

DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

**A comparative study of diversity
management in today's Irish workplace**

by

Elizabeth Finnerty

Word Count: 12,986

**A Dissertation submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for**

BA in Human Resource Management

**National College of Ireland
Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1**

July, 2004

Authorship Declaration:

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment of the programme of study leading to the award of BA in Human Resource Management is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed:

Eligateth Finney

Date:

28 July, 2004

Student Number: 03218236

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the concept of diversity management in the workplace, with particular emphasis on organisations in Ireland today. The principal objectives of this study was to develop a conceptualised view of diversity initiatives in the Irish working environment and to examine why business perceive diversity management as being an important contributor to their competitive advantage in today's economic environment. Because the area of diversity and diversity management is so broad, there was a need to focus mainly on the areas of cultural diversity/ethnicity and disability.

The methodological framework consisted of a combination of primary and secondary research. Secondary research examined literature, through books, Internet, business journals, articles, etc. Primary research, on the other hand, adopted a combination of both quantitative (based on a questionnaire) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) methodologies. Results from analysis of the research data indicated certain trends in relation to diversity management initiatives in the Irish workplace, namely 'work-life balance' initiatives, gender equality and disability. Also, findings established that, as with literature review on US perspectives, legislation was the primary driving force behind diversity management in organisations in Ireland. Other findings in relation to the research indicated bottom-line benefits to organisations related to employee morale, enhanced organisational profile and enhanced management/employee relations. This finding relating to management/employee relations had not been one of the findings of the literature review. However, findings in relation to financial benefits to organisations were difficult to establish in the Irish context. This may be mainly due to the fact that there is very little research in the Irish context on this aspect of diversity management and diversity management concepts and will be an area for future research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	iii
List of Figures.....	v
List of Tables.....	vi
Chapter I:	
Introduction.....	1
1.1 Diversity and Diversity Management Defined.....	4
1.2 Origin and Emergence Of Diversity Management.....	5
1.3 Changing Irish Economy (Diversity Implications)	7
1.4 Legislation (Equality/Diversity Implications).....	11
1.5 Summary.....	12
Chapter II: Literature Review.....	13
2.1 U.S. Framework for Managing Diversity.....	14
2.2 Diversity Conceptualised as a Corporate Asset.....	18
2.3 Managing Cultural Diversity (Implications for organisational performance).....	19
2.4 Cultural Diversity in Ireland.....	27
2.5 Disability Issues in the Irish Workplace.....	29
2.6 Summary.....	31
Chapter III: Research Methodology.....	33
3.1 Objectives of the Research.....	33
3.2 Research Population.....	36
3.3 Data Analysis Technique.....	38
Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion.....	39
4.1 Findings – Diversity Profile.....	39
4.2 Findings – Driving Forces Behind Diversity Management.....	42
4.3 Implications of Diversity Management.....	44
Chapter.V: Conclusion.....	45
Bibliography.....	46
Appendix I: Interview Questions (Diversity Management).....	47
Appendix II: Questionnaire (Diversity Management).....	49

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Number</i>		<i>Page</i>
1.	Work Permits Issued in Ireland (1999 – 2003, incl.).....	12
2.	Breakdown – Diversity Profile, Percentage, by Gender, People with Disabilities, Country of Origin	40
3.	Existing Diversity Policies in Organisations.....	42
4.	Areas of Priority in addressing Diversity Management.....	42
5.	Driving Forces Behind Diversity Management	43
6.	‘Impact of Diversity Management’	44

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Number</i>		<i>Page</i>
1.	Issue of Work Permits 2001	12
2.	Work Visas by Country of Origin (Jan. – Dec., 2001).....	13
3.	Work Authorisations by Country of Origin (Jan. – Dec., 2001)	14
4.	Diversity Perspectives and Associated Strategic Responses	15

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation paper will aim to examine the area of diversity, with particular emphasis on how diversity is managed in Irish working environment today.

Diversity is by no means a new concept to Irish society. Ireland has for decades been dealing with a diverse political and socio-economic culture. Ireland's membership to the European Union, while it may be seen by some as having some negative effects e.g., impairing of local decision making and lack of autonomy in policy formation, it has also had very positive effects as it has been a significant contributor to Ireland's prosperity over the last decade. Undoubtedly, Ireland has benefited greatly through EU funding and community initiative programmes, addressing educational, training and social needs across communities. The Irish labour market has changed rapidly over recent years and is now completing in a world market and Ireland is seen as the fastest growing economy in Europe. The government, with tax incentives and inducements, has attracted Foreign Direct Investment and this has been reflected in the growth in education and employment opportunities. For the first time in history we see an inward migration and we are witnessing increasing diversity in terms of how we operate in the business environment. This diversity is evident on two accounts – the first being our operating in an open market on a global scale and the second, with the changes in demographics of the labour force - increasing numbers of migrant workers, women, older people, people with disabilities and various family status, marital status, religious and sexual orientation, etc.

The focus of this research is to explore what measures are currently taken in Irish organisations by way of diversity management. The main research questions that this study seeks to address are:

- To develop a conceptualised view of diversity initiatives in the Irish working environment;

- To establish what have been the driving forces behind diversity management initiatives;
- To examine why businesses perceive diversity management as being an important contributor to their competitive advantage in the marketplace;
- To critically evaluate literature in the US and European context in relation to findings.

As will be discussed in the this paper, diversity has been conceptualised in many different ways. Diversity, as outlined by the United Nations is thought of in terms of obvious attributes – age, differences, race, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, religion and language, For the purpose of this research paper, we will focus mainly on examining diversity in the Irish context through the lens of both ethnicity and disability. Recent changes in society - Ireland becoming a more diverse and economically stronger society have, inevitably, led to changes in the workplace. The introduction of new equality legislation has also highlighted the need for equality in the workplace – protecting the dignity of all staff, by taking account of different needs and different realities and by developing policies that are sensitive to the diversity of the workforce. We also saw the “New Perspectives: Disability and Employment” conference held in Waterford in 1999, with speakers such as Ted Kennedy Jnr., from the U.S., Brian Crowley, MEP, Michael Laine of the European Commission and others, which put issues of disability onto the national agenda. These are two very topical areas in the Irish context at the current time and should be addressed adequately by diversity management initiatives.

Managing diversity and promoting a diversity culture has, undoubtedly, stemmed from the United States and diversity culture in the U.S. is seen as a key component to growth and competitiveness. Chapter ‘1’ of this paper will, therefore, examine the origins of diversity management by looking towards the US. Managing diversity in Europe may be said to have been pioneered by subsidiaries of US firms e.g., Intel, Hewlett Packard and IBM. However, one main difference from the US perspective is that of State intervention. In chapter ‘1’ we will also examine this, with particular emphasis on the impact of legislation in the European and at a micro level – in the Irish context. This chapter will focus on

what changes in the Irish economy has witnessed over recent years and the impact of these changes.

Chapter '2' of the literature review examines what research, concepts and opinions exist in relation to the concept of diversity management and look at the US framework for managing diversity. As cited by Rajvinder Kandola (Tools for Managing Diversity) "*Today, managing diversity is not just socially desirable, but the driver of organisational competitiveness*" – this chapter will aim to examine, both in the US and European context, what has been written and what evidence exists in relation to this concept of managing diversity impacting on competitive advantage. This chapter also examines what the main driving forces are behind diversity management within organisations. As the focus of this research paper, in the main, will be to examine diversity through the lense of ethnicity and disability, the literature review will aim to examine the management of cultural diversity and implications on organisational competitiveness. This will be examined in the US and European (UK and Irish) context. This chapter will also review any literature relating to organisational diversity in terms of disability, with particular focus on the Irish context.

The next area – the Research Methodology outlines the research aims and objectives. Because there are many options for conducting research, this chapter endeavours to justify the reason for each method of research undertaken and why it was deemed appropriate for this study. Details of how the data analysis was conducted will be outlined in this chapter which will, in turn, form the basis for reporting and discussing findings to be outlined in the final chapter. Where appropriate, the findings will be related back to, and compared with, the literature review findings.

1.1 Diversity and Diversity Management Defined

Diversity and, in particular, workplace diversity has been conceptualised in many different ways over the years and signifies different things to different groups and individuals within organisations and society. Some may see diversity as proportional representation of various demographic and social groups in the workplace. Others may see it as the involvement of overcoming cultural prejudice and instilling new values about difference in the organisation or it may imply changing work practices to encompass cultural influences of different social groups.

Diversity, as defined by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) is *'valuing everyone as individuals – as employees, customers and clients'*.

The United Nations (UN) gives a comprehensive definition of diversity which in many ways outlines the complexity of this area:

Diversity takes many forms. It is usually thought of in terms of obvious attributes – age, differences, race, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, religion and language. Diversity in terms of background professional experience, skills and specialization, values and culture, as well as social class, as a prevailing pattern.

(United Nations, 2000)

The UN paper has also taken into account other external factors such as globalisation and technological advances and state that the management of diversity should also acknowledge personal attributes such as family position, personality and job function (all characteristics that go into shaping individual's perspectives'). The UN notes, however, that the term 'diversity' is seen to some as a new buzzword for equal opportunities, while others see it as the antithesis of equal opportunities. It argues that:

Diversity management should be viewed as an inclusive concept, encompassing a broader focus than employment equality would suggest. It requires one to look at the mindset and the culture of an organisation and the different perspectives people bring to an organisation on account of their ethnicity, social background, professional values, styles, disabilities or other differences.

(United Nations, 2000)

Managing Diversity may be said to be one of the key aspects of management and personnel practitioners. We may look to the U.S. and the emergence of diversity management as a result of socio-economic changes over the past thirty to forty years. According to Mills, Elmes and Prasad (Managing the Organisational Melting Pot) *‘Managing diversity Refers to the systematic and planned commitment on the part of organisations to recruit and retain employees from diverse demographic backgrounds. Managing diversity also implies an active recognition and appreciation of the increasingly multicultural nature of contemporary organisations’.*

1.2 Origin and Emergence Of Diversity Management

The social movement in the U.S.A. in the 1960s and 1970s had a major impact on the development of diversity legislation, namely the Civil Rights Act of 1964. At this time American Industry witnessed the influx of workers from traditionally excluded sectors – from diverse, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. This, along with the increase in females entering the workforce and subsequently, people with disabilities, meant that management were faced with new challenges. According to Allard and Harvey, 1995 (Understanding and Managing Diversity) Diversity issues at this stage were quantitative rather than qualitative and few changes were made in organisational policies, procedures and cultures. They outline this as the first phase of a ‘three phase diversity programme’ – the legalistic/quota approach. The second phase being an attempt to generalise the differences attributed to specific demographic groups:- understanding differences, with emphasis put on awareness of cultures, values and sensitivity to characteristics of individual groups. While generalisation failed to account for individual differences within groups and led to additional stereotypes, this approach did, however, make a contribution by opening up possibilities that diverse communication styles and values had merit. The implications for human resources was to devise training programmes for individuals not, as previously, in an ad hoc manner but by developing methods of utilizing the talents of a more diverse workforce to the attainment of organisational goals. They outline the third and current phase as ‘managing differences’. This is based on the premise that

organisations can learn to 'manage' people's differences in ways that will lead to increased productivity in a more harmonised working environment. This has focussed on the need for organisations to change their way of thinking about diversity and to take appropriate action.

The '**Workforce 2000**' study predicted that more women, minorities, older workers and immigrants would join the U.S. workforce and that the American workforce would be reshaped by issues around gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, origin and age (Hudson Institute, 1987).

Both **diversity and equality** may be said to go hand in hand and if we look at the U.S. and Canadian workforces since the civil rights and student's movements of the 1960s, they had been targets of anti-discrimination legislation. Laws such as the Equal Employment Opportunities Act (EEOA), The Age Discrimination Act and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act in the U.S. and the Employment Equity Act and Multiculturalism Act in Canada have all attempted to curtail discrimination in hiring and promotion practices of North American organisations.

While defining diversity to include social, cultural, physical and environmental differences among people, we include race, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities, sexual orientation, age, religion, social class and we may look to the American concept of managing diversity. As outlined by Edwards, 1991 *Managing Diversity is a key priority not because corporations are becoming kinder or gentler but because they want to survive*.

Keeping this in mind, we will now examine diversity in the Irish context. We would like to refer back to the statement of the UN that the term 'diversity' may be seen as a buzz word for equal opportunities and argue that *'diversity management requires one to look at the mindset and the culture of an organisation and the different perspectives people bring to an organisation on account of their ethnicity, social background, professional values, styles, disabilities or other differences'*.

It is very evident that the Irish economy and working environment has changed dramatically over recent years. The following section will examine these changes with a view to outlining the relevance of effective diversity and equality management.

1.3 Changing Irish Economy (Diversity Implications)

The Irish Government has over the years introduced tax incentives and inducements in order to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) into the country and this has contributed greatly to the Irish economy. As with the U.S. perspective where changes in the working environment led to the need for practitioners to focus more on diversity management, we have also seen dramatic changes in the Irish economy and working environment, particularly over the last decade. Ireland is seen as being the fastest growing economy in Europe and we have witnessed rapidly changing labour market conditions as we operate in a globally competitive environment. We have seen a huge increase of migrant workers in Ireland (*See Fig. 1 - Work Permits Issued*). The increased presence of migrant workers over recent years is relatively new to the Irish economy and, according to 'The FAS Irish Labour Market Review 2002' – the Irish economy will have an ongoing need for migrant workers. It is, therefore, inevitable that **Cultural Diversity** is, and will be, a permanent feature of the Irish working environment and how this will be managed will be of crucial importance – important, not only to Irish organisations/companies but to all stakeholders – individuals, society, companies, shareholders, state bodies, etc.

Fig. 1: Work Permits Issued in Ireland

Work Permits Issued:	
1999	6,250
2000	18,006
2001	36,436
2002	40,321
2003	47,551
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 146 ethnic groups live and work in Ireland ▪ Highest rate of permits issued to the Services Sector 	

If we take for example migrant workers in the year 2001, which accounted for 36,436 and were employed in various sectors in the Irish economy, from high skilled and professional services, e.g., medicine and health to manual jobs in the food industry and agriculture. Table 1 – *Sectors for which work permits issued in Ireland, 2001* outlines the sectors in which these people were employed – service sector being the largest, representing 38.5%.

Table 1: Main Sectors – Issue of Work Permits, 2001

Sector of Economy	No. of Work Permits Issued	% of Total Issued
Service Industry	14,018	38.5
Catering	9,129	25.1
Agriculture/Fisheries	5,714	15.6
Industry	3,119	8.6
Medical/Nursing	2,252	6.2
Entertainment	1,021	2.8
Domestic	521	1.4
Education	480	1.3
Sport	121	0.3
Exchange Agreements	61	0.2
Total	36,436	100

(Source: Data from Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)

Migrant workers from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the Philippines made up the largest migrant categories for work permits in 2001 – accounting for one third of all migrant workers issued with work permits in 2001. Nationals from other countries working in Ireland, e.g., students from China that are in Ireland to study English through a formal programme. They hold education visas that permit them to work up to twenty hours a week while studying and full-time during college holidays. We also see a high percentage of migrant workers from outside the European Economic Area and as a result of a work authorisation scheme introduced in June 2000 to meet skill shortages in information technology, health services, construction and engineering, 1,082 work authorisations and 2,667 working visas were issued in 2001 (*Source: data from Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment*).

Table 2: Work Visas by country of origin (Jan. to Dec. 2001)

Country of Origin	IT/ Computers	Nursing	Other Skills	Total	%
India	345	62	3	410	15
Philippines	20	1797	17	1834	69
Russia	74	0	7	81	3
Others	224	42	76	342	13
Total	663	1901	103	2667	100

(Source: Data from Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)

Table 3: Work authorisations by country of origin (Jan. to Dec. 2001)

Country of Origin	IT/ Computers	Nursing	Other Skills	Total	%
Australia	113	45	62	220	20
South Africa	255	62	232	549	51
U.S.A.	60	8	8	76	7
Others	156	18	63	237	22
Total	584	133	365	1082	100

(Source: Data from Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)

The number of work permits issued rose from 6,250 in 1999 to 45,274 issued in 2003. We saw the further enlargement of the EU and entry of ten further countries – southern Cyprus, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia on 1st May, 2004 – a further 74 million people, creating the world’s largest single market which, according to the UK Government, will help to fill 500,000 job vacancies in the UK in IT, construction, hospitality and catering which are suffering skills shortages. It goes without saying that Ireland is witnessing profound changes in terms of diversity. Along with increased cultural diversity, changes in technology, demographic changes and changes in legislation have led to further diversity in today’s working environment. According to John Philpott, chief economist at the CIPD, “HR people will have a larger pool of workers to look to when trying to fill vacancies, although there will be a whole range of issues concerning validation of skills, language and culture that need to be taken on board” and said “we are talking about economies with relatively low levels of development, but they tend to have relatively well-educated workforces”

However, as pointed out by Robin Schneider, managing director of equality and diversity consultancy Schneider-Ross, *"In a global market the last thing you can afford to be is home-country dominated in attitude. HR should not walk into this blindfold. If you are going to bring in people from eastern and central Europe, do so with planning. Prepare your managers and leaders, prepare your receiving team and prepare the people who are coming so that you don't fall over the cross-cultural issues."* He adds, *"Done well, the benefits can be significant"* and he gave the example of Intel, who came up with its Pentium chip when they switched their product development from national to global teams.

(Source: People Management, 6 May 2004. P28 – 33 *"Continental Drift"* Report, Claire Warren)

With the enlargement of the EU, we have seen and recognise that the workforce has become more diverse in many respects. Not only has this diversity been recognised but also the need to manage the diverse workforce has become apparent in order to achieve results.

The European Policy Conference "New Perspectives: Disability and Employment" highlighted disability issues, both in a social and in a work context. The 1999 conference, held in Waterford, received a good deal of publicity, with articles in Trade Magazine ARENA, IPD News and EUROPS (European Commission Publication) along with national and local newspaper coverage. The high profile of some of the speakers no doubt contributed to the press coverage. Nonetheless, it was very significant in putting disability issues onto the national agenda.

We see a significant increase in women workers, people with disabilities entering the workplace and an increase in atypical employment (temporary, part-time, contract employment, etc.). All of these changes have led to a more diverse workforce in the Irish economy and pose new challenges by way of managing the diversity that now exists.

1.4 Legislation (Equality/Diversity Implications)

The introduction of the new equality legislation – the Employment Equality Act, 1998 (came into operation in October 1999) and the Equal Status Act, 2000 will have an impact on how diversity is managed and in particular in the areas of training. The Employment Equality Act outlaws harassment and sexual harassment and outlaws discrimination in employment on the following nine grounds:

- gender
- marital status
- family status
- sexual orientation
- religious belief
- age
- disability
- race
- membership of the Traveller community

Discrimination on these grounds in relation to a number of areas including the following is now unlawful:

- access to employment
- conditions of employment
- training or experience for, or in relation to, employment
- promotion or re-grading
- classification of posts

EU Directive Implementing the Principle of Equal Treatment between Persons Irrespective of Racial or Ethnic Origin, 2000

At European Community level, Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam makes provision for Member States to take appropriate action to combat discrimination on a number of grounds including racial or ethnic origin. A new Directive on equal treatment irrespective of racial or ethnic origin has been adopted by Member States. The scope of the new measure covers goods and services, health, education, sport and employment. The new Directive also makes provision for positive action on the race ground in relation to employment and training.

1.5 Summary

Having examined the origins of diversity management in the US context, we see the development from the legalistic/quota approach to understanding differences (culture, values and sensitivity to characteristics of individual groups) in the workplace to managing these differences. One underlying factor, as was predicted by 'Workforce 2000' study, was that a more diverse workforce would become apparent in the US – more women, older workers, immigrants joining the workplace that would reshape the US workplace. From examining the European and Irish context, we see that we are witnessing profound changes in today's Irish working environment – changes in demographics of the labour force – increasing numbers of migrant workers, women, older people, people with disabilities and various family status, marital status, religious and sexual orientation. Changes in technology and legislation has not only allowed for the increased number of people with disabilities entering the workforce but has also led to the need for 'family friendly' work arrangements to be put in place by many organisations and the need to accommodate the flexible working environment that exists in many organisations today. As outlined in '1.4' above, the introduction of new equality legislation has had, and will have, an impact on management in the workplace. However, legislation alone is not sufficient to address diversity issues in today's workplace. It is a useful, and possibly necessary, tool while diversity management requires organisations to go beyond meeting the legal requirements and take a proactive approach in achieving organisational and individual benefits through the effective management of diversity.

The following section, 'Chapter 2' will examine literature on diversity both in the U.S. and Europe (UK and Ireland) context.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter we will look at what research, concepts and opinions relating to diversity and diversity management exist. Having outlined in 'chapter 1' the U.S. origins and development of the concept of diversity management, we will look further into what has been written in the U.S., with particular emphasis on evaluating what models or strategies exist for managing diversity. We will also examine what appears to have been the driving forces for managing diversity and what has been written in relation to the implications for organisational competitiveness, both in a U.S. and European context. Because this research paper aims to focus on diversity through the lense of ethnicity and disability, the research will focus on literature relating to the management of cultural diversity with implications for competitive advantage. This chapter will also examine what literature exists on diversity in terms of disability within the Irish work context. Finally, this section will discuss material/publications, etc. in the Irish context, which may be of relevance to the area of diversity in the Irish workplace. We will examine, in particular, what the Irish Government and Employer Bodies, e.g., IBEC, have done over recent years by way of addressing the area of diversity and equality in the workplace.

Writings and theories relating to diversity have evolved over the years. From as far back as 1940 in the US when diversity was discussed in terms of it being a 'problem' A report of a twelve member committee on general education appointed during the Second World War years by James Conant (then President of Harvard University) entitled '*General Education in a Free Society*' 1945 was concerned with maintaining social stability and advocated that the move from a lower social level to a higher social level was governed by specialized education alone. The studies, however, did not consider race, gender, ethnicity, age, etc. but saw diversity only in terms of class.

Writings on diversity have progressed from defining diversity, the need for a diverse workforce, managing diversity and, as outlined in recent publications and cited by Rajvinder Kandola in *Tools for Managing Diversity*, *'Today, managing diversity is not just socially desirable, but the driver of organisational competitiveness. By focussing on the unique contribution of every individual in the workplace, managing diversity goes far beyond the traditional equal opportunities approach of targeting specific groups. Diversity is inclusive; it not only acknowledges and understands differences between people – sex, age, background, race, physical and mental ability, personality, etc – but also seeks positive ways to harness these differences to enhance creativity, innovation and productivity'*.

2.1 U.S. Framework for Managing Diversity

The US has acknowledged the managing of diversity as a key aspect of management and personnel best practice and, while many may advocate that there is 'one best way' to manage a diverse workforce, it is still debated as to what that is.

The following is an outline of a general framework for managing diversity, as outlined by Parshotam Dass and Barbara Parket, *Strategies for Managing Human Resource Diversity: From Resistance to Learning*. (Understanding and Managing Diversity 2nd Ed., P60-77).

They propose a model that links executives' perspectives and priorities to managing workforce diversity, organisational conditions, and performance. Both internal and external pressures are taken into account as U.S. organisations have assembled a more diverse workforce in response to external and/or internal pressures – e.g., customers, suppliers, civil liberties groups, etc. may exert external pressures to hire more people of colour while internal pressure in organisational hiring may be applied by diversity champions, employee groups or change managers. They have identified some pressures that will favour greater organisational diversity while other pressures arise to reduce it – e.g., some firms have lobbied to eliminate same-sex benefits policies. They state that "a fit or match among diversity pressures, perspectives, and strategic responses is likely to improve organisational performance, whereas a mismatch is likely to entail economic and

non-economic costs". They advocate that managers that acknowledge that they face strong legal and social mandates for diversity may conclude that accommodating racial diversity provides a better fit with organisational circumstances than resisting it. Their conclusion to this that the best approach to diversity management is particular rather than universal.

They outline three different perspectives for managing diversity:

- (1) **the discrimination and fairness paradigm**
- (2) **the access and legitimacy paradigm**
- (3) **the learning and effectiveness paradigm**

They have also identified a fourth – **resistance**. Resistance to diversity was very evident in the U.S. during the pre-civil rights movement as growing pressures for diversity was seen by some groups as threats. We still see resistance in organisations today as organisations face claims of discrimination from immigrants, ethnic groups, homosexuals, etc. As we will see in *Table 4*, a reactive strategic response may be appropriate when pressure for a particular type of diversity is low – e.g., a situation where a multinational organisation that otherwise hire from a diverse workforce may be less diverse in a homogeneous nation.

Table 4: Diversity Perspectives and Associated Strategic Responses

Diversity Perspectives	Problem Statement	Internal Definition	Prescription	Desired Outcome	Strategic Response
Resistance perspective	Diversity as nonissue or threat	Not "us"	Sustain homogeneity	Protect the status quo	Reactive
Discrimination and Fairness Perspective	Differences cause problems	Protected groups	Assimilate individuals	Level the playing field for members	Defensive
Access and Legitimacy Perspective	Differences create opportunities	All differences	Celebrate differences	Access to employees and customers	Accommodative
Learning Perspective	Different and similarities offer opportunities and bear costs	Important differences and similarities	Acculturate; pluralism	Individual and organisational learning for long-term effect	Proactive

- **Discrimination and Fairness Perspective** - this is based the perspective that prejudice has kept certain groups out of organisations but remedies are available with the intervention of law – based on *affirmative action policies and equal employment opportunity legislation*. This perspective perceives diversity as an organisational ‘problem’ to be solved and focuses on members of historically disadvantaged groups and thus gives rise to a defensive strategic response. This includes tactics such as negotiating with, and pacifying, different interest groups. An example here could be where businesses use minority and female vendors among their suppliers. However, enforcing quotas (to satisfy diversity in a particular area) could create backlash if unqualified people are hired. Also, as cited by Harvey and Allard, 1995 (*Understanding and Managing Diversity*), another challenge occurs when surface-level forms of diversity are mistaken for deep-level diversity. An example of this was when Thurgood Marshal’s Supreme Court seat was filled by Clarence Thomas, an African-American, but many felt Thomas identified more with Caucasians than with other African-Americans. They advocate that such a view can generate homogeneity, assimilation, colonization, and control rather than diversity.

- **Access and Legitimacy perspective** - As outlined earlier in ‘Chapter 1’ the *Workforce 2000* report predicted that more women, minorities, older workers and immigrants would join the U.S. workforce. This created the context for the access and legitimacy perspective – e.g., Legitimacy being sought by managers who believe it is important for customers to look inside the company and see people like themselves – cited by Harvey and Allard, 1995 as being a perspective adopted by IBM or the recruitment of bilingual employees to attract certain customers. This perspective not only recognises differences but also values them and many organisations would emphasise that there are bottom line reasons for incorporating this diversity, e.g., increased profitability, reduced turnover and improved morale and team spirit. Unlike the ‘discrimination and fairness perspective’ which is adopted as a result of social or legal mandate, the ‘access and legitimacy perspective’ is usually adopted in organisations by choice. This perspective promotes greater diversity in the workplace. We see this in the hospitality and service industries where we see a high percentage of

diverse workforce, accommodating a diverse customer base. According to Harvey and Allard, 1995 - the access and legitimacy perspective is likely to be associated with an accommodative strategic response. Rather than tolerate diversity until people can be assimilated, this perspective promotes greater diversity in the workplace. They advocate that organisations with an accommodative response are likely to reflect a higher level of heterogeneity and inclusion than those with a defensive one. They outline that the perspective may often be guided by demographic pressures and give an example Tyson Foods in the US hiring hundreds of Mexican immigrants in its poultry processing plants because of labour shortages (presumably caused by low wage rates in the industry). Another example is where long-distance telephone companies in the US selecting sales representatives from immigrant groups in order to attract immigrant users.

- **Learning Perspective** – this perspective on diversity involves three characteristics that distinguish it from the other perspectives (1) it sees similarities and differences as dual aspects of workforce diversity; (2) it seeks multiple objectives from diversity, including efficiency, innovation, customer satisfaction, employee development and social responsibility; (3) it views diversity as having long-term as well as short-term ramifications. This perspective encourages legal compliance and training but also encourages active participation in finding better and more efficient ways of compliance beyond those legally mandated. Its emphasis on unity-in-diversity may be described as multiculturalism. Organisations taking this approach adopt diversity policies that nurture homogeneity and diversity, addressing core issues of race, ethnicity and gender. They would also recognise the important role of conflict and debate in creating a common sense of vision and beliefs within the organisation.

Harvey and Allard, 1995 advocate also that the pressures for diversity range in intensity, and can vary and even conflict. In the U.S some pressures favour immigrant hiring, while other pressures oppose it. The implementation of diversity initiatives depends not only on these pressures, perspectives, and responses, but also on where managers place diversity on their list of organisational priorities.

Indications of similar pressured have recently been witnessed in the U.K in relation to hiring of refugees. As outlined in an article by Karen Higginbottom, *Firms fear bad refugee publicity* – (People Management, 11 March 2004), UK organisations employing refugees were frightened to admit the fact, for fear of bad publicity, resulting in damage to their firms. A study carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), on behalf of the Employability Forum, found that while firms were impressed with the work of refugees, they felt that the public perception towards refugees was so negative that speaking out about employing refugees could threaten their custom. This study was carried out on ten employers including a hotel chain, construction company, food manufacturing, a bus company, and also Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

As outlined by Cox and Blake, 1991 (Managing Cultural Diversity) Pitney Bowes CEO, Michael Critelli advocates that diversity “is a business necessity” and bottom-line objectives can include cost reductions, reduced turnover, enhanced profitability resulting from improved morale or team spirit, or improved market value.

Having outlined three perspectives in relation to managing diversity, we will now examine what evidence there is, or what has been written, in relation to how diversity contributes to organisational competitiveness with particular emphasis on cultural diversity

2.2 Diversity conceptualised as a Corporate Asset

Diversity has been viewed by some as having economic value and managing diversity often represents a viable long-term strategy that will result in economic benefits. According to Foster, Jackson, Cross, Jackson, & Hardiman, 1988; Fyock, 1990; Johndon & Packard, 1987,... The economic defence of diversity itself has three dimensions:

- (1) Diversity is framed as a valuable option because of the market forces behind it. This argument proposes that the changing demographic profiles of the North American workforce leave organisations with few options but to actively embrace

diversity. The thinking behind this is that change in the market supply of labour constitute the fundamental driving force behind the diversity movement and by incorporating diversity initiatives into managerial strategies driven by labour market conditions, this will be a warning for firms that have paid attention to their own diversity, that they will not be able to find skilled employees

- (2) 'Greater workplace diversity translates into greater workplace productivity' – An article in *Fortune* magazine outlined how Ernest Drew (CEO of Hoechst Celanese) ascertained that productivity in Hoechst began to surge in those plants with proportionately more diverse employees. According to Kirchmeyer & McLennan, 1991; Loden & Rosener, 1991 ("How to Make") Demographic and culturally diverse groups are likely to outperform more homogenous ones because they bring diverse approaches to everyday organizational problem solving.
- (3) The diverse workforce acquires economic legitimacy through arguments of *competitive advantage*. As pointed out by Foster et al, (1988) "*organisations that invite change and successfully manage diversity are more likely to detect and solve complex business problems that do not fit into orthodox business models of yesterday*". (Managing the Organisational Melting Pot, Dilemmas of Workplace Diversity, p10)

2.3 Managing Cultural Diversity (Implications for Organisational Competitiveness)

While management literature suggests that organisations should value diversity in order to enhance effectiveness, there is very little evidence of research to support the link between managing diversity and organisational competitiveness. For the purpose of this research, we will focus primarily on cultural diversity. We will examine an article written on this topic by Taylor H. Cox and Stacy Blake, University of Michigan.

Cox and Blake, 1991 have addressed six dimensions of business performance that are directly impacted by the management of cultural diversity. These dimensions are:

- i. Cost
- ii. Attraction of human resources
- iii. Marketing success
- iv. Creativity and innovation
- v. Problem solving quality and
- vi. Organisational flexibility

Cox and Blake refer to the first two - cost and attraction of human resources as the “**inevitability-of-diversity**” issues. They advocate that competitiveness is affected by the need to hire more women, minorities and foreign nationals. This is due to that of national and cross-national workforce demographic trends. The remaining four – marketing, creativity, problem solving and system flexibility arguments are derived from what they refer to as **value-in-diversity hypothesis** – that diversity brings net-added value to organisations processes. They argue that organisations have been less successful in managing women and racioethnic minorities. They state a higher percentage turnover for women and also report statistics of turnover for blacks in the US as being 40% higher than that of whites. They outline two further studies that investigated the effect of company investment in day care on human resource cost variables. One study monitored the turnover and absenteeism rates for working mothers using company sponsored childcare, and this showed an absenteeism of 38% lower than those without company assistance. Turnover was 2% compared to 6% for the non-benefit groups. The second study showed that companies that initiated in-house child care facilities, worker attitudes improved on six measures, including organisational commitment and job satisfaction and turnover declined by 63%. Another form of accommodating diversity studied with cost implications was the use of flexitime and it was found in a field experiment on the impact of flexitime use on absenteeism and worker performance. It was found that both short and long-term absence declined significantly.

(Source: “Effects of Flexitime on Employee Attendance and Performance: A field experiment” *Academy of Management Journal*, Dec., 1981)

A study by UCLA of the productivity of culturally heterogeneous and culturally homogeneous work teams found that among the heterogeneous teams, some were more and some were less productive than the homogeneous teams. This research indicated that if work teams “manage” the diversity well they can make diversity an asset to performance. Cox and Blake cite that all members should have ample opportunity to contribute and potential communications, group cohesiveness, and interpersonal conflict issues need to be successfully addressed. Alternatively, if diversity is ignored or mishandled, it may detract from performance.

Cox and Blake outline Resource Acquisition as the second “inevitability” related competitiveness issue – attracting and retaining excellent employees from different demographic groups. Companies such as Merck, Xerox and Hewlett Packard have been highlighted for their efforts to effectively manage diversity and listed in the best companies (*Best companies for Women / Top 50 Best Companies for Blacks to Work*). These companies used favourable publicity to recruit both women and racioethnic minorities and Merck cites that their boost in applications was due to them being identified as one of the 10 best companies for working mothers.

It is outlined by Cox and Blake that managing cultural diversity will have a significant effect on consumer behaviour and firms may gain competitive advantage by using employee insight to understand culture effects on buying decisions and map strategies to respond to them. They cite USA Today as an example of where the newspaper's success, as stated by Nancy Woodhall, (president of Gannett News Media) maintains that the newspaper's marketing success is largely due to the presence of people from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds – at the newspaper they planned group diversity and this led to different viewpoints because people of different genders and racioethnic backgrounds have different experiences shaped by group identities. Avon Corporation is another example of a company that used cultural diversity to turn around low profitability in its inner-city markets by making personnel changes go give black and Hispanic managers authority over these markets. The then President, Jim Preston, commented that ‘members

of a given cultural group are uniquely qualified to understand certain aspects of the world view of persons from that group'. It is a fact that cultural diversification of markets is no longer limited to US companies. Globalisation is forcing organisations from many nations to address cultural difference amongst consumers.

The next two dimensions of business performance that Cox and Blake identify as being directly impacted by the management of cultural diversity are creativity and problem solving. They cite that diversity of perspectives and less emphasis on conformity to norms of the past should improve the level of creativity. They refer Kanter's study on innovation in organisations that revealed that most innovative companies purposely established heterogeneous teams to "create marketplace of ideas, recognizing that a multiplicity of points of view need to be brought to bear on a problem" (Moss Kanter Rosabeth, *The Change Masters* p. 167).

They also cited that diverse groups have a broader and richer base of experience from which to approach a problem, therefore, managing diversity also has the potential to improve problem solving and decision-making. This was proved in the 1960s by several University of Michigan studies – heterogeneous groups produced better quality solutions to assigned problems than homogeneous groups. In one study 65% of the heterogeneous group produced higher quality solutions that new or modified integrative approaches to the problem; compared with 21% of the homogeneous groups. They also advocate, however, that decision quality is best when neither excessive diversity nor excessive homogeneity are present. We could understand from this study that culturally diverse workforces lead to better decisions being made and, in turn, leads to competitive advantage.

Their sixth dimension that is impacted on by managing cultural diversity as cited by Cox and Blake is that of system flexibility. They advocate that managing diversity enhances organisational flexibility and cite that there is evidence that women and racioethnic minorities tend to have especially flexible cognitive structures. They cite that research has shown that women have higher tolerance for ambiguity than men. Also, studies on

bilingual versus monolingual from several nations show that as compared with monolinguals, bilinguals have higher levels of divergent thinking and cognitive flexibility. They cite that the tolerance for different cultural viewpoints in organisations should lead to greater openness to new ideas in general.

Having outlined the six ways in which cultural diversity, by its effective management, can lead to competitive advantage, there is the question of how organisations can go from what may be said to be a typical organisation of the past (one culture dominant/organisation with various cultures, without valuing and using differences to benefit the organisation) to a “multicultural” organisation where people of non-traditional backgrounds contribute and achieve to their fullest potential. Cox and Black have identified five components that are needed to transform a traditional organisation into a multicultural one and these are Leadership, Training, Research, Analysis and change of cultural and human resource management systems and Follow-up.

As discussed earlier the US has one of the most culturally heterogeneous populations in the world, however, we are now operating on a global scale and every nation is becoming cultural diversified as far as markets, society and workplaces are concerned. Kit Thacker (who runs the Diversity and Employment Law unit at MsST International) advocates that we should be taking advantage of diversity. He states that *“Diversity recognises the strengths and potential of each individual. It broadens working culture so that a variety of creative thinking styles and life patterns can be accommodated for the benefit of the individual and the organisation”* (Source: People Management, 7 March 2002)

He outlines the three important reasons for looking at diversity – legal, business practice and ethical reasons. He emphasises that in business practice, organisations need to recognise changes in customer base or catchment area and they need to capitalise on them. He advocates that taking into consideration the percentage of the ethnic population in the UK and the age group (in 2002 half of the ethnic minority population in the UK were under 25 and 79% of those joining the European job market were women) by companies taking advantage of this, will have opportunities of increased sales, new ideas and

competitive advantage. He also states that problems that may arise if diversity is ignored will include recruitment difficulties, a rise in grievance claims, imbalance in the ethnic gender, age or disability mix of applicants for jobs or promotion and failure to win certain contracts.

Thacker's business practice reasons for managing diversity are somewhat similar to that of Cox and Black in the US context. However, he outlines the problems that are likely to arise if diversity is ignored, as outlined above, which will have adverse cost effect on organisations in the future. While Thacker also recognises that organisations will need a structured approach in order to move to a state of managing and valuing diversity, unlike the US approach however, he advocates the need to evaluate the existing stereotypes, questioning unhelpful groupings and assertions such as "What women think is..." , "What black people want is..." and "What older people is..." He stresses the need to encourage individuality while recognising the effects of different backgrounds.

From review of both articles it is very evident that each has identified the need to manage diversity, particularly cultural diversity, in the workplace in order to enhance competitive advantage. There is common ground in that both identify with organisational benefits, though Thacker focuses more on individuality citing that "*diversity is about development of individuals*". He goes on to cite "*Common to all diversity strategies is the move from system-based thinking, where process is everything, to people based thinking, where individuals are celebrated*". There is, however, a commonality in that, it is not enough for diversity to exist in organisations today - it must also be valued and adequately managed. Cox and Blake cite "*Just having diversity, however, is not sufficient to produce benefits. We must also manage it*". Kit Thaker cites that "*Companies that take advantage of this (ethnicity/cultural diversity) diversity will have the opportunity for increased sales, new ideas and a better future*"

In both articles, it is stressed that managing diversity will not happen over night and the approach taken will greatly influence the outcome. Cox and Black, as outlined above, identify five key components needed to transform 'traditional organisations' into multicultural ones –

- 1) **Leadership** – advocating that top management support and genuine commitment are crucial to cultural diversity. Champions for diversity are needed and, in particular, at lower levels e.g., key line managers.
- 2) **Training** – management and valuing diversity (MVD) training is the most relevant starting point. Awareness training and skill-building training. Training should be ongoing educational process.
- 3) **Research** – used to identify issues to be addressed and areas to be changed and also as an evaluation tool.
- 4) **Analysis and change of cultural and human resource management systems** – recruitment, performance appraisal, potential assessment and promotion and compensation.
- 5) **Follow up** – monitor change, evaluate results, institutionalising changes as part of the organisation's ongoing processes.

While Thacker outlines a step-by-step plan with the following seven steps:-

- 1) **Why are you doing this?** Recognises the need for diversity. What is happening with the organisation, in the local community or within the customer base that has initiated these thoughts?
- 2) **Research the starting point.** Identify key internal areas for concern. Ask the people who work with you to tell you what is going on. Ask your customers and suppliers how they see you.
- 3) **Communicate what it is about.** Make sure you have the buy-in and understanding of the leadership within the organisation. What you are starting will make a difference and benefit the company.
- 4) **How are things done at present?** Audit strategies and procedures (if they exist) against internal and external perceptions. Check processes for their adherence to current minimum legal standards.
- 5) **Concentrate on people.** Develop a programme to change people's attitudes. Lip service is a start but is, by and large, useless. Persuade people that "open, fair and creative" are more than just words.
- 6) **Get buy-in from all people all of the time.** Engage people in the process. Involving as many people as possible throughout the process will ensure it sticks. Training need not be dull,
- 7) **How did you do?** Check for success. Monitor. Celebrate. But remember the process is ongoing so reassess and start again.

(Source: People Management, 7 March 2002, P53)

There is, undoubtedly, an aim in the UK to promote diversity management and it was stressed by Patricia Hewitt, Trade and Industry Secretary, that firms need to recognise that recruiting a diverse workforce would help them appeal to the “widest possible” customer base. Speaking at a Guardian diversity conference in London, Hewitt said “*Diversity is crucial – for our economy and our society; and embracing it can bring real improvements in corporate reputation, employee morale and bottom line*” and advocates that “*The bottom line is that diversity means customers*” (Source: People Management, 23 October 2003, P8)

John Watkins, writer of the article ‘*DTI calls for diversity drive*’ outlines that Hewitt called for 500 top UK companies urging them to take part in a benchmarking scheme ‘Face for Opportunity’ to improve diversity in business. This benchmarking scheme was to help companies to evaluate race-related issues such as monitoring the number of ethnic minority employees reaching senior positions. However, the take up by companies for the benchmarking was very low and the conference Hewitt expressed disappointment that only 18 FTSE 100 companies had opted for the scheme in 2003 and stressed the necessity for more companies to embrace diversity. While there seems to be a lot of encouragement by the State and State bodies, etc. for companies to embrace diversity and actively manage diversity in the workplace, there is very little evidence of what is actually happening on the ‘ground’.

However, in a survey carried out by Penna (world-wide human resource specialist) compares the Republic of Ireland very favourably with Northern Ireland. It indicated while business in Northern Ireland think Catholic or Protestant when considering fair employment, very few had any form of diversity policy. The survey found that...

- A mere 38% of organisations polled had any kind of formal diversity policy compared with 76% in the Irish Republic.
- Legislation was the key driver of the diversity agenda, as opposed to the moral or business imperative
- The main obstructions and limitations to diversity are lack of knowledge and lack of resources.
- Actively managed diversity had been proved to help boost service to customers.

(Source: worldwide web – article from u.tv/newsroom/indepth.asp 23 June 2004)

As cited by Aine Brolly of Penna “Penna operates on a world wide basis, and the fair employment, equality and human rights legislation in place in Northern Ireland far outstrips that found anywhere else. Yet the level of diversity awareness is still very low”. “What is ‘quite amazing’ was the number of companies in the province operating a diversity policy is exactly half that across the border”

According to the article, questions in the survey sought to ascertain which aspects of diversity were most relevant to organisations - gender, religion, ethnic background and disability and what were the driving forces behind introducing a diversity policy. Findings revealed that organisations had introduced it because of legislative considerations. Brolly cited that “*Good recruitment practices could often lead to a more diverse workforce. Diversity in turn could help access new markets*” and also stated that “*It can also help to improve a company’s image as an employer, Equality and diversity is good for individuals and good for business alike*”.

2.4 Cultural Diversity In Ireland

Cultural diversity has always existed in Ireland. The Traveller community, with an estimated population of 22,000 remains the largest minority group and there has been a long established Jewish community. It has, however, been highlighted over recent years with the significant increase in inward migration. We saw an increase in work permits issued from 6,240 in 1999 to 47,551 in 2003. We are now living and working in a multicultural society and our aim should be to achieve an ‘Intercultural’ Working Environment – one which has a positive interaction between different cultures as distinct from multiculturalism which describes a society and work environment where cultures exist side by side with little interaction. This will require the effective addressing and valuing of cultural diversity in the Irish workplace and all stakeholders.

Irish Government/Employer Bodies – addressing Diversity

The Irish Government has taken some steps to address issues of racism and promote equality. In the year 2000 the Government approved a three-year public awareness programme to address racism and was launched by An Taoiseach in October 2001. As stated by Joe McDonagh, (Chairperson of the Steering Group Implementing the National Anti-Racism Awareness Programme) *“Ireland has undergone major changes in the past few years. Our society is now a multicultural society. We must accept the responsibilities and challenges that change brings to us. Irish people are traditionally generous, friendly and hospitable. It would be wrong to allow fear of strangers and intolerance to spoil this traditional spirit and change our attitudes towards the minority ethnic people who live and work among us. One of the challenges for Know Racism is to try to engender mutual respect among all groups and help everyone to recognise the value and opportunities that diversity brings to our country”*

The overall aim of the proposed programme is to contribute to creating the conditions for building an inclusive society in Ireland where racism is effectively addressed and cultural diversity valued. The steering group established to implement the programme, in partnership with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, consists of representatives from ethnic minority communities, IBEC, ICTU, the community and voluntary sector, the farming sector, national bodies as the Equality Authority and the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), relevant Government departments and Garda Síochána.

(Source: worldwide web, www.knowracism.ie) *printed 3rd June 2004*

As a result of EU Funding a project was launched to address the area of integration of Immigrant workers into the workforce in Ireland. This is known as Interact Partnership, consisting of members from IBEC, Congress and Integrate Ireland Language Training (IILT). A study carried out by the project group reported findings – some of which are outlined below:

- Nearly one-third of immigrant workers felt that Irish workers have a prejudiced attitude towards them, a view shared by 22% of Irish workers. A need for anti-racist training and intercultural awareness raising in the workplace was highlighted.
- Immigrants were recruited in a number of different ways but the largest numbers came through recruitment agencies based abroad. This highlighted the need for Irish employers to ensure that recruitment agencies with which they are dealing, either directly or through intermediaries, implement fair procedures with regard to the rights of immigrant workers and that the terms and recruitment procedures comply with Irish legal standards.
- The report gives examples of the benefits of providing even basic information about employment and life in Ireland, stating that the simple information proved enormously valuable in preparing immigrant workers in Ireland.

The project aim to use the research information to help design a number of initiatives including training programmes for managers, unions and language support tools for immigrant workers.

(source: worldwide web www.ibec.ie/press/presspublications) printed 3rd June 2004

2.5 Disability Issues in the Irish Workplace

This is one area that there is very limited research and data available in the Irish context. However, the publication of the special module on disability in the labour force by the CSO (2002b) has provided us with some data relating to people with disabilities in the Irish workplace. The CSO definition of disability is “*a longstanding health problem or disability refers to anything that has affected respondent over the past six months, or that is likely to affect respondent for at least six months*” (CSO, 2002b:17). Based on this definition, the report indicates that 271,000 of people aged 15 to 64 have a disability (11% of the population in this age range).

The labour force participation of people with disabilities indicates a rate of 42.9% compared to 71.3% in the non-disabled population. According to a report '*Accommodating Diversity in Labour Market Programmes*' carried out by the Equality Studies Unit within the Equality Authority – Among people with disabilities in employment, almost one in five (18.5%) state that they would need assistance to be provided in order for them to work. What is very remarkable about their findings is that amongst the people with disabilities that are working only 4.6% report that 'considerable' assistance was provided to them in order to facilitate their work and a further 3.6% stating that 'some' assistance was provided. This has indicated that, in the case of the vast majority of people with disabilities, no assistance was provided in order to facilitate their employment. Another relevant finding from the report was that people with disabilities in employment worked shorter hours than their non-disabled counter parts. Also a higher percentage of people with disabilities are self-employed 14% (with no employees) compared with non-disabled people – 10%. Also, according to Bruce (2003) a further report for the Equality Studies Unit '*Labour Market Experiences of People with Disabilities*' In the medical context, work for people with disabilities, has been linked to both therapeutic enhancement and restoration of optimal level of functioning; in the social security context of disability, work has been seen as the most effective mechanism to restore individuals to productive levels of functioning and to reduce cost to the state and work has been viewed in charitable models of disability as a path to meaningful activity for those deemed unable to participate more effectively in society. Of importance in the Bruce (2003) report is that it highlighted the criticism of the functional limitations model in its inability to provide a sufficient explanation for the poor levels of participation of people with disabilities in society, particularly with regard to employment. The report suggested that the attitudinal obstacles produced even greater restrictions on people with disabilities than did physical barriers.

From the a report '*Accommodating Diversity in Labour Market Programmes*' ten themes were identified as defining the major concerns of people with disabilities in relation to their participation in the labour market: (1) Negative social attitudes towards disability; (2) Architectural, physical and transport barriers; (3) Stigma of attending special schools; (4) Employer attitudes and recruitment practices; (5) Lack of ongoing support and follow-

up; (6)Lack of relevant skills in dealing with people with disabilities; (7)Lack of disability planning, research and funding; (8)Lack of effective legislation; (9)Adverse effects of administrative and allowance systems; (10)Issues related to disclosure. From this research Theme '4' highlighted the rigid recruitment procedures, the stipulation of minimum educational standards and lack of flexibility in working conditions as barriers to employment for people with disabilities. Also, a particular concern identified was lack of knowledge regarding disability and prejudice at initial interview stage among employers. This report also highlighted concerns regarding the absence of a coherent approach to planning for and implementing services relevant to assisting people with disabilities enter employment.

2.6 Summary

Chapter '2' – reviewed literature relating to managing diversity by way of examining U.S. models. While there was evidence of varied driving forces behind managing diversity e.g., changing demographics and labour supply, business demands, etc., there was one underlying factor common to diversity initiatives implemented in the US which was that of affirmative action. As cited by Dass and Parker, *'managers that acknowledge that they face strong legal and social mandates for diversity may conclude that accommodating racial diversity provides a better fit with organisational circumstances than resisting it'*. While affirmative action, the legally compliance driven approach, in some ways was a reactive style of managing diversity, there has been a progression towards diversity management and a more proactive style of dealing with heterogeneity. While management literature has suggested that organisations value diversity in order to enhance effectiveness, there has been very little evidence to support the link. This chapter has examined US literature relating to studies of diversity management and the impact on organisational performance. Initiatives studies were that of flexitime, gender diversity (working mothers) and ethnicity/cultural diversity. Findings

indicated positive results in the areas of turnover, absenteeism, increased business performance and market share.

Managing diversity has, undoubtedly, been pioneered by US subsidiaries in Europe. This chapter has attempted to evaluate and compare the US and European (UK) approaches to managing diversity in terms of viewing diversity, particularly cultural diversity, as a key to competitive advantage in today's economic environment. This chapter has also evaluated an article by Penna which compared diversity management in Northern Ireland companies and that of the Republic. While the Republic compared quite favourably with Northern Ireland, this chapter examined further into the overall situation in Ireland (Republic) at the current time, focussing on what has been done by the state and employer bodies by way of promoting and assisting in diversity management initiatives.

Finally, while this paper attempts to examine diversity mainly through the lense of both ethnicity and disability, this chapter examined issues relating to disability in the Irish workplace. This piece of research highlighted the low percentage of people with disabilities currently in the Irish labour market, the barriers that exist and the need for this form of diversity to be addressed more proactively by organisations. One of the aims of the research will be to establish what forms of diversity exist in organisations in the Irish workplace today and to establish what diversity initiatives organisations have taken.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the objectives of the research undertaken, the methods by which the research was carried out and why the methodology chosen was deemed appropriate for this study. This chapter will also detail the population identified for the research and, again, why the sample population was chosen. Also discussed in this chapter is the pilot study/questionnaire and feedback for this questionnaire is given by way of analysis and findings. Finally, details of the analysis of data collected will be outlined and will form the basis for the following chapter in which the findings will be reported and discussed in detail.

3.1 Objectives of the Research and Methodology Applied

Secondary research was examined in the literature review through books, internet, business journals and magazines, desk research, library and newspaper articles. For the purpose of researching the origins and literature on diversity in the workplace and the concept of diversity management, it was appropriate to research through the usage of all of the above. Research on diversity management in the European and, in particular, the Irish context meant that the research through usage of books proved to be more problematic. Most of the research on the current status as regards diversity management in the Irish workplace was done through the usage of newspaper articles, government and employer body publications (e.g., IBEC, Equality Authority and IPD publications), business journals and the internet. Certain underlying themes and concepts arose out of this research relating to the driving forces behind diversity management in the workplace, the initiatives adopted by organisations to address diversity in the workplace and the concept of diversity

management impacting on organisational performance. The secondary research indicated both negative and positive findings in the Irish workplace context, e.g., the low levels of people with disabilities in the Irish labour force and the entry barriers that currently exist in this respect. Also, as cited by Garavan, 2002 'Ireland lags behind its EU competitors in terms of investment in training'. This is of particular importance in the area of equality and diversity training. These themes would require further examination and analysis by way of primary research. On a positive side, research indicated that many organisations in Ireland had some form of diversity policies in place (76% in Republic of Ireland as compared with 38% of organisations in Northern Ireland – Penna Study) and certain companies have received recognition (articles by IBEC and Equality Authority) for their achievement in the area of diversity initiatives e.g., Intel, Eircom, North Western Health Board and Waterford Crystal. Again, the primary research aimed to examine this in further detail. Some further secondary research was done by use of additional, more recent, newspaper and website articles.

Primary research objectives may be outlined as follows:

- To develop a conceptualised view of diversity initiatives in the Irish working environment;
- To establish what have been the driving forces behind diversity management initiatives;
- To examine what organisations perceive as being the outcome/impact of diversity management initiatives taken;

This primary research adopted a combination of both quantitative (based on a questionnaire) and **qualitative** (interviews) methodologies. The qualitative research consisted of **Semi-structured Interviews** whereby a set of interview questions were worked out in advance, with the flexibility of freely modifying during the interview, if deemed appropriate. While the quantitative method (using questionnaires) would result in data being collated and analysed to give a generalised overview of diversity statistics and management initiatives in the workplace, qualitative research was also used in order to give a broad overview of work practices in relation to diversity management in organisations today. This would include in-depth analysis and interpretation data collected and a broad

overview of opinions, issues of concern, etc. in relation to diversity management by key diversity/equality personnel.

These interviews were carried out as follows:-

14th June - Interview with Joe Kelly, Project Manager of Waterford Crystal - Waterford Crystal premises at 12.00 Noon – 2.30 p.m.

18th June - Interview with Pat Normanly, Equality Officer, Dublin Bus - Dublin Bus premises at 11.00 a.m. – 1.45 p.m.

(Copy of Interview Questions attached – See Appendix I).

It was also deemed appropriate to collect **quantitative** data based on a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent by e-mail (with prior and follow-up telephone calls) to the ten companies that had agreed to participate in this study, to be completed and returned to the author within a two week period. This form of research would give a generalised overview of diversity statistics and management initiatives in the workplace and contribute to the achievement of the overall research objectives, as outlined above. The questionnaire itself was designed in order to establish a conceptualised view of diversity initiatives in organisations, what the driving forces have been and implications/resulting factors of diversity management initiatives. Ten sections focussed on:

- Obtaining details of company – sector/business and size ; (*Section 1 + 2*)
- Obtaining data regarding diversity percentage breakdown – male/female, people with disabilities and ethnicity; (*Section 3/4/5*)
- Ascertaining whether a formal diversity plan exists in organisations (*Section 6*)
- Obtaining data relating to diversity management initiatives and policies that are in place, plus driving forces behind implementation. (*Section 7/8/9*)

(Copy of Questionnaire attached – See Appendix II).

[Note: *Some companies expressed concern regarding the questionnaire information being sensitive and confidential. For this reason, companies completing the questionnaire were assured that analysis of the data and findings would be outlined in this research on a general basis with no reference to any specific company*].

3.2 Research Population

For the purpose of this research, it was deemed appropriate to use as our population the 'Top 50 Best Companies to work for in Ireland 2003 and 2004' (conducted by Discovery Research Ltd., with sponsorship from FAS and Irish Independent). However, as not all companies operating in Ireland have participated in the 'top 50 Best Companies study' it was, therefore, deemed necessary to include some of the companies and businesses that have recently been highlighted, by either IBEC or the Equality Authority, for their achievements in the area of diversity. Such companies include IBM, Eircom, Waterford Crystal and North Western Health Board. Also, as discussed in the literature review, we saw Trade and Industry Secretary in the UK, Patricia Hewitt, calling on the 500 top UK companies to take part in a benchmarking scheme with the aim of improving diversity in business. We have seen the study of the top 50 Best Companies in Ireland to work for the year 2003 with special recognition by The Tanaiste, Mary Harney when she congratulated ten Irish companies for their achievement in being included in the "Best Workplaces in the EU" and Intel Ireland was awarded an overall EU award for their achievements in the area of diversity. The 50 Best Companies to Work for in Ireland 2004 include companies such as Ballina Beverages, Boston Scientific Tullamore, BUPA Ireland, DMG Services, GE Capital Aviation, Halifax Ins., Hilton Hotel Group, MBNA and Microsoft Ireland, Deloitte, Diageo Ireland, Dublin Bus, Royal & Sun Alliance, Superquinn to mention some.

As outlined in Chapter '1' managing diversity has stemmed from the United States and, given the fact that diversity management in Europe may be said to have been pioneered by subsidiaries of US firms such as Intel, Hewlett Packard, IBM, etc., it would be appropriate to include some of these firms in our research.

The **sample population** consisted of ten companies that agreed to participate in this research study – a strategic sample representation from service (Table 1: 38.5%, highest percentage, work permits issued to the service sector in 2001), manufacturing, public and private sector, Irish (to include some recently recognised for their developments in area of

diversity) and Multinational companies (US companies pioneers of diversity management in EU).

A Pilot Questionnaire was carried out on three companies – Tyco Healthcare (Private Sector – Manufacturing), Kildare Co. Council (Public Sector) and Spring Grove Services (Private Sector – Manufacturing + Services). One was carried on site and the others by e-mail. In each case, the questionnaire was completed by HR personnel. There were no problems encountered. Only one of the three companies inserted additional comments (most likely as it was administered by the author on site) – in section ‘7’ examples of how the individual areas had been addressed, e.g. ‘Work-life Balance – flexitime; ‘Gender’ – even balance male/female across all levels and ‘9’ – while there was no diversity training for all staff, all management trained in equality. In analysis of data, this did not pose any problems as this information was to be supplied optionally and would be used in further analysis or clarification of initiatives/policies, etc. There was one change made to the questionnaire from the pilot study – *Sec. 5 Approximate percentage breakdown by: Country of origin Ireland / Rest of EU / Eastern Europe / Other*. This was changed to include just three options (leaving out Eastern Europe). From analysis of the data, while one of the three organisations had a formal diversity plan in place, each of the three had policies that reflected diversity initiatives such as flexible working policies, parental leave, bullying/harassment policy, equal opportunities policy, etc. While only one of the three had diversity training for all staff, all three had an equal opportunities policy in place. Two out of the three had ranked ‘work-life balance’ as number ‘1’ as being the most important area when addressing diversity management; the third organisation had gender as number ‘1’, cultural diversity no. ‘2’ and ‘work-life balance’ no. ‘3’ (this organisation had the highest percentage (32%) of non-national employees). For driving forces behind diversity management/initiatives, the top three ranked were compliance with legislation, change in workforce diversity and driven by top management. The percentage of employees with disabilities was 2% for two organisations and 3% for the third. What was interesting from the pilot questionnaire was that all three organisations ranked identically as the top three outcomes resulting from diversity management as being (1)employee morale, (2)contribution to organisational goals and (3)organisational profile.

These were just some of the findings from the analysis of the pilot study but were a good reference, and proved beneficial, for the research carried out on the sample population which follows.

3.3 Data Analysis Technique

The primary research adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative research was based on a questionnaire and the analysis of the data consisted of collecting and compiling data manually, typing up of tables where appropriate to the data (using Excel) and forming graphs/charts. This method was deemed most appropriate for collation of data and analysis of the variables. This resulted in an overall deductive and logistic view of data relating to diversity within the ten organisations that participated in this research study. The data, following analysis, formed the basis for further discussion and critical evaluation against the literature review.

The qualitative research methodology was that of semi-structured interviews. Data analysis consisted of typing up of the interview answers (each interview was for a duration of approx. 2 hours and 30 minutes) and identifying themes and commonalities relating to the interviews and the questionnaire data. This technique of data analysis was based on collection, analysis and interpretation of data not easily reduced to numbers. However, it allowed for a more in-depth evaluation and deduction of certain variables and opinions of the diversity/equality personnel in the various organisations. From the data collected, certain trends were identified and comparisons deducted that, again, formed the basis for further discussion in the following chapter.

The interviews were conducted on-site which meant travelling to Waterford and also Dublin. This proved time consuming (allowing a day for each), however, this method was thought to be more beneficial as it allowed for a more personal approach and emphasised the importance of the research topic in the current climate.

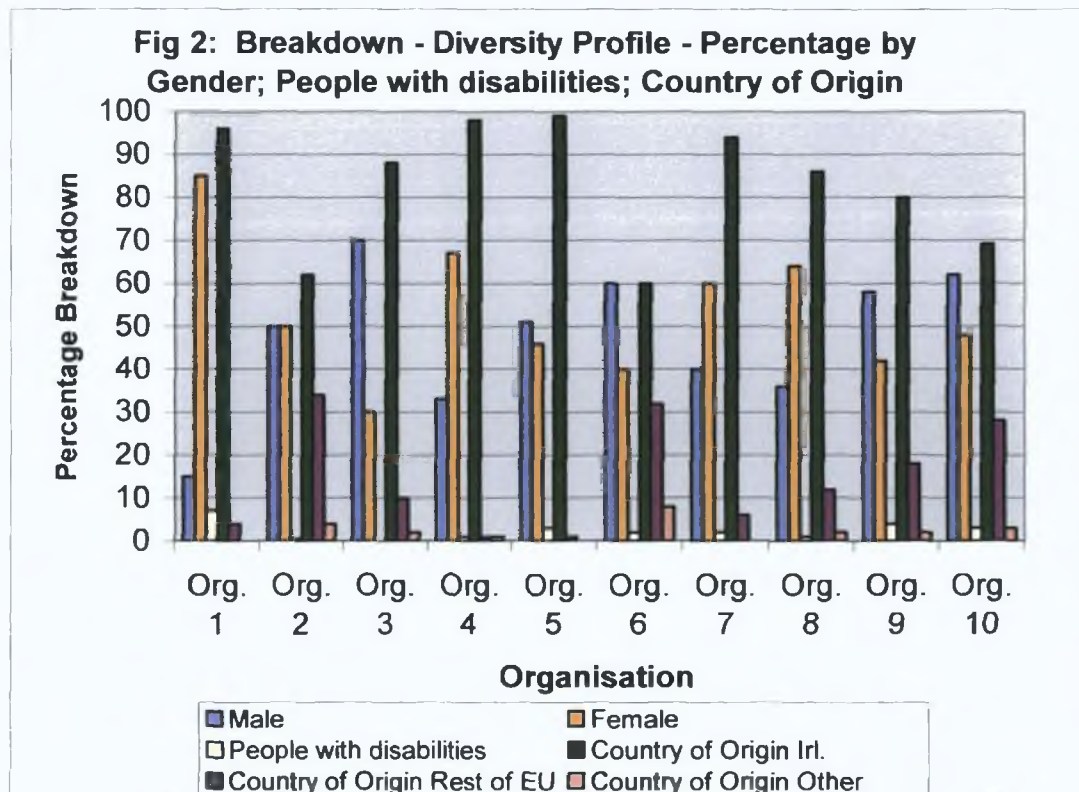
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to diversity in the Irish workplace. The focus of the research was to explore what measures organisations in the Irish workplace are taking by way of addressing diversity management. The main objectives, therefore, of the research methodology was to develop a conceptualised view of diversity management and initiatives in the Irish context, establish what the driving forces behind diversity initiatives have been within the ten organisations in the research study and what these organisations perceive as the impact of diversity management. This chapter outlines what the findings are as a result of the quantitative and qualitative research methods used and these results are compared and contrasted with findings of the literature review, as outlined in chapter '2'.

4.1 Findings – Diversity Profile

Of the ten organisations examined, there was an overall indication of certain areas of diversity being addressed. In relation to gender, one organisation stood out as regards the male/female imbalance – indicating 15% male and 85% females. There were three further organisations reporting an approximate 70/30 ratio and the remaining six organisations indicating a more balanced male/female ratio – (See Fig.2) The fact that this area of diversity appears to have been addressed was a good indication of a proactive approach to addressing gender diversity/equality in the workplace. As outlined by Pat Normanly, Equality Officer of Dublin Bus (interview 18th June, 04) “*There was a low percentage of females, particularly at certain levels, within the organisation that needed to be addressed*” In reply to question '2' (What areas of diversity were focussed upon? see appendix II) Pat Normanly outlined

that the Equality Review 2001 (conducted within Dublin Bus) focussed mainly on gender and also on cultural diversity and disability. She stated that *“We needed to do an equality review of the organisation. The equality committee consisted of management, staff, trade union representatives and we got a good spread as regards age, gender, culture, level and so on, gathering data on the relevant areas. We could then explore an in-depth analysis of certain aspects of the review and draw up an equality and diversity plan that focussed primarily on gender equality, culture and disability”*

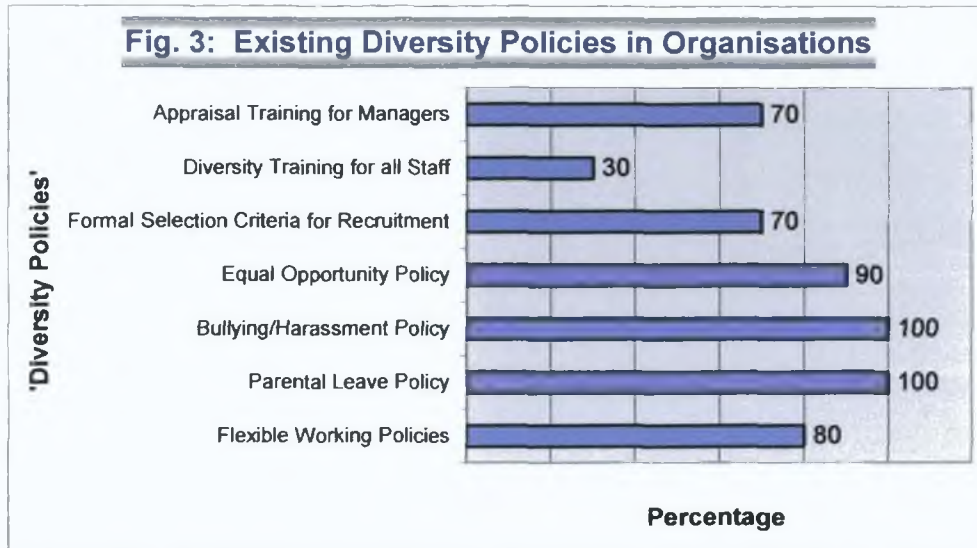


In support of the literature review which detailed changes in the US and Europe in relation to diversity in the workplace – the US ‘Workforce 2000’ study predicted that more women, minorities, older workers, immigrants, people with disabilities, etc. would reshape the American workforce and with globalisation and changes in demographics, legislation and business requirements indicated diversity changes in the European and Irish context.

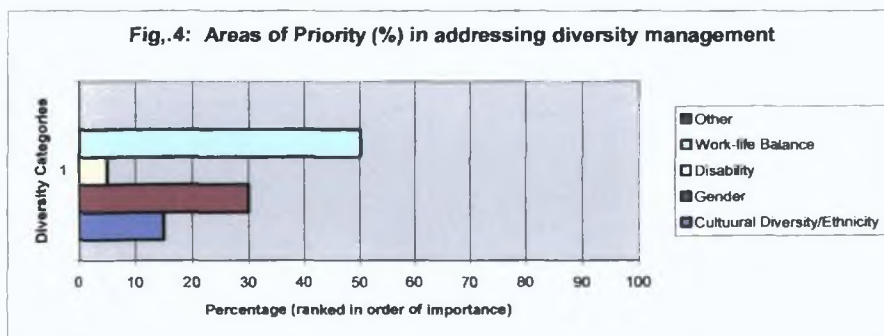
Further examination of organisational profile in relation to cultural diversity within the workplace indicated that the percentage of non-Irish nationals varied from 1 % to 34% (six organisations reporting a percentage of non-Irish employees between 10 and 34%). Of these statistics, Dublin Bus reported a total of 46 different nationalities within their workforce. According to further secondary research findings, MBNA (included in the top 50 best companies to work for) employ 45 different nationalities and IBM employ about 60 different nationalities (*Irish Times*, 2 July 2004 P9/Article *Firms Raise HR Standards*). In relation to findings on percentage of people with disabilities, while one company reported having 7% of employees with disabilities, the remaining range was between 0.5 and 4%. This is somewhat contradictory to the literature review findings based on the CSO (2002b) data stating that the labour force participation of people with disabilities indicated a rate of 42.9% compared to 71.3% in the non-disabled population. The huge variation in relation to the percentage of people with disabilities within the workforce may be accounted for by the CSO definition of disability “*a longstanding health problem or disability refers to anything that has affected respondent over the past six months, or that is likely to affect respondent for at least six months*” (CSO, 2002b:17) and the statistics are based on this definition. However, as a definition was not given in the questionnaire, it may be assumed that data supplied by the ten organisations related to permanent disabilities. However, the companies that have a percentage of people with disabilities have adopted a proactive approach in this area of diversity. Joe Kelly, Waterford Crystal outlined that during their restructuring process, people with disabilities within the organisation would get left behind unless this area of diversity was addressed. He stated “*Retraining was a key element of the turnaround programme for the company and special steps needed to be taken to include our disabled employees in the process*” *Disabilities ranged from mental health issues to physical disabilities and Waterford Crystal had approximately 70 people with disabilities working in the company*”. Pat Normanly stated that “*as part of our action plan, the Disability Officer, is responsible for networking and communicating with disability groups who have issues regarding bus transport. We have a transport policy and 45% of our busses are currently accessible by people with disabilities - wheelchair and people visually impaired and so on.*”

4.2 Findings – Driving Forces Behind Diversity Management

While only three of the ten responding organisations reported having a ‘formal’ diversity

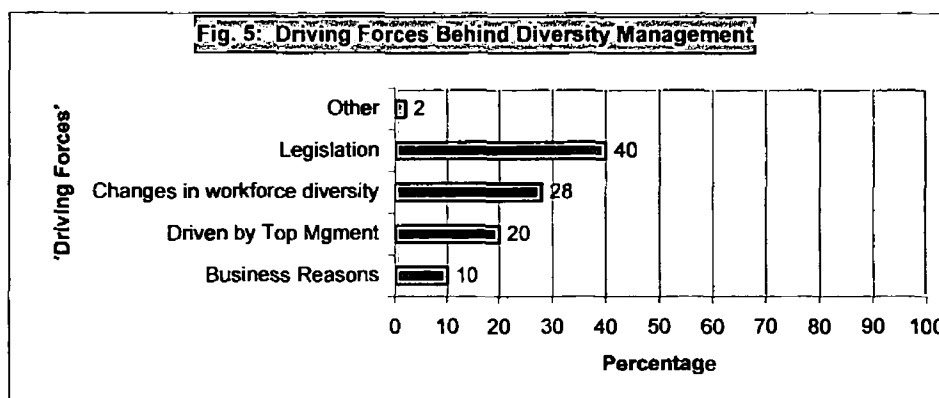


policy in place, all organisations reported that they had some policies, e.g., Parental Leave and Bullying/Harassment (*See Fig.: 3 above*) and a high percentage of the ten organisations indicated having other policies in place – Equal Opportunity, Flexible Working, etc. Findings relating to what was perceived by organisations as being the ‘priority’ areas when addressing diversity indicated ‘Work-life Balance’ as the top priority. (*See Fig.: 4*) This supports what was outlined in the secondary research relating to Eircom (*IBEC – Eircom Diversity Programme – case study – 07.12.2001*) having put in place a work-life balance strategy and outlined the various organisational benefits that resulted. The benefits of addressing



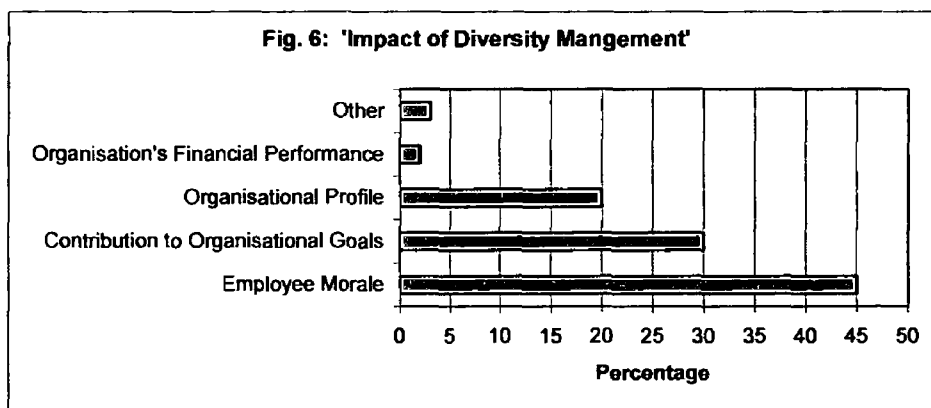
diversity and putting measures in place such as work-life balance initiatives resulted in organisational benefits, confirming literature findings outlined by Cox and Blake, 1991, lower absenteeism and turnover of working mothers.

This dissertation research examined the driving forces behind these diversity management initiatives within the Irish workplace and from the findings relating to the ten organisations, 40% indicated legislation as being the main driving force behind diversity management; 28% of the ten organisations indicated 'changes in workforce diversity' being the driving force and 20% reported 'driven by top management' as being the driving force (See Fig.: 5). These findings have been supported by the literature review findings, which outlined the main driving force in the US as being affirmative action. The theory that managers who acknowledge that they face strong legal and social mandates for diversity, may conclude that accommodation diversity, particularly racial diversity, provided a better fit with organisational circumstances than resisting it. Also, the report by Penna (research on companies in North and Republic of Ireland) as outlined in the literature review, identified legislation as the key driver of the diversity agenda as opposed to the moral or business imperative. While Pat Normanly of Dublin Bus stated that the initial reason for diversity management was that of gender distribution and imbalance, she cited "A second, and very important reason, was that of legislation. The new equality legislation meant that the company had obligations both as an employer and as a service provider".



4.3 Findings – Implications of Diversity Management

Findings in this respect relate to what the key personnel in the organisations that participated in this research study perceived as being the implications/impact of diversity management. Of the organisations that participated in this study, 45% perceived 'employee morale' as the main resulting factor; 30% reported 'contribution to organisational goals'; 20% reported increased 'organisational profile'; 2% 'organisational financial performance' and 3% 'other'. One comment relating to the option 'other' was 'Improved self confidence and morale of minority group'. This indicated that some initiative had been taken by way of cultural diversity management and resulted in benefits to both the individual and organisation.



Findings from qualitative research interviews allowed for a more in-depth analysis in relation to the organisational benefits and outcomes as a result of diversity management initiatives. These findings indicated:

Enhanced Management - Employee/Employee Representative Relations. As cited by Joe Kelly, Waterford Crystal *"The approach of the company to include existing employees with disabilities and long-term disabled employees in initiatives, which benefited them, helped to develop relations between management and trade union representatives and also between company management and the workforce in general"*. Pat Normanly of Dublin Bus cited *"It has given an opportunity to explore some issues and using an approach that is an alternative to IR issues. For example – issues regarding*

work-life balance being explored through the 'Work-life Balance Working Group' and 'Intercultural Group' exploring race issues which is a different approach and coming up with recommendations. Traditionally, this would have been dealt with through unions and may not reach such a satisfactory outcome. It gives staff an opportunity to express their views and become a part of the decision making process." Pat Normanly went on to say *"It has been very good for staff morale, particularly good for drivers from other countries and also for female staff"* Diversity initiatives and approaches (e.g., through focus groups/'working groups') allows for both commitment from numerous departments and levels within organisations while enhancing communication, morale and developing staff that may otherwise not have this opportunity.

Enhanced Profile of the Organisation Results of the quantitative research indicated that 20% of the organisations indicated a reflection on organisational profile as a result of diversity management initiatives. Findings from further research indicated a definite correlation between these two variables. Pat Normanly, Dublin Bus, cited *"Not only has the HR profile been enhanced as a result of data produced and training of staff, the profile of Dublin Bus has also been enhanced"* She continued to say that *"Dublin Bus as a public body, by employing people from different cultures and nationalities, is seen as promoting and informing the public. We are one of the '50 best companies in Ireland to work for' and have received recognition for actively promoting best practice in equality and diversity"* This concept had been argued in the literature review, through the Access and Legitiacy Perspective. This perspective argued the recognition and valuing of differences led to bottom-line benefits for the organisation in terms of improved morals, reduced turnover, increased profitability and believed that customers looked inside companies to identify with people like themselves – IBM was outlined as sample whereby recruitment of bilingual employees attracted certain customers.

From research findings 'organisation's financial performance' was identified by only 2% of the organisations as a result of diversity management. While the literature review, particularly in the US studies, indicate financial benefits to organisations, as this is a relative new concept to organisations in the Irish workplace and very little research currently exists, this area will be relevant for future research on diversity management benefits.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to examine the area of diversity, with particular reference to diversity in the Irish workplace. The main aims of this research was to address certain areas, namely - to develop a conceptualised view of diversity initiatives in the Irish working environment while also establishing what the main driving forces behind these initiatives were. A further area of research related to resulting factors of diversity management initiatives. As a result of research carried out, certain trends emerged in this respect and, as with what was outlined in the US literature review, legislation appeared to be the main driving force behind diversity management in the Irish workplace.

Although workplace diversity has very quickly become a concept and relative new issue for managers in the Irish workplace, there is still very little research on the topic in the Irish context.. This research paper has enabled the author to learn from the literature review, particularly the US and European writings. While evidence exists in the US context in relation to tangible benefits to organisations that manage diversity appropriately, there is a lack of evidence to prove that diversity management has a positive impact on organisational performance/bottom-line in the Irish context. This research indicates that there is scope to further develop this concept and further research into the area of organisational benefits resulting from managing diversity will be required.

In conclusion, while legislation may be seen as the primary driving force, in order for organisations to benefit from effective diversity management, it will be necessary to adopt a more proactive approach and, as outlined in the literature review as the 'Learning Perspective' diversity is viewed as having long-term as well as short-term ramifications. The perspective encourages active participation in finding better and more efficient ways of compliance beyond those legally mandated with emphasis on addressing all areas of diversity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Tracy and Metcalf, Hilary *Diversity: Stacking up the Evidence, Executive Briefing*. CIPD Publication, 2003
- Clements, Phil & Jones, John *The Diversity Training Handbook, a practical guide to understanding & changing attitudes*. First edition, Kogan Page Limited, 2002
- Elmes, Michael & Prasad, Anshuman *Managing The Organizational Melting Pot, Dilemmas of Workplace Diversity*, Sage Publications, 1997
- Gordon, J.R., *A diagnostic approach to organisational behaviour* Allyn & Bacon, 1993
- Harvey, Carol & Allard, M June *Understanding and Managing Diversity, Readings, Cases and Exercises*. 2nd ed. Prentice Hall, 2002
- Prasad, Pushkala, Mills, Albert J, Elmes, Michael & Prasad, Anshuman *Managing The Organizational Melting Pot, Dilemmas of Workplace Diversity*, Sage Publications, 1997
- Bruce, A (2003) *Labour Market Experiences of People with Disabilities*, Report for the Equality Studies Unit Dubli, The Equality Authority
- Central Statistics Office (2002b) *Quarterly National Household Survey: Disability in the Labour Force* Second Quarter 2002, CSO www.cso.ie

(Questions asked of Pat Normanly, Equality Officer, Dublin Bus - Meeting at Dublin Bus Office on Friday 18th June, 2004)

The following questions were asked:-

1. What initiated the need/realisation of the need for diversity/equality management?
2. What areas of diversity were focussed upon - Disability, Culture, Ethnic, Other?
3. What were the initial steps; did you do a survey amongst employees?
4. What were the main objectives of the diversity/equality programme?
5. Was there a budget allocation for the programme?
6. Was there outside/state funding/support provided?
7. What involvement was there from:
Management:
Employees:
Local Community:
Others:

8. What training did people receive in order to establish the programme?

Managers/Facilitators:

Participants

Other:

9. How many participated in the programme?

10. What was the timeframe of the programme?

11. Is it still in operation?

What evaluation has taken place?

Were there any 'pitfalls'/obstacles encountered?:

12. How have people benefited?

13. How has the programme contributed to the business objectives of Intel?

14. What advice would you give other companies regarding implementation of such a programme?

15. Any additional comments?

Questionnaire Diversity Management

The following is a questionnaire regarding diversity management in Irish companies.

It will be used as a research tool for the purpose of work for a Dissertation to be submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of a BA in Human Resource Management (National College of Ireland) 2004. Information compiled will be used for this purpose only and will be treated as private and confidential.

Your participation, by completing the following, would be greatly appreciated:-

Questionnaire	
Instructions: Please respond to the questions below, placing any relevant additional comments where space is provided.	
Name: _____	Title/Position in Organisation: _____
Organisation: _____ 2. Size/No. of Employees: 10 - 49 50 - 249 250+ Small <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Large <input type="checkbox"/>	1. Sector: Public Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/Non Profit <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector - Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector - Services <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Approximate percentage breakdown by: (1) Male <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Female <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does your organisation have a participation of people with disabilities in your workforce: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Average percentage: <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Approximate percentage breakdown by: (1) Country of Origin Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Country of Origin Rest of EU <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Country of Origin Eastern Europe <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Country of Origin - Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Does your organisation have a formal diversity plan? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Please rank, in order of importance, what areas have been/are being addressed with a view to diversity management: <small>(Scale 1 to 5, 1 given first priority and 5 least priority)</small>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Diversity/Ethnicity:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disability:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Work-life Balance:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other :	

8. Please rank, in order of influence, what have been the driving forces behind diversity management in your organisation:

(Scale 1 to 5. 1 given biggest influencing factor and 5 least influencing factor)

Business Reasons:

Driven by Top Management/Organisation Commitment:

Changes in workforce diversity (Gender/Age/Ethnicity, etc):

Compliance with legislation:

Other :

9. Please indicate which of the following policies exists in your organisation:

(Please tick box)

Flexible Working Policies:

Parental Leave:

Bullying/Harassment Policy:

Equal Opportunities Policy:

Formal Selection Criteria For Recruitment:

Diversity Training For All Staff:

Appraisal Training For Managers :

10. Please rank, in your opinion, what impact diversity management has on:

(Scale 1 to 5. 1 indicating greatest impact diversity management has on and 5 least impact on..)

Employee Morale:

Contribution To Organisational Goals:

Organisational Profile:

Organisation's Financial Performance:

Other :

I would like to thank you for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

B. Finnerty, Email: betfinnerty@eircom.net