintain the continuity of their self-concept overtime and across environments (Steele, 1988), when faced with negative attitudes such as stereotype and prejudice, diverse employees' mental and psychological state can be negatively affected, and this can lead to lower integration.

Disposition. In addition to the above factors, socialization can predispose a diverse employee to react to situations differently. For example, some argue that there is a variation between men and women regarding how stressful situation is handled (Collins and Frankenhaueser, 1978; Ivancevich and Matteson, 1992). And, age has been found to relate to how people react to change (Guthrie, 1975; Kim, 1977). Similarly, religious beliefs have been found to affect people's attitudes towards others (Bochner, 1976). It should be emphasized that the variation in attitudes and behaviour between the sexes, age and ethnic groups is widely attributed to socialization as opposed to genetics (Greenglass, 1982; Jick and Mitz, 1985; Stead, 1978). For example, Butler (1976) argued that women in many societies have been traditionally socialized to portray themselves as nurturing, likeable, affectionate, soft-spoken, gentle, compassionate and dependent rather than ambitious, aggressive, dominant, self-reliant, individualistic and independent.

Proposition: Diverse employees' socialization would affect their attitudes and behaviour that would ultimately influence their level of integration.

EMPLOYEE INTEGRATION

The idea of integration is important when explaining employees' behaviour in a diverse setting. This is because; the likelihood of employee alienation is higher in a diverse workforce than in a homogenous one. Taft (1988) describes integration in terms of self-perceived identity, feeling of belonging, reference group, self-perceived competence, feeling of mastery, favourable attitude to social relations and perceive acceptance. Adopting Gordon's (1964) seven dimensions of integration, Cox's (1991) describes employees' integration in a diverse workforce from the following dimensions: (1) modes by which two groups adapt to each other and resolve cultural differences, (2) profiles of organizational members (job status, hiring, job placement), (3) membership of informal networks by the minority groups, (4) level of prejudice and discrimination, (5) feeling of belonging, loyalty and commitment to the organization, (6) friction, tension and power struggles between groups. Put simply, integration can be described as the opposite of segregation. For the purpose of this paper, *integration refers to a diverse employee's perception and feelings of fairness, belonging, respected, inclusion, and freedom, and ability and willingness to interact with all the members of the organization*. This feeling and perception is hypothesized to affect employee attitudes (affective and moral commitment). In many ways, diverse employees' level of integration can be assessed by the quality of social support they have available to them. Arguably, social support would be a key determinant of their adjustment and commitment to the organization. Empirical evidence indicates that social support can improve quality of work life (Anderson, 1991). Psychologists describe social support in terms of exchange of information between social actors, availability of confidant, and assistance (Wallston et al, 1983). Social support is also

used to describe the number of people an employee interacts with, the frequency of contact, employee's perception of the adequacy of contact (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1992).

A number of studies indicate that high level of employee integration can lead to higher productivity (Fiedler, 1966; Mitchell, 1986; Walsh, et al, 1988; Triandis, et al, 1965), whereas lack of integration can result in negative outcomes. For example, Benkkoff (1996) found that perception of being treated with respect has a positive correlation with employee identification, desire to stay and exertion of extra effort. McNerney (1994a) attributes higher turnover of minorities and women to lack of integration. Similarly, Hess (1993) and Jones (1983) argue that employees who feel alienated by the organizational policies and practices and by members of the organization are less likely to be productive. Basically, high level of employee integration would lead to higher job satisfaction, which in turn would lead to affective and moral commitment. In fact, evidence indicates that the more satisfied employees are with their jobs, the more broadly they define their responsibilities, and the more so-called "organization citizenship behaviour" they define as in-role (Morrison, 1994).

> **Proposition:** Other things being equal, diverse employees who are integrated are more likely to have affective and moral commitment to their organization. And integration would enable diverse employees to acquire knowledge and skills and utilize them to benefit the organization.

EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment can be described from behavioural as well as attitudinal dimension (Mottaz, 1989; Mowday et al, 1982; Randall et al, 1990). However, the primary focus of this paper is on the latter. The relevance of organizational commitment in our framework is based on research which indicates that, less committed and alienated employees are more likely to have lower motivation and productivity and/or quit their job (Johnston, et al, 1990; Moch, 1980). And employee commitment has been found to relate to workforce diversity (Tsui, et al, 1992). Two dimensions of attitudinal commitment are relevant to our framework. They are affective and moral commitment. Jaros et al, (1993: 954) defines affective commitment as " the degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an employing organization through feelings such as loyalty, affection, warmth, belonging, fondness, happiness, pleasure and so on". Implicit to this definition is the idea of organizational support that motivates the employee to reciprocate in the form of attitudes such as pleasure, happiness, loyalty and affection. Setton, et al, (1996) demonstrated that affective commitment to organizations is based on workers' perceptions of the support they receive from their organizations. Arguably, when discriminated or harassed, an employee would expect organisational support. The extent of support received would influence employee's affective commitment to the organization. Indeed, Sanchez and Brock (1996) found strong correlation between perceived discrimination and employees' job satisfaction, work tension and role conflict. These findings reinforced our proposition that how diverse employees feel or perceive they are treated would influence their commitment to the organization.

Drawing on the work of several authors, Jaros et al, (1993: 955) conceptualised moral commitment "as the degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an employing organization through internalisation of its goals". Central to this definition is the idea of duty and obligation (Jaros et al, 1993). Evidence suggests that moral/normative commitment is strongly associated with "organizational citizenship behaviour" (Schwartz and Tessler, 1992). And Morrison (1994) found that the higher the level of moral and affective commitment experienced, the more broadly employees define their responsibilities, and the more so-called "organizational citizenship behaviour" they define as in-role.

> **Proposition:** Diverse employees who have affective and moral commitment to their organization are more likely to engage in OCB than those who have no commitment.

CONCLUSION

Although research and theorising on organizational demography and interethnic interaction have being going on for decades, research on the strategic significance of diversity is only just beginning. In spite of the recent development however, the emphasis is still on how to manage diversity rather than on how to take advantage of diversity. The neglect of this dimension of diversity is responsible for the limited understanding, and inadequate theoretical development in the field. In this paper I sought to contribute to the understanding of the topic by providing an analytical framework that explains factors that can influence a diverse employee's willingness and ability to engage in OCB. It is an indirect attempt to address the issue of why diversity would not always lead to desirable outcome to organizations.

Another aim of the paper is to provide testable propositions in order to frame future research directions in the study of how organizations can utilize their diverse workforce. The challenge for theorists and researchers is not only to test our propositions but also to integrate the topic of diversity into the mainstream human resource management (HRM) and organizational behaviour (OB) literature. Our knowledge of how diversity will improve organizational competitiveness and overall effectiveness is still limited. Although many experts in the field have being urging organizations to manage and take advantage of diversity, the relevant theories that will guide this endeavour are yet to be articulated. (See Powell, 1998 for a more recent theory on how organization can take advantage of diversity).

On the basis of the framework advanced in this paper, we envisioned the development of HRM policies and practice that are anchored to the idea of effective utilization of diverse workforce. Currently, there are significant attempts by many organizations to follow this direction. However, such effort still lags behind what can be conceivably achieved. We believe social exchange theory as adopted in this paper holds the key to developing appropriate HRM policy and practice that can take advantage of diverse workforce. The theory can be used to elicit OCB from diverse employees. For example, developing the appropriate policy and practice will ensure that diverse employees reciprocate by OCB. Similarly, organizations can develop relevant policies and practices to target the dominant group in order to avoid backlash against diversity.

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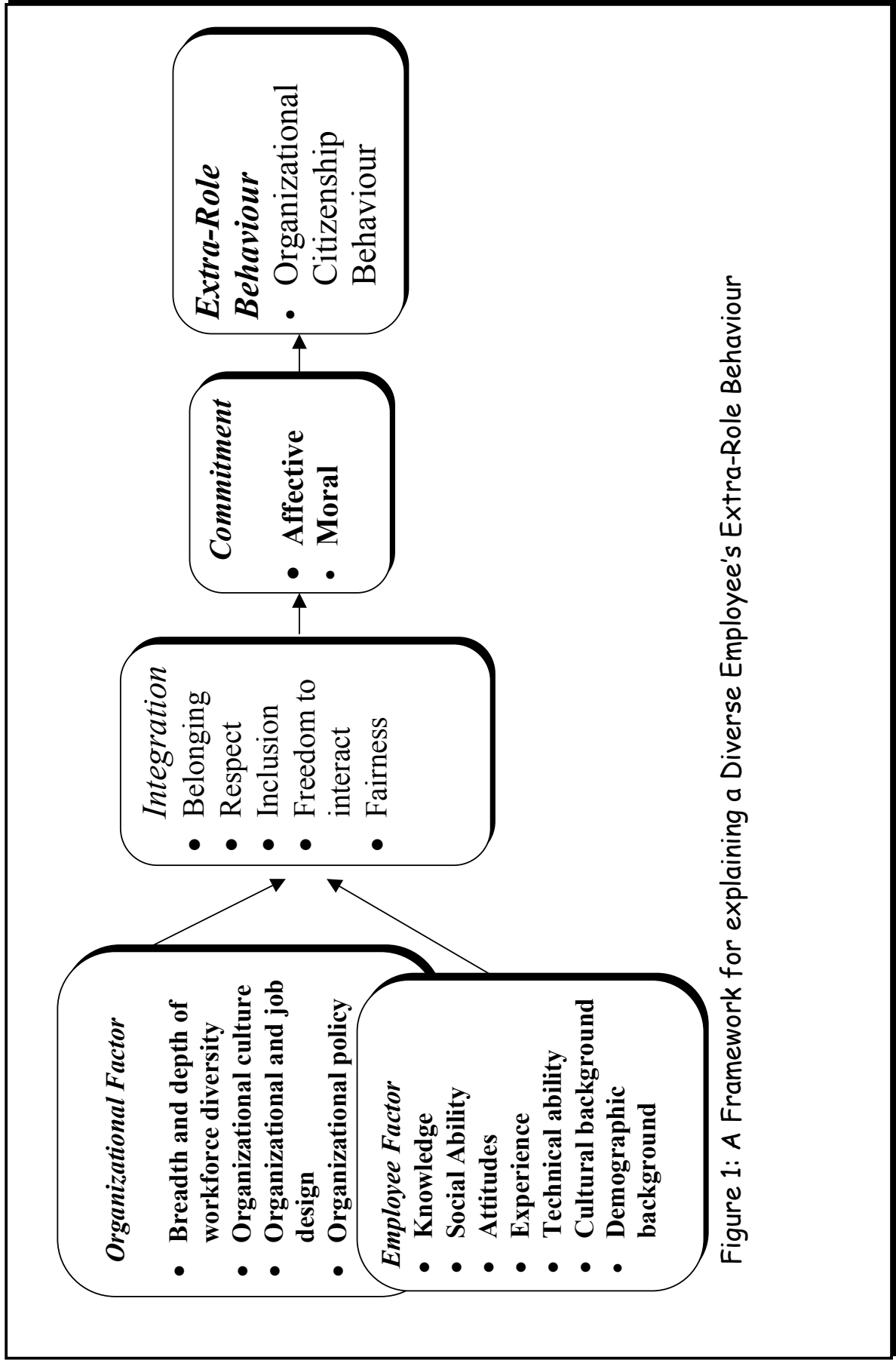
Figure 1: A Framework for explaining a Diverse Employee's Extra-Role Behaviour

Organizational Factor

- Breadth and depth of workforce diversity
- Organizational culture
- Organizational and job design
- Organizational policy

Employee Factor

- Knowledge
- Social Ability
- Attitudes
- Experience
- Technical ability
- Cultural background
- Demographic background

Integration

- Belonging
- Respect
- Inclusion
- Freedom to interact
- Fairness

Commitment

- Affective
- Moral

Extra-Role Behaviour

- Organizational Citizenship Behaviour