

Leadership Competencies for Managing Diversity

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The new understanding of diversity involves more than increasing the number of different identity groups on the payroll. An important proposal is that the experience of diversity in an organisation results from pervasive styles of management. This article dealt with the specific paradigms of diversity management and leadership style theory used to address the research problem in the empirical study, namely *'Is diversity management experience related to leadership styles or competencies?'* The models of diversity and inclusion indicators are used to examine the experience of diversity management. The population of this study into the experience of diversity management is two thousand six hundred and sixty nine (2669) respondents. Leadership styles were obtained from four hundred and forty (440) leaders. The Cronbach alpha values were determined in order to indicate internal validity and reliability.

Key Words: diversity management, engaging leadership style, experience, heroic leadership style, management, symbolic interactionism

JEL Classification: D740, L290, M120, J53

Introduction

Diversity is a subject that can be very powerful and emotional for everyone who deals with it, either directly or indirectly. Diversity topics deal with issues of being different and alike, inspiration and perspiration, sadness and gladness, privilege and lack thereof, culture and religion, tolerance and justice, and hatred and animosity. Diversity challenges and opportunities impact all nations around the world to one extent or another (Bahaudin and Jatuporn 2009).

The question could be asked, what exactly is 'diversity management,' why does management include it in their organisation objectives, and

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how will it be measured? It may be taking the issue too far to claim that diversity is the most talked about but the least implemented corporate objective. However, the fact remains that as a strategic objective, diversity often constitutes the ‘poor relations’ and ranks low on managers’ lists of priorities (Human 2005, 1).

It is well documented that diversity and diversity management have any number of definitions, interpretations, applications and implications. Is diversity management, as some might say, becoming a cliché, reformed affirmative action, a defining matter or something else? In any event, diversity management remains a question of *what* rather than *if* (Bledsoe and Oatsvall 2008, 7).

The existential present, the ‘now,’ on which we act, is dynamic and implies a past and future (Mead 1936). Having presented the contextual realities for leadership and diversity management, arising from the past and present, the specific interactive leadership style and diversity management theories were used to address the aim of this article (‘What kind of leadership style do organisations need to developed to establish a positive experience of diversity management in order to continue to be successful?’) and to propose a diversity leadership competency model.

Von Mises (1996, 42) stated that all actions are performed by individuals: ‘A collective operates through the intermediary of one or several individuals whose actions are related to the collective. It is the “meaning” which the acting individual and those who are touched by the actions attribute to an action that determines its character.’

Blumer places primary importance on the foundation of human behaviour through interaction with the ‘self.’ This specifically underlies actions – it is interaction, real or imagined, with others and the self that is the most important determinant of the behaviour of the individual (Harris 2005). Mintzberg’s (2004) engaging leadership style is required to establish a positive experience of diversity management. This article specifically explains the interactive leadership style theory of McClelland and Burnham (1976), Burnham (2003) and Mintzberg (2004) and relies on empirical research. Robertson’s (2004) five-factor model, inclusive of the paradigms of Thomas and Ely (1996; 2002), is used to examine the experience of diversity management.

The aim of the study is to determine the kind of leadership competency styles for managers in organisations and to develop and establish a positive experience of diversity management in order to continue to be successful.

The specific objective of this article is to determine diversity management experience in workplaces, whether the experience of diversity differed between race, gender and generational groups and whether this experience related to leadership style.

Leadership Competencies for Managing Diversity

To be successful in today's market, companies need an extremely capable, flexible and dedicated workforce, a flexible and innovative management, and the capability to hold on to developed talent. To accomplish these objectives, the company needs a talented HR department. In addition to hiring the right people to carry out specific jobs, HR managers have to build up dedication and allegiance among the workforce (Manna and Morris 2008).

Organisations of different sizes, structures, and purposes increase their breadth of search, learning capabilities, and resource access thereby reducing the threat of core rigidities in management. However, diverse organisations tend to have different goals, management styles, decision-making processes, and systems that cause communication and coordination difficulties (Jiang, Santoro, and Tao 2010, 1138).

Dreachlin (2007) claimed that new era diversity management tests leadership skills at a deep and personal level. According to Barrett and Beeson (2002), who undertook extensive research into developing leadership competencies for competitive advantage, leadership competencies will change as the competitive environment changes.

They predicted that five critical forces would shape leadership competencies (requirements) in the future, namely (a) global competition, (b) information technology, (c) rapid and flexible organisations, (d) teams, and (e) differing employee needs. Considering these, most organisations will not need the 'Lone Ranger' type of leader as much as a leader who can motivate and co-ordinate a team-based approach (Barrett and Beeson 2002).

This is consistent with the views of Mintzberg (2004), who believes an engaging interactive leadership style is required. In the future, the model of effective leadership will be one of encouraging environments that unlock the entire organisation's human asset potential (Hernez-Broomeand and Hughes 2006).

Barrett and Beeson (2002) furthermore identified four essential roles for meeting the business challenge of the future, and the career 'derailers' who will matter most in the future. The four essential roles for meeting

future business challenges, include ‘master strategies,’ ‘change manager,’ ‘relationship network building’ and ‘talent developers.’ Intensified globalisation, the increasing use of technology, and public scrutiny of the integrity of leaders influence the role of the leader (Hernez-Broome and Hughes 2006).

In essence, Crossan and Olivera (2006) opined that, within the context where organisational boundaries have become less defined and competition dictates radical change, the hierarchical leadership approach has become outdated – ‘Distributed leadership has become necessary and no one can manage it all’ (Crossan and Olivera 2006, 4).

The overarching interactive competencies of leaders gain further significance when evaluating Gentry and Leslie’s (2007) research into leadership requirements. The leadership competencies most favoured in organisations included ‘building and mending relationships,’ ‘bringing out the best in people’ and ‘listening.’ Vision, inspiration and communicational goals were regarded as further important competencies for people in leadership positions.

Gentry and Leslie (2007) furthermore concluded that enhancing business skills and knowledge was not regarded as very important for leadership development. Leslie et al. (2002) identified five characteristics of successful global leaders, namely context, specific knowledge and skills, inquisitiveness, personal character, connecting, and integrity. Leslie et al. (2002) regarded ‘duality’ (the capacity for managing uncertainty and the ability to balance) and ‘savvy’ (practical understanding of business and organisation) as important. Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee’s (2002, 38) similar contention was that ‘leadership operates best through emotionally intelligent leaders who create resonance.’

Kets de Vries and Mead (1992) submitted that the influences on leadership qualities as well as the ability to adapt culturally result from childhood background and psychological development. In this study, Kets de Vries and Mead (1992) indicated that in addition to standard technical competence and business experience, global managers would need to interact effectively with people ‘who are different.’ This could be learnt through developmental factors, such as cultural diversity in the family, early international experience, bilingualism, self-confidence, hardiness, envisioning, cultural studies and international environmental studies.

Chang and Thorenou (2004) commented that current literature refers to cognitive factors that may affect the ability of managers to manage across cultures. These cognitive factors include the ability of leaders to

manage stereotypes. Human (1996, 49) commented that cognitive complexity could be developed in a person if frequently presented with clear, directed information about the existence of many individual dimensions.

Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee's (2002, 38) similar contention was that 'leadership operates best through emotionally intelligent leaders who create resonance.' A cognitive, complex person would be able to manage better in situations in which the conditions for multi-dimensional dynamics are presented.

Chang and Thorenou (2004) established five key leadership competencies for managers who manage multicultural groups, namely cultural empathy, learning of the job, communication competence, managerial skills, and personal style.

Among others, the themes related to these competencies were:

- *Cultural empathy*: Cultural awareness, cultural understanding, respect for values, treating people as individuals, using different perspectives and experience in other cultures.
- *Learning of the job*: Adapting to the context, curiosity, willingness to learn, tolerance for ambiguity and being observant.
- *Communication competence*: Listening, open-door policy, clear expression, non-verbal nuances, knowing other languages.
- *Generic managerial skills*: Motivating, consulting, human resource factions, conflict resolution, planning, goal and task focus, budgeting.
- *Personal style*: Emotional stability.

Gudykunst (1988) furthermore suggested a number of competencies for effective interpersonal and inter-group communication, including, among others, tolerance for ambiguity, ability to empathise and the ability to gather and use appropriate information.

Lockwood (2005) adapted the competencies for diversity management:

- Active, non-judgment listening;
- Willingness to change one's own concepts about diversity;
- Collaboration skills;
- Experience with conflict resolution and change management;
- Sensitivity towards terms labelling groups regarding diversity;
- Ability to identify diversity issues and understand related tensions;

- Intercultural team building – ability to express respect and appreciation;
- Openness to learning about others who are different;
- Ability to educate others on how to build diverse people skills; and
- Ability to provide appropriate responses.

Human (2005, 45), referring to Mintzberg's (2004) competency model, described similar competencies of cognitively complex individuals.

Against this background, requisite leadership competencies inherent to leadership styles are addressed, in view of the overall aim, to establish the kinds of leadership styles required by organisations.

Interactive Leadership Styles Theory

McClelland (1975) traced the development of the human need for power and identified the various forms of expression an individual's power orientation may take. Grobler et al. (2006, 218) describe the achievement motivation created by McClelland (1975) as almost as popular as Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Goleman et al. (2002) also specifically referred to McClelland's (1975) contributions. McClelland (1975) proposed that if an organisation wanted to appoint or promote the best person for a specific job, such as a leadership position, it should discard previous standard criteria.

McClelland (1975) emphasised three needs, namely (a) achievements, (b) affiliation and (c) power. The need to achieve (N-Ach) is defined as a preoccupation with focusing on goals. The need for affiliation (N-Affil) motivates people to make friends, to associate with other people and to become members of a group. The need for power (N-Pow) refers to the need to obtain and exercise control over others. McClelland contended that a good manager has a greater need for power than for achievement. McClelland and Burnham (1976) found that good managers appreciate and desire influence and impact (Hall and Hawker 1988, 12). McClelland (1975) regarded management's behaviour as a function of the characteristics of managers in interaction with the situation in which managers find themselves. Managers will interact in a manner that they find intrinsically satisfying because of their unconscious beliefs. McClelland (1975) explained six managerial styles and matching behavioural patterns which managers apply to situations they encounter:

- Cohesion – immediate compliance;
- Authoritarian – firm but fair;
- Affiliative – people first;

- Democratic – commitment through participation;
- Pacesetter – achievement to a high level of excellence; and
- Coaching – developing unique strengths for the future.

According to McClelland (1975), the most effective style depends on the people, the task and the situation that needs to be managed.

David Burnham and Interactive Leadership

In 2003, Burnham (2003) extended the study he conducted with McClelland in the late 1990s and studied the performance of 140 leaders in 18 organisations. He found that the high performers continued to fall in the power motive, but that their orientation toward power had changed. In the 1970s, he said institutional leaders saw themselves as the source of power, whereas ‘today the interactive leaders tend to derive power from others, the team, groups and organizations’ (Burnham 2003, 39). Leadership ‘was now something to be done with others, whereas in the 1970s it was something done to others’ (Burnham 2003, 40).

Burnham (2003) believes the age of the institutional leader has ended. He referred to the social, psychological, technological and economic trends that have converged to demand this change, which influence the assumptions that motivate leadership. According to him, few Baby Boomers, late Generation X’ers and some women bring with them the assumptions of the old-style hero model of leadership. Burnham’s (2003) research showed that almost 60% of superior performing groups are led by people with interactive profiles. The interactive leadership approach relies on communication skills. Viewed from a symbolic interactionist perspective, it is concluded that, in interaction with leaders, individuals rely on meaningful reflexive interaction and thus on personally significant and emotional connections through communication. Referring to the leader competency areas of Mintzberg’s (2004) model and the diversity management components found by Chang and Thorenou (2004) and suggested by Human (2005), the following model is illustrated in figure 1.

Symbolic interactive engaging leadership competency model inclusive of diversity management, adapted from Mintzberg (2004), Chang and Thorenou (2004) and Human (2005)

Mintzberg’s Leadership Competency Model

The work of Mintzberg (2004) supports the aforementioned work and application of McClelland and Burnham (1976). The approach suggested

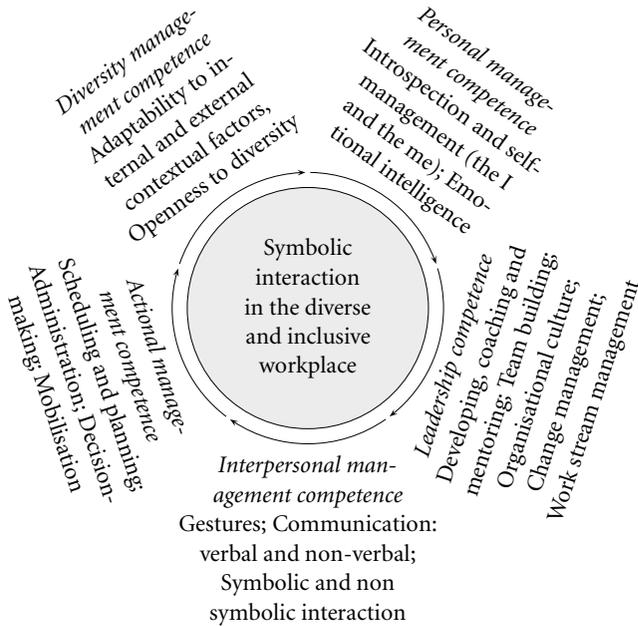


FIGURE 1 Interactive engaging leadership competency model

by McClelland (1975) and Burnham (2003) forms the basis of the leadership style instrument and Mintzberg’s model used in the empirical research of this article. Leadership styles are interactive by nature. Of theoretical interest is Mintzberg’s (2004) conceptualisation of various interpersonal, information processing and decision-making roles that a manager may perform, since it relates to the process of managing (Parker et al. 1997, 121).

THE HEROIC AND AFFILIATIVE MANAGER

Mintzberg (2004, 119) boldly suggested that contemporary leadership training leads to the placement of managers in senior positions ‘who are too smart, too confident, too self-serving and too disconnected.’ He termed this style ‘heroic,’ which is directly comparable with McClelland and Burnham’s (1976) ‘personal achievement.’

ENGAGING MANAGERS

Mintzberg (2004) opined further that ‘engaging managers’ should replace ‘heroic’ managers in organisations. To manage is to bring out the positive energy that exists naturally within people. Managing therefore

means engaging, based on judgment, rooted in context. Leadership is sacred trust, earned from the respect of others. It seems that an engaging leader is directly comparable with the socialised manager described by Burnham (2003).

‘An understanding of the role of culture in the practical management of diversity requires the cognitive complexity to manage both simultaneously’ (Human 1996, 19). Human linked Mintzberg’s (2004) ‘engaging leadership’ with McClelland and Burnham’s (1976) institutional manager. Although it is suggested that all individual leaders are a unique combination of the styles described by McClelland and Burnham (1976) – personalised, socialised, affiliation – it is suggested that management styles are not randomly distributed within natural work groups and that a pervasive style would be found in organisations.

Mintzberg’s Typology of Leadership Styles Aligned with McClelland and Burnham

Mintzberg’s leadership styles are comparable with McClelland and Burnham’s (1976) leadership motives and could be presented as a typology of leadership styles, ranging from predominantly ‘personalised’ (heroic) at one extreme to highly affiliative on the other, with two ‘outliers,’ namely fight/flight leadership style and even leadership. The typology, originated by Human (1996), is illustrated in figure 2.

It is conceivable that the heroic leadership style could be experienced as acknowledging and even valuing diversity, but that an engaging leadership style could be experienced as actively managing diversity. Leadership styles in the workplace will be determined referring to McClelland and Burnman’s (1976) leadership styles, comparable to Mintzberg (2004), as presented in the typology of leadership styles. The characteristics of each of these types, according to the seven-point typology (x axis), are illustrated as measured on a scale from zero to 100 (y axis), and could include the following:

Heroic management style: Obtain performance or delivery at the expense of relationship; Is perceived as autocratic; Create ‘parent-child relationships;’ Disempowered subordinates; Tell rather than ask and listen; Are perceived as poor managers of diversity; Damage the dignity, self-respect and self-confidence of others.

In view of the high achievement drive associated with leadership style, it is assumed that the heroic leadership style would obtain diversity management delivery as directed and motivated by legislation.

| Highly personalised | |
|------------------------|--|
| Heroic | ⇒ High personalised power |
| Heroic tendencies | ⇒ Tends to pull towards the heroic |
| Engaging | ⇒ Engaging leadership |
| Affiliative tendencies | ⇒ Tends to put relationships before output/performance |
| Affiliative | ⇒ Stress relationships at the expense of performance |
| Fight/flight | ⇒ High personalised; high affiliation; low socialised |
| No trends | ⇒ No significant statistical differences |
| Highly affiliative | |

FIGURE 2 Typology of Mintzberg's leadership style

Heroic tendencies management style: The social power level is higher than in the heroic style. However, there is no statistically significant difference (less than 25 points) between the socialised and personalised power levels. These managers are more likely to: Tend towards heroic management, particularly in times of stress or pressure; Get the job done; however, some team members may feel disempowered in the process; Be perceived by those with lower levels of personalised power as tending towards being autocratic and as communicating in a parent-child way; Be perceived by some as not a particularly good manager of diversity.

Engaging leadership style: These people are high in socialised power, slightly lower in personalised power (± 25 points) and low in affiliation. Engaging leaders tend to: Get the job done through others; Be very assertive but never aggressive; Be respected for their commitment; Provide open, honest, constructive feedback on performance; Be non-defensive, can give and receive; Be builders of systems and people; Be sources of strength; Promote adult-adult relationships; Be perceived as effective managers of diversity

Affiliative tendencies leadership style: These people tend to be high in socialised power, but have a higher level of affiliation than personalised power. Managers with affiliative tendencies will tend to: Deliver, but place relationship before delivery especially in time of stress or crisis; Avoid conflict; Be somewhat laissez faire and sometimes not insist on the achievement of high and challenging goals; Sometimes be perceived as inconsistent and occasionally unfair; Be defensive, especially when being criticised; Not sure of the strength of other people; Create some frustration among heroic managers.

Affiliative leadership style: The affiliative is significantly higher than the

personalised and socialised power (more than 25 points). Affiliative managers tend to: Put relationship before performance; Have a need for approval; Lack self-confidence; Avoid conflict; Make ad hoc decisions that can lead to them being perceived as inconsistent or unfair; Be defensive; Not provide effective leadership and direction; Create frustration among colleagues; Create a 'nice atmosphere.'

Thomas and Ely (2002) described the effect of their diversity management paradigms on work group functioning in a qualitative study of three professional organisations, with the aim of theory development. They found three underlying perceptions of diversity, namely integration and learning, access and legitimacy, and discrimination and fairness perceptions. These perceptions, they claimed, 'are governed by how members of work groups create and respond to diversity' (Ely and Thomas 2001, 239).

Viewed from the discrimination and fairness paradigm, managerial processes aim to ensure that employees are treated equally and that no one is given an unfair advantage over others (Ely and Thomas 2001). The more diverse the business becomes, the more it would become legitimate. It needs employees with multilingual skills to serve clients better and so gain legitimacy with them (Thomas and Ely 1996, 25). Thomas and Ely (2002) were of the view that assimilation pushes 'sameness' too much, and differentiation 'overshoots' in the other direction.

Thomas and Ely (2002) concluded that all three paradigm approaches to diversity management could succeed to some extent, but only the integration and learning perspectives contain a rationale that will motivate management and employees in a sustained manner to ensure the long-term success of a diversity programme.

Empirical Analysis and Discussion

The aim of this article is to determine the kind of competency leadership styles that organisations need to develop to establish a positive experience of diversity management in order to continue to be successful. The specific objective was to determine what the experience of diversity management is in selected workplaces – whether this experience differs along race, gender and generational lines; what the predominant leadership styles in organisations are; and more particularly, whether the experience of diversity management is related to the prevalent leadership style.

To address the research question, two instruments are used and the

results thereof analysed. A diversity management questionnaire, aligned with the diversity management factor model of Robertson (2004), is used to determine the experience of diversity management in selected organisations. The leadership styles in these selected businesses were determined using the Hall and Hawker Power Management and Style Inventory (Hall and Hawker 1988). In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the experience of diversity management is investigated and the results are presented. Thereafter, prevalent leadership styles in the selected organisations are determined and the results discussed. Having assessed these two research constructs, the results of the leadership styles and experience of diversity management are correlated in order to achieve the aim of this study.

Experience of diversity management is considered to be the development variable, and leadership style as the independent variable in the research model. Race, gender and generational differences are regarded as explanatory moderators.

The empirical study includes two main components, namely leadership style and experience of diversity management. The research questions are studied through an intensive, focused examination of the empirical context for the purpose of analysis, in accordance with symbolic interaction methodology.

The population of this study into the experience of diversity management is 2669 ($N = 2669$) respondents from 11 ($N = 11$) different workplaces nationally. Leadership styles were obtained from 440 ($N = 440$) leaders in the same 11 workplaces. The population of this study into the correlation between leadership style and experience of diversity management is the 11 ($N = 11$) participating workplaces. The Cronbach alpha values were determined in order to indicate internal validity and reliability. An acceptable Cronbach value of 0.5 was used. The Cronbach alpha values for the questionnaire items varied between 0.61 and 0.81.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Robertson's (2004) final five-factor model indicted factors comparable to and inclusive of the three paradigms of Thomas and Ely (2002) – Robertson's factor 1 (the fairness factor) aligns with Thomas and Ely's discrimination and fairness paradigm; Robertson's factor 2 (representation of diverse groups) aligns with the access and legitimacy paradigm; and Robertson's factor 3 (leadership's commitment) was the same as the learning and effectiveness paradigm. Robertson found these three factors

to be conceptually distinct. The remaining two factors (4 and 5) (employee involvement in work systems and diversity-related outcomes such as learning, growth and flexibility) are indicators of inclusion as defined at the outset of the theoretical study. The last two factors, although similar, were separated. The results of Robertson's study suggest that factor 4 characterises organisations that are diverse, and factor 5 characterises organisations that are inclusive.

The questionnaires were designed as assessment tools for measuring the degree to which employees experience attributes of diversity management, ranging from practices to increase the representation of designated groups to the broader people management initiatives intended to facilitate employee participation and engagement, learning and development in the organisation. The three main sections of the instrument include Robertson's factors (2004) and Thomas and Ely's (2002) paradigms. Questions were grouped in terms of Robertson's three-factor model. The remaining factors (4 and 5) were incorporated in the three sections of the questionnaire.

To comment on the practical significance of groups, standardised differences between the means of the population are used. Cohen (1988), as referred to by Ellis and Steyn (2003), provided guidelines for the interpretation of effect size as: small effect: $d = 0.2$, medium effect $d = 0.5$ and large effect: $d \geq 0.8$. In this article, data with d larger than and equal to 0.8 are considered practically significant. It is furthermore important to know whether a relationship between age, gender and race and the factor on diversity management is practically significant. The article seeks to determine whether the relationship is large enough to be important. In this article, the guideline by Cohen (1988), as referred to by Ellis and Steyn (2003), is used as follows: small effect $w = 0.1$, medium effect $w = 0.3$ and large effect: $w = 0.5$. A relationship with w larger than and equal to 0.5 is considered practically significant. The Spearman rank order correlation coefficient is used, and also serves as an effect size to indicate the strength of the relationship. Steyn (2005) provides guidelines for the interpretation of correlation coefficients' practical significance with $r = 0.1$ small, $r = 0.3$ medium and $r = 0.5$ large. A parallel between the results of the diversity audit and leadership styles obtained from the *Power Management Inventory* (PMI), as presented on the typology of leadership, is drawn using these guidelines. The unit of analysis for the correlation between leadership style and the experience of diversity management is the 11 organisations. The analysis includes data pre-

sented in frequencies and means, using the SAS system and SPSS system. The data are analysed by means of various appropriate statistical analyses to infer meaning. Construct reliability and validation of the diversity management questionnaires were originally assessed and confirmed in pilot studies in a South African beverage enterprise from 2004 to 2006. The questionnaire was found suitable for this article. The Cronbach alpha values were determined for each of the subscales included in the diversity management questionnaire used in this article. The average interim correlation with the total was determined in order to establish the strength of factor items. The ideal value between 0.15 and 0.5 was used. The Cronbach alpha values of all subscales were found to fall within the required criteria (between 0.65 and 0.87).

The general reliability and validation of leadership styles PMI (Hall and Hawker 1988) were assessed and confirmed with the motivational scales of the Edwards Preference Schedule (EPS). The report reliability of this inventory was assessed by coefficient alphas of 0.77 for personalised power (heroic leadership style), 0.67 for socialised power (engaging leadership style) and 0.74 for affiliative power, respectively. The diversity management questionnaire was subjected to the interrelationship analysis among the number of variables, and to explain these variables in terms of their common underlying dimensions (factor), an exploratory factor analysis with principal component extraction and Varimax rotation (table 1) was conducted.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND TREATMENT OF THE DATA

Construct reliability and validation of the diversity management questionnaire were originally assessed and confirmed in pilot studies in a South African enterprise from 2004 to 2006. The questionnaire was found suitable for this study.

The Cronbach alpha values (table 2) were determined for each of the subscales included in the diversity management questionnaire used in this article. The average interim correlation with the total was determined to establish the strength of factor items. The ideal value between 0.15 and 0.5 was used.

The Cronbach alpha values of all subscales were found to fall within the required criteria (between 0.65 and 0.87), except for one question ('People generally make racist comments'), which presented a negative correlation of -0.007 with the total standardised variables.

The specific question was therefore removed from the section and

TABLE 1 Varimax rotated factor for representation of diverse groups – staffing and people management

| Representation of diverse groups | (1) | (2) |
|--|------|------|
| Receiving open and honest feedback on performance | 0.76 | — |
| Performance is regularly appraised | 0.72 | — |
| Enough pressure on managers to develop diversity of staff | 0.68 | — |
| Satisfied with the way talent and potential have been assessed | 0.67 | 0.34 |
| Training is based on individual needs | 0.65 | — |
| Defined targets to improve diversity | 0.64 | — |
| People who deserve promotions get them | 0.59 | 0.45 |
| Recruitment and selection policies are fair | 0.58 | 0.41 |
| Individual career plans are in place | 0.58 | — |
| Employees are regularly consulted about diversity | 0.51 | — |
| What you know and how you perform get a promotion | — | 0.81 |
| Increasing diversity does not lower standards | 0.30 | 0.62 |

NOTES Column headings are as follows: (1) performance management – factor 1, (2) standard of work – factor 2.

TABLE 2 Cronbach alpha coefficient values for diversity management subscales

| Factor | Alpha value |
|--|-------------|
| Section 2: Leadership commitment – strategic alignment | 0.82 |
| Section 3: Representation of diverse groups – staffing and people management | 0.87 |
| Section 4: Treatment fairness – diversity management* | 0.65 |

NOTES * Question 2 has been removed from this subscale

treated as a separate entity in analysis. The discrimination values indicated by the individual Cronbach alpha values for deleted questions (sections 2 to 4) are presented in table 2. To answer the research questions, which arose from the objectives of the research towards the overall aim of this article, a survey was undertaken in 11 organisations from selected companies. The diversity management questionnaire used was found to be inclusive of the five-factor diversity and inclusion management model of Robertson (2004) and paradigms of Thomas and Ely (1996; 2001; 2002).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

What is the experience of employees with regard to diversity management in all selected organisations?

The mean scores of the items included in each of the three factors (factor scores) were determined for each respondent so that the factor scores are interpretable on the original Likert scale (1 = very negative; 2 = negative; 3 = neutral; 4 = positive; 5 = very positive). Throughout the descriptive results, reference to the mean of the factor scores is indicated using the symbol M and 'SD' to indicate standard deviation.

Most of the mean scores for the experience of diversity management for all three main factors were somewhat neutral, with a tendency towards the negative for Factors 1 and 2. Respondents leaned more towards the positive for Factor 3. An interesting aspect is that the mean score for Factor 3 (diversity treatment fairness), was visibly more positive ($M = 3.19$) compared to the mean scores for Factor 1 (leadership commitment to diversity strategic alignment) – $M = 2.85$ ($d = 0.41$) and Factor 2 (representation of diverse groups – staffing and people management) – $M = 2.85$ ($d = 0.47$). This implies that employees are visibly less positive in assessing that leaders are genuinely committed to the strategic alignment of diversity management and the people management process than about social interaction between race, gender and age groups and that work processes are fair.

The mean scores for each item included in the three main factors were regarded as significant in understanding the specific diversity management experience.

Because the majority of the organisations were in the production sector, by far the largest number of respondents (63%) was designated in terms of the Employment Equity Act (No 66 1998), being black Africans, coloured and Indian, while 37% were white respondents. The majority of the respondents were traditionally male (78.7%), while only 21.3% were females.

The results show that respondents are mostly neutral to positive in their belief that managers are genuinely committed to racial and gender equality, while they seem negative about senior management's commitment to employing people with disabilities. Respondents tend to remain neutral to positive in the belief that communication on diversity issues is not experienced as effective. The mean scores for factor 2 items indicated a more negative experience related to diversity representation and the people management processes.

In general, respondents indicated a somewhat negative experience for factor 2. While respondents were neutral about whether clearly defined targets exist, they tend to be somewhat more negative in their

response that people management and staffing practices are fair. Respondents disagreed ($M = 2.9$) that individual career plans are in place, or that recruitment and selection practices are fair ($M = 2.8$). Similarly, they did not experience promotion practices as fair ($M = 2.7$). Respondents were also negative in their response to 'it is who you know' rather than 'what you know and how you perform' that results in promotions ($M = 2.9$).

While respondents were neutral ($M = 3.0$) in their view that they receive open and honest feedback, they were more negative about the skill of managers to develop subordinates ($M = 2.7$) or that enough pressure is put on managers to develop subordinates ($M = 2.7$). Moreover, respondents tended to be negative about regular performance appraisal occurrences ($M = 2.9$) or that training is based on individual needs.

Respondents specifically appear relatively neutral to positive in their experience of greeting each other regardless of race ($M = 3.08$), mixing at social functions ($M = 3.0$) and being willing to learn about each other's cultures ($M = 3.0$).

This might indicate a degree of intercultural sensitivity and a sense of appropriate social behaviourism. Although social interaction scores for the experience of treatment fairness (Factor 3) are mostly neutral to positive, it is interesting to note that the experience of racist and sexist comments is somewhat more negative. It would appear as if sexist comments might be regarded as slightly more prevalent ($M = 2.68$) compared to racist comments made ($M = 2.99$).

Respondents indicated that 'Black people accuse white people of racism when criticised' ($M = 3.4$), while they were slightly negative about women accusing men of sexism when they are criticised ($M = 2.8$). Of note is that respondents generally disagreed that 'White people believe reverse discrimination exists' in the workplace ($M = 3.4$).

Generally, these results could indicate that overt discrimination is not experienced. The experience of staffing, people development and leadership commitment practices is less positive.

For the purpose of analysing the relationship between the experience of diversity management and leadership style, the respondent leaders were considered as a proportion of the leaders in each workplace with certain leadership styles. Mintzberg's (2004) leadership styles are comparable with McClelland and Burnham's (1976) leadership motives and are referred to as a typology of the leadership styles, ranging from predominantly 'personalised' (heroic) at one extreme, engaging at midpoint, to

TABLE 3 Correlation between leadership style and diversity management factors

| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Factor 1 | -0.35 | 0.15 | 0.35 | -0.17 | 0.10 | -0.47 | 0.02 |
| Factor 2 | -0.41 | 0.04 | 0.44 | -0.05 | 0.19 | -0.36 | 0.19 |
| Factor 3 | -0.06 | 0.09 | 0.22 | -0.01 | -0.09 | -0.38 | -0.01 |
| Q1.1 | -0.26 | 0.10 | 0.33 | -0.08 | -0.10 | -0.51 | -0.11 |
| Q2.1 | -0.20 | 0.05 | 0.38 | -0.11 | 0.05 | -0.55 | -0.07 |
| Q8.3 | -0.58 | 0.17 | 0.47 | -0.15 | 0.31 | -0.12 | 0.38 |
| Dd2 | 0.63* | -0.03 | -0.69* | 0.02 | -0.03 | 0.24 | -0.07 |

NOTES Column headings are as follows: (1) variable, (2) heroic, (3) heroic tendencies, (4) engaging, (5) affiliative tendencies, (6) affiliative, (7) fight/flight, (8) even. Spearman rank order correlations, MD pair wise deleted. * $p < .05$.

highly affiliative at the other, with two 'outliers,' namely fight/flight leadership style and even leadership.

The results of the Spearman rank order correlations are presented (table 3) next, to determine the relationship between the experience of diversity management and leadership style, and more specifically to establish whether an engaging leadership style yields a more positive experience of diversity management, as suggested by the theoretical study. The Spearman rank order coefficient $r = 0.3$ is regarded as a medium practical or visible relationship and $r = 0.5$ is regarded as large and a relationship important in practice to determine the relationship between the two variables. The Spearman rank order correlation is indicated using the symbol 'sr.' Spearman rank order correlations (sr) between leadership styles and the three main factors were determined. For the purpose of these correlations, three specific questions about leadership style from factors 1 and 3 were included. These were: 'senior managers are genuinely committed to racial equality' (question 1, section 1, referred to as Q1.1 hereafter), 'Senior managers are genuinely committed to gender equality' (question 2, section 1, referred to as Q2.1 hereafter) and 'My manager generally treats me with dignity and respect' (question 8, section 3, referred to as Q8.3 hereafter).

In addition, Spearman rank order correlations were determined for Dd2 'People generally make racist comments.' Large significant correlations are indicated in table 3.

Table 6 shows that heroic leadership style correlates visibly negatively with factor 1 and factor 2, as well as being practically significant with Q8.3

(‘My manager generally treats me with dignity and respect’). Consistent with the Mintzberg model (2004), and McClelland and Burnham’s theory (1976), the engaging leadership style correlates visibly positively with factor 1, factor 2, Q1.1 and Q2.1 and is practically significant with Q8.3. The fight/flight leadership style shows a practically significant negative correlation with factor 1, Q1.1 and Q2.1 and a visibly negative correlation with factors 2 and 3. It is interesting to note that no practically significant positive correlations were established for leaders with heroic tendency leadership styles.

On the other hand, the engaging leadership style resulted in a medium positive practically significant correlation with most of the dimensions measured in this study. As could be expected, the affiliative and even styles appear to correlate positively with the experience of being treated with dignity and respect by the manager, whereas the fight/flight style correlates negatively with factors 1, 2 and 3.

Quite significant in these specific results is the strong positive correlation ($s_r = 0.63$) between the heroic style and Dd2 (‘racist comments generally made’), whereas a negative correlation exists between such comments and engaging leaders ($s_r = -0.69$). The theoretical explanation of behaviour associated with the heroic leadership style suggested that the heroic leadership style could lead to communication that could be perceived as undignified and not ‘race and gender free.’

From the information above, it is clear that the predominant leadership style is affiliative tendency and affiliative (43% for the combined percentage). Heroic and heroic tendencies measure 36% (for the combined percentages), as the alternative styles in the 11 workplaces. Mintzberg’s (2004) preferred engaging leadership style is less commonly found in the workplaces (12%).

Conclusion and Contributions

The aim of the article was to determine the kind of leadership competency styles for managers in organisations and to develop and establish a positive experience of diversity management in order to continue to be successful. The specific objective was to determine the diversity management experience in the workplaces, whether the experience of diversity differed between race, gender and generational groups and whether this experience related to leadership style. The results suggest that the prevalent leaders’ style in workplaces might be predictors of diversity management experience. It appears as if cultivating an engaging leadership

style, as robustly campaigned for by Mintzberg (2004), could contribute to establishing a positive experience of diversity management. Diversity management indeed becomes a process of establishing interactive engaging leadership.

Leadership competencies centre on the ability to influence co-operative work towards achieving organisational objectives. Underlying all the competencies of Mintzberg (2004) is the ability to manage diversity in the ever-increasingly diverse workplace. As seen from the competency requirements of Chang and Thorenou (2004), these include respecting values, treating people as individuals and using different perspectives. The learning on the job competencies found in their study furthermore included tolerance for ambiguity and adapting to the context with curiosity and willingness to learn.

These competencies equally could be aligned with openness to diversity as presented in the five-factor model of Robertson (2004). From the symbolic interactive perspective, this competency would in essence include all the dimensions of the model, in that it requires an ability to adapt to the relevant situations, the ability to show empathy, communicate openly and honestly. According to Mead (1936), 'the novel action of the "I" (leader) can cause changes in the attitudes of others' (Perinbanayagam 2005, 348).

Although fewer women participated in this study, male respondents are more positive than female respondents, except for one workplace, where a more engaging leadership style prevails. Understanding the influence of leadership style may prove instrumental in understanding some of the dynamics of the diversity management experience. The older the respondents, the more likely they were to favour engaging leadership styles. Most races favour the engaging leadership style with a positive experience of a negative one with fight/flight, whereas white respondents favour the heroic leadership style for diversity fairness and correlate negatively with the engaging leadership style for this factor. The empirical results of diversity experience, as understood from the inclusion and diversity model of Robertson (2004) as a component of leadership style, interpreted from the contemporary interactive leadership theory of McClelland (1975), McClelland and Burnham (1976), Burnham (2003) and Mintzberg (2004), support the leadership/diversity competence model.

Generally, the results of this study contribute to the understanding of leadership as a diversity-related determinant in the world of work.

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