AN EXPLORATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN DIVERSITY DYNAMICS

by

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Marius Pretorius

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DECLARATION

Student number: 7908253

I declare that *'An exploration of South African diversity dynamics'* is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

_____ _____

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TABLE OF CONTENTS **Page**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS **ii**

DECLARATION **iii**

LIST OF TABLES **xiii**

SUMMARY **xiv**

CHAPTER 1 ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH **1**

1.4 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH **1**

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT **3**

1.6 AIMS **5**

1.3.1 General aim **5**

1.3.2 Specific aims **5**

1.4 THE PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE **6**

1.4.1 Relevant paradigm **7**

1.4.1.1 Background to the systems psychodynamic paradigm **7**

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN **11**

1.5.1 Type of research **11**

1.5.2 Justifying the use of qualitative research in this study **12**

1.5.3 Validity of the research **13**

1.5.4 Reliability of the research **14**

1.6 RESEARCH METHOD **15**

1.6.1 Phase 1: Literature review **15**

1.6.1.1 Step 1: Diversity in the workplace **15**

1.6.1.2 Step 2: GRTM **16**

1.6.1.3 Step 3: Diversity dynamics **16**

1.6.2 Phase 2: Qualitative research **16**

1.6.2.1 Step 1: Defining the setting of the research **16**

1.6.2.2 Step 2: Description of the sample **17**

1.6.2.3 Step 3: Data collection **17**

1.6.2.4 Step 4: Data analyses **17**

1.6.2.5 Step 5: Interpreting and reporting the results **17**

1.6.2.6 Step 6: Conclusion **18**

1.6.2.7 Step 7: Hypotheses **18**

1.6.2.8 Step 8: Limitations **18**

1.6.2.9 Step 9: Recommendations **18**

1.7 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS **18**

1.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY **19**

CHAPTER 2 DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE **20**

2.1 DEFINING DIVERSITY 20

2.1.1 Shifts in the way diversity is defined 20

2.1.2 Diversity as difference and similarity 21

2.1.3 Diversity as relational concept 22

2.1.4 Dimensions of diversity 22

2.1.5 The contextual nature of diversity 23

2.1.6 Diversity as defined in this study 24

2.2 DIVERSITY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT 24

2.2.1 South Africa: pre-1994 25

2.2.2 South Africa: post-1994 28

2.2.3 The South Africa dream: a future perspective 29

2.2.4 Integration: diversity in context 31

2.3 APPROACHES TO DEALING WITH DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE 32

2.3.1 Assimilation 34

2.3.2 The 'right the wrongs' approach 35

2.3.3 Valuing diversity 37

2.3.4 The managing of diversity 38

2.3.5 Integration: approaches to diversity 40

2.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY 40

CHAPTER 3 GROUP RELATIONS TRAINING MODEL 41

3.1 BACKGROUND TO THE GROUP RELATIONS TRAINING MODEL 41

3.2 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE GROUP RELATIONS TRAINING MODEL 43

3.2.1 Levels of group functioning 43

3.2.2 Basic assumptions 44

3.2.2.1 Basic assumption dependency **45**

3.2.2.2 Basic assumption fight/flight **46**

3.2.2.3 Basic assumption pairing **47**

3.2.2.4 Basic assumption oneness **47**

3.2.2.5 Basic assumption me-ness **47**

3.3 RELEVANT CONCEPTS OF THE GROUP RELATIONS TRAINING MODEL 48

3.3.1 Anxiety and defences against anxiety 49

3.3.2 Defence mechanisms 50

3.3.3 Developmental positions 51

3.3.3.1 The paranoid-schizoid position **51**

3.3.3.2 The depressive position **53**

3.3.4 Envy 53

3.3.5 Boundaries and boundary activities 55

3.3.6 The hierarchical nature of systems 56

3.3.7 Collectivism 57

3.4 THE RATIONALE FOR AND HYPOTHESES OF THE GROUP RELATIONS TRAINING MODEL 57

3.4.1 The rationale for the GRTM 57

3.4.2 Hypotheses of the GRTM 58

3.5 THE GROUP RELATIONS TRAINING EVENT 59

3.6 APPLYING THE GROUP RELATIONS TRAINING MODEL 61

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY 63

CHAPTER 4 DIVERSITY DYNAMICS 65

4.1 ORIENTATION TO DIVERSITY DYNAMICS 65

4.2 THE RATIONALE FOR DIVERSITY DYNAMICS 65

4.3 THE FORCES UNDERLYING DIVERSITY DYNAMICS 67

4.3.1 Survival instinct 67

4.3.2 The pleasure principle 68

4.3.3 Anxiety and the defences against it 69

4.3.3.1 Splitting, projection and projective identification **69**

4.3.3.2 Socially constructed defences **71**

4.3.4 The need for attachment 72

4.3.5 The struggle for individuation 73

4.3.6 Envy 73

4.3.7 Vicious diversity-related circles 75

4.3.8 Contextual influences 77

4.3.8.1 History and traditions as the context for diversity dynamics **77**

4.3.8.2 Macro-environmental influences **78**

4.3.9 The need to deal with unresolved issues **79**

4.3.10 Integration: the forces underlying diversity dynamics **79**

4.4 THE CORE CONCEPTS OF DIVERSITY DYNAMICS **80**

4.4.1. Identity **80**

4.4.1.1 Identity development **81**

4.4.1.2 The function of identity **82**

4.4.2 Reference systems **83**

4.4.3 Power **84**

4.4.4 Relations and relatedness **85**

4.5 DEFINING DIVERSITY DYNAMICS **86**

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY **87**

CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH METHOD **88**

5.1 THE ROBBEN ISLAND DIVERSITY EXPERIENCE (RIDE) **88**

5.1.1 The primary task **88**

5.1.2 Aims **88**

5.1.3 Rationale **89**

5.1.4 The core concepts of diversity dynamics **89**

5.1.5 Administration of the event **90**

5.1.6 Design and method **90**

5.1.7 Programme **91**

5.1.8 The venue **94**

5.1.9 Population **95**

5.1.10 Staff **95**

5.2 THE SAMPLE OF THE STUDY **96**

5.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH **96**

5.4 DATA COLLECTION **99**

5.4.1 The aims of the unstructured interview **99**

5.4.2 Rationale for using the unstructured interview **99**

5.4.3 Design of the unstructured interview **100**

5.4.4 Administration of the interviews **101**

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS **102**

5.6 INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS **104**

5.7 VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH **105**

5.7.1 Validity of the literature review **105**

5.7.2 Validity of the qualitative research **106**

5.8 RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH **107**

5.8.1 Dependability of the literature review **108**

5.8.2 Dependability of the qualitative research **108**

5.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY **109**

CHAPTER 6 RESULTS **110**

6.1 CROSSING THE BOUNDARY 110

6.2 ENGAGE THE NEW WORLD 112

6.3 THE TIES THAT BIND 114

6.3.1 Primary and secondary dimensions 114

6.3.2 Being tied 118

6.3.3 Guarding own territory 120

6.4 BEING IMPRISONED 122

6.4.1 Imprisoned on the island 122

6.4.2 Imprisoned by the past 123

6.4.3 Imprisoned by a reference system 125

6.4.4 Imprisoned by a culture of dependency 127

6.5 THE STRUGGLE 129

6.5.1 The struggle to find a place 132

6.5.2 The struggle for acceptance and being 'good enough' 134

6.6 THE ROAD TO RECONCILIATION, INTEGRATION AND HEALING 136

6.6.1 Dealing with the past 136

6.6.2 Moving towards a new tomorrow 137

6.6.3 Pathways to healing 138

6.6.4 Communication as a vehicle 140

6.6.5 The heart of the matter 141

6.7 BACK TO THE FUTURE 142

6.8 THE CRUCIBLE 143

6.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY 143

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS, HYPOTHESES, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 144

7.1 CONCLUSIONS 144

7.1.1 Conclusions to be drawn from the literature review 144

7.1.1.1 The first aim **144**

7.1.1.2 The second aim **146**

7.1.1.3 The third aim **147**

7.1.2 Conclusions to be drawn from the qualitative research 149

7.1.2.1 The fourth aim **149**

7.2 HYPOTHESES 152

7.2.1 Overarching research hypotheses 152

7.2.2 Hypotheses on the literature review 152

7.2.3 Hypotheses on the empirical study 154

7.3 LIMITATIONS 156

7.3.1 Limitations of the literature review 156

7.3.2 Limitations of the empirical research 156

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS 157

7.4.1 Recommendations on the use of the GRTM in dealing with diversity 157

7.4.2 Recommendations on future research **159**

7.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY **159**

REFERENCES **160**

LIST OF TABLES **Page**

Table 5.1	November 2000 RIDE programme	**92**
Table 5.2	Breakdown of the RIDE population	**95**
Table 5.3	Breakdown of the research sample	**96**

SUMMARY

Diversity has, over the last few decades, become a burning issue on the agenda of most companies. Current diversity-related interventions are mainly based on behaviouristic and socio-cognitive approaches. In this research diversity was approached from the systems psychodynamic paradigm. The general aim was to gain an understanding of the diversity dynamics that manifests in an South African diversity experience. The literature review focussed on diversity in the workplace, on the group relations training model, and on the application of the group relations training model to diversity. Qualitative research was done by interviewing a sample of 15 delegates who attended the November 2000 Robben Island Diversity Experience. These unstructured interviews were used to obtain in-depth information about the participant's experience and the data was analysed hermeneutically. The emerging themes were 'crossing the boundary, engage the new world, the ties that bind, being imprisoned, the struggle, the road to reconciliation, integration and healing, back to the future and the crucible'.

It is recommended that South African organizations make more use of the systems psychodynamic approach to study the manifestations of diversity dynamics. The aim is not to replace the other approaches to diversity, but to add a perspective that can enhance awareness and sensitivity to the covert, unconscious and irrational forces that impact on diversity.

KEY TERMS: South African diversity, diversity dynamics, systems psychodynamic paradigm, group relations training model, Robben Island Diversity Experience, identity, power, reference systems, relations and relatedness.