Chapter 2: Literature Review

The fields which this literature review explores are threefold. The first is that of diversity management and its application within South African companies. Attitude and behavioural change management as applied to the South African situation are closely linked to the management of diversity. In this case study, I focus also on the role of the educator as a healer within the South African workplace and I explore how this role is reflected in the use of experiential learning methods with individuals and groups.

Diversity and Diversity Management

In this section I investigate various definitions of diversity: What is it? Who defines it? What language is used to define diversity and how does this language reinforce or adjust the framework that structures our thinking? To what extent can we deconstruct these frameworks?

In South African companies, diverse groups consist of adult males and females of all ages from a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds and language groups, who hold various religious beliefs or no belief-system. Each person’s childhood and life experience differs. Each person holds a specific sexual orientation and all people interact within a company or organisation which, in most cases, adheres to a hierarchy of authority and power. This means diversity management is a political subject. Within companies, power is in the hands of senior management. ‘The dominant culture of business management in South Africa is historically British in origin with some American influences playing a role later in the twentieth century’ (Luhabe, W.2002). Luhabe spends most of her book, ‘Defining Moments’ explaining how deeply rooted and subtle discrimination is in South African organisations. The management of companies is still mainly in the hands of white males, she notes. Our corporate culture is unexamined; we keep those who are different out of informal networks of communication, we place obstacles in the career paths of black line managers thus making it almost impossible for them to reach their potential. Here potential equals power within the company. Luhabe also mentions the lack of role models for black trainee managers and withdrawal of support for black managers when they need it most. Luhabe explains how the ‘glass ceiling’ impacts on black male managers.
“Whilst black men do experience the glass ceiling, it is for them based more on fit than experience. Fit in this case means whether they are comfortable with their white peers, speak about the same things, do the same things. In other words, other racial groups qualify for promotion into senior management if they assimilate its values. It has nothing to do with the value a person adds to an organisation. Value is only recognised if it looks similar to what everyone else contributes. This explains why most companies are cynical about diversity. In their view there are pre-determined criteria which make a person eligible for an executive position.”

Luhabe, W: 2002:173

In my investigation I will be taking diversity management as a political subject and applying it to the situation in South Africa with particular reference to race, and to gender where appropriate. This includes looking at Affirmative Action with its successes and failures. If it were not for Affirmative Action there might be no diversity in the workplace. I discuss Affirmative Action later in this chapter.

Effective diversity management does not seek to acculturise the minority or different racial group into the culture of the dominant group within the company, but rather to harmonise the two different cultures to the advantage of the company. It helps to reduce friction from cultural and racial stereotyping and conditioning and from victimization. It aims not to ignore racial, cultural and gender differences but to prevent these from making a section of the workforce unhappy and unproductive, and thus harming the company’s business.

Qunta, S: 1994:41

While I agree with Qunta in the question of acculturisation, “harmonizing” does not happen by itself. For people to move away from cultural and racial stereotyping and conditioning requires that individuals work at a conscious level to change their attitudes. This, in turn, requires that they probe their personal and collective pasts to ferret out internalised racism, sexism, homophobia and other areas of resistance to difference.

Victimisation is a serious result of our Apartheid past, as is shame and guilt. Qunta says that race, culture and gender should not be “ignored”. The differences will not be celebrated either, it seems, and must not be allowed to make employees “unhappy.” In Qunta’s definition it is clear
that the focus of diversity management is profit and production. It implies that people are utilities from which a small group of share-holders reap significant rewards.

The average worker views ‘profit’ as a symbol of capitalist apartheid exploitation; it is something in which workers have had no stake and very little interest. Yet they face the continuous threat of losing their jobs if profits are not maximised. Surely this is the most negative type of employee motivation yet conceived. Fuhr, 1993:88

Cleghorn’s opinion is that business needs to understand that “diversity includes everyone, it is not something that is defined by race or gender. It encompasses age, background, education, and personality. It includes lifestyle, physical challenge and geographic origin” (Cited in Callanan, 1998:11).

While I agree with Cleghorn, the situation in South Africa is that we have been conditioned into thinking through the lens of race and gender. People have been pocketed for generations along these lines. The new order is attempting to broaden these lines and open up the concept of diversity to include all other aspects of individuality.

Prasad explains that diversity management needs to be planned. It must be systematic and include commitment. This begins at the recruitment phase. He also mentions a key element which is to retain the recruited employees (Thomas 1992). Diversity management needs to be viewed as positive, both on an individual level and on the level of the nature of contemporary organisations. (Cox, 1991). It calls for active recognition and appreciation of multi-culturism.

Historically speaking, the mono-cultural organization is dying or dead. Both in the USA, in South Africa and England, the nature of the workforce is multicultural and without this culturally diverse workforce corporations cannot function effectively. However, the situation in South Africa differs from the USA in that in South Africa, the majority of people were treated as inferior and it is in the new integration of employees in the workplace where the bruises of the past impact on the productivity of the present.
Organizations should concentrate on the recognition of diversity and not be consumed by the search for commonality. They should go to great lengths to understand the political, social, and ideological complexities that exist in our troubled land. It is of no benefit to speak of such shared values as respect, dignity and honour when the grassroots issues such as violence, township stress, transport, education, health and housing have not been properly addressed.

Fuhr, 1993:90

One’s ability to accept difference takes place within a social and organisational structure where language often reflects attitudes. ‘Managing’ diversity sounds to me like an attempt to control ‘it’ ensuring that the person doing the ‘managing’ is not swamped under ‘it’ and is able to retain her or his position and all that the position entitles her or him to. “Diversity”, accordingly, is a good noun because it has a “generous feel to it, it is welcoming, inclusive, embracing.” (Caws, 1994:381).

Euphemism appears to be the lingua-franca of the diversity literature. Terms such as apartheid, hate, bigotry, even racism, are assiduously avoided. It is this evasive vocabulary, among other features, that should clue us to the boundaries, that is, the basic euphemistic purpose of the diversity literature as a linguistic structure.”

Cavanaugh, 1997:48

“Diversity” is an all-embracing term which, in much of the literature, avoids the nub. Because dealing with people who are different to us is conscious and often hard work, we attempt to dismiss the nitty-gritty of it and couch it in terms that appear deceptively easy and comfortable. The truth is that words are social conventions. We have fixed meanings to them and tend to forget that those meanings can and must change. “Words such as ‘the business cycle’ and ‘management’ and ‘race’ are not autonomous ‘things’ but culturally relative and contingent social interactions” (Cavanaugh, 1997: 37). I discuss the importance of multilingualism towards the end of this section.

Prasad mentions that “few scholarly attempts have been made to understand exactly what diversity offers and how it might be influencing organizational change” (Prasad, 1997:4). In South Africa diversity is not merely an influence on organizational change, it is the catalyst leading to it. South Africa introduced employment equity laws which compel companies to include people of colour, women, and disabled people in their organizations. Few organizations
had voluntarily recruited black\textsuperscript{1} staff, so the government had little option but to introduce affirmative action.

\textbf{Racism}

\begin{quote}
Black men and women have always constituted the majority of the workforce but as unskilled, cheap and replace-able labour. With the introduction of black managers into the predominantly white workplace South Africans had to deal with racism.

\textit{Biko, 1978:50}
\end{quote}

According to Koopman (1997) there are two kinds of racism generally: classical and modern. Classical racism is explicit. “This ‘brand’of racism involves behaviours, practices and attitudes that overtly define black people as inferior to (or less than) white people.” One example she gives is the practice of white women keeping separate eating and drinking utensils for their black domestic worker/s, and calling people by a Christian, Afrikaans or English name rather than their birth name or title and surname.

Modern racism, according to Koopman (1997) is defined as “the expression in terms of abstract ideological symbols and symbolic behaviours of the feeling that black people are violating cherished values and making illegitimate demands for changes in the racial \textit{status quo}.” White people continue to exclude and discriminate against black people but the “excuses” given are worded in other ways, for example: “Explanations for the withdrawal of white children from state schools as ‘It’s not the blacks; it’s the large number of children per class’.”

Modern racism includes dysfunctional rescuing which, according to Koopman, “is characterised by an unconscious or conscious assumption that black people need to be helped as they cannot help themselves.” The corollary to this is that some black people tend to see white people as those who can help them out of their situation. This is a form of dependency resulting from the \textit{Apartheid} days. However, there are black people who have been considerably encouraged, financially and in other ways, by whites and have succeeded because of this. An example is

\textsuperscript{1} Black in this context is a general term for African, Indian and people of mixed-race origin, denoted as a ‘coloured’ in the \textit{Apartheid} era.
Mark Mathabane the author of the novel *Kaffir Boy* who was sponsored by a yoga teacher and went on to international success as a writer.

Blaming the victim is another form of modern racism. “The victim of racism is blamed for behaviour that is a consequence of structural oppression” (Koopman, 1997). An example given is: “Why don’t black people speak up and say what it is they want?” Structural oppression occurs when society, through its laws, makes it impossible for most or some members of that society to claim their rights because they have none; to speak out because those in power are not interested in what they say; to set goals for their lives because their choices are severely limited.

Avoidance of contact is where people make excuses for not having to interact socially with people of other race or ethnic groups. Whites often give transport reasons (“The guests will not be able to get here because there are no buses to where I live’ or “I’d never find their place in Soweto”) as an excuse or they say that they cannot supply the hospitality which black people might expect. Koopman also writes about denying difference and I explore this later with reference to the work of Jacques.

Internalised racism is a result of *Apartheid* and according to Koopman (1997:23) this means “getting around the system. It involves manipulating others or the system through guilt games or illicit activities, acting out anger, playing stupid, clowning and being invisible”.

It includes black people blaming the system by not taking responsibility for actions or by inactivity. The question of racism is profound and a full discussion is beyond the scope of this research report. The point is that racism and internalised racism have been cultivated by *Apartheid* and in *post-Apartheid* times they accompany us into the workplace.

**Affirmative Action**

“The advancement of blacks was viewed as a pain in the organization’s neck, a nuisance factor to be managed” (Madi 1993). Madi points out that in the late 1980s and early 1990s black employees were initially taken on as window-dressing or a token of company’s compliance with Affirmative Action principles. No authority was given to the new recruit and the work given was
not on a par with the capability of the new recruit. There were a number of ways in which new black recruits were unable to develop or to take their rightful places in the corporate ladder.

According to Craayenstein (1994:59), who canvassed experts in 26 companies, the factors which most frequently contributed to the failure of Affirmative Action were: an absence of consensus on affirmative action issues; top management not holding line management accountable for progress; Affirmative Action not a key performance area for line managers; and consequences were not attached to the behaviour of line managers.

“Affirmative Action was the removal of arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to employment when the barriers operate invidiously to exclude on the basis of racial or other impermissible classification” (Fullinwider, R:1995). Some of the consequences of Affirmative Action have been the increase of racial polarization; an ‘entitlement culture’ among some black staff members; factionalism among blacks (Africans, Coloureds, Indians) as victims compete for recognition and the lowering of performance standards in favour of the correct numbers (Madi, 1993:29).

Khoza states that Affirmative Action “is a form of positive discrimination used as a measure to correct imbalances created by generations of oppression” (1993:77). Although it is discussed under various terms he says such as black advancement or strategic resourcing, “the issue remains: the need to redress discriminatory employment practices.”

The White American male

According to Roy Jacques, five myths often expressed as truths by angry white males are:

1. I’m not responsible for the past.
2. Every person deserves to be judged on his own (sic) merits.
3. All the good jobs are now being held for women and minorities.
4. Qualified white males are being passed over for unqualified others.
5. I’m not dominant; I’m just as powerless as you.”

Cited in Prasad, 1997: 88
Jacques explains that the past is not past in that it continues to impact on the present where privilege and exclusion intersect. If the opportunities had been the same for all people, then every person would deserve to be judged on her/his own merits. Opportunities have not been the same, not in America and not in South Africa. As Affirmative Action continues, white males in South Africa will not be appointed if there is a black person who can fill the position. This is to correct the imbalances of the past and, according to Jacques, the extent of the white male outcry is again an indication of the expectation that there should always be work available for white males.

Jacques looks at who holds most of the “good jobs” in the USA and his conclusion is similar to the South African corporate climate where most of our organisational power is still in the hands of white males. The few women at the helm are insignificant compared to the total population of women available. “The success or failure of the dominant group is judged by the incidence of failure within the members of that group. The success or failure of the marginal group is judged by the incidence of success within the members of that group” (Jacques, 1997:87).

Affirmative Action was introduced in South Africa so that previously disadvantaged people could play a greater role in the economy. In so doing, a middle class can emerge and over time, black people will control major corporations. If people are dismissed unfairly or recruited unjustly – and this includes white people – they have access to legal procedures. Many white males I have spoken to have adjusted their stance and have become mentors. Others have left the corporate world to become entrepreneurs. This is helping the economy. Dominance is not always a question of numbers.

McIntosh, a white American female researcher in Women’s studies, lists 46 situations where white people are not judged as representative of the white race when they act, whereas black people would be.

- Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin colour not to work against the appearance that I am financially stable.
- I am not made acutely aware that my shape, bearing or body odour will be taken as a reflection on my race.
- I can be late for a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race.

( McIntosh, 1993)
Many of the 46 situations apply to white South Africans. What McIntosh points out is that we are not aware that we are white, or that our whiteness gives us an advantage. At the same time there is a fear among white South Africans that they are now “the victim” in what is called ‘reverse Apartheid.’

A prominent black journalist describes his move to the predominantly white Northern Suburbs of Johannesburg. His telephone rings with callers “with two burning questions: did we get a new maid (one that wasn’t from Malawi) after we fired the old one, and how are we coping with the maintenance of the swimming pool?” (John Matshikiza: 2000:114). He satirises the transition of black people to so-called ‘white’ suburbs. He also highlights the South African dilemma of labels relating to race and how now white South Africans want to be included.

These whites cannot reasonably be called “blacks” all of a sudden, just because they want to be seen to be on the side of the good guys, the Mandelas and so on. So they revert to a term that unfortunately used to be reserved for blacks but gave a confusing continental identity as well, namely, “African.” But for many blacks the fact that they used to be called “Africans” (and didn’t much care for it at the time) has left them with the lingering belief that the term is synonymous with “black,” just like it used to be in the bad old days. Therefore whites should stay out. The issue is uniquely and horribly South African.

Matshikiza, 2000:154

Affirmative Action was the start of a process. This process developed into “Diversity Management” with the emphasis on how businesses ‘managed’ a diverse staff, how they kept some form of control. A third stage in the process is Black Economic Empowerment. I would now like to define the term and briefly describe both its growth and its results.

**Black Economic Empowerment**

The use of the word ‘empowerment’ reinforces the fact that economic advancement is about power. If I am making a contribution to the wealth of the country I am in a powerful position. Sishi defines ‘Economic Empowerment’ as power acquired by individuals or collectives to be economically self-reliant’ (1998:7). There is no longer any dependency on altruism nor on the
law. Black Economic Empowerment is about money and power in the hands of the black community. It is neither tokenism nor some sort of control but it is black men and women taking the future of the country into their own hands with no apologies or asking for permission. It is a progression from a white-owned economy to a shared economy.

Early in South African history black business consisted of micro enterprises mainly in the informal sector. When these businesses were financed this was called Black Economic Advancement (Sishi 1998:2). Today black business men and women are acquiring stakes in large companies as these ‘unbundle’ and finally own a significant stake in the economy.

Until as recently as 1993, only 13 percent of the population had the means of producing what made the economy work, with less than 2 percent of the shares listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) belonging to black businesses. Since the BEE initiatives, there are 70 transactions that have taken place which involve 17 companies with an approximate market capitalisation of R38 billion. This, in percentage terms, amounts to 11 percent of the JSE capitalisation.

Cited in Sishi: 1998: 8

In 1976 in South Africa, 87 percent of the land was owned by whites and 13 percent of the land was allocated to the black population (Biko 1979:81). We continue to see the rich grow richer and the poor grow poorer. Empowerment occurs by means of deals which include the formation of strategic alliances, the acquisition of stakes from corporates (unbundling), which includes leveraged buy outs and the formation of joint-ventures. This means that black investors “have to raise funds, draw up a sound business plan and have a clear vision and capable leadership with good track records in order to be considered for these deals.” Further, according to Sishi, they need to have made their mark politically and socially, given evidence of their abilities as entrepreneurs, and must have strong managerial skills.

Unfortunately this movement is not yet succeeding. Few people, according to Sishi, are being empowered and now a black elite is emerging. The broader base of black people still remains excluded from Black Economic Empowerment. (1998: 73). Nonetheless these are early days.
Critical reflection on assumptions and values

Jaques (1997) is Assistant Professor at the California School of Professional Psychology in Alameda California. His work explores the coalescence of the institutions of management in the United States in the period 1870 to 1920. His focus is on developing a better understanding of how the processes through which work practices related to caring, connection, emotion, and/or relationship come to be devalued. He writes about diversity from a gender perspective and with a structural focus. He insists that if we want to embrace diversity in all aspects of our lives, we need to work, not only on changing our attitudes, our language, our belief systems, but on challenging the structures in which these operate.

Even if every individual were to root out his or her discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, systemic factors would still result in our society being deeply skewed in favour of those possessing dominant identities. Critics of this structural problem are not reflecting on my goodness as a person or on my masculinity. I must accept that as a producer of research, an organization member and as a citizen to fail to resist these systemic forces is as much an act of dominance as is face-to-face discrimination. (Italics in original, Jacques, 1997:103)

He lists points he tries to bear in mind such as:

i. I am not a bad person because I passively receive privilege, but it is a moral and ethical act to fail to question and resist that privilege.
ii. If there is a problem those with more power have more responsibility, regardless of what we have done or not done to produce the problem.
iii. The journey is endless. I will always have to work with my socialized baggage; I will always embody my ideals imperfectly.


Perhaps, therefore, it is the task of organisations in South Africa to assist staff to “work with their socialized baggage.” In this way, companies would be more likely to insist on full participation in diversity workshops so that attitudes can be changed where necessary. This is a shift from taking responsibility for oneself, to a corporate or social responsibility. Reflecting on one’s values and attitudes implies that one is a critical thinker.
When we think critically we become aware of the diversity of values, behaviours, actions and social structures and artistic forms in the world. Through realising this diversity, our commitments to our own values actions and social structures are informed by a sense of humility; we gain an awareness that others in the world have the same sense of certainty we do- but about ideas, values, and actions that are completely contrary to our own.

Brookfield, 1987:5

Brookfield’s choice of the word ‘humility’ is the lynch-pin. Our response can also be arrogance, the thinking that judges others as “less than” us. Whether we respond to, or resist, the other will depend on that judgement. Perhaps the very act of being able to think critically safeguards us against arrogance. Critical thinking helps us to know that we can change aspects of our lives. Brookfield points out that this is an emotional response and that emotions are intertwined with critical thinking. The subject of emotions is not generally regarded as ‘businesslike’. How does, let’s say, a human resource manager, succeed in creating an environment in which employees agree to identify and challenge the assumptions upon which their identities and livelihoods stand? “If our thought structures are the ways in which we organize our perceptions to make sense of the world, it seems natural that we would have a strong vested interest in maintaining those structures” (Meyers 1986: 96).

Assumptions and thought structures are based on beliefs. Once we begin to question them we put ourselves at risk, according to Brookfield. Yet risk is vital if we are to venture into the unknown and if we are to become critically aware. Carl Rogers insists that life is a process where change in inevitable (Brookfield, 1987:115). I agree and am also aware that our ability to change or to ask questions that could lead to change depends on a number of factors, including the nature of the situation (life-threatening, loss of work, sudden illness); how we coped with change in our past and the level of security we feel as an adult in relation to our experience as a child. To bring about change within the workplace ‘the manager calculates the risks involved in different courses of action and then decides, knowing that success is uncertain;’ (Brookfield 1987: 143). I would argue that a “confident, self-assured manager with a strong self-image who does not feel threatened by losing face or failing or is ready to accept that possibility” (Brookfield 1987: 156) is more likely to succeed in facilitating meaningful change.
Our attitudes rest on our beliefs which are supported by our values. According to Rokeach (Cited in Reich and Adcock, 1976:18) “a value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” In the field of attitude change and the management of diversity, one needs to investigate beliefs and value systems.

A number of authors reviewed in the literature agree that effective diversity management must be concerned with issues beyond gender, colour or other demographics and that it must address deep rooted values which drive the cultures of individuals and organizations.

Ndlovu, 1998:13

“If values occupy a central role in our lives, then this need to achieve standards of excellence becomes conceptually tied to our need to maintain and enhance self-esteem” (Reich and Adcock 1976: 19). If self-esteem begins in childhood, as I am convinced it does, then a return to our childhood experiences or patterns of thought and perceptions offers an opportunity to critically reflect on those experiences, thoughts and perceptions. In doing so, we learn and are able to transform ourselves.

Meaning perspectives are, for the most part, uncritically acquired in childhood through the process of socialization, often in the context of an emotionally charged relationship with parents, teachers or other mentors.

Mezirow, 1990:3

According to Mezirow (1990) our ability to interpret an experience gives that experience meaning. Once we have grasped the meaning we move towards making a decision or we take action. Our process needs to be critical in that we take a long, hard look at our beliefs at the time when they were constructed. Those beliefs resulted in our having interpreted an event in a particular way. Once we re-interpret that event, we change our beliefs and have the potential to act differently.
For example, one of the white office staff held the belief that she had nothing to learn from a black factory worker. In listening to the life stories of the factory workers, she discovered their courage and fortitude in demanding circumstances and her attitude changed to one of openness and a willingness to learn from them.

“Perhaps even more central to adult learning than elaborating established meaning schemes is the process of reflecting back on prior learning to determine whether what we have learned is justified under present circumstances” (Mezirow:1990:5) It follows, therefore, that when we are unable or unwilling to reflect, change eludes us; our growth is restricted. “Adulthood is the time for reassessing the assumptions of our formative years that have often resulted in distorted views of reality” (Mezirow, 1990:13).

To free ourselves of our own bias, Mezirow advocates exposing our perspectives on meaning to “rational and reflective discourse” (Mezirow, 1990:10). We try out our ideas on others. In this context it is important, I think, that we are able to listen to people whose experiences may have been different to ours, or the meanings they gave to those experiences differ from ours. Listening is a form of respect for diversity.

If staff members view difference with respect and simultaneously value the uniqueness of each person, the likelihood is they more easily move towards incorporating that value at work and perhaps even transfer it to their personal lives. Once this action takes place we are no longer in a reflective mode but in a more active process. However, according to Sword and Blackman in Reich and Adcock (1976) if I work next to a person who is not lazy (as was expected) my attitude might change towards that person but only in his role as worker. Generalisations to other situations are minimal because we are comfortable holding stereotypes (Reich and Adcock, 1976:55). This implies that in order for people to mix and for attitudes to change in a multi-racial environment people need to engage with each other within and beyond their work environment.

How we acquire attitudes is still seen as a ‘matter of theoretical controversy’ (Reich and Adcock, 1976: 39). Much literature around attitude formation, beliefs and values covers the personality and how particular personalities might differ with regard to the acquisition of attitudes. Adorno
and his colleagues (Reich and Adcock, 1976:52) insist that the prejudiced person is basically insecure. Class impacts on attitude. “If the class we belong to defines the individual’s environment to some extent, then the values transmitted through the socialization process must be congruent with the class structure” (Reich and Adcock, 1976: 48). Insecurity, low self-esteem and social class can contribute towards prejudice and the scapegoat theory (where negative emotions towards oneself are displaced onto another person, group etc.) This, however, does not mean that people from higher social orders may not be insecure nor that they do not hold prejudices.

A difficulty lies in the evaluation of attitude change. Within an organization, there is pressure to conform to ‘acceptable behaviour’ because one’s livelihood might depend on it. It is possible for an employee to maintain ‘acceptable behaviour’ within working hours and then shrug it off once outside work. There is also the debate around an educator’s right to act as a catalyst in order to change attitudes. I intend to find my way towards answering these questions by continuing to explore the most recent work on attitudinal and behavioural change within an organisation.

Caring and healing

Part of managing diversity is creating a safe space where employees can learn about themselves and their attitudes. The educator, acting as a facilitator or catalyst, creates this space. The word ‘safe’ implies a risk factor. People in work organisations tend to compete. Talking about intimate aspects of oneself can be threatening in that some people believe what they reveal may be used against them in their climb up the corporate ladder. Yet, in order to understand oneself it is necessary to be heard, to be seen, to be recognized by another. In other words the element of ‘care’ is essential. A caring relation is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings – a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for person. (Noddings, 1992: Ch.3:1) Noddings describes the state of consciousness of the carer in terms of engrossment and motivational displacement. Engrossment is when the carer is fully receptive to another person and ‘I really hear, see or feel what the other tries to convey’ (Noddings,1992: Ch.3:2) Motivational displacement is a willingness to be concerned with another, to put her/his needs before one’s own.
Experiencing motivational displacement, one begins to think. Just as we consider, plan and reflect on our own projects, we now think what we can do to help another. Engrossment and motivational displacement do not tell us what to do; they merely characterize our consciousness when we care. But the thinking that we do will now be as careful as it is in our own service. We are seized by the needs of another

Noddings, 1992: Ch.3:2

Being ‘seized by the needs of another’ is only possible if we value the other person, not as an object to be manipulated or used to further our own agendas. Our identity has been developed through what we have and what we can consume (Fromm, 1976:65). This means that we have been conditioned to consume. The positive regard of others is based on what we own or wear or drive plus the number of items we buy – from food to CDs to DVDs and everything else that is available, including our natural resources. Our identity is not about who we are, the calibre of person we are, our ethics, our morals, our integrity. According to Lauzon (1998) adult education needs to rise to two challenges: (1) helping learners develop ways of being-in-the-world that respects the natural limits of the creation, and (2) helping learners live with diversity (Lauzon, 1998:319). These two are related. When Lauzon refers to diversity he includes both natural diversity and cultural diversity. The soul, with its emphasis on myth, imagination, story thrives on difference (diversity). Furthermore, the most resilient ecosystems are diverse ecosystems and Lauzon thinks that is true with cultural systems too. The very creativity we need to meet the challenges we face will be found in diverse ecosystems and cultural systems, he believes. Homogenous systems are very vulnerable to change and that is what economic globalization offers (Lauzon 1998). Therefore when diversity between people is valued in companies, systems develop that can withstand the vagaries of economic shifts.

Lauzon claims we need a psychology of the soul in order to develop as spiritual beings and this involves being able to heal ourselves and be whole again. ‘In order to imagine what soul is we need to look at the forms of our consciousness, the cages in which we sit and the iron bars that form the grids and defences of our perceptions (Hillman 1975:127). This involves using our imagination and envisioning.
Thus soul psychology is egalitarian and respectful of different perspectives by definition and searches not for grand narratives but invites the telling of a plethora of stories so that our histories may teach rather than be forgotten, repressed, or denied.

Lauzon, 1998:321

Regrettably it is not always enough to tell one’s story; the element of being heard by a caring human being who responds and accepts one’s pain is, in my mind, necessary for healing and closure to begin.

What characterises the consciousness of one who is cared for? Reception, recognition, and response seem to be primary. The cared-for receives the caring and shows that it has been received. This recognition now becomes part of what the carer receives in his or her engrossment, and the caring is completed.

Noddings, 1992:Ch.3:2

Not every person has the same ability to care for others, according to Noddings (1992), but in my opinion this is an essential component for a person who is engaged in bringing about change both within an individual and within an organisation. Noddings discusses how the response of the ‘cared-for’ impacts positively or negatively (if there is no response) on the care giver and how this links to ethics. Within the South African context, our ability to care for one another has become paramount if we wish to become a nation of people who co-operate rather than a nation mired in crime, rape, domestic and child abuse, HIV/AIDS, race and class division and a refusal to move out of the past and build the future in the present.

Louzon argues that it is “through the development of our identity that we cultivate and honour soul” (Louzon, 1998, 321). Our challenge as South Africans is to reclaim our individual identity and, at the same time revisit our cultural and linguistic identities that are rooted in Africa so that we are not absorbed in a culture based only on values of consumption, gain, and the manipulation of others for our own conditioned needs.

Lauzon(1998: 321) mentions that in Sardello’s point of view, self love is central.
Self-love is built into the very nature of human consciousness; it does not have to be learned. What needs to be learned is how to remove all the obstacles of egotism that obscure the immediacy of the experience of self-love.

Sardello, 1995:101-102

Once these obstacles are removed, we are truly free. Recognizing and removing egotism and its roots can take years of inner work and is never completed. In working towards this we become increasingly more liberated from a false sense of identity. Sardello names this an originating activity in that the person serving and the person receiving the service are not separate. There is no expectation on the part of the person being served. There is no dualism. In South Africa we are moving towards self-love, self-acceptance and redefining what we understand as freedom. Whereas before 1994 freedom was about political freedom and rights, it now includes our responsibilities as builders of the country and as individuals released from emotional abuse and psychological slavery under Apartheid.

Experiential Learning
Caring contains within it a sense of respect for the way in which attitudes, beliefs, and values have been formed and how they can alter within the cared-for person. How do we learn to change our attitudes, beliefs and values? Experiential learning is one way. What is experiential learning? ‘Experiential learning occurs when a person engages in some activity, looks back on the activity critically, abstracts some useful insight from the analysis, and puts the result to work (Jones and Pfeiffer, 1983:3).

The Experiential Learning Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concrete Experience</th>
<th>Observations and Reflections</th>
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Source: Smith & Kolb, 1986:12
In Kolb’s diagram there are tensions between concrete experiences and abstract conceptualisations and also between active experimentation – which is the testing the implications of concepts in new situations, as shown in the diagram, - and reflective observation. This makes for a dynamic interaction and one needs to make constant mental shifts to maintain a balance. The question could be asked: “So which is true or more true for me? The concept or the experience or a combination of both?”

Experiential learning holds out certain promises as its emphasis is on the subjective experience of the learner. The person is valued for her own experience rather than only for the knowledge she has gained through theory developed by others. Kolb quotes Schein and Bennis (1965) as adding to the above values a scientific humanistic process which includes a spirit of inquiry, an increased level of consciousness and choice, and an authenticity in relationships. These “offer new hope-filled ideals for the conduct of human relationships and the management of organizations” (Kolb 1984:11).

Not everyone is in full agreement with Kolb. Wildemeersch argues that there are ambiguities between experience and theory. Experiential Learning is about a clash between theory and experience, he writes (Wildemeersch 1992: 30). He “has a problem with the anti-theoretical attitude that rejects the necessary discursive aspects of education” (Wildemeersch 1992: 21). He thinks that learners cannot relate to abstract theory and that they find theory irrelevant. In my experience of training I have found that experiential learning can be a high-excitement mode that can often be left incomplete because of the lack of theorizing or abstracting for later use. Wildemeersch argues that most experience has a theoretical base and therefore the opposition between experiential and theoretical ways of knowing is unproductive and even false. He prefers to discuss this in terms of formal and informal theories instead: the one is implicit and the other is more conceptual. He points out that a teacher needs to take the learner’s point of view seriously even when that learner challenges her formal and informal interpretations of theories. (Wildemeersch 1992:22)
Intellectual stretching may be demanding for a learner but I think that it adds understanding to an experience and gives the learner a sense of not-being-alone in his/her experience. I have found the most fruitful experiences in a learning situation have been when the experience has been discussed and then related to theory. When the theory is lacking I have found the experience lacks a root; it tends to be suspended like a question-mark without a question.

“This emphasis on subjective experience has developed into a strong commitment in the practice of experiential learning to existential values of personal involvement, and responsibility and humanistic values emphasising that feelings as well as thoughts are facts” (Kolb 1984:10).

Wildemeersch also questions the aspect of experiential learning where the learner gives her/his personal meaning to reality. He claims that if we accept that all knowledge is particular and prejudiced, and that universal claims about truth and justice are no longer meaningful then the result would be our inability to take a stance upon specific problems of prejudice and injustice. I think we need universal claims and qualified people who can make judgements based on those claims, but I also think what happens in reality is that each one of us has our own ideas of how to solve problems and what constitutes justice.

When people in organisations are affirmed for who they are, this affirmation may increase their productivity, according to Kolb who states that what we feel is as much a ‘fact’ as a fact (Kolb 1984:10). Their experience of themselves as being acceptable or non-acceptable by the majority of their co-workers, and their ability or refusal to accept people who are not like them makes a difference. When this experience is multiplied, for example, where most people belonging to one group experience the same treatment by most people belonging to another group who also hold power, the effect may be devastating. The experience of people within each group hardens. In a training situation a person can be asked to reflect on his/her attitudes, how those attitudes were formed, what the effect of those attitudes are. In so doing the person realises he has a choice as to which attitudes he will change. But the question is: how do attitudes change?

Perhaps we need to have some idea of how attitudes are formed and then work backwards, as it were, in order to change these attitudes. Humans live in groups and they need to be a member of a group in order to survive (Van Niekerk 1991:5). Part of our survival is our ability to categorize.
As we categorize we invest the category with an emotional content. We either like or dislike the group or category (Allport 1958:22). We also need some certainty around our expectations, for example, if I go to a dentist I am not prepared to find a man with a white top hat standing at a stove. “Lefcourt 1973 suggests that an attitude towards something provides individuals with an illusory feeling of control over things” (Van Niekerk 199:5) We are wary of the unexpected; we need to feel secure.

In the context of this case study I prefer to look at how a prejudiced attitude is formed. According to Allport (1958:12) for prejudice to occur there needs to be an attitude and a belief. For example: ‘I don’t like Spaniards’ is an attitude and ‘Spaniards are emotionally unstable’ is a belief. He states that we need some generalised beliefs concerning a group and this gives rise to our hostile attitude towards that group. The former makes the latter possible to sustain. We pick up these attitudes from our parents, community, society, media, churches, politicians, and from the general and particular rhetoric of our lives.

Positive attachments are essential to life. The young child could not exist without his dependent relationship on a nurturant person. He must love and identify himself with someone or something before he can learn what to hate. Allport, 1958:24

Allport states that we hear little about love-prejudice because it is socially acceptable to love our children. However he also points out that this can lead to the manifestation of antagonism towards the neighbour’s children. “When a person is defending a categorical value of his own, he may do so at the expense of other people’s interest or safety” (Allport 1958:25). According to Harro’s (1982) Cycle of Socialization (See Appendix 8d) there is a point in our socialisation process when there is a possibility of change. According to the diagram, in order to change we need to be educated, or have an experience that changes our belief or attitude or we need to analyse situations and ourselves critically.

If we look South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, we see that negative world opinion towards us grew to such an extent that we became increasingly isolated. This affected our economy. For pragmatic reasons and in the wake of the violence and unrest, the Nationalist government retreated into co-operation with the African National Congress – a force they could no longer
ignore. Faced with a man of such stature such as Nelson Mandela and the majority of people in the country who supported him, the ruling party bowed out as gracefully as they were able to. We had to change to save our lives. Closer interaction between previous opponents became possible and attitudes changed as a result of communication. Prejudiced beliefs were tested and found wanting. All is not yet over, as many people still carry learnt prejudice and hold hardened attitudes. There may be more to healing and transformation than the changing of one’s mind.

**Change involves the whole person**

If one considers the human being as holistic, consisting of a multitude of dimensions, then it stands to reason that addressing more than one dimension of the person can be helpful and even healing to the person.

Therapeutic methods that utilize creative media (music, visual and dramatic arts) are in alignment with the oldest shamanistic tradition of healing, where dance, gestures, dramatic play, song, music, and painting used to be an integral part of medical treatment and were all connected to one another within a concept of the creative wholeness of body, mind and spirit. Spirituality, of which creativity was an integral part, was neither separated from the body nor from the intellect. One of the common factors between the spiritual experience of traditional rites and the theoretical background of therapeutic art is the concept of human nature as being physically, creatively and spiritually undivided. It is in the wholeness of body, mind and soul that individual self-healing resources are to be found. Dupierry in Hampe 1998.

“Intelligence is not an innate internal characteristic of the individual but arises as a product of the ‘interaction between the person and his or her environment’” (Kolb quoting Piaget 1984:12). Kolb states that ‘the notion that healthy adaptation requires the effective integration of cognitive and affective processes is of course central to the practice of nearly all forms of psycho-therapy.’ (Kolb1984:16).

**Multilingualism and its impact on diversity**

If one views therapy as the ability to change based on reflection of experience, what happens in training and development workshops within organisations working towards integrating many
different people is a form of therapy. ‘At the heart of democracy is cultural pluralism, that which
allows us to work and live together without surrendering our identity and at the same time to
work for ways of finding reality-in-identity’ (Pai quoted in Lauzon 1998:132). When a person is
considered as a whole and as having a right to his/her cultural identity the question of what
language the person uses becomes central.

As result of my reading I now see that cultural diversity is a mirror of eco-diversity. The two are
inextricably linked. What is as linked is our ability to maintain contact with our individual soul
and our awareness of each other as one soul. This means we are interdependent on each other
and on our planet. If we attempt to become homogeneous we are going against nature. Thus
language is an essential part of the diversity of the planet and its peoples.

Language diversity, then, is a benchmark of cultural diversity. Language
death is symptomatic of cultural death: a way of life disappears with the
death of a language. The fortunes of language are bound up with those of
its speakers. Language shift and death occur as a response to pressures of
various types - social, cultural, economic and even military - on a
community.

Nettle and Romaine 2000:7

What has happened in South Africa is that western languages were imposed on the majority
of people. In post-Apartheid South Africa many people are reclaiming their own names and
languages. At the same time, English is increasingly embraced by Coloured and African
people as a key to success in a modernizing country. In 2005 the Education Department has
reconsidered its stance teaching through the medium of English, thus opening the debate of
the importance and relevance of one’s home language.

In our languages lies a rich source of the accumulated wisdom of
all humans. Most English-speakers take the present position and status
of English for granted, and do not realise that English was very much
once a minority language initially in all of the places where it has since
become the mother tongue of millions. It has gained its present position
by replacing the languages of indigenous groups such as Native American,
the Celts, and the Australian Aborigines and now many more.

Nettle and Romaine 2000:15
Nettle and Romaine insist that the reason we tend to ignore the death of languages is that we mistakenly believe that if there are many languages it makes it more difficult for us to communicate. We believe it impedes economic development and is a barrier to modernization. The opposite may be the case, for example in Somalia where a high degree of linguistic and religious uniformity exist. According to Nettle and Romaine, in spite of this, a civil war broke out there. “Yet disputes involving language are not really about language, but instead about fundamental inequalities between groups who happen to speak different languages.” (Nettle and Romaine 2000:19).

This is the case in South Africa where those who speak English tend to fall into the higher income bracket and those who speak an African language tend to fall into the lower income bracket. This creates a class consciousness which now cuts across the race groups. Many black learners now discard their home language and many children who attend predominately white schools tend to speak mostly in English.

Summary

This Literature Review highlights the complexity of people learning to relate to one another in organisations that are placed within a history of oppression. This has resulted in a movement from Affirmative Action to the management of diversity to Black Economic Empowerment. Eleven languages and their related cultures add further dimensions. There is a need for a change of attitude at all levels: personal, organisational and communal, yet there remains an ongoing discussion of how this can be facilitated. Although we may struggle to make sense of the context we live in, we can chose to move forward in a way that assures us we will one day live up to our Constitution. If we can learn by experience and base that on solid theory which we understand, and if we are able to receive the kind of education that will foster our critical thinking skills while at the same time encouraging us to be ourselves and to be open to others, we will be more than half-way on our long journey home.
References


