

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT FOR CALD RECRUITMENT IN POLICING: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationships between demographics and an employee's understanding of and support for the recruitment of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups (CALD) in a policing context. A postal survey was distributed to 500 Victoria police employees and yielded a response rate of 19.5%. A Cronbach Alpha value of 0.802 for the questionnaire was achieved with the reliability values for 'understanding of diversity' and 'support for diversified workforce' constructs showing Cronbach Alpha values of 0.813 and 0.788 respectively. Statistical analysis identified gender and higher educational levels as having significant relationships to understanding about CALD and support for CALD recruitment. The paper proposes a conceptual model that would contribute to recruitment policy in a policing context and is discussed in terms of its contribution to the literature. Results provided demographic factors in the development of a CALD conceptual model. A mathematical relationship between understanding diversity and support for a diversified workforce was established. The utility of the model is already being implemented to assist Victoria Police in designing CALD policies in order to increase CALD recruits.

KEYWORDS: Gender, CALD, Policing, Recruitment, Retention, Demographics

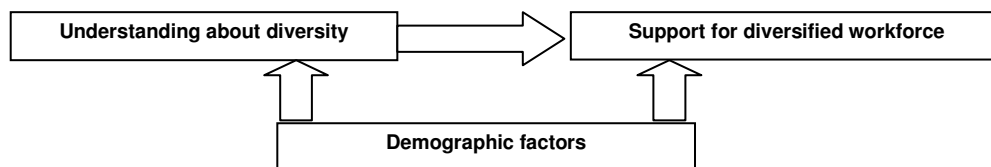
Policing is Australia's front-line agency most often required to represent the government in situations involving disputes concerning CALD minority interests or claims. Today's global immigration has made the challenges of policing a multiethnic society complex hence a new paradigm for policing these societies is emerging in which the balance between enforcing law and maintaining racial and ethnic harmony is becoming increasingly important (McDonald, 2003). The Police explore ways in which to bridge cultural divides; to communicate in foreign languages; to win the trust of people whose past experience led them to mistrust or despise the police (Scott, 2000).

Responding to these challenges sees the development of Policing policies, procedures and practices that assist in the sensitiveness of dealing with the diversity of CALD matters. The literature suggests that Policing would be more responsive to these new demands if Policing services increased their strategies in the recruitment and retention of a CALD workforce.

An extensive analysis of the international and national CALD literature, Victoria Police's policies, procedures and key strategic documents informed this paper which proposes a theoretical conceptual model for understanding cultural diversity and demographics as critical determinants of necessary support for CALD recruitment and retention in Policing. This paper proposes a preliminary model which after data collection is refined to show understanding cultural diversity and demographics as being critical determinants of necessary support for CALD recruitment and retention in Policing.

The preliminary conceptual model is comprised of three factors with factor 1 depicting an employee's understanding and experiences about the benefits of cultural diversity that directly influence the support for a diversified workforce. Factor 2 represents variables related to support for a diversified Police force and the third factor denotes an employee's demographic factors that affect both their understanding and support for a diversified workplace. This paper argues that the potential impact of understandings necessitate a diversified Police force as a means of increasing efficiency and effectiveness of Police services. The demographic factors include age, gender, education qualifications, and length of employment in Policing. Figure 1 below shows the direction of impact between the preliminary model's three factors.

Figure 1: Preliminary Conceptual Model - Demographics, CALD Understanding and Support



In line with the proposed model, the following three hypotheses were investigated.

H1 - There is a relationship between the level of understanding about the benefits of a CALD workforce and support for increasing the number of CALD employees.

H2 - There is a relationship between demographic variables (gender, age, length of employment, and educational level) and an understanding of CALD.

H3 - There is a relationship between demographic variables (gender, age, length of employment and educational level) and support for increasing the number of CALD employees.

The findings in this paper are based on a pilot study of 97 respondents undertaken prior to a substantial main study where approximately 9000 recipients were surveyed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding and managing diversity is crucial to the viability of contemporary organizations in the face of globalization and rapid demographic changes in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, age and national origins (Cox and Blake 1991; Shaw and Barrett-Power 1998, Ng and Burke 2004). Differences in cultural values are an important consideration during the implementation of any management initiative and being aware of these differences enhances management's understanding of their employee's reaction to organizational initiatives (Kirkman & Shapiro, 2001). The success and acceptance of cultural diversity within an organization is dependent on an integrated organizational strategic effort that is strongly related to organizational support, high strategic priority of diversity relative to other competing objectives, the presence of a diversity manager, and the existence of a large number of diversity-supportive policies and managerial rewards for increasing workplace diversity (Rynes & Rosen, 1995).

Australia is second only to Israel and the OPEC Arab region in the ethnic diversity of its population (Wilkinson and Cheung 1999). Diversity may be defined as the presence of differences among members of a social unit (Jackson, May & Whitney 1995; Peppas 2005) and is becoming an increasingly important factor in social life as countries worldwide become more diverse (Shaw and Barrett-Power 1998).

During the last few decades Australia experienced its rapid growth of CALD minorities largely due to the migration of Asian, African and East European immigrants. Demographic changes that have occurred as a result of immigration have brought enormous benefits to Australia. However, an increasing number of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic communities and racial groups may pose conflicts about the legitimacy of legal and communal standards and definitions thereby presenting an enormous challenge to law enforcement and order maintenance activities (APMAB 2003). The literature reports that a culturally diverse representative police force will better meet the needs and priorities of the communities it serves and draws its resources from hence it is no longer acceptable for organizations to deliver standardized services to a culturally and linguistically diverse community without regard for that diversity. Recruitment practices play an important role in job seeker decisions (Rynes, Bretz, & Gerhart, 1991). Therefore, in order to attract and retain more CALD employees, an appropriate recruitment and retention policy is an extreme necessity.

Previous research on the attitudes toward diversity initiatives generally found that women and minority groups hold more positive attitudes towards CALD (Ng and Burke 2004) than males. Guller (1972) found the higher the level of education, the more flexible or open one's belief system becomes. Roberg and Bonn (2004) suggested that a liberal attitude is conducive to the discretionary nature of law enforcement. There is evidence to indicate that degree-educated officers are more ethical in their behaviour than their less educated counterparts (Tyre and Braunstein 1992). In addition, officers possessing a degree are thought to be more understanding of human behaviour, more sensitive to community relations, and hold a higher service standard (Miller and Fry 1976; Regoli 1976).

An international review of the literature showed that most research addressing cultural diversity is predominantly descriptive (Jehn 1997; Pelled, Eisenhardt & Xin 1999; Jaeger and Vitalis 2005) and focused on the importance of diversity and organizational success but few studies addressed how workforce diversity may be achieved let alone the development of a theoretical CALD recruitment model. Morris, Shinn & DuMont (1999) proposed a theoretical model to investigate the relationship between the support, fairness, and sensitivity of police officers to social interactions, and the relationship to organizational commitment of culturally diverse police officers. Her study showed that the management support and management sensitivity to diversity are directly and indirectly related to organizational commitment. However, Morris's study did not investigate the factors that influence the support for a diversified workforce, nor the demographic variable relationships associated with this support.

Extensive analysis of Victoria Police's policies, procedures and key strategic documents extends the CALD scholarly literature by modelling the relationship between demographics and support for CALD recruitment where the empirical validation of the proposed model will, in turn, extend the body of CALD literature and recruitment thereby assisting organizations in the development of organizational policies.

RESEARCH METHOD

The literature suggests that organizational research, by its very nature, requires cross-level assessment in order to understand the impact of work environment and situational determinants of behaviour (Klein, Dansereau & Hall 1994; Rousseau 1985). This study adopted a multi-method research approach where a postal survey was distributed to Victoria Police sworn and unsworn employees. The 41 item questionnaire was comprised of three sections with the first section containing closed questions gathering information on items related to the understanding of CALD and the support for the recruitment and retention of CALD employees. The second

section contained open questions regarding the benefits and challenges of working with CALD colleagues and communities and the third section contained independent variables such as demographics. The quantitative section of the questionnaire contained closed Likert scale items anchored to 1 representing strongly disagree, 5 implying strongly agree and 3 representing neutral. The qualitative section was comprised of ten open questions where the respondents wrote their comments to each question. Prior to the pilot study, the validity of the instrument was pre-tested on a sample of eight Victoria Police sworn and un-sworn employees.

A total of 500 questionnaires were posted to randomly selected Victoria Police employees. Ninety seven useful responses were returned with an effective response rate of 19.5%. This is deemed as an acceptable response rate in postal survey research method techniques. The Chronbach alpha value for the instrument was $\alpha=0.81$. The reliability values for 'understanding of diversity' and 'support for diversified workforce' constructs yielded Cronbach Alpha values of $\alpha=0.813$ and $\alpha=0.788$ respectively. These reliability measures were higher than similar studies found in the literature. For example, α value of Chermak's study was 0.73 (Chermak, McGarrell & Gruenewald 2006). In the Morris et al's (1999) study, Cronbach Alpha values of 'management support' and 'management sensitivity' were 0.71 and 0.74 respectively. These results indicate that the variables studied were internally consistent and by exceeding a minimum α value of 0.60 that the measuring instrument was reliable (Nunnally, 1978).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Sample

Seventy one percent of the respondents were male and 29% were female. This is inline with the present gender distribution in Victoria Police. The majority of the male respondents (82%) were sworn employees whereas the majority of the female respondents (59%) worked as un-sworn (public service) employees. Among the sworn respondents, 84% were male and 16% were female. On the other hand, among un-sworn respondents, 77% were female and 33% were male. These results indicate that sworn employees were dominated by male employees and the un-sworn sector was dominated by female employees.

Results show that the majority (68%) of employees did not possess a University degree. Thirty two percent of the respondents possessed a Degree or higher levels of qualifications. Among the male respondents 21% had a University degree compared to 64% for females. In addition, more un-sworn (59%) employees had University degrees compared to sworn (24%) employees. Table

1 below shows the respondents' education level in terms of gender, employment type, age, length of employment and country of birth.

Table 1: Education Level

Demographics	Category	Education level (%)	
		<Degree	Degree +
Gender	Male	78.8	21.2
	Female	36.4	63.6
Employment type	Sworn	75.8	24.2
	Unsworn	41.2	58.8
Age group	<40	59.5	40.5
	>40	75.6	24.4
Length of employment	<15 yrs	51.4	48.6
	>15 yrs	81.8	18.2
Country of birth	Australia	71.2	28.8
	Other	70.6	29.4

Further analysis of the results showed that 37% of the respondents had a secondary school level qualification, 20% had a diploma and higher diploma and 22% had a University level degree qualification. Demographic distribution of employees according to their age shows that the majority of employees (62%) were aged between 30-50 years and almost equally distributed above and below 40 years of age. Younger members (age < 30) constituted about one fifth of the respondents. In terms of the length of the employment, about a third of respondents were working with Victoria Police for more than 25 years. Respondents with employment length less than 5 years constituted 18% of respondents. A vast majority of the respondents were born in Australia (77%) and among the respondents who were born outside Australia, 55% were born in England and Scotland.

Understanding of Cultural Diversity

The respondents were requested to show their level of agreement to five closed questions related to the understanding of the benefits of cultural diversity as shown in Table 2 below. Descriptive results are also presented in Table 2 which shows the mean values of all but one variable are above 3, indicating that most respondents are in agreement with the five statements. The respondents placed strong emphasis on having a CALD workforce to assist in the delivery of policing services to the community. In addition, the respondents agreed that they had positive experiences working with CALD colleagues, and that a CALD workforce would support social cohesion where the community would work more closely with a culturally diversified Victoria Police workforce. However, the respondents were not generally agreeable (mean <3) that the low level of cultural and linguistic diversity at Victoria Police acts as a barrier to interaction

with CALD communities. However, a SPSS ‘frequency’ test showed that 40% of the respondents disagreed with this view and 60% either agreed or stayed neutral.

Table 2: Mean values and factor loadings with understanding of cultural diversity

Understanding of cultural diversity	Mean	Factor loading with ‘understanding’
Having a culturally and linguistically diverse workforce assists in the delivery of policing services to the community.	3.63	.814
Positive experience in working with CALD colleagues	3.51	.568
A CALD workforce supports social cohesion.	3.03	.893
The low level of cultural and linguistic diversity in the Victoria Police workforce acts as a barrier to interaction with CALD communities.	2.78	.623
The community will work more closely with Victoria Police if they perceive it to be a culturally diverse organisation	3.22	.889

A principal components analysis with varimax rotation was employed to reduce the number of predictors in the model. Factor analysis of five variables related to ‘understanding of cultural diversity’ showed that all the variables were grouped in one factor. Factor loading of the variables to the factor ‘understanding’ are shown in the last column of Table 2. It can be seen that the factor loadings are high (>0.5). As all the variables grouped into one factor and the factor loadings are also high, it may be concluded that all these items collectively measure a single construct identified as ‘understanding’.

Strong correlations between the factor measuring ‘understanding of cultural diversity’ and the variables indicate the strength of relationships. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy of 0.747 and significance value of 0.00 validates the derived factor.

Support for Diversified Workforce

The literature suggests that strong organizational support is necessary for establishing organizational commitment towards a diversified police force (Morris et al. 1999). The strength of the support for the recruitment and retention of CALD employees and a diversified workforce among existing Victoria Police employees is shown in Table 3 below. It can be seen that respondents generally support (mean >3) a culturally diversified Victoria Police. They placed strong emphasis on having a good understanding of Victorian CALD communities. In order to test whether the three items used to measure support for a culturally diversified Victoria Police force may truly measure a single construct ‘support’ a principle component factor analysis was conducted. Results show that all three items grouped into one factor. Factor loadings of these variables are presented in the last column of Table 3. It may also be seen from

the table that all the variables strongly relate (factor loading >0.7) to the factor 'Support for diversified workforce'. KMO measure of sampling adequacy of 0.623 and significance value of 0.00 validates the derived factor.

Table 3: Mean values and factor loadings with support for diversified workforce

Support for diversified workforce	Mean	Factor loading with 'support'
I think it is important for Victoria Police to increase the number of police officers from CALD backgrounds.	3.39	.827
I think it is important for Victoria Police to increase the number of VPS employees from CALD backgrounds.	3.01	.822
I think it is important for police officers to have a good understanding of CALD communities in the Victorian Community.	4.03	.736

Influence of Demographic Variables

It was hypothesised that independent demographic variables such as gender, age, length of employment, and highest level of education influenced an employee's understanding of cultural diversity and support for a diversified Police force. The factor analysis results presented above showed all the items used to measure an employee's understanding about cultural diversity and support for a diversified force converged to factors 'support' and 'understanding' respectively. Therefore, in order to further analyse the scores of the variables belonging to each factor they were summed and averaged (Hair Jr., Anderson, Tatham & Black 2006). This was then tested to show how different demographic groups responded to the aggregate 'understanding' and aggregate 'support' factors. Results are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Relationship of 'understanding' and 'support' with demographic variables

Theme	Gender		Education Level		Length of employment		Age	
	Male	Female	Without Degree	With Degree	<15 years	>15 years	<40 years	>40 years
Support	2.15	2.43	2.19	2.37	2.37	2.16	2.27	2.24
Understanding	2.2	2.57	2.27	2.43	2.40	2.25	2.35	2.27

Table 4 shows that female respondents have a higher understanding of cultural diversity and support for a diversified workforce than male respondents. Table 4 also shows that respondents with higher education levels have a better understanding of cultural diversity and support for a diversified workforce. The table shows that respondents below 40 years of age have a marginally higher understanding of cultural diversity and support for diversified workforce. In summary, Table 4 results show that female respondents, respondents under 40 years of age,

respondents working less than 15 years at Victoria Police, and respondents possessing a degree or higher education qualification have a better understanding of cultural diversity as well as stronger support for a culturally diversified workforce. Due to the small population sample, further tests such as influence of ethnic background were not performed. For example, whilst Australian born, the respondents may be of a non-English speaking background and this may influence their attitudes towards a CALD workforce.

Hypotheses Test

In order to test the conceptual model’s three proposed hypotheses, a Pearson’s correlation test between the aggregate ‘understanding’ and the aggregate of the ‘support’ was performed with the results presented in Table 5 below. As can be seen in Table 5, cultural diversity understanding and support for CALD recruitment are strongly and significantly related. A statistical significance level of 0.00 demonstrates a strong relationship. Hypothesis 1- there is a relationship between the level of understanding about the benefits of a CALD workforce and support for increasing the number of CALD employees was thus supported.

Table 5: Pearson’s correlation test between understanding and support for CALD recruitment.

		Support CALD recruitment	Understandin g
Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.771(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Understanding	Pearson Correlation	.771(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Although Table 5 shows significant relationships between understanding of cultural diversity and support for CALD recruitment, the pattern of the relationships cannot be understood from the table. The relationship between these two factors is plotted in Figure 2 below.

It is evident that an understanding of cultural diversity and support for CALD recruitment are linearly and strongly (positively) related. The linear relationship can be expressed mathematically as: Support for diversified Police force = 0.9146 x understanding of benefits of cultural diversity + 0.235.

The strength and pattern of the relationship between ‘understanding’ and ‘support’ is reflected in the equation.

In order to test Hypotheses 2 and 3, SPSS t-tests were conducted between understanding of cultural diversity and support for CALD recruitment and demographic variables of gender, age, length of employment and educational level. The results are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6 shows that the two independent variables of gender (female) and highest level of education (higher education) have strong significant relationships with ‘understanding’. However, the relationship between gender and education with ‘support’ was shown to be insignificant. Other demographic variables such as age and length of employment do not show a significant relationship with neither an understanding of cultural diversity nor support for CALD recruitment. Therefore, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 2 - There is a relationship between demographic variables (gender, age, length of employment, and educational level) and an understanding of CALD is partially supported. However, Hypothesis 3 - There is a relationship between demographic variables (gender, age, length of employment and educational level) and support for increasing the number of CALD employees is rejected.

Figure 2: Relationship between understanding and support for CALD recruitment

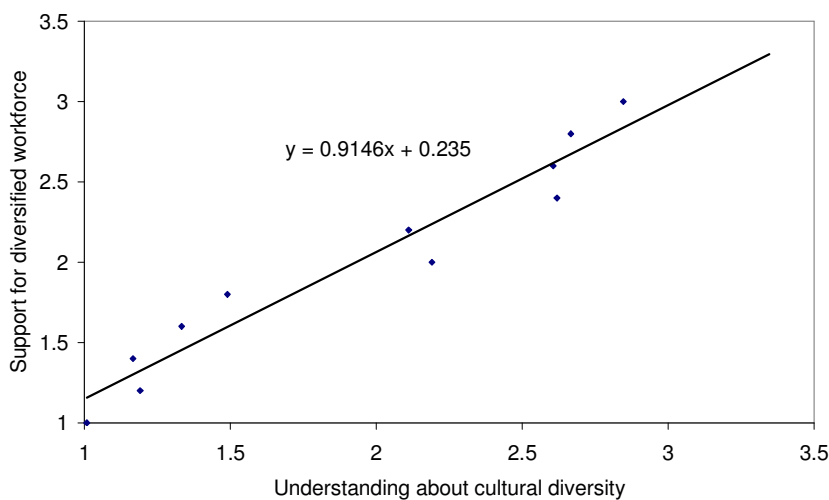


Table 6: T-test results between ‘understanding’ and ‘support’ and demographic variables

	Gender		Age		Length of employment		Education	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Understanding	7.109	0.01	0.028	0.282	1.172	0.282	4.465	0.023
Support	0.072	0.789	1.035	0.376	0.793	0.376	1.023	0.315

Conceptual Model: The results of the statistical tests and hypothesis testing indicated that the study’s preliminary model that was proposed prior to data collection required refining. Hence the revised conceptual model is shown in Figure 3 below. In summary, demographics such as gender and education level, influences the understanding of cultural diversity which in turn

influences the understanding of cultural diversity which flows on to have a significant influence on the support for the recruitment and retention of CALD employees.

Figure 3: Conceptual Model - Demographics, CALD Understanding and Support



Results of Open Ended Questions

In order obtain in-depth explanations of the benefits and challenges of working CALD colleagues and the efforts necessary to recruit and retain CALD staff, ten open ended questions were included in the questionnaire. The respondents were asked what benefits, if any, they had experienced when working with employees from CALD backgrounds. The results are shown in table 7. Analysis of the responses shows that the majority of the respondents stated that they experienced some benefits working with CALD colleagues. The main benefits they received were learning about other cultures and languages, enhanced communication with CALD communities and broadening different ideas on various issues which enable Victoria Police to be prepared in dealing with CALD communities.

In describing the benefits of working with CALD colleagues, one of the respondents stated *“learning new things and becoming more culturally sensitive to their (CALD) needs”*. Another respondent stated *“learning culture and how to talk, approach or deal with that particular culture if exposed to them in your duties”*. Yet another respondent stated *“A better understanding of culture differences and ways to resolve situations differently”*.

An analysis of these open ended questions shows that 73% of the respondents stated they had experienced some benefits working with CALD colleagues with the remaining 27% stating that they either had not worked with CALD colleagues or had not realised any benefits from working with CALD colleagues. Results show that working with CALD colleagues provide significant benefits which prepares Victoria Police to work efficiently in a multicultural society. A cross check of these open questions with the quantitative section of the questionnaire showed that the vast majority of the respondents who stated that they did not experience any benefits of working with CALD colleagues did not support the idea of recruiting more CALD employees.

Table 8 shows the cross tabulation results between support for CALD recruitment and the benefits experienced working with CALD colleagues.

As can be seen in the Table 7, 69% of the respondents who stated that they experienced no benefits did not support CALD recruitment. On the other hand, 70% of the respondents who stated they increased their understanding about different languages, cultures and religions through working with CALD colleagues, supported more recruitment from culturally diversified groups. These findings support the quantitative data findings and provided further support to the modified conceptual model.

Table 7: Cross tabulation results between support for CALD recruit and benefits experienced working with CALD colleagues

		Benefits experienced when working with CALD employees			
		Learning, people, culture, language	Better communication	Broadening of ideas and different perspective	No benefit
Support for CALD	Disagree	30%	33%	20%	69%
	Agree	70%	67%	80%	31%

CONCLUSION

The survey instrument was found to be highly reliable with an overall Cronbach Alpha value of 0.802 and reliability values for ‘understanding’ and ‘support’ constructs yielded Cronbach Alpha values of 0.813 and 0.788 respectively. A model was proposed that depicts the link between demographic factors, awareness of cultural diversity within the members of Victoria Police and the necessary support for a culturally diversified workforce. Results show that demographic variables gender and education qualifications have significant impact on the understanding of cultural diversity. However, these variables do not have any significant direct influence on support for a diversified workforce. Other demographic variables such as age of employees and service length proved to have no significant influence of understanding of cultural diversity and support for culturally diversified workforce. The study established a significant relationship between an employee’s understanding of the benefits of cultural diversity and support for CALD recruitment.

The proposed conceptual model contributes to CALD recruitment and retention and to the scholarly literature. For example, the model contributes to the literature addressing CALD recruitment by proposing and empirically validating a conceptual model which is absent in the literature. In particular, the model demonstrates statistically significant relationships between the understanding of cultural diversity and support for CALD recruitment. Furthermore, the

model identified the measurement instruments for the understanding of cultural diversity and support for a diversified workforce. As all the measurement items used in this study converged to a single factor in both cases, use of these items to measure the factors were statistically supported. Finally, the model and the research emanating from the conceptual model will assist in designing and modifying Victoria Police's CALD recruitment policies. The highly reliable survey instrument used in this study, generated findings that extended Morris et al's (1999) proposed theoretical model. The limitations of this study are that the population sample was small at 97 responses.

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