CHAPTER 1   ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

This research focused on exploring South African diversity dynamics. The aims of this chapter are to provide an orientation to and substantiation for the research. A discussion of the background to the research leads on to the formulation of a problem statement and research questions. On the basis of the aforementioned, the aims of the research are presented. The paradigm perspective, research design and research method are then explained. Chapter 1 concludes with an outline of the chapters, as well as a chapter summary.

1.1   BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Internationally organisations have increasingly been confronted with diversity-related issues (Cox, 1993; Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2001; Hostager & De Meusse, 2002). The political, technological and socio-economic changes that have taken place in the last few decades have resulted in a more diverse workforce as growing numbers of women, immigrants, disabled people, older workers, people from different cultures, and other minorities have entered the labour market (Ashkanasy, Härtel & Daus, 2002; Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000; Jackson, 1992; Lorbiecki, 2001; Ruderman, Hughes-James & Jackson, 1996). In contrast to fleeting trends that come and go, diversity seems to be here to stay, and with massive population movements the world over, it is bound to increase rather than decrease (Chidester, Stonier & Tobler, 1999; Chmiel, 2000).

In the South African context, DIVERSITY can indeed be written in capital letters. The country developed against the backdrop of differentiation, segregation, and discrimination (Bekker & Carlton, 1996; Eades, 1999). It has only been since the 1994 political transition that strategies have shifted from segregation and exclusion to the inclusion of all people and a celebration of the diversity this country has to offer (Beck, 2000; Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994). Although the post-1994 changes have propelled the country from an apartheid regime towards the dream of becoming a rainbow nation, the road to reconstructing the South African society has been far from smooth (Hunt & Lascaris, 1998; Thompson, 2001).

Diversity has proved to be a double-edged sword because it is both an opportunity as well as a threat (Cavaleros, Van Vuuren & Visser, 2002; Newell, 2002). Organisations realised that diversity in itself does not lead to a competitive advantage, instead it is more likely to result in frustration, misunderstandings, unhealthy conflict, and an increase in turnover if it is not properly managed (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Van Eron, 1995). Thus the diversity sword, if not skillfully wielded, can have major cost implications for organisations in terms of production, employee absenteeism, inefficient communication, poor utilisation of resources, low morale, and industrial action (Cox & Beale, 1997; Human, 1996b; Oakley-Smith & Winter, 2001).

On the upside, organisations can also reap huge benefits and even gain a competitive advantage if diversity is effectively managed (Cavaleros et al, 2002; Laubscher, 2001). Through proper management of diversity, organisations gain access to a larger pool of knowledge, skills and abilities. It can also lead to intercultural cooperation, employee satisfaction, higher morale, increased employee commitment and a reduction of discrimination-related industrial action (Carnevale & Stone, 1994; Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2001; Sadri & Tran, 2002; Selden & Selden, 2001).

Most organisations seem to realise that diversity has become an unescapable reality that has to be confronted, indeed exploited, in order to survive in this 'brave new world' (Arredondo, 1996; Steyn & Motshabi, 1996; Susser & Patterson, 2001). This realisation prompted organisations to implement a variety of diversity initiatives (Cox & Beale, 1997; Hayles & Russel, 1997; Prasad, Mills, Elmes & Prasad, 1997). Because of the need to incorporate diversity into organisational functioning, the diversity training and consulting industry expanded dramatically with consultants everywhere jumping on the diversity bandwagon (Chmiel, 2000; Norton & Fox, 1997; Selden & Selden, 2001). In this regard, Van der Westhuizen (2001) cautioned that organisations should be wary, since many of these diversity-related initiatives and training programmes lack academic rigour. The fact that these initiatives can easily do more harm than good, emphasises the need for well-grounded and researched diversity initiatives (Cavaleros et al, 2002; Flynn, 1998; Newell, 2002).

Current approaches to diversity as described by Van der Westhuizen (2001) tend to focus more on

mobilising wider organisational processes, than on achieving attitudinal- and behavioural change at an individual level. This process usually necessitates structural change, which in South Africa, typically includes the implementation of employment equity, equal opportunity, and affirmative action policies resulting in strategic positions being filled by minority appointments (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994; Laubscher, 2001; Strydom & Erwee, 1998). In addition to this revision of recruitment, appointment and promotional policies are also formulated to ensure a more inclusive and equitable organisation (Carnevale & Stone, 1994; Leach, George, Jackson, & Labella, 1995). The focus of diversity training programmes is mostly on facilitating diversity awareness, and ensuring that nondiscriminatory policies are communicated and understood (Eades, 1999; Thomas, 1996; Van der Westhuizen, 2001).

These diversity interventions are usually based on a behaviouristic and socio-cognitive approach. The training programmes are typically presented in a mechanistic, instructional and 'telling style', extending knowledge and content about the different ways in which people perceive and approach life (Cilliers & May, 2002). Members are informed of the *do's and don'ts* of diversity. The underlying assumption of this mechanistic approach to diversity seems to be that members can be trained and that once they have done the training they can be certified as being able to 'do' diversity (Cilliers & May, 2002). The focus is thus on dealing with diversity at a 'hand' (behavioural) and 'head' (cognitive) level with little attention being focussed on the 'heart'(emotional / affective) level (Groenewald, 1996; Hayles & Russell, 1997).

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Current diversity initiatives mainly use obvious, mechanical and socio-cognitive approaches to address diversity-related issues. Excluded from these approaches is the systems psychodynamic stance with its focus on the unconscious and irrational forces which inform change and development (Obholzer & Roberts, 1994).

According to Human (1996b), the more rational and cognitive approaches to diversity often fail because of an inadequate understanding of the concept of diversity and its unconscious behavioural dynamics.

In dealing with diversity, the affective level with its focus on needs, fears, attitudes and anxieties is greatly neglected (Groenewald, 1996; Hayles & Russel, 1997). The systems psychodynamic stance accepts that traditional 'talk and chalk' training approaches do little more than share knowledge and enhance dependency. According to this stance individual and organisational change and growth occur only through true social learning in an experiential design (Cilliers & May, 2002). It can thus be argued that organisations only study the tip of the 'diversity iceberg' if the covert and unconscious social political issues such as resistance, denial, splitting, projections and projective identifications are neglected (Cilliers & May, 2002; Obholzer & Roberts, 1994). True understanding and awareness develop when organisations take into consideration both the rational and the irrational forces, conscious as well as unconscious processes, and overt as well as covert behavioural dynamics (Czander, 1993; Kets De Vries & Balazs, 1998).

The need is therefore to attain a deeper understanding of diversity and the underlying forces that impact on the way diversity is perceived, experienced and acted upon. In this quest, the systems psychodynamic stance offers the possibility of attaining a deeper learning and understanding of diversity and its accompanying dynamics. Unfortunately, little literature linking the systems psychodynamic approach to diversity could be found. Cilliers and May (2002) and Wachtel (2001) published relevant articles linking the psychodynamic approach to diversity, while Minsky (1998) and Sapir (1994) explored culture from a psychodynamic perspective.

The challenge of this research thus centres around applying the systems psychodynamic stance to diversity. Its specific aim is to apply systems psychodynamic theory to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of (South African) diversity. The researcher is confident that the systems psychodynamic approach, with its focus on unconscious irrational processes will be able to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of diversity.

The research is exploratory and descriptive in nature, and serves as a project in studying diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective. The research will try to gain insight into the dynamics of South African diversity by analysing the experience of participants in the Robben Island Diversity Experience (RIDE).

The research problem can be defined as follows:

• What are the diversity dynamics manifesting in an experiential South African diversity event?

From the problem statement the following research questions can be formulated:

• How can diversity in the workplace be conceptualised?
• How can the group relations training model (GRTM) be conceptualised?
• How can diversity be understood in terms of the GRTM?
• Which themes emerge from an analysis of the experience of the RIDE delegates?
• What recommendations can be made about the use of the GRTM to better understand (South African) diversity dynamics?

1.3 AIMS

From the research questions the following general and specific aims are formulated.

1.3.1 General aim

The general aim of this research is to gain an understanding of the diversity dynamics that manifest in an experiential South African diversity event.

1.3.2 Specific aims

In terms of the literature survey, the specific aims are to

- conceptualise diversity in the workplace
- conceptualise the GRTM
- gain an understanding of diversity dynamics by integrating the literature on diversity and the GRTM

In terms of the qualitative study, the specific aims are to

- report on the main themes that manifest in an experiential South African diversity event
- make recommendations on the use of the GRTM to better understand (South African) diversity dynamics

1.4   THE PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

With reference to the paradigm perspective, the relevant paradigms, metatheoretical statements, the market of intellectual resources and the methodological assumptions are discussed next.

The disciplinary relationship focuses on industrial and organisational psychology with training and development as fields of application.

Industrial and organisational psychology is a branch of psychology concerned with the application of psychological techniques and findings in order to find solutions to workplace-related problems (Aamodt, 1991; Corsini, 1999). In essence, it is an umbrella term covering organisational, military, economic and personnel psychology and include areas such as tests and measurement, the study of organisations and organisational behaviour, personnel practices, human engineering, human factors, the effect of work, fatigue, pay and efficiency, consumer surveys and market research (Reber & Reber, 2001). With reference to this research, diversity impacts directly on organisational behaviour and personnel practices.

Organisational psychology can be defined as the study of organisations, the elements and systems it comprises, and those factors that influence the effectiveness of the organisation (Plug, Meyer, Louw & Gouws, 1988). Organisational psychology studies what individuals do in organisations and how this behaviour impacts on the organisation (Robbins, 1997). With reference to this research, the focus is on diversity and its impact on organisations. Personnel psychology refers to

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Training and development is the second field of application. According to Van Dyk, Nel and Loedolff (1992, p. 142), training can be seen as the systematic process of changing the behaviour and/or attitudes of people in a certain direction to increase goal achievement in the organisation. Within the new Education, Training and Development (ETD) framework, the emphasis in training has shifted to specifically address issues relating to the acquisition or transference of skills (Meyer, Mabaso & Lancaster, 2001). The development component is concerned with preparing employees so that they can move with the organisation as it develops, changes and grows (Robbins, 1997). In this research, the systems psychodynamic paradigm is used as the approach in training and development.

1.4.1   Relevant paradigm

Thematically, the literature review will be on diversity and the GRTM. The literature review will be integrated by applying the GRTM to diversity. The qualitative research will focus on reporting about South African diversity dynamics. The systems psychodynamic paradigm is applicable in both the literature survey and the qualitative research. The subsections below will provide the background to and an overview of contributions to the systems psychodynamic paradigm.

The systems psychodynamic paradigm reflects the gradual development and application of contributions from psychoanalyses and open systems theory in order to provide a conceptual framework for understanding organisational behaviour (Obholzer & Roberts, 1994; Rutan & Stone, 1993). The systems psychodynamic paradigm started with Dr Eric Miller's work and the development of a learning-

from-experience model of education about group and organisational life (Cilliers, 2002). Miller and Rice's (1967) publication, *Systems of organisations,* was the first attempt to integrate the strands of theory and insight of this interdisciplinary field. The growing nature of this paradigm ensures that its boundaries are continuously being refined and redefined (Clliers, 2002).

The systems psychodynamic paradigm does not focus on individual behaviour per se, but rather the systemic group and organisational behaviour influencing various systems, of which the individual is but one. The central tenet of this paradigm is contained in the conjunction of the two terms 'systems' and 'psychodynamic' (French & Vince, 1999; Stapley, 1996). It simultaneously works from 'the inside out' and 'the outside in' with both perspectives contributing to a holistic understanding of organisations. The following sections provide a brief overview of psychoanalysis, object relations theory, and systems theory as the conceptual origins of the systems psychodynamic paradigm.

a   Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalytic theory, as developed by Freud (1921; 1923; 1930), poses a basic framework through which deeper understanding of the unconscious and irrational forces that impact on human behaviour can be attained. Psychoanalysis centres around the realisation that there are hidden aspects of human mental life which, while remaining hidden, nevertheless influence conscious processes and/or behaviour (Czander, 1993; Halton, 1994). From this perspective flows the belief that behaviour cannot be ascribed to chance, and a person's behaviour therefore reflects his/her unconscious (Albertyn, 1999). Hence the aim of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious conscious; and to help people gain greater understanding of the unconscious and irrational forces that influence their behaviour (Czander, 1993; Minsky, 1998; Mosse, 1994).

From a psychoanalytic perspective behaviour is fundamentally biological and instinctual in nature (Badcock, 1992). The focus is on the intra-psychic drives, needs and anxieties that direct behaviour (Thurschwell, 2000). Behaviour is seen as a product of the way that these drives, needs and anxieties are negotiated by the three dimensions of personality, the id, the ego and the superego (Freud, 1923).

The id contains the unconscious instinctual drives, while the superego contains societies values, prohibitions and ideals (Badcock, 1992). The function of the ego is to attempt to mediate the conflict between the unconscious sexual and aggressive instincts of the id and the societal demands internalised in the superego (Thurschwell, 2000).

Traditionally psychoanalysis has been the domain of individual therapy, with its general aim of gaining insight into and an understanding of the inner world (Halton, 1994). According to Rutan and Stone (1993), the focus of psychoanalysis and its field of application have expanded dramatically since the time that Freud formulated his theories. By elaborating on and further developing Freud's ideas, psychoanalytic theory has made valuable contributions to understanding the predominant needs and anxiety of individuals, organisations and society as a whole (Minsky, 1998; Rutan & Stone, 1993).

Psychoanalysis further accepts anxiety as the basis of organisational behaviour (Jacques, 1955; Menzies, 1993, Miller, 1998). Organisations, like individuals, employ defence mechanisms against difficult emotions which are too threatening or painful to deal with (Bain, 1998; Menzies, 1993). Although defence mechanisms are functional in that they help the organisation to cope with anxiety, they often lead to anti-task behaviour that can hinder the organisation from functioning effectively (Halton, 1994; Miller, 1998). Consultancy from this perspective would thus focus on the unconscious institutional anxieties and the defences against them (Allcorn, 1995; Bain, 1998; Kets De Vries, 1991).

b   Object relations

Object relations provide a distinct interpersonal basis for understanding behaviour and focus on the analysis of the person and his/her objects (Czander, 1993). Where traditional psychoanalytic theory describes psychic development on the basis of biological derived drives, object relations theory views human interaction as the primary source of psychic development (Minsky, 1998). Instead of being motivated by tension reduction, as in traditional psychoanalytic theory, object relations view the establishment and maintenance of relationships as the motivating force behind human behaviour

(Cashdan, 1988). The need to be attached, related and connected to other objects forms an integral part of object relations theory (Czander,1993).

Object relations proceeds from the premise that people, over time, acquire the psychological capacity to relate to external (real) and internal (fantasies) objects (Cashdan, 1988). The term *object* is used, rather than a person, because the object of relations is not always a person; it may also refer to an organisation, a group, an idea, a symbol or parts of the body (Klein, 1997).

Klein's work on the development of infants and her ideas on how the same processes involved in the development of the infant continue to influence adult relationships, form the basis of object relations theory (Segal, 1996). According to Klein (1997) the infant seeks pleasure and comfort while avoiding pain and discomfort. The infant polarises his/her world according to the objects that give pleasure (good objects) and those that cause pain or discomfort (bad objects). The infant gains a sense of relief by splitting off and projecting the painful emotions away from himself/herself. Through natural maturation or treatment, previously separated feelings can be brought together again into a more integrated whole. This movement from the polarisation of opposites to the integration of opposites recurs throughout life (Klein, 1997).

c   Systems thinking

The work of Von Bertalanffy (1966) serves as the foundation of systems thinking.   It originated as a way of thinking about the constant, dynamic adjustments of living systems and proposes that an organism exists and survives through constant interaction with its environment (Miller & Rice, 1967). Systems thinking maintains that all systems fundamentally pose similarities in the underlying structure and organising processes used to survive within a specific environment (Rutan & Stone, 1993). Fundamental to these processes is the way that a system receives inputs from its environment, the way it is transformed within the system, with the resulting outputs of the system (Miller & Rice, 1967).

Another aspect of the structure of systems is that organisms are embedded in a set of supra- and

superordinate systems and that an organism's interaction thus consists of relationships between its sub-systems, the relationships between the subsystems and the organism as a whole, and the relationship between the whole organism and its environment (Wells, 1985; Wheelan, 1994). As a result of this interconnectedness/interdependence of systems any change in one part of the system affects and generates change in all other parts of the system (Vorster, 2003). The above-mentioned similarities in the underlying structure and organising processes of systems imply that an organism, as a living system, can be studied according to the principles and laws that govern all living systems (Young, Wood, Phillips & Pedersen, 2001).

The following premises can be identified in systems thinking:

• Living systems are open to interaction with their environment, converting inputs and maintaining an output system (Brabender & Fallon, 1993; Czander, 1993).

• Parts of a system cannot be understood in isolation; any part of a system can only be understood within the context of the entire system (Halton, 1994; Rutan & Stone, 1993).

• A system is more than the sum of its parts - once formed, a system engages in a ongoing process of defining and redefining itself; it creates new features that were not present at the outset (Czander, 1993; Vorster, 2003).

• All parts of the system interact dynamically and constantly - this premise describes how parts of a system are intricately interconnected; each part affecting all the others. Changes in any one system affect all other related systems. This can be likened to dropping a pebble in a pond (Roberts, 1994; Young et al, 2001).

• An open system interacts with its environment in mutually influential ways - in the same way the parts of the group cannot be studied in isolation from one another, a group also cannot be studied in isolation from its context. The system forms part of many other systems whose influences must be taken into consideration (Vorster, 2003; Young et al, 2001).

1.5   RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design will be discussed by first focussing on the type of research. From there qualitative

research as a research medium will be outlined. The research design will be concluded by addressing the question of the validity and reliability of the research.

1.5.1   Type of research

This research is exploratory and descriptive. According to Mouton and Marais (1994), the aims of exploratory and descriptive studies are as follows:

- to gain new insight into the phenomenon
- to undertake a preliminary investigation prior to conducting a more structured study of the phenomenon
- to explicate the central concepts and constructs
- to determine priorities for future research
- to develop a new hypotheses about an existing phenomenon

With reference to this research, an exploratory study is relevant since it serves as an exploration of a relatively unknown research area that attempts to gain new insight into this area (Mouton & Marais, 1994). According to Mouton and Marais (1994), hypotheses develop as a result of such research, rather than the research being guided by hypotheses.

Descriptive studies include the in-depth description of a specific individual, situation, group, organisation, tribe, subculture, interaction or social object (Mouton & Marais, 1994). In this research, the descriptive study is relevant to the literature review as well as the qualitative research. In the literature review, diversity in the workplace, and the GRTM are conceptualised and described. In the qualitative research, the themes (diversity dynamics) manifesting from an experiential South African diversity event are described.

1.5.2   Justifying the use of qualitative research in this study

The main focus of this research is on exploring and describing South African diversity dynamics. The nature of the exploratory and descriptive research led the researcher to adopt a qualitative approach. Qualitative research by its nature is well suited to exploratory and descriptive studies, since it allows researchers more freedom to delve deeply into relatively unknown areas in social science, and to explore the personal experiences of people (Johnson & Christensen, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The qualitative approach to research enables the researcher to uncover the unexpected and explore new avenues (Gordon, 1999; Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The qualitative approach could thus allow the researcher the freedom to explore and describe South African diversity dynamics. In line with the qualitative approach, this research is about generating hypotheses, rather than testing them (Flick, 2002; Taylor & Bogdan,1984). Concepts, insights and understanding were derived from the patterns in the data collected (Richardson, 1996). The emerging themes related to South African diversity dynamics enabled the researcher to formulate hypotheses on South African diversity dynamics.

Qualitative research was further appropriate since it took the historical context of the country into account. Qualitative research approaches settings and people holistically (Gordon, 1999). Groups are not reduced to variables but are studied in the current and historical context in which they find themselves (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Mukherji, 2000).

1.5.3 Validity of the research

In qualitative research the focus of the methodology is on attaining insight and understanding, rather than the collection of accurate and replicable data (Mouton & Marias, 1994). By implication issues relating to validity and reliability, that have traditionally been used as criteria to evaluate quantitative research, are less demanding in qualitative research (Mouton & Marais, 1994). Qualitative researchers have reacted to these traditional criteria with mixed regards, with some qualitative researchers even suggesting that validity and reliability are not relevant in qualitative research (Camic, Rhodes & Yardley, 2003;

Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Most qualitative researchers, however, do not hold this point of view, as they regard some qualitative studies as better than others (Camic et al, 2003; Flick, 2002). Alternative criteria, more appropriate to qualitative research, have been used to distinguish between the rigour of qualitative studies (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

The alternative criteria (related to the validity of the research) that were used in the research are as follows:

- *Truth value.* The truth value of the research refers to whether the account of what is being studied is perceived as honest and accurate by both the subjects and the wider audience (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).
- *Credibility.* In qualitative research the term credibility refers to issues pertaining to the internal validity of the research. Credibility refers to qualitative research that is plausible, credible, trustworthy, and therefore defendable (Flick, 2002; Johnson & Christensen, 2000). According to Flick (2002) credibility refers to the trustworthiness of observations, interpretations and generalisations. The credibility of the researcher could be linked to the research design, the sample, the data collection strategies and the data analysis strategies.
- *Transferability.* In qualitative research the term transferability refers to the external validity of the research. It refers to the extent to which a set of findings in one context can be transferred or applied to another context. In qualitative research the burden of demonstrating transferability rests more with the researcher who wants to make the transfer than with the original researcher (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

The above mentioned criteria were taken into consideration in this study to ensure its scientific rigour. In section 5.7 the researcher describes the actions that were taken to ensure the validity of both the literature review and the qualitative research.

1.5.4   Reliability of the research

As stated above (sec 1.5.3) reliability has traditionally been used as an important criterion in evaluating quantitative research (Mouton & Marias, 1994). Reliability refers to the degree to which the results of research are repeatable (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Qualitative researchers, unlike quantitative researchers, do not believe that they study stable and unchanging realities, and therefore do not expect to find the same results repeatedly. The belief is that people behave differently and express different opinions in changing contexts (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

Instead of using the criterium of reliability, qualitative researchers propose that dependability, confirmability and consistency should rather be used (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). These criteria can be described as follows:

- Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed take place as the researcher indicates it did (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). It indicates whether the process of the study is stable across time, researchers and methods (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).
- Confirmability refers to the extend to which another researcher using the same data, perspective and situation could confirm the findings of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).
- Consistency refers to whether the findings of the study could be confirmed through a different, but similar study (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

The above mentioned criteria were taken into consideration as a way of ensuring the scientific rigour of the research. In section 5.8 the researcher describes the actions that were taken to ensure the reliability of both the literature review and the qualitative research.

1.6   RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology refers to the basic approach used to conduct research (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). It is based on the assumptions, theories and perspectives of what constitutes good research (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This research was conducted in two phases, each with different

steps. Phase 1 refers to the literature review, while phase 2 entails the qualitative research.

1.6.1   Phase 1: Literature review

Phase 1 includes the literature review on diversity in the workplace, as well as the literature review on the GRTM. The literature review was integrated by applying the GRTM to diversity.

1.6.1.1 Step 1: Diversity in the workplace

A review of recent and classical literature was conducted to conceptualise diversity in the workplace. The review explored the phenomenon of diversity, and also placed it in the South African context. Step 1 also entails a review of the different approaches to diversity in the workplace.

1.6.1.2 Step 2: GRTM

A review of recent and classical literature was conducted to conceptualise the GRTM. It presented a background to the GRTM followed by an overview of the basic assumptions as well as other relevant concepts of this model. The rationale, hypothesis and application of the GRTM training were also provided.

1.6.1.3 Step 3: Diversity dynamics

This step relates to the theoretical integration of the literature on diversity in the workplace and the GRTM. It provided an orientation to diversity dynamics, followed by the rationale for applying the GRTM to diversity. The forces underlying diversity dynamics as well as the core concepts of diversity dynamics were then explored. The researcher also presented an integration of diversity dynamics.

1.6.2   Phase 2: Qualitative research

Phase 2 provides an outline of the qualitative research.

1.6.2.1 Step 1: Defining the setting of the research

The Robben Island Diversity Experience (RIDE), presented from a systems psychodynamic perspective, was used as the group relations training event. Specific modifications were made to make the event more applicable to studying diversity.

The population of this research represented all delegates who attended the 2000 Robben Island Diversity Experience.

1.6.2.2 Step 2: Description of the sample

After the event, the researcher drew a sample of convenience out of the population (all members attending RIDE 2000).

1.6.2.3 Step 3: Data collection

The researcher used unstructured interviews to obtain in-depth information on the participant's experience of the group relations training event. The interview had a non-directive, unstructured, non-standardised and open-ended format. The interviews were done either in person or telephonically, approximately one month after the group relations training event (RIDE).

1.6.2.4 Step 4: Data analyses

Qualitative data analysis normally requires the reduction and interpretation of the voluminous amount of information collected (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Through qualitative content analysis, certain patterns, categories or themes were identified and then interpreted from the GRTM. The researcher followed various steps in analysing the data (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000; Johnson & Christensen, 2000; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). The data analysis practically entailed the transcribing of the interviews, the familiarisation with the data, segmenting and coding of the data, and the analysis of the data.

1.6.2.5 Step 5: Interpreting and reporting the results

The researcher interpreted the research data and reported on the themes (diversity dynamics) that emerged from the data.

1.6.2.6 Step 6: Conclusion

The conclusion was based on the results with specific reference to the literature review and the qualitative research.

1.6.2.7 Step7: Hypotheses

On the basis of the aforementioned conclusions, certain hypotheses on the research were formulated.

1.6.2.8 Step 8: Limitations

The limitations of the research were discussed with reference to the literature review and the qualitative research.

1.6.2.9 Step 9: Recommendations

Recommendations were made on the basis of the results of the research.

1.7   DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

The chapters were divided up as follows:

Chapter 2:   Diversity in the workplace

Chapter 3:   The group relations training model

Chapter 4:   Diversity dynamics

Chapter 5:   Research method

Chapter 6:   Results

Chapter 7   Conclusions, hypotheses, limitations and recommendations

1.8   CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the background to and substantiation for the research were formulated. It described the research problem, the aims of the research, the paradigm perspectives, as well as the research design and method that were used to conduct the research. With the above in mind, the researcher sets out to explore South African diversity dynamics in the chapters to follow.

In chapter 2, diversity in the workplace will be discussed.