A Formal Suite of Object Relational Database Metrics

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Abstract—Object Relational Databases (ORDB) are complex in nature than traditional relational databases because they combine the characteristics of both object oriented concepts and relational features of conventional databases. Design of an ORDB demands efficient and quality schema considering the structural, functional and componential traits. This internal quality of the schema is assured by metrics that measure the relevant attributes. This is extended to substantiate the understandability, usability and reliability of the schema, thus assuring external quality of the schema. This work institutes a formalization of ORDB metrics; metric definition, evaluation methodology and the calibration of the metric. Three ORDB schemas were used to conduct the evaluation and the formalization of the metrics. The metrics are calibrated using content and criteria related validation based on the measurability, consistency and reliability of the metrics. Nominal and summative scales are derived based on the evaluated metric values and are standardized. Future works pertaining to ORDB metrics forms the concluding note.

Keywords—Measurements, Product metrics, Metrics calibration, Object-relational database.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is understood that the important constituent of product engineering is the ability to measure the internal quality of the product and extend them to assess the external quality of the product [1]. Most of the times the software product measures are concerned only with the complexity of the programs, its functionality and its runtime behavior, both in conventional and object oriented systems. As analysis, design and coding has already moved for object oriented approaches in developing Information Systems (IS) , databases too have become complex as they have opted to function with Object Oriented Information Systems. Hence, there arises the need to propose and study some measures to assess the internal quality of the database and thereby determine their external applicability and reliability. It is important that databases are evaluated for every relevant quality characteristic using validated or widely accepted metrics. Such metrics could help designers to choose the most maintainable, effectual, and semantically proficient schemata. Apart from the existing set of metrics [2], [3], [4] for object relational database (hereafter ORDB), few more were proposed in [5], [6], which focuses on the behavior of the database in real timeframes. Still ORDB is left unexplored on its varied temperament; like dynamism, componential traits and features of object oriented storage.

A. Motivation

This work on the evaluation and the calibration of the ORDB metrics is motivated by the need for a formalized set of metrics that would be consistent, reliable and measurable. Hence we attempt here to consider simple ORDB schemas and make the metric evaluation process calculable. Also we extend the work to calibrate the metrics, to standardize and prove that the metrics measure what it intends to measure.

We see that database metrics are not given due importance in the software measurement community, might be for its static nature in functional platforms. But our earlier work in [6] discusses metrics to assess the dynamism of databases, and infers that databases too demand due attention from system engineers and designers. As far as we understand, for complex databases like ORDBs, the metrics need formalization and calibration to arrive at standardized scales, from which database designers would be able to assess their design. In this work we attempt to propose methodologies for evaluating the ORDB metrics and we aspire to calibrate them to achieve and arrive at standard scales for each metric. Simple OR schemas, based on the ontology given in appendix (figure 1), were considered for better understandability of the evaluation of metrics. Subsequently, sample experiments were conducted to make the metrics scalable and meaningful.

B. Relevant Works

The metric community possesses works of eminent researchers and scholars who have proposed suitable measures for the object oriented approach. Those measures linger around the design aspect of the real world entities and its operability. Chidamber & Kemerer [7] have proposed a suite for Object Oriented Design which helps in arriving at better design of the OO system. Works in [8], [9] states the dynamic nature of OO systems. Baroni Et.al [2], [3] and Piatini Et. al. [4] have given his major contribution exclusively to the Object Relational databases. They have considered the design metrics and have formally validated them based on the SQL:2003 Ontology.

The design complexity and the structural complexity are measured by the basic metrics like table size (TS), number of
weighted methods per class (CWM), depth in the relational tree (DRT) referential degree (RD), number of involved classes (NIC), number of shared classes (NSC) [2], [3], [10], [11]. Moris [12] proposed metrics for Object oriented software design and development which help the system designers to evaluate their design strategies and methodologies with which systems were architected. In [13] the authors attempted to test the structural complexity of OO software using cohesion and coupling metrics and in [14] three cohesion metrics are interpreted. In contrast, works in [15] and [16] quantify that cohesion and coupling are measures of behavioral aspect of OO systems.

The traditional metrics of object oriented design, which could be extended to ORDB, were criticized for their relevance in the functional platforms and their defects were reflected on the basis of their influence in the design process [17].

C. Outline

This research work is organized as follows: Section 2 details on the evaluation methodology, covering the basic concepts of ORDB, and formal definition and the evaluation procedures. Section 3 presents the formal validation of the metrics based on the content and criteria related validity. Calibrated scales are also derived for the metrics in this section. The formal calibration is performed using sample ORDB schemas and the metric values are calculated based on the schemas. Section 4 presents the concluding remarks and future works pertaining to the ORDB metrics.

II. EVALUATION OF ORDB METRICS

An object-relational database schema is comprised of a number of related tables that forms a connected structure of type constructs or classes (hereafter class-type). Class-types are the classes in the object relational paradigm. They possess all the properties of a class; data abstraction, encapsulation, inheritance and polymorphism. These traits of class-types are embedded in the relational nature of the database; data model, security, concurrency, normalization and so on. In more precise words, the relational database talks in terms of objects. It is also interesting to have a relational schema built with classes and these classes encapsulated with data and methods acting on the data.

Such as its description the object relational databases are more intricate and multifarious. When such a complex structure is proposed to be built, its design should be more systematic and elaborate taking into account the functional perception of the database along with its application. Hence a set of metrics are derived considering the object oriented epitone of a relational database. Consider the example shown in figure 1. The relational model on the left side uses class-types defined on the right. The relational tables are comprised of attributes of basic data type and also the class-types which are referred as User Defined Datatype (UDT). These UDTs are the complex components of challenge in the object relational database archetype [18], [19]. In this example ORDB Schema we use three class-types (UDT) for two relational tables.

A. Metric 1: Table Size (TS)

The metric is defined as the sum of complexities of simple columns and of the complex columns. Each of these complex columns can be a class or UDT or other class-type.

\[
\mu(TS) = \sum_{i=0}^{n} SC_i + \sum_{j=0}^{m} CC_j
\]

A simple column is constructed using basic data type, and no extra construction or maintenance cost is required and they have no runtime characteristics. Hence, the complexity weight is unity for a simple column. Whereas, a complex column (attribute) is an UDT (user-defined type), which exhibit dynamic behaviors during runtime. A complex column may be Structured type, Composite type, Collection type or a Reference type [20].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CREATE TABLE Tab_Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CREATE TYPE person_t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREATE TABLE Tab_Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Fig. 1 Sample ORDB Schema](image)

Fig. 1 Sample ORDB Schema

The size of the table student can be calculated as:

Size of address_t: SC = 5, CC = 2  
Size of person_t: SC = 3, CC = 2  
Size of department_t: SC = 2, CC = 2

TS(Tab_Student) = TS(Tab_Staff) + TS(Tab_Staff)

Hence the structural complexity of a complex column in terms of its construction and maintenance should be considered [21]. For evaluation convenience, we assume the measure for methods and procedures in a complex column can be averaged to 2. Based on these assignments the metric value of the example schema shown in figure 1 is calculated as follows. The schema design is given in the appendix (figure 2).
This metric is a measure of the total size of a table in the object relational schema. However, TS is not just a measure of the sum of the attributes, but of the structural complexity of the complex columns. The metric will be useful in refining the relational database table design in restricting the tables’ size to an optimal value, which will reduce effort and cost in the construction and maintenance of the database schemas. Larger the TS value, higher will be the effort in managing the attributes and the data in the tables, thus higher will be the maintenance effort.

B. Metric 2: Complexity of Weighted Methods (CWM)

Consider a class-type A, containing m number of methods whose complexity are C1, C2, ..., Cm, then the metric is defined as the sum of the complexities of the methods, which is given as

\[ \mu(CWM) = \sum_{i=1}^{m} C_i \]  (2)

This metric is not just the count of number of weighted methods as defined in earlier metrics definition [1], [7], but quantifies the complexities of all the methods. Cyclomatic complexity is a measure of complexity of a program unit or a procedure, but a member method of a class-type in ORDB does not have functional control paths. Hence, we formulate the complexity based on the FP calculation discussed by Pressman [22].

\[ \text{Count_total} = (\text{no of tables accessed } \times \text{cf}) + (\text{no. of read queries } \times \text{cf}) + (\text{no. of write queries } \times \text{cf}) \]

Where cf: complexity factor ranges from 1 to 5, as functional complexity increases.

\[ \text{CWM(Mi)} = \text{Count_total} \times [0.65 + 0.01 \times F] \]

Where F is the functional weight of the method. F=1 for constructors and destructors, and other methods involving I/O operations. Based on the metric definition we evaluate the metric value considering the person_t class-type, defined in figure 2.

\[ \text{Person_t.set_values() } \]

Tables accessed = 2, Read queries = 1, Write queries = 1

\[ \text{Count_total} = (2 \times 3) + (1 \times 2) + (1 \times 2) = 10 \]

\[ \text{CWM(person_type.set_values)=}10 \times [0.65 + 0.01 \times 3]=6.8 \]

C. Metric 3: Cohesion between methods (COM)

In the view of Bunje [23], Cohesion is defined in the terms of similarity between two things as the intersection of the set of properties of the two things. This definition can be extended as the cohesion between the methods as the intersection of the set of instance variables.

\[ \gamma(M_1,M_2) = \{I_1 \} \cap \{I_2 \} \]

where \( \gamma(M_i,M_j) \) is the degree of similarity between methods \( M_i \) and \( M_j \) and \( \{I_1 \} \) is the set of instance variables used by the method \( M_i \).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Construct</th>
<th>No of Methods</th>
<th>CWM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>person_t</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.8 \times 0.66 = 7.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>department_t</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.4 \times 0.66 = 6.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>address_t</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consider the sample of method definition in figure 2, for the class-type person_t. Method set_values() access three members and procedures, intersection gives the value of 3. The total number of instance variables accessed by both the methods is 4. Hence the COM for person_t is 3/4 = 0.75. Since address_t contains only one method the metric value will be zero.

The measure of COM in a class-type in ORDB gives the database designer an insight into how far the designed class-type is rigid in the given schema. If COM is high, then the fault prediction and change proneness of the class-type will be challenging and costly [7]. On the other hand, if COM is too low, then the class-type is loosely built, demanding its decomposition. Higher the number of decomposed classes, the structural complexity of the table increases as a whole [13].
D. Metric 4: Coupling between Objects (CBO)

An object is coupled to another object if one of them acts on the other, i.e., methods of one objects uses the methods or instance variables of the other. Since objects of the same class-type have same characteristics, two class-types are coupled only when methods declared in one class-type use methods or instance variables used by another class-type. Coupling is the sum count of instance variables and methods invoked from a class-type of an object of another class-type.

\[\text{Count}_{cp} = \sum_{i=0}^{n} I_i + \sum_{j=0}^{m} M_{INV_j}\]  

(4)

Method invocation (M_{INV}) involves calculations of number of methods called and the average number of arguments involved in each invocation. The count of coupling \(\text{Count}_{cp}\) results in a positive value with which the coupling indicator can be derived.

\[\text{Cob} = \frac{k}{\text{Count}_{cp}}\]

Where \(k = 1\) and is a proportionality constant which may be adjusted as experimental verification occurs. This implies that Count_{cp} is inversely proportional of the metric Cob. Hence to have a coupling metric increase as the degree of coupling intensifies \([22]\), a reversed coupling metric is defined as

\[\mu(\text{CBO}) = 1 - \text{Cob}\]

(5)

where the degree of coupling varies non-linearly between 0 and 1. This is a direct measure of number of instance variables and methods invoked, arguments passed to the methods of objects of other classes/tables or type constructs. The class-type department_t is reengineered and redefined so as to make it more complex. The department_t type is tightly coupled with person_t which in turn is coupled to address_t, where both are coupled using method invocation and not instance variables. In this definition department_t is coupled to person_t by one-method invocation, hence Count_{cp} is 1. Also person_t is coupled to address_t by one-method invocation, hence Count_{cp} is 1. But, since department_t type is under consideration and is coupled at two levels, we divide the second level couple by its level. Thus Count_{cp} can be calculated as:

\[\text{Count}_{cp} = \text{CL}_1 + \text{CL}_2 = 1 + (1/2) = 1.5\]

Where CL1=Coupling level 1, CL2=Coupling level 2

\[\text{Cob} = 1/1.5 = 0.667\]

\[\text{CBO}(\text{department}_t) = 1 - \text{Cob} = 1 -0.667 = 0.333\]

The measure of coupling between objects in ORDB gives the insight into the compactness with which the class-type is entrenched in the schema. Removing or modifying a highly coupled class-type will affect the other coupled class-types, leading to higher effort in restructuring or reengineering the schema design.

Lower the coupling, better the design \([13]\). Hence, lower CBO value for a class-type is preferred as design and implementation goals. However, the practical challenge is in selecting the tolerable level of measure.

E. Metric 5: Referential Degree

The metric RD is the summation of the number of foreign keys and reverse reference keys the table or class contains. For a table with \(n\) number of foreign keys and \(m\) number of reverse references is given as follows:

\[\mu(\text{RD}) = \sum_{i=0}^{n} \text{Fk} + \sum_{j=0}^{m} \text{Rvref}\]

(6)

The concept of reverse reference is one of the best features of relation databases available in ORDB. This makes a relational table more smart and referenced to the contextually related tables by dual means, i.e., the existence of the reference is authenticated double the times a relational model supports. The dual measure of the metric best admits the degree of entrenchment of the class-type or table in the database schema, subjecting the table/class-type to be normalized based on functional dependencies and key references. The metric is a mere count of the reference and reverse reference keys.

F. Metric 6: Depth in the Relational Tree

The metric DRT of a table/class is defined as the longest path in the tree that constitutes the tables that are related by means of reference keys and inheritance. Relationships formed between classes involve other classes or UDT or other data constructs like list, bag, array etc. Consider class A, and \(d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_k\) are the distance between the related tables/classes. Then its depth in the relational tree can be given as

\[\mu(\text{DRT}) = \sum_{i=0}^{n} \text{di}\]

(7)

The metric determines how strongly the table is ingrained in the schema or in the relational tree. Hence change in the tree structure is influenced by the referential degree of the table or class.

G. Metric 7: Number of Inherited Properties

This metric relates to a notion of scope of properties of a class-type. It is a measure of how many properties are being inherited by the children and how many are not being inherited. The properties of a class-type include the instance variables and the methods. Consider a class-type ‘A’ having \(n\) number of instance variables and \(m\) number of methods to be inherited, then the measure can be stated as

\[\mu(\text{NIP}) = \sum_{i=0}^{n} I_i + \sum_{j=0}^{m} M_j\]

(8)

Where \(M_j= [\text{no. of types x CWM}] + [\text{no. of methods x CBO}]\)

Suppose the class-type definition of person_t allows all the instance variables and the member methods to be inherited by other two class-types, student_t and staff_t, then the NIP metric for person_t will be its size.

The count of number of properties being inherited determines the complexity with which the type can be reused. NIP is not just a direct count of properties but the coupling of a class-type with other types and the number of weighted
methods united cohesively. The type person_t has 3 instance variables, 1 UDT and 2 member methods. The complexity measure for UDT is its CWM and for methods is its CBO. This measures the component’s reuse. Thus the metric value for person_t is calculated as follows:

\[ \text{NIP (person_t)} = 3 + [1 \times (\text{CWM})] + [2 \times \text{CBO}] \]

\[ \text{NIP (person_t)} = 3 + [1 \times 1.4] + [2 \times 0.5] = 5.4 \]

This value of NIP obviously measures not just the number of properties but also their complexity with which the component can be reused in future schemas.

Since inheritance in a form of reuse, this metric, NIP, contributes to the componental nature of the database. Hence the designing of classes need more attention for their future usage and their contribution in the componental database design.

### III. CALIBRATING THE METRICS

Measurements for OO systems, in general, have been proposed by CK [7], and other research works [1], [10], [15], [16], and for ORDB, in particular, metrics have been proposed by Piatini [2], [4], [5]. Metrics for ORDB have formally validated in [20], [24], but the metric values have to be calibrated to a scale, where their applicability could well be appreciated. In this work we have attempted to define the metrics for ORDB in the context of its design, that is, at the schema-level. The calibration of these metrics is formalized by testing the device (metrics) for its 1) construct validity, 2) criterion based validity and 3) reliability in measuring the intended attribute.

#### A. Content Validity

The measurement device (metrics) has to consider the global set of data to test its consistency in formulating the evaluating methodology. In the previous sections we have dealt in detail the evaluating methodology for each of the metrics. This validity is proved by arriving at consistent values for the metrics using a wide variety of database schemas.

Three object relational database schemas were considered for this research work. We name them as ORSx, ORSy and ORSz.

The schema ORSx is backing a financial application, where the specification is to maintain day-to-day transactions of the organization and process data, to generate reports and memos according to the customers’ requirement. The schema ORSy houses the information of a shipping corporation. The realtime ship movements, radar information from the traffic cell, generation of reports and memos are the primary function of the application. ORSz supports an SCM system for an electronic production company.

The experimental dataset is given in table 3. The schemas covered a wide variety of concepts in object oriented system and relational system. Table 4 presents the various concepts covered by the experimental dataset.

The schemas were very appropriate for this study that they are applicable in testing the metric device in more than one dimension; Measurability, Consistency and Reliability. The design-level metrics, proposed here, are tested on these four dimensions.

#### B. Criterion related Validity

Criterion related validity can be performed by means of testing

- The measurability of the metrics and
- The consistency with which they measure the attributes.

1) **Measurability**

Measurability of the metric includes other factors like understandability and calculability. Understandability of these metrics for ORDB is done in our earlier works [18]. Calculability is the ability to derive complete ontology based standard formulas for estimating the measured values. That is, using the formula we arrive at definite numbers that gives us insight into the design-level measurability of the database schema.

This is proved by arriving at definite numerical values that convey the semantics of the metrics, which are detailed in the previous sections.

2) **Consistency**

Consistency of the metric is defined as the ability of the device (metric) to produce coherent values at different iteration of measurements [17], [26]. An iteration is one instance of executing the formulas for the given schema design. The three object relational schemas ORSx, ORSy and ORSz are the dataset where the metrics are applied to measure their attributes. We have conducted totally 18 iterations with 6 iterations for each schema. The metrics TS, DRT, RD, CBO, COM, NIP, CWM are measured using the formulas given for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schemas</th>
<th>No of Tables</th>
<th>No of types</th>
<th>ANIV</th>
<th>ANMT</th>
<th>ANRT</th>
<th>RT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORSx</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORSy</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORSz</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NIV: Avg no of Instance variables per type, ANIV: Avg no of References per type, RT: No of Relational Trees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schemas</th>
<th>Object Oriented Concepts</th>
<th>Relational Concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORSx</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORSy</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORSz</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ABS: Abstraction, AGN: Aggregation, PMS: Polymorphism; IHT: Inheritance, NRM: Normalization, RI: Referential Integrity; Y = Yes, N = No, P = Partial

**Table III**

**Experimental Data Set**

**Table IV**

**Object Oriented and Relational Concepts**

...
each measurement. A total of \((7 \times 6 = 42, \text{ and } 42 \times 3 = 126)\) 126 metric values are obtained. For a single metric we have 6 iterations and for the 7 metrics it totals to 42 and for the three schemas it is 126.

We have adopted correlation analysis to study the consistency of the metric values and have found that they correlate between iterations of experiments. All possible pairs of iterations are analyzed using Karl Pearson’s Coefficient Correlation \([26]\) using equation 9 and the results are given in table 5.

\[
Correl(x,y) = \frac{\sum (x-\bar{x})(y-\bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x-\bar{x})^2 \sum (y-\bar{y})^2}}
\] (9)

![Table V: Correlation Analysis Between Iterations](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>1,2</th>
<th>2,3</th>
<th>3,4</th>
<th>4,5</th>
<th>5,6</th>
<th>6,1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TS</td>
<td>0.872</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td>0.896</td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td>0.846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.998</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD</td>
<td>0.975</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>0.912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td>0.923</td>
<td>0.935</td>
<td>0.926</td>
<td>0.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>0.787</td>
<td>0.769</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td>0.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>0.988</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>0.988</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, we conclude that for the number of iterations for each metric value, the device is consistent to measure the attributes, proving the consistency test for the device (metric). As far as the metric is consistent in measuring the intended attribute it is expected to be reliable enough to satisfy the measurement properties.

![Fig. 3 Correlation among the different Iterations of measurement](image)

![Fig. 4(a) Table size metric for three schemas](image)

![Fig. 4(b) COM and CBO Metric Ranges](image)

![Fig. 4(c) NIP Metric for the three schemas](image)
C. Reliability of the metrics

The reliability of the metrics can be tested using two approaches: Formal analytical approach and Scale Calibration approach.

1) Analytical Approach

The metrics for object-oriented design proposed in [7] are based on the six properties of metric evaluation. The definitions of the properties given in [27], [28], [29] for OOD are redefined here in relevance to the ORD schema design requirements, retaining the essence of the properties. Based on the six properties we have framed four properties, each at the design, functional, atomicity and componential interaction.

The properties are:
1. Design-level Non-uniqueness: the metric for two different class-types may have same numerical value at the design-level
2. Functional-level uniqueness: the metric for two different class-types may have different numerical value at the functional level. This is because the realtime parameters involved in calculating the metric varies at several instances
3. Atomicity: The metric for individual class-type is always less than or equals the metric when two or more class-types are joined.
4. Interaction complexity: the metric of each class-type varies in interaction with other class-types, as they are dynamically determined by external programming factors.

Table Size (TS): This metric measures the design-level complexity of the schema [5]. The design-level complexity measure involves the fields of the table, both simple and complex. As complex tables include the UDTs, class/types, complexities of the tables are not just count of attributes, but the complexity of the attributes. Hence property 1 holds good. As well, the metric for the two tables A and B reveals the atomic existence of itself, and hence property 3 holds good.

∀ tables A, B; μ(A) = μ(B) [Property 1]

ie., the two tables are equally complex at the design level.

∀ tables A, B;
μ(A) ≤ μ(A+B), μ(B) ≤ μ(A+B) [Property 3]

No. of Weighted methods per class (CWM): This metric shows uniqueness when the functional complexity of a class-type is considered and non-uniqueness for design level complexity of a class-type. For a class type with n methods, the CWM metric calculates the inputs, outputs, queries and other methods invoked, where all these parameters are calculable during design time and runtime. Hence property 1, 2 and obviously 3 holds good.

∀ Class C, ∃ method M, N;
then μ(M) = μ(N) [Property 1]
μ(M) ≠ μ(N) [Property 2]
μ(M) ≤ μ(M + N), μ(N) ≤ μ(M + N) [Property 3]

Cohesion between methods (COM): This functional metric involves the uniqueness and the interaction complexity of the class-type. Cohesiveness of a class-type is the interactions among methods, which the metric intends to measure. Hence properties 2 and 4 holds good. Obviously property 3 is ignored as cohesion complexity of pairs of methods or an individual class is non-equivalent.

∀ Classes A and B; μ(A) ≠ μ(B); and
A, B and C, such that μ(A) = μ(B)
μ(A+B) ≠ μ(B+C) [Property 4]

Coupling between Object (CBO): This functional metric involves the uniqueness and the interaction of the complexity of the class-type with other class-types, showing the level of coupling. Coupling of the class-types in the schema determines the reusability of the component class and the rigidity with which the component class-type be modified. In addition to properties 2 and 4, property 3 also holds good for CBO as the class-types can be combined.

∀ Classes A and B; μ(A) ≠ μ(B); and
A, B and C, such that μ(A) = μ(B)
μ(A+B) ≠ μ(B+C) [Property 4]

Number of Inherited Properties (NIP): In contract to NOC metric in OO design [7] this metric measures number of properties of a class-type that could be inherited. The properties declared public are inherited and thus interaction among the class-types in the inheritance tree. Since inheritance is a form of reuse [7] the properties 1, 2 and 3 hold good, satisfying the componential trait.

A and B, such that B is the root and A is the leaf node,
Then μ(A) = μ(B) [Property 2]
If A and B are siblings, then μ(A) = μ(B) [Property 1]
If B is a subclass of A, then
μ(A) ≤ μ(A+B), μ(B) ≤ μ(A+B) [Property 3]

Depth of Relational Tree (DRT): The metrics is a design-level attribute satisfying property 1, considered to determine the reusability of the class-type, and hence satisfies the property 4. As they don’t have functional significance property 2 is ignored. Combination of two class-types or tables, will remove them from the tree and hence the metric becomes insignificant during combination.

Referential Degree (RD): This design-level metric obviously satisfies property 1, since the references are made during the design of the class-type. However, during combination of individual component classes, μ(A+B) = μ(A) + μ(B) – λ, Where λ is the common references, thus satisfying property 3.

A and B, such that μ(A) = μ(B), then
μ(A) ≤ μ(A+B), μ(B) ≤ μ(A+B) [Property 3]

Using the four evaluation properties, we say that each of the metric is reliable enough to measure the relevant attributes. These properties are helpful in identifying the purpose of the metric and in removing redundancy in the metric values.
IV. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORKS

Object-relational database metrics require formal validation and verification as they determine the structural, functional and componential nature of the ORDB schemas. They are used in assuring the internal quality of the database design, which on further study indicate the usability, maintainability, understandability and reliability that assure the external quality of the ORDB schema. In this work we have formally defined seven ORDB metrics and described the calculability of the metrics, thus providing the evaluation methodology. Then we validated the metrics based on its content validity, criteria related validity, which includes the verification of the measurability, consistency and the reliability of the metrics. The verification and validation are carried out using three ORDB schemas, which are designed for realtime applications. Finally we calibrated the metrics and derived scales for each metric indicating the usability of the metric values. This work can be extended by considering the following future issues.

Future Works: Apart from formalizing the ORDB metrics on the three traits, structural, functional and componential traits of ORDB, the following open issues can be considered for future works: 1) The compatibility of the ORDB objects with the programming languages, 2) The ability of the ORDB objects to represent knowledge models using XML, CG constructs, 3) The complexity of the objects with regard to performance and storage, and 4) Additional ORDB metrics to assess the time optimization and disk space utilization need to be formally defined.

The features of object-relational database and models need to be explored, so that its power of handling data through objects may be appreciated. The componential trait of the OR schema and class-types has to be considered for measurement so as to produce componential OR schemas. The evaluation and the calibration of the metrics presented in this work is an instigation of research in object-relational databases. This work on the calibration of the device (metric) for ORDB will benefit further researches in the metric area and serve as a direction guide for assessing and scaling future metrics.

APPENDIX

Figures are enclosed at the end of the references

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APPENDIX

Fig. 1 ORDB Schema Ontology

Fig. 2 Sample Schema for the Metrics Evaluation