Chapter 1

The Theory and Practice of Multicultural Organization Development in Education

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This chapter begins with an overview of the development and evolution of multicultural organization development (MCOD) in the private corporate sector. Next, this chapter explores how MCOD is currently being transformed and adopted as a tool for supporting social justice and social diversity in both K-12 and higher education systems. Finally, the chapter reviews the core assumptions behind the theory and practice of MCOD with particular emphasis placed on those modifications beyond the corporate application that must be considered for this model to be most effective in K-12 schools, school districts and higher education systems.

Historical Overview

The pursuit of what is currently termed social justice and diversity, whether for moral reasons, legal reasons, or in the service of a system’s mission, has been a priority for both corporate and educational organizations for several decades. While corporate and educational sectors often emphasize these priorities for different reasons, and tend to favor strategies that are most consistent with their individual missions and goals, they also share in common a number of objectives and tactics in their effort to become multicultural organizations (MCO).

Over twenty years ago, researchers and practitioners in various applied behavioral sciences interested in understanding organization development (OD), came together with those concentrating on issues related to “social diversity” in the workplace. The result of this fusion, multicultural organization development (MCOD), has developed and evolved into a model and set of practices that continues to show promise as an approach for change agents working with systems seeking to become fully multicultural organizations.

This union between OD and diversity, while perhaps obvious today, was
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slow to develop. Prior to the interconnection of OD with diversity, internal and external change agents working to develop effective high performing businesses with techniques that would enhance their competitive advantage generally addressed diversity issues in the workplace only as a module in a large systems change initiative. In actuality, even that module only focused on what is now referred to as “social justice” rather than “social diversity,” terms that are often used interchangeably. In MCOD terminology, these terms are meant to describe different aspects of the social or organizational change agenda. Organizational change interventions focused on social diversity tend to address issues related to “social group inclusion”. The goals of this type of intervention focus on building an organizational culture that includes people from various social identity groups based on differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social/economic class, religion, nationality, age, and other socially defined group identities. A change effort with a social justice focus would concentrate on the elimination of racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, anti-Semitism, and other manifestations of social oppression or social injustice. While MCOD acknowledges the difference between the justice and diversity agenda, many practitioners use the term diversity to refer to both social justice and social diversity concerns.

Much of the literature on the theory and practice of OD was originally intended to speak to, and about, the business community. OD was rarely seen to have much widespread consequence or value for education systems and its values were seen as “too corporate.” On the occasions when practitioners were given the chance to introduce OD concepts and strategies into an education system, it was often seen as missing the mark. Often this lack of fit resulted from the OD practitioner’s failure to consider the unique attributes of education systems (e.g., organizational structures, accepted cultural norms, decision-making processes, and use of language). This failure of OD to reflect the values and “speak the language” of education organizations could be especially apparent in the context of large research campuses, which are often quite different from business environments.

In the education community, social justice has primarily been sought through a focus on divisions of student affairs, the creation of curricular interventions, focused student and faculty recruitment efforts, and the institution of campus policies and procedures. These efforts often attempted to create a civil and diverse community through policy legislation. The most popular change strategies were often intended to persuade individuals in the education system that to be supportive of social justice and diversity was to be a good citizen of the academic community.

In large part, OD and the strategies for pursuing diversity are still separate enterprises in education. However, recently OD practitioners have begun to recognize those parts of OD theory and practice that can be modified to be of service to educational organizations and have begun to adapt their theories and practices and to better communicate how their field can support change efforts in education systems. On the same note, diversity practitioners and theorists are now better able to understand how OD models can help them address holistically the needs of education organizations to make them healthier systems and, therefore, better able to achieve and sustain their goals of diversity and social justice.

Bringing OD, Social Justice and Social Diversity Together

Applied behavioral scientists that were grounded in both OD and diversity were the first to recognize or consider the integration of these two change agendas (Miller & Katz, 2002; Cox, 2001; Thomas, 1996; Thomas, 1992; Jackson, Foster, Jackson, Cross, & Hardiman, 1988; Jamison, 1987). Kaleel Jamison (1987) was one of the first to write about the possibility of justice, or affirmative action work in systems as having a positive effect on systems health in other areas and that the reverse was also true. Jackson and Hardiman were among the first theorists and practitioners to bring OD, social justice, and diversity together as MCOD and it was Jackson and Holvino who first contributed this work to the literatures.

Jackson and Hardiman recognized that their work in systems to address the behaviors and attitudes related to various forms of discrimination manifested by individual managers and workers, was indeed necessary, but not sufficient, to produce the kind of systemic change that would result in an increasingly socially just system, much less to move the system to become a multicultural organization (MCO). Based on their work in both OD and diversity, or social justice in the workplace, race relations, and social identity development, they theorized that to achieve the vision of a MCO it would be necessary to view the system as the target of change, or the client, rather than the individuals in the system. This perspective was based on their conceptualization of organizations as organic or “open.” By this, they meant that systems, like individuals, can grow, adapt, and change and could therefore be systematically influenced to become MCOs.

The education community has traveled a different road to get to the point of recognizing that the entire system was the key unit of change for becoming a MCO. They have come to recognize that individual consciousness-raising, education, and behavior change in support of social justice and social diversity must be approached in the context of a set of change goals for the whole campus (or system). Currently, there are a number of educational systems and
Theoretical Frameworks and Useful Models

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Campuses pursuing change in their core elements (mission, management practices, teaching and learning approaches and content, personnel profile and the general learning/working environment) using forms of MCOD theory and practice.

By presenting the theoretical tenants of MCOD and the practice of MCOD, this chapter presents the essence of what MCOD has become over time as it has been applied to educational systems.

Assumptions Behind the Theory and Practice of MCOD

The assumption that “consciousness raising and training activities for individuals in systems may be necessary but not sufficient” to produce systems change is one of the assumptions that is embedded in MCOD theory and practice. Others include the assumption that:
- **Systems are not simply good, “multicultural,” or bad, “monocultural.”** Organizations exist on a developmental continuum with monocultural and multicultural on opposite ends. It is important to understand where the campus (or system) is located on this continuum when the intervention begins. Then, and only then, can we operate from an accurate diagnosis when developing change goals and intervention plans for the educational system.
- **The change process needs to be pursued with a clear vision of the “ideal” end state, or MCO vision, in mind.** A well-articulated vision is a manifestation of the ideal MCO and needs to inform all aspects of the change process. Only with a clear sense of the “ideal” can the data help to describe the current or “real” situation with any meaning. In addition, it is only when one juxtaposes the ideal with the real and acknowledges the resulting discrepancies will the most important issues and problems emerge.
- **The picture of the “real” should be derived from an internal assessment process.** A structured assessment that can be used to identify and describe the current state of diversity and social justice in the system should be used to establish the baseline or current state of what “is,” in the system.
- **Ownership of the assessment process is a key to success.** A significant majority of the members of the educational system must feel ownership of data that describe what “is,” the vision that describes the ideal or the “ought,” and the problems that have emerged from the comparing of the real to the ideal. They must also “own” the identification of the change goals and any sense of priority in working to remove those problems for an MCOD initiative to be a success.
- **Significant systemic change in social justice and diversity will only occur when there is someone monitoring and facilitating the process.** In any change process, there is a natural pull back towards the status quo. Change occurs when there is a commitment to stay with the change effort over time and there is significant support for the organization as it learns to be a MCO. Like individual change efforts, education systems benefit from regular feedback and support to recalibrate their efforts.
- **It must be clear that the pursuit of the goal of becoming a MCO is in the best interests of those who live, learn and work in the system.** The education system must see the MCOD change goals as integral to and serving the overarching health and well being of the system. Only when the change goals link to and facilitate the achievement of the system’s overall mission, will efforts to become a MCO be successful and sustainable.

Three Major Elements of MCOD

With these assumptions in mind, the theory and practice of MCOD in both business and education was further developed around three major elements: 1) The MCOD Goal; 2) The MCOD Developmental Stages; and 3) the MCOD Change Processes.

The MCOD Goal

The first element of an MCO systems change effort focuses on the goal of the MCOD effort. Typically, systems enter into an MCOD process because they understand or believe that a system that manages its human resources well has a greater chance of achieving its overall mission. A system that is invested in its human resources also recognizes that to develop and maintain a strong, productive and high performing human resource system, there must be an effective management of social justice and social diversity in that education system. An MCO is thought of as a system that seeks to improve itself and/or enhance its ability to reach its mission by advocating and practicing social justice and social diversity internally and externally to the educational system.
- **The MCO is a system that has explicit policies and practices that prohibit anyone from being excluded or unjustly treated because of their social identity or status.** This system not only supports social justice within the system and on the campus, it advocates these values in its interactions within its local, regional, national and global communities.
- **The MCO is a system that has explicit policies and practices that are intended to ensure that all members of the diverse workforce feel fully included and have every opportunity to contribute to the goal of achieving the mission of the educational system or campus.** This system also advocates for the appreciation of all forms of social diversity and a realization of the
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strengths that social diversity brings to the local, regional, national and global community.

When applying this goal to an MCOD effort, it is important to recognize that a level of social justice must be achieved before social diversity can be pursued. Many have tried to move directly to social diversity objectives by building a climate of inclusion in the workplace without adequately attending to the absence of social justice (e.g. the existence of sexism, racism, classism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, and other manifestations of social injustice). The goal of becoming a MCO involves the achievement of both social justice, or an anti-exclusionary objective, and social diversity or an inclusion objective.

When there is evidence that there is a significant investment in becoming an MCO, or at least in exploring the possible benefits of becoming such a system, the MCOD process can begin. Often the first steps are to engage the leadership and as many of the workforce at-large to become more familiar with, and hopefully begin to “own” the MCO goal, or at least to develop a goal of this type in their own words.

MCOD Development Stages

One of the core assumptions of MCOD is that most systems are neither good nor all bad. In the language of multicultural organization development, systems are neither wholly “multicultural systems,” nor are they wholly “monocultural systems,” it can be assumed that they are on various places on the continuum. In fact, in most large systems, it is typical to find divisions, departments, groups, or other single units in different places from each other and/or from the larger system with respect to the strength of their affinity for, or against, MCO goals for the educational system or campus.

The MCOD Developmental Stage model is a significant element of MCOD theory and practice because it allows us to assess the current developmental issues, opportunities, and challenges unique to a specific system as it attempts to move toward becoming an MCO. It is also provides the change process with an essential conceptual organizer to guide the identification of change strategies that are consistent with the developmental readiness of the educational system. Together Rita Hardiman and I developed the MCOD Developmental Stage Model based on our work in Social Identity Development theory (Jackson & Hardiman, 1994) and Racial Identity Development theory (Jackson & Wijeyesinghe, 2001). We coupled our research and writing on individual development with our work with/and observations of organization development practitioners. This model identifies six points on a developmental continuum, each describing the consciousness and culture of a system with regard to issues of social justice and diversity, or relative to becoming a MCO.

Stage One: The Exclusionary System. The Exclusionary System is openly devoted to maintaining the majority group’s dominance and privilege, and these values are typically manifested in the system’s mission and membership criteria. Such a system is usually openly hostile to anything that might be seen as a concern for social justice or social diversity in the system. A system that is rooted in this stage of development is unlikely to entertain anything like a MCOD process; however, most large systems can identify a department, group, or some other systemic unit that does embrace this developmental perspective.

Stage Two: “The Club”. The system or systemic unit that is at the Club stage can be thought of as a system that stops short of explicitly advocating the “majority” group’s supremacy, but does seek to maintain the privileges for those who have traditionally held social power within the system. This is done by developing and maintaining missions, policies, norms, and procedures seen as “correct” from their perspective. The Club allows a limited number of people from “minority” social identity groups into the system if they have the “right” perspective and credentials. The Club is seen as more “liberal” with regard to social justice issues, when compared to the Exclusionary system; however, when we look closely we find that its interest in and commitment to issues of social justice tend to be “soft” when convenient, at best. The club only engages with social justice issues when it can be approached on the club member’s terms, therefore not disturbing its “comfort zone.”

Stage Three: The Compliance System. The Compliance System is committed to removing some of the discrimination inherent in the “club” by providing access to members of social identity groups that were previously excluded. It seeks to accomplish this objective, however, without disturbing the structure, mission, and culture of the system. The system is careful not to create too many waves or to offend or challenge its “majority” employees’ or customers’ bigoted attitudes or behaviors.

Continuum of Multicultural Organizational Development

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Figure 1. Multicultural system development: Stages in the development of a multicultural system.
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The Compliance System typically attempts to change its social diversity profile by actively recruiting and hiring more "non-majority" people. On occasion, such organizations will hire or promote "token" non-majority people into management positions, but most often, they are brought in at the bottom of the system, usually staff positions. When the exception is made to place a "non-majority" person in a line (senior staff) position it is important that this person be a "team player" and that s/he be a "qualified" applicant. A "qualified team player" does not openly challenge the system's mission and practices and is usually 150% competent to do the job.

Stage Four: The Affirming System. The Affirming System is committed to eliminating the discriminatory practices and inherent advantage given members of the "majority" group in the Club by actively recruiting and promoting members of those social groups typically denied access to the system. The Affirming System, moreover, takes an active role in supporting the growth and development of these new employees and initiating programs that increase their chances of success and upward mobility. All employees are encouraged to think and behave in a non-oppressive manner and the system may conduct awareness programs toward that end.

Stage Five: The Redefining System. The Redefining System is a system in transition. This system is not satisfied with being only socially just or "non-oppressive." It is committed to working toward an environment that goes beyond managing diversity, to one that values and capitalizes on diversity. This system is committed to finding ways to ensure the full growth of all social identity group perspectives as a method of enhancing growth and the potential success of the system.

The Redefining System begins to question the limitations of relying solely on one cultural perspective as a basis for the system’s mission, operations, and product development. It seeks to explore the significance and potential of a multicultural workforce. This system actively engages in visioning, planning and problem solving activities directed toward the realization of a multicultural system.

The Redefining System is committed to developing and implementing policies and practices that distribute power among all of the diverse groups in the system. In summary, the Redefining System searches for alternative modes of organizing that guarantee the inclusion, participation, and empowerment of all its members.

Stage Six: The Multicultural System. The Multicultural System reflects the contributions and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations and products or services. It acts on a commitment to eradicate social oppression in all forms within the system; includes the members of diverse cultural and social groups as full participants, especially in decisions that shape the system. Finally, it follows through on broader external social responsibilities, including support of efforts to eliminate all forms of social oppression and to educate others in multicultural perspectives. This is the description of the Vision of a MCO. As there are no known MCOs, this must remain a vision, a statement of the ideal. When we see aspects of this vision manifest in a system or systemic unit, it is important that they be recognized and celebrated, even if it is not a perfect representation of the vision. It is important to believe that we can "get there."

As already mentioned the developmental stages of MCOD are most useful in the assessment and planning phases of the MCOD change process. The stage model offered by Jackson and Hardiman (1994) provides a framework for selecting and designing assessment instruments and techniques for identifying the developmental stage and for ascertaining a developmental benchmark for the system. A range of MCOD assessment instruments have been developed by many of the MCOD practitioners mentioned in this chapter. However, it is important to note that assessment instruments are often tied to a particular version of MCOD theory that it is ascribed to by the developer of the instrument. Additionally, there are related instruments that while not specifically designed to assess MCOD stages do address some of the aspects of each stage and can be suitable for benchmarking a system or unit.

Once it has been determined where the system currently is on the MCOD continuum, or benchmarked, the next task is to develop a change plan that will address the specific manifestations of that stage as demonstrated by this system and implement strategies that will help the system move to the next stage on the developmental continuum. It is important here to present the overall MCOD process so that the assessment and change planning processes are understood in context.

The MCOD Process

The MCOD change process has four components with a number of subcomponents. Once the decision is made to pursue the goal of becoming an MCO, the process has begun. The process involves four steps: 1) Identification of the change agents; 2) determination of the readiness of the system for an initiative of this type; 3) assessment or benchmarking of the system as it currently exists; and 4) change planning and implementation.

The Change Agents

There are three primary actors or change agents in this process: the internal change team, external consultants, and the leadership team. The internal change team is a group of people from within the system who agree to take on the responsibility of managing the MCOD process for the system. Manag-
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The process can take a number of forms. For some change teams, managing the process may mean hiring an outside consultant who will come into the system and run the process for that change team. The team’s role at this level of involvement would be to hire the consultant, monitor the consultant’s activities, provide input where necessary to the consultant regarding the best way to negotiate the system’s culture, and report on the progress of the initiative to the leadership. In other systems, the change team may itself take on a more involved or higher level of responsibility for the MCOD change process. In that case, the team may internally have the competence to assess the system, develop change plans, and implement those plans with only minimal technical assistance or guidance from outside sources. Therefore, once the team is formed, one of its first tasks is to determine how involved it wants to be or feels that it is capable of being. The level of involvement of the change team should also influence the level of involvement of the offsite resources or consultant team. Regardless, the internal change team should:

a. Be a manageable size: usually no more than 12 members. The group members should understand that it is expected that every member will come to every meeting (except in the case of emergencies).

b. Understand that this is now part of their job. This is “regular” work and they should be released from some other assignment or task so that this work is not an overload. In many systems, because it is part of their regular job, they can and should be evaluated on their performance and rewarded consistent with the regular merit and recognition system for efforts related to this initiative.

c. Have good connections with as many constituencies as possible within the system. As the size of the group is limited, it will not be possible to have all specific constituencies represented on the team, but it is possible to have the voices of all constituencies heard through those who are chosen to serve on the team. There should also include a representative sampling of organization members from across the system both horizontally and vertically. For example, an Academic Affairs team in higher education might include: exempt and nonexempt staff members, undergraduate and graduate students, tenure-track and tenured faculty members, and academic administrators like deans or department chairs.

d. Be comprised of people who are thought of as opinion leaders in the system. Such individuals are not always those in formal positions of authority. Often, their legitimacy comes from the trust that their peers have in them.

e. Understand that committee membership should be thought of as at least a two-year commitment from each member. This should be made clear to each member’s supervisor as well.

f. Be supportive of the system’s intention to engage in this process and become a MCO. The voices of those who are opposed to this effort need to be heard and their concerns addressed, but it will not help the process if they are on this team.

Once assembled, the change team and the external consultant will meet to review the MCOD process. The external consultant can also be very helpful in facilitating team building within the change team. It is often helpful if the leadership announces the formation of the team, expresses gratitude for their contribution, and uses this moment to also announce the beginning of the MCOD initiative.

An external consultant team provides important support to such a change committee. For example, it provides the outside or objective perspective to this process. It is also imperative that the external consultants have a familiarity with MCOD or MCOD type change processes. In addition to providing guidance on the best way to conduct an MCOD change effort, the external consultant can:

1. Assist with the identification or construction of appropriate assessment instruments. For the assessment phase itself, the consultant can be helpful in the collection of sensitive data that might be difficult for members on the change team to collect such as individual interviews or focus groups.

2. Stay clear of internal politics. The apolitical perspective of the external consultant can be both an asset and a limitation. As the external consultant is not a part of the power politics that exists in any system, in many ways
their credibility is not in question in the same way that an internal change team members will be. It is also important to recognize that the external consultant’s lack of an understanding of all of the history and internal politics can cause blind spots that can hurt the effort if not recognized. It is therefore imperative that there be both an internal perspective and an external perspective available to this effort at all times.

3. Provide a buffer between the leadership of the system and members of the change team. The external consultant is often better able to deal with the leadership of the system than are members of the change team, who more than likely report to members of the leadership team, have a “history,” or are seen as allied with specific outcomes.

4. Help facilitate team building among change team members. The external consultant should be able to help the change team with its own team building and group dynamics. MCOD change teams typically have need for help with their own group process. Social justice and social diversity issues bring their own tension to any group. It is very difficult for a group to manage these issues for itself. Having an external consultant/resource that can help the group work through these issues as they arise will benefit the team and the effort.

5. Understand that part of their charge is to “build internal capacity” for the system. This means that the internal consultant understands that the MCOD process will need to go on for a long time and it is not the intention of the system to have the consultant become part of the system. The role of the consultant is to guide the change team through the process the first time, and in so doing build, the skills and knowledge necessary to the team so that on the next round, the capacity to manage the process will exist in the system and therefore only require limited external resources.

The third primary agent in the MCOD change process is the leadership team. The term ‘leadership team’ is used rather than ‘leader’ because in most systems, especially larger systems, leadership functions are typically diffused across a group of individuals. These system leaders, (Presidents, CEOs, CFOs, Chancellors, Vice-presidents, Provosts, Deans, Superintendent, Principals, etc.), usually have primary responsibility for, and authority over, all internal policies and procedures involving broad areas. These individuals are responsible for their own area and collectively responsible for leading the system. For an intervention like MCOD, it is important that this leadership team knows what is going on and has direct involvement in the manner in which the initiative is carried out.

The leadership team must be involved in the initial decision to engage in an MCOD initiative. While one key officer often brings a process like MCOD to the system, to ultimately be successful that person must receive the approval of the entire leadership team before going too far with the process. This process of getting such approval is one of those places where an outside consultant can be a significant player. The leadership team must have some understanding of the process and its role, must decide what level of involvement it will want to have in the process. Like the change team, the leadership team can decide to be very involved or it can decide to bless the process and charge the team with moving forward and reporting to the leadership team from time to time. The more that the leadership team has direct involvement in the initiative, the faster the MCOD process will move and the greater its chances of success.

System Readiness

The question of how ready a system is for a change initiative, especially one that focuses on an area as volatile as social justice and diversity, must be considered before the effort shifts into full gear. It is important to know whether the system has the kind of leadership support and awareness in the workforce that will allow the effort to have a chance of succeeding; therefore, a critical component of the MCOD process is a test of system readiness. A test of this type should ask some critical questions about the level of support or awareness in the workforce for an initiative whose goal it is to make this an MCOD, and how ready the leadership is to do what must be done to support and engage in this process. A MCOD readiness test should be developed when it is determined that an assessment at the very beginning of the process is essential in determining how best to enter into a system with an intervention of this type, one that ultimately calls for a rather intensive data collection phase.

The MCOD Readiness Test is usually given to a sampling of the system and all of the Change Team and Leadership team. The inventory asks six basic questions:

1. How racial and sexual harassment are handled
2. Whether diversity is valued in the system
3. If there is a commitment to social justice
4. If the leadership has made it known that social justice is supported in the system
5. How well the leadership models a value for diversity and social justice
6. Whether a commitment to diversity and social justice is clearly stated in the mission and values of the system

These and other questions have been shown to help the change agents get a sense of the system’s general readiness to move forward. While no system at this point is going to score very high on a test of this type, a minimum score equivalent to fifty percent should be attained. This readiness inventory can
also serve to provide some preliminary data on the nature of issues in the system. On rare occasions it has been determined that some work is needed to bring the leadership and/or workforce up to another level of awareness before trying to fully engage in the MCOD process. This might involve more pronouncements from the leadership about the commitment and intent to be more like an MCO; it might involve addressing some long standing social justice issues in the system that when addressed will send a message throughout the system that something serious is happening; or it might involve conducting some harassment training sessions for the workforce. There are a number of introductory interventions that can be implemented without waiting for the MCOD assessment process to begin. These interventions are intended to address some key issues that need to be addressed, while also letting everyone in the system know that “this is serious”.

**Assessment and Benchmarking**

MCOD is a data driven process. The identification of the benchmark where the system begins its journey to become a MCO is critical to the process. Establishing this benchmark is essential to understanding how far the system has to move to become an MCO, and how it is progressing as it implements the action or change plans.

The initial assessment is set to accomplish a number of objectives. First, it is intended to engage the system in naming and owning the current developmental stage of the system—establishing the benchmark. Collecting data that allow the system to provide the detailed description of how it manifests the stage of development that it is in on the MCOD Developmental continuum is critical to this process. Once this detailed description of the system’s way of acting out its MCOD stage of development is established, it is easier to focus on issues and problems that need to be addressed, determine the priority that the various issues and problems have, and develop a focused set of strategies with criteria for measuring success.

The assessment strategy that is used in MCOD initiatives is based on survey feedback methodology. The MCOD Assessment calls for the collection of three types of data: 1) Survey data; 2) Interview data; 3) and Audit data.

**Survey Data.** A range of MCOD or MCOD type assessment questionnaires can be useful as survey instruments designed to be administered to everyone in the system. In some cases, systems construct their own instrument. In these cases, it is critical that the survey instrument provide the kind of data that will give the change agents information that can effectively inform the development of a change plan. Surveys are best at providing data that allow an over-

view of trends across the entire system. The MCOD Assessment Survey is key to the Continuum of MCOD developmental stages, therefore makes the task of organizing the data less difficult, and makes it easier to develop change plans.

**Interview Data.** While surveys can provide useful quantitative data, interviews help to flesh out nuances and provide a context for data that can be confusing or initially appear to be contradictory. Though desirable, there is rarely, if ever, enough time or resources allocated to MCOD change processes to collect interviews of every individual; therefore, focus groups are typically employed at this stage. Focus groups are pulled together from the various social groupings in the system (e.g. gender, race/ethnic, sexual orientation, class, as well as systemic grouping e.g. secretarial staff, managers, engineers, part-time workers, instructors, students, counselors, etc.). Within these focus groups, two types of data are usually collected. First, the group is asked to talk about their perceptions of the system relative to social justice and diversity. The data that is collected from these discussions helps to flesh out, or fill in, some of what is known via the survey instrument. Second, the focus groups are presented with some of the survey data, particularly survey data that is not giving a clear message, or seems to contradict other data, and asked to provide a perspective on those apparent contradictions.

**Audit Data.** MCOD audit data is information that is gleaned from a review of the system’s records. There is a specific set of questions that are often asked of the system’s records. These questions focus on information that tends to be in the system’s personnel office and in the budget office. The audit asks for information on hires, terminations, resignations, grievances, and promotions. Data is aggregated by race, gender, physical/developmental ability, sexual orientation (when available), religion, (when available), and other social identity groups as requested and available. Data is further aggregated by systemic unit (e.g. division, department, or work group, and by job grade or classification). As the data from the survey and from the focus groups is impressionistic, it is important to have the facts from the records to support those impressions, or to highlight where there are serious misunderstandings about the system’s record on certain social justice and diversity issues.

Once the assessment data is collected, the change agents, or those managing the data for the change agents, “sanitize” and compile the data for presentation back to the system. By sanitize, we mean clean the data up without changing the data. Cleaning the data involves removing language or names that will cause the anonymity of the respondent to be compromised. In some cases this can eliminate a group from the data set for example, if there is only one
African American woman in a unit, this person’s identity cannot be protected and therefore may need to be included in responses from “People of Color,” or removed altogether.

It is important that the change agents understand that at this stage their responsibility is to compile, rather than analyze, data. Data should be organized in a format that any audience can understand. The primary purpose for the presentation of the data is to allow those who work in the system to hear what was said in the assessment stage, offer any major adjustments or corrections, and ultimately to “own” the data. Once the data is owned, or the group has indicated that, “Yes, the data represent our system”, the next step is to identify those things that must be changed so that the system can become an MCO. These are key steps to ensuring that the MCOD process results in an initiative that most members of the system both understand and embrace. This process of inviting members of the organization to confirm the accuracy and to make sense of the data differentiates this approach to systems change from others that tend to be either top-down or bottom-up. This process is intended to be all-inclusive.

**Change Planning and Implementation**

Once the assessment phase is completed and the data has been presented to and vetted by members of the system, then the members of the change team will assist (or have the consultants assist) each unit within the system with identification of the issues and problems that they want to address first. In MCOD, these individual units are encouraged to identify goals related to those issues and problems that, when addressed successfully, will affect the issues or problems in an observable and measurable way. This is the first step in building a change plan for the systemic unit. In most cases, the units determine change goals based on the identified issues and problems, and prioritize them by isolating those that can be addressed within 18 months to two years and will significantly affect the identified issue or problem. As previously mentioned, it is critical that results can be seen and measured. To be successful, the MCOD change process generally, and all those who work on it, must have clear strategies for such accountability.

When the change plan has been implemented, and the results evaluated, it is time to redo the assessment, renew the commitment to becoming an MCO, and to develop and implement the next change plan. With the completion of each cycle of this process, it is expected that the MCOD process will become even more internalized within the system and its culture. It is also expected that the internal capacity of the system to run and monitor its own MCOD process will continue to develop and take root ever more deeply.

**Concluding Comments**

This chapter describes how Multicultural Organization Development emerged from the work of organization development and diversity practitioners who shared a common commitment to creating organizations in the corporate sector that were socially just, diverse, and high performing systems. While MCOD has been in practice in the corporate environment for more than two decades now, the way it is practiced, and the theory behind the practice, continues to grow and evolve.

The latest evidence of this evolution is the current movement to adapt MCOD practices and models developed for corporate organizations to environments in K12 and higher education. Future directions for the theory and practice of MCOD offer many interesting lines of inquiry. What are the long-term uses and effects of MCOD as an organization change model? Do systems that use this model indeed become MCO’s? And, if so, does being an MCO bring such organizations significantly closer to enacting both their social justice and diversity visions and also significantly enhance their ability to realize the overall missions unique to their system?

As new applications of this model unfold, we should also pay attention to the ways that the practice of MCOD in these different environments changes the theory of MCOD and the theory and practice of OD, as well. In a corporate environment, judging the usefulness of a model like MCOD may be as straightforward as discerning the impact of the MCOD change process on the organizations’ bottom-line (whatever that measurement of success is in the context that organization). How will higher education organizations construct equally compelling measurements suited to their particular needs?

MCOD by its very nature is a commitment to the holistic health of human beings in systems. Bringing together the values, practices, and perspectives of both organization development and diversity offers a model to help fulfill the promise of organizations and society to be both successful and socially just. MCOD was in part an invention intended to fill a perceived gap in the contemporary theory and practice of organization development, however, it seems now that as MCOD continues to evolve, not only will that gap be filled but the theory and practice of OD and MCOD will be thought of as one, rather than two separate or overlapping fields.

**References**

Chapter 2
Letting the Hydra Roam: Attending to Diverse Forms of Diversity in Liberal Arts Education

Sammy Basu

This chapter offers a Hydra-like heuristic framework consisting of nine distinct conceptions of diversity. For each conception it notes the attendant vision of liberal arts education, the curriculum and pedagogy entailed, and the main weaknesses identified by critics. Rather than privilege any single conception, it is argued that for institution-wide diversity initiatives to be successful, they must allow participants to span the various conceptions.

Diversity in education remains controversial, needless to say, between those who identify themselves as broadly “for” multiculturalism and monoculturalists who see themselves as “against.” But there is also considerable confusion and disagreement within the “for” camp, particularly once it

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