

Evolving Role and Nature of Workplace Leaders and Diversity: A Theoretical and Empirical Approach

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Blumer (1962) regarded the 'many possibilities of uncertainty as inherent to the process of joint action.' Joint action reflects the efforts of participants to work out the line of action in light of what they observe each other doing. Leadership appears to be approached from two fundamental perspectives: an organisational perspective (the influence that is exercised to change the direction of the organisation), and an individual task perspective (the influence that is directed at changing the work behaviour of an individual). In this article, it is suggested that the symbolic interaction of perspective integrates the two fundamental perspectives in that both perspectives require meaningful, reflexive integration and meaning, group membership, organisational role and experience. The evolving role of leaders to attract, retain and connect with a diverse workforce in a changing environment gives rise to interactive leadership competency requirements. This article suggests that managing diversity requires business leaders to adopt an approach to diversity management that is sensitive not only to race and ethnic differences, but also to the background and values of all individuals at work. The empirical study was done and four hundred and forty (440) leadership styles were measured in eleven (11) organisations. The study used the Hall and Hawker (1988) inventory leadership styles and a diversity questionnaire to measure diversity management experience.

Key Words: discrimination, diversity management, engaging leadership style, experience, heroic leadership style, management, transformational leadership

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Introduction

An individual is constantly reacting to the organised community in a way of expressing himself. The attitudes involved are gathered from the

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group, but the individual in whom they (the attitudes) are organised has the opportunity of giving them an expression that perhaps has never taken place before (Mead 1934). This article deals with leadership within the context of the changing 21st century and proceeds to analyse diversity management, within the context of societal change, as integrated units.

The aim of this study in general is to determine the kind of leadership style organisations need to develop in order to establish a positive experience of diversity management, to continue to be successful, and to conclude with a leadership competency model inclusive of diversity management competence. Understood through the key principles of symbolic interactive leadership theory, leaders are examined through meaningful, reflexive interaction between leaders and employees in a diverse work environment.

The definitions of diversity and diversity management used in this study were briefly defined by Thomas (1990, 10), stating that workplace diversity management 'is a planned systematic and comprehensive managerial process for developing an organisational environment that works for all employees.' Diversity management was defined as the result of orientated organisational actions to harness the inputs of different individuals. 'Managing work is the organisation and integration of human effort into purposeful, large-scale, long-range activities, in the realm of action – what man's conceptual faculty is in the realm of cognition' (Rand 1986, 280).

In order to understand leadership as a component of diversity management, leadership as the independent variable is firstly analysed, whereafter diversity management as the dependant variable is examined. The questions in this research are how diversity management is experienced in the workplace, whether it differs between race, gender and age groups, and ultimately whether leadership style influences this experience. In this article, the main aim will be 'meaning' through symbolic interaction as a social product, created and not inherent in things. The subjective aspect of diversity management may differ between individual managers and employees in organisations. Diversity management experienced by individuals in the workplace and explained by symbolic interaction implies that social behaviour acquires meaning through interaction. According to Mead (1934), significant change occurs when forceful and original 'I's' appear, causing correspondingly great transformations of the 'me's' with whom they interact.

Development of Leadership and Management as a Science

The Towers global workforce study (2006) suggested new insights into what drives the global workforce and signals the end of much of the conventional 20th century wisdom about workforce management. To take advantage of a diverse workplace in the 21st century, Kreitz (2007) proposed that organisations should refine management and leadership. Because of the symbolic interaction view (which suggests interdependence between the past, present and future) that was adopted in examining the historical development of diversity, the development of management theory as a science is important in understanding leadership style as a component of diversity management in the 21st century. The evolving role of leadership and leadership style (inclusive or requisite leadership qualities) demands cognisance of the historical development of leadership and management as a science.

Classic Model of Management

Managerial models evolved during the 20th century and can be broadly divided into two phases: The classic theories before 1938 and the contemporary theories after 1938. During the first quarter of the century, the industrial revolution management model of Fayol and Taylor regarded the role of managers as planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and control (Reynders 1977). During the second quarter of the century, the human relation model of Mayo and Roethlinger was developed, which included human relations in the managerial role (Leslie et al. 2002). The third quarter of the century, after World War II, saw the systems approach of Parsons, which evaluated organisational dynamics, inclusive of contingency theory in studying managerial behaviour (Thomas 2005). In the last quarter of the century, the global management model was presented. Thomas (2005) observed that during the late 1940s, the emphasis shifted from traits and personal characteristics to leadership styles and behaviour.

Over the last 25 years, the leadership fields developed in response to the changing requirements of organisations. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) assessed that at least three areas of skills are necessary for carrying out the process of management, namely technical, human and conceptual.

Koontz, O'Donnell and Weinrich (1984, 4) defined management as 'the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals working together as groups accomplish efficiently selected aims.'

Leaders are responsible for aligning and integrating the efforts of employees with the goal expectations of the organisation. House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman and Gupta (2004) suggested that the leader's function consists of clarifying the goals for subordinates, the paths to these goals and facilitating both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for proper performance.

The theoretical overview of leadership theory indicates that leadership involves the function of influence, goal attainment, vision and enablement. Management theories deal with a number of variables in the management function, which could be broadly classified as the 'structured' side of management, for instance task behaviour (Hersey and Blanchard 1982), task orientation (Redding 1970), concern for production (Blake and Mouton 1961) and strategic results orientation. The 'people' approach to leadership can be found in the studies of relationship behaviour (Hersey and Blanchard 1960), relationship orientation (Redding, 1970), and concern for people and emotion (Blake and Mouton 1961) as experienced in Thomas (2005).

Management and Leadership

Management is defined as the execution function of coordinating structures and resources to ensure optimal delivery in organisations, whereas the term leadership is defined as obtaining commitment from employees. A common understanding of the word 'leader' naturally implies that there are followers over whom the leader has to exert a degree of influence.

Kellerman (2004, 44) points out that the Harvard Business School leadership theorist group under Zelenzink started to draw a distinction between leaders and managers: 'A leader is an inspirational figure while the manager handles the more administrative tasks and maintains organizational discipline.'

Transactional and Transformational Leaders

Hernez-Boome and Hughes (2006) suggested that twenty years ago the understanding of leadership in organisations was dominated by the classic two-factor approach focusing on task and relationship behaviour. Burns (1978) addressed the processes or behaviour that leaders used to motivate or influence followers. The start of the transformation of leadership is said to result from Burn's work. He provided an analysis and dis-til-lation of leadership. In his view, leadership behaviour falls within two

categories of influence, namely transformational and transactional. Boje (2000) explained that Burns (1978) based his theory of transactional and transformational leadership on Kohlberg's (1958) six stages of moral development and Max Weber's (1947) work on charismatic leaders. Weber concluded that transactional leaders were like bureaucrats and charismatic, 'heroic' leaders were the transformational ones (Boje 2000). Boje (2000, 2) points out that Bass (1985) used the definition of Burns (1978) of transformational leadership, as the 'leader who recognizes the transactional needs in potential followers but tends to further seek to arouse and satisfy higher needs, to engage the full person of the follower to a higher level of need according to Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs.'

Kellerman (2004, 42) suggested that the definition of Burns referred to earlier, 'still dominates the field of leadership in its view that leaders create shared meaning, have a distinctive voice and have integrity.'

Kotter on Leadership and Management

Kotter (1990) viewed leadership and management as parallel processes. He distinguished between leadership and management as follows: Management controls complexity and effective leaders produce change. Kotter (1999) referred to the interchangeable concept as the 'management leader.'

He believed that managers maintain the status quo through the processes and functions of planning and budgeting; organising and staffing; and controlling and problem-solving. Kotter (1990) viewed leadership as provocative and persistent and suggested that leaders produce constructive and adaptive change through the processes of establishing direction through corporate vision, aligning people through communication and motivating and inspiring workers. Kotter (1999) identified three basic levels of leadership, namely executive leaders (CEOs), who are responsible for articulating the vision and direction of the organisation, with little impact on the operation of the business; line leaders, who connect the lower levels to the top – they have influence on what is important and act as filters; and the network leaders, who have been identified as the third type of leader – they are the invisible force.

Leadership/Follower View

Kark and Dijk (2007, 500) integrated motivational theory and leadership. They drew on the self-regulatory focus and on the self-concept-based

theory of leadership. They suggested that ‘leaders may influence the motivational self-regulatory foci of their followers, which will mediate different follower outcomes at the individual and group level.’ Recently, motivation among followers has been understood in terms of leadership theories that are focused on the follower’s self-concept. In the leadership follower view of Kouzes and Posner (1990), a leader’s power is derived from the followers. The context is of particular relevance to the leader, as the situational demands prescribe what types of leader behaviour are deemed appropriate. The most important and crucial situation variable is that of the people whom the leader wishes to influence in order to achieve organisational goals.

Mintzberg on Leadership Management

Mintzberg provides the following description of management: managers perform ten basic roles that fall into three groupings: (1) the interpersonal role, which describes the manager as figurehead, eternal liaison and leader; (2) the information processing role, which describes the manager as the ‘nerve centre’ of the organisation’s information system; and (3) the decision-making role, which suggests that the manager is at the heart of the system by which the allocation, improvement and disturbance decisions relating to organisational resources are made. According to Leslie et al. (2002), Mintzberg’s earlier job variables dominated the attention of researchers from a hierarchical level, such as Pavett and Lau (1983), Sen and Dass (1990), and functional areas by McCall and Segrist (1980) and Paolillo (1987). Leslie et al. (2002) noted that Pavett and Lau (1983) found significant differences between middle- and lower-level managers on eight of the ten roles originally identified by Mintzberg (1974).

Mintzberg (2004) concluded that leadership and management are words that could be used interchangeably. ‘Managers predict the future and leaders create it’ (Mintzberg 1974, 5). In accordance with the view of Mintzberg (2004), this article uses the term leadership to include the concept of management.

The synopsis of the development of leadership theory presented above indicates that the role of leadership and management has evolved from institutional to transactional, from transactional to transformational and finally to interactive leadership.

Evolving Nature of Leadership

The role of line managers explained through symbolic interaction is established out of what interacting people have to deal with (Wallace and

Wolf 2006). The nature of the role is established through interaction. 'When symbolic interactionists speak of role, they do not mean a social role that is specified by culture; rather they mean something more flexible and capable of improvisation' (Wallace and Wolf 1980, 242). A global survey on people and business challenges, conducted by Deloitte and Tohmatsu and the Economic Intelligence Unit (2006), found 'people issues' to be the most important strategic issue for global enterprises, driven by changing workforce demographics, increased globalisation and a relentless focus on innovation, productivity, growth and customer service. 'In the past, discussions of people issues tended to focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of human resources operations. The focus now is increasingly on leadership, talent management, performance, culture and how organisations can create more value with the people they already have' (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu 2005).

Research by the Center for Creative Leadership (Martin 2006) found that more than 84% of respondents believe that the definition of effective leadership has changed in the last five years. Although respondents believed that interdependence is important and that challenges go beyond their own capability, the results indicated other shifts in leadership, leading to these challenges going beyond their own capability. The results indicated other shifts in leadership, leading to this definitional change, such as working across functions, working more collaboratively, improving work processes, creating novel solutions (new skills and technology), increasing its speed of response, making more effective decisions, and enhancing co-worker relationship.

Leadership as a component of diversity management is regarded as the ability of a manager to influence the activities of an individual or group towards goal achievement. As such, the inherent function of leadership is to achieve commitment of employees within the complexity of work as influenced by contextual factors.

Interactive Role of Leaders

It is clear that management, as a social process involving interactive relationship, is aimed at achieving results through others – by influencing subordinates to pursue organisational objectives. The performance of a manager will thus be measured against the output achieved, individually and collectively, by the individuals for whom the leader is directly responsible. The aim of this article is to determine the kind of leadership style organisations need to adopt in order to create a positive experience of diversity management to continue to be successful. It involves

the leader in the role of adapting to contextual, environmental factors, achieving the commitment of diverse followers, and dealing with the complexity in achieving goals.

From Financial to Human Capital Management

Nowicki and Summers (2007, 118) expressed the view that ‘dominant leadership philosophy has traditionally been based on the premise that the organization is purely an economic entity.’ Management’s priority was to leverage the capital and the resource in the most effective way. The role of leadership was to get the strategy right, to correct the structure and link the strategy to structure through defined systems to deliver high performance. The new leadership paradigm could be regarded as one of ‘purpose, process and people’ (Norwicki and Summers 2007, 18).

Robertson’s Model of Diversity and Inclusion (2004)

Robertson (2004) investigated the meaning of diversity and inclusion in organisations. She posited that the results of her study support a distinction between the concepts of diversity and inclusion, although the terms may not describe separate types of work environment, but different approaches to diversity management. In her results, Robertson (2004) pronounced that the management of diversity might be more complex than the two-dimensional factors of ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion.’ Her results endorsed the argument that diversity in organisations may be supported by sets of practices to manage fair treatment issues, increase stakeholder diversity and demonstrate leadership commitment to diversity, whereas inclusion on the other hand may be supported by practices to integrate diversity onto organisational systems and processes, and encourage the full participation and contribution of all employees. The instrument constructed by Robertson (2004) measured the degree to which each of the attributes supports diversity and inclusion in organisations. The empirical investigation of the reliability and factor structure originally supports a three-factor model. One of the factors was represented by the attributes for inclusion. All the attributes were described as characteristics of an inclusive organisation. One factor, Robertson (2004) found, included items relating to employee involvement and fair treatment. Other factors consisted of the organisational attributes for diversity.

Robertson (2004, 23) commented that scholarly literature on definitions of diversity primarily focused on heterogeneity and the demographic composition of groups or organisations, while definitions of in-

clusion focus on employee involvement and the integration of diversity into organisational systems and processes. The initial research of Robertson included 48 items – 24 for diversity and 24 for inclusion. The five factors were: Fairness in treatment, Representation, Top management support, Participation and Involvement. Robertson (2004) believed that diversity and inclusion ‘encapsulate’ the discrimination and fairness, and integration and learning diversity paradigms suggested by Thomas and Ely (1996). On the other hand, the second diversity factor included items relating to the representation of demographic diversity at all levels and outside of organisations, such as described in the access and legitimacy paradigms of Thomas and Ely. They described the effects 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: 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’ (Thomas and Ely 1996).

Cross-Enterprise Leadership

Crossan and Olivera (2006) advocated ‘cross-enterprise leadership’ as the new approach for the 21st century leader. Cross-enterprise leadership is a holistic approach that recognises four emergent realities that redefine general management for the 21st century manager. The contemporary business imperative requires an approach of cross-enterprise leadership roles, which creates, captures and distributes value across a network of businesses, not just in an enterprise. Cross-enterprise leadership differs from traditional management in that it takes cognisance of managing in a complex world, where the boundaries of organisations are fluid and dynamic, cutting across functional designations, departments, and business units. The evolving role of leaders in organisations was established in an online study by Concelman and Eilersten (2005) in a Development Dimension International research project, among 2766 leaders of 187 organisations in 15 countries. Respondents rated the importance of leadership roles. The findings of this research are shown in table 1.

Diversity Management as a Function of Leadership

Gallup Organisation studies (2004), led by Conchie, of more than 50 000 leaders in diverse industries, identified seven demands of leadership: vi-

TABLE 1 Importance of leadership role

Role	HR	Leaders
Strategist	61%	46%
Captivator	59%	43%
Talent advocate	52%	41%
Change driver	54%	41%
Enterprise guardian	52%	40%
Navigator	39%	35%
Mobiliser	37%	34%
Entrepreneur	40%	31%
Global thinker	19%	14%

NOTES Adapted from Concelman and Eilersten 2005.

sion, maximising values, challenging experience, mentoring, building a constituency, making sense of experience and knowing oneself. Thomas (1990) popularised the term 'managing diversity' and argued that diversity traditionally has been associated with multicultural, multi-ethnic and multiracial aspects of the workforce. This study suggested that to meet these demands within the context of diversity is the ultimate leadership challenge in the near future. There is, however, a defined definite trend toward multiplicity of diversity dimensions. The evolving nature of workplace diversity presented above confirms the multiplicity of diversity dimensions. The managing of diversity becomes a function of diversity. Managing diversity incorporates planning, organising and leading of individuals with differences or diversity in the workplace, to achieve the strategic goal of the organisation. Jayne and Dipboye (2004) concluded that successful diversity indicatives depend on the perceptions of top management support for diversity. Friday and Friday (2003, 864) advocated that the execution and evaluation of a corporate diversity strategy use a 'planned change' approach to acknowledge diversity and to systematically manage and inculcate this into an organisation's culture. Dreachslin (2007, 151) quoted the work of Mayo, Paster and Meindl (1996), who found that the leaders of diversity teams rated their own performance lower than leaders of homogenous teams did. Visconti (2007) referred to Fosdick, the CEO of Nebraska Medical Centre, who said: 'The successful development of diversity-sensitive organizations is significantly different from increasing the percentages of minority representations.' It requires senior leadership to openly commit to the recruitment, retention, devel-

opment, and support of candidates previously under-represented. The leadership must educate and convince others that this is of strategic value and is the long-term direction of the organisation. Dreachslin (2007) was of the view that leaders of diversity groups are challenged to ensure well-functioning productive teams and to constructively deal with conflict. Parker of PepsiCo boldly stated: 'You cannot speak about growth and being a market segment leader, without speaking about diversity and inclusion' (Cole 2007, 26). Rijamampianina, (1996) advocated that diversity does not directly influence the group and organisational performance, but rather impacts on the management system at the level of four inter-related organisational processes, namely motivation, interactive, vision and learning. Activities undertaken at any one of these four processes have an effect on the other, leading to shifts in the performance of the group or organisation (Rijamampianina and Carmichael 2005).

Employee commitment exists at three levels, namely obligation, belonging and ownership. Managing the motivational process is primarily to increase each individual employee's commitment at the ownership level, so they will be willing to perform at their highest potential, according to Rijamampianina and Carmichael (2005). Cox and Beale (1997) examined the factor that motivates leaders to support diversity actively. Similar to the diversity management continuum suggestions of Gardenswartz and Rowe (1999), they explained that the process of being an effective leader within the context of diversity management commences with awareness, which recognises that diversity has an impact on organisational performance.

Research Design

The evolving role and nature of workplace leaders and diversity management are considered the development variable, and leadership style the independent variable in the research model. Race, gender and generational differences are regarded as explanatory moderators.

Research Group

The participants in this study were 2669 respondents from 11 different organisations, and 44 managers were selected from the 11 companies. The companies were geographically distributed across the country and included selected businesses operating in South Africa as subsidiary operations in three different industries. To determine the experience of diversity management, the population is made up of all the subjects in the

11 participating workplaces. The experiences of employees who are functionally illiterate and could not complete a written or electronic questionnaire are excluded from the empirical data. The unit of analysis is the respondents and managers involved in this study from whom the data were obtained.

Research Instruments

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

Robertson's (2004) final five-factor model indicated factors comparable and inclusive of the three paradigms of Thomas and Ely (1996) – 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. These three factors that Robertson found were 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 organisations that are inclusive.

The questionnaires were designed as assessment tools for measuring the degree to which employees experience attributes for 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 (1996) paradigms. Questions were grouped in terms of Robertson's three factors. The remaining factors (4 and 5) were incorporated into the three sections of the questionnaire.

Sampling

Random sampling was not feasible in this study. Employees and managers were invited to participate voluntarily in the research, from a 'cap-

tive audience' of managers present at the time of research, to obtain quantitative data on leadership styles, as a matter of convenience. Convenience sampling was used to establish an approximation of reality. This non-probability research does not depend upon the rationale of probability theory (Trochim 2006).

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. The guideline of Cohen (1988), as referred to by Ellis and Steyn (2003), is used in this study as follows: small effect: $w = 0.1$, medium effect: $w = 0.3$ and large effect: $w = 0.5$. 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 the correlation coefficients' practical significance as $r = 0.1$: 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 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 presented in frequencies and means, using the SAS system (2007) and SPSS system (2005). The data is analysed by means of various appropriate statistical analyses to infer meaning. Construct reliability and validation of the diversity management questionnaire 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 study. The Cronbach alpha values were determined for each of the subscales, including in the diversity management questionnaire used for 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).

The general reliability and validation of leadership style PMI (Hall and Hawker 1988) were assessed and confirmed with the motivational scales of the Edwards Preference Schedule (EPS). The report reliability of

TABLE 2 Factor pattern for Section 2: Leadership commitment to strategic alignment of diversity

Section 2: Leadership commitment	Factor 1*
Senior managers are committed to racial equality	0.80
Senior managers are committed to gender equality	0.76
Communication on diversity issues is effective	0.72
Diversity is regarded as a strategic issue	0.72
Senior managers are committed to employing more people with disabilities	0.64
Diversity does not clash with other objectives	0.41

NOTES * Rotation was not possible with Factor 1.

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. All questions in the second section (table 2) of the questionnaire (strategic alignment) were retained as one factor, and all the percentage variance explained by the factor is 48.46%.

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 Factor 1 (table 3) and Factor 2 (table 4). Respondents tended more towards the positive for Factor 3. An interesting aspect is the mean score (table 5) for Factor 3 (diversity treatment fairness), which was visibly more positive ($M = 3.19$) compared to the mean score 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 stating 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.

Of the total number of respondents to the diversity management survey, 19% (table 6) were senior management, 42.2% middle, junior and supervisory management and the balance of 39% were employees. The proportional representation of supervisory, junior and middle managers in relation to employees was expected in view of the fact that a large pro-

TABLE 3 Mean scores for Factor 1 items: Leadership commitment to diversity strategic alignment

Items	M	SD
Senior managers committed to racial equality	3.06	1.20
Senior managers committed to gender equality	3.20	1.10
Senior managers committed to employing disabled people	2.47	0.96
Diversity regarded as a strategic issue	3.19	1.11
Diversity communication is effective	2.67	1.12
Managers have diversity objectives in performance appraisals	2.99	1.40

TABLE 4 Mean score for Factor 2 items: Experience of representation – staffing and people management

Items	M	SD
Clearly defined to improve diversity	3.07	1.27
Individual career plans are in place	2.94	1.24
Recruitment and selection policies are fair	2.83	1.26
People who deserve promotions usually get them	2.71	1.24
It is not who you know but what you know and how you perform that gets you promotion	2.96	1.38
Increasing diversity does not lower standards	3.83	1.16
Satisfied with the way potential has been assessed	2.86	1.24
Managers have the skills to develop the diversity of staff	2.75	1.21
Enough pressure is exerted on managers to develop subordinates	2.71	1.20
Receive open and honest feedback	3.01	1.26
Performance is appraised regularly	2.98	1.23
Training is based on individual needs	2.93	1.21
Employees are regularly consulted about diversity	2.30	1.14

portion of functionally illiterate employees did not complete the questionnaire.

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 EEA, being black, coloured and Indian, while 37% were white respondents. The majority of the respondents were traditionally male (78.7%), while only 21.3% were females.

Considered generally, respondents indicated a somewhat negative experience for Factor 2 (table 4). While respondents were neutral about

TABLE 5 Mean scores for Factor 3 items: Diversity fairness treatment

Items	M	SD
Sexist comments are generally made	2.68	1.08
Racist comments are generally made	2.99	1.20
Mix at social functions	3.08	1.20
People greet one regardless of race	3.41	1.20
Willing and open to learn about cultures	3.06	1.09
Black people accuse white people of racism when white people criticise them	3.46	1.13
Women do not accuse men of sexism when criticised	2.81	1.01
My manager treats me with dignity and respect	3.66	1.17
White people believe reverse discrimination exists	3.48	1.12
Black people have the same responsibilities and accountabilities	3.52	1.01
Generation issues	3.55	1.02

TABLE 6 Level of employees

Grade	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Top/senior management	475	18,72%	475	18,72%
Middle & junior, supervisory management	1070	42,18%	1545	60,90%
Employees	992	39,10%	2537	100,0%

NOTES Column headings are as follows: (1) frequency, (2) percentage, (3) cumulative frequency, (4) cumulative percentage.

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 result 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

occurrence ($M = 2.9$) or that training is based on individual needs. The question could be asked: Is the experience of diversity management related to leadership style? And does an engaging leadership style relate to a more positive experience of diversity management?

SPEARMAN RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
EXPERIENCE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP
STYLE

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

The results of the Spearman rank order (table 7) correlations are presented 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. As explained earlier, the Spearman rank order coefficient $r = 0.3$ is regarded as a medium practical or visible relationship and $r = 0.5$ 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, hereafter referred to as Q1.1), 'Senior managers are genuinely committed to gender equality' (Question 2, Section 1, hereafter referred to as Q2.1) and 'My manager generally treats me with dignity and respect' (Question 8, Section 3, hereafter referred to as Q8.3; see table 7).

In addition, Spearman rank order correlations were determined for Dd2, 'People generally make racist comments.' Large significant correlations are indicated in table 7. The results for medium and large correlations for each factor are discussed. Table 5 indicates the results of the

TABLE 7 Correlation between leadership style and diversity management factors

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
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 Spearman rank order correlations, MD pair wise deleted, * $p < 0.05$. Column headings are as follows: (1) heroic, (2) heroic tendencies, (3) engaging, (4) affiliative tendencies, (5) affiliative, (6) fight/flight, (7) even.

leadership style typography correlated with the experience of diversity management.

Table 7 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 ($r = 0.63$) between the heroic style and Dd2 ('racist comments generally made'), whereas a negative correlation exists between such comments and engaging leaders ($r = -0.69$). The theoretical explanation of behaviour associated with the heroic leadership style suggested that the heroic leadership style could lead to communication,

which could be perceived as undignified and not 'race and gender free.'

From table 7 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

This article dealt with leadership and diversity as key constructs. It introduced the evolution of leadership as a science and studied the evolving role of leaders to adapt to a complex world of work. The article evaluated the nature of diversity management and sought to establish leadership as a component of diversity management. The results confirmed the suggestions of Jayne and Dipboye (2004), that perceptions of diversity management are not separable from perceptions of leadership style and traits. To meet the role expectations of leaders, managers need to display interactive competencies towards effectively managing a diverse workforce. Symbolic interactionists support the understanding of diversity management, using the model of Roberson (2004). The evolving nature of leadership and diversity contextualises interactive leadership styles. The study relies on the leadership competency model, explained in Mintzberg (2004), McClelland (1975) and Burnham (1976; 2003).

As is seen from the analysis of leadership theory, leadership appears to be approached from two fundamental perspectives: an organisational perspective (the influence that is experienced to change the direction of the organisation), and an individual task perspective (the influence that is directed at changing the work behaviour of an individual). It is suggested that the symbolic interactionist perspective integrates the two fundamental perspectives – in that both perspectives require meaningful, reflexive interaction and meaning, group members, organisational role and experience. Directional, strategic, visionary and interactive leadership has been the focus of more contemporary work.

The specific objectives of this article were to determine diversity management experience in the workplace; whether the experience of diversity differed between race, gender and generational groups; and whether this experience related to leadership style. All research questions posed were answered. The results support the propositions of the research. The selected workplaces included in this research appear to have made

progress from a historically assumed, outright negative experience of diversity management towards a more neutral experience, tending, however, towards the negative. Although the respondents exhibited a more positive experience of diversity fairness (factor 3), significant differences in experience between race and gender groups were found for Factor 1 (leadership commitment and strategic alignment of diversity management) as well as for Factor 2 (representation of diversity, people management). Most respondents favour the engaging leadership style for leadership commitment and strategic alignment of diversity, as well as in the case of staffing and people management and performance management policies, other than woman, who correlate positively with heroic leadership styles (Factors 1 and 2). There is a positive correlation between the heroic leadership style and the statement 'racist comments made.' Engaging leadership, however, correlates negatively with this item. Dominant group respondents are somewhat more likely to believe that senior managers are committed to racial and gender equality, and diversity is regarded as a strategic issue. Employees believe that people mix at social functions regardless of race, greet each other and are open to learn about each other's cultures, which could indicate that social action is on social identity conscious practices. This article suggests that managing diversity requires business leaders to adopt an approach to diversity management that is sensitive not to race and ethnic differences, but to the background and values of all individuals at work. Diversity management involves an understanding of and competence in managing and motivating a diverse group of employees within the complex of societal change (Human 2005). Having concluded that leadership style influences the experience of diversity management, it is recommended that organisations adopt Thomas and Ely's (1996) integration and learning paradigm.

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