

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN A SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

To establish the perception of employees regarding diversity management at South Africa's largest residential university, the questionnaires of Gardenswartz & Rowe (1993) was adapted and a *case study* approach with a sample of 25 employees was used. The diversity audit measured the sample's perceptions on symptoms of diversity related problems; openness to change of the university; the status quo regarding diversity management; organisational barriers to diversity; the valuing of diversity; and the management of diversity by managers or supervisors. It was found that a high number of symptoms of diversity-related problems are perceived and that respondents believed that the university is relatively unresponsive to the need to change. The university was believed to be in a mono cultural stage of development and barriers to developing into a multicultural organisation were identified. Respondents did report a very positive attitude towards diversity but perceived that certain procedures are not supportive.

OPSOMMING

Die vraelyste van Gardenswartz en Rowe (1993) en 'n gevalstudiebenadering is benut om die persepsies van 'n steekproef van 25 personeellede aangaande die bestuur van diversiteit in 'n Suid Afrikaanse universiteit te ondersoek. Die diversiteitsaudit meet die steekproef se waarneming van simptome van diversiteitsverwante probleme, die bereidwilligheid van die universiteit om te verander, die huidige stand van diversiteitsbestuur, organisatoriese hindernisse, die waarde wat aan diversiteitsbestuur geheg word, en die bestuur van diversiteit deur bestuurders en toesighouers. Die resultate toon dat 'n beduidende aantal simptome van diversiteitsverwante probleme geïdentifiseer word en dat die respondente meen dat die universiteit relatief min bewustheid vir die nodigheid van verandering toon. Respondente meen dat die universiteit in 'n monokulturele fase van ontwikkeling is en hindernisse in die ontplooiing na 'n multikulturele organisasie is bespeur. Respondente toon aan dat positiewe houdings ten opsigte van diversiteit voorkom maar dat bestaande prosedures hierdie houdings nie ondersteun nie.

In order to implement a diversity management programme in a company, the prerequisite is to know the extent of diversity management within that company at a particular point in time. The research question in this study is therefore to investigate the perceptions of employees regarding the present level of diversity management in the largest residential university in South Africa.

The study is necessary at this time as tertiary institutions in South Africa and especially universities, are facing a transformation wave as they are strongly linked to society as well as the business community. Universities are presently dependent on the central government for subsidising their budgets which requires of universities to concede to pressure from the central government regarding the internal transformation processes of individual universities. The transformation of a university's frame of reference regarding the way diversity is accommodated could be seen as a microcosm analogy of the way the issue is to be handled on national, macro-level. Two differences that exist in a straight analogy are as follows: On micro-level, transformation could more easily be "enforced" or brought about mechanistically than on national level by for example legislation. The result of failure on macro-level is far more serious than failure at enterprise-level.

One must bear in mind that any transformation on a macro or enterprise level is inhibited by a number of restraints. On an enterprise level, a restraint applicable in the educational sector is the autonomy of universities. Opinions differ to what extent universities can decide on the pace of reform and to what extent external stakeholders can guide the transformation process. Most South African universities have instituted transformational forums that include external and internal stakeholders. A further factor is the extent to which South African universities

are influenced by international trends. One opinion is that South African universities that build international alliances with leading tertiary, research and business institutions world-wide will manage their local transformational processes more effectively.

In order to measure the perception of individuals regarding the management of diversity, the concept must first be defined, an appropriate model about the management of diversity needs to be identified and measuring instruments and methodologies must be chosen.

Defining diversity

The term diversity is often used as synonym for *multiculturalism* and the latter concept introduces yet another set of relevant terms, for example "Euro-, Afro- or multiple-centrism", "pluralism/particularism/universalism", "separatism vs. relativism" (Asante, 1992, p.180; Ravitch, 1992, p. 182, Bonevac, 1992, p. 138). People operate in specific social structures which are not homogeneous wholes, but rather composed of multiple communities/cultures (Parekh, 1992, p.44). O'Mara (1994, p.118) distinguishes between diversity and multiculturalism in the following way: "Multiculturalism refers to many cultures. In diversity work, it means valuing the differences of others and creating an environment that does not require assimilation (taking on the traits of another culture, leaving the culture of origin behind)."

On the most elementary level, diversity can be defined as differences in race, gender, age, language, physical characteristics, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, parental status, education, geographic origin, profession, lifestyle, religion, position in the company hierarchy and any other difference (O'Mara, 1994, p.115). Griggs and Louw (1995) add that diversity in a work situation encompasses every individual difference that affects a task or a relationship. Cox (1993, p.6) defines *cultural diversity* as "the representation, in one social

system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance."

Gardenswartz and Rowe (1993) and Este, Griffin & Hirsch (1995) make a distinction between primary (age, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, race) and secondary dimensions (geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, work experience, class, hierarchy) of diversity as applied to an individual. Cox distinguishes between majority groups (i.e. the largest group) and minority groups referring to the groups with fewer members represented in the organisation or system than the majority group. There are several kinds of identity groups of which a person becomes part and that correspond with above listed dimensions. The crucial issue is not merely classifying an individual on the basis of physical identification, but to ascertain to what extent the individual identifies with cultural traditions of a particular group.

A model of diversity management

Cox's model (see Figure 1) proposes that the *impact of diversity on organisational outcomes* is a complex interaction between individuals and their environment. This formulation is comparable with organisational change and development models of Porras (1987) and Robertson, Roberts and Porras (1992) as well as Burke and Litwin (1992) which was used in a theory testing study by Pantke and Erwee (1997). Cox notes that the environmental situation includes organisational forces as well as intergroup factors focusing on the relationship between the majority group and the various minority groups.

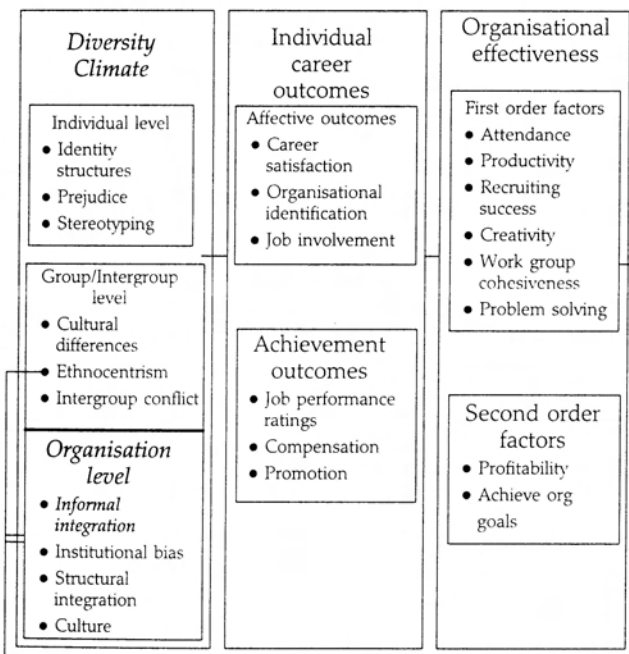


Figure 1: Interactional model of the impact of diversity on individual career outcomes and organisational effectiveness (Cox, 1991 & 1993)

The model postulates that four individual-level factors (personal identity structures, prejudice, stereotyping and personality type), three intergroup factors (cultural differences, ethnocentrism and intergroup conflict) and four organisational context factors (organisational culture and acculturation processes, structural integration, *informal integration* and institutional bias) collectively define the *diversity climate* of the organisation. This diversity climate may influence individual career outcomes (affective and achievement outcomes). Affective outcomes include job satisfaction and involvement and it is argued that these elements of employee morale and satisfaction are related to identity groups (such as gender or race/ethnicity). Cox (1993, p. 10) suggests that the actual career achievements of individuals may be influenced by group identities, but do

impact on first order organisational effectiveness measures such as productivity. In both profit-making and non-profit organisations individual and group contributions ensure the achievement of organisational goals. The challenges facing companies and individual managers with reference to Cox's model are therefore to create a diversity climate not only conducive to positive career outcomes for individual members but also fostering group cohesiveness, in order to achieve organisational effectiveness and competitiveness.

Even though the actual terminology differs, researchers agree on the basic organisational forms that are relevant in the transformation process towards greater diversity. Adler (1991, p. 104) refers to the progression from parochial organisations, to ethnocentric organisations and finally to synergistic organisations ("creative combinations of our way and your way may be the best way"). Gardenswartz et al (1993, p.249) as well as Esty et al (1995, p.189) use models in which a company moves from being a **monocultural** to a **multicultural** organisation.

A more comprehensive model according to which companies can be measured regarding their disposition towards diversity was developed by Cox (1993, p.226 – see Table 1) which describes the characteristics of monolithic, plural and eventually multicultural organisations. The objective of managing diversity is seen as the creation of an organisation in which members of all social backgrounds can contribute and achieve their full potential and *multicultural* refers to those companies that achieve the objective of managing diversity. This model was the basis for a pilot study to test the theory and will serve as framework for the current research question on how a university can be evaluated regarding its progress towards managing diversity (Cox, 1993).

Theory testing by means of study on: Diversity in 25 South African companies

An interview schedule based on the Cox model (Cox, 1991; Cox & Blake, 1991) was developed and refined (see Sparrow, 1994). Cox's model of multi-cultural management was tested in South African companies by MBA students interviewing human resource managers using the interview schedule. The 25 companies used in the survey is a sample of convenience representing public and private sector organisations in the Gauteng province. The MBA reports are not empirical studies as students interpreted answers according to the Cox model and wrote narrative case studies. It was decided that content analysis would be adopted in integrating the results of the individual studies. The authors and statistical consultants developed a coding system based on the model (Strydom & Erwee, 1998) to analyse the companies' perspectives on Diversity as a competitive advantage; Dimensions of integration present in the companies; Tools for organisational change used in the companies and Key components for the transition to a multicultural organisation. Even though this sample of South African companies acknowledge the potential advantages of diversity, they do not yet experience a pressing need to optimise diversity. These companies can be classified mainly as monolithic companies (Cox, 1993, p. 226 – see Table 1), although some evidence emerged that specific companies are developing a plural orientation.

Although the interview schedule and content analysis yielded useful data, it was decided to investigate the applicability of questionnaires of Gardenswartz and Rowe (1993) in a university setting.

Background information on the university

The University has approximately 27 000 students and a personnel corps of 5 445. Education/training is the main task of the university with research second and third is community service (Strydom & Erwee, 1997). In its positioning, the University has to address itself to the attainment of the highest internationally-acceptable standards as well as the problems associated with a societal order which is quickly changing where a need exists for wealth creation, upliftment and trai-

TABLE 1
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISATION FORM AND DIMENSIONS OF THE DIVERSITY CLIMATE

DIMENSIONS	ORGANIZATIONAL FORM		
	MONOLITHIC	PLURAL	MULTICULTURAL
1. Culture	Ignores or actively discourages diversity	Ignores or tolerates diversity	Values diversity
2. Acculturation	Assimilation	Assimilation	Pluralism
3. Degree of structural integration	Minimal	Partial	Full
4. Degree of informal integration	Minimal	Limited	Full
5. Institutional bias in HR systems	Omnipresent	Prevalent	Minimised or eliminated
6. Intergroup conflict	Minimal, due to identity homogeneity	Significant	Minimised by management attention

ning. Some of the following are cited as important developments at the university : a) two black councillors were appointed; b) a black deputy for the Dean of students was appointed; c) a Centre for Reconstruction and Development was founded with a black female as director; d) a student profile of approximately 27 000 of whom 5 310 are black; e) a program was launched in the Greater Pretoria to improve the quality of education of black schools; f) bridging courses are presented for black students who have passed potential tests; g) the official language policy has been changed; h) bursary and loan schemes for black students have been strengthened; i) places are reserved for black students in residences as was demanded by parties in the negotiating forum; j) a Broad Transformation Forum has been established in July 1996 whose powers will include participation in the selection process of vice chancellors and vice rectors. The university has decided not to formulate official policy on affirmative action regarding personnel. Merit, namely the necessary expertise, serves as a basis for appointment. The *entry*-requirements of students may be relaxed, but the *exit*-requirements remain non-negotiable.

The research question and aim of this paper is to report on the perceptions of staff members of diversity management at the university.

METHOD

A draft and final copy of the questionnaire (Diversity Audit) was developed by adapting existing questionnaires of Gardenswartz and Rowe (1993). Approval for access to a random sample was withdrawn and therefore a *case study* approach was then chosen to approach 25 respondents to complete the questionnaire. This smaller sample was selected to be representative of the organizational level, gender, race and line versus staff ratios in the university. The sample consists of 55% male and 45% females; 80% whites and 20% blacks; 80% Afrikaans speakers and 20% black language speakers; 20% senior managers, 50% middle managers and 30% lower level staff respondents; 80% married and 20% unmarried or divorced respondents; 60% with post graduate degrees, 20% with first degrees and 20% with diploma or school certificates.

The Diversity Audit includes the aim of the survey, definitions of concepts, biographical data, perceptions on Symptoms of diversity related problems; Openness to change of the university; the Status quo regarding diversity management; Organisational barriers to diversity; the Valuing of diversity; and the Management of diversity by managers or supervisors. A four point Likert scale was used and the values are changed continuously to avoid response set.

Each section of the Diversity Audit has its own scoring procedures. In the section "Openness to change of the university", the total score of a respondent can fall within one of four possible categories; a) a score of 50 to 60 – the culture of the organization is open to change and the organization reacts and adapts quickly; b) a score of 40 to 49 – the organization understands that change is a reality, is open to change, but has not yet fully embraced it, nor is it harnessing change to make it work for the organization; c) a score of 30 to 39 – the organization understands the value of change but needs to be more open to its reality and quicker in the implementation process; d) a score of 15 to 29 – if the organization does not get better at adapting, its longevity will be affected negatively.

In the section "Status quo regarding diversity management" three stages in the evolution towards a diversity sensitive environment are described (Gardenswartz & Rowe, 1993 p. 274): a) *Monocultural*: the organization acts as though all the employees are the same. There is an expectation to conform to a standard (for example a white, male model) and success is achieved by following the expectations and norms of this model. *Others* are expected to assimilate and adopt the dominant style of the organization, b) *Non-discriminatory*: usually as a result of government regulations or threats of employees grievances, organizations begin to adhere to affirmative action requirements and equal employment opportunity regulations. Much attention is given to meeting quotas in hiring and promotions as well as removing road-blocks that inhibit equal advancement opportunities. For employees of non-mainstream groups, there is a push-pull between the need to assimilate and a desire for the organization to accommodate their needs. Compromise is usually the way to deal with conflict, and c) *Multicultural*: there is recognition that there are clear differences as well as the valuing of culture, background, preferences and values. Assimilation is not seen as the way to deal with conflict but rather the creation of new norms which allow scope for employees to do their own thing. Policies and procedures are flexible to be applicable to all and no-one is exploited.

In the section "Organisational barriers to diversity" respondents were asked to rank-order eight potential organisational barriers to diversity with 1 being the most important obstacle to 8 being the least important obstacle. The arithmetic means of the respondents' results, with a weight being added to it for statistical purposes, for each of the barriers are calculated.

In "Valuing of diversity", a respondent's attitudinal predisposition towards or against diversity is assessed to obtain an indication to what extent diversity is either being valued or

resisted. Responses are scored by adding the even and uneven items of their responses. The **even** numbered items score the *multicultural* view that values diversity and the **uneven** numbered items score a *monocultural* view that resists diversity. The bigger the score, the greater the acceptance or resistance of diversity factors, with the maximum score being 40.

The way in which "Management of diversity by managers or supervisors" is perceived by respondents is assessed by analysing three sub-components which add up to an aggregate score, indicating the organisation's overall level of diversity management. Respondents are asked to rate the statements according to a scale expressing the terms *very true*, *somewhat true* and *not true*.

After a first-round fault identification was completed, the final printout of data was prepared and the inadequacy of the sample regarding advanced statistical inference was emphasised. This problem is exacerbated in different levels of interpretation of data due to the fact the representation per category are as follows: a) Female: 13 of 25; b) Blacks: 5 to 25; c) Top/Senior management: 5 of 25. For this reason the results are presented merely in order to establish some format for a possible future, full-scale analysis with a representative sample.

RESULTS

Symptoms of diversity related problems

The respondents are requested to indicate whether a specific symptom is applicable or present in their working environment. Of the 16 symptoms that have come to be associated with diversity problems, the following are also present at the university reflecting in a 63% presence of usual symptoms: a) a lack of diverse staff at all levels; b) difficulty in communicating due to limited or heavily accentuated Afrikaans; c) ethnic, racial or gender jokes; d) complaints about discrimination in promotion, pay and performance reviews; e) lack of social interaction between members of diverse groups; f) increase in grievances by members of non-mainstream groups; g) difficulty in recruiting and retaining members of different groups; h) mistakes and productivity problems due to employees not understanding directions; i) perceptions that individuals are not valued for their unique contributions; and j) frustrations and irritations resulting from cultural differences.

Openness of the university culture to change

The arithmetic mean of the respondents was obtained: the highest score is 52 with a mean of $X=38$ ($38/60 = 63\%$). Given the smallness of the sample it seems as if the respondents perceive the university culture as not sensitive enough to the fact that change does exist. By doing an item analysis, giving focus to items where less than 50% of the respondents rated these items as applicable, the following items emerge: a) rewards are handed out to suit the preference of the rewarded ways to attract top talent among diverse groups (39%); c) there is an openness to suggestions from people at all levels of the organization (50%); d) performance evaluation measures an employee's adaptation to change (39%); e) we can bring about change very easily (37%); and f) "We've always done it that way".

The relevant means for gender groups are as follows: Female: $X=38.5$; Male: $X=37.7$ indicating no significant difference between the scores of men and women regarding the university's openness to change – they perceive it as understanding the value of change, but not accepting its reality and implementing change more quickly. The means for racial groups are: Black: $X=31.8$; White: $X=39.7$ which suggests a relatively significant difference between the scores of whites and blacks regarding the university's openness to change. Where the mean for blacks lies at the bottom end of the category implying a perception that the university understands the value of change but does not accept its reality, whites feel that the university is almost in the category in which change is being seen as a reality that has to be accepted. The relevant means for different levels of the hierarchy are: Higher level managers:

$X=38.6$ (HLM); Lower level workers: $X=40.27$ (LLW) indicating that there is no significant difference between the scores of HLM and LLW.

Status quo at the university regarding diversity management

The arithmetic means of the respondents for each of the stages were obtained and translated to a percentage: 41.15% of the respondents indicated that the university is in the **monocultural** stage; 32.31% of the respondents indicated that the university is in the **non-discriminatory** stage; and 26.54% of the respondents indicated that the university is in the **multicultural** stage.

The most instructive part of this section emerges from an item-analysis regarding the unchecked (c) responses. The most revealing items are as follows: the university is not seen as family-friendly employer; newcomers are expected to adapt to existing norms; there is diversity among lower (not higher) levels at the university; one needs to adapt to the university culture to learn "the way things are done around here"; managers are held accountable more for productivity than for working effectively with diverse staff; managers are held accountable more for perpetuating existing norms than for building productive work teams with a diverse staff.

Both the male and female respondents believe that the university is primarily in the **monocultural** phase regarding diversity management. Firstly, female respondents felt very strongly about it (45% of females versus males 37%) and secondly where less males feel that the university is **non-discriminating** (males 31%; females 34%), fewer females felt that the university does not have a **multicultural** orientation (females 23%; males 33%). Both the white and black respondents indicate that the university is primarily in the **monocultural** phase regarding diversity management. Noticeable is firstly how strongly the black respondents (blacks 54%; whites 38%) felt about it and secondly that both groups argue that the university does not have a **multicultural** orientation (blacks 15%; whites 29%). A total of 48% of the HLM thinks that university is already in the **non-discriminatory** phase. The LLW group is ambivalent about the university's phase as can be seen in the equal distribution of responses across the categories.

Identifying organizational barriers to diversity

The **three most important** barriers as prioritised by the respondents are: No perceived need to dismantle existing systems to accommodate diversity; Strong belief in a system that favours merit; Annoyance at reverse discrimination.

The prioritised sequences, in order from most to less important, for respectively females/*Need to dismantle existing systems to accommodate diversity*, b) Fear of hiring unskilled employees/*Annoyance at reverse discrimination*, c) Perception that there has been a lot of progress/*Strong belief in a system that favours merit*.

The prioritised sequences, in order from most to less important, for respectively blacks/*white*, are as follows: a) Need to dismantle existing systems to accommodate diversity/*Need to dismantle existing systems to accommodate diversity*, b) Diversity is not seen as a top-priority issue/*Perception that there has been a lot of progress*, c) Fear of hiring unskilled employees/*Annoyance at reverse discrimination*.

The prioritised sequences, in order from most to less important, for respectively HLM/LLW, are as follows: a) Fear of hiring unskilled employees/*Need to dismantle existing systems to accommodate diversity*, b) Cost of implementation of diversity management system/*Strong belief in a system that favours merit*, c) Need to dismantle existing systems to accommodate diversity/*Diversity is not seen as a top-priority issue*.

To what extent is diversity valued at the university?

The respondents' scores are integrated and the uneven items

TABLE 2
EXTENT OF VALUING DIVERSITY AMONG GENDER, RACE GROUPS AND HIERARCHY LEVELS

FACTOR	FEMALE	MALE	BLACK	WHITE	HLM	LLW
Multi	33,69	31,82	32,6	32,89	33,6	33,5
Mono	24,53	24,18	23,0	24,73	21,0	24,9
Aggregate	<u>9,16</u>	<u>7,64</u>	<u>9,6</u>	<u>8,14</u>	<u>12,6</u>	<u>8,6</u>

are subtracted from the even items (as per prescribed procedure) with the following results:

Multicultural view (even-numbered items):	32.8/40 (82%)
Monocultural view (uneven-numbered items):	-24.3/40 (60.7%)
Aggregate attitude of whether diversity is valued	<u>+8.5 (21.3%)</u>

When looking only at the score of the even items, it seems as though the respondents perceive the university to have a culture which values diversity. Comparing this result with the findings of the other sections will eventually indicate the extent to which this perception is supported by other results. There is already an indication of differences about this perception as is evident in the high score on the monocultural items. A truly diverse culture will (ideally) score 0 (nil) on the *monocultural view* which will mean that the score below the line, reflecting the diversity valuing culture, totals 40.

In Table 2 the same pattern is established in which the stronger multicultural view (where diversity is valued) is expressed among the gender and race groups and hierarchical levels. In all instances the monocultural views still received very high scores in relation to the ideal 0 (nil).

How is diversity managed in your environment?

When the subtotal scores of the three sub-components are added, the final score regarding the university's overall management of diversity is:

Individual attitudes and beliefs	12.56
Organizational values and norms	6.92
Management practices and policies	7.64
Total aggregate score for diversity management	<u>27.12</u>

Out of a possible 56, the score achieved indicates that the university is 48% effective in managing diversity – "Only when all three of the levels of organization functioning work in concert, diversity is effectively managed as a corporate asset" (Gardenswartz & Rowe, 1993, p.267).

The scores for Organisational values and norms and Management practices are the lowest. Serious attention regarding Organisational values and norms has therefore to be given to whether: There are diverse staff at all levels; Racial and/or gender jokes are tolerated; Formation of gender and/or ethnic groups is encouraged; Mentoring programmes for women and/or people of colour have been instituted; There is high turnover among women and/or people of colour; Policies are flexible enough to accommodate everyone; Resources are spent on diversity programmes; and Top management backs up its value on diversity with action.

Issues to be addressed in Management practices and policies include the following: Do managers have a track record of hiring and promoting diverse employees; Do managers hold all people equally accountable; Are managers flexible, structuring benefits that fit all employees; Appreciation of differences can be seen in the rewards managers give; One criterion of a manager's performance review is developing the diversity of the section's staff; Managers get active

participation from all employees in meetings; Multicultural work teams exist and are functioning harmoniously; Managers effectively use problem-solving skills to deal with language differences and other culture clashes; and Managers have effective strategies to use when one group refuses to work with another.

Once again the same pattern is established between the gender, race groups and hierarchical levels. Males and females perceive Individual attitudes and beliefs to be the strongest developed of the diversity components. Organizational values and norms are significantly underdeveloped (6.9 from a possible 18) and Management practices and policies are also very low, with males scoring these slightly higher. The total in both cases, expressed as effectiveness percentages, are 47.93% and 48.92% respectively, both gender groups show that diversity as corporate asset is not being managed optimally. Both race groups perceive Individual attitudes and beliefs to be the strongest developed of the diversity components. Organizational values and norms are significantly underdeveloped (40.34%) and Management practices and policies are also very low (50.45%), with whites scoring relatively higher. Both race groups show that diversity as corporate asset is not being managed optimally – with blacks feeling more so than whites. The low score of blacks regarding Management practices (4.2/20 = 21% effectivity) is significant. Both hierarchical levels perceive Individual attitudes and beliefs to be the strongest developed of the diversity components, with LLW scoring higher than HLM in this case. Organizational values and norms are significantly underdeveloped (48.21%) and Management practices and policies are also very low (53.23%), with LLW scoring these relatively higher. Both hierarchical levels show that diversity as corporate asset is not being managed optimally.

Structural integration at the university

The information presented above had been acquired by means of questionnaires and reflect respondents' subjective perceptions regarding specific questions. Data was also requested from the Personnel Department with reference to the composition of the university's personnel regarding permanent and part-time employees.

The following proportions, relative to a total of 5 445 employees, are visible in Table 3: Gender – Men: N=3 048 (59.95%), Women: N=2 397 (44.02%); Race – Blacks: n=1 068 (19.61%), Coloureds: n=12 (0.22%), Indians: n=4(0.07%), Whites: n=4 361 (80.01%) The distribution of *people of colour* along organizational level was not available.

DISCUSSION

Within the context of socio-political changes currently being experienced and managed in South Africa, it is expected of all tertiary institutions to become multicultural. The university aims to deliver an excellent product to 27 000 students with the help of 5 445 employees but as the largest residential university has only recently embarked on this journey towards creating a diverse workforce. Based on the principle of academic excellence and the fact that employees work with intellectual capital instead of company financial assets, the university reserves the right to require that the best candidate for a position be appointed.

TABLE 3
COMPOSITION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S STAFF

FUNCTION	BLACK			INDIAN			WHITE					
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T			
Academic	9	4	13	0	0	0	2	1	3	1319	642	1961
Academic Support	366	90	456	2	0	2	0	1	1	571	1209	1780
Student Services	9	6	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	39	66
Management & Admin	20	2	22	1	6	7	0	0	0	100	198	298
PF&M ¹	445	113	558	2	0	2	0	0	0	155	60	215
Marketing	3	1	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	16	25	41
Total	852	216	1068	6	6	12	2	2	4	2188	2173	4361

A frequency distribution of the potential symptoms of diversity-related problems show that 10 of the 16 symptoms fall between the area of 40 to 60% presence of problems. Due to this high number of symptoms being present at the university, the issue of diversity should get serious attention.

If it has been established that a company needs to address diversity, the obvious issue is whether that company is actually open towards change. The results suggest that the university is relatively unresponsive towards the necessity for change. The question to be asked now is which *Barriers* are preventing the university from changing into a multicultural organization? As mentioned earlier, these barriers serve to perpetuate the present equilibrium of the organizational system. The marking schedule employed in the questionnaire, forced respondents to prioritise 8 given barriers without the option of adding or dropping some. The barriers with the highest priority are: No need exists to accommodate diversity, Strong belief in a system that favours merit and Annoyance at reverse discrimination. These barriers are possibly symptoms of the strongly embedded monocultural stage at the university, exacerbated by its unresponsiveness regarding change. Almost half the respondents indicated that the university is still in the **monocultural stage**. This result as well as those relating to the prioritised barriers, contrast with the findings of the minor research results obtained from a Human & Hofmeyr study (Strydom, 1995) where it was reported that environment is perceived to be conducive to advancement.

Regarding the attitudinal predisposition of employees, the respondents reported a very positive attitude towards diversity which correlates to a degree with the minor studies cited earlier. It is interesting to note how the monocultural stage indicator finds expression in the strongly opposing monocultural attitude expressed in the Valuing diversity section of the results. The total aggregate score for the Management of diversity consists of Individual attitudes and beliefs, Organization values and norms and Management practices and policies. The conclusion from this section is that, employees' personal attitudes are supportive of the concept of affirmative action, equal employment opportunity and diversity management. When it comes to practice as expressed in the university's norms, procedures and policies, they leave much to be desired. The concepts which drives procedures and policies, are values and norms and in that respect the respondents' score is extremely low, signifying a vacuum in the base structure required for establishing a multicultural organization, *i.e.* diverse workforce. This statement is supported by the test of the university's structural integration (see Table 2) and although no ratios for interlevel gap-analysis could be computed, proportions between minor and major groups seems out of balance.

As far as can be established, the university did not have

a published value structure which contains relevant norms and values at the time this research was undertaken. Such a document could contain agreed upon, integrating values which would serve to steer employees' behaviour along acceptable lines. The absence of such a document has the effect that no integrated view regarding organizational life can be established, resulting in the low scores in the management of diversity section.

Due to the mentioned problem regarding the small sample, no conclusions will be drawn about the cross-referencing of sections and classes of employees. It will be worthwhile, in a full-scale follow-up analysis, to do cross-referencing of scores. Consider for example the difference in scores between blacks and top management regarding university's stage of progress towards a multicultural organization: 54% of the black respondents perceive university to be at the monocultural stage where only 17% of higher level managers perceive the university to be there.

Conclusion

According to Human (1991), the optimal form of the management of diverse cultures originates where a diverse workforce is established in which each group is developed on the grounds of merit. With reference to Paul Simon's concert in Central Park she made the comment that: "Out of managing this diversity [Paul's multi-cultural group] - where each individual makes his own contribution on merit - comes a unique and unforgettable fusion of instruments and voices: a sound which is both European and African, modern and traditional. And it works! Moreover, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts" (1991, p.27). The University has a role to play in the South African environment to empower its employees in order realise Clem Sunter's *High road*-scenario. It must be done by supplying relevant, high-level education to members of the community through an empowered workforce. If managers at the university, whether academic or supporting, top management or lower level managers, do not make internal adjustments and accept the realities of the new South Africa, the university will be unable to achieve its mission.

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