

Development of the commitment to diversity questionnaire

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**Socio-cultural
Session 3**

**Thursday, May 29, 2008
9:00 AM - 9:25 AM**

**Presentation (25-minute)
Abstract 113**

Organizational diversity can have mixed effects. Diverse groups, relative to their more homogeneous counterparts, take longer to arrive at decisions (Hambrick et al., 1996), are oftentimes marked by increased stress (Keller, 2001), and have greater employee turnover (O'Reilly et al., 1989). Despite these potential negative effects, researchers have also demonstrated that when effectively managed, diversity can bring real benefits to the organization (Lovelace et al., 2001). In groups where diversity is valued and seen as an asset to the organization, the presence of differences can result in better decision making, higher employee affect and performance gains (Chatman et al., 1998; Hopkins et al., 2001; McKay et al., 2007; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). In short, organizations that show a commitment to diversity are likely to reap the benefits thereof.

Despite the presumed importance of commitment to diversity, the literature devoted to this topic is limited in several respects. First, researchers have solely focused on the organization's commitment to diversity, as opposed to examining the commitment levels of that entity's employees (Ryan et al., 2003; Hopkins et al., 2001). Such an anthropomorphic focus fails to consider that it is the people within the organization that establish that its values, beliefs, and assumptions—that is, its culture (Schneider, 1987). Second, previous conceptualizations of commitment to diversity have been unidimensional; for instance, Ryan et al. defined the construct as "perceptions of the organization's concern regarding managing diversity" (p. 649). This approach fails to recognize the multidimensional nature of the construct, or that the different commitment mindsets can have a varied impact on subsequent outcomes (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

The purpose of this research, therefore, was to propose and examine a multidimensional model of commitment to diversity. In drawing from Meyer and Herscovitch's (2001) framework, commitment to diversity is defined as "a force or mindset that binds an individual to support diversity in the workplace." The mindset that binds the individual to this course of action can reflect (a) a desire to support diversity because of the belief in its inherent benefits (affective commitment to diversity), (b) a recognition that there are costs associated with failure to provide support for diversity (continuance commitment to diversity), and/or (c) a sense of obligation to provide support for diversity (normative commitment to diversity). This rationale suggests that commitment to diversity is multidimensional in nature and that the different dimensions (mindsets) are conceptually, and therefore empirically, distinct. Consistent with this framework, the first objective was to test the dimensionality of commitment to diversity construct.

In addition, the second objective was to examine the influence of personal demographics on commitment to diversity. Research has demonstrated that women and racial minorities are not only under-represented in sport (Acosta & Carpenter, 2006; DeHass, 2007), but that they are also likely to face discrimination (Fink et al., 2001). Given this state, members of under-represented groups, relative to their majority counterparts, might have more positive dispositions toward diversity (i.e., affective commitment) and/or a stronger sense of obligation to support diversity in the workplace (i.e., normative commitment). Thus, the second objective was to examine possible racial and gender differences in the commitment to diversity mindsets.

The research took part in three stages. In the first stage, a questionnaire measuring commitment to diversity was developed. Specifically, a definition of the general construct and of the specific mindsets (as articulated previously) was developed, and items reflecting each mindset were articulated. Following Fraenkel and Wallen's (2000) guidelines, the definitions and representative items were then distributed to three academicians, who examined the scale for validity evidence based on test content. Based on their comments and suggestions, three items for each mindset were retained for the final questionnaire.

In the second stage, data were collected from 199 undergraduate students at a large, public university in the Southwest United States, with the reference organization being the university as a whole. The sample consisted of 97 (48.7%) men and 102 (51.3%) women. Results indicated that the scale was internally consistent (all reliability estimates over .70). A confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the hypothesized three-factor model was a close fit to the data: chi-square ($df = 24, n = 199$) = 38.12, $p < .05$; RMSEA (90% C.I.: .02, .09) = .05; TLI = .97; CFI = .98. The model was a statistically better fit than alternative models.

In the third stage, data were collected from 383 athletic administrators of NCAA Division II universities. Consistent with NCAA demographics (DeHass, 2007), the sample consisted of a mostly men ($n = 236, 61.6%$) and Whites ($n = 334, 87.2%$). As with the student sample, all scales demonstrated high levels of reliability, and the CFA indicated that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data: ($df = 24, n = 383$) = 99.51, $p < .001$; RMSEA (90% C.I.: .07, .11) = .09; TLI = .92; CFI = .96. Further analyses indicated that the model was not invariant across sex (chi-square change (3) = 4.80, $p > .05$), meaning that the

2008 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2008)

model fit equally well for men and women. Finally, a multivariate analysis of variance indicated no significant differences in the commitment mindsets based on sex, $F(3, 361) = 1.72, p = .16$, race, $F(3, 361) = 1.64, p = .18$, or the sex x race interaction, $F(3, 361) = .80, p = .50$.

This research makes several meaningful contributions. Past research (e.g., Hopkins et al., 2001; Ryan et al., 2003) has treated commitment as a unidimensional construct that the organization displays. The theoretically-driven research presented here addresses these limitations by illustrating that individuals express different commitment mindsets—that is, the forces that bind employees to that course of action can and do vary. Empirically, results from two studies with unique samples point to the sound psychometric properties of the instrument. The questionnaire's three dimensions are all internally consistent, there is validity evidence based on test content, and validity evidence based on internal structure. Subsequent research is needed to examine outcomes associated with the different commitment mindsets.