

Who Manages Diversity?

Predicting Diversity Management Implementation in Public Organizations

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Paper prepared for presentation at the 9th Public Management Research Conference, Tucson, Arizona, October 25-27, 2007.

Introduction

As the diversity of the U.S. workforce continues to increase at a rapid pace, public managers are facing pressure to create organizational cultures that permit employees from different backgrounds to succeed. The “one-size-fits-all” approach to management that was effective thirty years ago is arguably no longer an appropriate strategy for ensuring maximum employee performance (Ricucci, 2002). As more women and people of color enter the workforce, managers must adapt to noteworthy changes, including more emphasis on family and work-life balance (Bertelli, 2007; Ezra and Deckman, 1996; Saltzstein et al., 2002), different cultural assumptions about the role of work (Ho, 1987), more emphasis on collective values and teamwork (Azevedo et al., 2002), and different approaches to communication (Arai et al., 2001). The impetus for responding to these changes varies. Managers may feel a normative obligation to accommodate people of different backgrounds (Mosher, 1982; Naff, 1998); they may be under legal obligation to be inclusive (Kellough and Rosenbloom, 1992; Selden, 1997); or they may try to use diversity as a strategic means of augmenting performance (Andrews et al., 2005; Pitts, 2005; Pitts and Jarry, 2007; Wise and Tschirhart, 2000).

Whatever the motivation, the managerial response to workforce diversity has often been the initiation of a formal diversity management program (Kellough and Naff, 2004). Research linking diversity management programs to work-related outcomes has been scant, and the few studies conducted have yielded mixed results (Cox, 1993; Naff and Kellough, 2003; Pitts, 2008a; Sanchez and Brock, 1996). While there remains much work to be done linking diversity management to key outcomes for relevant groups, we focus on a different relationship in this paper: the factors behind diversity management implementation. We use an institutional perspective to understand the reasons why public organizations choose to manage diversity.

After a review of the literature on diversity management, we outline three competing arguments that we believe can explain diversity management implementation. We then test these arguments, using a sample of 585 public education organizations. After explaining our data, method, and findings, we close with conclusions and implications for practice.

The Diversity Management Construct

Up until the 1990s, much of the public management research relating to diversity issues focused on affirmative action, equal employment opportunity (EEO), and representative bureaucracy (see, e.g., Grabosky & Rosenbloom, 1975; Kellough, 1990; Meier, 1975; Rosenbloom, 1977). The approach was decidedly legalistic and normative, with little emphasis on management mechanisms that might help to promote outcomes for diverse employees in the work setting. While this line of work continues to be relevant and vital to diversity in public organizations (Dolan & Rosenbloom, 2003; Keiser et al., 2002; Naff, 2001; Selden, 1997), increased attention to management issues has permitted the field to paint a fuller picture. These three areas of work have formed a “Trifecta” of sorts when it comes to diversity. Attention to the legal climate for diversity ensures that employees are protected at all stages of employment, including recruitment and selection, while representative bureaucracy research assists in understanding the relationship between employee diversity, target population diversity, and outcomes for agency clients. Focusing on diversity management ensures that on-the-job processes and functions serve all groups of employees effectively. This paper focuses primarily on this third area – diversity management.

R. Roosevelt Thomas (1990) was one of the first to bring attention to diversity management, calling on organizations to draw upon diversity as a strength and competitive edge.

He initiated an expanded notion of what diversity entailed, moving beyond a discussion of diversity as simply race and ethnicity. He argued that managing for diversity meant managing for all differences, whether they be based in race, ethnicity, gender, education, or function. This meant focusing on making sure all groups of employees had what they needed in order to succeed at work, moving the emphasis in large part to post-recruitment processes. Recruitment was important, but mainly in a strategic sense. Diversity management was different from affirmative action and EEO in that it was about managers and what they did on the job, on a day-to-day basis, and the programs that organizations could implement to best serve diverse employees.

His idea about how organizations should focus on diversity has been embraced by a number of public management scholars (Riccucci, 2002; Wise & Tschirhart, 2000). It is inherently pragmatic and focused on improving outcomes such as job satisfaction, employee motivation and performance, and interpersonal relations. It purposefully differentiates itself from affirmative action and EEO, which helps to prevent white male backlash, and it maintains a clear link to performance. Some scholars, particularly ethnic minority members, argue that diversity management is damaging to organizations because it detracts from attention to discriminatory behavior that should be remedied first (Cox et al., 1991; Morrison, 1992). However, if diversity management is explored alongside continued emphasis on equity in recruitment, selection, and promotion, then it may actually assist in leveling the playing ground for these groups (Naff & Kellough, 2003).

The ambiguity of the diversity management label leads to difficulty in operationalizing it for empirical research, resulting in little published research that considers the link between diversity management processes and performance in public sector organizations (Naff &

Kellough, 2003; Pitts, 2008a). In earlier research, one of the authors defined diversity management as a comprehensive set of diversity oriented work processes, merging the affirmative action/EEO and diversity management functions (Pitts, 2006). He argues that this distinction is somewhat invalid and that a more comprehensive model of diversity is needed in order to conduct research on management and outcomes. His model of diversity management includes three interrelated components: recruitment and outreach, valuing differences, and pragmatic policies and programs. These components represent the three primary activities, or processes, in which an organization engages in order to manage its employee diversity. We use this definition of diversity management in order to organize our framework and consider each of these three aspects in turn.

The first of these, *recruitment and outreach*, considers whether an organization is extending itself to all potential sources of employees. A strategic plan for recruiting from underrepresented groups is a key component of this aspect of diversity management, and recent research has underscored the importance of recruitment for diversity (Rubaii-Barrett and Wise, 2007; Selden, 2006). This does not mean simply adhering to affirmative action guidelines or other legal constraints on recruitment and selection. Rather, it involves seeking out employees from the labor market who may not be “found” through the typical venues. Methods might include targeting journals and newspapers read by underrepresented groups, recruiting from colleges and universities with underrepresented students, and attending conferences with particular focus on underrepresented professionals. Increasing organizational diversity has the *potential* to increase performance, making recruitment a potentially vital step in improving organizational outcomes (Adler, 2002; Pitts, 2005; Pitts & Jarry, 2007; Wise & Tschirhart, 2000).

The second of these processes, *valuing differences*, is more normative in nature and considers whether employees and managers appreciate the different cultural assumptions and biases that employees bring to their work. Multicultural perspectives have been promoted as particular opportunities for organizations to learn and grow (Thomas and Ely, 1996; Ely and Thomas, 2001). Multicultural understanding is imperative for managers who oversee the work of diverse employees, and such understanding is arguably improved through programs aimed at bridging cultural gaps (Adler, 2002). These programs might take a number of forms, including diversity training and cultural awareness events. Foldy (2004) argues that organizational processes aimed at encouraging multicultural learning will lead to greater benefits from existing diversity. Unfortunately, much of the evidence on this point is anecdotal: empirical research has not produced much support for the effectiveness of values-based programs (Cox, 1993; Sanchez and Brock, 1996), and these types of diversity training sessions can sometimes promote majority backlash (Ricucci, 1997). While more research is needed before the field can be confident about the relationship between values-based diversity training and performance, it remains a key aspect of the diversity management construct and should be considered in any related empirical research.

Finally, *pragmatic programs and policies* consist of a strategic set of management tools that an organization can use to promote employee job satisfaction and performance (Pitts, 2006). Understanding that employees require individualized management, these programs and policies provide an explicit means for underrepresented or minority employees to work in a culture that is supportive of their individual needs. Such programs might involve mentoring opportunities for those outside the majority organizational culture; family friendly programs for those who have children or parents at home that require care; flexible working hours for those who have

competing demands and are unable to work a consistent, 9-to-5 day; collaborative assignments for those who work better in groups than individually (Kellough and Naff, 2004). The list varies by organization, but it reflects a strategy on the part of managers to assess employee needs and create workplace policies that respond to them.

Competing Drivers of Diversity Management Implementation

Based on the definition of diversity management above, the key purpose of this paper is to understand the factors that predict whether an organization will choose to manage diversity. Drawing heavily from the institutional perspective in organization theory, we identify three general motivations that an organization may have in choosing whether to manage diversity (Table 1). The undercurrent of these three motivations is the basic need for organizations to adapt to the values of external society (Selznick, 1957). First, they may *have* to manage diversity in order to respond to a need in the environment. It could be that environmental forces and internal levels of diversity produce a scenario where an organization has no choice but to be active and strategic about diversity issues. Second, the external environment may just make it *easy* for an organization to manage diversity. In this case, an organization may have the time, resources, and culture present that would make diversity management something that would be relatively easy to implement. Third, it may be that an organization is encouraged to manage diversity by other professional actors in the external environment. Contact with external actors could socialize organizations toward managing diversity, reflecting a pattern of isomorphism motivated by mimetic and normative forces (Scott, 2003). We consider these three motivations to be *competing* drivers of diversity management implementation and seek to understand which is most relevant. We will consider each of these three explanations in turn.

Table 1: Competing Drivers of Diversity Management Implementation

<i>Driver</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Theoretical Basis</i>
Environmental threat or uncertainty	School districts implement diversity management as a means of fending off a diversity related threat in the environment (e.g., increasing student/teacher diversity) or as a means of buffering against environmental uncertainty (e.g., the <i>potential</i> for diversity related threats)	Contingency theory (Lawrench and Lorsch, 1967), “racial threat hypothesis” (Key, 1949), strategy content (Boyne and Walker, 2004; Miles and Snow, 1978)
Environmental favorability	School districts implement diversity management because they are already performing well in other areas, have the funds with which to do so, and/or have significant political support in place	Resource munificence (Dess and Beard, 1983), capacity (Aldrich, 1979), “contact hypothesis” (Allport, 1954)
Environmental adaptation	School districts implement diversity management because of professional norms or encouragement from other actors in the external environment	Institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 2003)

A number of environmental shocks and threats could lead an organization to implement diversity management. Indeed, diversity strategies often hinge on environmental and contextual factors (Hicklin, 2007). Organizations operating in environments of changing demographics are probably most likely to see diversity oriented conflict and, as a result, are in a position where diversity management cannot be avoided. The “power-threat” argument in political science research has shown that as the size of ethnic minority groups increases, the hostility of the group in power escalates (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Key, 1949; Oliver and Wong, 2003). Extending this argument to public education, it seems that conflict, and the need for diversity management, might be greatest in school districts with a sudden and recent influx of new students of color.

Diversity management could also be necessary in school districts with a number of new teachers of color, although demographic changes among teachers are most certainly more incremental and easier to manage than those among students. To use O'Toole and Meier's (1999) language, diversity management would be vital in any organization experiencing an "environmental shock" that reflected a dimension of diversity, such as race or ethnicity. Put in Miles and Snow's (1978) verbiage, this approach would be that of a *reactor* – an organization that does not proactively manage environmental forces, but rather waits until the pressures cannot be avoided.

Similarly, organizations may implement diversity management as a means of fending off environmental uncertainty. While organization theorists may debate its utility (Hall, 2002), contingency theory suggests that organizations behave in ways that reduce environmental uncertainty (Aldrich and Mindlin, 1978; Galbraith, 1973; Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967). Research has begun to examine strategy and environmental alignment in public organizations, finding mixed results when it comes to whether proactive, reactive, or defensive alignment to environmental changes is most effective (Andrews et al., 2006; Boyne and Walker, 2004; Goerdel, 2006; Meier et al., 2007). Environmental turbulence can have profound effects on an organization's health, including potentially negative impacts on employee morale and productivity (Golden, 2000; Meyer, 1979; Rubin, 1985). Understanding these negative consequences, organizations may choose to decrease this turbulence where they can, and diversity management is one approach that can be used to suppress conflict and promote a sense of stability or certainty. If diversity is one potential threat or shock, then a diversity management program can make an organization confident that it is doing all that it can to address it.

A second explanation behind diversity management implementation is quite different: the environment does not *require* it in the form of shocks or threats, but rather *promotes* it through

the munificence of resources, time, and intergroup harmony. Organization theorists have long established that capacity (Aldrich, 1979) and resource munificence (Dess and Beard, 1984) play a large role in determining whether an organization will choose to implement a new program or policy. Research on organizational innovation and change suggests that slack resources provide a climate where programs like diversity management are more likely to prosper (Fernandez and Pitts, 2007a; Fernandez and Rainey, 2006). If resources are plentiful, the rules for adoption become more relaxed, meaning that potentially contentious programs like diversity management are more likely to be accepted. Limited research specific to diversity management suggests that financial resources are key to implementation success (Pitts, 2008b).

In addition to financial resources, time can play a role in creating new programs. For public school districts, this means whether or not other goals must take priority over diversity. School districts that are already performing well on standardized tests, graduating students, and sending graduates to college have the luxury of creating a diversity management program. On the other hand, school districts with high dropout rates and more fundamental education problems may have to handle those crises first. If one assumes that the amount of time a school district can spend on goals is fixed, then it carries that districts that are already performing well in other areas would be able to devote more attention to diversity management. Finally, the “contact hypothesis” suggests that inter-group harmony improves as the number of “out” groups increases and contact between different ethnic groups becomes more frequent (Allport, 1954; Welch and Sigelman, 2000). It is possible that a harmonious environment, marked by significant “out” groups and general inter-group tolerance, will be more likely to implement diversity management because of a general political will and social desirability.

Our third explanation for diversity management implementation is based in institutional isomorphism, where organizations in the same field gradually adapt to the same norms (Aldrich, 1979; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; March and Olsen, 1989). This isomorphism can take place for a number of reasons, but chief among them for diversity management would be mimetic and normative forces (Scott, 2003). Mimetic forces might encourage an organization to change because the change is culturally supported and helps to reduce uncertainty in the environment. On the other hand, normative forces would encourage an organization to change out of duty or obligation, with the primary motivation being moral. These mimetic and normative forces are often very strong - Durant (2000) argues that isomorphism occurs with public sector reform even when organizations do not completely understand the reform itself. When it comes to diversity management, we anticipate that these forces could affect the organization through two mechanisms – the mimetic force encountered as managers interact with similar organizations, and the normative influence seen through the manager’s educational socialization, as graduate programs in education have recently incorporated issues of diversity management into the curriculum.

Data and Method

We use data from the public education policy setting in order to explore these three competing drivers of diversity management implementation. Public education organizations provide an interesting laboratory for investigating diversity management. They are highly professionalized with strong norms and values, which makes diversity management more likely to be implemented there than in policy settings with less professional training and socialization. Public education organizations tend to be relatively flat and invest significant discretion in street-

level bureaucrats. Given research that demonstrates the significant influence that bureaucrat ethnicity can wield on student outcomes (Meier et al., 2000, 2006; Pitts, 2005; Pitts and Jarry, 2007), diversity management is particularly vital to organizational performance in public schools. Since our dataset includes 1 out of every 14 school districts in the United States, we believe that we have captured a reasonable component of a policy setting where diversity management is a vital and salient function.

The data for this analysis are drawn from the most recent survey in the series of superintendent surveys that constitute the Texas School District Dataset (see, e.g., Meier and O’Toole, 2001). Data requirements for this project are high, given the need for both organizational and environmental variables that are often difficult to measure or obtain. Despite widespread use of Texas education data in public management research, we argue that these data provide one of the few opportunities to systematically examine diversity management, and thus are particularly useful in this line of work.

In 2007, Meier and O’Toole conducted the fourth wave of the Texas superintendent management survey, which included a new battery of questions on diversity management. This survey was sent to 1,110 school districts, 757 of whom responded, producing a 68% response rate. After omitting cases with missing data, we generated 585 useable responses. The survey data are paired with data collected by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) from the 2006 “Snapshot,” a yearly publication with basic data on school district characteristics.

We use OLS regression with robust standard errors to estimate our model.¹ In the section below, we identify all of the variables that we use in the analysis. The theory on which we base

¹ Our dependent variable is the average of two ordinal variables that range from 1 to 4. Possible scores range from 2 to 8, with scores falling at seven different cutpoints (2.0, 2.5, 3.0, and so on). By combining two ordinal scales into one, we make the implicit assumption that the data are interval, so there is no reason to use anything other than OLS to estimate our model.

our work does not suggest interactive or curvilinear relationships, so all of these variables are included as additive terms. Multicollinearity does not appear to be a problem. However, we do recognize the potential for endogeneity. For example, it is possible that diversity management influences some of our explanatory variables, such as non-white teachers and harmonious inter-group relations. Endogeneity is almost always a problem in management research, given the reciprocal nature of management relationships, but in the immediate case we do not have data available to create instrumental variables and use a more advanced analysis. Since dropping these variables from the analysis does not seem to affect the other findings, we chose to maintain our model despite the potential for some minor endogeneity.

Variables

Diversity Management

Our dependent variable is constructed by combining responses to two questions on the survey, each of which considers the extent to which superintendents are active in diversity management (Table 2). For these two questions, superintendents are asked to rank the extent to which they agree with the two statements -- “There are special programs in place in my district to manage diversity among principals, teachers, and staff,” and “Promoting under-represented groups to positions of authority is a priority in my district,” -- on a four-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” These questions measure all three aspects of diversity management discussed in the review of the literature above. The first question measures whether there are values-oriented programs and pragmatic policies in place, and the second question taps into recruitment and outreach. We combine these two measures by averaging the responses to generate one measure of diversity management. The distribution of responses on the dependent

variable was fairly broad, with meaningful percentages at both ends of the scale and the bulk of respondents in the middle (Table A1).

Table 2: Variable Operationalization

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Variables</i>
Diversity management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “There are special programs in place in my district to manage diversity among principals, teachers, and staff” (superintendent survey) - “Promoting under-represented groups to positions of authority is a priority in my district” (superintendent survey)
Environmental threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of non-white teachers (TEA) - Percentage of non-white students (TEA)
Environmental uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “There is a great deal of uncertainty in the environment in which my district operates” (superintendent survey)
Environmental favorability: resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Average revenue per pupil (TEA)
Environmental favorability: capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School district enrollment (TEA) - Superintendent’s years employed in the district (superintendent survey) - “How would you rate the quality of professional development in your district?” (superintendent survey) - “Our district is always among the first to adopt new ideas and practices” (superintendent survey)
Environmental favorability: culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Index of two variables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “In my district, employees generally value ethnic and cultural differences” (superintendent survey) “I would characterize relations between diverse groups in my district as harmonious” (superintendent survey)
Environmental adaptation: socialization by education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Superintendent education (superintendent survey) - Years since superintendent’s highest degree earned (superintendent survey)
Environmental adaptation: socialization by networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Factor score of responses on 10 networking dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Indicate how frequently you interact with individuals in the following groups: school board members, teachers’ associations, parent groups, local business leaders, other superintendents, federal education officials, state legislators, Texas Education Agency, City/County Government, Local police/fire departments” (superintendent survey)

Environmental Threat and Uncertainty

Our first competing driver of diversity management speculates that the decision to engage in these programs may be a function of threats or uncertainty in the environment. We measure this environmental threat and uncertainty in three ways. We include two variables, taken from TEA, that measure the percentages of students of color and teachers of color. This permits us to gauge the extent to which the organization must address critical demographic needs. We conjecture that organizations with large percentages of people of color will see diversity management as an important and necessary response to these environment characteristics. Not surprisingly, the average district was more diverse along student lines than among teachers (Appendix A1). Our third variable is a measure of organizational uncertainty, which we also draw from the survey. This variable measures the extent to which the superintendent agrees with the statement, “There is a great deal of uncertainty in the environment in which my district operates.” Responses vary across the four categories of agreement and are only slightly positively skewed.

Environmental Favorability

The second explanation links diversity management efforts to factors that would contribute to a more favorable environment for diversity management efforts, hypothesizing that organizations engage in diversity management when it is easiest to do so. We include six measures that tap into factors that should make it easier to pursue diversity initiatives. First, we include a measure of the extent to which the organizational is already “diversity-friendly.” While one might expect that organizations with less tension among various groups would have less need for diversity programs, a key factor in organizational change is political support

(Fernandez and Rainey, 2006), which will be highest when the organization is already diverse and managing inter-group relations effectively. This measure is constructed by combining responses to two survey questions: “I would characterize relations between diverse groups in my district as harmonious,” and “In my district, employees generally value ethnic and cultural differences.”

We also include two variables that tap into the organization’s capacity to deal with change. One of these variables, a measure of capacity to innovate, is drawn from a question that asks superintendents to rate the extent to which the school district is often among the first districts to adopt new ideas. The second measure is a basic rating of the quality of the professional development in the district. This variable taps into the concept of slack resources, since districts with large professional development programs are those that are most likely to have the slack resources necessary to implement a program like diversity management. Our other measures of resources include financial wealth (measured as the revenue per pupil), managerial tenure in the organization (the number of years the superintendent has been employed by the district), and organizational size (enrollment), as we would expect that larger organizations may have greater capacity to implement cross-cutting programs.

Environmental Adaptation

Our third competing driver speculates that the likelihood of a manager to implement diversity management programs will be a function of the norms to which he or she is exposed. We are particularly interested in the possibility that the education and socialization of managers may be a key explanatory factor in diversity management, as many graduate programs in education have recently incorporated issues related to diversity management into the curriculum.

To explore the effect of professional norms, we include two measures: whether the superintendent holds a doctorate (a dichotomous variable where “1” represents having a doctorate), and the time since the superintendent has received the most recent degree (measured in years). We would anticipate that those with doctorates and those who have completed graduate work more recently would be more likely to hold those norms that would lead the manager to pursue diversity initiatives.

Finally, we are also interested in exploring whether exposure to other organizations is positively related to diversity management. Here, we hypothesize that as managers become more engaged in their environment, including interactions with other districts and local organizations, they will be more likely to engage in diversity management. Our measure of interaction with other groups is a factor score that combines the level of activity between the superintendent and the superintendent’s network, a measure that has been used in a number of previous studies (see, e.g., Hicklin, 2004; Meier and O’Toole, 2001; Fernandez and Pitts, 2007b). This factor score includes the level of interaction with other superintendents, teachers associations, parent groups, local business leaders, federal education officials, state legislators, TEA, city and county government, and local police and fire departments.

Findings

Results from our data analysis are presented in Table 3. Our variables comprising the three competing motivations behind diversity management jointly accounted for roughly 24% of the variation in the dependent variable. While this is not a substantial and groundbreaking percentage, we are satisfied with it given that many of our variables reflect behaviors that are

difficult to measure and are often a bit noisy. We explain our findings on each of the three competing drivers examined below.

Table 3: Determinants of Diversity Management Implementation

Dependent Variable: Diversity Management Efforts

Percent Non-White Teachers	-0.007*	}	Environmental Threat and Uncertainty
	(3.54)		
Percent Non-White Students	0.007*		
	(5.39)		
Environmental Uncertainty	0.081*		
	(2.48)		
Diversity-Friendly Environment	0.159*	}	Environmental Favorability
	(2.78)		
District First to Adopt New Ideas	0.105*		
	(2.78)		
Quality of Professional Development	0.120*		
	(3.78)		
Revenue per Pupil	0.000		
	(0.46)		
Years Employed in District	0.006*		
	(2.63)		
Enrollment	0.009*		
	(4.29)		
Superintendent Holds a Doctorate	0.094	}	Environmental Adaptation
	(1.91)		
Years Since Highest Degree Earned	-0.001		
	(0.618)		
Time Spent Networking (Factor Score)	0.101*		
	(3.73)		
Constant	0.879*		
	(3.88)		

N	585
R-squared	0.24

* Significant at the .05 level. T scores in parentheses.

Evidence is mixed for our first hypothesis linking environmental threat and uncertainty to diversity management implementation. For environmental uncertainty, we see a positive and statistically significant relationship, indicating that organizations in environments of uncertainty are more likely to implement diversity management than others. For environmental threat, however, our results are split. While our analysis indicates that increases in minority students do have a positive, significant relationship with diversity management, we find that increases in minority teachers do not. Unexpectedly, an increase in minority teachers – the group most closely tied to many diversity management programs and efforts – is negatively related to diversity management. This gives us reason to doubt that diversity management efforts trend closely with where they are most needed. However, in the light of the theory used to build these three explanations for diversity management, it makes sense that student diversity would play a larger role in predicting diversity management implementation. This hypothesis reflects conditions in the organization's environment, and there are simply many more students than teachers in number. If an organization is prompted to act on the basis of a perceived threat, then it makes sense that a threat would be perceived as strongest if it reflected a larger pool of individuals over which the organization had no control. The organization controls its pool of teachers and can keep track of its non-white composition fairly closely. On the other hand, at least in public education, organizations do not control their pools of students, and perceptions of a diversity-oriented threat could rise from greater ambiguity.

Also, while it may seem surprising that districts with the largest percentage of non-white teachers are not those that are implementing diversity management, it is important to keep some of our control variables in mind. The model controls for whether inter-group relations in the district are harmonious and whether cultural differences are appreciated. If a school district is

relatively stable and harmonious, then it may be less likely to implement diversity management because its large corps of non-white teachers engages in informal, bottom-up diversity management instead. This relationship warrants further exploration.

Taking our second set of potential explanations for diversity management, we find strong support for our hypothesis that environmental favorability affects diversity management implementation. Our measure of the extent to which the organization is already “diversity-friendly” offers a direct test of whether these programs are implemented because they are needed or because it is easier for the organization to engage in diversity management efforts. If diversity management were more likely to be pursued when relations among racial groups were tense, we would expect a negative relationship between “diversity-friendly” environments and diversity management efforts. Instead, we find a positive, significant, and strong relationship between the environment and management efforts².

We find further support for our second hypothesis with the capacity variables. Our findings show that the innovativeness of the district, the quality of professional development, the manager’s tenure in the organization, and the size of the district are all positively and significantly related to diversity management efforts. This is not surprising, since one would expect innovative districts to have built-in capacity to introduce new programs like diversity management. One would also expect superintendents with longer tenure in the district to be more likely to introduce diversity management, since they will be more familiar with the district’s culture and needs. In addition, larger districts seem to be more likely to engage in diversity management, likely at least partially due to the economies of scale that they enjoy. Interestingly,

² We were concerned that, given the close relationship of the “diversity-friendly environment” variable to the dependent variable, the environment measure may be driving the results. To examine this possibility, we also ran our models without the environment measure, which produced results almost identical to the full model, with only a 2% drop in the r-squared.

our measure of resource munificence – average revenue per pupil – was not statistically significant. This provides some evidence that it is more important for an organization to have capacity for introducing a program like diversity management than it is for it to have slack financial resources. Perhaps diversity management just isn't that expensive, but there does not seem to be conclusive research about its costs (Kellough and Naff, 2004).

Environmental favorability seems to be a strong determinant of diversity management, with significant evidence that inter-group relations in the environment and capacity are key drivers of implementation. Our results indicate that financial resources do not seem to be as important, which could indicate that diversity management does not require as much in the way of fiscal resources as other types of organizational change. Future research should consider whether or not financial issues are relevant factors for diversity management implementation.

Our final hypothesis, that environmental adaptation explains the implementation of diversity management programs, fails to gain substantial support. The findings are mixed. Our analysis yields no support for the idea that a superintendent's educational background is a key determinant in diversity management, as the coefficient for holding a doctorate is both substantively small and is not statistically significant. Time since attaining the advanced degree is also insignificant. This indicates that environmental adaptation does not seem to explain diversity management implementation, at least when it comes to socialization through education. These results show that, if normative and mimetic forces encourage diversity management implementation, then they are not doing so through a manager's formal education.

However, we do find partial support for our third competing hypothesis: networking is positive and statistically significant. Superintendents who spend time managing their networks are more likely to lead organizations that implement diversity management than those who spend

time on internal issues. Perhaps environmental adaptation *is* an important driver of diversity management implementation, but it simply takes place through networks, not through education. Alternatively, the finding on this variable could actually reflect the relevance of resources for diversity management adoption. This networking variable, as mentioned before, has been used in number of management studies and is found to be strongly linked to organizational performance. Several scholars in this area have linked networking to performance by arguing that this networking function is primarily an effort to exploit resources and buffer shocks to the organization (Hicklin et al., 2006; Meier and O’Toole, 2001). Although we originally hypothesized that networking would be the mechanism by which managers would adopt norms, it may actually be another measure of organizational resources. More research is needed on how environmental adaptation operates in public school districts, and focused inquiry on isomorphism would shed a great deal of light on how organizations become similar with regard to programs like diversity management.

Conclusion

These findings demonstrate that a mix of these three motivations – environmental threat and uncertainty, environmental favorability, and environmental adaptation – are key drivers of diversity management. As with most things, there is not one clear explanation, but rather a subtle combination of explanations that seems to drive behavior. Environmental favorability appears to be the most noteworthy factor, where a harmonious environment and capacity for change seem to strongly encourage diversity management implementation. Environments with threats and uncertainty – specifically, those with large percentages of non-white students and a high level of perceived uncertainty – are also likely to promote diversity management. On the other hand,

there is limited support for a conclusion that environmental adaptation is important. Mimetic and normative forces do not seem to operate through education. Our finding that network management relates to diversity management suggests that isomorphism may find its roots more in external management than in core, education-based socialization. However, it is not clear whether our finding on this variable reflects this sort of socialization or a desire to tap financial resources.

These findings raise some concerns about the nature of diversity management. Previous evidence has established that the increasing diversity of the workforce can have negative consequences if the diversity is not properly managed (Pitts, 2008a). Here we find that there seems to be either no relationship or even a negative relationship between the increase in minority staff and the implementation of diversity programs. Our most direct link between a demonstrated need for diversity management and actual implementation of diversity management yields a negative relationship. As noted above, it is likely that our control variables drive this negative relationship, but it should be unpacked further in future research.

Instead, we find that it is the most advantaged organizations that engage in diversity management. This results in an interesting but problematic “catch-22” where diversity management is intended to improve the organizational culture, yet a healthy (or diversity-friendly) organizational culture seems to be a prerequisite for the implementation of diversity management. In short, those who need it don’t have it, and those who have it don’t need it.

These conclusions also offer new directions for further research into the nature of diversity management. First, it seems that diversity management has yet to become a “core” management function, as these findings would lead us to conclude that organizations only engage in diversity management when they can “afford” to do so. The question then turns to the

temporal element. As diversity management becomes more prevalent in our society, will we see a general increase in its implementation across organizations? If so, what would be the mechanism for this increase? Our findings would lead us to believe that formal education and training made not be the most effective mechanism.

Secondly, we also must consider the possibility that diversity management is not (and maybe even cannot be) a “top-down” management function. Instead, our findings could lead us to speculate that diversity management may be a bottom-up process. We may find that as organizations become more innovative and more accepting of differences among employees, managers will be able to become more proactive in implementing formal diversity initiatives.

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Appendix
Table A1: Descriptive Statistics³

Dependent Variable Components

“There are special programs in place in my district to manage diversity among principals, teachers, and staff.”

Strongly Agree	74	13%
Tend to Agree	298	51%
Tend to Disagree	183	31%
Strongly Disagree	30	5%

“Promoting under-represented groups to positions of authority is a priority in my district.”

Strongly Agree	49	8%
Tend to Agree	238	41%
Tend to Disagree	267	46%
Strongly Disagree	31	5%

Independent Variables	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Percent Non-White Teachers	13.53	0	95.2
Percent Non-White Students	40.78	0.6	99.8
Environmental Uncertainty	2.07	1	4
Diversity-Friendly Environment	3.12	1.5	4
District First to Adopt New Ideas	2.66	1	4
Quality of Professional Development	3.80	1	5
Revenue per Pupil	7848.70	3739	40175
Years Employed in District	9.51	0	44
Enrollment	4096.94	14	160969
Superintendent Holds a Doctorate	0.34	0	1
Years Since Highest Degree Earned	18.55	0	54
Time Spent Networking (Factor Score)	0.07	-2.55	4.39

³ The data presented in this appendix represent only those respondents for whom we had complete data and were included in the full statistical analysis.