ORGANIZATIONAL ASSIMILATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS
by
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Assimilation and Demographics

Fine (1996) argues that the most pressing challenge of our time is the challenge created by the increasing cultural diversity of the U.S. workforce. Despite this statement, and statistics which project a nearly 20% increase in the minority workforce from 18% to 37% during 1980-2020 (Nat'l Center, 2005), there is limited research on how a member's race-ethnicity affects perceived levels of organizational assimilation.

Weick's (1979) Organizational Information Theory (OIT) was used to assess factors that may lead to information equivocality and lower degrees of assimilation for people of color in the workplace. This study analyzed the responses of organizational members who completed a survey questionnaire designed to determine if equivocality affects their perceptions of assimilation. Equivocality prevents organizations from functioning effectively and achieving their goals.

Hofstede's (1991) cultural dimensions: 1) power distance, 2) individualism, 3) masculinity, 4) uncertainty avoidance, and 5) long-term orientation, racial-ethnic cultural identification (Cox, 1993), and assimilation dimensions (familiarity with others, acculturation, recognition, and involvement) (Myers and Ozetel, 2003) were used to examine racial-ethnic differences in assimilation of people of color versus their White counterparts.

Three conclusions are offered. First, assimilation was significantly and positively correlated to the convergence of perceptions of the importance of collectivism by individuals and their employer organizations. Second, differences in perceptions of the employee's value of collectiveness and the organization's value of it were positively related to equivocality. Finally, and contrary to expectations, people of color with high racial identification reported feeling more acculturated to the organization than their White counterparts with low/medium racial identification.

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (2005) projects that by 2020, 37% of U.S. workers will consist of Americans whose racial/ethnic origins are African, Hispanic, Asian, Native, and Pacific Islander, and those of mixed race/ethnicity. If organizations are going to be successful in an environment that is no longer majority White, they must have a goal to successfully assimilate members of all racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Chapter 1 – Literature Review

Introduction

Fine (1996) argues that the most pressing challenge of our time is the challenge

created by the increasing racial/ethnic diversity of the U.S. workforce. Despite this

statement, and statistics which project a nearly 20% increase in the people of color

workforce from 18% to 37% during 1980-2020 (Nat'l Center, 2005) there is limited

research on how a member's race/ethnicity affects perceived levels of organizational

assimilation. While much of the assimilation research has focused on newcomers

(Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Hess, 1993; Louis, 1980), and the strategies (Allen & Meyer,

1990; Van Maanan & Schein, 1979) processes (Jablin, 2001), and content used to

transform them into organizational members (Chao, O'Leary, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner,

1994; Taormina, 1999), it is important to understand demographic differences that may

affect employee assimilation throughout their organizational tenure. Interaction among

people from different race/ethnic groups can bring out counter-productive attitudes and

behaviors (Cox, 1993; Jones, 1986; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormly, 1990).

Varying belief systems and cultural differences, may cause frustration,

misunderstandings, and confusion within the workplace, preventing people of color from

assimilating into an organization to the degree experienced by their White peers (Myers

& Shenoy, 2006).

Weick's (1979) Organizational Information Theory (OIT) is an appropriate

framework to assess factors that may lead to information equivocality and lower degrees

of assimilation for people of color in the workplace. The theory explains how

organizations make sense of and use information in order to be successful (Weick, 1979).

Weick uses the term equivocality to explain that organizational information is often

complicated, uncertain, and ambiguous. Organizational information theory can illumine

racioethnic-based factors, such as cultural dimensions and cultural identification that lead

to equivocality, so that organizational leaders can assess and adjust assimilation practices

in order to improve assimilation for people of color.

This study will analyze the responses of organizational members who completed a

survey questionnaire designed to determine if equivocality affects their perceptions of

assimilation. The results will assist the efforts of communication scholars, practitioners,

and human resource professionals.

Organizational Assimilation

Voluntary employee turnover is of great concern to human resource professionals

due to financial and productivity costs. Several factors that affect turnover include job

satisfaction, role stress, leader-member exchange, and pay (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner,

2000). The successful integration of members into an organization, known in

communication research as assimilation, has shown to reduce employees' propensity to

leave an organization (Busch & Bush, 1978; Baltis, 1980). Organizational assimilation

describes "the processes by which individuals become integrated into the culture of an

organization" (Jablin, 2001, p. 755). Assimilation consists of two interrelated processes

that include efforts by the organization to socialize employees and employees' efforts to

individualize their roles and work environments to better satisfy their values, attitudes,

and needs (Jablin, 2001). The essence of successful assimilation is to orient and mold

employees into productive members (Chao, O'Leary, Wolf, Klein, & Gardnerer, 1994) and bring stability and continuity to the organization (VanMaanen & Schein, 1979).

Assimilation Components

Measurement of assimilation components is a relatively recent development with the creation and validation of Myers and Ozetel's (2003) Organizational Assimilation Index (OAI). OAI evaluates organizational member assimilation by examining aspects of the dual organization-member processes. The OAI consists of items grouped into six dimensions of assimilation: familiarity with others, acculturation, recognition, involvement, job competency, and adaptation and role negotiation. The first dimension, familiarity with others, comprises how a member relates to their colleagues at work and includes components such as feeling comfortable with coworkers, learning how to interact with coworkers, expressing an opinion at meetings, receiving emotional support from organizational members, and "generally feeling a sense of community" (Myers & Oetzel, 2003, p. 443).

Acculturation according to Myers and Oetzel (2003) is "learning and accepting the culture" (p. 443), understanding what to do and what not to do according to organizational norms. A member who violates these norms may be less accepted by coworkers and as a result, feel additional stress on the job. The dimension of recognition consists of a member feeling accepted into their workplace through acknowledgement from peers and managers that they, and their work are valuable to the organization.

Involvement, is an indication of assimilation state Myers and Oetzel (2003), because it consists of members proactively taking on additional work or responsibility for

the good of the collective.   Dimension five is job competency. A members' knowledge

that they know how to accomplish the tasks of their job and their confidence in doing

their job well is also associated with becoming accepted into the organization. Finally,

assimilation is associated with a member's adaptation and role negotiation. Role

negotiation consists of a member compromising between their own expectations and

those of their company. Myers and Oetzel (2003) suggest that adaptation is more

compromise on the part of the member to modify their expectations for the sake of the

organziations. The six dimensions offer one way to assess member assimilation.

Another means to gauge employee assimilation involves quantifying specific individual

and organizational outcomes.

Assimilation Outcomes

Scholars have identified several outcomes that measure the assimilation of

organizational members. In particular, assimilation is positively correlated to job

satisfaction (Taormina, 1999, 2004; Anderson, Martin, & Riddle, 2001), organizational

identification (Bullis & Bach, 1989; Cheney, 1983; Van Dick, et al., 2004), and

organizational commitment (Taormina, 1999, 2004; Anderson, Martin, & Riddle, 2001;

Myers & McPhee, 2006), and negatively correlated with propensity to leave (Baltis,

1980; Busch, & Bush, 1978). In other words, employees who are successfully assimilated

have positive feelings about their job and their employer, strongly consider the values and

interests of their organization when making decisions, and are unlikely to cut ties with

their employer.

Evidence suggests that successful assimilation has a powerful impact on several of the above outcomes. Taormina (1999; 2004) found that organizational assimilation has a greater influence on job satisfaction and organizational commitment than demographics such as sex, age, education level, marital status, industry, position, and monthly income. In addition, perceptions of assimilation positively predict job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and satisfaction with the workplace (Anderson, Martin, & Riddle, 2001).

Simply put, job satisfaction is the extent to which employees like or dislike their jobs. Job dissatisfaction may lead to low productivity (Taormina, 1999) and propensity to leave (Baltis, 1980) – costly outcomes for employer organizations. Job satisfaction as an assimilation variable has been defined in quite broad terms. For Taormina (1999), job satisfaction consists of employee satisfaction with coworkers, pay, promotion, supervisors, and the tasks of the position. Taormina's study correlated these facets of satisfaction with components of assimilation such as training received, understanding of the organization, coworker support, and future prospects within their employer companies. Taormina found that the assimilation variables strongly predicted job satisfaction. In other words, employees were satisfied with their jobs when they perceived that their training, understanding of the company, support from coworkers, and future job prospects within the company were adequate.

Organizational identification describes a motivation originating from an individual's membership in an organization to act on behalf of the group because the membership maintains and enhances part of their self-concept (VanDick, et al., 2004).

That is to say, an employee practicing member identification considers their organization's wellbeing when making work-related decisions because the act preserves and builds up their own image of themselves. Organizational identification is an important assimilation outcome because it denotes a member's affective connection to their organization.

Within organizations, identification is an ongoing process for employees that is linked to work attitudes and other outcomes such as job satisfaction, role orientation, job performance, employee interaction, length of service (Cheney, 1983), and citizenship behaviors (Van Dick, Grojean, Christ, & Wieseke, 2006). Limited research specifies that there is a stronger correlation between identification with supervisors versus subordinates (Cheney, 1983) and assimilation is mediated by a member's ability and willingness to identify with their organization (Cox, 1993).

Relevant to the current study are the conflicting results regarding the links between organizational identification and tenure. In his study, Cheney (1983) found that the correlation of tenure to identification is nonlinear and episodic. In other words, identification ebbed and flowed during a member's employment with an organization. However, Bullis and Bach (1989) reported that identification decreases with tenure, and in further contrast, tenure is positively related to organizational identification according to Barker and Tompkins (1994) and Schrodt (2002).

Propensity to leave describes the likelihood that a member will leave an organization (Lyons, 1971). As an outcome of assimilation, it can be used to measure potential turnover. Several scholars state that a member who is not successfully

assimilated will probably depart the organization (Busch & Bush, 1978; Baltis, 1980). Several outcomes of assimilation, namely job satisfaction (Busch & Bush, 1978), role clarity (Busch & Bush, 1978) and organizational clarity (Baltis, 1980), are negatively related to propensity to leave the organization, while role ambiguity is positively related to propensity to leave (Baltis, 1980). That is to say, if a member is satisfied in their job, has the information they need to perform their job, and perceives that their work environment is organized, it is unlikely that they will leave.

Weick's (1979) organizational information theory and its focus on information equivocality, is directly related to assimilation and the outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational identification, organizational commitment and propensity to leave. If propensity to leave is positively impacted by role clarity and organizational clarity, and negatively impacted by role ambiguity, we can deduce that higher levels of equivocality may lead to propensity to leave.

Assimilation is Ongoing

As Weick (1979) posits, change is inevitable, and organizations must adapt to survive. Organizational members must also continually assimilate, according to a number of scholars. Outside forces such as economic flux, mergers, and downsizing, and personnel changes that involve newcomers, job transitions such as transfers and promotions, and a demographically altered workforce, can present environmental challenges for employees. Van Maanen and Schein (1979), state that an individual's entire career with an organization can be described as a process of assimilation, full of episodes that bring anxiety and change. "The problems of organizational assimilation

refer to any and all passages undergone by members of an organization…Nonetheless, a period of assimilation accompanies each passage. From this standpoint, organizational assimilation is ubiquitous, persistent, and forever problematic" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 6).

Subsequent communication scholars agree that assimilation is an ongoing, irregular process for all employees, newcomers and incumbents (Chao, et al., 1994; Kramer, 1993; Myers, 2005; Myers & Oetzel, 2003; Waldeck, Seibold, & Flanagin, 2004).

The extent to which one feels him or herself to be a valuable part of an organization is likely to vary over time in accordance with unmet expectations, environmental shifts, changes in responsibility, promotions, burnout, and a wide variety of experiences that constitute organizational life (Myers & Oetzel, 2003, p. 439).

As an ongoing process, assimilation can be measured at any point during an employee's organizational membership. The assimilation process involves members continually learning and adapting to changes within their organizations and organizational environments (Waldeck, Seibold, & Flanagin, 2004) and concurrently defining their roles in an attempt to affect their organizations (Jablin, 2001).

Assimilation during different types of change has been assessed considering conditions and relationships within workgroups (Myers, & McPhee, 2006), job transfers (Kramer, 1993), and job promotions (Kramer, & Noland, 1999). All three studies

illustrate how communication is critical to facilitating change at the organizational and individual levels (Waldeck, Seibold, & Flanagin, 2004).

In their analysis researching assimilation within highly interdependent firefighter workgroups, Myers and McPhee (2006) found that much of assimilation occurs at the interpersonal and group level, rather than the organizational level. These types of workgroups are particularly likely to exert more member influence on assimilation because activities that require high levels of coordination may create stronger connections within the group. Myers and McPhee indicate that involvement and trust predicted commitment and acceptance. In other words, within interdependent workgroups, mutual adjustment of members is crucial. Environment conditions and/or membership changes can alter the level of trust and commitment among members, their assimilation, and ultimately their performance together.

Kramer (1993) found that transferring employees have a unique assimilation experience with two distinct phases. Before leaving a post, transferees engage in 'passing the baton' communication, which facilitates the adjustment process by reducing uncertainty for themselves, their coworkers, and their organization. Transferees reduce uncertainty by completing tasks, passing along procedural information, and explaining the rationale for the transfer. At their new site, transferees' reduce their uncertainty by engaging in communication with their peers on topics such as work procedures and the work environment, as well as personal background information and interests. Organizational rituals such as farewell parties and welcome tours are also communication vehicles for reducing uncertainty for transferring employees.

Kramer and Noland's (1999) research identifies three developmental stages that members experiencing a promotion undergo as they assimilate to their new positions. Similar to newcomers and transferees, recently promoted members endure pre-promotion, shifting, and adjustment. Pre-promotion encompasses preparation for advancement through selection and transitioning to the new position. This process includes the initiation of changing work relationships where former peers may become subordinates, or a former supervisor becomes a peer. Shifting includes the period where the promoted member receives training and engages in information seeking and feedback. Finally, in the adjustment phase, the promoted member becomes confident and comfortable in their ability to perform their new role. Key to promotion-related assimilation is the development of new communication relationships and skills such as delegating tasks and providing instructions, when to share or guard information from subordinates, and how to communicate authority.

Weick (1979) states that the constant state of organizational change brings with it large amounts of information that the organization must decipher and use. Some of this information is equivocal – complicated and ambiguous. Sensemaking is Weick's term that explains the process by which members create understanding and are able to use information. According to Weick, sensemaking occurs through organizing, a "consensually validated grammar for reducing equivocality by means of sensible interlocked behaviors" (1979, p. 3). In other words, sensemaking is a means to create order and clarity out of the complications and ambiguities of change.

Louis (1980) created a model to understand the processes of newcomers'

sensemaking within their organization. Louis contends, "change, contrast, and surprise

constitute major features of the entry experience" (1980, p. 235). Change is the

difference between a newcomer's former situation and the new situation. Contrast entails

differences in location that a newcomer must adjust to, including physical environment

elements, dress practices, and letting go of old roles. As the third feature, surprise

embodies the difference between newcomers' expectations and actual experiences in the

new organizational environment. It is in these circumstances of surprise that sensemaking

occurs. If sensemaking is not successful for newcomers, it may lead to turnover.

Louis (1980) posits that newcomers are distinct from insiders, or incumbent

employees with respect to sensemaking in three ways. In general, insiders know what to

expect in situations. Second, when insiders experience a surprise, they have more

historical knowledge to make sense of the situation, and finally, when surprises arise,

insiders reach out to other insiders to compare perceptions and interpretations.

Louis (1980) does not claim that incumbent employees are free from surprise and

sensemaking, but rather that they have more information and more channels to seek

information as a result of the time spent as a member of the organization. In the end,

Louis shows us that assimilation, equivocality, and sensemaking are ongoing experiences

for all organizational members.

Organizational information theory helps us to further understand the process of

making sense of equivocal information that comes as a result of change. Weick's (1979)

equivocality is similar to Louis' (1980) concept of surprise. Members experience

surprise when expectations and experiences are incongruent which can lead to confusion,

ambiguity, and uncertainty - equivocality. Weick (1979) states that sensemaking is the

means by which equivocality is diminished through social and individual communication

activity. This communication activity, known as information-seeking, and its

relationship to assimilation is addressed in the following section.

Assimilation and Information-Seeking

Morrison (2002) states that

organizations are institutions characterized by ambiguity, change, and

uncertainty. For employees, these conditions can create discomfort and

anxiety…an important way in which employees can cope with ambiguity

and uncertainty is to seek information (p. 229).

Several studies have helped us to understand the types of information members

seek and the tactics they use. Miller (1989), Morrison (1993), and Miller and Jablin

(1991) identified four types of information: referent - information on role demands and

expectations needed to perform on the job; social – information on the nature of an

individual's relationship with other members; normative – information on the

organization's culture, expected behaviors and attitudes; and appraisal – feedback on a

member's successful functioning on the job.

Miller and Jablin (1991) identified that newcomers use one or more of seven

tactics to gather information: overt, indirect, third party, testing, disguising conversations,

observing, and surveillance. Overt – involves asking in a direct manner; Indirect –

involves engaging others to provide information using clues; Third party – consists of

asking another member rather than the main information object; Testing – entails purposefully performing incorrectly in order to observe the object's reaction; Disguising conversations – involves the use of humor or verbal triggers to obtain information from the object without their awareness; Observing – consists of watching someone's actions in order to model behavior and distinguish meaning connected to events; and Surveillance – entails haphazardly monitoring conversations and activities in order to later ascribe meaning to the information.

To further quantify information-seeking, Morrison (1993) created information-seeking scales based upon Ashford's (1986) feedback-seeking behavior measures. Morrison used the scales to determine what types of information newly recruited accountants were seeking, the frequency of their information-seeking, what tactics they used, and from whom they sought the information (supervisor, more experienced accountant, another new accountant). Results of the study indicate that the newcomers primarily sought normative, referent, performance, and social information through observation, but technical information by asking other employees. In addition, they sought normative and social information from their peers, but technical, referent, and performance information from their superiors.

Morrison's (1993) work is meaningful with respect to tenure, a newcomer's perspective, and assimilation outcomes. The study's longitudinal design measured results at three distinct points in time: two weeks after completion of orientation, three months, and six months. The above conclusions were stable over this initial employment period. In addition, Morrison concluded that information seeking is positively correlated to job

satisfaction and performance, and negatively correlated to intentions to leave the organization.

There is conflicting evidence that members use different information-seeking tactics to obtain specific types of information. Similar to Morrison (1993), Comer (1991) concluded that newcomers use monitoring tactics for social information, while Miller (1989) found that newcomers use indirect tactics when seeking social information and overt tactics for referent information. In greater contrast, Teboul (1994) found no relationships between information types and tactics.

However, Teboul's (1999) results detecting racial/ethnic distinctions in information-seeking, are particularly relevant for the current study. The research included White, Asian American (mainland U.S.)/Pacific Islander (Hawaiian American), African American, and Hispanic respondent new hires. Teboul (1999) found that African American and Hispanic newcomers were more likely than Whites and Pacific Islanders to experience social uncertainty. Furthermore, and contrary to expectation, Whites did not report less appraisal uncertainty than their counterparts of color. All respondents reported similar levels of referent uncertainty.

Although the above studies examined the responses of organizational newcomers, evidence suggests that if assimilation is ongoing throughout a member's organizational tenure, information seeking is also ongoing. Uncertainty within an ever-changing workplace will therefore lead employees of all tenures to seek information in order to grasp content, meaning, and understanding. This sensemaking process will in turn impact members' degree of assimilation.

In terms of organizational information theory, information-seeking represents a coping mechanism, and an act of the sensemaking process. As Morrison (1995) describes, "organizations are institutions characterized by ambiguity, change, and uncertainty. For employees, these conditions can create discomfort and anxiety" (p.229). Information-seeking illustrates a desire to understand, to make sense of the workplace environment, in order to assimilate and be productive. Organizational culture represents the elements of the workplace environment, which include accepted attitudes and behaviors. The following section will examine the relationship between assimilation and organizational culture.

Assimilation and Organizational Culture

Since organizational assimilation is the process of integrating members into an organization's culture (Jablin, 2001), understanding the linkages between assimilation and organizational culture are important. An organization's culture is a socially constructed reality that consists of a common set of shared meanings about the entity and its problems, goals, and practices (Reichers & Schneider, 1990). Culture consists of shared knowledge among members of an organization with respect to systems of knowledge, common values, ideologies, norms, and rituals (Smircich & Calas, 1987). Culture also provides order by interpreting information from the environment and creating a frame of reference and system for structuring members' experiences (Pilotta, Widman, & Jasko, 1988). In other words, an organization's culture is a social environment where members share common information, ideals, and ways of thinking

and doing. Communication is the means by which culture is conveyed to members and organizational information is translated through an organization's culture (Hess, 1993).

Both organizational information theory and organizational culture use information seeking to create shared meanings among members. As stated above, culture is shared member knowledge about the organization and how things are done within that organization (Smircich & Calas, 1987). Organizational culture describes and interprets organizational life (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Truillo, 1982). It is Weick's (1979) organizing concept, that organizational culture is created, whereby organizational members create a language of shared meanings.   Organizing is also the means by which an organization adapts to change and the organization's culture evolves.

Relative demographic homogeneity has supported a broad American organizational culture, which has not been one of change, but a rather static phenomena dominated by White male belief systems (Fine, 1996). Current racial/ethnic shifts from a predominantly White workforce to one that will consist of approximately thirty-seven percent people of color by 2020 (Nat'l Center, 2005) poses a challenge for organizations and their members. The workplace is an environment where organizational culture as reflected by the employer, and national culture reflected by the employees, can clash as the workforce becomes more diverse. One possible root of conflict consists of factors that are associated with an individual's national origin.

National Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede (1991) provides a useful framework for us to understand the national culture origins. He describes culture, or rather, people's patterns of thinking, feeling, and

acting, as mental programs, or "software of the mind" (Hofstede, 1991, p. 4). Culture is

learned in childhood, rather than inherited, and culture is always collective because it is

shared with others from the same social environment. Culture therefore helps us to

distinguish one group of people from another.

Hofstede uses an onion diagram to depict the layers of culture. At the core of the

onion are values, followed by rituals, heroes and symbols. Hofstede (1991) explains that

values are broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others.

Values are feelings with an arrow to it: they have a plus and minus side.

They deal with good vs. evil; dirty vs. clean; ugly vs. beautiful; unnatural

vs. natural; abnormal vs. normal; paradoxical vs. logical; and irrational vs.

rational (p. 8).

Values are some of the things a child first learns, they are held unconsciously, and may

be difficult to change after childhood. Also, values, unlike the other layers of the onion,

cannot be observed.

Hofstede conducted groundbreaking research to quantify cultural differences

based upon nations and regions. Using multi-national IBM employees, Hofstede

identified distinctions between cultures in 53 nations and regions (Hofstede, 1980). The

resulting cultural typology measures distinctions between national cultures using four

dimensions: power distance, individualism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance. A

fifth dimension, long-term orientation was added after subsequent research (Hofstede,

1991).

Power distance is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful members of

institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede, 1991, p. 28). High power distance reflects a tolerance of strict hierarchy with some individuals having significant power and others having very little. In Hofstede's research, the U.S. ranked 38 out of 53 nations and multi-country regions studied, indicating low power distance, and in general, a desire for relative equal power distribution. Alternatively, the majority of America's people of color populations come from largely high power distance nations and regions, namely Latin America, Asia, and Africa. For example, Mexico shares ranking number five with Venezuela as high power distance nations.

Individualism refers to "societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family" (Hofstede, 1991, p. 51). The opposite of individualism is collectivism, which relates to "societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which through people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede, 1991, p. 51). Individualist cultures value independence and speaking ones' mind while collectivist cultures value group responsibility, harmony, and loyalty. On Hofstede's (1991) individualism index, the U.S. ranks number one for individualism, while most nations in Latin America, Africa, and Asia rank in the lower half of the index, and are therefore collectivist in nature.

The masculinity dimension describes to what degree a culture values and adheres to traditional male and female roles. A national culture high in masculinity values men that are assertive, strong, and the supplier of income. On the other hand, cultures low in

masculinity feature gender roles that are more equal and value traits such as modesty and sympathy. Japan ranks number one and Mexico number six on Hofstede's (1991) masculinity index, while the U.S. is fifteenth. Alternatively, most of Latin America, Africa, and Asia rank in the lower half of the fifty-three nations/regions, and as a result, are more feminine than masculine with respect to gender roles.

Uncertainty avoidance relates to the amount of anxiety members of a culture feel in uncertain circumstances. A low level of uncertainty avoidance indicates acceptance of risk and valuing differences. According to Hosfstede's (1991) uncertainty avoidance index, the U.S. ranks quite low at the 43rd position of 53 nations and regions studies. In other words, relative to people of other nations, Americans are accepting of risk and relatively confident in uncertain situations. Latin America ranks high to moderate, and much of Africa and Asia are moderate in their uncertainty avoidance rankings.

Hofstede's (1991) fifth cultural dimension long-term orientation, refers to the degree to which long-standing values are important such as perseverance, adapting traditions to contemporary circumstances, thrift, respect for social status, and willingness to subordinate self for a broader purpose. Short-term orientation is identified by values such as protecting individual 'face', a desire for quick results, spending rather than saving, social pressure for spending to keep pace with ones' peers, and respect for traditions. Rather than IBM managers, Hofstede gathered data from undergraduate students in twenty-three nations to create the long-term orientation index. A broad analysis of the data indicates a prominent East-West divide. China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea are the top five ranked nations with long-term orientations,

followed by the only Latin American nation, Brazil. The U.S. is quite short-term oriented, with a rank of seventeen. The top short-term orientation nations are Pakistan, Nigeria, and the Philippines.

To summarize, Hofstede's research concludes that relative to other nations and regions around the world, American culture has relatively low power distance, is highly individualistic, comparatively masculine, rather low in uncertainty avoidance, and reasonably short-term orientated.

Hofstede (1991) compares his national culture typology with organizational culture. He states that while the onion diagram can be applied to both, they are distinct constructs. Organizational culture is in fact "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one organization from another" (Hofstede, 1991, p. 180). Further, national culture is created by socialization within the family and cultural differences reside primarily in values. Alternatively, organizational-level culture is created by socialization in the workplace, and cultural differences reside frequently in practices. In fact, Hofstede (1991) considers "shared perceptions of daily practices" (p. 183) as the core of organizational culture.

Regardless of whether cultural differences are manifested at either the level of values or practices, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are a means for us to understand the challenges of organizational culture and a diversifying workforce. Hofstede presents that founders of organizations are "children of national culture, so the founders' national values appear to be reflected in the values of their organizations, even if the organizations spread internationally" (Hofstede, 1985, p. 349). Every person that joins the organization

after the founder needs to adapt, or rather, assimilate to the organization. If the 'joiners', as Hofstede calls them, are from other cultures, there are likely problems with not only their conflicting value systems, but sociological issues such as discrimination, stereotyping, and role-constrained behavior.

A number of scholars have applied Hofstede's typology to research the impact of varying cultural dimensions within organizational contexts (Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991; Deshpande, Hoyer, & Donthu, 1986; Matsumoto, Meredith, & Masuda, 1970; Tyler, Boykin, Miller, & Hurley, 2006). In sync with Hofstede's (1991) individualism dimension, Cox, Lobel, and McLeod (1991) found that African, Asian, and Latino Americans are more cooperative in their behavior than individuals with Anglo backgrounds. On the job, cooperative behavior runs counter to traditional individualist American culture and may be misconstrued by other members to denote a lack of ability or confidence. For example, this value may translate into Asian employees not engaging in self-promotion behaviors that will lead to career advancement. Similarly, Tyler, Boykin, Miller, and Hurley (2006) identified communal work as a cultural value for African Americans.

Hofstede (1991) discusses the potential distinctions between first, second, and subsequent immigrant generations of Hispanic and Asian respondents with respect to uncertainty avoidance. He posits that levels of uncertainty avoidance may change over generations. Diverse members' attitudes and behaviors may be related to their level of affective affiliation within their racial/ethnic group.

Racial/Ethnic Identification

Racial/ethnic cultural identification denotes their membership within a group that embodies a personal and emotional connecting point with others who share their experiences, worldview, norms, values, and language (Cox, 1993). Group identities help define ourselves and how others perceive us (Cox, 1993). There is substantial evidence that many Hispanic-Americans (Deshpande, Hoyer, & Donthu, 1986), African-Americans (Phinney, 1989), and Asian-Americans (Matsumoto, Meredith, & Masuda, 1970) identify strongly with their minority cultures.

From an organizational culture standpoint, individual differences and group identities may collide with the host culture in the U.S., which is "White male culture, a culture that is not hospitable to those who are different" (Fine, 1996, p. 494). Since organizational culture is a socially constructed reality that includes a common set of shared meanings about the entity, its problems, goals, and practices (Reichers & Schneider, 1990), and shared knowledge of systems, common values, ideologies, norms, and rituals (Smircich & Calas, 1987), it is likely that an increasingly diverse workforce will bring about information equivocality, disharmony, and modifications to organizations and their cultures.

Weick's organizational information theory (1979) is the framework by which organizational change, i.e. cultural change, is facilitated through communication. In order to survive with a more diverse workforce, organizations must rely on communication to create new realities, cultures, and identities (Pearce, 1989) and facilitate change at the organizational and individual levels (Waldeck, Seibold, & Flanagin, 2004). From a state

of equivocality, sensemaking brings about organizing, a new common language of shared

meanings and shared knowledge in order to create a reconstructed organizational culture.

An increasingly diverse workforce may bring challenges for all employees. White

members who have accepted and internalized Majority-based cultural knowledge and

practices may embrace attitudes and behaviors that can create communication barriers

among employees. All members of a diverse workforce may be faced with high levels of

uncertainty about how to work effectively with one another to achieve organizational

goals. Cultural clashes between members and their organizations can lead to increased

stress, conflict in the workplace, absenteeism, performance reduction, and turnover

(Allen, 1995) – all factors that negatively affect an organization's productivity.

Increasing diversity among organizational members may create a new cultural reality

where meanings and member knowledge about values, ideologies, norms, and rituals are

not shared, but rather, inappropriate, outdated, or even discriminatory.

Weick's (1979) organizational information theory prepares us to look at aspects

of organizational change with respect to workforce demographic shifts. Specifically, the

theory leads us to assess equivocality precipitated by divergent cultural factors and its

influence on assimilation. The following section will address the racial/ethnic differences

that lead to equivocality within a diverse workforce, and the impact of these factors on

member assimilation.

Organizational Assimilation and Race/Ethnicity

Demographic Changes

Although researchers have examined many aspects of the organizational

environment and organizational behavior, they have not heeded the words of Fine (1996):

There have been numerous challenges issued to academics to become more

involved in the pressing issue of the day and to demonstrate, in the public arena,

the worth of their studies. The study of cultural diversity and of multicultural

discourse in organizations offers an opportunity for scholars to do that (p.485).

More specifically, Allen (1995) calls for communication scholars to conduct research on

how

differences in employees' racial/ethnic backgrounds can affect formal and

informal organizational communication processes; stereotypes and expectations

based upon others' race/ethnicity may impede effective interaction; and

differences in value systems and cultural norms may influence attitudes,

expectations, perceptions, and language barriers (p. 148).

The comments of Fine (1996) and Allen (1996) convey the reality of U.S. population

statistics, which paint a clear picture of the diverse workplaces of today and tomorrow.

In 1900, the U.S. population was 87.9% White and 11.6% other races. By 2000, Whites

represented 75.1% of the total population and other races, 24.8% (U.S. Census, 2002).

As of 2008, racial/ethnic minorities represented one third of the U.S. population.

Following this upward trend, people of color are estimated to become the majority in

2042, and 54% of the total population in 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). For

organizations, individuals of working age between 18 and 64 are projected to become

more than 50% racial/ethnic minorities in 2039 and 55% by 2050 (U.S. Census, 2008).

This demographic data parallels Fine's (1996) statements that "we can no longer talk about a melting pot nation in which assimilated people share the same history, language, and personal and political values" (p. 494).

Assimilation can be challenging for people of color due in part to culturally-based values and norms that differ from majority-based belief systems. These cultural factors can cause confusion, uncertainty, and equivocality, thereby preventing successful assimilation, reducing worker productivity, and resulting in possible turnover (Allen, 1995).

B*arriers to Assimilation for People of Color*

Growing U.S. diversity makes the demographic variable of race/ethnicity a crucial component to understand organizational assimilation in contemporary organizations. According to Allen (1995), race/ethnicity-based stereotypes and differences (in values, norms, work ethics, etc.) bring further complexity to the already complex process of assimilation.

With respect to members of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds, there is considerable evidence that their organizational assimilation experiences are drastically different from their White counterparts. In fact, as one of the few studies to examine race and assimilation, Myers & Shenoy (2006) found that people of color and women experience more barriers to assimilation. At the organizational level, structural biases (Myers & Shenoy, 2006), and homogenous belief systems (Fernandez, 1981), exist in many organizations, which benefit the assimilation of White male employees, but are disadvantageous to women and people of color. Similarly, White privilege (McIntosh,

1988), Anglo communication style bias (Cox, 1993), Colorism (Jones, 1986), and prejudice, discrimination, and stereotypes (Fernandez, 1981; Cox, 1993; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990) all prevent people of color from assimilating into their organizations.

Using Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) model of assimilation where members become part of their organization by crossing inclusionary, functional, and hierarchical boundaries, Myers and Shenoy (2006) identified evidence of structural bias that negatively affected the assimilation experiences of women and people of color, but not Caucasian males. Van Maanen and Schein posit that individuals become accepted members of an organization when they cross the three boundaries. Functional boundaries involve members moving from one functional area of the organization to another. Members cross hierarchical boundaries when they are promoted through the ranks of the organization, and inclusionary boundaries are those where members are accepted into social networks of the organization.

The four key findings of Myers and Shenoy (2006) are all relevant to this study. First, women and people of color reported barriers to crossing inclusionary boundaries related to adapting to workgroups. In other words, women and people of color found challenges being accepted into their workgroups. Second, "non-native English speakers said that crossing functional and inclusionary boundaries was impeded when Americans paid little attention to their ideas" (p.2). Myers and Shenoy (2006) reported that employees for whom English was not their first language were not asked to give presentations as readily as native English speakers, and their sharing of ideas in meetings

were not taken seriously. Third, women and people of color reported obstacles to crossing hierarchical barriers because White men were the only possible leaders in their organizations. Similar to the finding for non-native English speakers, but much more broadly reported, women and people of color stated that they were not viewed by their White male superiors as potential leaders. Finally, White male participants of the study did not report experiencing the above challenges and largely were unaware of the barriers for women and people of color. The last finding of Myers and Shenoy has been given the name White privilege by at least one scholar.

White privilege is the tendency of Whites to be unaware of their advantages with respect to people of color (McIntosh, 1988). McIntosh describes white privilege as "an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear and blank checks" (p. 3). In the context of organizations, white privilege involves unearned advantages such as individuals feeling welcome and comfortable in the world and their organizations. Most importantly, White privilege conveys systemic power, dominance, and permission to control because of one's race.

Differences in communication styles embodied by particular racial/ethnic groups are a barrier to assimilation for members who are racially-ethnically diverse. Foeman and Pressley (1987) identified distinct dissimilarities between the communication styles of Anglo Americans and African Americans. African American style preference is more assertive than that of Anglos, featuring qualities such as forthrightness, a high level of responsiveness from listeners, and emotive expression. "Forthrightness is expressed in

preference for direct confrontation as method of resolving conflicts, and a high value is placed on the integrity of communication" (Cox, 1993, p. 123).

For non-native English speakers, behavioral communication challenges include speech anxiety (Morishima, 1981), communication modesty or reserve (Cox, 1993), and Anglo communication style bias (Cox, 1993). The presence of communication style bias can mean the dismissal of ideas by non-native English speakers, prevention of public speaking opportunities due to speaking inefficiency, and avoidance of workers with whom communication is challenging, in favor of those who share their primary language.

Nonverbal communication styles can also be an obstacle to assimilation for people of color. Direct eye contact between people of unequal status in some Asian cultures is considered offensive (Cox, 1993), while high eye contact is the preferred communication style for African Americans (Foeman & Pressley, 1987).

Other identified assimilation barriers for people of color are prejudicial and discriminatory behavior based on physical qualities. Jones (1986) uses the word colorism to describe an attitude, a tendency for people to "act favorably toward those with skin color like theirs and unfavorably toward those with different skin color (p. 88)." Jones' three years of research with managers and executives identifies a pattern of unfavorable treatment towards Black organizational members. In addition, Fernandez (1981) reports that variation of skin tone has implications in the workplace where lighter skinned racial/ethnic minorities report less racism than those who appear less euro-American.

Stereotypes likely work with factors like colorism to reinforce negative perceptions of others. In their comparison of Black and white managers, Greenhaus,

Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) found that Black managers "felt less accepted in their organizations, perceived themselves as having less discretion on their jobs, received lower ratings from their supervisors on their job performance and promotability, were more likely to have reached career plateaus, and experienced lower levels of career satisfaction" (p. 64).

The physical, behavioral, and psychological distinctions between cultural groups and negative behaviors practiced as a result of these perceived distinctions, serve as backdrop for an examination of assimilation using organizational information theory. This information helps to define the state of equivocality within organizations with a diverse workforce. It can serve as preliminary content for members to engage in communication processes for organizational sense-making and understanding. A thorough discussion of organizational information theory is presented in the next segment.

Organizational Information Theory

According to Weick (1979), organizations are systems that engage in processes to collect, manage, and use information. Weick's Organizational Information Theory (OIT) explains how organizations make sense of and use information that is confusing and ambiguous in order to be successful.

One of the central assumptions of organizational information theory is that change is inevitable (Weick, 1979). Organizations must adapt to change in order to survive. Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) provide a relevant operational definition of organizational change. They state, that "change is an attempt to alter the current ways of thinking and

acting by the organization's membership (p. 448)", and meaningful change leads to the alteration of existing value and meaning systems.

OIT also assumes that organizations exist in an atmosphere of information. In other words, organizations depend on information in order to function effectively and accomplish their goals (Weick, 1979). In fact, organizations are bombarded by massive amounts of information, which must be processed through their relative information environments (Weick, 1979). The information environment is where all fragments of information are available and organizations must interpret external information and coordinate information to make it meaningful for members within the context of organizational goals (Weick, 1979).

The high volume of information received by organizations can also lead to information equivocality, or rather, multiple interpretations of the information because its' content is complicated, ambiguous and unpredictable (Weick, 1979). Equivocality prevents organizations from functioning effectively and achieving their goals. Organizations engage in various forms of communication to reduce equivocality (Weick, 1979). This communication process is known as sensemaking.

Sensemaking is Weick's (1979) term for creating understanding from equivocality, and a critical component of organizational information theory. Sensemaking is both a social and individual activity that describes how members seek to interpret and ascribe meaning to information and events they don't understand (Weick, 1995). According to Louis (1980), sensemaking is partially due to unmet expectations that interrupt ongoing activity. When members experience events that are different from

their predictions, these events are called "surprises." Surprises trigger a need for understanding and the development of a process to interpret and ascribe meaning to discrepancies. Members experience surprise when expectations and experiences are incongruent which can lead to confusion, ambiguity, and uncertainty - equivocality.

Weick's (1979) organizational information theory is a particularly useful framework to examine communication processes within diverse workplaces because organizational success is reflected in how members communicate on an everyday and ongoing basis. Potential explicit communication challenges with a diverse workforce include issues associated with members who are non-native English speakers (Cox, 1993), and behaviors rooted in varying ethnic-based communication styles (Foeman & Pressley, 1987). Perhaps more significant are the implicit cultural components of members whose experiences, attitudes, and behaviors in the workplace are often influenced by their race/ethnicity (Allen, 1995). Race/ethnicity based stereotypes and differences in values, norms, and work ethics, bring further complexity to the already complex process of assimilation (Allen, 1995).

Hypotheses and Research Question

I propose to use organizational information theory as a framework to assess whether cultural dimension factors and racial/cultural identification may lead to information equivocality, sensemaking, and the communication aspects of ongoing assimilation for members working within racial/ethnic diverse organizations.

Research suggests that racial/ethnic cultural differences among Whites and people of color affect their workplace assimilation experiences. For people of color, working in

an organization with a predominantly White organizational culture may be challenging

due to an information environment that is ambiguous and confusing, cultural dimension

differences and racial/ethnic identification. In order to assimilate, people of color may

attempt to reduce equivocality in the areas of social information (Teboul, 1999) and

organizational culture (normative) information. This study will test the following

hypotheses:

H1: Discrepancies between employees' perceptions of their organization's cultural value

dimensions, and their own cultural value dimensions, will be associated with differences

in employee assimilation scores.

H2: Cultural value dimension perceived difference between self-report and company will

be positively correlated to equivocality for people of color.

H3: People of color with high racial identification will have lower levels of assimilation

than Whites and people of color with low racial identification.

H4: People of color will report more equivocality than Whites.

H5: There will be a greater degree of difference between the cultural value dimensions of

people of color and their employer, than Whites and their employer.

H6: People of color will conduct more social information-seeking behavior.

RQ1: Will people of color will conduct more normative information-seeking behavior?

A variety of organizational research conveys that equivocality is created as a

result of organizational change brought on by a more racially-ethnically diverse

workforce. Cultural value differences and cultural identification lead to equivocality in

the workplace. These same factors have been identified as barriers to assimilation for

people of color (Myers, 2007). In between equivocality and assimilation is information seeking sensemaking. Teboul's (1999) research on information seeking with race/ethnicity as a variable provides the final link in the chain for this current study. Teboul (1999) provides some evidence that racial/ethnic distinctions exist regarding the types of information uncertainty and information tactics used by different groups. Together, the components of racial/ethnic factors, equivocality, and information seeking lead us to further understand these variables and how to successfully assimilate all organizational members now, and in the future.

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (2005) projects that by 2020, 37% of U.S. workers will consist of Americans whose racial/ethnic origins are African, Hispanic, Asian, Native, and Pacific Islander, and those of mixed race/ethnicity. If organizations are going to survive in an environment that is no longer majority White, they must have a goal to successfully assimilate members of all racial/ethnic backgrounds. This study will provide valuable scholarly and practical knowledge to the subject of assimilation towards this end.

Chapter 2 - Methods

Sample

Participants (N=194) were employees of two nonprofit health care organizations in Madison, Wisconsin. Participants completed an online survey developed by the researcher. There were a total of 194 survey participants, 45 were partial responses, resulting in 149 completed surveys. Table one indicates the demographic information of the final sample set.

Table 1   Demographic data of participants

Sample Group (N=149)		
Sex		*Race*
Male 31 (20.81%)		Black/African-American 4 (2.68%)
Female 118 (79.19%)		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 0 (0%)
		Native American/Alaskan Native 1 (.67%)
		Asian 6 (4.03%)
Tenure		White/Caucasian 116 (77.85%)
0-6 months 20 (13.42%)		Latino/Hispanic 22 (14.77%)
7-11 months 14 (9.4%)		
1 yr – 2 yrs 38 (25.5%)		
3 yrs – 4 yrs 24 (16.11%)		
5 yrs – 7 yrs 13 (8.72%)		
8 yrs – 10 yrs 10 (6.71%)		
11 or more yrs 30 (20.13%)		

The demographic information includes several notable issues. The respondents were primarily women (79%) and the mean tenure was just over three years (*M*=3.04). With respect to race, the majority of respondents were White/Caucasian (77.8%), with people of color being represented by Latinos/Hispanics (14.7%), Asians (4%), Black/African-Americans (2.7%), and Native American/Alaskan Natives less than one percent. There were no Hawaiian/Pacific Islander respondents.

Survey Instrument

The research instrument was an online survey designed by the researcher. The survey included six distinct sections to address the hypotheses: 1) cultural dimensions; 2) assimilation; 3) information-seeking; 4) equivocality; 5) race/ethnic identity; and 6) demographic information. The survey included twelve questions with ninety-nine total items.

Measures

The cultural values dimension measures were created by the researcher using Hofstede's (1991) five cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and short-term orientation. Survey question one consisted of twenty items and asked participants to 'select the number that best describe how important the following values are to you at work', using a five point Likert-type scale with 1=very unimportant to 5=very important. Survey question two consisted of the same twenty items as question one but asked respondents to 'select the number that best describes how important the following value are to your company' using the same Likert-type scale. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for the cultural dimension scale was excellent with a score of .91.

Assimilation was measured using a modified version of Myers and Oetzel's (2003) Organizational Assimilation Index (OAI). Content included questions from four of the six areas of assimilation: familiarity with others, acculturation, recognition, and involvement. Survey questions three and four consisted of thirty-five items and asked participants, 'based upon your experiences at work, select the number that best describes

your opinion', using a seven point Likert-type scale with 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for the assimilation scale was good with a score of .89.

Normative and relational information-seeking were measured using a modified version of Morrison (1993) information-seeking scales. Survey question five consisted of seven items and asked participants, 'during the past three months, to decide the behaviors and attitudes that are important to your company, how often did you do the following', using a seven point Likert-type scale with 1=never to 7=a few times a day. Survey question six consisted of the same seven items as question five and asked participants, 'during the past three months, to decide the accepted ways of getting along with your coworkers how often did you do the following', using a seven point Likert-type scale with 1=never to 7=a few times a day. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for the information-seeking scale was excellent, with a score of .92.

Equivocality was assessed using the measure created by Daft and Macintosh (1981). Survey question seven consisted of five items and asked respondents to 'select the number that describes how people see things at work', using a five point Likert-type scale with 1=very little extent to 7=very great extent. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for the equivocality scale was good with a score of .85.

Race was identified using a self-report measure. If the respondent was more than a single race, they were asked to 'select the category with which you feel the strongest identity'. Race categories consisted of: Black/African American, Hawaiian/Pacific

Islander, Native American/Alaskan Native, Asian, White/Caucasian, and

Latino/Hispanic.

       Race identification was a self-report measure. Respondents were asked to 'select

the option that best describes your feeling of identification with your race/ethnicity'. The

possible selection consisted of a five-item scale (very low, low, medium, high, very

high).

<div align="center">Procedure</div>

       Survey data was collected in a uniform manner using the public survey website,

www.surveymethods.com. Employees received email messages from their CEOs

notifying them of the research project and encouraging their participation. Participants

used a link in the email to access an introduction to the survey by the researcher, and a

waiver of informed consent. Participants used a link on the introduction/informed

consent page to begin the survey.

Chapter 3 - Results

Hypothesis 1

In order to determine the factor structure of the cultural dimensions scale based on Hofstede's work, the construct validity of the of the self-report and cultural dimension 'your company' measures were examined using a rotated principal component factor analysis/Varimax rotation. The criteria for factor extraction was 1) an Eigen value of at least one, 2) primary factor loading of at least .6, 3) no secondary factor loading above .4, and 4) there had to be at least two items to measure a factor.

The analysis revealed four primary factors, which accounted for 63.64 percent of the variance in the overall scale. The four factors appeared to measure: 1) collectivism (COLL), 2) individualism (IND), 3) open communication (COMM), and 4) power distance (PD). (Table 2). Factor one consisted of six items with factor loadings of .74 to .86. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor one was good, with a score of .89. Factor two consisted of two items with factor loadings of .65 and .76. However, the reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor two was unacceptable, with a score of .56. Factor three consisted of two items with factor loadings of .75 and .82. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor three was respectable, with a score of .74. Factor four consisted of two items with factor loadings of .87 and .88. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor four was good, with a score of .82.

Construct validity of the assimilation measures were also examined using a rotated principal component factor analysis/Varimax rotation, using the same criteria for

factor extraction. The analysis revealed a potential of eight factors based upon Eigen values, which explained 69.30 percent of the variance. However, only five primary factors met all criteria. (Table 3).

Factor one, which appeared to measure 'my boss values my work' (BOSVLU), consisted of five items with factor loadings of .70 to .87. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor one was excellent, with a score of .94. Factor two, which appeared to measure 'I understand my role expectations' (GETMYROL), consisted of six items, with factor loadings of .65 to .77. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor two was good, with a score of .89. Factor three, which appeared to measure social relationships with co-workers outside of work (RELAOUT), consisted of three items with factor loadings of .67 to .76. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor three was respectable with a score of .70. Factor four, which appeared to measure resistance to social interaction (RESST), consisted of two items with factor loadings of .67 and .76. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor four was undesirable with a score of .62. Factor five, which appeared to measure workplace related anxiety (WRANX), consisted of two items with factor loadings of .63 and .66. The reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha for factor five was minimally acceptable, with a score of .67.

Hypothesis one predicted that discrepancies between employees' perceptions of their organization's cultural value dimensions, and their own cultural value dimensions, will be associated with differences in employee assimilation scores. In order to test hypothesis one, a correlation matrix was conducted using four new variables created by

adding the factor cultural dimension 'your company' items, adding the factor cultural

dimension self-report items, and subtracting the self-report total from the 'your company'

total.   The four new variables reflect the difference in scores between 'your company'

and self report and were coded as DCOLL, DIND, DCOMM, and DPD. For each of the

four cultural value factors identified, a difference score was created. For instance,

difference in collectivism (DCOLL) was computed by subtracting the employee's self-

reported value of collectivism from the employee's perception of how much their

organization valued collectivism. Descriptive statistics indicate that the average self

value was higher than the employer value for DCOLL (*m*=-.55) and DCOMM (*m*=-.25),

and the average self value was lower than the employer value for DIND (*m*=.14) and

DPD (*m*=.37) (Table 4). This means that individuals reported that collectivism and open

communication were more important to them than their employer, and individualism and

power distance were less important to individuals than to their employer.

To create a measure of assimilation, each factor score was computed by adding all

the items within each factor together, and then dividing that sum by the num of items in

each factor. For each employee, a total assimilation score was computed by adding the

average scores for the assimilation factors BOSVLU, GETMYROL, and RELAOUT, and

then subtracting the average scores for RESST and WRANX from that total.

The cultural dimension difference variables were then correlated to the average

total assimilation score. The correlation matrix revealed that assimilation was

significantly and positively related to the differences in perceptions of the organization's

value of collectiveness and the employee's self-reported value of it (DCOLL), *r*(149) =

.50, p < .0005, which is considered a moderate relationship. This means that the employees perceived value of collectivism was greater than their perception of their employers value of collectivism, and this was related to their level of assimilation. Assimilation was not significantly related to DIND, DCOMM, or DPD. Therefore, hypothesis one is partially supported. (Table 5).

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis two predicted that cultural dimension difference will correlate to equivocality for people of color. An equivocality variable was created by adding the scores of the equivocality survey items: 'Information can be seen in many ways', 'the same information can lead to different but agreeable solutions', people see things differently', 'there is more than one agreeable answer for problems', and 'in making decisions, different people use different information.' To conduct this analysis, a correlation matrix was conducted with data from people of color (n=33) consisting of the four variables created for hypothesis two (DCOLL, DIND, DCOMM, DPD) and the equivocality (EQUIV) variable. Differences in perceptions of the organization's value of collectiveness and the employee's own value of it were positively related to equivocality, $r(33) = .37$, $p<.035$, which is a moderate relationship. Equivocality was not significantly related to DIND, DCOMM, or DPD. Therefore, hypothesis two was partially supported. (Table 6).

Of note, but not directly related to hypothesis two, was that when a correlation matrix was conducted with data from all respondents, equivocality was positively related to differences in perceptions of the organization's value of collectiveness and the

employee's own value of it, $r(149) = .27$, $p < .001$, which is considered a weak

relationship.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis three predicted that people of color with high racial identification will

have lower levels of assimilation than Whites and people of color with low racial

identification. In order to examine hypothesis three, four racial identification variables

(categories) were created: 1) Caucasians with low and medium levels of identification, 2)

Caucasians with high and very high levels of identification, 3) People of color with low

and medium levels of identification, and 4) People of color with high and very high levels

of identification.

To further examine hypothesis three, variables were created using the average

scores of the five assimilation factors (BOSVLU, GETMYROL, RELAOUT, RESST,

and WRANX). Descriptive statistics indicate that Caucasians with low and medium

levels of identification were the most numerous (n=59), followed by Caucasians with

high to very high identification (n = 57), People of color with low and medium

identification (n=17), and People of color with high to very high (n=16). (Table 7).

In order to test hypothesis three, a one-way ANOVA was calculated using the

four identification by race groups as the independent variable and assimilation factors as

the dependent variable. A significant difference was noted for the assimilation factor 'I

understand my role expectations'; $F(12.44, 156.15) = 3.85$, $p<.05$. In a follow-up to this

hypothesis, a Sheffe multiple comparison test post hoc was conducted. The Sheffe post

hoc indicated that for the assimilation factor 'I understand my role expectations', there

was a significant difference between People of color with high to very high racial identification (M= 6.29, SD = .44) and Caucasians with low to medium racial identification (M = 5.40, SD = 1.22). These findings suggest that people of color who identify strongly with their race had a better understanding of their role expectations than White persons who did not identify strongly with their race. No significant differences emerged with respect to the other assimilation variables examined. Therefore, hypothesis three is not supported and, in fact, ran counter to expectations. (Table 8).

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis four predicted people of color will report more equivocality than Whites. To establish levels of equivocality, a t-test was conducted using cumulative data from survey question seven. The t-test for equality of means showed no significant difference between participants of color and White respondents, t (147) = .39, p > .05. Therefore, hypothesis four was not supported.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis five predicted that there will be a greater degree of difference between the cultural value dimensions of people of color and their employer, than Whites and their employer. To test hypothesis five, a t-test was conducted using the four variables created for hypothesis one (DCOLL, DIND, DCOMM, and DPD). The t-tests for equality of means were not significant for DCOLL, t (147) = -1.60, p >.05, DIND, t (147) = .90, p>.05, DCOMM, t (147) = -1.90, p>.05, and DPD, t (147) = .43, p>.05. Therefore, hypothesis five was not supported for any of the four factors.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis six predicted that people of color will conduct more social information-seeking behavior.   In order to test hypothesis six, a t-test was conducted on the seven items from survey question six. Items included 'ask your boss directly', 'pay attention to how others act', 'ask a more experienced coworker', 'be friendly with people in the company to learn how they act and what they see as important', 'look at memos, reports, or other written documents', 'ask any coworker', and 'watch what actions are rewarded and use this as a clue to what is wanted or required.' The t-test for equality of means was not significant, $t (147) = 1.10$, $p>.05$.   Therefore, hypothesis six was not supported.

Research Question 1

Research Questions one asked, will people of color will conduct more normative information-seeking behavior than Whites? In order to test research questions one, a t-test was conducted on the seven items from survey question five. The same seven items used in hypothesis six were used for hypothesis seven. The t-test for equality of means was not significant, $t (147) = 1.61$, $p>.05$.   Therefore, hypothesis seven was not supported.

Chapter 4 - Discussion

The current study revealed limited distinctions between the assimilation experience of Whites and people of color and the potential role of equivocality in assimilating to organizational values. As a cultural dimension, perceptions of collectivism appears to be consistent and shared moderate relationships with both assimilation and equivocality. In addition, strong racial identification by people of color and low racial identification by Whites may impact their acculturation, and in turn, assimilation to the organization.

Hypothesis one predicted that discrepancies between employees' perceptions of their organization's cultural value dimensions, and their own cultural value dimensions, will be associated with differences in employee assimilation scores. This study found that assimilation was significantly and positively correlated to the convergence of perceptions of the importance of collectivism by individuals and their employer organizations (DCOLL), $r(149) = .50$, p < .0005.

Employees' perception that they placed a higher value on teamwork than their employer was related to employees not feeling accepted into the culture of their organization (Jablin, 2001). Items from the survey that address collectivism include: 'importance of collective work and group accomplishments are most valued', 'importance of democratic structure where members have equal say', and 'importance of group promotion is a positive employee trait'. These items relate to perceived interconnectedness between individuals and the culture of their organization. Perhaps if organizations structured systems in ways to promote teamwork, employees would be

more likely to assimilate.

Hypothesis two predicted that cultural dimension difference will correlate to equivocality for people of color. Differences in perceptions of the employee's value of collectiveness and the organization's value of it (DCOLL) were positively related to equivocality. In other words, employees of color perceived that they value collectiveness more than their employer, and this difference (DCOLL) correlated to equivocality. One possible rationale for this relationship is that within their respective information environments, organizations must interpret and coordinate information to make it meaningful for members within the context of organizational goals (Weick, 1979). If this interpretation and coordination is not adequately provided, perhaps the collectivist cultural tendencies of people of color influence their own interpretations of information, leading to information equivocality.

Also of interest is that the relationship between DCOLL and equivocality remains significant, but weaker, when data from all respondents was correlated. As identified in hypothesis one, the sample set as a whole perceived themselves to value collectivism more than their employer organizations. Again, if adequate interpretation and coordination of information is not provided by organizations, perhaps the collectivist cultural tendencies of individuals influence their own interpretations of information, leading to information equivocality. Finally, further data analysis indicates that this perception is more acutely felt within the mental health organization than the health organization.

Hypothesis three predicted that people of color with high racial identification will

have lower levels of assimilation than Whites and people of color with low racial

identification.   For the assimilation factor 'I understand my role expectations', there was

a significant difference between Caucasians with low to medium racial identification (M

= 5.40, SD =1.22) and people of color with high to very high racial identification (M=

6.29, SD = .44). This means that people of color with high to very high racial

identification have a significantly higher understanding of their role expectations than

Whites with low to medium racial identification.

The finding for hypothesis three is contrary to expectations. Although no

research was identified regarding the relationship between racial/ethnic identity and

assimilation, Cox (1993) and Fine (1996) suggest that racial/ethnic cultural elements of

people of color will clash with organizational cultural elements of dominant White

organizations. The findings for this study suggests that people of color with high racial

identification have a solid understanding of recognized organizational norms, while

Whites with low identification may lack such an understanding.

There are several possible explanations for this finding. With respect to African

Americans, Foeman and Pressley (1987) state that group identification is one of five

attitude-base value differences that distinguish Blacks from Whites. These five value

differences have helped African Americans and their culture to survive in often isolating

and difficult environments. One study found that high racial identification is related to a

more acute sense of responsibility and high personal standards (McGraw, 1981, as cited

in Foeman & Pressley).

It would be logical to deduce that as racial/ethnic minorities in majority

organizations, Latinos and Asians with high racial identification may also feel a heightened sense to understand their organization and their role within it. Second, racial/ethnic identity is likely a complex variable with many possible interactions with other variables. For example, Linnehan, Chrobot-Mason, and Konrad (2006) found that people of color with high racial/ethnic identity who had supervisors of color reported more positive views of workplace diversity initiatives than people of color with low racial/ethnic identity.

Hypothesis four predicted people of color will report more equivocality than Whites. The t-test for equality of means showed no significant difference between participants of color and White respondents, $t(147) = .39, p > .05$. There are several possible explanations for this finding. First, the sample size of people of color was very small ($n=33$). Second, the equivocality measure (Daft & Macintosh, 1981) has questionable validity.

Hypothesis five predicted that there will be a greater degree of difference between the cultural value dimensions of people of color and their employer, than Whites and their employer. The t-test for equality of means using the four cultural dimension difference variables (DCOLL, DIND, DCOMM, and DPD) were not significant for DCOLL, $t(147) = -1.60, p > .05$, DIND, $t(147) = .90, p > .05$, DCOMM, $t(147) = -1.90, p > .05$, and DPD, $t(147) = .43, p > .05$. This non-supported outcome may be explained in part by the small sample set of people of color. A second possible explanation is a distinction of the perceived difference by people of color and Whites. Finally, there is a

dearth of research using Hofstede's cultural dimensions to identify differences within the multi-cultural United States.

Hypothesis six predicted that people of color will conduct more social information-seeking behavior. The t-test for equality of means was not significant, $t(147) = 1.10$, $p > .05$. The may be explained by the limited research using race/ethnicity as a variable relative to information-seeking. Only Teboul (1999) found that African American and Hispanic newcomers were more likely than Whites and Pacific Islanders to experience social uncertainty.

Research question one asked, will people of color conduct more normative information-seeking behavior than Whites? The t-test for equality of means was not significant, $t(147) = 1.61$, $p > .05$. A likely explanation for this finding is that there is no relationship between normative information-seeking and race.

This study indicates several important findings. First, assimilation of employees is related to the degree of convergence of perceptions of importance of collectivism. This means that employees who perceived that collectivism is more important to them than their employer, reported lower levels of assimilation to their organization. For scholars, this discovery adds to the investigative applications of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, and the assimilation and organizational communication body of research. For practitioners, finding ways to promote employee perceptions that collective work and group promotion are valued in an organization may lead to a more connected and productive workforce.

A second key discovery is that equivocality also correlates to the degree of

convergence of perceptions of importance of collectivism for people of color. In other words, employees of color who perceived that collectivism is more important to them than their employer, reported more equivocality. For scholars, this furthers research using organizational information theory, and the role of equivocality in organizational communication. For practitioners, designing improved means to coordinate and interpret information for employees may reduce equivocality and improve employee perceptions of the importance of collectivism by the organization.

Finally, it is an important finding that high racial identification by people of color may positively impact their assimilation into organizations. This discovery contributes to the limited, and dated research (Foeman & Pressley, 1987; McGraw, 1981, as cited in Foeman & Pressley) on the topic, but sheds a glimmer of light on the influence of racial identification on organizational communication. This finding is important for practitioners, in particular human resource professionals, to know that employees and prospective employees of color who have high racial identification may be highly assimilated and productive employees for the organization.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. First, the sample size was small, heavily weighted to Caucasians, and included a very limited number of people of color (n=33). A larger sample may produce very different results. Second, the data was collected during a severe economic depression featuring high unemployment, and budget tightening by many organizations. The questionnaire's focus on employee/employer concerns may have caused potential respondents not to participate or participants to alter

their responses for fear of retaliation from the organization.   Third, Individualism as a

cultural dimension factor was not reliable, which diminishes the results using this factor.

Fourth, results regarding racial/ethnic identification should be regarded with caution as

the data is the result of a single questionnaire item, and reliability and validity of the

measure could not be ascertained. Fifth, the equivocality scale (Daft & Macintosh, 1981)

has questionable validity, as validity of the measure was not reported in the research.

Sixth, the data was gathered using self-reporting methodologies and perceptions of

employer organizations by employees. Data was not collected from managers to cross

reference information-seeking tactics or executives representing the organization to cross

reference cultural dimensions. Finally, participants worked in a single employment

sector, health care. No other sectors are represented in the data.

Targets for Future Study

Future research should replicate this study with a larger participant sample that

includes more people of color who are employed in a variety of industries, and perhaps

are located in different regions of the U.S. Additional effort should be directed to

creating a valid measure of equivocality that more fully illuminates how information

leads to communication confusion within organizations. Further attention should be

placed on the components of racial identification, how identification may be manifested

by different racial/ethnic groups, and how identification may change over generations.

Hofstede's (1991) cultural dimensions should be applied to research of U.S.

organizations in the areas of diversity/inclusiveness training, newcomer orientation,

corporate culture documents, and workgroup/teambuilding exercises.

Conclusion

This study reveals limited differences in assimilation for Whites and people of color and sets the stage for future research on assimilation with a diversifying workforce. Among the findings is that assimilation and equivocality are significantly correlated to the degree of convergence of perceptions of importance of collectivism. In addition, and contrary to expectations, people of color with high racial identification reported feeling more assimilated to the organization than their White counterparts with low/medium identification.

There are a number of theoretical and practical implications of this study. First, these findings add to the limited body of research examining communication life within organizations using race/ethnicity as a key variable. The results should be of particular interest to scholars in organizational communication, cross-cultural communication, organizational behavior, and human resources who wish to understand the culturally based factors that impact communication within organizations, and organizational environments as their workforce becomes more diverse.   In addition, this study should be of interest to scholars seeking to further apply Hofstede's cultural dimensions to cross-cultural communication issues.

From a practical perspective, this study should influence how Hofstede's cultural dimensions can be applied to organizational systems and human resource practices, particularly related to workplace communication. In addition, organizational leaders and managers should examine how in particular, the promotion of collectivism within organizations may assist with worker assimilation.   This study adds to the research

which concludes that better assimilation will likely lead to productive employess (Chao,

O'Leary, Wolf, Klein, & Gardnerer, 1994) and bring stability and continuity to the

organization (VanMaanen & Schein, 1979), two important outcomes for employers.

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    Chapter 21: Sensemaking as an organizational dimension of global change.

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Section 1

1. Select the number that best describes how important the following are to YOU AT WORK. 1=very unimportant, 2=unimportant; 3=somewhat important; 4=important; 5=very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Respect for history and tradition					
Strict levels of rank with firm lines of communication					
Relationships					
Flexible rules and policies					
Work-life balance					
Group promotion is a positive employee trait					
Democratic structure where members have equal say					
Protecting "face" or self-respect					
Loose levels of rank with flexible lines of communication					
Individual work and accomplishments are most valued					
Competitiveness					
Constant effort					
Collective work and group accomplishment are most valued					
Thrift					
Self-promotion is a positive employee trait					
Informal processes					
Ambition					
Willingness to speak up					
Strict rules and policies					
Formal processes					

2. Select the number that best describes how important the following are to YOUR COMPANY. 1=very unimportant, 2=unimportant; 3=somewhat important; 4=important; 5=very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Respect for history and tradition					
Strict levels of rank with firm lines of communication					
Relationships					
Flexible rules and policies					
Work-life balance					
Group promotion is a positive employee trait					
Democratic structure where members have equal say					
Protecting "face" or self-respect					
Loose levels of rank with flexible lines of communication					
Individual work and accomplishments are most valued					
Competitiveness					
Constant effort					
Collective work and group accomplishment are most valued					
Thrift					
Self-promotion is a positive employee trait					
Informal processes					
Ambition					
Willingness to speak up					
Strict rules and policies					
Formal processes					

Section 2

3. Based on your experiences as work, select the number that best describes your opinion.
1=strongly disagree; 2=moderately disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither disagree nor agree; 5=slightly agree; 6=moderately agree; 7=strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know what is expected to succeed in this company.							
I consider my coworkers friends.							
I can tell when my boss would prefer not to talk.							
I understand the standards of the company.							
I must work up the courage to talk to my boss about a problem.							
I am tense in my work environment.							
I think I know "how things happen around here."							
I feel comfortable talking with my coworkers.							
I know whom I should talk to about a work-related problem.							
I feel like I know my boss pretty well.							
I spend time away from work with some of my coworkers.							
I feel very comfortable in my work environment.							
I have shared my problems at work with some of my coworkers.							
I think I have a good idea about how this company operates.							
I can see how my work benefits our clients/patients.							
My boss and I talk together often.							
I avoid conversations with my coworkers whenever possible.							
My boss sometimes discusses problems with me.							
I know what is important to my company.							
I feel like I know my coworkers pretty well.							

4. Based on your experiences as work, select the number that best describes your opinion.
1=strongly disagree; 2=moderately disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither disagree nor
agree; 5=slightly agree; 6=moderately agree; 7=strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My boss recognizes when I do a good job.							
I talk to my coworkers about how much I like it here.							
My work is appreciated by the organization.							
My boss listens to my ideas.							
I volunteer for duties that benefit the company.							
My coworkers tell me I do good work.							
I think my boss values my opinions.							
I do not think I can perform my work as well as others.							
I would do my best work even if I were not being supervised.							
I think my boss recognizes my value to the organization.							
I feel involved in the company.							
I think the work I do would be missed if I quit.							
My boss does not recognize the good work I do.							
I tell others that I am only working in this job temporarily.							
My boss has told me that he/she trusts my judgment.							

Section 3
5. Companies often have ways that they like employees to act (behavior) and how
employees should generally think (attitudes) about situations at work. During the past
three months, to decide the behaviors and attitudes that are important to your company,
how often did you do the following: 1=never; 2=once a month; 3=a few times a month;
4=once a week; 5=a few times a week; 6=once a day; 7=a few times a day

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ask your boss directly							
Pay attention to how others act							
Ask a more experienced coworker							
Be friendly with people in the company to learn how they act and what they see as important							
Look at memos, reports, or other written documents							
Ask any coworker							
Watch what actions are rewarded and use this as a clue to what is wanted or required							

6. Employees have ways of getting along with one another. During the past three months, to decide the accepted ways of getting along with your coworkers, how often did you do the following: 1=never; 2=once a month; 3=a few times a month; 4=once a week; 5=a few times a week; 6=once a day; 7=a few times a day

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ask a more experienced coworker							
Be friendly with people in the company to learn how they act and what they see as important							
Ask any coworker							
Watch what actions are rewarded and use this as a clue to what is wanted or required							
Ask your boss directly							
Pay attention to how others act							
Look at memos, reports, or other written documents							

Section 4

7. Select the number that describes how people see things at work. 1=very little extent; 2= little extent; 3=some extent; 4=great extent; 5=very great extent

	1	2	3	4	5
Information can be seen in many ways.					
The same information can lead to different but agreeable solutions.					
People see things differently.					
There is more than one agreeable answer for problems.					
In making decisions, different people use different people use different information.					

Section 5

8. Select your race/ethnicity (If you are more than a single race, select the category with which you feel the strongest identity).
   o   Black/African American
   o   Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
   o   Native American/Alaskan Native
   o   Asian
   o   White/Caucasian
   o   Latino/Hispanic

9. Select the option that best describes your feeling of identification with your race/ethnicity.
   o   Very low
   o   Low
   o   Medium

      o High
      o Very high

10. Select the industry that most defines the central mission of your company.
      o Health Services
      o Manufacturing
      o Mental Health Services
      o Banking

11. Select the option that most closely matches how long you have worked for your company.
      o 0-6 months
      o 7-11 months
      o 1 year – 2 years
      o 3 years – 4 years
      o 5 years – 7 years
      o 8 years – 10 years
      o 11 or more years

12. Sex
      o Male
      o Female

Appendix B: Table 2

Factor Analysis (Cultural Dimensions) of Hypothesis 1

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Importance of relationships to your company	.856	-.039	.192	.026
Importance of willingness to speak up to your company	.806	.225	.102	-.113
Importance of collective work and group accomplishments are valued to your company	.772	.081	.020	.215
Importance of democratic structure where members have equal say to your company	.769	.119	.286	-.026
Importance of work-life balance to your company	.753	.028	.307	-.052
Importance of group promotion is a positive trait to your company	.745	.029	.276	.071
Importance of competitiveness to your company	-.140	.759	.283	.231
Importance of self-promotion is a positive employee trait to your company	.194	.702	.408	.041
Importance of ambition to your company	.305	.650	.003	.031
Importance of informal processes to your company	.169	.213	.815	-.136
Importance of loose levels of rank & flexible lines of communication to your company	.343	-.056	.747	.015
Importance of strict rules and policies to your company	-.126	.177	.064	.880
Importance of formal processes to your company	.195	.002	-.091	.870

1= collectivism; 2=individualism; 3=open communication; 4=power distance

Appendix C: Table 3
Factor Analysis (Assimilation) for Hypothesis 1

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
My boss listens to my ideas	.874	.213	.102	.116	-.061	-.108
I think my boss values my opinions	.868	.270	.140	.116	-.011	-.093
I think my boss recognizes my value to the organization	.845	.317	.110	.004	-.091	-.037
My boss recognizes when I do a good job	.804	.228	.150	.150	-.048	-.051
My boss has told me that he/she trust my judgment	.696	.208	.205	.142	.054	-.076
I understand the standards of the company	.105	-.771	-.079	.334	-.086	-.051
I think I have a good ideas about how this company operates	.217	.738	.214	.087	-.003	.046
I know what is expected to succeed in this company	.324	.711	.063	.111	-.019	-.002
I feel very comfortable in my work environment	.361	.709	.148	.274	-.050	-.239
I know what is important to my company	.350	.692	.104	.163	-.071	-.074
I can see how my work benefits our clients/patients	.129	.649	.276	-.200	-.242	-.052
I spend time away from work with some of my coworkers	.087	.045	.757	-.060	.200	-.012
I have shared my problems at work with some of my coworkers	.124	.086	.750	.056	-.124	.093
I consider my coworkers my friends	.230	.300	.669	.218	.037	-.064
I tell others that I am only working in this job temporarily	-.131	-.178	.131	-.077	.760	.114
I avoid conversations with my coworkers whenever possible	-.052	-.072	-.231	-.139	.676	.316
I must work up the courage to talk to my boss about a problem	-.364	-.056	.049	-.182	.252	.663
I am tense in my work environment	-.281	-.332	-.022	-.098	.114	.631

1= my boss values me; 2= understanding my role expectations; 3= social relationships with coworkers outside work; 4=null factor; 5= resistance to social interaction; 6= workplace related anxiety

Appendix D: Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Hypothesis 1

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Stand.Deviation
DCOLL	149	-3.50	.83	-.5515	.855
DIND	149	-2.50	3.50	.1443	835
DCOMM	149	-3.00	3.00	-.2517	.965
DPD	149	-3.00	2.50	.3691	.999
Valid N (listwise)	149				

Appendix E: Table 5

Correlation Matrix for Hypothesis 1

		Average total assimilation score	DCOLL	DIND	DCOMM	DPD
Average total assimilation score	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 149	.500** .000 149	-.072 .382 149	.057 .490 149	-.038 .649 149
DCOLL	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.500** .000 149	1 149	.072 .383 149	.291** .000 149	-.185* .024 149
DIND	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.072 .382 149	.072 .383 149	1 149	.010 .906 149	.092 .266 149
DCOMM	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.057 .490 149	.291** .000 149	.010 .906 149	1 149	-.432** .000 149
DPD	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.038 .649 149	-.185* .024 149	.092 .266 149	-.432** .000 149	1 149

Appendix F: Table 6

Correlation Matrix for Hypothesis 2
(people of color respondents only)

		DOLL	DIND	DCOMM	DPD	EQUIV
DCOLL	Pearson Correlation	1	.225	.286	-.154	.369*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.208	.107	.392	.035
	N	33	33	33	33	33
DIND	Pearson Correlation	.225	1	.211	-.014	.068
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.208		.239	.940	.708
	N	33	33	33	33	33
DCOMM	Pearson Correlation	.286	.211	1	-.499**	.016
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.107	.239		.003	.930
	N	33	33	33	33	33
DPD	Pearson Correlation	-.154	-.014	-.499**	1	.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.392	.940	.003		.922
	N	33	33	33	33	33
EQUIV	Pearson Correlation	.369*	.068	.016	0.18	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	.708	.930	.922	
	N	33	33	33	33	33

Appendix G: Table 7

Correlation Matrix for Hypothesis 2
(all respondents)

		DOLL	DIND	DCOMM	DPD	EQUIV
DCOLL	Pearson Correlation	1	.072	.291**	-.185*	.275**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.383	.000	.024	.001
	N	149	149	149	149	149
DIND	Pearson Correlation	.072	1	.010	.092	.073
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.383		.906	.266	.375
	N	149	149	149	149	149
DCOMM	Pearson Correlation	.291**	.010	1	-.432**	-.109
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.906		.000	.185
	N	149	149	149	149	149
DPD	Pearson Correlation	-.185*	.092	-.432**	1	.098
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.266	.000		.233
	N	149	149	149	149	149
EQUIV	Pearson Correlation	.275**	.073	-.109	.098	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.375	.185	.233	
	N	149	149	149	149	149

Appendix H: Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Hypothesis 3

	Racial Id. Cat.	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Stand.Deviation
Average 'my boss values my work'	1	59	1.00	7.00	4.9864	1.73875
	2	57	1.40	7.00	5.6211	1.34466
	3	17	1.00	7.00	5.2471	1.73703
	4	16	4.00	7.00	5.7250	.92916
Average 'I understand my role expectations'	1	59	2.00	7.00	5.3983*	1.22083
	2	57	2.50	7.00	5.7632	.99848
	3	17	4.67	7.00	5.9706	.76657
	4	16	5.17	7.00	6.2917*	.54603
Average social relations with co-workers outside work	1	59	1.33	7.00	4.6667	1.42501
	2	57	1.67	7.00	5.0585	1.18376
	3	17	1.67	7.00	5.0784	1.22207
	4	16	2.33	7.00	4.7500	1.26198
Average resistance to social interaction	1	59	1.00	7.00	1.7712	1.04767
	2	57	1.00	7.00	1.7807	1.29566
	3	17	1.00	7.00	2.0000	1.14564
	4	16	1.00	7.00	2.5313	1.56491
Average workplace related anxiety	1	59	1.00	7.00	3.4915	1.84646
	2	57	1.00	7.00	3.0439	1.85953
	3	17	1.00	7.00	3.1765	1.76725
	4	16	1.00	7.00	3.2188	1.87944

Appendix I: Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Hypothesis 5

	White or POC	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Stand.Deviation
DCOLL	1.00	116	-3.50	.83	-.6106	.87475
	2.00	33	-2.50	2.00	-.3434	.75570
DIND	1.00	116	-2.00	3.50	.1767	.82424
	2.00	33	-2.50	2.00	.0303	.87446
DCOMM	1.00	116	-3.00	3.00	-.2974	.96904
	2.00	33	-2.50	3.00	-.0909	.94748
DPD	1.00	116	-3.00	2.50	.3879	1.05106
	2.00	33	-2.00	2.00	.3030	.79980
Valid N (listwise)	1.00	116				
	2.00	33				