

**DOING HUMAN DIFFERENTLY:
A CRITICAL STUDY OF APPRAISED DIVERSITY DISCOURSES
IN CORPORATE SOUTH AFRICA**

Nceba A. Ndzwayiba

1123180

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Supervisor: Professor Melissa Steyn

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Declaration

I declare that this Thesis titled **DOING HUMAN DIFFERENTLY: A CRITICAL STUDY OF APPRAISED DIVERSITY DISCOURSES IN CORPORATE SOUTH AFRICA** is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signed _____ on _____ day of _____ 20 _____

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late granny, Makhesa Asseneth Ndzwayiba. Enkosi Mpafane, Mchumane, Nozulu liyasa liyasibekela. Your unwavering love, wisdom and daily 4:30 am prayers remain my greatest source of strength and inspiration.

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Abstract

Despite slow pace of transformation in post-apartheid South Africa's corporate sector, the department of labour recently showcased some Johannesburg Stock Exchange listed corporations for executing effective diversity strategies. The strategies and discourses of diversity in these appraised corporations had not been studied scholarly, particularly from a critical perspective.

This inquiry adopted a multiple case study design and the framework of critical diversity literacy to study the nature, texture, and the depth of strategies and discourses of diversity in three of these appraised corporations in the financial, retail, and private healthcare sectors. Research entailed analysis of 35 published documents to examine conceptual framing of diversity; indepth semi-structured interviews with 6 transformation managers to explore prevailing organisational diversity culture and the designed strategies to transform such dynamics; and focus groups with 32 employees from dominant and subordinated groups to gauge the efficacy of executed strategies in promoting equality and social justice.

The findings suggest that appraised corporations mainly complied with prescripts of employment equity law and executed managerial instrumentalism oriented diversity initiatives. Diversity conceptual frameworks regarded inequality, oppression and dominance as historical legacies, rather than present day phenomena that are tied to coloniality of power and being and reproduced through neoliberalism. Diversity initiatives were minimalistic and impelled identity siloism, race and gender blindness, medicalization and hyper-individualisation of disability, nurturing of white fragility, and reproduction of gender binaries. Blacks, women, queer persons and persons with disabilities were barely visible in positions of power, strategic influence and high income. These subjugated groups constantly performed whiteness, normative masculinity, able-bodiedness and heteronormativity in order to fit in. This performance is systematised under the guise of merit without recognising its dehumanising effects. The findings suggest the inadequacy of employment equity legislation driven reform to produce real

equality as this law is a product of ILO's neoliberal "Decent Work" rhetoric. The study contributes to the closure of lacunae concerning paucity of agentic critical diversity studies that examine effective organisational diversity discourses. The study accentuates the importance of situating effective diversity discourses being evaluated in the broader context of contemporary global system of power and related hegemonic ideologies that re-produce inequality. By so doing scholars will be able to analyse the studied diversity discourses holistically and make informed decisions on their efficacy to yield social justice for the marginalised across various intersections of power, inequality and identity differences.

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CHAPTER 1

CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The collapse of the legal scaffolding that held intact colonial-apartheid regimes in South Africa (Steyn & Foster, 2008) was followed by the ushering in of a new democratic dispensation that came to symbolise possibilities, beginnings, and forms of liberation for the oppressed and disenfranchised (Gqola, 2001). In the spirit of realising these imagined possibilities, the newly-elected, racially-representative government has initiated a national transformation trajectory. The transformation trajectory is dismantling the totalitarian colonial-apartheid systems, laws and ideologies; replacing them with transformative processes that are congruent with the ideals of democracy enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No 108 of 1996. Political, economic and social reforms have since ensued resulting in gradual transformation of structures, institutional arrangements, policies, modes of operation and social relations (Ramphela, 2009). New phraseologies such as Archbishop Tutu's coined "Rainbow Nation" (Habib, 1997), Nelson Mandela's "New Nation" (Carlin, 2013), and "Mzansi" (Sokfa, Kaunda, & Madlala, 2015) have also emerged to denote a sense of a South Africa that all could freely identify with as their home. People that were segregated along racial lines are learning to live alongside each other (Ramphela, 2009); and society is being constantly challenged to rethink what it means to be human together (Steyn, 2010). This profound change, as Steyn (2015) posits, demands new skills that are congruent with the emerging social imaginary. Such skills include transcending a singular history, understanding human reality as multi-layered and multi-dimensional, fluctuating, ambivalent, and open to new possibilities (Steyn, 2015).

Notwithstanding these promising yet limited transitional changes, post-apartheid South Africa is haunted by the ghosts (Ramphela, 2009) of racialised and gendered social

inequalities, institutionalised prejudice and psychologically internalised “othering” that polarises humanity along various axes of difference (Ramphela, 2009; Steyn, 2010; Nkomo, 2011; Malala, 2012; Netshitenzhe, 2013; Habib, 2014). These omnipresent ghosts, as Ramphela (2009) argues, need to be laid to rest lest they derail the dream of freedom and equality for all. Local scholars with interest in organisational transformation and diversity (see Booyesen, 2007; Kelly, Wale, Soudein & Steyn, 2007; Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Nkomo, 2011) have steadily shown that these ghosts also prevail in South African workplaces. These findings affirm Acker’s (2006) hypothesis that inequality is produced, reproduced and embedded in a reciprocal relationship between the society and the labour market. The labour market, as the microcosm of society, is thus an ideal space for confronting these ghosts with intent of driving real social change. This study seeks to make a contribution towards this worthy cause of hastening the realisation of equality and justice for all, particularly in the corporate sector.

My interest in studying discourses of transformation in this sector derives from my passion for social justice and my constant search, as the head of transformation in a corporation, for empowering solutions. Moreover, the corporate sector has a history of being implicated in the (re)production of identity-based oppression and inequality during colonial-apartheid systems (Matisonn, 2014; Nixon, 2015; Terreblanche, 2014). Section A, chapter 2 on page 16 of this thesis explores this intricate relationship between corporations, inequality and neoliberal empowerment in detail. Presently, this sector is notorious for driving ineffective discourses of equity and empowerment (Commission on Employment Equity, 2013, 2014; Canham, 2014). However, the Department of Labour recently identified some pockets of excellence within the corporate sector for executing praiseworthy diversity strategies. These recent developments triggered my interest to study the strategies and discourses of diversity in these handpicked corporations using a transformative critical lens so that they may be shared for benchmarking.

1.2 Overview of corporate labour market reforms

Reforming the corporate sector, pejoratively termed white monopoly capital, is a heated issue in South Africa. The debate on this phenomenon centres on critical issues of lack of inclusivity in economic ownership and land distribution, corporate power and influence over state (also called state capture), division of labour, and unfair labour practices that hold intact racial hierarchies amongst others. Thus far, the debate is characterised by divergent views on how this imperative can be realised. The Constitution Act No 108 of 1996, as the supreme law of the land, mediates these contestations. Chapter 2, sections 22 and 23, of the Constitution (1996) outline rights and freedoms of all citizens to participate in the labour market and further gives credence to the promulgation of equality-enhancing labour laws. Accordingly, the ANC led racially inclusive democratic government has enacted a plethora of transformative labour laws including the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act No 53 of 2003, Employment Equity Act No 58 of 1998, and Skills Development Act No 97 of 1998. These transformative laws aim to eradicate the insidious inequality in work organisations and to redress the legacy of black economic exclusion that protected the interests of white capital in South Africa and the Global North (see chapter 2 on pages 29 – 33 for more details). Labour reforms also intend to transform institutionalised discriminatory policies, practices, attitudes and behaviours that hold in place binary positionalities of dominance and subjugation in predominantly assimilationist Eurocentric organisational cultures. The government is also gradually improving mechanisms for enforcing organisational compliance with labour laws (Commission on Employment Equity, 2014). Labour unions, on the other hand, are also progressively holding employer organisations accountable for reforms, and awareness of human rights amongst workers is heightening. These factors have led to a labour market context in which the taken for granted corporate power and privileged positionality of white, able-bodied, heterosexual masculinity is constantly interrogated and challenged with the intent of promoting substantive equality and justice.

Akin to the broader social transformation agenda, corporate labour market reform has encountered a plethora of challenges. Steyn and Foster (2008) explain that

transformation has brought about some profound social and psychological adjustment. In the organisational context, such profound alteration is known for producing a transitional curve (Fisher, 2012). Fisher (2012) explains a transitional curve as the psychological effects of an organisational change that may entail a process of anxiety, fear, threat, anger, resistance, denialism, disillusionment, hostility and gradual acceptance that precedes full embrace of the change. These psychological effects have a huge potential of derailing reforms especially if those who are in positions of power in corporations do not accept and lead the project of transformation. These dynamics require vigilance and constant examination of hindrance factors that (may) stymie the pace of reforms.

Thus far, research suggests that reform in the corporate sector is exceptionally slow and inequality remains rampant (Besharati & Foster, 2013; Commission on Employment Equity, 2014). Some scholars have examined factors that contribute to the slow pace of reforms in the sector, confirming a plethora of challenges including the global political economy and its effects on unequal wealth distribution between white corporate capitalists and predominantly black low income earning workers (Netshitenzhe, 2013; Habib, 2014), policy intent and practice related gaps (Ndzwayiba, 2012), attitudinal and behavioural challenges (Steyn & Foster, 2008; Nzukuma & Bussin, 2011), and counterproductive discourses of employment equity and diversity (Booyesen, 2007; Bezuidenhout, Bischoff, Buhlungu, & Lewins, 2008; Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Steyn, 2010; Canham, 2014). The majority of the historically oppressed continue to lack access to the equality rights enshrined in the constitution, with snail-paced corporate labour market reforms contributing to the slow pace of substantive socio-economic change. This is evident in the frequent prolonged strike actions over wage increases in the mining and agriculture sectors in which workers have lost their lives in efforts to modestly improve their quality of life. The massacre that occurred at the British mining company, Lonmin, in Marikana was indeed an exposé of post-apartheid South Africa's structural weakness, the country's failure to deal with the triad of inequality, unemployment and poverty (Malala, 2012), and the evidence of futility of the current transformation discourse to

eradicate the shameful injustice of government and corporate profit maximisation on the backbone of exploited and destitute black¹ workers.

Bezuidenhout, Bischoff, Buhlungu, and Lewins (2008) as well as Besharati and Foster (2013) remind us that the desire for equality has always formed the bedrock of oppressed people's struggle against the vicious racist, sexist, ableist, homophobic, Christionormative, colonial and apartheid regime. Referencing Langston Hughes (1951) in "Montage of a Dream Deferred" former President Mbeki warned of an imminent (social) explosion as he observed that the dream of social justice was being deferred (Gevisser, 2007). It is thus crucial to relentlessly examine the pulse of reforms in the labour market amongst other social organisations in order to bring to fruition the long awaited dream of equality and social justice.

1.3 Research aims and problem statement

Transforming the corporate labour market is vital for sustainable socio-economic reforms, inclusive development, and deepening of democracy. Presently, there is a plethora of factors that stymie the realisation of these ideals. Chief amongst these is that corporations are profit-oriented institutions with minimal interest in social reforms. The corporate sector is built on a hegemonic global power structure called neoliberal capitalism. This hegemonic global power structure believes in trickle-down economics; a theory that prioritises wealth accumulation for predominantly white capitalist elites with hope that accumulated benefits will somehow flow to the rest of society (Aghion & Bolton, 1997; Seip & Wood Haper, 2016). Hence, corporates focus primarily on improving productivity, and facilitating globalism and developmentalism to maximise profits (Baweja, Donovan, Haefele, & Siddiqi, 2016). Thus, there's a natural tension between corporate capital accumulation interest and the moral-ethical obligation of driving social justice and equality. South Africa's transformative labour laws attempt to mediate this tension. However,

¹ The category black in post-apartheid South Africa includes Africans, Indians, Coloureds and other non-white social groups that were disenfranchised by the apartheid regime.

broadly speaking, change remains slow in this sector with high levels of non-conformance with the government-imposed transformative laws (Commission on Employment Equity, 2012; 2013; 2014). Amid these complex dynamics, the Director General (DG) and the Minister of the Department of Labour has randomly selected some JSE-listed corporations for review. The DG identified some pockets of excellence and showcased some of these JSE listed corporations for having effective diversity strategies that are worth modelling (CEE; 2012; 2013; 2014). The diversity strategies of these corporations have not yet been examined by critical scholars so that their value proposition may be shared to accelerate workplace reforms. This study intended to close this gap. However, I reasoned that the diversity strategies of these appraised corporations must be studied within the context of the broader entangled discourses of power, dominance and inequality within and outside the organisations. Doing so would enable triangulation of data from multiple sources to determine whether these strategies are mere smoke screens discharged to appease government while holding intact the discourse of inequality and dominance, or if these strategies actually perform real work of social justice.

1.3.1 Research question

The main research question for this study was formulated as follows: What is the nature, the depth and texture of diversity discourses in the JSE listed corporations that were showcased by the Director General of the Department of Labour in the 2014/2015 CEE report?

To answer the main research question, the following sub-questions were formulated:

- What are the conceptual frameworks of diversity in these appraised corporations?
- How are these frameworks congruent with the ideals of equality and social justice?

- What diversity strategies and initiatives were implemented by these appraised corporations?
- How do the diversity discourses of these corporations address issues of unequal representation at all levels of occupancy?
- How do these diversity discourses level playing fields for marginalised groups?
- How do these discourses address organisational culture related barriers that result in inequality, power relations, domination, and differential treatment of Blacks, women, queer workers and people with disabilities?
- What plans are in place to entrench and sustain the realised change?
- What are employee's social constructions of diversity in these corporations?

1.3.2 Research objectives

The main objective of this study is to evaluate and critique diversity discourses of JSE listed corporations that were recently showcased by the DG of labour department as best practice, using a critical diversity theory lens. This will enable the determination of the extent to which these diversity strategies and practices transcend mere compliance with the provisions of the Act to facilitate social equality in organisations for marginalised groups. The following sub-objectives have thus been formulated:

- To establish the nature, texture and depth of diversity strategies implemented by empowered JSE listed entities to ensure equality at work.
- To determine the extent to which diversity strategies in these corporations promote equal representation in all levels of occupancy.
- To determine the extent to which these strategies remove differential treatment and barriers embedded in organisational culture and practices which impede equal participation of marginalised groups.

- To authenticate the effectiveness of these strategies by probing the social constructions of the marginalised identities that benefited from such initiatives.

1.3.3 Critical Diversity Literacy

Melissa Steyn's (2015) notion of Critical Diversity Literacy was adopted as the framework for this research inquiry. CDL is the most appropriate framework and lens for conceptualising and exploring the complexities involved in answering the main research question of this study which pertains to inequality, diversity, difference and otherness in corporations. Steyn (2015 p. 380) theorises Critical Diversity Literacy as "an enabled mode of existence, congruent with the requirements of the emerging social imaginary of the twenty-first century". Steyn (2007, 2015) has worked with France Winddance Twine's (2011) concept of racial literacy and incorporated the Brazilian Marxist critical theorist and educational scholar Paulo Frère's (1970) notion of "conscientizacao" to develop CDL as literacy and the process of conscientisation. She defines CDL as a reading practice that perceives and responds to complex social, political and economic climates and prevalent structures of oppression that implicate social identities with intent of taking a stand against such practices. CDL thus provides the lens to read patterns of power and oppression, the analytical tools to read the intricacies of such patterns, the vocabulary to name the ideological systems and hegemonic discourses that produce such patterns, and the competence to challenge these in the interest of deepening democracy for all. Thus, to be diversity literate is to develop and possess an ability to read social relations and how possibilities are being opened up and closed down for differently positioned subjects in different contexts. Steyn (2015) provides ten criteria applied to evaluate the presence of CDL in any social context:

- An understanding of the role of power in constructing differences that make a difference.
-

- A recognition of the unequal symbolic and material value of different social locations. This includes acknowledging hegemonic positionalities and concomitant identities, such as whiteness, heterosexuality, masculinity, cisgender, ablebodiedness, middleclassness etc. and how these dominant orders position those in non-hegemonic spaces.
- Analytic skill at unpacking how these systems of oppression intersect, interlock, co-construct and constitute each other, and how they are reproduced, resisted and reframed.
- A definition of oppressive systems such as racism as current social problems and (not only) historical legacy.
- An understanding that social identities are learned and an outcome of social practices.
- The possession of a diversity grammar and vocabulary that facilitates a discussion of privilege and oppression.
- The ability to 'translate' (see through) and interpret coded hegemonic practices.
- An analysis of the ways that diversity hierarchies and institutionalized oppressions are inflected through specific social contexts and material arrangements.
- An understanding of the role of emotions, including our own emotional investment, in all of the above.
- An engagement with issues of transformation of these oppressive systems towards deepening social justice at all levels of social organization.

In line with this framework, this chapter provides contextual background to the prevailing inequalities as not only historical but present-day systems of privilege that intersect, interlock, co-construct and constitute each other. The next section, section A, of this study expands on these systems by situating them as the product of coloniality of power. Section A applies CDL to set the tone and orientate the reader on

the researcher's stance and rationale for the choices made in subsequent chapters regarding theoretical paradigms, research design and philosophical assumptions, data collection and analysis as well as reporting.

1.3.4 Definition of key terms

The central themes of this study can be classified as diversity, corporate capitalism, oppression, marginalisation and reforms. Given the plurality of definitions and usages of these terms in different contexts and fields, I provide below definitions of these terms and their meaning within the context of this study.

1.3.4.1 Diversity

Simplistically, diversity refers to all the ways in which people differ. However, human differences are always relational, floating and contested. Hence different groups with divergent interests adopt dissimilar ideologies to secure the concept of diversity and to give it currency (Steyn, 2015). These divergent views reveal politics, power relations and divergent interests involved in the very process of constructing human differences (Layder, 2005; Healy, 2016 p. 15). In organisational context, the concept of diversity is contested within two paradigms, namely, managerial instrumentalism and the transformative (critical) paradigms.

Managerial instrumentalism is primarily influenced by the consultancy world under the framework of managing diversity (Janssens & Steyaert, 2003; Pollar & Gonzales, 1994). This paradigm commercialises human differences for enhanced organisational profitability (Groschl, 2011; Healy, 2016). Definitions of diversity tend to vary including affirmative action or employment equity legislation, multiculturalism, colour and gender

blindness, post racialism and a flurry of neoliberal oriented inclusion models which Nkomo (2014) argues may very well be “old wine in a new bottle”.

This study adopts the transformative (critical) paradigm’s conception of diversity. The transformative (critical) paradigm draws on a broad range of critical theory, post-structuralism, post-modernism, post-colonial and decolonial perspectives including critical race (Omi & Winant, 1986; Nkomo, 1992), feminism (Acker, 1992; Poggio, 2006), critical disability theory (Potheir & Devlin, 2006) and queer theories (Clare, 2009; Parker, 2001) to reject the apolitical and ahistorical monetisation of human differences that abound in managerial instrumentalism (Zanoni, 2011). This paradigm reclaims diversity as an issue of history, society, biography, culture and power (Steyn, 2010; Healy, 2016). This is done to problematize the taken for granted binary oppositional categories of human differences as a mere social construct; and as intended to create and secure the privileged positionality of dominant groups. The differences are constructed such that those who differ from the normative group are always portrayed in negative terms to justify their relegation to a sub-human category as the “other”. As such, scholars in this paradigm interrogate the established categories of human differences; and link the concept diversity at work with structural relationships that are constitutive of power, status and numbers (DiTomaso, Post, & Parks - Yancy, 2007). The main purpose of this scholarship is to expose the hegemonic discourses and ideological processes that construct the human differences and reproduce unequal positionalities with the intent of reinstating equality and social justice (Anderson 2006; Healy, 2016).

1.3.4.3 Corporations

Corporations are defined differently by scholars in different fields. From a legal perspective, corporations are defined as a 'natural person' under law (Republic of RSA, 2008). Thus, owners of corporations bear no consequences for the decisions and actions taken by the corporation. On the other hand, economic scientists define corporations as

profit oriented organisations that serve as strategic machinery for foreign direct investment and flow of capital between economies in what is known as the integrated globalising economy (Hymer, 1976; Roach, 2010).

Lazarus (2001), amongst other scholars, calls out the economic perspective for obscuring the role of corporations in serving as mechanisms by which different social and economic systems confront each other. According to Lazarus (2001) corporations develop in the cultural and social context of one nation and these are exported into another setting with the flow of capital. He argues that corporations powerfully transport knowledge and import cultural values and practices that habitually conflict with existing ones in the “new” environments. Corporates have enormous power that extends to various social aspects including influence over national and regional government’s ability to sustain political and economic autonomy (Lazarus, 2001). These views are shared by Marxists’ critiques of capitalism.

Karl Marx produced a linear timeline and listed European modes of pre-capitalist production as primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, then capitalism, socialism and communism. Marxists have since taken from this lead to produce multiple approaches of studying the history and development stages of corporate capitalism resulting in three broad perspectives that are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Three Approaches to Capitalism

Rudolph Hilferdign (1977)	Lenin (1996) & Hobson (1965)	Paul Sweezy (1970)	Fine & Harris (1979)
Free Trade	Early Capitalism	Competitive Capitalism	Laissez-faire
Monopoly	Colonialism	Monopoly Capitalism	Monopoly

Finance corporation	Imperialism	State Monopoly Capitalism	State Monopoly
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The first cohort focuses on political economy and outlines stages of capitalism (see Fine & Harris, 1979; Lenin, 1996). The second cohort are called dependency theorists as they focus on world-system analysis (see (Frank & Grills, 1992; Wallerstein, 1974) and most recently the third cohort emerged to focus on Varieties of Capitalism Approach (see Hall & Soskice, 2001; Ozveren, Havuc, & Karaoguz, 2012).

Despite the differences in approaches, these scholars are rooted in Marx and Engels' (1848) theorisation of capitalism as constituting the mode, means and relations of production. The mode, means and relations of production are seen as encompassing antagonistic relationships and a class struggle between the capitalist bourgeoisie as owners of capital and the proletariat, who sell their labour for survival. Marx defined capitalism as the mode of production grounded in the private ownership of means of production. He posited that capitalism also involved organisation of economic production such as factories, machines and raw materials as means of production used by a particular society. The mode of production involves labour and the division of the labour force. Marx argued that the mode of production is constantly evolving towards realisation of maximum productive capacity. Thus to produce supplies for exchange markets and retain competitiveness, the capitalists must extract as much labour from the workforce at the lowest costs possible. The economic interest of the capitalist class is to acquire and remunerate the workforce as little as possible or just enough to keep them alive and productive. By so doing the capitalists produce a relationship of exploitation and dependence.

Marxist alienation theory postulates that capitalism estranges the workers from natural human nature. This theory states that the industrial capitalist system alienates the labour force from the products of their own labour and from the process of production which the workforce regards as means of survival. This results in the workforce being alienated

from their humanity since the transformation of nature into useful objects is one of the fundamental facets of the human condition. By working on and transforming objective matter into sustenance and objects of use value, human beings meet the needs of existence and come to see the self-externalised in the work. Marx argued that labour is as much an act of personal creation and a projection of one's identity as it is a means of survival. Marx postulated that capitalism dispossesses the human of this essential source of self-worth and identity because capitalists appropriate these products and sell them for profit. In turn workers approach work only as a means of survival as they derive none of the other personal satisfactions of work because the products of their labour do not belong to them. Marx argued that capitalism alienates the workforce from their own "species being", that is, capitalism alienates the worker from what it is to be human. Marx hypothesised that workers come to understand that their economic interest lies in preventing the capitalist from exploiting them in this way; and that this will give rise to a class struggle that will ultimately lead to the overthrow of capitalism by the proletariat in order to replace it with a mode of production that is based on the collective ownership of the means of production, which is Communism.

In this study, I adopt a transformative critical paradigm. This paradigm borrows from multiple schools of critical thought including world systems theory, decolonial and postcolonial perspectives' views on capitalism and neoliberalism. As such, the study adjoins the cultural, epistemic, and Marxist political economy critique with the intent of locating corporations within the broader context of hegemonic Western imperialism as a global system. This approach enables this study to situate corporations within the presently dominant neoliberal agenda and its globalism, developmentalism and liberal-oriented democratisation. Broadly speaking, neoliberalism is an economic, social and political policy and system that advocates for laissez-faire capitalism, privatisation, tax cuts, and deregulation of markets. In this study, specific focus was given to corporations that are listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange regardless of whether they are internationally or South African owned.

1.3.4.3 Oppression

Young's definition of oppression and marginalisation is adopted in this study. Young (2011) argues that oppression and marginalisation involves a broad range of injustices, and a family of conditions and concepts that can be broken down into five categories, namely exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural Imperialism and violence. According to Young (2011) oppression and domination are two forms of constraints to social justice. While these constraints involve some elements of distributive justice, Young (2011) argues that they also encompass decision making procedures, division of labour, cultural aspects and everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society. Young argues that oppression is a central category of political discourse for modern emancipatory social movements such as feminists, black activists, LGBTI activists, disability activists and socialists. The political discourse in which oppression is a central category entails challenging the individualist liberal discourse that dominates the analysis and scrutiny of social structures and practices. This acknowledges that all oppressed people experience the common condition of the inhibition of their ability to develop and exercise their capabilities, and the freedom to articulate their needs, thoughts, and feelings.

1.3.4.4 Reforms – Social justice and equality

In this study reforms relate a type of change or transformation that leads to realisation of social justice and equality. Robinson's (2010) definition of social justice is thus adopted. Robinson borrows from John Rawls' (2003) work on "Justice as fairness" and David Miller's (2003) "Principles of Social Justice" to define social justice as consisting of distributive and non-distributive justice. Distributive justice refers to easily identifiable factors such as wealth, income, jobs, occupations and allocation of responsibilities whereas non-distributive justice concerns issues such as decision-making structures and procedures, culture and the division of labour (Young, 2011). Robinson (2010) argues that social justice is primarily concerned with the promotion of

a just society through challenging of injustices and valuing diversity. Social justice relates to the sharing of common humanity and thus equitable treatment, support and allocation of social resources. Social justice in this context denounces prejudicial treatment of members of society and unfair discrimination on grounds of human differences such as race, gender, sexuality, religion, age, (dis)ability, nationality and class amongst others.

Social justice goes hand in glove with equality. Equality in this study refers to a state in which people are treated equally without any forms of unfair discrimination, and a state in which all people regardless of their identity differences have equal rights and equal access to opportunities and resources. Given decades of oppression and unequal treatment of certain groups in South Africa which gave unfair advantage to certain social groups, equality can only be realised through equity. Equity relates to measures including policy and actions aimed at compensating and correcting inequalities suffered by marginalised social groups (Catarro, Shuda, Zander, & Marshall, 2008).

1.3.5 Structure of the Study

Chapter 1 outlines the focus of the study and the contextual background on the purpose of this study. The chapter provides the rationale for embarking on social justice work. Central research question and research objectives are also outlined.

Chapter 2, 3 and 4 form section A. Section A maps the terrain of this inquiry.

Chapter 2 traces the genesis of modern day inequalities in South Africa and discusses how corporations are implicated in this process. The chapter proceeds to discuss the transition process in South Africa and how global ideological and power shifts led to the development of a neoliberal oriented empowerment trajectory. The chapter concludes with a brief literature review on the current state of empowerment

and inequality in local corporations, and an emphasis on the criticality of accelerating reforms.

Chapter 3 contains review of literature on salient theories of diversity in organisations with intent of showing multiple thoughts on how equality and justice can be realised in organisations. The chapter discusses various schools of thought within two contesting paradigms, namely economic and management sciences (managerial instrumentalism), and critical theory (transformative paradigm). I conclude with an affirmation of my association with the transformative paradigm.

Chapter 4: Having selected the critical paradigm and explained the rationale for this selection in Chapter 3, I proceed to provide a literature review of empirical studies in critical organisational diversity in chapter four. I conclude with an outline of the lacunae and how this study aims to close these identified knowledge gaps.

Chapter 5, 6, 7 and 8 focus on mapping the case studies towards answering the main research question of this inquiry.

Chapter 5 outlines the selected research method, approach and design of the study. A more in-depth discussion on qualitative research, multiple case study design and critical discourse analysis is provided. I further discuss strategies employed to collect, analyse and ensure quality and rigour in the data and data reporting. I conclude with an outline of how the study adhered to the University of the Witwatersrand's prescribed ethics code.

Chapter 6 contains data explication and the identification of key themes that emerge from each case study.

Chapter 7 consists of cross-case study synthesis and a discussion of the key similar and dissimilar themes that emerged from different cases. I apply Critical Diversity

Literacy and CDA in the discussion of these main themes. I then revisit literature in order to make sense of these emerging themes.

Chapter 8 concludes the study with a précis of the study; implications and limitations of the study and an outline of recommendations for future studies.

Section A – Mapping the Terrain

CHAPTER 2

The Ugly Past, Murky Present and Desired Future

2.1 Introduction

This section follows Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2013) views on the importance of revisiting the ugly past and reflecting on the undesirable present in order to re-imagine the desired future. More specifically, section A comprises three chapters that seek to map the

discourses of inequality, oppression and empowerment in society and corporations. In mapping these discourses, I applied the following CDL criteria:

- Analytic skill at unpacking how systems of oppression intersect, interlock, co-construct and constitute each other, and how they are reproduced, resisted and reframed.
- Recognition of the unequal symbolic and material value of different social locations. This includes acknowledging hegemonic positionalities and concomitant identities, such as whiteness, heterosexuality, masculinity, cisgender, ablebodiedness, middleclassness etc. and how these dominant orders position those in non-hegemonic spaces.
- An analysis of the ways that diversity hierarchies and institutionalized oppressions are inflected through specific social contexts and material arrangements.

Chapter 2 traces the origins of inequality within the colonial-apartheid era and the crucial role of corporations in embedding oppression. The chapter briefly outlines the shift in global power which enabled western neoliberalism to become hegemonic worldwide and how this shift shaped South Africa's transformation trajectory post 1994. In chapter 3, I elaborate on prevailing theories of diversity produced within the corporate neoliberal perspective and contrasts these with those produced within the contending transformative (critical) perspective. After locating this inquiry in the transformative paradigm, I proceed to offer some empirical critical diversity studies in chapter 4. I conclude the section by identifying the lacunae and explicate how this study intended to contribute towards its closure.

2.2 Corporations, coloniality and the industrial revolution in South Africa

The decolonial scholar, Grosfoguel (2009), provides a useful lens through which the complex entangled design of oppression, inequality, identity politics and political economy can be examined in a non-essentialist or non-fundamentalist manner. He

places his argument within the context of the dishonourable arrival of the Italian-born sailing entrepreneur, Christopher Columbus, in the “New World” in 1492 and the proliferation of western empires in the Restern² periphery. He contends that “what arrived in the colonies was a “European / capitalist/ military/ Christian/ patriarchy/ white/ heterosexual/ male”; and that this powerful global minority established simultaneously in time and space several entangled global hierarchies of power.

Critical diversity scholars (Acker, 2004; Ahmed, 2007; Zanoni, Janssens, Benschop, & Nkomo, 2010; Steyn, 2015) build on this line of reasoning and tend to borrow from world system theory (Wallerstein, 1976; Baker, 2014), postcolonial (Prasad, 2003), and decolonial (Lucas, 1998; Quijano, 2000; Syed & Murray, 2008; Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2009; Mignolo, 2016) thought to link diversity in capitalist corporations with the dehumanising slavery, colonialism and coloniality; and to situate these discourses within the rhetoric of western modernity. Western modernity employed Cartesian rationality to create colonial situations (Santos; 2009; Mignolo & Escobar, 2013). Cartesian rationality is the western intellectual tradition that usurped the right to define the human category by enshrining (pseudo) scientific terms that overly glorify white, European, able-bodied, heteropatriarchal, Christian, masculine bodies as the epitome of being human (Mignolo & Escobar, 2013; Wits Centre for Diversity Studies, 2015; Wood, 2013 p. 197). This egotistic western logic devalued non-European subjects, epistemologies and cultural systems and (re)constructed them as illogical, primitive and needing western civilisation (Kanu, 2006; Mignolo & Escobar, 2013; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Quijano (2000) describes colonial situations as relating to cultural, spiritual, epistemic, political and economic oppression and exploitation of subordinate racialized ethnic groups by dominant racialised ethnic groups with or without colonial administrations. So, critical, postcolonial and decolonial scholars provide a comprehensive framework for conceptualising the interconnected dimensions of power, privilege and oppression that

² Terreblanche (2015) coined the term Restern periphery to denote the global south as being on the margins in relation to the western core.

historically and presently work together to sustain inequality within the global north and in the global south. This is certainly useful for charting the South African context.

The narrative of white supremacy in South African is generally traced to Jan van Riebeeck's arrival in the Cape on 6 April 1652 rather than to the arrival of a western colonial multinational corporation. In this study I purposely locate white supremacy in South Africa in the latter as Jan van Riebeeck was a deployee of a chartered multinational corporation that dominated the second era of colonial expansion between 1600 and 1700, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) (Baker, 2014). The VOC had quasi-governmental powers with enormous political, economic and military authority (Baker, 2014 p. 89). This powerful profit maximising corporation (Dye & La Croix, 2014) had rights to establish trade relations with natives throughout the lands surrounding the Indian Ocean and East Asia, initiate tax rules and extract labour from nearby native communities, forge wars, pass laws and dispense justice through courts and sign treaties (Baker, 2014 p. 89). Jan van Riebeeck was despatched by this colonial corporation to set up a refreshment station for voyagers en route to India.

On arrival in the Cape, van Riebeeck initiated trade relations with the native KhoiSan (Dye & La Corix, 2014). Trade relations involved trading with the locals for grain, meat and wine, often unsuccessfully (Dye & La Corix, 2014). When the KhoiSan failed to trade their cattle in quantities desired by the VOC, Van Riebeeck sought permission from the VOC Directors to enslave the native KhoiSan (Ulrich, 2011). In the arrogant reductionist Eurocentric superiority, Van Riebeeck conceived of the natives as "idle, godless savages and a brutal gang living without any conscience" (Ulrich, 2011). This (re)construction of human difference in relation to European modes of being denied indigenous people their humanity so as to justify colonial conquest, enslavement and exploitation of native people as free labour in service of white European corporate capital (Baker, 2014; Ulrich, 2011). The demise of the VOC did not bring an end to the brutality of western colonial settler exploitation and oppression in South Africa. Rather by 1806, the VOC's close

competitor, the British East India Company, took over the Cape and subsequently South Africa as a British colony (Dye & La Croix, 2014).

Subjugation of natives by colonial settlers soon intersected with intra-white settler politics, leading to growing resentment amongst Afrikaner Dutch Reformists towards British liberalism (Marx, 2003). The Dutch resented the British reforms for Anglicising Afrikaner education and way of life and denying the Afrikaner their 'God-given' right to enslave Africans, resulting in the Dutch embarking on the 'Great Trek,' leading to the establishment of the inland republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The Transvaal and Orange Free State eventually became inclusive of the British (Marx, 2003). The 1858 Constitution of the Transvaal Republic declared that "there shall be no equality between whites and blacks in church or state". It is in this racist context that settlers "discovered" gold and diamond fields in Kimberly, ushering in corporations such as Anglo-American and DeBeers in the newly-established Western controlled mining industry (Marx, 2003). Under the excuse of protecting the Zulus and other "foreigners" from Afrikaners, the British annexed the Transvaal and its diamond mines in 1877. By 1886, gold was discovered in Transvaal, leading to South Africa producing a quarter of the global gold market. Since then, South Africa's narrative of the economy and division of labour became one of gold, white capital monopoly, racism, sexism, ableism, heteronormativity and other -isms.

Writing about the division of labour in the then emerging industrial economy, Visser (2007) explains that the rich mineral bearing diamond and gold deposits were in deep level hard-rock resulting in high demand for manual labour. Following Taylorist, Smithist and Fordist ideologies (Ukpere & Bayat, 2012), the British transported black men from rural areas to work as migrant labourers in the mines, enabling British capitalist colonial corporations to maximise productivity and profits. Biko (2014) eloquently reveals the power dynamics in this discourse by stating that the Africans who had long owned the land abounding with diamonds and gold woke up overnight to find they had been turned into cheap labourers tasked with digging the gold for the white colonialists. In this

process of dispossession, dislocating, and turning human subjects into human resources, the British colonial capitalists tore apart homes, families and societies in the interest of chasing profits. Simultaneously they also engendered a form of sexualised division of labour in which women were relegated to the domestic sphere. This racist patriarchal capitalist colonial order was entrenched by missionaries and the Christian missionary schooling system that was strategically deployed to socialise women into 'feminine' roles in the domestic sphere. The "cult of domesticity" (Chidester, 1992) within the racist heteropatriarchal Christian normative capitalist colonial system controlled women's labour power, reproductive power, sexual power, mobility as well as property and economic resources (Orr, 2000). The sexual division of labour characterised by the narrative of men as breadwinners and women as homemakers became the new norm. Christianisation and preaching of an essentialist belief in biblical prescriptions became weaponry through which colonial masters entrenched and policed these oppressive gender norms (Orr, 2000). Meanwhile in the mines, a racist division of labour was enforced through the importation of skilled workers from Europe, Britain and America rather than the up-skilling of local labour (Visser, 2007). By the end of the Anglo-Boer war (1899–1902) the pre-war English speaking labour force was augmented with demobilised British, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian soldiers from the British armies (Visser, 2007).

According to Visser (2007), white male migrant workers brought some socialist unionism that was shaped largely by embedded liberalist ideologies. Embedded liberalism was characterised by universal union movement aimed at counterbalancing the British-American ideology of liberalism. These craft workers enjoyed power and privileges that were not available to their black counterparts and some white Afrikaners who had been forced off the land they had occupied (Marx, 2003). Visser (2007) explicates that craft unions kept access to the trades very low through rigorous criteria for entry as a strategy of sustaining global demand for their scant skills and to enable them to demand high wages. Consequently, white craft unions were elitist and exclusivist as they were

primarily concerned with protecting the privileged position of white skilled workers (Visser, 2007). This polarised the workforce along race and class lines resulting in black workers being perpetually unskilled and getting paid far less than their white counterparts. Corporations manipulated this dynamic by introducing mechanisation to reduce the demand for skilled and supervisory positions in order to maximise profit. Consequently, the demand for unskilled black labour increased while demand for skilled white workers decreased. Tensions in the sector amongst employees and unions increased as socialist unions were concerned about the white workers' job security being threatened. This led to the enactment of the first industrial law that introduced "job colour bars" in 1897 to appease the socialist oriented white workers (Doxey, 1961). This law precluded black African workers from certain job roles including driving. Thus, there was never a question of equality of skills, initiatives, development or organisational ability between the whites and indigenous blacks. Instead, notions of white superiority and black inferiority were introduced as a characteristic of the South African labour movement which lay at the epicentre of European control over the country and its economy without the involvement of the black majority population (Visser, 2007).

Visser (2007) explains that whites feared that blacks were more numerous and therefore posed labour competition. Hence whites opted to exclude blacks from opportunities of acquiring competitive skills, knowledge and expertise. This tactic served to justify the introduction of job reservations amongst many other inequality-instigating and discriminatory practices. Visser (2007) clarifies that these destabilising mechanisms resulted in the elevation of white workers into an elitist "labour aristocracy" and correspondingly, all black workers cast into a pool of unskilled, cheap labour. White workers' access to political power enabled them to define their position in antagonistic terms in relation to black workers. Thus the proletarianisation of white workers led to their structural insecurity which was greatly extended by exploitable, cheap black labour (Visser, 2007).

2.3 From colonialism to apartheid

While the world converged at Palais de Chaillot in Paris to adopt the United Nation's Universal Declarations for Human Rights in 1948, the National Party had just taken over rule in South Africa. The National Party recycled European enlightenment pseudo scientist ideologies to construct a complex and multifaceted racist, classist, sexist, ableist, heteropatriarchal and Christian normative hierarchical system called apartheid. Apartheid divided the country into racialised hierarchies that legislated white superiority and black subjugation (Conway, 2004; Fanon, 1967; Rabaka, 2010). The apartheid regime believed that God ordained whiteness as a superior identity with sophisticated intellectual capabilities, power and authority to rule over the "uncivilised", "savage" and "inferior" black subjects (Sunga, 1992). Serving as a structural guarantor of white masters' control over black subjects, apartheid became institutionalised through promulgation and enforcement of more than a hundred violent segregationist laws that were passed between 1948 and 1980 (Durrheim, Mtose, & Brown, 2011) covering the spheres of economy, spatial organisation, education, healthcare, labour and social relations (Crain & Jean, 1997; Jack, 2007).

These laws unjustly centred white, heteropatriarchal, able-bodied masculinity as the ideal human form, legitimating the dominance of this positionality in relation to the society, economy, and resources. Clubbed together within the assigned category of blackness, so-called 'non-white' people were perpetually placed in a positionality of dependence on white masters. Access and movement of blacks within exclusively white areas was restricted through the Urban Areas Consolidation Act of 1945 which required blacks to carry a form of passport that came to be popularly referred to as the "dompas". Grounded in eugenics ideology, the apartheid government also enacted the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act No. 55 of 1949 to criminalise interracial intimacy and marriage. Owing to the influence of the British sodomy laws that were imposed in the colonies and the nationalist Afrikaner ideology, the apartheid government regarded homosexuality as unnatural and immoral and this rhetoric led to the prohibition of homosexuality through the Immorality Act Amendment of 1968 (Conway, 2004). Booysen (2007) adds that

apartheid was also a sexist system. She posits that only six “white” women were ever elected to parliament during the 50 years of apartheid rule. Booysen (2007) explains that white women were only assigned a degree of power by association with the dictatorial white males but ultimately remained subservient to the authority of white males.

Conscious of the centrality of access to quality education for meaningful economic participation, the National Party abolished access of black Africans to the missionary schooling system. Hendrik Verwoerd believed that there was no place for African natives in the society above the level of certain forms of physical labor and service. According to him, Africans had opportunities in their own communities and thus it was futile to train them for meaningful roles in the European community. He thus alleged that missionary schools were giving Africans false hope because there was no space for them in European society. This racist rhetoric informed the design of the Bantu Education system which was created to deny blacks the right to intellectual growth and therefore eternally sustain them as a pipeline of cheap unskilled labour and thereby sustaining their inequality in relation to their white counterparts (Soudien & Baxen, 1997).

2.4 Corporate power, complicity and culpability in apartheid

The role played by corporations and Western European governments in financing apartheid cannot be ignored. The emergence of neoliberalism in 1970s when Ronald Reagan and Margeret Thatcher were at the helm of government in the USA and Britain, respectively, saw the power and interests of western corporations became hegemonic across the globe, including South Africa even during the time when western sanctions were growing (Terreblanche, 2014). Tauss (2012) explains neoliberalism as post-Fordism logic that has dominated the world in the last four decades and appropriated economic and political power to a core cluster of entrepreneurs and multinational corporations who thrive on profits earned from cheap, poor and desperate labour in the Global South under the guise of developmentalism and globalisation (Darian-Smith, 2013). Beder (2008) adds that “the rise of corporate power and increasing importance

accorded to markets implies that transnational corporations are eclipsing the nation state as the driving force behind policy making". Berder (2008) explains that corporates gain political power through resources and influence, market ideology, public relations and political mobilisation. Corporate power, according to Berder, in turn leads to the dilution and distortion of the idea that governments need to safeguard citizens against exploitation and excesses of free enterprise and replaces it with the idea that government should protect business activity against the excesses of democratic regulation.

Indeed, in 1979, the South African Institute of International Affairs affirmed the apartheid regime's commitment to market liberalisation arguing that the availability of cheap (black) labour, corporate friendly taxation policies and a minority of rising black middle class were key factors that made South Africa attractive for (corporate) Foreign Direct Investment, FDI (Geldenhuys, 1979). In 1975, European economic interest in the country was estimated to average R 9,851 million (Geldenhuys, 1979). Moreover, in 1975 there were 145 British corporations operating in the South African economy with 450 subsidiaries, while West Germany had over 300 companies in the country. By 1978 the USA corporations began to infiltrate the South African market with an estimated 350 corporations with a collective investment of almost R 1,275 million which constituted 17% of the FDI (Geldenhuys, 1979). The document released by the Institute for International Affairs (1979) acknowledged the significant power of corporations over the country's social, economic and political landscape.

The power, complicity and culpability of large corporations in funding and sustaining oppression in South Africa is captured well by Ron Nixon's (2015) book, "Selling Apartheid". Nixon (2015) explicates the intricate relationship between Washington, London, Bonn and Pretoria and the weighty chequebook exchanges to support white minority power and the oppression of black majority. Corporations sustained systemic exclusion of black South Africans through upholding segregationist practices within employment and complying with apartheid laws that precluded hiring of black workers in skilled positions and also supported the racist and sexist migrant labour system that tore

families apart (Seid, 2003). Seid (2003) names segregationist human resource practices to have included separate eating areas and disparate comfort – working stations for black and white employees, denial of training opportunities for black workers, unequal pay, non-recognition of black unions and enforcement of pass laws in the workplace. Banks such as Barclays, Bank of America, City Group, Standard Chartered and Deutsche Bank, oil companies including BP, Caltex and Shell, vehicle manufacturers such as General Motors, Ford Motors and Daimler Chrysler, information technology companies such as IBM, mining giants and many more including Coca-Cola (Khulumani v. Barclay Nat. Bank Ltd., Ntsebeza v. Daimler Chrysler, 2007) media, conservative religious groups, the coalition of liberal American black clergy and anti-communist black conservatives that had been aligned with right wing Cold War politicians provided financial resources, services and goods to the apartheid regime. This collusion was fuelled by western and white South Africa's hatred and fear of communism.

Following the CIA's claimed intelligence shared with Pretoria, western capitalists feared that the communist block expansion could potentially overthrow white capital in South Africa given the support and political ideological influence the Soviet Union had on the anti-apartheid movements (Stemmet & Senekal, 2013), particularly Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC) (Nixon, 2015). The west and the apartheid regime argued that strategic minerals and the country's control over strategic sea paths made South Africa attractive to the Soviet Union and therefore the white minority regime became a central western associate in the Cold War politics (Siedman, 2003). These fears and geo-economic and political dynamics caused corporate executives to grow deaf to pressure from anti-apartheid movements for disinvestment in South Africa. Instead corporations, with the assistance of Chase Manhattan, an American banking company, offered a counter narrative that emphasised profits as the sole purpose of business existence rather than meddling in the country's social affairs (Seidman, 2003). Successive USA presidents including Kennedy, Carter and Raegan, as well as Margaret Thatcher in Britain, also turned a blind eye to the brutality of institutionalised racism in

South Africa and used the USSR threat as an excuse (Nixon, 2015). While these successive US presidents spoke of economic sanctions against apartheid South Africa, they applied various tactics to derail the passage of such sanctions. In fact America continued to share intelligence with the apartheid regime through the CIA and kept the military ties intact (Nixon, 2015).

The Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960 drew a lot of global media attention on the repression in South Africa. An example was the NBC televised series, called “Winds of Change”, that was critical of the Sharpeville terror and bloodshed (Nixon, 2015). Nixon explains that Louw, an American agent tasked by Pretoria to promote South Africa abroad, was infuriated. He sent Wentzel du Plessis, Pretoria’s ambassador to Washington, to meet with Caltex, a division of the American oil giant Texaco with significant investment in South Africa and a major advertiser for NBC, to see if the company might exert some pressure on the television network. The apartheid regime also hired a New York public relations agency, Hamilton Wright Organisation, to portray a positive image of South Africa so as to avoid negative publicity that could accelerate the passage of sanctions (Nixon, 2015). The Hamilton Wright Organisation worked closely with the South Africa Foundation, a business funded group, that worked tirelessly to sell South Africa and stall efforts by the international community that may promote disinvestment in SA. Harry Oppenheimer of Anglo America, a giant mining company, played a crucial role in setting up of the South Africa Foundation (Nixon, 2015). Matisson (2014) explains that Oppenheimer was the richest man in South Africa and that he controlled a “lion’s share of the economy and its exports and was well connected around the world”. Matisson (2014) states that when the Nationalists came to power in 1948, Oppenheimer had shrewdly facilitated the establishment of General Mining, an Afrikaans mining house leading to Afrikaans friends of the government having a share in his mining giant.

The South Africa Foundation also worked closely with Engelshart of Precious Metals Corporation which was also supported by Robert Fleming & Co, a London merchant

bank. Nixon reveals that these corporate owners led a group of private investors who lent South Africa \$150 million to assist in stabilising the economy after some international investors had pulled out following the Sharpeville massacre. Engelhard later acquired a seat on the board of Anglo American, Oppenheimer's giant mining company. Shell Oil is also alleged to have hired Pagan International, an American public relations firm, to develop strategies aimed at undercutting the anti-apartheid movement's calls for American companies to withdraw from SA (Nixon, 2015). Nixon explains that Shell was a major supplier of fuel to the apartheid regime, including the military and police forces, and also provided "raw materials for napalm, defoliation agents and nerve gas for South African Defence Force's biological and chemical weapons unit" (Nixon, 2015). Nixon concludes that Shell had actually received almost \$200 million in secret as an incentive for supplying the apartheid regime with oil.

Nixon (2015) lists more corporations that colluded in various ways to keep their operations in apartheid South Africa and/or sustain the dehumanising oppressive apartheid regime. These include Control Data, Combustion Engineering, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer and Caltex (Nixon, 2015), Railey & Fox Inc, South African Chamber of Mines, and Eskom (Nixon 2015). These companies collectively raised \$1.2 million to put together a coalition that would resist the application of sanctions in SA. Matisson (2014) also implicates corporations such as NASPERS and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), and institutions of higher education including the then Rand Afrikaans University, Stellenbosch and Potchefstroom University as having played a vital role in providing impetus to the repressive apartheid regime (Matisson, 2014). Thus, contrary to the narrative of free apolitical markets, the preceding brief discussion illustrates that corporations, capitalism, colonialism and apartheid have always been deeply knotted. The discussion also indicates that in order to uproot the chains of colonialism and apartheid, democratic nation building efforts ought to respond to complex and polygonal domestic and international social, economic and political power dynamics that work together to sustain subjugation of non-western subjects. Interrogating and

closely monitoring the corporate sector role and progress in driving real transformation is thus a crucial aspect of deepening democracy.

2.5 Transitioning to democracy and neoliberal transformation

After the demise of apartheid in 1994, the new democratically-elected government took on the momentous task of dismantling colonial laws and structures and ushered in a new era of nation rebuilding (Newman, Masuku, & Dlamini, 2006). The government of national unity under the leadership of the ANC, IFP and NP enacted the Constitution Act No. 108 of 1996 (Republic Of South Africa, 1996) as the supreme law of the land and to lay foundations for the new era of democracy, freedom and equality. A number of transformative strategies that are constantly evolving also emerged from the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) in 1994, to Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) in 1996, then Accelerated and Shared Growth South Africa (AsGiSA) in 2006, and the National Development Plan (NDP) in 2012 (Visser, 2004). The table below, provided by Statistics South Africa (2013), illustrates how these strategies have been developed and have changed to address the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality:

Table 2: Transformative Strategies and Objectives

Programme/Strategy/Plan	Objectives
Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meet basic needs ○ Develop human resources ○ Build the economy ○ Democratise the state and society
Growth, Employment, and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restructure the economy ○ Create plentiful jobs ○ Create environment for attracting foreign investment ○ Create and implement policies to counter high inflation
Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Halve unemployment and poverty ○ Improve the capacity of the state ○ Reduce the regulatory burden on small and medium enterprises, etc.
Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Initiatives (JIPSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve skills base required by the economy for accelerated growth ○ Focus on scarce and critical skills

New Growth Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment creation
National Development Plan (NDP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eliminate poverty and reduce unemployment ○ Improve the quality of school education ○ Deconstruct the spatial patterns of the apartheid system ○ Reduce unemployment from 27% to 14% by 2020 and to 6% by 2030 ○ The level of inequality, as measured by the Gini Coefficient, should decrease from 0.7 in 2007 to 0.6 in 2030 <p>Become a less resource intensive economy, adopt sustainable development practices e</p> <p>(Taylor, 2007)</p>

These strategies illustrate a fundamental shift away from Marxist-oriented ideologies of the ANC towards neoliberal ideologies. Even the social services followed the World Bank’s cost recovery model as a source of revenue stream for government, resulting in the introduction of pre-paid meters for water and electricity, and discontinuation of services to household that cannot pay for such services (Cottle, 2014). Taylor (2007) and Posel (2010) offer some insights into the factors that are responsible for this ideological shift. According to Taylor, the South Africa Foundation, an alliance of more than 60 powerful and influential local and international corporations whose resolve was to advance white corporate interest in (apartheid) government, had become aware of the need to proactively align itself with the political interest of the ANC, which was to advance black empowerment (Taylor, 2007 pp. 171–172). This culminated in the Black Economic Empowerment, BEE, programme of 1993 which narrowly focused on the recruitment of black individuals, most of whom were connected to the ANC, into executive corporate echelons and corporate boards of directors. BEE shares were also offered to the politically-connected black elite in the name of supporting black entrepreneurship (Taylor, 2007). Posel (2010) adds that this collusion of white corporate capital with the ruling black elite to form a “reform coalition” (Taylor, 2007) was also fuelled by the shift in global political economy following the collapse of the Soviet Union, an event that opened up South Africa to the influence of hegemonic western capitalist economic policy that has come to dominate the global economy. Consequently, GEAR was adopted under the leadership of former President Mbeki. GEAR focused on the creation of a regulatory environment that attracts foreign direct investment (FDI) coupled with large-scale

privatisation of government-controlled assets to profit oriented corporations. GEAR was envisaged to lead to economic vibrancy, job creation and social development. GEAR failed to realise its envisaged objectives but succeeded in the reduction of the budget deficit (Godfrey, Maree, Du Toit, & Theron, 2010 p. 27). GEAR also improved the climate for private investors. Accordingly, South Africa adopted a Headquarter Company (HQC) regime strategy and positioned itself as a gateway into Africa for foreign investors. As Africa's largest source of new foreign direct investment, the stock of US Foreign Direct Investment in South Africa had increased from R 62,24 billion in prior years to over R 921 billion in 2014 with this being the second largest source of FDI in South Africa after the United Kingdom. In 2014 South Africa had more than 400,000 private companies, 4,000 public companies and 1,6 million Close Corporations.

2.5.1 Labour market transformation

In an attempt to counterbalance profit orientation of corporations at the expense of social development, the ANC-led government introduced transformative labour laws that made it mandatory for corporations to contribute towards redressing social inequality, eradicating unfair labour practices and unfair discrimination and the promotion of diversity. These include the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act No. 53 (2003), Employment Equity Act No. 55 (1998), Skills Development Act No. 54 (1998), Labour Relations Act (1998) and Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 (1997). These policies continue to shape transformation discourses in South Africa's corporate sector. This study focuses on the quality of diversity promotion strategies in corporations as intended by Employment Equity Act. Accordingly, this study will focus specifically on Employment Equity as this Act focuses primarily on promotion of diversity and equality in the labour market.

2.5.1.1 Employment Equity Act

Prior to promulgation of Act No. 57 of 1998, corporates had begun to voluntarily implement Affirmative Action measures to redress the deep-rooted structural inequalities of colonialism and apartheid (Burger & Jafta, 2012). However, these efforts failed largely due to their diverse, unstructured, often shallow and voluntary nature (Burger & Jafta, 2012). Voluntary affirmation programmes resulted in corporates giving preferential treatment to white women, a phenomenon earlier explained by Booysen (2007) as driven by white women's proximity to whiteness. These programmes failed to reach all marginalised groups. Consequently, the government opted for a more structured, prescriptive and mandatory approach by promulgating Act No. 55 of 1998. The Act recognises that due to apartheid and other related practices and policies, there are disparities in employment, occupation and income within the national labour market and that these disparities create such pronounced disadvantages for certain categories of people that they cannot be redressed simply by repealing discriminatory laws. The Act therefore intends to:

- a) promote the constitutional right of equality and the exercise of true democracy;
- b) eliminate unfair discrimination in employment equitable demographic representation in all levels of workforce commensurate with the national demographics;
- c) prevent unfair discrimination and promote diversity through equal treatment and equal opportunity for all citizens regardless of race, gender, age, colour, creed, dis/ability, sexual orientation, culture and religion etc.; and
- d) implementation of Affirmative Action measures to level playing fields for Blacks, women and people with disabilities to compete on equal footing with their counterparts that were unfairly advantaged by apartheid systems.

Section 43 of the Act grants powers to the Director General of the Department of Labour, here referred to as the DG, to conduct reviews to determine the extent to which employer organisations comply with the provisions of the Act. The Act, section 30, further gives credence to the establishment of the commission that will assume

responsibility for development of codes of good practice, monitoring of progress and making recommendations to the Minister of Labour regarding the provisions of the Act. Indeed, the DG began to conduct reviews amongst Johannesburg Listed Corporations from 2007/8 onwards. Further to this, successive Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) reports have also provided an indication of South Africa’s labour market transformation progress or lack thereof as discussed below.

2.5.1.2 Unequal representation

Over the 20 years since the Act was promulgated, little has changed in South African corporations. While organisational diversity strategies and practices have yielded some results at the lower levels of occupancy in as far as demographic representativity is concerned, corporations have remained largely untransformed at the level of leadership. The table below provides an outline of demographic representation per race per gender in the top four levels of occupancy.

Table 3. Private Sector Workforce Demographics per Race per Gender

Gender	Males				Females			
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White
<i>National EAP</i>	40.3	5.6	1.9	6.2	34.9	5	1.2	4.6
<i>Top Management</i>	8.8	3.2	6.6	58.6	3.8	1.5	1.8	11
<i>Senior Management</i>	10.2	4.3	7.4	47.5	4.8	2.4	3.2	16.9
<i>Professionally Qualified</i>	15.3	5.7	6.9	32.8	9.8	4.5	4.6	18
<i>Skilled Workers</i>	32.7	6.9	4.1	16.8	16.6	6.1	3.2	11.7

Source: Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) Report 2014

Table 3 illustrates that workforce distribution remains racially polarised in modern day South Africa. Whites constitute 11% of the national economically active population (EAP) but dominate 70% and 64% of top and senior corporate management roles respectively. White males are almost ten times and eight times more numerous at top

and senior management compared to their EAP of 6.2%. Conversely, blacks make up 89% EAP, yet account for 26% and 32% of top and senior management roles. The table further illustrates that males dominate 77% and 69% of top and senior executive roles respectively against a 54% EAP. The table also shows that white males and females and Indian males and females now exceed their EAP while Africans and coloureds remain underrepresented at all levels. The CEE report (2014) shows that between 2003 and 2013 more white employees were recruited, developed and promoted into top management thereby increasing their representation to 14,149 from 11,831 while blacks increased to 7,489 from 3,805 at the same level (CEE, 2014). Conversely, blacks are highly concentrated at the bottom of occupancy such that they exceed their EAP and whites are invisible at these levels. These trends indicate persistent white dominance of leadership roles and that little has really changed in dismantling apartheid at substantive levels.

The trends are no different amongst the black population regarding gender inequality. Despite the slight decrease in employment-population ratio to 41% and 45% in 2011, the employment ratio amongst men has remained higher compared to women (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Statistics South Africa (2013) affirms that males have better employment prospects than women. According to the CEE (2014), approximately 26,966 more males were hired in executive leadership roles over the last 10 years from a high base of 50,164 while only 17,184 more women were hired at the same level over the same period from a low base of 12,784 (CEE, 2014). While these trends could be reflective of a greater pipeline of employable males, the racial differentiation in the upward mobility of women suggests that there's more that is embedded in organisational practice. While women are grossly underrepresented in top leadership roles with a mere 18.1%, 61% of these are white women. White women (11%) are twice as numerous as their EAP of 4.6%. African and coloured women, on the other hand, are ten times and five times less numerous, respectively, than their EAP. While

these patterns change at middle and junior management levels, African women remain grossly underrepresented in relation to their EAP.

Similarly, at the intersection of dis/ability, able-bodied South Africans have better prospects for education and employment. The CEE report (2014) illustrates a concerning decline in workforce representation of people with disabilities from 1.3% in 2003 to only 0.9% in 2013. This skewed demographic profile clearly indicates the nature of inequality in post-apartheid South African corporations and how whiteness, white masculinity, masculinity and able-bodiedness still sustain power and dominance. This sustained and reproduced inequality and dominance directly impacts on power dynamics. The differential treatment and subjugation of certain groups define the norms and the rules of engagement (Matsimbi, 1995; Vallabh & Donald, 2001).

2.5.1.3 Unequal income distribution

In his highly acclaimed work on capitalism, Thomas Piketty (Smith, 2015) argues that inequality is the inevitable outcome of capitalism. He argues that the returns on capital always exceed economic growth. In other words, earnings of the owners of capital (the rich) always grow faster than the earnings of labour (the poor) (Netshitenzhe, 2013). Thus the burden of inequality falls squarely on the poor and marginalised (Netshitenzhe, 2013) as the rich save enough of their disproportionately high earnings to ensure that their stock of capital always grows at least as fast as the economy and so inequality widens. While rising inequality is not necessarily unique to South Africa, it is highly concerning that South Africa has now overtaken Brazil to become the world's most unequal society. South Africa has the highest income inequality even amongst the emerging and developing economies (International Labour Organisation, 2015). In addition to the skills deficit and high unemployment levels amongst the black majority cited by Netshitenze (2013) and Habib (2014), the ILO (2015) also attributes South Africa's growing income inequality to three main factors; a) the legacy of apartheid, b)

stagnant real wage income in the bottom decile, c) and the income rise in the top decile.

Linked to the earlier discussion, owners of capital in South Africa are primarily white and male. Further correlated with the CEE report, those charged with the responsibility of managing the means of production are also white, as the top decile is more than 70% white while the bottom decile is more than 80% black. Indeed, Burger (2015) argues that labour's share of aggregate income, which consists of labour and capital income, has fallen sharply since 1993 from 57% to 53% in 2013. This decline coincides with the steep rise in the income of holders of capital (ILO, 2015), a phenomenon that is familiar across developing economies.

South Africa is the most inequitable country in the twentieth century (Harmse, 2013; Ndletyana & Maimela, 2013). In fact, 60% of all income in South Africa is in the hands of 10% of the population. The richest two individuals, Johann Rupert and Nicky Oppenheimer, have wealth that equals that of the poorest 50% of the population. A recent study conducted by Analytico surveyed 65,628 individuals who work in professional job roles and found that white professionals earn higher wages than their black counterparts. Black professionals in computer programming earned an average salary of R 8,014 per month while their white counterparts earned R 26,549 (Peyper, 2016).

2.5.1.4 Oppression and marginalisation in Eurocentric corporate culture

The Employment Equity Act requires organisations to promote diversity through equal treatment of all groups. However, research shows that black workers, women, people with disabilities, and LGBTI workers are not treated equally and fairly in organisations. These groups often encounter many challenges as they integrate into and intersect with dominant groups in corporate spaces (Steyn, 2007). In fact, scholars describe corporate culture as frothing with racial mistrust, tensions, hostility and fear (Carton &

Rosette, 2011). Black workers are often labelled as “incompetent”, “tokens”, “empty suits” and “Black faces” or “BEE or Affirmative Action appointments” (Jack, 2007; Ross, 2012). Notably, black managers do not stay long in corporate leadership roles (Khoele & Daya, 2014; Mtungwa, 2009; Nzukuma & Bussin, 2011). This turnover is attributed to organisational hostility towards blacks (Kelly, Wale, Soudein & Steyn, 2007) and the desire by these incumbents for belonging, to add real value and leave a legacy rather than being mere Employment Equity statistics (Nzukuma & Bussin, 2011). These findings contradict the common perception that black managers job hop in search of higher pay (Muteswa & Ortlepp, 2011; Vallabh & Donald, 2001). Corporate diversity strategies also fail to address the perpetual marginalisation of women, LGBT employees and people with disabilities.

Despite being guaranteed equality, freedoms and human dignity by the Constitution, LGBT workers still face large scale homophobic attacks at work (Nel & Judge, 2008; Tlou & Schurink, 2003). They are stereotyped, demonised, stripped of their African identity and they often hide their true selves in order to survive in corporate work environments. Similarly, Lorenzo (2012) amongst many scholars, also points out differential treatment of disabled individuals due to perceived deviance from able-bodiedness. It is no wonder that the majority of people with disabilities remain largely unemployed, underemployed and poor in post-apartheid South Africa (Merrill, 2012). Owing to heightened enforcement of BBBEE and Employment Equity, most corporates have started to implement learnerships for disabled individuals. These skills development interventions, however, are failing to translate to permanent employment opportunities (Lorenzo, 2012). Corporations that convert learnership graduates to permanent employment tend to place them in lower entry-level positions (CEE, 2014). Issues of gender dynamics are well accounted for in literature. Canham (2014) and other authors found that black women suffer double marginalisation on grounds of gender and race. These findings affirm Cilliers and Stone’s (2005) earlier findings about how black women in leadership roles face resistance from both black and white men as

well as white women. Scholars attribute this lack of transformation of the deep organisational cultural milieu to targets-driven change which only seeks to comply with the Act and avoid penalties imposed on non-compliant organisations (Jongens, 2006). Such reforms undermine the spirit and ethos of the type of transformation intended by the Act and the Constitution; they dehumanise designated groups into mere numbers for the scorecard and miss the opportunity to engage diversity meaningfully in order to unleash human potential and create new empowering organisational environments (Selby & Sutherland, 2006; Steyn, 2010). Liswood (2008) likens this externally-focused change strategy to “Noah’s Ark” in that it involves bringing on board a pair of each kind with no account of what happens thereafter. This shallow approach to diversity fails to transform the prevailing assimilationist Eurocentric culture in corporations and fails to tackle power dynamics and inequality (Steyn, 2010).

2.4 Conclusion

The preceding discussion illustrated that contemporary inequalities in society and the labour market are entwined with politics of who is and what it means to be human. Corporations were located as central in the production, reproduction and institutionalisation of these oppressive discourses. The chapter also outlined corporate neoliberal influenced transformation trajectory which the democratic government embarked on since 1994 in an attempt to address injustices. These efforts seem ineffective. The preceding discussion provides motivation for continued exploration of transformative diversity efforts that will yield the desired social justice and equality. Presently, there are contesting views on how transformative diversity efforts ought to be conceptualised leading to a plethora of models of diversity that claim to be interested in redressing inequalities in organisations. The next chapter focuses on these theories and models.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORIES OF DIVERSITY

3.1 Introduction

Since the advent of the universal declaration for human rights and the ILO's decent work for all agenda, UN member states have enacted affirmative action laws amongst others to eradicate inequality and unfair discrimination in the labour market. Corporates locally and abroad also began to make efforts to promote equality and justice in workplaces. These efforts gave rise to multiple theories, models and practices of diversity. In this chapter, I review the most salient theories and models of diversity in organisations as found in scholarly literature. I situate these theories within two contesting paradigms, namely the management and economics paradigm (managerial instrumentalism) and or the transformative (critical) paradigm. I conclude with an explication of my alignment with transformative paradigm, more specifically the critical diversity studies.

3.2 Diversity discourses in the managerial instrumentalism paradigm

Conventional theories of organisational diversity within the management and economics paradigm in South Africa and elsewhere are mainly influenced by Euro-American corporate developments and interests. These theories vary but hold tight to the neoliberal ideologies of capital accumulation, developmentalism, globalism and multiculturalism. This connection is critical for taking into consideration the global power structures and ideologies that produce such theories and the interests furthered. My discussion of diversity theories within managerial instrumentalism begins with the developments in the USA prior to, during and post the enactment of Affirmative Action. My main aim is to illustrate how ideologies of diversity in the USA moved from the social justice orientation of the civil rights groups to become weakened and distorted by capitalist interest. The latter replaced the social justice ideals with profit-centred theories of organisational diversity. These include affirming diversity, diversity management and multiculturalism, the psychosocial theory, socialisation hypothesis, inclusion and the corporate social responsibility theory as illustrated in the diagram below:

Diagram 1: Theories of Diversity in the Managerial Instrumentalism Paradigm



3.2.1 Affirmative Action – a social justice imperative

Local and international scholars of diversity (Leonard, 1990; Monate, 2000; Tlali, 2001; Shaw & Barry, 2004; Kelly, Wale, Soudein, & Steyn, 2007; Evans & Sewell, 2013) trace the genesis of organisational diversity theories to President J.F. Kennedy’s signing of the Executive Order 10, 925 in 1961, and the subsequent passage of Civil Rights Act in 1964. These progressive laws emanated from the increasing pressure and demands exerted by Civil Rights movements for equality and social justice following decades of racial discrimination and marginalisation of minority groups in mainstream society and the economy (Kelly & Dobin, 1998; Evans & Sewell, 2013; Herring & Henderson, 2011). Nkomo and Hoobler (2014) explain that since the formation of the nation until the mid 20th century, the prevalent ideology of diversity in the USA was that of the legitimacy of racial domination and a belief in white supremacy. White supremacy according to Nkomo and Hoobler (2014) was predicated on the 19th century ranking of the world and human subjects into superior

and inferior beings resulting in blacks being placed on the lowest part of this ranking scale. At the turn to the industrialisation, blacks were generally excluded from factory work until the shortage of labour after first world war (Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014). When blacks were employed in factories, Nkomo and Hoobler (2014) explain that they were offered the “dirtiest lowest paying jobs”. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ended unequal application of voter registrations, segregation in workplaces and other public institutions in the USA on grounds of race, gender, religion, sex, or nationality.

Promulgation of Executive Order 11246 by President Lyndon Johnson further advanced these equality oriented policies. Order 11246 required federal organisations to implement affirmative action measures to level playing fields for marginalised groups (Madkins,1989; Soni, 1990). In his 1965 speech, President Johnson proclaimed that it was unfair to simply unbridle a person that has been chained for years and expect such a person to compete fairly with others that were never chained. He argued that the most profound stage of the battle for Civil Rights lay not in mere freedom without opportunity, legal equity without human ability, and mere equality as a right and theory but equality as a fact. Affirmative action measures entailed positive discrimination or preferential treatment of minority groups in human resource processes of recruitment, promotion, development and remuneration in order to close existing inequalities and to enable them to compete on equal footing with their unfairly advantaged counterparts.

Madkins (1989) and Soni (1999) posit that these policies were designed to promote social justice interests and positioned affirmative action as a moral and legal obligation. The gains of these policies were evident in the increased federal executive orders and legal actions taken against non-conforming US corporations and the corresponding hiring of professionals to drive Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action initiatives to correct the exclusionary and discriminatory practices towards marginalised groups (Holvino & Kamp, 2009). Affirmative action policy subsequently gained popularity resulting in its adoption in various permutations by

United Nations member countries including South Africa, the United Kingdom, Singapore, India, Namibia and Australia.

Attitudes and reactions towards affirmative action have varied substantially amongst academics, politicians, corporations and civil society. In South Africa, these contestations tend to follow one of three standpoints: a paradigmatic, legal and/or pragmatic perspective (Leonard, 2005). Paradigmatic arguments tend to support affirmative action citing that its success is dependent on the very object the policy seeks to achieve which is to shift individual, group and organisational beliefs about diversity and difference (Madi, 1993; Leonard, 2005). These scholars (Madi, 1993; De-Beer, 2002; Leonard, 2005) believe that affirmative-action based programmes are adequate for shifting the organisational demographics and facilitating reengineering of organisational practices and systems to value diversity. As a result, their studies tend to focus on examining antecedents of successful implementation of Affirmative Action policy.

Legal scholars based their arguments on the natural tension between the values of individual merits, liberties and responsibilities (Pretorius, 2009; Shamina, Gaibie, Cheadle, Thomson & Haysom Inc, 2013; Solidarity, 2015) on one hand, and group-focused affirmative programmes on the other (McGregor, 2011; Ngalwana, 2015). Arguments within this legal perspective also differ with some arguing for and others against the legitimacy of positive discrimination in modern “liberal” dispensation (Pretorius, 2009; Shamina, Gaibie, Cheadle, McGregor, 2011; Thomson & Haysom Inc, 2013; Ngalwana, 2015; Solidarity, 2015). The legitimacy of affirmative action in relation to the constitutional rights of non-designated groups has remained a bone of contention (Pretorius, 2009; Shamina, Gaibie, Cheadle, Thomson & Haysom Inc, 2013; Solidarity, 2015).

Pragmatists have debated a variety of topics including the efficacy of affirmative action in redressing institutionalised racism, the processes and effects of affirmative action

strategies in organisations (Monate, 2000; Swanepoel, Erasmus, & Schenk, 2008; Tladi, 2001), employee perceptions of and social attitudes towards affirmative action (Reuben & Bobat, 2014; Rankumse, Netswera, & Meyer, 2001; Roberts, Weir-Smith, & Reddy, 2011; Veldsman, 2013) and the advantages and disadvantages of Affirmative Action on organisational outcomes and (race) group dynamics (Hall & Woermann, 2014).

These multiple opinions and contestations about affirmative action in South Africa and elsewhere have given rise to the emergence of various diversity theories and models aimed at assisting organisations and employees in overcoming diversity-related challenges. As Lockard (2010) argues (though in a different context), “when the United States sneezes the rest of the world catches cold”. This statement is true about how shifts in (organisational) diversity theories and models in the US mould thinking and practice in South Africa. It is thus prudent to discuss these US developments and their influence on theorisation of diversity in the local context.

3.2.2 Affirming diversity theory

Devins (1989), Leonard (1990) and Kelly and Dobbin (1998) correctly posit that “the federal policy of Affirmative Action effectively passed away with the inauguration of the Reagan administration in 1981”. The Supreme Court decision in the summer of 1989 nailed down the coffin lid (Leonard, 1990). Reagan ushered in a new socio-political and economic dispensation that sought to apply Affirmative Action to affirmation of diversity (Leonard, 1990; Evans & Sewell, 2013). The “stagflation” (a combination of high unemployment and persistent high inflation) in the 1970s and the collapse of global markets marked the demise of embedded liberalism, creating an opportunity for intensified conservative white male backlash against Affirmative Action policy (Evans & Sewell, 2013). These economic and political conditions provided an opportunity for support of Reagan and Thatcher’s neoliberal policy.

Regan reverted to classical liberal economic models in order to lower inflation, stabilise and grow the economy (Roy, Denzau, & Willett, 2007). Neoliberalism weakened the state's role in the economy through de-regulation of markets, privatisation of government services and institutions, tax reduction for business and on capital gains, and globalisation of markets to permit free flow of capital across national borders. In the US and UK respectively, Reagan and Thatcher hiked payroll taxes and privatised social security that gave society the rights of access to basic services (Rowley & Smith, 2009; Roy, Denzau, & Willet, 2007). These changes weakened the power of organised labour which had previously served to counterbalance capitalist surplus. It is within this context that the needs of society were negated and enforcement of Affirmative Action weakened as these were perceived to be a burden to the state and business (Holvino & Kamp, 2009). Equal opportunity legislation was reversed, enforcement resources withdrawn and judicial decisions overturned (Holvino & Kamp, 2009). Kelly and Dobbin (1998) explain that some employers, however, opted to proceed with affirmative action initiatives. Nonetheless, Reagan continued to mobilise liberal views of individualism and merit. Andersen (2006) sums up Reagan's views as having mobilised against permitting "the noble concept of equal opportunity to be distorted into federal guidelines or quotas which require race, ethnicity or sex – rather than ability and qualifications – to be the principal factor in hiring or education".

Reagan's intentionality for advancing individuality and meritocracy was tied to the agenda of race neutrality and gender blind (re)conceptualisations of Affirmative Action and the perceptions that legislation intended to address historical inequalities constitute "reverse discrimination" (Berry, 2007). This neutrality or blindness towards race and gender discrimination aligned with American liberal values of fairness, equality and democracy (Berry, 2007). The administrations of Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton in the 1990s continued to weaken enforcement and judicial support for equal opportunity legislation. President Clinton advocated the shift from

Affirmative Action to “managing diversity” to diminish any possible associations with Affirmative Action (Payne & Thakkar, 2012).

It is in this broader context that Thomas (1990; 2004) articulated the notion of affirming diversity, a hypothesis that has since taken centre stage in the theorisation of organisational diversity in business management sciences. Thomas (1990) theorised that Affirmative Action is based on a set of old premises that need revision in contemporary globalised multicultural societies. Thomas (2004) further argued that Affirmative Action’s parochialism and amplification of racial and gender consciousness justified its abandonment. He postulated that there was a need for more inclusive, non-divisive race, gender and ethnic neutral and de-politicised model. Such a model, according to Roosevelt, had more potential of creating the necessary conditions required to discontinue Affirmative Action more productively. He then proposed a Strategic Diversity Management Process (SDMP) as an alternative. Thomas (2004) explicated that SDMP is a framework that enables quality decision making on strategic diversity mix and that this model admits differences, similarities and tensions.

The affirming diversity discourse has since penetrated academia and organisations, creating an industry of consulting firms and professionals who often reinforce neoliberal ideologies across a broad range of specialities including diversity, organisational psychology, accounting, etc. Psychometric assessments have also become normalised practices for measuring merit for entry, employment and development opportunities in social institutions and organisations (Nzukuma, 2011). Nzukuma (2011) argues that this normalised practice conceals the fact that psychometric assessments are designed to measure the experiences, cultures and perspectives of privileged, dominant white groups. As Letvin (2002) recapitulates, affirming diversity theory and praxis managerialises a phenomenon that is based on human rights values and social justice imperatives. Nkomo and Hoobler (2014) cite Takaki (1979) arguing that the dilemma for industrialists at this juncture was to find

mechanisms of maintaining white supremacy while satisfying labour supply to sustain capitalism. Despite this criticism, affirming diversity has gained momentum and is now entrenched in management scholarship and organisational practices within the Global North and the Restern periphery.

3.2.3 Multiculturalism and diversity management

The Hudson Institute's "Workforce 2000" and its sequel 1997 report, "Workforce 2020", entrenched the shift away from Affirmative Action towards the discourse of 'diversity management'. The Institute predicted that 85% of new entrants in the USA workforce would be women and racial minority groups. Subsequent reports further argued that the 21st Century workforce in a globalised technology and knowledge-driven economy would consist of more diverse groups and skilled migrant workers who would eventually outnumber historically dominant white males. The Institute further argued that organisations needed to weave diversity into their everyday operation systems and processes if they were to sustain a culture of success and global competitiveness. Bell (2007) states that the Institute's report sent shockwaves through the business world, often misunderstood as stating that white men will account for only 15% of the workforce by the year 2000. In this era, McKinsey & Company (1997) also hypothesised that the ageing population and retirements were resulting in the decrease of Baby Boomers at work, a largely white and male workforce. The company postulated a "war for talent" arguing that organisations needed to place diversity at the epicentre of talent acquisition, development and retention as strategic priority and determinant of organisational success in the 21st Century.

The Hudson Institute, a philosophically conservative pro-individual liberties and market liberalisation think tank, together with McKenzie's talent scarcity theory, provided intellectual impetus for numerous studies that connected and measured effects of workforce diversity on organisational outcomes. Scholars in this domain

focused on investigating effects of diversity management and multiculturalism on organisational outcomes, implications of increasing border permeability of talented workers for organisations, effects of globalisation on organisational processes, and workforce diversity dynamics in the era of cross border trade and technological advancement (Gwele, 2009; Hosch, Pearce, & Welzel, 2010; Jane & Dipboye, 2004; Kindu, 2003; Korn/Ferry Institute, 2007). Multiculturalism became a central theme in diversity management practice and scholarship. Bekker and Leilde (2003) state that multiculturalism describes the state of cultural diversity in a society, an ideology aimed at legitimising the assimilation of ethnic diversity in the majoritarian Anglophone society, and a public policy designed to create national unity in ethnic diversity.

Other management scientists have also gone further to link diversity with other performance-related theories such as Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (Mamman, Kamoche, & Bakuwa, 2012; Noor, Khalid, & Rashid, 2014) and Psychological Ownership and Employee Engagement (Skalsky & McCarthy, 2009) in a bid to leverage diversity in order to maximise organisational profitability.

3.2.4 The psycho-social theory

Psycho-social theorists tend to focus on understanding possible counterproductive effects of diversity. In this domain, scholars tend to associate increased organisational diversity with negative outcomes such as interpersonal conflict, communication inefficiencies, absenteeism, presenteeism (being present at work but not productive) and high voluntary turnover of minority groups (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Pelled, 1996). These scholars, predominantly organisational behaviour and industrial psychologists, often adopt Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity and self-categorisation theories to examine the intra- and intergroup dynamics in a heterogeneous work context. Social identity and self-categorisation theories are interconnected social psychology theories that explain the intrinsic human need for

belongingness and the human propensity to organise based on perceived shared identity similarities.

Hornsey (2008) explains that self-categorisation occurs in three cognitive levels that are important for one's self-concept: human identity, social identity and personal identity. Hogg (2001) further suggests that self-categorisation leads to group formations on grounds of perceived similarities (the in-group) and dissimilarities (the out-group), and the homogenisation of both groups.

The similarities of the in-group and the differences of the out-group are often exaggerated. This results in the conception of prototypes and the depersonalisation of an individual in order to fit into the prototype (Hogg, 2001). In these interactions, salient in-groups often establish normative behaviours and this results in their social interaction with the out-group being characterised by hostility, stereotypes, marginalisation and rejection based on the "othering" of the non-normative group's identity and behaviours (Milliken & Martins, 1996). The LGBTI group, for instance, is often marginalised, stigmatised, "pathologised" and "medicalised" (De Block and Adriaens, 2013). This marginalisation affects the quality of social relations, social integration and often affects access to crucial psycho-social resources that are essential for career growth opportunities. For instance, in a predominately heterosexual and cisnormative workforce, LGBTI workers often struggle to find coaches and mentors (Thomas, 2005). The same applies to racial minorities in predominantly white workplaces and women in male-dominated leadership roles. Theories that explain this phenomenon include symbolic interactionism, relational demography, similarity-attraction, social categorisation, person – environment fit, and homo-sociability theory (Kenny, Whittle, & Willmont, 2011). A variety of psychological assessment instruments have subsequently been developed in this domain to profile a job applicant's propensity to "fit in" within the existing dominant culture.

3.2.5 The socialisation hypothesis

Some scholars within management sciences are increasingly framing diversity within the confines of an intergenerational workforce. This discourse argues that human differences-based conflict, mistrust and inequalities shift from generation to generation. They use the socialisation hypothesis to support their arguments. Mannheim's (1952) generational theory, Inglehart's (1990) post-materialism and socialisation hypothesis and Ryder's (1965) study of cohort replacement in social change form the basis for the postulations of this intergenerational discourse. According to Mannheim (1952), differences in age groups can be used as a means of locating individuals within a socio-historical context. While Mannheim (1952) initially hypothesised the social location as a social class factor, he later agreed that generational factors influence one's generational location and that generational location indicates some definitive modes of behaviours, feelings and thoughts. However, Mannheim (1952) retained his belief that formative experiences are pivotal in shaping the generational conception of the world and social relations.

Inglehart (1990) later connected generational theory with materiality, post-materiality and socialisation hypotheses. He describes post-materialism as being concerned with the quality of life, the environment and human rights rather than materialist preoccupations with growth and security. Inglehart and Welzel (2010) argue that these social and material conditions shape adult's values through the socialisation process and that their youth experiences of economic and physical security instil enduring value orientations. To test this hypothesis, Inglehart (1990) developed the materialism – post-materialism value scale which measures multiple generational perceptions of various diversity dimensions including heteropatriarchy, disability, homosexuality and migration. Having applied the instrument in various contexts, Inglehart concluded that values shift more towards post-materialism in richer countries, resulting in the rise of pro-human rights movements, environmentalists, and working class, and the rise of new left-wing parties. He argued that survivalist

values remain salient in emerging economies. Materialist societies and generations are less likely to value diversity and difference.

Despite being highly criticised for conceptual flaws and theoretical as well as empirical inconsistencies (Brooks & Maza, 1994; Butler & Savage, 1995; Tilley, 2005), the socialisation generational replacement theory is flourishing in modernist discourse. Generational theorists differ substantially in their description of generational cohorts, the socio-historical events and timelines that shape and differentiate generational cohorts, and fail to account for geo-political, socio-cultural and economic nuances in various contexts.

Table 4: Generational Cohorts

Source	Generational Cohorts				
Howe and Strauss (2000)	Silent Generation (1925 – 1943)	Boom Generation (1943 – 1960)	13 th Generation (1961 – 1981)	Millennials (1982 – 2000)	-
Lancaster and Stillman (2002)	Traditionalists (1900 – 1945)	Baby Boomers (1946 – 1964)	Generation Xers (1965 – 1980)	Millennials, Echo Boomer, Generation Y; Baby Busters; Generation Next (1981 – 2000)	-
Martin and Tulgan (2002)	Silent Generation (1925 – 1942)	Baby Boomers (1946 – 1960)	Generation X (1965 – 1977)	Millennials (1978 – 2000)	-
Oblinger and Oblinger (2005)	Matures (<1946)	Baby Boomers (1947 – 1964)	Gen Xers (1965 – 1980)	Gen – Y; NetGen; Millennials (1981 – 1995)	Post Millennials (1995 >)
Tapscott (1998)	-	Baby Boom Gen (1946 – 1964)	Generation X (1965 – 1975)	Digital Generation (1976 – 2000)	-

Veterans	Baby boomers	Gen Xers	Nexters
(1922 – 1943)	(1943 – 1960)	(1960 – 1980)	(1980 – 1999)

Jean Twenge (2006) hypothesised that millennials or “Gen Me”, born in the 1980s and 1990s, will soon constitute the majority of the workforce globally. She devoted 13 years to surveying 1.3 million Gen Me’s perceptions of diversity in the USA to test this generation’s propensity to collaborate. Twenge (2006) concluded that “Gen Me” will continue to push the racial boundaries to engender the shift towards racial equality. She hypothesised that as a result of this shift, race will become less important as a defining characteristic. She argues that “Gen Me” is likely to redefine the homo-sociability hypothesis by fostering cross-cultural relations and community organisations (Twenge, 2006). An Ethics Resource Centre (2010) study affirmed this prediction stating that “Echo Boomers” (born in 1981 onwards) are more attuned to diversity than their elders. The study postulated that Echo Boomers connect easily with humans across a broad range of human differences including race, religion and sexuality. This is attributed to a view that Echo Boomers view diversity as a cause for celebration and sharing rather than a source of tension and apprehension (Ethics Resource Centre, 2010). Howe & Strauss (2000) had earlier argued that Millennials are better educated, affluent, and culturally diverse, therefore they project a wide range of positive social habits such as team orientation, achievement, modesty and good conduct.

Despite contestations the idea of born frees being highly contested in South Africa (Sokfa, Kaunda, & Madlala, 2015), other scholars particularly from management sciences (Barnes, 2012; Close, 2015; Kuhn, 2011; Moss & Martins, 2014; Martins & Martins, 2014) adopted the concept of born frees to examine some diversity-related variables and perceptions amongst different generational cohorts of South African

workers. Results of these studies echoed the findings of their American counterparts discussed above. These scholars, however alluded to some unique nuances involved in defining generational cohorts in South Africa. Although developed for a different context, Mattes' (2011) model is perhaps the most useful of these. Mattes (2011) distinguishes five South African generational cohorts and these are the Pre-Apartheid, Early Apartheid, Grand Apartheid, the Struggle and Born Free generations. He defines the Pre-Apartheid generation as those who reached their formative political age of 16 before the National Party came into power in 1948. The Early Apartheid generation reached 16 years between 1948 and 1960 and thus have no working memory of life before the imposition of apartheid or the legal matrix of laws imposing and enforcing racial classification and separation. The Grand Apartheid (1961 – 1975) generation's early memories were seared by the first stirrings of internal black resistance, the Sharpeville massacre in 1961, the news of gathering decolonisation movements and the creation of constellation of independent black republics beyond the borders of white South Africa. The Soweto uprising in 1976 ushered in the Struggle generation, consisting of people who turned 16 between 1976 and 1996. This generation witnessed the first television broadcast, violent resistance and reaction to racial segregation. This generation also witnessed the demise of apartheid, the unbanning of political parties, and the release of political prisoners, the election of a new government and the passage of the Constitution, even though they were unable to vote. Lastly, Mattes (2011) defines "Born Frees" as those who came of age after 1996 and have no first-hand experience of the trauma of the debilitating racial segregation. This generation, according to Mattes witnessed reconciliatory processes and massive growth and development such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the massive state investment in infrastructure development, transformation of the state, educational reform, and growth-oriented economic development. Similar to Sokfa et al., (2015), Mattes (2011) dispels the idea of born frees sharing positive perceptions of democracy compared to their

militant elders as social and economic conditions have not improved for most youths labelled as born free, particularly for those in poor and rural areas.

3.2.6 The inclusion paradigm

Inclusion has recently emerged as a discourse that responds to diversity management's failure to successfully integrate diverse groups into the workplace. Proponents of this paradigm argue that the objective of inclusion discourse is to promote the creation of empowering organisational environments of differences in which diverse groups feel included and connected (Bilimoria, Joy, & Liang, 2008; Roberson & Stevens, 2006; Thomas & Ely, 1996). Batts, Capitman & Landman (2013) associate the inclusion discourse with pluralism. These authors liken pluralism to the 'salad bowl' conceptualisation of diversity. Emphasis is on transcending the assimilationist melting pot concept to address issues of acceptance, appreciation, utilisation and celebration of similarities and differences at the personal, interpersonal, systemic or institutional and cultural level (Batts, Capitman & Landman, 2013). However, some scholars, including Nkomo (2014), have questioned whether inclusion is "old wine in a new bottle".

Thus far, there are inconsistencies in the definition of inclusion. Pelled, Ledford, and Morhman (1999) define inclusion as "the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by others in a work system". Roberson's (2006) definition focuses on the removal of barriers that hinder full participation and contribution of employees in an organisation. Roberson (2006) is unclear, however, of what these barriers look like and whether they link to broader historical and present socio-political barriers outside and inside organisations. This absence leads to reductionist perspectives of diversity-related barriers. Mor Barak's (2000) model, however, conceptualises inclusion as "a continuum of the degree to which individuals feel part of critical organisational processes". These processes include information and resources, connectedness to supervisors and participation in decision-making

processes (Mor Barak, 2000). Mor Barak (2000) argues that greater diversity and non-inclusive organisational culture lead to perceptions of exclusion and this in turn affects job satisfaction, organisational commitment, individual well-being and task effectiveness.

Mor Barak's (2000) inclusion model has been tested by a number of researchers with varying findings. Pelled, Ledford and Morhman (1999) conducted a study that focused on three dimensions of inclusion. These are decision-making influence, access to sensitive information, and job security. These authors found that dissimilarities in race and gender were not associated and similarities in tenure and education were positively associated with the three inclusion dimensions. Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkaman (1998) proved that amongst a group of electricians, men and Caucasians were more likely than other groups to feel included. The study found that women felt more excluded, and interestingly, they found no correlation between inclusion, commitment and job satisfaction. This led to the expansion of the model to include turnover intentions. Mor Barak, Levin, Nissly, and Lane, (2006) tested the revised model and found that exclusion from decision making was a predictor of turnover intentions amongst care workers. They also found that younger workers and those with lower tenure had a higher rate of exclusion from information and decision resulting in higher turnovers.

3.2.7 The corporate social responsibility paradigm

The corporate social responsibility (CSR) paradigm is built on the theoretical assertions of Clark (1916), Kreps (1940), Bowen (1953), Davis (1960), and Drucker (1984). These authors acknowledged the power and impact of corporations on society. They argued that business needs to pursue policies, decisions and actions that are in alignment with social values and responsibility. This paradigm acknowledges the role corporations played in plundering societies, slavery, exploitation and related ills and seeks to inculcate a culture of social consciousness

in corporate pursuit of profits. Sethi (1975) developed and amended the model that classifies corporate social performance and later amended it to include four dimensions: economic, legal, ethical and discretionary/philanthropic obligations. DeGeorge, (1999) later agreed with Sethi by defining corporate social responsibility as duty to society with regard to economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic matters. Other authors in this domain view CSR as a tacit social contract between the corporation and society and that the contract bestows certain rights and responsibilities to the organisation (Donaldson, 1982; Donaldson & Dunfee, 1999). Freeman (1984), however, views CSR as a stakeholder theory. By this, Freeman implies that CSR is about ensuring that the corporation's strategic interest must respect the interests of all its stakeholders which are defined as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an organisation's purpose.

The CSR perspective frames diversity within the moralistic responsibility perspective and tends to focus on corporate obligations towards rights of labour, environmental conditions, human rights and poverty alleviation. Central to this paradigm is corporate interest and profitability that does not neglect the needs of society. Structures such as the UN Global Compact, UN principles of responsible investment, the ILO Tripartite Declaration of principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration), UNHCHR Business and Human Rights have been put in place to monitor corporate responsibility towards their social contexts. The perspective is linked to the notion of corporate citizenship behaviour, a concept that is grounded in the individual liberty, rights and responsibilities of the corporate as an individual citizen.

3.3 The critique of and contestations within the diversity management paradigm

As Friday and Friday (2003) point out, the well-researched and widely-implemented diversity management (DM) models and initiatives cannot adequately address the

critical issues of power, inequality and social justice. These authors assign this failure to lack of consensus on what diversity management stands for and the absence of concrete diversity models that address real social problems. Other scholars argue that diversity management discourse merely acknowledges the existence of, and respect for, differences without necessarily tapping into the unique talents of a diverse workforce (Mare, 2001; Gwele, 2009).

Marques (2010) heavily criticises the diversity management paradigm for promoting “colourful window dressing” tactics and producing a range of minimalistic shallow diversity interventions that disregard critical questions of inequality. Noon (2007) adds that diversity management promotes assimilation of minority groups without accounting for issues of hegemony, subjugation and institutional prejudice. Cilliers and Stone (2005) add that diversity management interventions are “quick fixes” that fail to account for power relations and interpersonal and intergroup dynamics, and lack integration into the broader human resources strategy. Most importantly, the claimed business case for diversity management has yet to be proven (Lobove, 1997; Hansen, 2003; Cilliers & Stone, 2005). American corporations invest \$8 billion per annum in diversity management initiatives with zero returns on investment (Hanse, 2003). In fact, the Korn/Ferry Institute (2007) estimates the cost of failed diversity management interventions to average \$64 billion per annum in the USA which is equivalent to the gross domestic product of the 55th wealthiest country in the world.

Richard (2000) examined the impact of racial diversity on a firm’s financial performance while Carstens (2013) evaluated the impact of diversity on firm-level outcomes. Both scholars found that diversity was insufficient to yield positive returns. These scholars, however, remained incongruent on a proposed way forward. On the other hand, McGuire, Sundgren and Schneeweis (1988) argued that hiring women and racial minorities into leadership roles leads to positive organisational reputation and performance. Roberson and Park (2006) dismissed this claim and clarified that

enhanced organisational diversity reputation does not necessarily increase sales. Dezsó and Ross (2010), on the other hand, were concerned about the dearth of women in top corporate leadership echelons and wondered if gender diversity has any benefits for organisational performance and competitiveness beyond mere social and ethical implications. These authors hypothesised that female representation in top management brings informational and social diversity benefits to the top management team. They further hypothesised that female representation enriches the behaviours displayed by managers in the entire firm and motivates women in middle management. Dezsó and Ross (2010) analysed panel data collected over 15 years on top management teams of the Standard & Poor's 1 500 firms to test this hypothesis. The results indicated that female representation in top management improves firm performance limited to the extent to which the firm's strategy is focused on innovation. In such contexts, the informational and social benefits of gender diversity and behaviours associated with women in management were found likely to be important for management task performance.

The preceding discussion shows some sharp criticism levelled against the managerial instrumentalism oriented diversity discourses. The discussion further illustrates contestations within the paradigm particularly on the claimed business case for diversity in organisations. I will now turn to the transformative paradigm, more specifically, critical diversity theory as the rising alternative of thinking about and doing diversity in organisations.

3.4 Critical Diversity Theory

Since the 90s, sociologists began to galvanise a body of knowledge that sought to refute the paradigm of diversity management and to refocus diversity discourses on critical issues of hierarchies of power and inequality rather than the dominant meritocracy oriented diversity management rhetoric (Zanoni, 2011). Anderson (2006) ascribes the purpose of this scholarship to the original intent of the Civil

Rights movements which led to the enactment of Affirmative Action. The interest of the critical diversity research stream is to identify, challenge and change hegemonic systems and process of power that perpetuate oppression and domination in social organisations. Anderson (2006) emphasises that critical scholars do not study race, gender and class in organisations for theory's sake but with a genuine desire for social change and inclusivity. Critical diversity scholars reject the studying of differences in organisations through "objective" lenses of the privileged, which is a dominant epistemological position in managerial instrumentalism. Instead, critical diversity scholars have more interest on investigating issues of power, dominance and otherness with a sharp focus on lived experiences of marginalised groups and their "subject" social constructions of such lived realities. In the main, these scholars draw from a broad range of critical theoretical thought which may include but not limited to post-modern, post-colonial and decolonial perspectives including critical race (Omi & Winant, 1986; Nkomo, 1992), feminism (Acker, 1992; Poggio, 2006), critical disability theory (Potheir & Devlin, 2006) and queer theories (Clare, 2009; Parker, 2001).

Critical Diversity Studies (CDS) engage a broad literature base including post-structuralism discourse analysis, cultural studies and labour process theory (Jongens, 2006; Zanoni, 2009). Janssens & Steyaert (2003) refer to critical diversity studies as the moral-ethical approach to the study of difference. The emergence of CDS in the mid-1990s intended to refute the diversity management rhetoric and to refocus literature and practise back to the critical question of inequality, unequal power relations, oppression and discrimination (Zanoni, 2011). Therefore, CDS confronts and interrogates historical and present structures of power that work together to construct and propagate inequality, superiority and subjugation (Steyn, 2010). As a postmodernist and post-structuralist theoretical framework, CDS adopts a non-positivistic view of diversity and difference to position these constructs as socially produced and reproduced in ongoing context-specific processes (Zanoni,

et.al, 2011). CDS challenges the notion of assimilation and advocates for the promotion of deep transformation of the organisational cultural milieu in order to bring about new social meanings and representations.

CDS views diversity as a complex and multi-layered phenomenon and implicates identity and differences that are constructed within specific historical, cultural and power relations (Steyn, 2010). World systems theory, postcolonial theory and decolonial theory are generally useful for mapping this interconnectivity of identity, history, culture and power. These theories unapologetically recognise European colonialism as a historical fact that profoundly fashioned the modern world into asymmetries of power, poverty and inequality. These scholars dismiss Social Darwinist bio-political economic notions of natural selectionism and the survival of the fittest (Leonard, 2009; Offer, 2014) that abound in modernist theories to explain the hegemonic economic, political and social positionality of developed countries and white subjects, arguing that the capitalist core became rich, powerful and developed through destructive and dehumanising colonial means (Mignolo, 2016; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wallerstein, 1976). Decolonial scholars go further to argue that the decolonisation project of the Cold War epoch ushered in postcolonial discourses without altering the “conqueror – conquered”, unequal power relations between the colonising core and the colonised periphery (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Hence postcolonial and decolonial scholars actively engage in transdisciplinary and “undisciplinary” (Mignolo, 2016) studies and practices that seek to identify colonial legacies and modern neo-colonial ideologies that hold intact these unequal power relations and inequalities. These critical scholars seek to disentangle, discredit and change the structural injustices enacted by the logic of coloniality and the rhetoric of modernity across the social, economic, epistemic and aesthetics spheres (Mignolo, 2016). Linking CDS with world systems theory, postcolonial and decolonial thought enables development of comprehensive criteria for recognising organisational

transformation discourses that transcend mere compliance to valuing democracy and equality (Groschl, 2011; Steyn, 2007).

This link reconnects with Fanon's (1967) sociogenesis hypothesis which ruptures the Eurocentric Cartesian body - soul dualism and bio-economic conception of the human to render these parochial, ahistorical and apolitical. Fanon declared that "Besides ontogeny and phylogeny of being human stands sociogeny" (Fanon, 1967 p. 2). Fanon's *sociogenesis* hypothesis situates human (differences) in specific socio-historical-economic-political contexts in order to offer a revolutionary mode of rethinking the human category. Fanon and fellow anti-colonial Francophone and Guinea Bissauan colleagues, Césaire and Cabral, further contend that the human is a mode of being and becoming (Fanon, 1967) that is shaped within a specific yet timeless, social, economic, political, epistemological, spiritual, aesthetics, linguistics and cognitive (Wa Thiong'o, 1986; Steyn, 2001) historicity of coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000). Steyn (2015) summarises that "the human is not a self-evident category but has, in fact, always been a site of contestation shaped within unequal power relations" (Wits Centre for Diversity Studies Media statement, 2015). Steyn explains that Cartesian, white, Western-European, able-bodied, heteropatriarchal, Christian males appropriated the right to define the human to centre themselves as the epitome of being and to justify the relegation of the different "others" into a perpetual positionality of subjection. Fanon (1967) refers to this subverted positionality as the "zone of non-being" (Fanon, 1967), while Mignolo (1999; 2016) refers to this as the "coloniality of being". This perspective locates coloniality of being at the epicentre of coloniality of power (Quijano, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2005).

Quijano (2000) argued that coloniality of power entails a matrix that encompasses four intersecting domains: control of economy, control of authority, control of gender and sexuality and control of knowledge and subjectivity. The decolonial paradigm thus recalls and reconnects the Columbus era of "God, Gold and Glory" in the 15th century to contemporary Western hegemonic imperialism that perpetuates universal

overvalorisation of Western subjects and devalorisation of non-Western “others” in all spheres of life (Herbut, 2013; Mignolo & Escobar, 2013). This recollection-reconnection discourse lays bare the polygonal and enduring traumas that occurred since the non-European subjects encountered Europeans since Columbus docked in the Americas on 12 October 1492 (Herbut, 2013; Grosfoguel, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; 2015). Columbus, who was sponsored by the monarch of Isabella and Ferdinand to explore a more efficient route to Asia, thought he had arrived in Asia. As he strode out of the vessel he stumbled upon the Tahinos, which he thought were Red Indians, and became astonished at the dissimilar aesthetics, religions, knowledges, languages and cultures of these beings compared to the European mode of being (Grosfoguel, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; 2015). The natives welcomed the European guests with love and admiration (Washburn, 1962) while Columbus, on the other hand, was dumbfounded by the natives’ generosity and affection and equally wondered if these “different others” had souls (Grosfoguel, 2013).

This discourse of “soul-less” others (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015) was predicated on Cartesian philosophy of the soul as a definitive feature of being human and a sign of connectedness to God. Thus, Columbus’ construction of Native Americans as “soul-less” dehumanised the natives and relegated them to a zone of non-humans; a discourse that justified the brutalisation of non-Western subjects in the theft of gold for Spanish profit. Interestingly, Native Americans are still called Indians till today, a discourse that powerfully shed light on who has power to define the “other”. When Columbus returned to Spain, he had left some 37 men behind to establish a colony while he returned to Spain with spices, gold and some Indians as evidence of his discovery of the “New World” and as an indication of profit prospects in the “New World”. This dehumanising discourse became a common experience in the Restern periphery including Africa and Asia.

Referencing Nederveen Pietrese (1992 p. 28) Steyn (2001) reminds us that the relationship between (white) Europe and (black) Africa began in 1441 when 10 (black)

Africans from the northern Guinea coast were shipped to Portugal as a gift to Prince Henry. Terreblanche (2014) adds that the first pattern of Western empires involved the shipment of millions of Africans as slaves to the Americas, the excavation of mineral wealth in the Americas, and the production of plantation crops in the Americas for export to Europe. The large quantities of gold and silver that were shipped to Western Europe enabled the Europeans to maintain lucrative trade relations with Asia, from where a great variety of valuable products were imported to Europe and Africa. He states that some Asian countries, particularly in the southern zone of Asia, were also plundered in the same destructive way as Africa and America. The stolen wealth from the Restern periphery aided Western Europe in stimulating the development of financial, banking and fiscal institutions, thereby giving rise to the emergence of gentry or commercial capitalism in the 17th century in Netherlands, England and later America. This confirms Grosfoguel's (2011) view on how the European, capitalist, military, Christian, patriarchal, white, heterosexual male established simultaneously in time and space several entangled global hierachies of power. It is thus pertinent to continue to deconstruct these hierarchies in order to bring about real change.

Critical diversity studies engage these oppressive systems with intentions of deepening democracy in all social organisations (Steyn, 2010). Walcott (2011) explains that the critical diversity paradigm is about the texture and depth of diversity and seeks to provide encounters that address "the very core of what it means to be human". Walcott (2011) further states that the critical diversity perspective leads to social justice and that social justice is an ongoing project which can only be concluded when those seeking justice declare it achieved. Critical diversity scholars work with four main themes: power, privilege, oppression and domination.

3.4.1 Power

CDS adopts Michel Foucault's conception of power. Foucault (1980; 1983) transcended Marxist's superstructure hypothesis to theorise power not only as a

means of coercion or as concentrated in the social, economic and political structures of the state and civil society in which social agents operate. Rather, Foucault viewed power as omnipresent. This is similar to Gramsci who viewed power as residing in ideology (Cole, 2010; Dalda, 2014). For Foucault, power is everywhere, embodied in discourse, knowledge and epistemologies and in every relationship. Foucault views power as flowing through vessels of the social body not only in one, top down, direction, but also in reverse and into every cell of the social body (Dalda, 2014). He criticises the Marxist and Freudian perspectives of power as repressive. He agrees that power at times functions repressively but generally it is productive (Dalda, 2014). He posits that power produces reality and domains of objects and rituals of truth. Power according to Foucault also produces subjects, individuals. Foucault's theorisation of power provides an analytic lens in which the divide between the public and private domain is viewed as artificial and the personal is positioned as political (Cole, 2010; Dalda, 2014).

Elucidating the issue of power and identity politics in an essay titled "Intersecting oppression", Hill Collins (2000) clarifies how power is organised in society to oppress the "othered". Collins uses the matrix of domination model to illustrate the complexity and multiple intersections of power and oppression in society. Collins argues that any matrix has a particular arrangement of intersecting systems of oppression that come together in historically- and socially-specific contexts. She explains that intersecting systems of oppression are specifically organised through four interrelated domains of power: structural, disciplinary, hegemonic and interpersonal:

- **Structural** – consists of social structures such as law, policy, religion, culture and the economy.
 - **Disciplinary** – manages oppression. As Weber and Foucault argue, the disciplinary domain consists of bureaucratic organisations whose task it is to control and regulate human behaviour through routinisation, rationalisation and surveillance.
-

- **Hegemonic** – legitimates oppression. Links the structural, disciplinary and interpersonal domains to the sphere of cultural influence where consciousness and ideology merge. It is made up of everyday language, values we hold, the images we respond to, and the ideas we entertain. It is produced through school curricula and textbooks, religious teachings, media images and contexts, community culture, and family histories.
- **Interpersonal** – entails personal relationships we preserve and the different interactions that make up daily life. Related to how an individual understands the self and others and how this understanding in turn oppresses or upholds oppression of the “others”.

3.4.2 Privilege

In her essay on Simone de Beauvoir and the politics of privilege, Kruks (2005) defines privilege as unjustified benefits conferred on certain groups and individuals by virtue of the exclusion of others. She argues that privilege is “intrinsically a scarce resource”. She further explicates that privilege consists of a structural relationship in which the benefits enjoyed by a powerful group have been, more often than not, obtained through systematic exploitation of the group that is denied access to such benefits. Kruks (2005) explains that the term privilege derives from the Roman historical exemption of certain individuals from the law, called *privilegium*. She explains that privileged positions such as nobility, upper echelons of clergy and guild membership or citizenship in a free city came to be conferred upon certain groups and individuals by virtue of birth. Privilege in this context signified exclusive and advantageous social status. Thus privilege and entitlements (or lack thereof) depended on where, to whom, and with what set of apparent or attributed qualities one was born. This discourse was changed by John Locke’s proposal of liberalism – the rights of man. Kruks (2005) credits Locke (1691) with originating the discourse of universal human rights and

demands for “equal treatment under the law for all”. She argues that the shortcomings of this discourse, however, entail the narrow definition of “all” and the promotion of the notion of earned privileges. Earned privileges denote “reward” or “entitlements” as a result of industriousness or one’s own individual hard work (Kruks, 2005). She quotes Locke (1960/1988) as having asked why one shouldn’t be allowed to enjoy differential treatment that money can buy. Thus, the highly educated should be allowed to enjoy the rewards and social privileges conferred by formal professional status (Kruks, 2005). Critical scholars problematise this discourse and argue that privilege is an issue of structural differentiation that affects the life chances and well-being of certain groups and this exclusion is morally unacceptable, just like the inequalities in produces. Making reference to de Beauvoir (1955), Kruks suggests that this activist definition of privilege transcends de Beauvoir’s notion of class and occupational status privileges to encompass privileges of masculinity, whiteness, heteronormativity, national citizenship and able-bodiedness, amongst others. She concludes that the term privilege no longer narrowly connotes exclusivity even though it still implies exclusion. She explicates that privilege is also not conceived only as a source of wealth or material advantage for its beneficiaries. Privilege, according to Kruks (2005), also confers on dominant groups a high social status at the cost of those whose identity is subjugated (Taylor, 1991; Fraser, 1995).

3.4.3 Oppression and domination

Young (2001) defines oppression and domination as two forms of constraints to social justice. While these constraints involve some elements of distributive justice, Young (2001) argues that they also encompass decision making procedures, division of labour and cultural aspects that cannot be understood as distribution alone. Young argues that oppression is a central category of political discourse for modern emancipatory social movements such as feminists, Black activists, LGBTI activists, Amerindian activists and socialists. Young argues that political discourses in which oppression is a central category entail the challenging of liberal individualist discourse

and scrutiny of social structures and practices. She argues that all oppressed people experience a common condition that inhibits their ability to develop and exercise their capabilities and freedom to articulate their needs, thoughts, and feelings. She further contends that the construct of oppression depicts a broad range of injustices and encompasses a family of conditions and concepts which she breaks down into five categories; exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural Imperialism and violence.

Young (2001) further explains that oppression is structural. Structural oppression refers not only to the exercise of tyranny by a ruling group such as apartheid, colonialism or anti-communism. In this discourse, oppression is used to describe the 'other' rather than problematise privileged and privileging discourses. She argues that the new left social movements since the 1960s and 70s speak to the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer not because of coercive tyrannical power but because of everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society. Thus, oppression is more structural rather than tyrannical. Its causes are embedded in unquestioned norms, habits and symbols in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of the status quo.

Following the above, Young (2011) argues that organisational justice ought to go beyond the mode of production as it only deals with issues of distributive justice by paying attention to the easily identifiable distributions such as wealth, income and positions. Young (2011) postulates that distributive justice lacks the ability to deal with other forms of injustices that are embedded in labour market processes and in the segmentation of labour and that it also disregards and obfuscates the institutional context within which the distributions occur. Young (2011) advanced the prudence of exploring organisational structures or practices, the guiding rules and norms, the language and symbols that mediate social interactions within institutions of state, family, civil society and the workplace. Young proposes social justice as a more fitting approach and that such an

approach ought to encompass three aspects: decision-making structures and procedures, division of labour, and culture:

- a) **Decision making** includes not only questions of who has effective freedom and authority to make an assortment of decisions by virtue of position, but also the rules and procedures according to which decisions are made. Arguments about economic justice often emphasise the decision making as determinants of economic relations. Young (2011) rejects this notion by stating that economic domination in the society occurs not only because some persons have more wealth and income than others. Economic domination stems as much from the corporate and legal structures and procedures that give some people power to make decisions about investment, production, marketing, employment, interest rates, and wages that affect millions of other people. Young (2011) argues that not all decision makers are wealthy or privileged; instead decision-making structures are exploitative and marginalising in that they operate to reproduce distributive inequality and the unjust constraints on other people's lives.

 - b) **Labour segmentation** is both distributive and non-distributive. Labour segmentation entails the distribution of occupations, jobs, and allocation of responsibilities amongst individuals and groups. Equally, labour segmentation involves the definition of occupations themselves, a matter that is non-distributive. Young posits that labour segmentation is actually an institutional structure that involves the range of tasks performed in a given position, the definition of the nature, meaning, and value of those tasks, and relations of cooperation, conflict, and authority amongst positions. From a feminist perspective, the distributive division of labour lies at the heart of scarcity of women in prestigious jobs while the non-distributive aspects focus on the conscious or unconscious association of many occupations with masculinity with instrumentality and or femininity with affectivity. Moreover, modern liberal theories fall short of challenging and
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questioning the traditional sexual division of labour which presuppose that law and employment policies are just.

- c) **Culture** – Young postulates that culture is the most universal of the three categories of non-distributive issues. Culture comprises symbols, images, meanings, habitual compartments, stories, and other mechanics through which people express their experience and interconnect with one another. Culture is ubiquitous, but nevertheless deserves distinct consideration in discussions of social justice. The symbolic meanings that people attach to other kinds of people and to actions, gestures, or institutions often significantly affect the social standing of persons and their opportunities. Cultural imperialism in organisations is a form of injustice that presupposes the superiority of Western culture and stereotyping others while equally silencing their self-expression.

Critical diversity scholars then focus on unravelling and destabilising structural oppression, exposing how power operates across various intersections of identity to privilege some and oppress others (Steyn, 2012, 2015). As illustrated in Diagram 2 below, I focused my discussion on critical race theory, feminism, gender and sexuality, critical disability theory and intersectionality and later explain why I selected intersectionality as a suitable theory for the purpose of this research inquiry. The theories discussed below align with the CDL criteria relating to the understanding that social identities are learned and are an outcome of social practice.

Diagram 2: Critical Diversity Theories Discussed in this Section



3.4.4 Critical race theory

Frederick Douglass, W.E.B Du Bois and Sojourner Truth in the 18th and 19th centuries were very influential in the shaping of critical race theory. Critical race theory destabilises the conception of race as a physiological and biological fact and repositions race as a social construct that draws its origins mainly from the 18th century pseudoscientific enlightenment scholarship (Smedley, 1997). Guess (2006) draws a distinction between race as an ideology of human identity and differences, and racism as the segregation and discrimination based on ascription of some measure of social de-valuation imposed on non-white subjects and normatively-defined racial characteristics. Guess further draws a distinction between racism 'by intent' and 'by consequence'. Racism by intent, according to Guess, operates at the level of the individual and is manifested toward non-white individuals. For Guess (2006), racism by consequence operates at the macro-level of society and presents a historical evolution. Racism by consequence constitutes a gradual shift away from a

conscious, almost personalised conviction of the inferiority of the race marked as inferior. Such conviction expresses itself in attitudes of prejudice and is acted out in discriminatory behaviour. In its place follow social practices that are essentially depersonalised through institutionalisation; as a result, individual racial prejudices may decline over time, yet more subtle patterns of discrimination persist, supported by inertia of custom, bureaucratic procedure, impersonal routine, and even law. Guess states that the archaeology of knowledge about race provides a useful strategy for uncovering ways in which symbolic meaning systems define, legitimise and reproduce themselves across generations. Guess (2006) further postulates that over the past 400 years, scholarships on race produced human 'traces'; what people do, how they behave and structure their daily lives, and even how we are affected by certain ideologies can all be observed in the 'traces' people leave behind either intentionally or inadvertently.

Literature on race tends to take a sociological or political approach in an attempt to make sense of the socio-political and economic dynamics that exist between blackness and whiteness. Guess (2006) states that traditional approaches to the study of race tend to ignore "whiteness", and problematise the "other" in relation to whiteness. On the other hand, post-structuralists and critical theorists tend to problematise whiteness in relation to the "other". Mignolo (2016) explicates that racialisation is not a description of any people's brown skin tone. Racialisation is rather in the "consciousness of the whites who invented racism and used skin colour, amongst other markers (of human difference), to devalue all people of non-white colour" (Mignolo, 2016).

Delgado & Stefancic (2012) define Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a movement driven by a collection of activists and scholars who are interested in studying and transforming the relationship between race, racism and power. This movement emerged in the 1970s in response to daily encounters of racism and racial conditions in the United States and from the realisation by a number of lawyers, activists and

scholars that the gains of the civil rights movement had diminished and were regressing (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Critical race theorists present a challenge to theories that assume race as an “essential” biologically inherent phenomenon to humans. For critical race scholars, racial categories like black, white, Coloured, Latino, etc., mere are social constructs. Thus, they are not produced by biology. Instead they are a product of culture, social relationships, law institutions, state, politics, and religion (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). According to Delgado and Sfenacic (2012) critical race theorists opine that the race construct has always been a central facet of contemporary social organisation and current epistemologies of human biology, medicine and law.

Most importantly, critical race scholars critique conceptions of racism as an invention of individual prejudices (Scruggs, 2009). Instead, these scholars see racism as systemic and structural. Thus, institutional racism is ingrained not only in the minds of individuals; but also in social practices, institutions and relationships. These social structures and relationships in turn shape individual minds and identities, and assign economic, political, and social resources in a racially unequal manner.

Critical race theorists believe that racism is difficult to eradicate because it is not acknowledged. The following theoretical perspectives, namely colour blindness, critical whiteness studies and social constructionism, play a vital role in identifying and challenging various social structures, systems, processes and behaviours that work together to sustain superiority of white subjectivity and oppress black subjectivity. Colour blindness, also referred to as the “new racism” (Scruggs, 2009) and “racism without racists” (Bonilla-Silva, 2006) draws from Dr Martin Luther King’s famous speech in which he stated his wish to live in an equal society in which people are judged not by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character. White supremacists erase and deny the social realities of discrimination and oppression experienced by non-white subjects on a daily basis. Colour blindness manifests in

narratives that white people use on a daily basis to account for and justify inequalities. These include narratives such as, “I don’t see race, I see people”, or “It’s no longer a race issue but a class matter”. Bar-Haim, Ziv, Lamy, & Hodes (2006) advise us that this narrative is far from the truth as “perceptual differentiation of race occurs in less than one-seventh of a second and develops as early as month six of infancy”. Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers (2012) also posit that colour blindness maintains whiteness as the standard to which all other races must aspire and assimilate to. colour blindness is a whiteness self-preservationist strategy as this discourse denies racial inequality and oppression that is evident in white control of the economy, wealth, senior job roles, and general overvalorisation of whiteness in all facets of society. Bonilla-Silva (2006) states that colour blindness shies away from Jim Crow racist explanation of unequal social standing of blacks as a result of their biological and moral inferiority. Instead, colour blindness blames blackness’ fate on (lack of) meritocracy, cultural limitations, market dynamics, etc. This discourse emerged within the context of affirming diversity to insist on equal treatment across the board. In organisational contexts, colour blindness manifests in recruitment processes, performance measurement and income differentiation where race is rarely acknowledged as the cause for disparities in opportunity distribution (Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers, 2012).

Contrary to colour blindness, Critical Whiteness Studies is a body of knowledge that is dedicated to deconstructing and destabilising the global power and privileged positionality of white subjects. Steyn (2004) posits that “... the construction of whiteness was central not only to the process of power and oppression established during the modern era of colonial determination, but still shapes the postcolonial world we live in”. Steyn (2001) had earlier explained that European colonialists fashioned whiteness as a master narrative and drew on this creation to construct three oppositional discourses: the cultured and the savage, Christians and Heathens, and Natural Orders, Norms and Deviations. These discourses helped white European

colonialists to place themselves at the centre of the world as a civilised and cultured social group in relation to the savage nonbelieving “others”. In her PhD thesis on whiteness and the narrative of self, Scott (2012) argues that the concept and/or category of whiteness ought to be critiqued and declared insecure, and then interrogated in order to render the very whiteness concept “visible, suspicious and open to scrutiny so as to undermine the concept as an acceptable and unquestioned subjectivity”. Thus, whiteness studies destabilises the normalised, invisibilised and routinised hegemony and manifestations of whiteness, calling for the redefinition of the category ‘human’ so that it is inclusive of all identities.

3.4.5 Critical disability theory

Similar to race, the notion of disability is contested within a myriad of theories or models. These discourses serve as tools for defining impairment and informing interventions aimed at dealing with the subject of disability (Shapiro, 1994). The most prominent amongst these include: the medical model, the social model, the biopsychological model and the critical model.

As oldest model, the medical model has dominated conceptualisations of policy towards disability in societies and workplaces for decades (Gottlieb, Myhil, & Blanck, 2009). The model is based on the belief that disability is a product of physical and/or mental limitations of the individual. The model focuses greatly on the person’s impairment and the treatment of the disability through medical intervention including medication, surgery and/or rehabilitation (Shapiro, 1994). When such curative interventions do not prove effective, the medical model resorts to a social support model aimed at providing care and support services to the disabled individual. Blanck (2008) argues that the emphasis of the medical model on care and support results in the exclusion of persons with disabilities from normal social obligations. This exclusion provides impetus for institutionalisation and segregation to become justifications for marginalisation (Blanck, 2008). By so doing, medicalisation of disability perpetuates the inhibitions enacted upon

persons with disabilities in as far as social and economic participation is concerned and therefore denies them the opportunity to realise their full potential. The medical model reinforces the prejudicial conceptions that persons with disabilities are different and therefore lack the ability to perform certain job functions (Lunt & Thornton, 1994).

Contesting the parochialism of the medical model, the social model has since emerged. Rather than focusing on the medical condition, the social model places emphasis on the environmental, social and attitudinal barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from participating maximally in society (Gottlieb, Myhil, & Blanck, 2009). This focus implies that when these environmental, social and attitudinal barriers are removed, persons with disabilities may be viewed as other ordinary persons with different abilities with full capability of participating in society and the world of work, rather than being seen as a liability. The social model thus shifts focus fundamentally from individuals' (in)ability to the social structuring. The social model has been hugely influential in the development of workplace anti-discrimination policies for differently-abled individuals, including within Affirmative Action and Employment Equity legislation in South Africa and elsewhere.

Critical disability theory, on the other hand, is based on the critique of traditional discourses and related assumptions that serve to oppress and marginalise persons with disabilities. Potheir and Devlin (2006) argue that disability is not fundamentally a medical or health issue nor a phenomenon of sensitivity and compassion but an issue of politics and power. Rather than employing the pathologising biomedical approach to disability, critical theory transcends the liberal social model to focus on normativity and supremacy of able-bodiedness as an oppressive social system that limits social and economic opportunities and benefits for those deemed disabled (Barnes & Oliver, 1993).

Seibers (2011) raises a number of issues that are critical to disability studies. He first questions how disability theory and other forms of critical theory can challenge and inform one another. Secondly he questions how disability theory can move beyond the post-structuralist position that all experience is simply a linguistic construct and give voice

to the embodied experience of disability. Thirdly, how identity politics can move the disability rights movement forward in its struggle for universal access. Underpinning all of these issues are two basic questions: How can we overthrow the medicalised representation of disability that portrays impairment as a purely individual matter of physical functioning? And, what strategies can we use for representing disability, in Simi Linton's words, as "a social, political, and cultural phenomenon" (Linton, 1998 p. 133)?

Siebers answers these questions by exploring two related lines of thought. First, he addresses the issue of how to redefine disability not as the property of an individual, but as a form of social theory that represents the social and political experience of disabled people. He then argues for a paradigm that addresses itself not to individual human bodies, but to the shape, form, and function of the archetypal body for whom our culture is constructed – the body that is welcome in public spaces, the body that has the right to consensual sexual activity, the body that signifies human worth. He concludes that the only way to ensure human rights for disabled people is to represent disability not as an individual calamity, but as the common inheritance of all human beings whose bodies are frail and vulnerable, and who depend upon one another, throughout their lives, for protection and support.

Siebers concerns himself, first and foremost, with the question of why disabled people are oppressed in our culture. The answer lies in what he calls the "hyperindividualization" of disability (Siebers, 2011). Our society, he notes, represents ability as a generalised human trait; in fact, ability is one of the markers of humanity (Siebers, 2011). Disability, on the other hand, becomes an individual trait, belonging to unfortunate persons in their particularity, but not representative of humanity as a whole (Siebers, 2011). Siebers finds this differentiation between ability and disability particularly useful in thinking about what Murphy refers to as the "quasi-human" status of disabled people (Murphy, 1990). Does the fact that our culture views disability as a feature of individuals prevent society from seeing disability and humanity as synonymous? After all, if disability is not a part of shared humanity, then it places human beings with disabilities outside of the collective

category of 'human'. The status of the disabled outsider is clear, for example, in the work of Baron-Cohen (2001), who writes that because of an alleged empathy deficit, autistic people are lacking "one of the quintessential abilities that makes us human" (Baron-Cohen, 2001).

3.4.6 Feminism and gender – sexuality theory

Defining feminism is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks. Feminist writers argue that feminism is not monolithic and avoid a narrow definition of this broad body of scholarship. Sarikakis, Rush, Grubb and Lane (2008) state that feminist inquiry is complex, comprehensive and fluid. According to Tong (1998), feminist theory rejects any form of "categorisation". Thomson (2001) adds that to define feminism is thus to "situate oneself and clarify the standpoint from which one approaches feminist project". By so doing the author invites the reader to also enter the debate as no discourse belongs only to the writer (Thomson, 2001).

Sarikakis et al., (2008) map out a number of focal areas within feminist theory including liberal feminism, Marxist-socialist feminism, radical feminism, psychoanalytic feminism, cultural feminism and postmodern feminism. Liberal feminists are mostly located in the West and align their politics to Locke's discourse of individual rights, equality, privacy and freedom (Sarikakis, et al., 2008). Liberal traditions conceive humans as autonomous and rational thinkers. Thus humans are distinct from animals due to their thinking capabilities which enable them to make choices and to develop one's own capabilities and rationality. Liberal feminists do not question liberal ideology itself but respond to the misogyny of great philosophers such as Aristotle who defined a female as a deformed version of the male who is an ideal type, and other forms of androcentrism and sexism found in laws, policies and social structures (Enslin, 2003). Thus liberal feminists do not see women's equality as requiring a reorganisation of society but seek to expand the rights and opportunities of women and to call for legislation of civil and political rights of women. Moreover, Western liberal feminists

assume that women in non-western contexts are oppressed because they are denied liberties on grounds of their sex (Bruno, 2006; Dixon, 2011). As a result, they argue that women's issues are the same everywhere and that women's liberties ought to be enshrined universally (Bruno, 2006; Stringer, 2014).

Contrary to liberal feminism, Marxist feminism arose in the 1970s. It synthesised the classical feminist ideologies with Marxism's super structure model of society to position gender distinctions as a function of economy rather than anatomy. MacKinnon (2008) summarises this point well by arguing that "sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism: that which is one's own, yet most taken away". In this discourse, capitalism is viewed as having assigned means of production to men, trained men in industrious activities, opened space for them to participate in the economy and society while relegating women to the role of reproduction and home activities (Weeks, 2011). This sexual division of labour hypothesis views class structure as intersecting with gender hierarchies to produce inequality between the sexes (Washbrook, 2007; MacKinnon, 2008; Weeks, 2011). This perspective views this capitalist intervention as the main source of women's inequality and that a real liberation is impossible without changing the economic structure for fair distribution of power and wealth. Thus, while lust for masculinised profit still remains intact, women cannot be free. MacKinnon (2008) argues that this super structure has been produced and sustained by misogynous ideological constructions of "firm" masculinity and "fragile" femininity and has assigned roles according to this binary in order to justify discrimination.

Radical feminism, poststructuralist feminism and queer theory, on the other hand, transcend the individual rights discourse of liberal feminism and the economic orientation of Marxist feminism. These scholars question and challenge existing political, economic and social organisation arguing that these structures and systems are gendered in a manner that is laden with oppressive racist heteropatriarchal power.

In this broad scholarship, I will focus on Judith Butler (1990) and Sylvia Tamale (2011).

Butler's (1988) essay on "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" renders gender flexible, unstable and fluid. Butler (1988) states that socio-cultural formations of gender possess a "hegemonic hold and call for subversive action – mobilization, subversive confusion, and proliferation of genders and therefore identity". Butler believes that gender identity is free floating and not connected to biological facticity but rather to a performance. Butler argues that gendered identity does not necessarily portray an authentic inner core self but a reflection of human performance of social norms associated with masculinity or femininity a "stylized repetition of acts". Thus gender is a social script that is produced on an ongoing basis long before one arrives at being assigned 'male' or 'female' at birth. She suggests that biological sex is also a social construction and that gender subsumes sex. Therefore, according to Butler (1998) the social construction of the natural assumes the annulment of the natural by the social. She explains that if gender entails social meanings that sex assumes, then sex does not accrue social meanings as additive properties but rather is replaced by the social meanings it takes on; sex is relinquished in the course of that assumption and gender emerges, not as a term in a continued relationship of opposition to sex, but as the term which absorbs and displaces sex. Butler thinks performance of woman-ness is a cultural enforcement rather than a given anatomy. She argues that what is at stake in gender roles is the ideology of heteronormativity.

Tamale (2011) picks up on this complexity of gender and heteronormativity to argue that gender and sexuality are interwoven creatures of culture and society that play a pivotal role in maintaining heteronormative power relations in society. Thus for Tamale a discussion of gender without linking it to sexuality is akin to cooking pepper soup without the pepper. She argues that factors that impact gender relations such as history, class, age, religion, race, ethnicity, culture, locality and ability, also influence the sexual lives of men and women. Having acknowledged the complexity involved in

the discourses of sex/gender/sexuality, Tamale resolves to begin by tracing the historical trajectory of sexualities using a decolonial perspective. In her essay titled “Researching and Theorizing Sexualities in Africa”, Tamale (2011) alludes to the earliest written records of sexualities in Africa archived by colonial explorers and missionaries who travelled the continent during the 19th century. During this period, Tamale (2011) states, the African bodies and sexualities were a point of focus for legitimising the methods of colonialism which purported to “civilize the barbarian and savage natives of the dark continent” (Young, 1995). She emphasises that these colonial expeditions were in fact financed by Britain, Germany, France, Portugal, Spain and Italy and their companies. According to Tamale, records authored by white European explorers show a clear pattern of ethnocentric and racist constructions of African sexualities as part of the wider project of colonising and exploiting the black race. For instance, the imperialists (re)constructed and narrated black sexualities as primitive, exotic, bordering nymphomania, immoral, bestial and lascivious (Magubane, 2001; Osha, 2004). Imperialists, according to Tamale, executed the mission of undermining and demonising African sexualities and bodies through force, brutality, paternalism, arrogance and humiliation. Contrasted with the European imported conservative sexual norms that adhere to the Victorian code, the “relatively unrestrained sexualities” of Africans were a strange phenomenon to the colonialists. McEwen (2016) and Tamale (2011) remind us that Victorian women were expected to mute their sexuality, and that their dress, conduct and morals were crafted towards erasing any hint of sexuality, failing which they would risk being stigmatised as prostitutes. Imperialists and Western anthropologists stereotyped black women’s bodies and African sexualities in racist, patronising and morally-normative ways. In this discourse religion, particularly Christianity and Islam, emphasised the impurity and inherent sin associated with women’s bodies (Goodson, 1991). Through religion, Africans were encouraged to denounce their beliefs and values and to internalise the “civilised” ways of the whites. With these developments came the emphasis on covering and hiding body parts. Tamale alludes to draconian laws enacted by

dictators such as Kamuzu Banda of Malawi and Idi Amin of Uganda to police and control women's bodies.

Tamale reminds us that it is from the beginning of colonialist contact with African communities that Western researchers adopted a "voyeuristic, ethnographic obsession with what they perceived as exotic sexual cultures". These researchers framed sexualities across the continent as different, less urbane and inferior in relation to the Western ways of performing sexuality. It is this "othering" that justified the imposition of racist and imperialist policies which looked down on practices such as polygamy, circumcision, levirate, sexual cleansing rituals, dry sex and so on (Raum, 1939). Tamale states that when anthropologist Jane Kendall arrived in Lesotho in the early 1990s looking for lesbian women, she was surprised to encounter Basotho women who engaged in erotic women to women relationships, but these were not analogous to lesbianism or homosexuality as known in Western Europe. Kendall's theoretical and empirical framework informed by LGBTI identity politics was thrown out by the "batsoalle" relationships of the Basotho (Gatter, 2000; Dankwa, 2009).

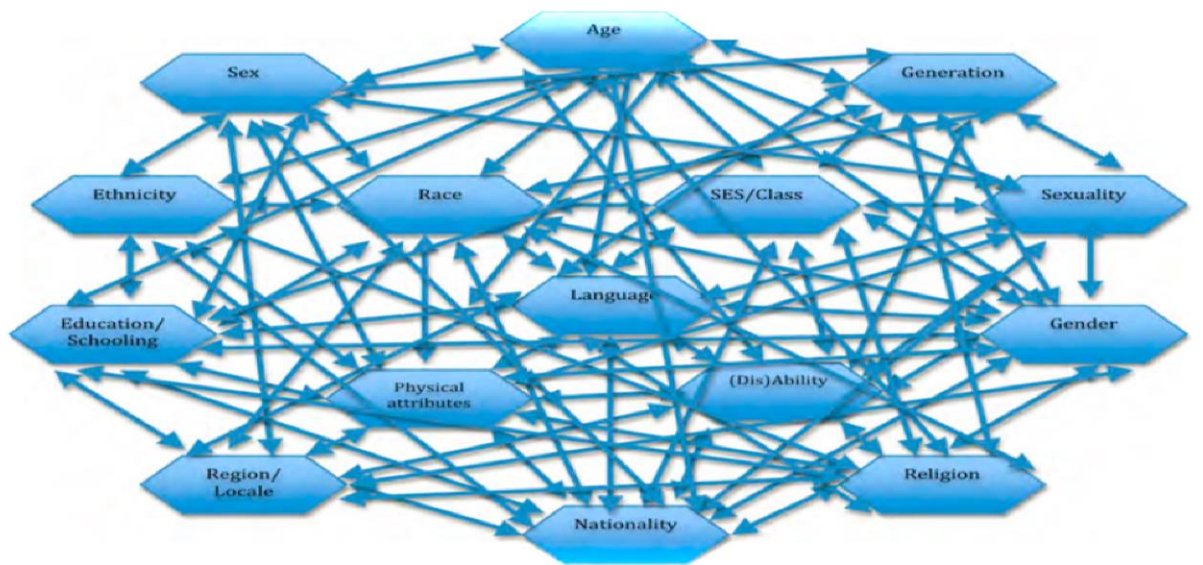
One of the highly-influential theories that emerged amongst feminists is the notion of intersectionality by Patricia Hill Collins and Kimberle Crenshaw.

3.4.7 Intersectionality theory

Intersectionality corresponds with CDL criteria relating to analytical skill at unpacking how systems of oppression intersect, co-construct and constitute each other, and how they are reproduced, resisted and framed. In the 1980s critical scholars, particularly black feminists, began to call for intersectional analysis of social phenomena. McCall (2005) defines intersectionality as the method of studying the relationships amongst multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships and subject formations. Crenshaw (1989; 1991) is credited for coining the intersectionality term within the legal context. Crenshaw (1989; 1991) used the term to reject the essentialist usages of race

and gender as “siloes” ways of understanding oppression. Crenshaw postulates that these silo approaches are incapable of adequately addressing the nuances involved in the subordination of black women. Collins (2000 p. 42) and Crenshaw (1989; 1991) state that cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional social systems, such as race, gender, social class, citizenship status, sexuality, ability and other identity categories. Lanehart (2009) demonstrates the complex and intertwined identity categories that make up an individual’s identity.

Diagram 3: Intersectional Identity Categories



Adopted from Lanehart, 2009: Diversity and Intersectionality

Intersectionality enables the analyses of how social and cultural categories interlock and enables the study and challenging of oppressive systems within a group that shares similarities and differences (Knudsen, 2006). Thus, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, class and nationality are recognised as not (necessarily) independent of one another, but interconnected and one may experience various forms of oppression on multiple levels depending on one’s positionality in a social

hierarchy (Lanehart, 2009). Intersectionality theory aims to interrogate ways in which several socially and culturally constructed categories interact on multiple levels to manifest themselves in society (Knudsen, 2006). Knudsen (2006) posits that intersectionality is instrumental in analysing the production of power and oppressive processes between and within social identity categories.

Crenshaw (1991) explains that intersectionality, for instance, proposes that black women are situated within at least two subordinated groups (black and female) that often pursue conflicting political agendas. She adds that the need to split one's political energies between two, sometimes contradictory, groups is a facet of intersectional disempowerment that black men and white women rarely confront. Thus, while black women share a commonality of patriarchal oppression with white middle-class women and racism in similar and differing ways with black men, intersectionalism enables the analysis and articulation of the complexity of the various aspects in which their lives differ from white middle-class women and black men.

Intersectionality theory has gained popularity within political and sociological studies and has been taken up beyond feminist theory. Intersectionality for black feminists, for instance, argues that the explanation of black people's lives in relation to racism alone is acknowledged as insufficient for understanding their lived experiences. Black people experience racism in variable ways depending on their positionality in a social hierarchy of class, sexuality, dis/ability, gender, etc. ethnicity, gender, generation, class, sexual orientation, etc. Similarly, intersectionality argues that hegemonic institutions and cultures produce and reinforce oppression. Therefore, scholars need to persistently examine how hegemonic institutions and social organisations are (re)produced by class, race, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, etc. (McCall, 2005). This call requires the ability to comprehend and deal with the complexities involved in studying social realities.

In an essay titled “The Complexity of Intersectionality”, McCall (2005) acknowledges scarcity of literature on how to study the intersection of identity and marginality methodologically. As a contribution towards closure of this gap, McCall (2005) proposes three approaches in studying intersectionality: anticategorical complexity, intercategorical complexity and intracategorical complexity. She explains the anticategorical complexity approach is concerned with deconstructing social categories of race, gender, class, sexuality and ability as arbitrary social constructs rather than biologically fixed and that these categories offer little understanding of how human subjects experience society. Scholars that engage with anticategorical complexity believe that the society is too complex to be reduced to closed categories. The category of gender, for instance, is known to be constituted by men and women. What remains unresolved is whether these binaries are distinguished by biological sex and if so, what is biologically male and female (McCall, 2005). These binaries, according to Fausto-Sterling (2000), fail to account for bisexual, queer, transgender and intersex people in a similar fashion as the race categories are regarded as indefinable within multiculturalism. Anticategorical complexity approaches thus challenge the singularities, separateness and wholeness of a variety of social categories (McCall, 2005). McCall (2005) states that “social life is considered too irreducibly complex, overflowing with multiple and fluid determinations of both subjects and structures to make fixed categories anything but simplifying social fictions that produce inequality in the process of producing difference”. Thus, the only way to eliminate social oppression is to challenge and eliminate these categories that segregate human subjects into binary oppositional groups. This would permit a holistic approach in understanding intersectionality.

Intercategorical complexity approaches, according to McCall (2005), acknowledge the existing categories and the fact that they are not fixed but dynamic and that there is an existential relationship amongst these categories which fosters inequality within

society. Intercategorical scholars use these diverse categories to study inequality across multiple dimensions and to measure changes over time.

Lastly, intracategorical approaches acknowledge the shortcomings of the above stated categories and serve as a mid-point between these. In this perspective, the importance of existing categories is not rejected completely but recognises the relevance of these social categories to the understanding of modern social experience. Thus, the focus is more on recognising faults within existing social categories and problematising the ways in which society draws boundaries of distinction (McCall, 2005). I have thus resolved to use the intracategorical approach in this study for the purpose of examining how showcased diversity initiatives in corporate South Africa conceptualise diversity and intervene in the multiple complex and intersecting matrix of domination and oppression.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter showed that the phenomenon of diversity in organisations is plagued by monolithic managerial instrumentalism thinking and praxis with a plurality of inconsistent descriptions, epistemological positions and methodological approaches within the same paradigm. The chapter further showed that a transformative or liberatory model has recently arisen to challenge managerial instrumentalism (Healy, 2016). Managerial instrumentalism was discussed as placing emphasis on leveraging human differences for organisational efficiencies and profits while neglecting critical issues of inequality and social justice (Groschl, 2011; Healy, 2016). On the other hand, transformative models (CDS) place inequality and social justice at the epicentre of (organisational) diversity discourses (Healy, 2016). These differences reveal ideological processes as well as political and power relations that influence organisational approaches in doing diversity at work (Layder, 2005; Healy, 2016 p. 15). Discussions in this chapter were intended to illustrate the complexity involved in determining best practice conceptual frameworks and practices of

diversity in organisations. Given the multiplicity of perspectives within economic and critical diversity paradigms, questions arise: which paradigm offers best practice diversity initiatives? What would constitute appropriate criteria for measuring best practice? Who is best suited for measuring such practices (and what is the positionality of the individual doing the measurement) in the matrix of power and domination and how does positionality influence the measurement process and reported outcomes?

I postulate that the critical diversity paradigm provides the most appropriate lens for examining diversity initiatives in organisations as this paradigm goes beyond superficial level change to challenge hegemonic discourses across intersecting matrices of power and oppression. CDS also brings together four perspectives, namely: history, society, biography and power (Healy, 2016). This closes the existential gap in managerial instrumentalism of delinking diversity from structural inequality and structural relationships between social groups (DiTomaso, Post & Parks-Yancy, 2007). DiTomaso et al. (2007) explicate that these structural relationships are constitutive of power, status and numbers.

CHAPTER FOUR

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE ON CRITICAL DIVERSITY IN ORGANISATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 contrasted dominant theories of diversity within the management and economics paradigm and in the critical paradigm. I concluded the chapter with an affirmation of the critical diversity paradigm as the most appropriate lens for studying diversity and transformation in organisations. In this chapter, I discuss some key critical diversity empirical research conducted internationally and locally in organisations. Specifically, this chapter focusses on literature that employed intersectionality theory to study diversity dynamics and interventions in organisations. The chapter concludes with a reflection on gaps in existing literature and an explanation of how this empirical study intends to contribute towards the closure of such gaps.

4.2 Systems of power, privilege, domination and oppression in work organisations

Since the emergence of critical diversity scholarship in the 1990s, scholars in this domain have focused primarily on investigating the deployment of power, privilege and oppression in organisations. These scholars tended to focus on interrogating how race (Kanter, 1977; Cockburn, 1985; Cox & Nkomo, 1990; Nkomo, 1992), sex and gender (Ely & Meyerson, 2000; Yancey-Martin & Collinson, 2002; Benschop & Verloo, 2006); homophobia and heterosexism (Creed, 2006), age and ageism (Perry & Parlamis, 2006); and dis/ability (Stone, Stone-Romero, & Lukaszewski, 2006) operate as organising principles of diversity in workplaces. Though grounded in specific geo-socio-political contexts, critical diversity researchers have unpacked constraints encountered by socially “marginalised, devalued and disenfranchised” groups (Konrad, Prasad, & Pringle, 2006) inside work organisations and linked these to society-wide systems of oppression.

Themes that emerged in these studies included denial of access to meaningful employment, career-related outcomes, access to psychosocial networks and resources, job satisfaction, performance evaluations and rewards and recognition (Konrad, Prasad & Pringle, 2006). Critical diversity scholars have generated valuable knowledge on how power, privilege and oppression operate through some intersecting axes of difference in organisations covering race and gender (Bell & Nkomo, 1992; Nkomo & Cox, 1996; Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Browne & Joya, 2003; Elliot & Smith, 2004; Thompson & McHugh, 2009); race, ethnicity and gender (Ferdman, 1999; Mintz & Krymskowski, 2010); race, class and gender (Adib & Guerrier, 2003; Acker, 2006; Holvino, 2010) as well as disability and sexual minority status (Pilling, 2013).

For instance, Acker (2006) applied intersectionality theory to situate organisations as power-laden structures comprising interrelated practices, processes, actions and meanings that produce and sustain class, gender and racial hierarchies and inequality at the broader societal level. She posited that even organisations that have clear egalitarian objectives develop inequality regimes over time and that these regimes are fluid and constantly changing in sync with inequalities shaping the broader social, political, historical and cultural context. Acker (2006) defined inequality in organisations as systematic disparities between participants in power and control over goals, resources, outcomes and decision-making authority. Acker (2006) found that executives, managers, leaders and departmental heads are assigned greater power and higher remuneration than secretaries and production workers. She linked these systematic differences in access to, and control over, resources for provision and survival with the production of class hierarchies. It is argued that class is intrinsic to employment and to most organisations and that organisational hierarchical structures, particularly in large organisations, are congruent with class processes in the broader society. According to Acker, class structures in smaller organisations may not be very congruent with society-wide class relations, but the owner or the leader enjoys class power in relation to employees. Acker (2006) adds that these class structures are gendered. Similar

conclusions were also drawn by Spade and Valentine (2008 p. 375) who found that (gendered) power differences are fundamental to class inequality.

4.3 Gender, race and class intersections at work

Feminist scholars link these “organisational-social” gendered class hierarchies to the rise of corporate capitalist industrialism; a move that distinguished the private domestic affairs from employment obligations (Acker, 2004; 2006). For instance, Cavendish (1982) conducted a study to unpack how class, gender and imperialism shaped the gendered division of labour. Ong (1987) also conducted a study on how modernity affected lives of Malaysian women. Both studies established that modernity produced an artificial and gendered separation of so-called ‘public’ life (‘productive’ work such as civic engagement, politics and economy) and ‘private’ life (‘reproductive’ labour to sustain the workforce in the home such as childrearing, maintaining a home and working husband). These Marxist feminist scholars linked capitalism with class production and patriarchy as they found that the separation of domestic–workplace obligations functioned to centre men in the ‘public’ sphere and marginalise women into the ‘private’ sphere. Other scholars added that job roles that are regarded as less demanding with less pay are often allocated to (and sometimes even reserved for) women, thereby reproducing the gendered class structure that has come to be known as the “glass ceiling” in popular discourse (Dahle, 2012; Dahle, 2015; Coltrane, 2004). Ferguson (1984), Morgan (1986) and Acker (1990) found that gender neutrality is a common discourse in organisations, yet cultures of masculinity still prevail. Hearn and Collinson (1998) add that even leading organisational management models embody masculinist cultural assumptions.

Ozbilgin and Woodward (2003) applied the socialist feminist critique approach to study similarities and differences in male and female employee perceptions and experiences of belonging and otherness in the financial services sector in Britain and Turkey. After interviewing 45 employees and analysing 362 responses to questionnaires from participants in both countries, the researchers found that although these countries were

geographically situated in different socio-political areas, 'Orient' and 'Occident', patterns of gendered occupations were somewhat similar in both contexts. The authors found that management models that were in force associated aggression with dynamism, thereby engendering masculine modes of work behaviour, power wielding and competencies in organisational processes. In her article on "Inequality Regimes", Acker (2006) linked these masculinist assumptions to the evident dominance of men in leadership roles that are assigned more power and greater financial rewards. Acker (2006) argued that while over the past 30 to 40 years women in the USA and other countries in the Global North and South began to occupy leadership roles in organisations, the majority were still assigned feminised roles associated with the provision of care. Acker (2006) found that top leadership positions, particularly in the United States and European countries, are occupied by white men and the image of the successful leader is associated with masculine characteristics such as strength, aggressiveness and competitiveness. As a result, when women do break through the glass ceiling and occupy masculine stereotyped leadership roles, they are expected to embody and perform masculinity (Acker, 2006). This finding links to Symons' (1986) study of women's occupational careers in business management and entrepreneurship in France and Canada, in which she finds that women generally have "both hidden and silenced male career models and masculine stereotypes of managers and entrepreneurs". Other scholars also found that "there is dual gender bias in organisational practice" in that both organisations and people are gendered (Cockburn, 1985 p. 231), and technical competences were structured as masculine, thereby serving to exclude women from technologically-driven professions and top management teams (Syed & Murray, 2008).

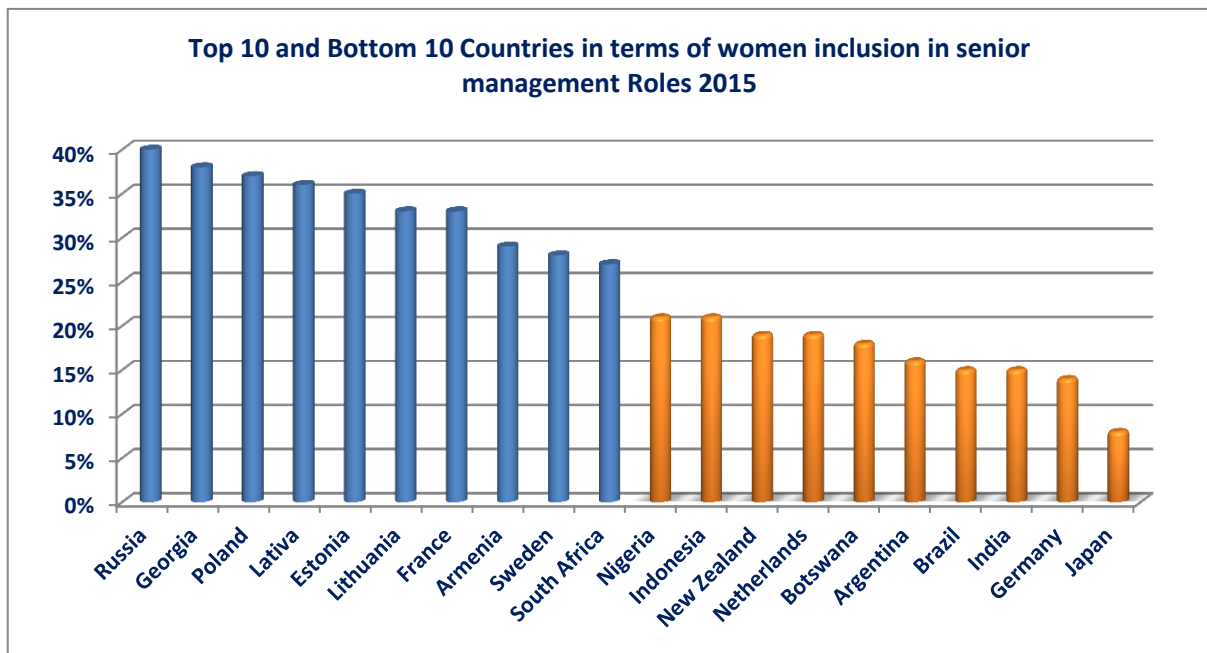
Kvande & Rasmussen's (1994) study of gender relations in the engineering field in Norwegian companies further echoes these claims. The study sought to understand how women graduate engineers navigate their identity in a field that connects technology and leadership with strong symbols of masculinity. The study found that women engineers had to abandon their normal dress code to adopt a male-like dress code in order to be

taken seriously, accepted and given opportunities to grow within the organisation. The study found that small engineering firms had a more collegial atmosphere and women gained recognition and advancement more easily compared to a large engineering firm strongly characterised by its bureaucracy. These scholars also found that women in the small engineering firm were expected to put in the same long hours as their male colleagues and to prioritise work over family responsibilities. Performance management systems linked to pay and career progression were not geared to take care of these gender nuances as these work processes were positioned as gender neutral and job quality outcomes-based. This inevitably led to pay inequalities. Similarly, Acker (1991) conducted an empirical study on gender and work processes in six Swedish bank branches to examine gender segregation of job categories and the extent to which the branches had adopted a reorganisation plan and a more equitable distribution of work tasks and decision-making responsibilities (that had been agreed to by both management and unions). The study found the branches had a single “gender neutral” job classification system for entrant bank workers known as “aspirants”. However, in practice, there were dimensions of inequality. Acker (1991) found that young women had different job tasks compared to their male counterparts. Young men were groomed for managerial positions while women were not, working primarily as tellers or receptionists with their internal contact limited to immediate managers and colleagues. Acker also found one exception in which an office was mostly occupied by female employees with few status and power differences. Here, the employees had a redistributive task approach and participatory ethos, with supervision by the male manager rated positively by all working in the branch. To the contrary, the other branches in the study had clear gender segregation with men taking responsibility for lucrative business accounts and women handling everyday tasks and private customers.

A recent global study conducted by Grant Thornton, (2015) confirms the intertwined nature of gender and class as women have the largest share of unemployment, underemployment and vulnerable employment globally. The study states that while more

than 74 million youths aged 18 to 24 are unemployed, the majority of these are young women. Thornton (2015), looking at gender empowerment, also proves that positions of power, authority, influence, strategy development and high income are dominantly held by men in organisations worldwide. Diagram 4 below shows the findings of the Grant Thornton study (2015) confirming that women still constitute the minority in organisational leadership roles even in countries rated as having the greatest gender equality in the world.

Diagram 4: Women Representation in Senior Management Roles – 2015



Source: Global Employment and Social Outlook Trends (2015)

A study conducted by the International Labour Organisation (2015) illustrates that the top 10 gender-empowered nations have an average female representation of between 27 and 40% in leadership positions. Russia leads the world with 40% female representation in leadership and South Africa ranks 10th in the world in this regard, with 27% female representation in organisational leadership roles. Nigeria leads the bottom 10 states with 21% while Brazil (15%), India (15%), Germany (14%) and Japan (8%) are in the bottom

four. Despite having women in political leadership roles, Brazil still ranks 4th from the bottom globally with more than 57% of organisations having no women in the upper echelons of organisational power. Scholars including Acker (2006), Collins (2014), Holvino (2008; 2010) and Shore et al., (2009) remind us that women of colour remain marginalised from organisational leadership structures. Acker (2006) illustrates the significance of this exclusion by pointing out that women of colour make up a mere 3.1% of Fortune 500 corporate board positions while women in general make up 14.6% of such leadership roles.

Spade and Valentine (2008) also found gender-based wage differentiation in organisations. Wage differentiations, according to these authors, were justified by the gender biased hierarchical organisational structure. The CEO earned 185 times more than the average salary of the lower level workers who were predominantly women and black (Spade & Valentine, 2008). These findings correspond with the recent findings made by the International Labour Organisation's Global Wage report (2015) which confirmed that men earn between 70 to 90% more than women for the same or similar work of equal value. These differentials work together to produce and sustain gendered class hierarchies. These gender hierarchies serve to keep heteronormativity intact (Stoller, 1968; Goffman, 1977; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009). Thus gender and sexuality as interlaced, intersecting and co-constituting social constructs within the workplace and broader society ought to be deconstructed, challenged and changed in order to engender equality (Stoller, 1968; Goffman, 1977).

4.4 Gender and heteronormativity at work

Indeed, gender norms embedded in most organisational processes and interactions not only reinforce gender-based hierarchies and exclusions, but they are also deeply heteronormative (Butler 1988; Warner, 1991; Acker, 2006). According to Warner (1991), heteronormativity is the naturalisation of heterosexual bodies, subjects, norms, and practices as the inevitable structure of society. Howarth (2004) expands that

heteronormativity denotes “complex social, political, legal, economic and cultural systems that together construct primacy, normalcy and dominance of heterosexuality”. Flemming and Sturdy (2009) argue that heteronormativity privileges heterosexuality and enforces compliance with culturally-determined heterosexual roles and assumptions about heterosexuality as natural or normal. Perhaps the most startling evidence of this engendered heterosexuality is the separation of public and private life and the assignment of binary oppositional sex and gender thereto by capitalist industrialism. For these reasons D'Emilio (1983) and Butler (1988) argue that heteronormativity is inherent to capitalism. Capitalism, as the colonial system of production, engendered the idea of a heterosexual “procreating” nuclear family structure, thereby creating no social space for men and women to be gay (D'Emilio, 1983; Butler, 1988). This for Butler makes queer struggles not just a cultural phenomenon, as Frase (1999) had suggested, but a crucial issue that is tied to economic, social and political systems of power and oppression. Butler adds that cultural recognitions and material oppression are intertwined; and that how a person is viewed culturally depends on their legal personhood rights, and status. She concludes that queer-identifying people are denied cultural recognition and are materially oppressed based on their cultural non-recognition. Indeed, homosexuality is criminalised in 77 countries internationally of which 38 are in Africa. Homosexuality is punishable by death penalty in eight of these countries (Ritzer & Dean, 2015). As a result, LGBTI groups have no protection against workplace discrimination in these contexts of state-sponsored homophobia.

Martinsson, Reimers, Rengarde and Lundgreen (2007) examined personal experiences of lesbian- and gay-identifying employees in workplaces in Lithuania. These scholars found that heteronormativity operated in organisations as the mechanisms of power and control to limit abilities of LGBTI employees to discuss and construct their own identities at work. The study found that LGBTI employees were “accepted and tolerated” rather than being viewed as equals. She found that hegemonic heterosexism precluded open discussion of the experiences of non-normative sexualities at work, implying that

knowledge of this taboo is present in the discourse even if it's not talked about. The most prominent theme that emerged in this study was silenced sexualities. Martinsson et al, (2007) found that heterosexual men and women were completely ignorant of the hegemony of their heterosexuality. This, according to the authors, silenced and socially invisibilised lesbian and gay employees, as heterosexual employees believed that sexual orientation was irrelevant at work. Consequently, lesbian and gay employees were found to lead a double life, hiding their sexual identity to fit in at work and only expressing their sexual identity outside of work. According to one of the participants in the study, "heteronormativity destroys me from inside, you understand? I have to destroy myself from the inside in order to please them. How can you live like this?"

Martinsson et al's (2007) findings correspond with the results of a research inquiry conducted by the Catalyst (2015) and the OutNow Global (2015) on LGBTI-identifying people in workplaces. The Catalyst study revealed that though some 61 countries and 88% of the Fortune 500 Companies offer protection for LGBTI groups at work, almost 41% to 91% of LGBTI-identifying employees, especially transgender workers, have experienced workplace discrimination. The OutNow Global research study titled "LGBT2020" (2015) also explored experiences of LGBTI workers in 24 countries across five continents. The study showed that even in progressive countries, 85% of study participants identified themselves as closet LGBTI professionals. These participants stated that they expended a lot of energy presenting and performing a heterosexual identity at work. In fact, 41% of American LGBTI-identifying employees remain closeted at work while 62% of graduates return to the closet after acquiring their first job. The study also showed that in countries where homosexuality is socially "unacceptable", coming out at work drops to about 17%. While coming out to family and friends in progressive countries averaged between 62% and 85%, the rate dropped significantly to between 21% and 26% in non-progressive countries. Recently, lobby groups in Singapore embarked on a campaign called "Stop Hurting, Quit Labelling" to protest against the rising workplace discrimination against LGBTI workers (Tan, 2013).

In South Africa, Van Zyl's (2015) study titled "Working the Margins" suggests that workplace discrimination remains prevalent in post-apartheid South Africa despite constitutional protections of the rights of LGBTI persons. Van Zyl (2015) applied the lens of belonging to chronicle how LGBTI-identifying employees negotiate the disjuncture between citizenship "which promises equality, inter alia, on the basis of sex, gender and sexual orientation" and everyday homophobic prejudice in the workplace. Most profoundly, the author emphasised the importance of not treating LGBTI workers in the local context as a homogenous group. She argues that South African history demands recognition of how race, class, gender and sexuality intersect to simultaneously locate LGBTI-identifying employees in multiple axes of power, privilege and oppression. Van Zyl opines that black LGBTI persons contend with poverty, unemployment, low paying jobs and stay in townships compared to their white counterparts who have been protected, in many ways, by the privileged positionality of whiteness. In what she refers to as sexual economic rights, Van Zyl's study found that careers such as human resources, cleaning, nursing and teaching were associated with femininity while information technology, engineering and military work was associated with masculinity. These stereotypes posed challenges for employees who did not fit this mould. While five participants reported that they had never experienced discrimination at work, 13 participants had encountered what Van Zyl terms "homoprejudice". One female-identifying participant who was a train driver indicated her intent to transition from male to female to her employer, who responded by sending the employee for psychological assessment and suspending her from train driving for a period of three months. Further, some workers in the military hospital found that, in general, there was greater inclusion with some doctors tending to bring their same-sex partners to some work functions. However, those who were in the closet were reported to sometimes be party to homophobic comments as they felt that they were forced to participate out of fear of outing themselves. Other South African scholars (Tebele, 2013; Mawambi, 2014; Yoder & Mattheis, 2015; Soeker, Bonn, de Vos, Gobhozi, & Ribaudó, 2015) also found widespread hostility and homoprejudice towards LGBTI-identifying workers in South African workplaces. These scholars linked these

findings to heteronormative organisational cultures. Sekaja and Adams (2015) found that while gay and lesbian employees in South African organisations confront workplace bullying, prejudice and stereotypical attitudes, lesbian employees also experienced sexual harassment. This phenomenon of sexual harassment was not found amongst gay employees. Thus power mediates the manner in which male and women homosexual identifying employees are treated.

Apart from these studies, empirical literature that examines intersections of race, gender, sexuality and disability in South African organisations is scarce. Moreover, there is a dearth of empirical literature that has evaluated the efficacy of organisational diversity practices aimed at combating these oppressive systems. Notwithstanding this, Soeker's study (2015) suggests that organisations can eliminate ignorance about LGBTI issues through education and micro-affirmations. She described micro-affirmations as tiny acts of opening doors to opportunity, gestures of inclusion and caring, and listening to all employees regardless of their orientation. She also suggested involvement of heterosexual-identifying employees and leaders in LGBTI rights advocacy.

4.5 Race and gender intersections in South African workplaces

Intersectional studies on organisational diversity in South Africa have focused on race and gender. This is mainly due to the history of racial segregation and the advent of Affirmative Action, which motivated most scholars to focus on either race and/or gender as an analytical tool (Nkomo, 1992; Omi & Winant, 1986). Most of this scholarship focused on barriers that stymie career progression of black or female employees. Despite this gap, there are few studies that have used intersectionality to examine multiple organisational diversity related issues.

For instance, Dlamani (2013) used intersectionality as a lens to examine black female CEO's lived experiences and career progression in predominantly white and male dominated South African corporations. Dlamini used a personal narrative design to

collect and analyse black female leaders' own experiences of race, gender, and class intersections in the transformation of leadership echelons in South African corporations. Dlamini (2013) argued that the examination of these intersections demands transcendence of liberal feminist and functionalist perspectives that still prevail in South African organisational transformational change theory and practice. Dlamini advanced that appreciation of the simultaneity of race, gender and class in the lived experience of historically oppressed groups is useful for providing important insights into the design of effective comprehensive transformative policies. Participants in this study narrated difficulties they encounter on a daily basis in leading or being part of predominantly male organisations and how racist, patriarchal and cultural ethnocentrism shape expectations of how black women leaders ought to conduct themselves in business. Dlamini (2013) recommended the creation of place and space for the expression of black female executive's "hidden" personal narratives of their encounter at work so as to raise consciousness about the dominant fault lines that continue to stymie effectiveness of black women in organisations. This would also enable the reshaping of the prevailing race and gender neutrality in organisations. Dlamini also recommended that corporate South Africa and scholars need to continuously identify, untangle and change the disparate everyday practices in organisations and to (re)link organisational processes with societal processes so as to understand organisational diversity dynamics within a broader social context.

Carrim and Nkomo (2016) examined the tussles experienced by South African Indian female managers in forming and negotiating their identities in leadership roles. These authors located Indian women at the intersection of racial-ethnic, gender and professional identities and used a life story narrative approach to provide a holistic grasp of the journey travelled by the first cohort of Indian women to climb the leadership echelons in corporate South Africa. The study showed that Indian women struggle on a daily basis to negotiate a gender identity that is shaped by racial-ethnic Indian cultural assumptions about the role of men and women in relation to career aspirations. As a

coping strategy, the women in the study tended to develop hybrid-identities permitting them to shift between compartmentalised professional identities demanded by corporate leadership roles and identities commensurate with cultural demands outside of work. These scholars found that this hybrid identity is developed over time not just by choice and social influence but also shaped by the historical and cultural contexts beyond the employer organisation. The study concluded that work identity, personal identity and/or social identity are never fixed but are always negotiated, produced and fluid.

4.6 The dis-ability intersection at work

Scholarly work on the disability intersection tends to focus on unemployment, underemployment, inequality (Philpott & McClaren, 1997; Eide & Ingstad, 2011; Mbanjwa & Neeson, 2002; Ngwena, 2010), the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Hanas-Hancock, 2009; Wickenden, Nixon, & Yoshida, 2013), rehabilitation and psychosocial resources (Sherry, 2004) and infrastructure in/accessibility (SAHRC, 2002). Critical empirical studies on how disability intersects with race, gender and sexuality to privilege or deny the so-called “disabled” persons organisational and/or economic justice are scant. Some studies problematised the medical model of disability arguing for adoption of the social model to drive disability mainstreaming while others focused on social factors that limit employment opportunities for persons with disabilities (Matsebula, Schneider, & Watermeyer, 2000), and issues of workplace discrimination and reasonable accommodation (Hurling, 2008). Matsebula et al. (2002) focused on national government departments as employer organisations; its findings were as follows: Failure of post-1994 legislative instruments to accelerate integration of persons with disabilities at work; inadequate budget; framing of disability integration strategies within the context of “helping” the “other”; and, scarcity of research to inform policy improvements and programme implementation. Merill (2015) has illuminated that while people with disabilities in South Africa suffer lower levels of unemployment and education compared to their counterparts, white women and men are twice as likely to find employment than their black counterparts. Du Plessis (2015) found that African women in particular are at

the bottom of the human scale in relation to how they are treated in society and in the workplace. Majiet and Africa (2015) add that the few disabled women who do make it to managerial positions often contend with racism and patriarchy. Naidu, Haffejee, Vetten, and Hargreaves (2005) had earlier found that in addition to low educational levels and high unemployment, women with disabilities often encounter high levels of domestic violence. These scholars argue that women with disabilities are also subject to “mystification” of their sexualities. People with disabilities are socially constructed as located in two extremes of the pendulum either as non-sexual beings with no sexual needs, or as people with extreme, uncontrollable sexual urges. The authors argue that these distortions potentially contribute to low-self esteem and also place disabled women at risk of gender-based violence. Traustadottir (2002) argued that the sexuality of persons with disabilities is generally policed with intent of denying them opportunities to forge intimate sexual relations based on fear that as dependants, they are also in need of being taken care of. This, according to Traustadottir (2002), denies heterosexual women with disabilities equal status and recognition as women. Dick-Mosher (2015) also found that organisations tend to reserve some jobs for persons with disabilities. This, according to Dick-Mosher, is evidence of how able-bodiedness is institutionalised relative to disabled counterparts. By so doing, organisations fail to account for the bodies and minds of workers with disabilities by naturalising the idea that people with disabilities do not belong in certain job categories. Dick-Mosher states that these job type stereotypes operationalise class segregation. Persons with disabilities in higher paying jobs were also found to be receiving reasonable accommodation relatively easier than those in lower echelons (Gottlieb, Myhil, & Blanck, 2009).

4.7 Examination of organisational diversity interventions

South African scholars Kelly, Wale, Soudien and Steyn (2007), have examined and consolidated most of the prevailing organisational diversity management practices in South Africa and used Thomas and Ely’s (1996) paradigms of managing diversity to locate these discourses in what they call the diversity (theory-practice) ‘rubric cube’. The

six dominant perspectives include: anti-discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy, cognitive effects or learning and effectiveness, symbolic effect and resistance.

According to Kelly et al. (2010), South African organisations that operate within the anti-discrimination and fairness paradigm focus primarily on the functional aspects of Employment Equity compliance. Leaders who look at diversity through this lens usually focus on equal opportunity, fair treatment, recruitment, and compliance with the legal requirements of the Equal Employment Opportunity legislation. This perspective acknowledges the prejudice that has kept members of certain demographic groups out of organisations and then constructs Affirmative Action as a fair means of realising organisational diversity to reflect social demographics. This perspective also focuses on reengineering managerial processes to ensure that all employees are treated equally, regardless of their identity differences. The reengineering of managerial processes generally entails provision of psychosocial resources, induction and on-boarding programmes, career development and diversity awareness initiatives to promote tolerance and respect of differences. While this perspective seems to align with a social justice perspective, diversity is measured by the extent to which recruitment and retention objectives are achieved rather than the extent to which organisational culture has changed to allow diverse employees to realise their potential and utilise their talents (Kelly et al., 2007). This perspective adopts the colour-blind and gender blind discourse, adopting the “melting pot” perspective where “we are all the same” (Kelly, et al., 2007). While the workforce profile may change, the culture and nature of work remains in place, protected by assimilationist discourses seeking to erase differences. This leads to organisations and employees missing the opportunity to learn from differences to inform cultural change and to improve individual relations and organisational practices.

Kelly et al. (2007) found that organisations operating within the access and legitimacy paradigm focus primarily on building a ‘business case’ for diversity. This perspective projects diversity as a strategic lever for gaining a larger market share. Thus, in the business case model, diversity is constructed in a manner that serves profit-driven

intentions. Diversity in this model is used as a manipulative tool for unlocking markets that are otherwise difficult to penetrate. In the legitimacy model, there is innate trust between people who share identity similarities (Kelly et al., 2007). The legitimacy model conceives identity similarities as generating a feeling of comfort, meaning that a diverse workforce is capable of attracting and retaining a customer base within their ethnic and cultural demographics. Diversity is thus not theorised in terms of justice and fairness, but as making good business sense. On the other hand, the Learning and Effectiveness paradigm shifts from signifying identity categories towards the cognitive effects of diverse team workings in the organisation (Thomas & Ely, 1996; Dass & Parker, 1999). Workforce heterogeneity is constructed as a value resource and a strategic asset with potential to enhance organisational innovation, performance and customer retention (Cox & Blake, 1991; Ely & Thomas, 1996). This paradigm emphasises the importance of diversity integration. Organisations operating in this paradigm tend to reengineer organisational structure and work process flows towards cross-cultural and cross-functional project teams and matrix structures to maximise learning and effectiveness.

In the symbolic effect perspective, Kelly et al. (2007) found that organisations tended to position diversity as a value proposition for talent attraction and retention. Janssens and Steyaerd (2003) explained that diversity thus serves a symbolic effect. Organisations in this perspective allude to the intense war for scant talent in a context where the employer–employee psychological contract has altered significantly (Ferreira & Coetzee, 2013). Diversity in this discourse serves to symbolise the organisation as socially just and empowering to internal and external stakeholders. Equally, diversity serves the purpose of attracting and retaining a diverse customer base in order to gain a larger market share (Cox & Blake, 1991; Ferreira & Coetzee, 2013; Milliken & Martins, 1996). Lastly, the Resistance Perspective, which to the other extreme examines negative organisational reactions towards change. Resistant organisations opt for the status quo of homogeneity and are prepared to sustain it in the absence of pressure to increase diversity (Dass &

Parker 1999), thereby reproducing inequality without an equal opportunities or diversity policy (Kirton & Greene, 2005).

In 2010, Steyn and colleagues applied a case study design and critical discourse analysis to examine diversity interventions implemented in 12 South African organisations. The objective was to determine the extent to which these diversity interventions effected change in organisational structures and cultures. The study further examined the extent to which these organisational diversity interventions effected changes to the demographics, policies and organisational affiliation amongst diverse employees. The study found that race was the most salient focal point in diversity interventions with the intersections of gender, ability, class, and sexuality largely ignored. The study also showed that diversity initiatives in these organisations were largely guided by a legislative compliance approach. This rendered these interventions shallow and unfit to adequately address the plethora of diversity-related dynamics and unequal power relations that prevailed in organisations. The study found that for some located within hegemonic raced and (to a lesser extent) gendered positionalities, greater diversity inculcated by organisational compliance with transformative legislation created a sense of existential crisis. The study found that white males felt that inclusion of black people and white women into their professional territories was a form of victimisation and 'reverse discrimination'. Conversely, interviews in these case studies revealed that the power of whiteness and masculinity were still being reproduced in these organisations. Most importantly, the study exposed lack of will to take action against discrimination as being responsible for perpetuating discriminatory dynamics. People who raised alarm to forms of racism and sexism were branded as troublemakers or "wanting special excuses from incompetence" (Steyn et al., 2010).

4.8 Agency of minority groups

Zanoni and Janssens (2007) critiqued the field of critical diversity studies for tending to focus greatly on intertextual linkages between diversity and a variety of political and

legal, economic and biological discourses of equality but overlook material structures in which these discourses occur. The authors further point to the tendency of this scholarship to fall into excessive determinism by focusing greatly on identity regulation and control resulting thereby underplaying minority group employees' agency. In response to this, Zanoni and Janssens (2007) conducted a study in a technical drawing company and a hospital company to understand how minority employees exercise agency to engage with control. These scholars viewed diversity management as encompassing controls embedded in an organization's mutually constitutive material and discursive structures. They relied on Phillips and Hardy (2002) to define discursive structures as "the set of interrelated discourses and the practices of their production, dissemination, and reception, which bring the organisation into being". The authors regarded agency as micro-emancipation and as concerning an individual's ability to act otherwise, to intervene in the world or to refrain from such interventions with effect of influencing a specific process or state of affairs. They argued that agency refers to human capacity to be reflexive about their situations – their discursive consciousness and to act upon it to make a difference. The study found that minority groups, in varying degrees, were not necessarily mere passive receptors of control. Rather, they complied with organisational discursive and material controls and equally exercised a degree of agency to construct a positive identity based on perceived price. Participants were found to reflect and act upon the control in more or less compliant ways and through this reflection they sought to create space for their own emancipation. The study concluded with a recommendation for scholars to consider multiple contexts when investigating compliance, resistance, and micro-emancipation.

4.9 Conclusion

The preceding discussion shows that critical diversity scholars have examined overt and covert power relations in organisations and exposed the complex and multi-layered inequality, oppression, discrimination and marginalisation experienced by subjugated groups in organisations and organisational processes. Most importantly, these scholars

have applied intersectionality theory to show how one employee may occupy multiple social positionalities in the matrix of power, privilege and domination in organisations based on multiple intersecting identities they identify with. Intersectional studies produced important knowledge regarding complexities of identity formation, identity negotiation and navigation, and personal experiences of oppression, marginalisation and agency at work based on various intersections of identity. These studies showed how human differences are often controlled to create unequal access to employment, resources, income, decision-making authority and social relations and how these in turn reproduce racialised and gendered social class structures.

Critical diversity studies have also examined diversity interventions in organisations and found these not to constitute models of best practice (Steyn & colleagues, 2010; Kelly, Wale, Soudien & Steyn, 2007). These studies made significant findings about predominance of legislative compliance driven approaches in local organisations and how these shallow diversity interventions failed to transform the organisational cultural milieu and to tackle inequality along the complex intersections of race and gender. Subsequent to these studies, the Director General of Labour Department and the Commission for Employment Equity declared some diversity interventions in some corporations as best practice. To this date, there is no empirical critical diversity study that has examined the (ideological) conceptual framing and efficacy of these appraised diversity initiatives in tackling unequal power relations, privilege and oppression along the complex intersections of race, gender, sexuality and (dis)ability. This study intends to close this gap by employing critical diversity literacy framework and intersectionality theory to critically examine the conceptual framing of these showcased diversity initiatives in some corporations in South Africa and to examine the effectiveness of these diversity initiatives in producing equality and social justice for marginalised groups along the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and dis/ability. By so doing, this study also seeks to contribute to the gap in critical diversity studies identified by Zanoni, Janssens, Benschop and Nkomo (2010). Zanoni et al. (2010) recommend that critical diversity

scholars need to adopt an agentic stance to actively search for new, emancipatory forms of organising in organisations and to identify and study diversity initiatives that have some degree of effectiveness in instigating equality so that such initiatives may be shared to accelerate organisational and social justice.

SECTION B: CASE STUDIES

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 outlined theoretical frameworks abound in management sciences and critical philosophy which inform empirical studies and practice. Having confirmed the researcher's alignment with the critical paradigm, Chapter 4 outlined empirical research studies internationally and locally that have examined organisational diversity discourses using the intersectionality lens. A lacuna was identified relating to the paucity of empirical research that examines appraised diversity discourses and their efficacy in tackling unequal power relations, privilege and oppression along various intersections of difference. This study intends to contribute towards the

closure of this knowledge gap by examining appraised diversity discourses in corporate South Africa.

This chapter provides an outline of the selected research design, philosophical assumptions and the techniques applied to answer the main research question: What is the nature, the depth and texture of diversity discourses in JSE listed corporations that were recently show-cased by the Director General of the Department of Labour in the CEE report?

5.2 Research design

The research design sketches a step-by-step plan and structure of how the researcher intends to answer the main research question. The plan includes decisions on the forms of data to be collected, population groups to be studied, and how the collected data will be analysed and reported to answer the central research question (Stone-Romero, 2010). This study used the intersectional lens to link macro-, meso- and micro-level factors that instigate and sustain inequalities and to examine the impact of diversity interventions in some appraised corporations in eradicating these inequalities. The study set out to understand the quality (depth and texture) of these diversity interventions. I resolved that documents would be resourceful for providing an indication of the framing of these strategies and that human experience within these organisations is the real litmus test of their efficacy. Hence a qualitative research method, more specifically multiple case study design, is more appropriate for collecting and analysing empirical data to answer the main research question of this study.

Welman, Kruger, and Mitchel (2005) trace the origins of qualitative research to social and cultural anthropology as the field that has been primarily concerned with studying societies and social groups. The strength of qualitative research is that it provides for complex textual description of people's experiences, contradictory behaviours,

emotions, opinions, beliefs, intangible social norms, and roles that are otherwise intangible. However, there is a plurality of approaches, and contestations regarding issues of objectivity and subjectivity

5.3 Research paradigm for this inquiry

Paradigms are basic belief systems or worldviews that entail and inform the researcher's ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Guba and Lincoln (1994) delineate at least four contesting paradigms within qualitative research. These include positivism, postpositivism, critical theory and related perspectives, and constructivism. Positivism and, later, postpositivism focus on the traditional science of objectivism which seeks to verify (positivist) or falsify (postpositivism) a priori hypotheses (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These tend to be aligned with mathematical propositions or propositions that can be converted into formulas that express functional relationships. Social constructionists on the other hand tend to be aligned with the decolonial, postcolonial and critical paradigm. This study is aligned with social constructionism within qualitative research.

5.3.1 Social constructionism

Social constructionism embodies a variety of critical approaches to studying social phenomena. These include deconstruction, critical analysis, discourse analysis and post-structuralism (Andrews, 2012; Burr, 2015). In the main, social constructionists view reality as a social construct (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and as a complex and subjective phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Social constructionists take a critical position towards what is generally taken for granted and widely accepted modernist conceptions of reality, which posit that knowledge is objective and unbiased (Burr, 2015). Social constructivism opposes these positivistic and empiricist epistemological positions of hard core science (Burr, 2015 p. 2). These positions assume that

knowledge about the social world can be produced through observation and that what exists is what we perceive to exist (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Social constructivism, on the other hand, argues that there is no social reality prior to its invention. Thus what we've come to know and accept as truth and reality are a product of intersubjective interactions (Hoffman, 1990; Baxter & Jack, 2008; Burr, 2015).

Social constructionists postulate that reality and knowledge are historically and socially relative and influenced by one's location in social and economic stratifications that prevail at a particular point in time (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Burr, 2015). This implies that our understandings of knowledge, society and truth are artefacts of history and culture (Burr, 2015). This supposition throws upside down the idea of rationality and universal knowledge, reality and truth. It rather argues that there can never be any scientific knowledge and truth that can define the physical, psychological and social world definitively. Social constructivism emphasises that the idea of objective truth and knowledge leads to the imposition of western knowledge systems upon other cultures and to epistemicide.

Social constructionism argues that humans construct meaning and knowledge through their daily interaction in the course of life (Burr, 2015; Owen, 1992). Thus knowledge is produced through social, particularly, linguistic exchange (Burr, 2015). What we therefore regard as the truth is reflective of our current accepted understanding of the world. Therefore these are not products of objective truth but of social process and ongoing interactions amongst human subjects (Owen, 1992). Through these social interactions different possible social constructions of events are produced and in turn induce certain types of action from human subjects. Social constructions therefore sustain some patterns of social actions and exclude others (Burr, 2015). This implies that our social constructions of the world are intricately bound with power as they define what is regarded as acceptable behaviour for different people and may legitimate certain treatment of others.

Critical diversity literacy is thus compatible with social constructionism ontologically, epistemologically and methodologically. In fact, empirical and theoretical research studies in critical diversity in organisations are chiefly located within social constructionism. Chapter 3 and 4 illustrated how critical diversity scholars speak back to modernist constructions of race, gender, dis/ability intersections amongst other axes of difference. These scholars regard identity intersections as complex, unstable and decentred. They further proposed that identity differences are social constructs rather than a fact of nature or biology (Butler, 1988). Critical diversity scholars also advance that race/gender/dis-ability/identities are relational; constantly shifting and valorised through repetitive social process of identity performance, domination and “othering” (De Francisco & Palczewski, 2007, Erly, 1995; Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Zanoni, 2011). Other critical diversity scholars disrupted the idea that organisational processes are value-free and showed how these processes embody social, historical and political ideas of the dominant and how diversity interventions in organisational processes tend to reproduce these unequal power relations (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2015; Steyn, 2010; Vertovec, 2015). Social constructionism is also acknowledged in the broader field of organisational behaviour and development studies as crucial for re-framing, deconstructing and democratising modernist assumptions about knowledge production in organisations. Such assumptions include individual rationality, empirical evaluations, language representation and narratives (Camargo-Borges & Rasera, 2013). The social constructionism perspective is being acknowledged in broader organisational studies as having the capability of opening space for dialogue, co-creation and social change (Camargo-Borges & Rasera, 2013).

5.3.2 Ontology

Crotty (1998) defines ontology as the science of being while Guba and Lincoln (1994) posit that ontology is concerned with the nature of reality. Ontology refers to the researcher’s stance on what constitutes reality. Social constructivism recognises that reality is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic and racial values as important

determinants of power in a research context. My ontology is thus based on social constructivism. This paradigm rejects the positivist use of rigid structural analysis, theories and practices that do not acknowledge the lived realities of marginalised groups, and for failing to address dynamics of power, social justice, discrimination and oppression (Creswell J. W., 2014). Henning, van Rensburg, and Smit (2004) also state that research cannot be conducted in a vacuum. Research inquiry is often grounded and built on theoretical and empirical knowledge. Such knowledge in turn influences the interpretation of data. Accordingly, this study is framed within the critical diversity theoretical perspective. This perspective presumes the researcher's profound commitment to the values of democracy, social justice, equity and empowerment (Steyn, 2015).

5.3.3 Epistemology

Epistemology concerns “the way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know” (Crotty, 1998). Holloway (1997) and Mason (1996) discuss the role of epistemology as it relates to the relationship between the researcher and the object of inquiry, and how we come to know what we know. In the context of research, epistemology provides a philosophical basis for making decisions on what counts as knowledge and how to ensure legitimacy and adequacy of such knowledges. Kamil (2011) draws a distinction between positivist epistemology and constructionist epistemology. The objectivist epistemology “presupposes the possibility of a theory neutral language where our sensory experience of the objects of reality provides the only secure foundation for social scientific knowledge” (Phil & Joanne, 2003). Thus objectivist epistemology approaches the knowledge of what exists as having an independent existence before human cognition. Researchers therefore aim to search for objective knowledge about objects of reality (Kamil, 2011).

Critical researchers employ constructivist epistemologies in studying social justice and social change. These scholars reject the theory of neutral observational language

(Burr, 1995). Instead, proponents of constructivist epistemology approach objective truth or reality as non-existent, maintaining that what we come to know as the truth or reality is the product of ideologies and subjectivities. Accordingly Lincoln and Guba (1988) postulate that constructivists ought to minimise the distance between the self as researchers and the subjects of study. Creswell (2007) further emphasizes the importance of positioning one's research approach within a particular theoretical paradigm that reflects the researcher's stance toward the inquiry.

This study drew on critical diversity literacy as a framework for pursuing the process of collecting and analysis of data related to diversity discourses in these select corporations. This choice is more apt for understanding social constructions of diversity in corporations and their link with (re)production of power and inequality. Foucault's (1976; 1980) seminal works revealed that socially constructed knowledge must be traced to discourse and power. This postulation is congruent with postmodernist philosophy.

5.3.3.1 Postmodernism

The distinction and connectivity of post-structuralism and postmodernism remains a contentious debate amongst scholars. Most scholars (Culler, 1982, Agger, 1991; Best & Kellner, 1991) argue that the two are inseparable, as they overlap. Agger (1991), however, explains that while post-structuralism is concerned with knowledge and language, postmodernism can be described as a theory of society, culture, and history.

Barret (1997) argues that postmodernism does not just chronologically follow modernism but is an anti-modernism movement. Barret (1997) further traces the origins of postmodernism to the 1968 student riots in Paris, France. Barret (1997) also associates modernism with Descartes and Kant amongst others who believed that through rationality or reason the foundations of universal truth could be established.

Political leaders during the modern epoch (late 1800s to 1970s) believed that rationality or reason is the source of social change and that a just and egalitarian social order could be achieved through reason (Atkins, 1993). Lyon (1999) explains the establishment of modernity as a development that resulted in the division of labour, rationalisation, urbanism, state (criminality) discipline and secularism. Barrett (1977) also adds democracy, capitalism, industrialisation, urbanisation, freedom and individualism as products of modernity.

Postmodernists such as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Foucault, Baudrillard, Jameson, Dewey, Derrida and Rorty counter modernism by criticising it for the suffering of the peasants under monarchies, oppression of proletariat under capitalism, exclusion and marginalisation of women, colonialism, imperialism and decimation of indigenous knowledges, culture and societies (Barret, 1997). Postmodernists argue that reality and knowledge are imprecise interpretations and constructions of individuals and that all knowledge is mediated by culture and language. Baudrillard, for instance, studied popular consumer culture and found that subjecthood is constructed through the use of signifiers (Hossain & Shariful Karim, 2013). Baudrillard argued that humans are now living in the realm of “hyper-reality” where the image of an object or subject is more real than reality (Nicol, 2009). Foucault’s idea of discourse posited truth as a relative concept and that we come to understand truth through a social process known as discourse. Foucault rejected the idea of neutrality of knowledge, truth and language, arguing that knowledge is always connected to power. He posited that modern discourses that formalise knowledge, discourses on sexuality, insanity and criminality amongst others control and regulate human experiences (Hossain & Shariful Karim, 2013). Therefore postmodernist researchers reject the idea that a researcher’s work is an “objective depiction of a stable other” (Hossain & Shariful Karim, 2013). Instead, many postmodern scholars have adopted “alternatives that encourage reflection about the ‘politics and poetics’ of their work. In these accounts, the embodied, collaborative, dialogic, and

improvisational aspects of qualitative research are clarified” (Hossain & Shariful Karim, 2013).

Postmodernism thus situates social problems in historical and cultural contexts in the process of collecting and analysing data. In postmodernism meaning itself is seen as unstable due to the rapid transformation in social structures and meanings. As a result, postmodernist research is centred on local manifestations, rather than broad generalisations. Hossain and Karim (2013) summarise that postmodernism permits polysemic meanings for text and language to exist without implying contradiction. This enables postmodernists to allow the coexistence of different views, establish new discourses and theories. The authors summarise key features of postmodernism as follows:

- Rejection of the ultimate faith in science.
- Anti-positivist and anti-verificationist stance.
- Individuality by placing emphasis on subjective views.
- Truth as a matter of perspective.
- Blurring the old distinctions by disregarding the binary oppositions such as male – female, black – white, east – west, etc. Postmodernists dismantle gender roles, racial, ethnic, sexuality and class differences as they believe that these constructs are not as neat as modernists believed.
- Globalisation and multiculturalism.
- Information and media.
- New literary trends (Hossain & Karim, 2013).

5.3.4 Axiology

Creswell (2007) argues the importance of the researcher to acknowledge that research is value-laden and subjective. Thus, it is important for the researcher to openly discuss values that shape data collection and his/her own interpretation thereof. My interest in

persuing this study emanates from my own experiences as a black able-bodied queer male who leads transformation in a South African corporation. I am confronted with complexities and dynamics of diversity intergration in my daily practice. I am tasked with redressing inequality and creating inclusive organisational culture in a predominantly white/male, able-bodied and heterosexual dominated work environment. Conversations with colleagues in the field and this research project indicate that there is a desire amongst transformation managers to effect real chage in organisations but there's a lack in the empirical literature to guide their efforts. Thus, I have a deep-seated interest and investment to finding equality enhancing solutions that go beyond mere legislative compliance.

5.3.5 Rhetorical assumptions

Scientists agree that writing in qualitative research differs substantially from the scientific writing style associated with quantitative research (Richard, 1990). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) point out that quantitative research strives towards objectivity by applying a passive writing style, whereas critical qualitative researchers take an insider's view that allows them to be present in their writing. In describing these differences, De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011) point out that in qualitative research, reports are less structured, more descriptive and integrated with the entire research process. Wolcott (1994) states that in qualitative research the writing style is shaped by the researcher's conventions, the context, the assumptions about the intended or real audience, their role or position, their choice of rhetorical mode and their vocabulary. Wolcott (2001) argues that in developing his or her own writing style, the researcher may experiment with the following rhetorical modes:

- a) **Expository** – aims to explain, inform, describe or define the subject to the reader. It is concerned with presenting facts to the reader and therefore it must not be biased. This style is most suitable when writing for a business context or giving background to the phenomenon or research setting.
-

- b) **Descriptive** – conveys a particular impression of persons, places or phenomena using vivid imaginary detail. It is often used to convey emotion or attitude.
- c) **Narrative** – often includes the combination of expository and descriptive styles. Narrative writing is most suitable for the research setting as it intends to tell a story about the research and its topic.
- d) **Persuasive** – often used for academic purposes and may combine expository, descriptive and narrative writing. Persuasive writing is intended to convince the audience of the writer’s arguments and interpretations.

Following Wolcott’s (2001) advice to researchers to develop their own writing style, I apply different styles in this study. In the main, I will use the persuasive style.

5.3.6 The use of literature in qualitative research

The stage at which literature can be used in qualitative research remains a highly contested terrain amongst researchers. Shank (2006) argues for treatment of data on its own by setting aside the researcher’s preconceptions and biases in order to allow data to speak for itself. In this context, a literature review is considered during the conceptual phase to ensure that one does not research an already researched topic, and at the end of the project to validate and make sense of the data. There is also the school of thought that supports the review of literature before data collection, arguing that this empowers the researcher with knowledge required to plan and execute the research project. Literature in this perspective is for illustrating existing gaps in the body of knowledge rather than justifying why the research is needed to answer the question. These scholars argue that the phenomenon of inquiry is not well understood and enables one to seek advice from experts in order to execute the study well.

I conducted the literature review during preparation of the research proposal and in the introductory chapters for the purpose of situating the research problem and research question. I further conducted a review of the main theories of diversity with

intent of illustrating the ideological dichotomy in the field. After selecting critical diversity as the preferred paradigm for this study, I conducted empirical literature review with intent of identifying the gap in the existing body of knowledge and to explain the contribution that would be made by this inquiry. Once case studies were analysed and synthesised to determine the overarching themes I further conducted an extensive literature review to make sense of the findings. This enabled the contrasting of these themes against existing knowledge and to illustrate novel contributions and to make recommendations for future studies.

5.4 Research Approach and Strategy

Below I discuss the multiple case study approach as the selected design for this study and the process I followed in applying this design.

5.4.1 Multiple case studies

Alvesson and Deetz (2000) postulate that multiple case studies deepen the understanding of a certain context, provide multiple perspectives and multiple voicing. This research design also enables the exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a range of data sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008). By so doing, a multiple case study design permits the viewing and exploration of phenomena under inquiry through multiple lenses so that the phenomenon can be revealed and understood as postulated (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Baxter & Jack, 2008). Yin (2003) adds four advantages of conducting multiple case studies which include: a) when the focus of the inquiry is to answer, how and why?; b) when the researcher cannot manipulate the behaviours of those involved in the study; c) when the researcher wants to cover contextual conditions because he/she believes they are relevant to the phenomenon and lastly, d) when the boundaries are not clear between phenomenon and context.

Based on the above stated grounds, I resolved that multiple case study design is the most appropriate design for this study, which seeks to understand the nature, the

depth and texture of diversity discourses in multiple JSE listed corporations. This choice is informed by the fact that multiple case studies enable the researcher to explore the differences and similarities within a single case study or unit and between cases (Yin, 2003; Stake, 1995). Baxter and Jack (2008) argue that the evidence created from a multiple case study design is robust and reliable and this, in turn, enhances data credibility. Multiple case studies are also compatible with social constructionism (Camargo-Borges & Rasera, 2013) as they allow for multiple voices and non-positivistic data to emerge from multiple sources. Yin (2003), however, warns that the downside to this method is that the process of data collection, analysis and report writing can be labour and resource intensive. The upside of this challenge is that it enables triangulation and collection of thick data (Steyn, 2010).

5.4.2 Locating research participants

I consulted the Commission for Employment Equity reports for 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/2015 to find the companies that were showcased by the Director General of the Department of Labour. In the CEE reports I read the brief summary of the initiatives these organisations had implemented and the realised results. I grouped these organisations according to their sectors. I resolved to target the sectors that contribute the most to South Africa's GDP. The CEE does not necessarily follow this approach. The CEE randomly selects organisations on JSE and attempts to cover multiple organisations in different sectors of the economy. My choice of industries that have a higher contribution to GDP was informed by the impact and influence these organisations have in (re)shaping social, political and economic discourses in the country. The diagram below illustrates financial services, real estate and business services sector, followed by manufacturing sector and then wholesale and retail are the top three contributors to the GDP. I therefore selected a purposive sample of to target corporations that fall within these sectors. I targeted at least one corporation that has been showcased within these industries.

I later visited the websites of the sampled corporations to obtain the contact details of the human resource executive and the transformation manager. Initially I sent out emails introducing myself and the study and invited the corporations to participate in the study. I attached the formal letter which is on the University's letterhead. I subsequently followed up with a telephone call. The response rate was very low. In fact, none of the corporations initially agreed to participate.

I resolved to rely on leads and contacts. I requested some of the influential persons I had connected with in some of the networks to connect me with the most senior persons within these corporations and to help introduce me and the study I intended to do. This strategy yielded some positive results with nearly five corporations agreeing to participate. I went on to schedule dates for interviews with the transformation managers. I revisited the organisation's websites to obtain publications including annual reports and media statements. These assisted greatly in orientating the researcher to the organisation and their work. I relied on the transformation managers for the purpose of identifying and obtaining employees for the focus groups. This level of participant identification was very complex. Most corporations showed great reluctance in terms of having their employees interviewed. I went back at least four to five times in each case to finally receive the entry into the employee level. This set me back on the project plan by at least 8 months. I can attribute the success of gaining access to all participants to persistence, patience and tapping into network of resources from time to time. Ultimately, the study involved three organisations, nearly 35 analysed documents, 3 transformation managers and 32 employees. Thus, this study collected data from nearly 70 sources.

5.4.3 Data collection

I collected data from multiple sources within each single case study. This was important for triangulation purposes. The first set of data was collected through publicly available or accessible documents. The documents included information about the sector within which the organisation operates to gain a sense of the size of the sector, asset value, key role players who control the industry, current diversity profile within the sector and the commitments the sector has made towards reforms. This step was important as most organisational transformation and diversity discourses are informed or linked to sector commitments. It further assisted in locating the studied organisation within the sector.

I then proceeded to collect documents including published annual reports, publications and other publicly available documents on the studied organisations. I read through these documents and took notes of important and relevant information to the main research question. I first mapped out the organisational profile, its geographical location, asset value, diversity profile and the articulated philosophy regarding transformation. This aided in orientating the researcher with the company and its views on diversity and informed as well as focused some of the context specific questions which were asked during the second phase of the data collection.

The second phase entailed semi-structured interviews with transformation managers. The purpose of this phase was to understand how the philosophy, vision and strategy are translated into practice based on the transformation manager's social constructions. This phase was also important for understanding synergies between written text contained in documents and the actual lived experiences within the organisation based on lived experiences of managers that are charged with the responsibility of driving transformation. I used an interview schedule and protocol to guide the process and to ensure professionalism and effective time management. The protocol had been submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand's ethics committee as part of the ethics clearance approval process. I interviewed transformation managers in their own work environments. One transformation manager requested to

be interviewed outside the work premises arguing that an external environment would be more relaxing and a “safe space” to share openly. I accommodated this request accordingly. I found that all transformation managers in all case studies that are included in this study were very keen on participating in the study and voluntarily shared information. They mostly voluntarily shared documents and reports which supported their statements and initiatives. Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008) emphasise the importance of recording interviews in order to determine the quality of end results. Accordingly, I recorded all interviews. I also took notes including the paralinguistic clues given by participants during interviews. Each interview lasted for an average of an hour to an hour thirty minutes. The interviews were transcribed immediately thereafter and stored securely for data analysis. I proceeded to analyse the data in order to guide and focus the inquiry during the third phase of data collection.

The third phase of data collection involved focus groups with employees of each corporation. Focus groups ranged between six to ten participants per group. Participants included a range of organisational members who are at different levels as well as different race and gender groups. The focused groups were primarily intended to examine employee’s social constructions of diversity and transformation within the corporations based on their own lived experiences. I opened the interviews by thanking the participants, introducing myself and the purpose of the research as well as the research process. I then requested permission to record the interviews and for participants to consent to participating. I then proceeded to request participants to introduce themselves after which I asked them to share their own experiences and/or perceptions of diversity within the organisation. I played multiple roles during the data collection process ranging from being an interviewer, a listener; a moderator and a learner. I also noted down my observations including paralinguistics and group interactions. I later transcribed the data and stored it securely in a password protected

computer. I then assigned each participant a number to protect their identity, and to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

5.4.4 Data analysis

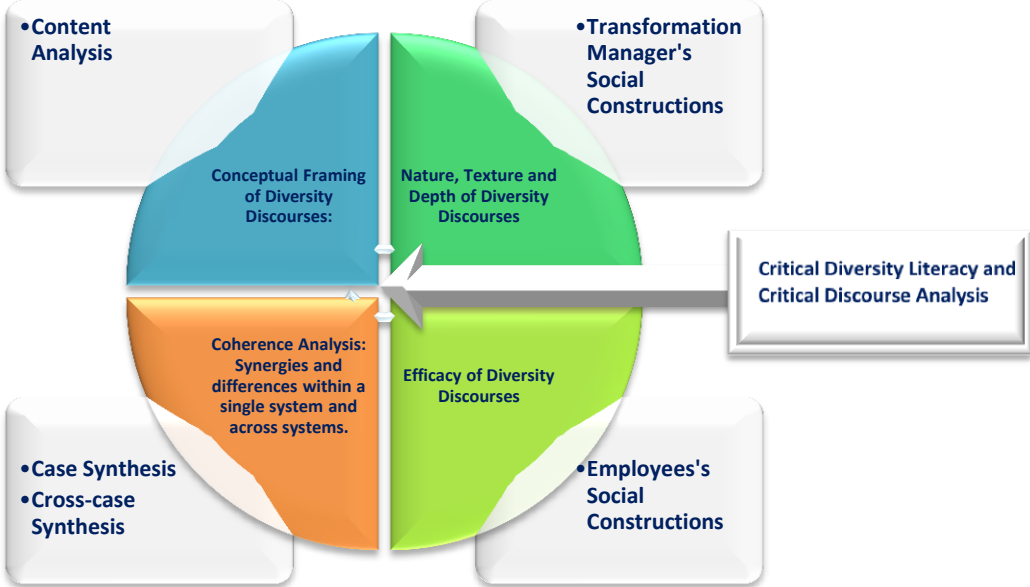
In qualitative studies, data collection and analysis occurs concurrently. This was particularly true in this study. Data analysis was conducted in four stages in this study, namely, content analysis, thematic analysis of transformation manager's social constructions, thematic analysis of employees' social construction, and cross case synthesis. CDL was used to read and delineate key themes in each phase and CDA was applied to analyse these themes. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was appropriate for this purpose because it is methodologically, theoretically and epistemologically part of postmodernist and poststructuralist thought; and is compatible with CDL (Gil, 1995; Silverman, 1998). CDA is useful in analysing and explaining how power is legitimated, reproduced and enacted through discourse in texts and in social-political and institutional contexts. van Dyk (1993) explains that CDA takes an "explicit position to understand, expose and ultimately resist social power abuse, dominance and inequality. Agger (1992) draws some links between CDA and critical theory. This is evident in Fairclough and Wodak's (1997) summary of the principal views of CDA. These scholars argue that CDA addresses social problems, recognises that power relations are discursive, discourse constitutes society and culture and that discourse does ideological work. They further argue that discourse is historical and the link between text and society is mediated. Thus discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory and is a form of social action.

Van Dyk (1993) argues that CDA is not necessarily a particular direction of research and therefore does not have a unitary theoretical or methodological framework. Instead, CDA seeks to offer a different mode of theorising and analysing through various fields that may be concerned with discourse, cognition, society and power. Consequently, CDA works well across a diverse range of theoretical and analytical

frameworks while retaining analytical focus on the deployment, reproduction and sustenance of power (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1993). Therefore CDA vocabulary tends to encompass concepts of power, dominance, hegemony, and ideology (van Dijk, 1993). He further argues that critical discourse analysts need to have an explicit awareness of their role in society. This is in line with subjectivist ontological and epistemic positions found in post-structuralist and post-modernist rejections of the notion of “value-free” scientific inquiry. CDA analysts according to van Dyk ought to be mindful of the fact that science is “inherently part of and influenced by social structure and produced in social interaction”. He further posits that theory formation, description and explanation in discourse analysis are socio-politically situated processes that should satisfy the following requirements: a) CDA must focus chiefly on social problems and political issues, b) an empirically adequate critical analysis of social problems is often multidisciplinary, c) Instead of just describing discourse structures, CDA must explain them in terms of properties of social interaction; particularly social structure, d) CDA must focus on ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance in society.

Given that a multiple case design has been employed in this study, I used CDL to read and categorise patterns and themes that reveal power relations and personal experiences of domination and empowerment. I then used CDA to analyse such themes within a single case and across the cases. This iterative process is depicted in Diagram 5 below:

Diagram 5: Iterative Data Analysis Process using CDL and CDA



The first phase involved document analysis. Here I focused on written text in industry transformation charters, industry reports, sector skills plans, organisational annual reports and other related publications. I applied CDL criteria to detect textual descriptions and attitudes towards transformation. I paid particular attention to descriptive words, verbs, metaphors and statements of emphasis which give an indication of the industry’s and organisational stance towards the issues of diversity, social justice, equality and empowerment. I also sought to understand the conceptual frameworks that underpin the industry and organisational approach to transformation. My interest here was to assess whether such frameworks acknowledge the historical and present day oppressive systems, unequal power relations and inequality in South Africa and how the industry and organisations sought to engage with these hegemonic issues as a contribution towards organisational change and broader social change.

The second phase involved thematic analysis of transformation managers' social constructions of diversity within the organisation. In this phase I was interested in seeing how the conceptual frameworks are translated into practice by those charged with the responsibility of driving organisational transformation. In this phase I was interested in understanding how crafted diversity strategies are geared towards challenging and changing diversity hierarchies and institutionalised processes. I examined the focus of these strategies with intent of understanding whether these corporations recognise the symbolic and material value of hegemonic identities. I was also interested in understanding how these appraised diversity discourses deal with the intersecting, interlocking and co-constructing nature of oppressive systems and the degree to which they engender the values of democracy, social justice and equality. The analysis paid specific attention on the intra organisational processes with the view of understanding how the process of incorporating marginalised social groups into predefined corporate cultures is managed. The researcher paid specific attention to how transformation managers construct their own experiences of social relations and interactions, organisational culture and practices. The researcher presumed that the efficacy of the appraised diversity strategies would be measurable by the extent to which such strategies challenge and transform the monolithic corporate cultures and mediate unequal power relation and the degree to which they promote co-creation and equality. I proceeded to the third phase which entailed an analysis of employees' social constructions.

The third phase involved thematic analysis of data that emerged in the social constructions of employees' personal experiences of diversity within the organisation. This phase was almost a litmus test of the efficacy of the diversity strategies implemented by the organisations. Here CDL criteria were useful in enabling the reading how diverse employees negotiate their being and existence in these corporations. The degree of ease and or complexity different employees negotiate within these corporations to gain legitimacy gave an indication of dominant practices.

The fourth phase entailed single case study synthesis. In this phase, I contrasted themes that emerged from the content analysis, the transformation managers' and employees' social constructions of diversity (or lack thereof). I once more applied CDL criteria to delineate some key themes that are similar and different across these levels of data analysis and draw conclusions about the discourses of diversity in each corporation.

5.4.5 Strategies employed to secure quality of data collection and analysis

The question of credibility and reliability of qualitative research remains a contested terrain with no consensus amongst researchers on the appropriate criteria with which to assess it (Giorgi, 1975; Lincoln & Guba, 1988). The conventional criteria for good research, namely internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity, are inappropriate constructs for establishing the "truth value" of critical qualitative inquiry (Schurink, 2006). In conventional objectivist (scientific) research, the observer is capable of standing away from his or her own humanity and the subject of inquiry to ensure he/she doesn't permit subjectivity to interfere with the research process (Burr, 2015 p. 171).

In social constructionism objective truth is viewed as a fallacy (Burr, 2015). Yardley (2000) suggests the use of terms trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility as the criteria for ensuring quality in qualitative research inquiry. Guba (1981) and Shenton (2004) on the other hands propose use of internal validity (credibility), transferability, dependability and confirmability while Shannon and Hambacher (2014) argue that methodological rigor in constructivist research is attained through assessment of trustworthiness and authenticity. They also argue that authenticity and trustworthiness allow for the researcher to develop and test their own methods and due to uncertainty, fluidity and emergent nature of constructivist inquiry. In Shannon and Hambacher's study (2014), concepts such as credibility, transferability, and reliability answer the fundamentalist (positivist) interest in qualitative research.

In this study I followed Guba (1981) and Shenton's (2004) guidance. I ensured internal validity by remaining true to the personal narratives of participants and by ensuring that multiple realities of participants are represented fairly and accurately. For this purpose, I provide quotes of participants' views as part of the analysis to distinguish between the views of participants and my interpretation. I did this so that the reader can also understand that while my interpretation is value-bound and not striving for pure objectivity, I still aimed to convey the voice of the participants. A summary version of the transcripts was sent to participants to confirm if their views were presented correctly. I also triangulated data within each case by contrasting themes/data emerging from analysis documents, managers' constructions and different employees. I later conducted a cross-case synthesis as part of triangulation. An audit trail of the research process including raw data, transcripts, reconstruction and synthesis, personal notes and interview protocols are also available and correspond with the research findings. The audit trail was consulted numerous times during the data analysis phase and report writing. I also requested a peer to sample the data from transcripts, review my analysis of it and provide input. The process and the product of research was also checked by the supervisor to ensure consistency and conformance with the research paradigm. Lastly, I have not generalised the findings of this study. However, I believe that findings can be transferred or inference can be made about discourses of diversity in other similar JSE listed corporations.

5.4.6 Research ethics

This study complied with the requirements of the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Witwatersrand-Johannesburg. In line with these guidelines, I informed the participants verbally and in writing about the purpose of the research and outlined the research process. In the written electronic invitation to participate in the study, I explained that participation was voluntary. I sent a letter together with a consent form via email requesting permission to use the site (organisation) for the purpose of this research. The communiqué entailed the research process and sources of data that

were required. I only proceeded with the data collection after I received confirmation and consent from the organisation and the participants. I applied the strategies outlined in 8.2.6 to ensure quality research. All information provided by participating organisations remained strictly confidential and anonymous. Raw data was not shared with anyone, and was not used for any purpose other than this study.

CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

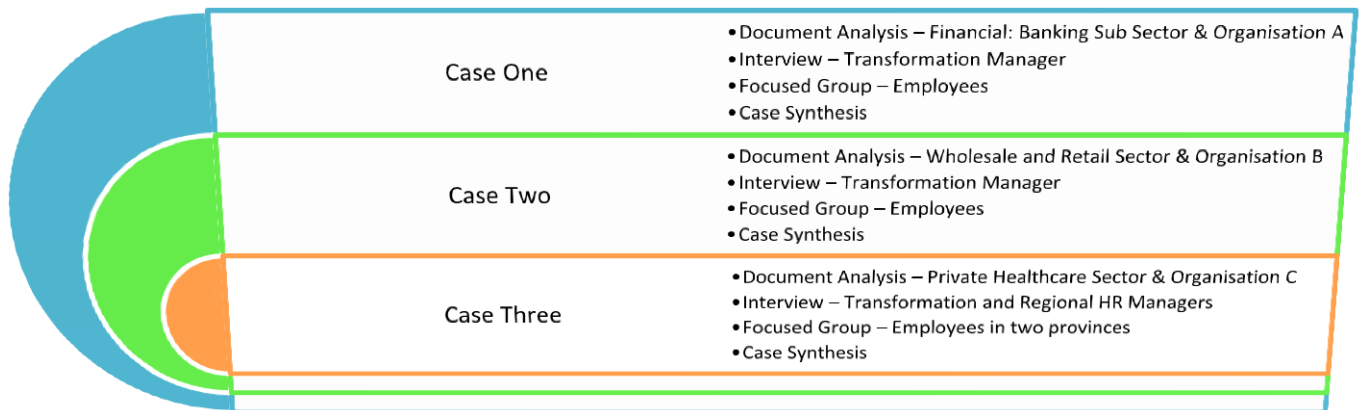
The preceding chapter outlined the step-by-step process followed to answer the main research question including data collection and analysis. This chapter provides key themes that emerged at various levels and sources of data within each case study. The themes presented in this chapter emerged from publicly available documents, interviews with senior transformation managers and focus groups with employees in organisations that participated in this study. The following CDL criteria were applied in the analysis of data and highlighting of key themes:

- A definition of oppressive systems such as racism as current social problems and not only historical legacy
- The possession of a diversity grammar and vocabulary that facilitates a discussion of privilege and oppression.
- An analysis of the ways that diversity hierarchies and institutionalized oppressions are inflected in specific social contexts and material arrangements,
- An engagement with issues of transformation of these oppressive systems towards deepening social justice in all levels of social organisation.

6.2 Chapter Outline

Diagram 6 below indicates the manner in which data analysis is organised in this chapter.

Diagram 6: The Organisation of Data Analysis

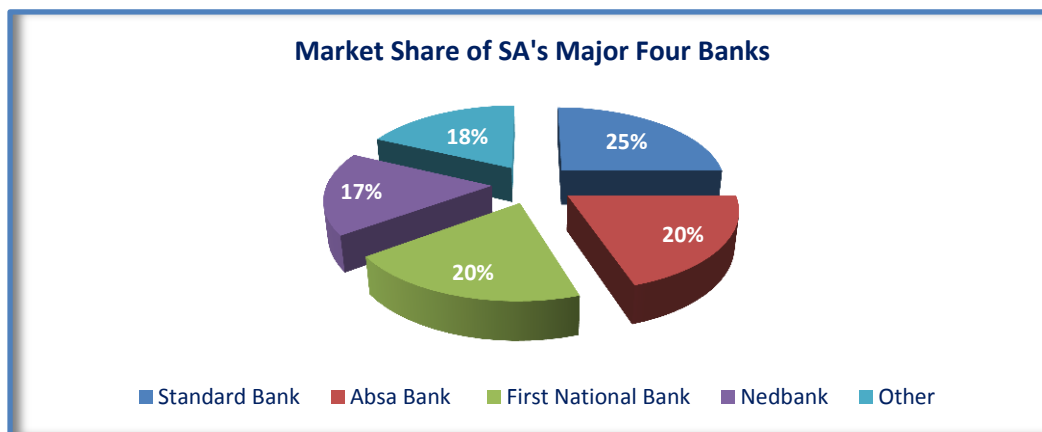


In each case, the analysis begins with the mapping out of the sector profile to which the participating organisation belongs. This mapping provides a macro-analysis of the commitments made by the collective industry towards transformation. These commitments profoundly influence and prescribe how organisations must approach the issue of transformation and diversity. This level of analysis is also important for illustrating the power of capitalist-oriented industries in shaping and/or redressing inequalities and diversity discourses. I then proceeded to locate the participating organisation within the sector and to analyse organisation-specific documents to determine the transformation philosophy, initiatives, progress and related practices. I then proceeded to analyse transformation managers' social constructions of diversity within these organisations. Lastly, I provided the voices of employees based on data collected through focused groups. I concluded each case with a synthesis of key themes that emerged.

6.3 Case One – Sector Analysis for organisation A

The first corporation (here referred to as organisation A) to participate in the study is located within the financial services sector, more precisely within the banking sub-sector. South Africa's banking sector comprises some 60 banks of which 17 are locally controlled, two are mutual banks and 41 are foreign banks with 12 local branches (Banking Sector Financial Report, 2015). The asset value of the country's banking sector is estimated at R 3.9 trillion (Banking Association of South Africa, 2014). The sector is dominated by four corporate banks that collectively own 83% (R 3.5 trillion) of the sector's asset value (Banking SETA Report, 2015). Diagram 7 below shows the market share of these four dominant banks.

Diagram 7: Market Share of the 60 Banks in South Africa



The diagram shows that Standard Bank has the largest market share (25%) followed by Absa and First National Bank (20% respectively) and then Nedbank with 17%. The remaining 54 banks share 18% of the market. The four dominant banks manage nearly 27.3 million banked individuals and run a debt book of around R 1.29 trillion (Banking Association of South Africa, 2014). Lending money to clients is one of the means through which the sector makes its profits. As such the sector has 20.64 million borrowers which is 76% of banked individuals. Nearly 10 million (50%) of

borrowers are over-indebted with arrears of between 3 months and more (Banking Association of South Africa, 2014).

The sector has developed the Financial Sector Charter Codes (FSC) that binds employer organisations to contribute towards socio-economic reforms. The charter encourages employers to prioritise the creation of a globally-competitive financial services sector that also focuses on the transformation of the sector. Transformation here is defined within the corporate social investment and inclusion paradigm. The charter states that the industry must include black people in the activities of the sector and that access to products and services offered by the sector must also be extended to previously marginalised groups. This commitment, however, is contingent on the industry retaining its competitiveness in the global market. "... to actively promoting a transformed, vibrant, and global competitive financial sector that reflects the demographics of South Africa, and contributes to the establishment of an equitable society by effectively providing accessible financial services to black people and by directing investment into targeted sectors of the economy" (The Banking Association of South Africa, 2004).

Accordingly, the charter commits organisations within the sector to donate a 25% share ownership to black people. The ownership structure is divided into 10% direct ownership and 15% indirect ownership. The balance of 75% is held by individuals, other corporations and members of the public that have the financial muscle to invest through mandated investments. This ownership structure is indicative of the ideological shifts that took place when South Africa transitioned into democracy. The Freedom Charter (1955) indicated that the national wealth of the country shall be restored to the people. The charter stated that "... the mineral resources beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole". Presently, transformation instruments prescribed by the democratic dispensation require a minimum ownership threshold of 25%+1. Thus

economic power remains in the hands of previously advantaged persons. This is critical for understanding the flow of decision authority within organisations.

The commitment to contribute towards transformation in this sector appears to be driven by the need to comply with the prescriptions of the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment and Employment Equity legislation. Consequently, the sector begrudges this compliance viewing it as adding financial and administrative burden. This is evident in statements such as "... adding costs of compliance", "a necessary evil that will be outweighed by the long-term benefits to the banks and other financial institutions" (The Banking Association of South Africa, 2004).

The sector also commits to improve the workforce profile to reflect the country's demographics in all levels of occupations. This commitment emerges from what the sector regards as historic discrimination. The sector does not necessarily view these discriminatory discourses as being reproduced in the present. Nonetheless, the sector sees these disparities as unjust and impeding economic efficacy, competitiveness and productivity. The motivation for redressing these injustices is thus firmly located with the economic interest of the country and the sector rather than as redressing mechanisms to realise social justice. Disparities in the South African workplace resulting from past discrimination and laws are not only unjust, but also have direct negative implications for economic efficiency, competitiveness and productivity. It is therefore in the country's long-term national interests that a broad-based and diverse pool of skills is developed for the sector to unleash the potential of all South Africans.

As such the sector commits employers to develop human resource development strategies to promote non-racialism, non-sexism, cultural diversity and gender sensitivity. This language is aligned with Employment Equity legislation. However, the sector has eliminated other dimensions of diversity that are included in the Employment Equity legislation which include disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, etc.

The sector also states that it intends to invest in the skills development of black people and women to enable attainment of the numerical goals it has set for itself. The skills development investment can be read within the context of white paternalism which is portrayed by the perpetual construction of black subjects as lacking and therefore deserving of some form of “development” intervention to bring them to the some close proximity to whiteness. This view is supported by lack of proper labour market analysis to understand what skills already exist amongst the black community that are commensurate with those required by the industry. The statement thus assumes that the entire race group requires some form of development in order to qualify to be brought into certain forms of labour. This is contradictory to the statistics issued by the South African Qualifications Authority (2001) and the study conducted by Wits University on behalf of Minister Ndzimande (2012), which revealed that black people have the skills but corporates are less inclined to employ from this social group in certain professions.

Notwithstanding the above, evaluation of progress made by the sector suggests that the sector has a workforce of 160,000 employees the majority (85%) of which are employed by the four major banks (Banking Sector Skills Plan, 2016). Most of these (61%) are located in South Africa’s economic hubs in Gauteng province, Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal. The sector seems to be shifting gender norms, as women make up nearly 61% of the workforce while men make up 39%. The sector is, however, failing to transform the racial profile in leadership echelons. Persons with disabilities have been included in very small numbers of only 1.2% (1,900). The sector has a relatively young workforce with only 2% of employees being 56 years of age and above. According to the sector skills plan (2014), this age profile impedes the pace of transformation. Changing the workforce diversity requires forward thinking. By forward thinking I am referring to the creation of a diverse pipeline, investing meaningfully in the development there in order to create bench strength for promotion and role expansion when opportunities arise. There was no evidence in reviewed

documents of how the sector collectively prepares the pipeline. I then proceeded to analyse organisation A's documents.

6.3.1 Document analysis of organisation A

Organisation A has a national and regional footprint into Africa. I collected data at the headquarters of organisation A. The headquarters are situated in the richest square mile in Africa, Sandton. Stretching only 133.84 hectares, this location is home to 15,300 dollar millionaires and this is 65% of nearly 23,400 dollar millionaires living in Johannesburg (City Press, 2013; WealthInsight, 2013). Each of these dollar millionaires has an investment interest, investable assets and liquid assets worth R 9.6 million or more excluding the value of their homes. This location also hosts the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, which had a market capitalisation of \$ 1,007 billion in 2013. Black South Africans have a mere 4% direct ownership on JSE. Organisation A's location thus embodies the adjacentness of inequality in South Africa, as Alexandra township is barely 6 kilometres away from this wealth, luxury and opulence. Alexandra is home to an estimated half a million black Africans who live under dehumanising conditions. Abject poverty, rodent infestation, high unemployment and crime rates are some of the daily realities confronting residents of Alexandra. The pictures below show this contrast.

Image 1: The Disparity of Wealth in Sandton and Surroundings



Left: Alexandra township (Stock Photos), Right: Sandton (Skyscraper.com)

Organisation A employs in excess of 29,000 workers. The majority of the workforce is women. However, women predominantly occupy the lower echelons while the men occupy nearly 70% of leadership roles despite being a minority in the total workforce. In fact black women make up 7% and 15% of top and senior management roles respectively while making up 58% of skilled workers and other lower levels. The organisation has surpassed the 2% national disability target with this social group making up nearly 4% of the workforce.

6.3.2 Framing diversity and transformation

The analysis of the organisation's transformation philosophy suggests that the organisation is committed to social and organisational justice. The analysed organisational documents chronologically articulate the history of colonialism, apartheid and post-apartheid social restructuring discourses. The documents explicitly call out colonial and apartheid regimes as having been oppressive and dehumanising discourses and further confirm the need for the organisation and the individuals to engage critically on issues of redress and equality. "South Africa has an enormous legacy of dispossession, inequality, and oppression to overcome. The arrival of Europeans in 1600s was to change the course of South Africa's history and

development”. The document also acknowledges the lack of human dignity experienced by Africans as the direct result of the policy of white supremacy.

The document also recognises anti-oppression movements and momentous events which show the power of the oppressive regimes and the power of the people. These include the Women’s March of 1956, events such as the treason trial, the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 and the Rivonia trial. It further acknowledges transformation as requiring deep change of hearts and minds beyond legislation, and also argues for targeted interventions that will also address structural oppression and inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa. “The struggle continues. I can transform.” The redress of these injustices and the drive towards non-racial equality has to look towards an equitable distribution of opportunity and resources across all race groups in relation to their demographic representation.

The document also acknowledges the persistence of white privilege in the post-apartheid dispensation and the corresponding white denialism. “White privilege persists... while our first democratic election in 1994 brought an end to white supremacy in South Africa; we must be mindful that white privilege still exists...”

The organisation sees instruments such as Employment Equity and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) and the sector charter codes as being concerned with restorative justice rather than punitive. The documents further deal with the importance of dealing with unconscious bias. The organisation has also developed successive Employment Equity plans containing commitments towards employment, development and career progression of black people, women and persons with disabilities.

6.3.3 Transformation manager’s social constructions

The transformation manager in this corporation identifies herself as a black African woman. She finds the transformation role exciting and challenging and a job that

requires a strong support system. She has done transformation work in both the public and private sector. In her view the private sector including organisation A is not ready to transform: Key themes that emerged from this interview include compliance-driven reforms, rejection of Africans and denial of psychosocial resources, English proficiency and white merit, depoliticised diversity, medicalised-hyper-individualised disability, black women to black women prejudice, reproduced gender binaries, and invisibilised queer identities.

6.3.3.1 Compliance driven transformation efforts

She sees transformation efforts within this corporation as being externally focused in that it is a mere public relations exercise. She feels that the organisation wants to be seen to be complying with the requirements of the BBBEE Codes: "...one thing I've learnt in terms of transformation, the organisation just wants to comply with the BEE codes".

In her experience this and other corporates prefer to focus on complying with BBBEE codes as the criteria therein are less stringent than that of Employment Equity law. She states that the BBBEE Codes view non-white employees as a homogenous "black" group. They do not consider the degree to which Africans, Indians and Coloureds are represented relative to their economically-active population. Companies receive good scores for employing any of these black groups in managerial roles. This phenomenon, according to this participant, results in some social groups such as Indians being overrepresented in certain occupations and levels compared to Africans, for instance, who remain excluded from leadership roles especially women:

You'd find that within the generic black group, majority of the people were Indians. Indians exceeded the EAP. They (the company) will score high on Employment Equity on the BBBEE Codes but when you break it

(representation) down you'll find that there are very fewer Africans and very few Coloureds while the Indians have exceeded the EAP. Despite this the company will still be setting targets for Indians even when they've exceeded the EAP... and the Africans and Coloureds will be low because basically what we're doing now is just chasing the BEE score card as long as we're going to get our ten points on employment in terms of the BEE codes.

In her view BBEE codes are not capable of producing the desired transformation: "... BEE does not give real meaningful transformation that we want to see and achieve because now we are chasing the score card instead of (focusing on) how we want to transform the lives of our employees".

6.3.3.2 Rejected Africans and denial of psychological resources

She further singles out lack of mentorship particularly for young black women as one of the key challenges. She states that young black women graduates lack fellow black people who will mentor and coach them on organisational politics and the importance of behaving in a particular manner in corporations in order to succeed:

I was able to make an impact in that woman's life ...especially young graduates. I told her this is how you will be perceived, this how you'll be able to play organizational politics. You need to also be able to share with them the dynamics of the organization. To advise them that, you ... can be a good girl (you know), do everything right but if you don't know organizational politics at the end of the day you won't go anywhere.

She finds this phenomenon quite prevalent in this sector and that the excuse advanced frequently is absence of suitably qualified Africans in the finance and accounting field. She says this is no longer the case as more black Africans have graduated in the field while some are still undergoing training in Universities. She

believes that this is due to prejudicial attitudes towards Africans. She states that financial services organisations recruit mainly from previously white only Universities: “When recruiting for finance positions, we go to universities that are traditionally white institutions”.

She confirms the findings of a study commissioned by the Minister of Higher Education (Nzimande, 2012) which found corporate reluctance to employ graduates from former black only Universities: “ ... but those who come from the University of Limpopo who have a BA or who have a BCom or even a masters in accounting, when they come this side because of the heavy accent and Then they say we did not employ them because language is a barrier”.

6.3.3.3 English proficiency and white merit

The language barrier refers to fluency in English. The participant finds that the language issue is a common tool used in the politics of decision making on who to include and/or exclude under the guise of competence. She states that a small mistake such as leaving out a comma or having a comma in a wrong place can lead to your presentation being rejected. She says that substance becomes less important. Thus competence and acceptance becomes hugely dependent on one’s English command.

Blacks, according to the participant, have to work ten times harder than their white counterparts to prove their worth and competence. She states that it remains common practice to treat black subjects differently. These employees are always made to feel inferior and inadequate. Consequently, they tend to quit and return after a year or two citing leadership style and organisational culture as the problem:

... in the corporate environment you’ll find that you have to work ten times harder than the other team members (you know) because you are made to feel inadequate. You are made to feel that your work it’s not good enough.

But even instructions sometimes are not given clearly and you say (you know) what? I can go work somewhere else if here a person gives half an instruction and expects me to do the whole job and when I come back they say but this isn't what I gave you, this is not wanted. So as a person one says (you know what) had the person told me this is what they wanted from the onset, I would have done it completely. You know those (kind of) dynamics.

The participant states that black people do not divulge the real reasons for leaving the organisation. They simply go through the motions and tell human resource practitioners the generic reasons. She states that due to the transactional nature of human resource practice, which is more tick-box oriented, HR practitioners going through the motions of an exit interview:

HR, (they) are very transactional. They'll do an exit interview but the real exit interview where a person will be able to talk openly happens outside this process. They (resigning employee) will just tick the box and not tell you the real reason why they are leaving. They'll just say they are leaving for greener pastures or for better career prospects. But in reality they're not leaving because of that. They are leaving because they know they are not going to get promotions and chances for growth.

6.3.3.4 Diversity incompetent managers and depoliticised diversity

The participant also feels that managers in the corporation are ill equipped to deal with diversity: "I think in most instances, managers don't know how to deal with a diverse group of people, that's a challenge".

She finds this corporation in particular to be dismissive of real transformation issues that need to be tackled. She finds that such issues are always silenced. Softer approaches are preferred even if they add no value:

... for instance my manager... he told me off the record, you are too political because there I was going to present at a women's day conference. Then the moment I mentioned Beijing... he said you're too political, put it nicely. Then in the next forum I didn't even mention Beijing at all... I feel sometimes we're too apologetic about transformation.

This notion of being too apologetic about transformation is driven primarily by corporate preference of decontextualised-compliance driven transformation:

... you know it's important [to] be able to take people through the history of woman's day and happened and everything but if you are told, you know it's those kind of things... before I know I can do transformation by just being focused on compliance but also you need to be able to educate people to say from a social perspective this is what has happened in terms of transformation.

She states that Women's Day celebrations and women empowerment awards have been reduced to mere public relations exercise with no real substance:

You just have to understand the basics of what you're talking about when you're talking about woman empowerment or a woman's forum. For me I feel personally that we have moved from real issues, especially for woman empowerment, it's purely now a PR exercise. Hence everybody now sends us invites to attend this conference, these branding things, what for me sometimes I feel having this woman's kind of thing that money we could have used to allocate bursaries to women, to educate woman in there to say even if they don't do so well we're not going to penalize them and say pay the money instead of spending R450 000 on hmm venue and food, for me those are, for me that's real transformation.

6.3.3.5 Medicalised and hyper-individualised disability

Turning to the diversity strategy the company was showcased for, the participant indicated that they have done some good work in improving employment prospects of persons with disabilities and in encouraging disclosures and engendering an organisational culture that values this difference:

We focused on employees with disabilities. We had a huge employee declaration drive. So we said to employees declare your disability status. After you've declared on our online system we move to start conversations between you and your manager or HR to see how or what kind of reasonable accommodation measures we can put in place for you. Most employees came forward they said 'I have this disability, some of my disability doesn't need reasonable accommodation but this is what I want the organization to know.' We have an internet set where employees can declare confidentially.

The organisation leverages technology to make the disclosure process private and confidential. There's an option on the online platform for the employee to elect whether the manager or HR department can be informed of the disclosure:

If you don't want them to know it's still fine. But HR will note to say we have an employee that declared. We also have hmm a forum of persons with disabilities. We are focusing on universal access. We need to create universal access for employees with disability. We should manage these issues on a day to basis. It should not only be a December thing when we commemorate the day and the Disability Month.

The organisation uses the health calendar to drive targeted initiatives and educational campaigns that tackle different disability-related matters:

We say this month its mental wellness we're going to communicate with employees about depression amongst others... so we are really trying to

make sure that we don't focus on declaration drives but also focus on having meaningful programs that will help our employees.

The company has mainstreamed disability focus into the recruitment process and graduate recruitment programmes. They also monitor the number of applicants and declines. They follow up on the reasons for declines and review the assessment instruments for bias:

We've called the guys that are doing recruitment graduate programs and asked how many persons with disabilities have you recruited into the graduate programs, uhh how many have applied and how many did not make it through and why... seven of them who applied did not make it and we can see that clearly there is something wrong with the assessments. We need to make the assessments uhm be able to accommodate their needs.

The participant indicated that they have also built inclusion of persons with disabilities even within the recruitment processes. Though the profile has increased, the participant notes that race intersects with disability to determine who is fit to lead organisations:

It is {disability representation} across all levels {of occupations} but if you look at the higher levels, it is still {your} whites. There are very few Africans with disabilities in middle and senior management.

The participant notes that the handful of black persons with disabilities who manage to climb the corporate ladder into the management echelons, do not stay. They leave to other organisations: "... those (blacks) that are in managerial roles, they don't even stay in most organizations because they can go to any other employer".

According to the participant, it remains a huge challenge to get Africans, Indians and coloureds people with disabilities into middle and senior management roles. The

participant also finds stereotypes about disability as a major barrier even amongst HR practitioners. She also finds a conflict between HR process which require a medical doctor's confirmation of disability once someone declares a disability and the human rights model which seeks to protect the dignity of the individual:

... sometimes our HR person is not so equipped to deal with employees with disabilities. You declare your disability status and they just take your form and file it. They wouldn't know what to do. Only when problems pop up then they come to you to say you have asked for reasonable accommodation but go tell your doctor we need more information so that we can make reasonable accommodation... and my argument has always been that from a human rights model we don't have to get medical certificates because if you've done that self-declaration.

In the participant's view, the requirement for a medical confirmation perpetuates stereotypes and infringes on the individual's dignity and confidentiality: "... some disabilities are visible and some are not. A person will come to tell you that they have depression and the doctor has to write such on the medical certificate. Mental illnesses attract stigma...".

The participant finds that managers are often inflexible and harsh towards persons with disabilities. However, white employees with disabilities still receive preferential treatment in relation to black employees:

Managers are sometimes very harsh on employees with disabilities. They put pressure on these employees. They have very high expectations on them. This also depends on the race of the employee with a disability... If it's an employee who is white, the managers will be very accommodating. But if it's a black person it's different. If it's a white person they'll understand him and accommodate him and everybody will understand....

6.3.3.6 Black woman to black woman prejudice

In addition to patriarchal norms, the participant narrates that there are also women-to-women prejudicial attitudes at work even amongst those with disabilities. She adds that women on women issues are becoming more of a problem than men vs. woman dynamics at work. She states that based on her personal experiences it is much better to be led by a black man than a black woman. She becomes a little agitated as she continues to explain "... let me tell you my situation, I cannot, I cannot be managed by a black woman. I prefer to be managed by a black man myself. We've got issues... They become personal. Where I have been managed by a black woman, I don't last".

Probing further with intent of understanding how this phenomenon manifests, the participant states that black women managers tend to be undermining, treat subordinate black women like kids, and delegate their own responsibilities to subordinates and take the praise for such work without giving any credit:

... she treats you like a child. There'll be things that she wants you to do and you that some of the things you should not be doing because some of the things it's her responsibility and everything, she'd want to delegate everything to you, do everything, her work for her, that's my personal experience and she'll go and take the glory. I have so many things to say. I'd rather be managed by any African male but any African female becomes a problem.

Notwithstanding this, the participant acknowledges that there are great black women managers who have an empowering leadership style with transparency and trust.

6.3.3.7 Invisibilised queer identities and reproduced gender binaries

Asked how the organisation deals with issues of LGBTI diversity in the workforce, the participant indicated that this has not been a key area of focus for them. However, they

deal with these issues via the sexual harassment policy. She emphasised that the organisation is aware of their existence within the workforce: “We are aware of them, we’re to say, we even for instance when we sexual harassment we also tell them to say they can be same sex as sexual harassment, don’t assume that a male can’t sexually harass another male, so we are aware”.

Though the organisation does not focus on this intersection of difference within the race, gender and ability intersection, the participant states that they remain sensitive to LGBTI issues: “We don’t (focus on them) but at the very same time we’re very sensitive not to offend the LGBT community. You know we’re very mindful of them”.

The participant swiftly shifts focus to feminist issues. She argues that the corporates have appetite for feel-good public relations type of gender empowerment initiatives. She thinks that this is a short coming that is also held intact by black male transformation managers. In her view, gender empowerment must be grounded in feminist thinking and struggle:

I think in most corporates, uhm feminism is not recognized. Woman empowerment, gender equality Beijing kind of thing, is still regarded as an ANC women’s league kind of thing. Gender should be integrated in all things so but in corporate when you talk about woman empowerment we don’t talk about gender mainstreaming onto an organization.

The participant affirms her stance by offering a sharp critique of corporate gender empowerment which she says is often driven by the desire to receive awards.

I know that now there is a gender mainstreaming awards and I look at them, ‘what are they doing, what is it about and how do you measure gender mainstream and everything.

She argues that current forms of gender empowerment initiatives have less impact on real women issues in the workplace. She states that when one challenges the dominant discourse, one is labelled as political and radical.

These corporates don't care about issues that are going to impact on the lives woman. When you challenge them they are being political; it's too radical.

6.3.4 Focus group

The focus group comprised seven individuals within the corporate and investment department within the bank. Participants' ages ranged between 23 and 42 years. Four participants were African, one Indian and two were white. The majority of the participants worked in the human resource division within the corporate and investment department, one worked in the office of the executive, one was a consultant while one was an intern. Key themes that emerged during this focus group include complexities and contestations of racial identity in a transitioning South Africa, embraced and rejected rainbowism, reforms and white displacement, and colour blindness.

6.3.4.1 The complexities and contestations of racial identity in South Africa

As a way of introduction, the researcher asked participants to identify themselves. While participants stated their names, surnames and job roles, however, they had different views about their racial identity. The racial categories in particular were rejected by some participants, particularly white and Indians, while Africans largely embraced their racial identity. An Indian woman (aged 35), for instance disliked being identified as Indian. She believed that race as an identity category boxes human subjects leading to people limiting their self-identity to these boxes. She also refused to identify with any gender category. Instead, she preferred to be identified as a South African. Similarly, a white

male aged 42 rejected being categorised into any racial group. He is a contractor within the bank. His contract role within the bank has been in force for the past eight years. He argued that he has no racial or religious affiliation. He is simply “trying to get along in South Africa which is changing and... this sometimes proves to be difficult”, he concluded. Another participant who is a white woman on a graduate recruitment programme also rejected being classified into any racial category. She preferred to be identified as just a young woman.

Contrarily, two black African participants preferred and owned their racial identity. The female (early 30s) was in a senior role within a sub-division of the Bank. She emphatically identified herself as a black African woman, a mother and a wife. Likewise, the male participant (early 30s) identified himself as an African male. He preferred to be identified as a black African male. He stated that he is aligned with the Afrocentric type of principle and Christian fundamentalism.

These introductions showed a diversity of thought about identity, diversity and self-categorisation. Race seemed to trigger discomfort for Indian and white participants. These participants opted for colour blindness. These narratives of self-identification shed some insight into how different employees perceive diversity within the organisation. As a result, I proceeded to ask the participants to share their personal experiences of diversity and transformation within this work space.

6.3.4.2 Personal experiences of diversity – embraced and rejected rainbowism

Interestingly, Indian and white participants regarded the organisation as a happy space and as characterised by diversity, unity and multiculturalism. These participants praised the company for its transformation efforts and what they regarded as a transformed organisation: “... we really are a rainbow nation. We are what you see on the floor; you get all sorts. The bank has really done a good job of making sure that when they employ people the numbers accurately reflect demographics of South Africa”.

These participants argued that the organisation was historically an enclave of white males. However, they viewed this as a phenomenon of the past. The black African participants' opinions of diversity within the organisation differed from those of their white and Indian counterparts. These participants regarded the organisation's leadership echelons as a white male enclave and further argued that the lower levels of occupation are a black enclave. This racialised division of labour was articulated by African participants as indicative of the work of transformation the bank still needed to do to bring about real diversity:

You know what; I tend to disagree... I really don't think the pendulum did swing that drastically because I've been sitting on Employment Equity forums for the past two years now. What we are seeing is that at top management there hasn't been much of a transformation. Where you've seen new entrants is at a junior level. Those bottom levels have become predominantly black... you know. So yes there is diversity on the floor because you've got young graduates, you've got young guys coming in at very administrative levels, junior levels that are of the colour; but if you look at your 'S Scores', you look at your main cause, you still see predominantly white males.

The Indian female participant offers a counter-narrative, arguing that the upper echelons constitute small numbers in relation to the total workforce. This justification reproduces the narrative of corporates as creators of jobs which the majority ought to be grateful for and therefore there's no need to interrogate the enclaves of power within the organisational structure. This justification performs the work of invisibilising the unequal power relations between "followed" decision makers and "followers" in the workforce who have to comply with such decisions.

The African female participant counters the above justification and asked some pointed questions regarding the glass ceiling effect experienced by these majority workers in the lower levels who are primarily black:

So I think I'm querying what roles these majority are getting within corporate South Africa. So if you are pushing them in, how come they are not filtering through to the top? Why are we still seeing the top not transformed? So yes the bulk is sitting there, so what is being done to get them to be represented at the top? So for me I don't think the pendulum has swung, I don't see that and I know for the past few years we have not been meeting transformation targets at top management.

The white male participant offers an explanation by arguing that while the top management remains white and male, one needs to be cognisant of the wealth of experience required to get to the top. He believed that such as experience cannot be achieved in 22 years. In his view, forcing transformation at that level would lead to the collapse of the bank: "... and if you want the bank to run without collapsing, you don't want to fast track somebody with 5 years of experience into that position because he is black".

Interestingly, the analysis of average work experience of the company's executives ranges between 13 and 22 years. These contestations lead to further divergent views about personal views and experiences of diversity in the Bank, some of which are discussed below.

6.3.4.3 Government reforms, demographic changes and white "displacement"

The white participants suggested that the application of affirmative action in South African workplaces has led to the denial and/or displacement of white people from job opportunities. This narrative plays into the fears and sense of loss of power experienced by white people in a post-apartheid South Africa that is attempting to correct the

inequalities of the past. In this organisation, the white male expressed his compassion for white men who, according to the participant, have become displaced by transformation. He then proceeds to locate himself within this discourse of displaced whiteness:

At one point 21 years ago this (place) was probably all white males. I wonder where those guys are... Have they left for Australia or what exactly happen to them, have they fallen on hard times? I think... it's all good and well to be transformed and to have everybody changed and to change the flavour of your staff. But I think at the end of the day there are probably some people suffering because of it as well.

In his view, affirmative action has brought suffering for white males, thus situating white males as victims of policies that are designed to correct the injustice that were inflicted by a predominantly white male government on majority. He proceeds to situate himself and his fears within this Affirmative Action discourse:

You know it's all good and well for government to be involved and to say right, this is how things are going to change but if I take my own personal circumstances into account, I know that it's probably... I'll never be able to become CEO of (the Bank) because I'm just not the right colour.

He also sees the intersections of race and age as sealing his fate of ever growing within his career role due to what he calls the "... flavour in the Bank". While he had found a degree of comfort in contract work, he views the government crackdown on labour broking as causing further difficulties for white middle-aged men like himself. He thinks that his option is to migrate and explore business opportunities abroad: "... even contracting has become a bit difficult now because people don't want to use labour brokers. So you actually got to start your own business or go overseas".

The white female (23 years) intern also shares this victimhood. She believed that corporates do not give white people opportunities anymore because of Affirmative Action:

... as a grad, cause I've obviously applied at multiple companies and I actually think (the bank) is very diverse. A lot of companies won't even look at you if you are still white; they just reject you based on the EE policy and stuff.

The Indian female participant empathises with the narratives of white colleagues adding that the Bank has gone from one extreme to another. The other extreme in this instance refers to large volumes of black people: "... I agree completely with (mentions name)... I often look around and then question myself: did we forget about balance. We went from one end of the scale right to the other end of the scale. Did we forget about the part where we need to balance things out?"

These participants believe this narrative despite successive Commission for Employment Equity reports discussed in Chapter 1 that prove otherwise. Somewhat cognisant of this reality, the Indian female hastens to invoke the meritocracy argument. She argues that the Bank has transformation targets, however, competence is the big picture. In other words, they will hire a competent person regardless of their colour. Thus, she sees transformation and competence as mutually exclusive, a narrative that presupposes black incompetence and white competence (Canham, 2014):

I understand the purpose of transformation targets. In my experience... although we do drive targets within the bank... we also look very closely at skill sets because at the end of the day there is a broader objective... You know having a diverse workforce, it's also around having the right skill sets in specific positions it does become a challenge... what is one supposed to do when one is a white male or female... and you know, regardless of age and race, if one has a skillset to do a job but... and it might be a perfect candidate for the job but unfortunately we cannot look at you because we have certain targets. But having said that I completely understand the purpose of it. There is always some sort of unfairness that is attached to it.

The African female participant challenges the above narratives by questioning what the company is doing to fast track black people into positions of power. She further argues that there's an absence of a concrete plan and strategy to ensure achievement of this objective and therefore an absence of will to do so:

... what I'm saying; if you listened to what I'm saying, I said what happened in between to get those guys to gain the skill to actually be competent enough to join those guys at the top. So you bringing them here, so are you just keeping them there? Why are we not seeing them filtering in the top?

She adds that the organisation should be representative of the broader South African demographics across all levels: "So if 80% of the majority in South Africa is black African, surely we should be seeing the levels also be representative of what South Africa looks like".

The African male participant adds that the workforce in the bank remains racialised: "... something that requires low level of skill or something that does not require small administrative skills or...so in construction industry it would be someone that pushes the wheel-barrow..., that incumbent will be of African descent. In better jobs, it's the opposite. You don't find a white male pushing a wheel-barrow."

The participant proceeds to imply that the division of labour within the bank mirrors that of other industries in South Africa in which the African is at the bottom of the scale and the white men lead. In his view, the issue of skills deficit is just used as an excuse to legitimise exclusion of blacks in leadership roles:

... in the bank where you find staff within the retail sector, within the frontline of the retail sector you find its mainly black staff, and as you move up this tree where its assumed that there is no skill, you start to find more white male. So we've got issues on both ends I think.

The African participants argue that there is no question of lack of skills amongst black workers. They add that if there was such a skills deficit, it would still be the responsibility of the white top management to address such as prescribed by Skills Development Act of 1998 through structured skills development initiatives: “I don’t think there is no skill in the market, and if there are no skills you need to develop them rather than simply say we are going to shift something 20 years down the line because you can’t do a maths some or something”.

These participants conclude that the skills debate is the shifting of the goal posts which serves to preserve decision-making authority and control in the hands of a white male minority. They also indicate that the board is transformed and exerts pressure on the executive leadership to transform the workforce:

Essentially your top structure is important because that’s the people who drive the vision of the business, that’s the people who drive. For instance our board is quite a transformed board and the board is actually the one putting pressure on the CEO saying you not transforming enough, you not getting top level management to where it should be.

The investors, however, are an invisible and more powerful structure that really sets the tone and the direction. Participants suggest that the real transformation tone is set by this invisible structure. This implies that the board may exert pressure in vain if the investors are not interested in transformation. By the same token, investors that are vested in transformation have decision-making authority regarding which banks/institutions to invest in that show greater commitment to reforms: “... because on the back of it we’ve got investors. I mean look (mentions another competing bank) today PIC, which is a government employee funded entity. They want to do deals with a transformed company. So can (this Bank) do those deals?”

The Indian female participant offers a counter-narrative "... it takes time to build a pipeline but it also requires an efficient and a very efficient management strategy".

The Bank has recently put in place a talent development system. The system is envisaged to assist with talent identification through psychometric assessments and individual development plans. The efficacy of talent development systems largely reflects the attitudes of those that are involved in their implementation. Thus, they can either build a diverse pipeline for the purpose of transforming the organisation or produce the same profile as those who are already in power and privileged positions. In this instance, existing systems are working to preserve leadership echelons as an enclave of whiteness, as confirmed by the African female:

... you know it's all well and good to have those kind of programmes but the implementation is where I think we are lacking. We have the executive development programmes. This is where we take aspiring leaders to a course in Harvard or Wits IDP course. They also travel the world and understand what other investors are doing and then come back and implement. I still again saw four male names going through, no Black female, no Indian female just four white males again.

The existing talent identification and development systems also remain delinked with the transformation strategy and objectives.

Participants agree that despite these challenges there is some cultural shift that is occurring within the institution. They seem to suggest that black-and-white relations are improving, however, the younger generation of workers seems to be more of a challenge. They seem to be exhibiting characteristics that do not conform to the norm: "You know! I'm not feeling the black and white thing so much anymore. Its more about young people are too relaxed you know. They are too relaxed and not respectful of... So the moment you say to me, you guys I'm turned off [laughing]".

6.3.4.4 Colour blindness

The Indian female adds that this institution is colour blind despite this being contrary to the transformation philosophy of the organisation. She states that the organisation has very strict policies to deal with unacceptable behaviours and that everybody is treated the same including those with disabilities:

I think this this a very diverse organisation. In a sense that... to (participant 4's) point, we don't see colours, it's not an issue for us concern pass it's a colleague that you work with, a colleague is different from me, if that has an impact on me then there is a process that I follow to deal with it. And if I am disabled for example, there is a process on the system that I can declare it so that my line manager is aware and it's not because my line manager needs to know because he is inquisitive, it's because me declaring it allows my line manager to assess and to add conditional sick leave if I might require it. It helps my line manager to understand my circumstances, so we go through additional sick leave for people who are sick; there is a whole escalation process. If this this is the process we follow, if that then we go the extra mile to do this. And the premises are flexible.

In closure, black male shares his concerns that affirmative action policy in this country may reproduce the same problematic race-based exclusions of the apartheid regime. He thinks that a workforce that reflects the demographics of the country which is majority black may pose a risk. He argues that there is a need for a non-race-based mechanism of doing diversity in organisations. He also acknowledges the importance of transforming and cites that from his experience it has been empowering to mix with people that are different from himself:

You know what worries me is that I see a similar thing happening, not the same, it's not the same at all but I mean if 98% of the country is black then

you going to have 98% of the banks black at one point then that's is actually diverse than it is currently. So there is maybe some risk in that, I totally choose to see it that it is not race based what so ever. But I think that we've all gone through a journey of our own and I think that for me it's empowering to actually meet and to integrate with work....

The participant concludes by challenging the above narrative that transformation is far from taking place. He states that until every job role in the bank regardless of its level is not racialised, transformation is still far from taking place. He argues that competence is still seen as white and that currently by virtue of being born different from whiteness the odds of reaching the top are very minimal:

If I walk into the security guard downstairs, there should be one white or one Indian security guard. And that's when you fully; because in essence what happen in the past is that if somebody did not have a skill they simply get a good job because of their colour but what this Employment Equity is saying, it's not saying you going to get the job simply based on your colour but it's a merit based thing, you got to have the skill, you got to have; but obviously the redress the past we got to try and fast track so we can really create a mixed top and bottom. So what will happen is unfortunately whatever race you coming from or ethnicity not everybody is brilliant, not everybody is Einstein, so... it's not about I come from this family so I end up being CEO. It's based on, am I intelligent, am I really good at what I do then I will get to the top. So that's, I think... that's where we need to get to. There is a lot that needs to be done at the bottom scale but now it really needs to filter through.

6.3.5 Case synthesis

This case epitomises the contradictions of transformation and diversity discourses that are crafted and employed within the neoliberal system. There's an unavoidable dichotomy and tension between the capitalist interest and social justice. The transformation instruments designed within this dichotomy are purportedly meant to reconcile this tension and act as a means to an end. Though their purpose is restorative justice, they neither shift power relations nor address the endemic inequalities. In fact the financial services sector views these transformation instruments as a necessary evil that is costly and administratively burdensome. The industry however seems to be taking on this task because of perceived return on investment rather than a commitment to social justice. The commitments as reflected in the industry charter and subsequently organisational documents are located within the corporate social investment approach with a tinge of the diversity management perspective. There's a degree of realising the need to contribute towards social values linked to the need to comply with legislative requirements. But these commitments won't shift the existential unequal power relations. In fact they will yield greater financial returns for the industry and this is seen as a sweetener to this perceived necessary evil. Critical question on the capability of transformation strategies and commitments made by the sector to tackle inequalities and injustices thus arise.

The organisational documents suggest that organisation A is deeply aware that present inequalities and injustices are a product of colonial and apartheid history and that the legacies of these unjust systems still lives on. Documents suggest that the organisation frames transformation within the social justice perspective. However, these ideals are lost in translation and practice. There's no synergy between the corporate strategy, tactical strategy and implementation level. Consequently, there's very little change that is occurring in this organisation. Leadership echelons remain an enclave of white, heterosexual, able-bodied males. Relatedly, organisational culture is still defined by Eurocentric standards. In fact the transformation manager affirmed that the incongruence between strategy documents and practice is due to lack of (genuine) organisational

commitment to transformation. Employees' narratives support the transformation manager's views. However, employees' social constructions of diversity within the organisation exposed unhealed racial divisions within the labour force. Narratives of diversity were very reflective of different racial group's location in what Butler (1988) called the matrix of domination. White employees invoked colour and gender blindness discourses, a phenomenon that is common amongst privileged social groups. White participants also portrayed a great sense of vulnerability feelings of loss and despair at the unending transformation process. Despite the power still preserved by white males in this organisation, it was interesting to note how Indian participants constantly cushioning white participants from what seemed to be perceived as negative voices of African employees. African employees took up the space to challenge the blindness discourses and the notions of transformation progress within the bank. This phenomenon revealed an interesting dynamic worth investigating further in future research studies.

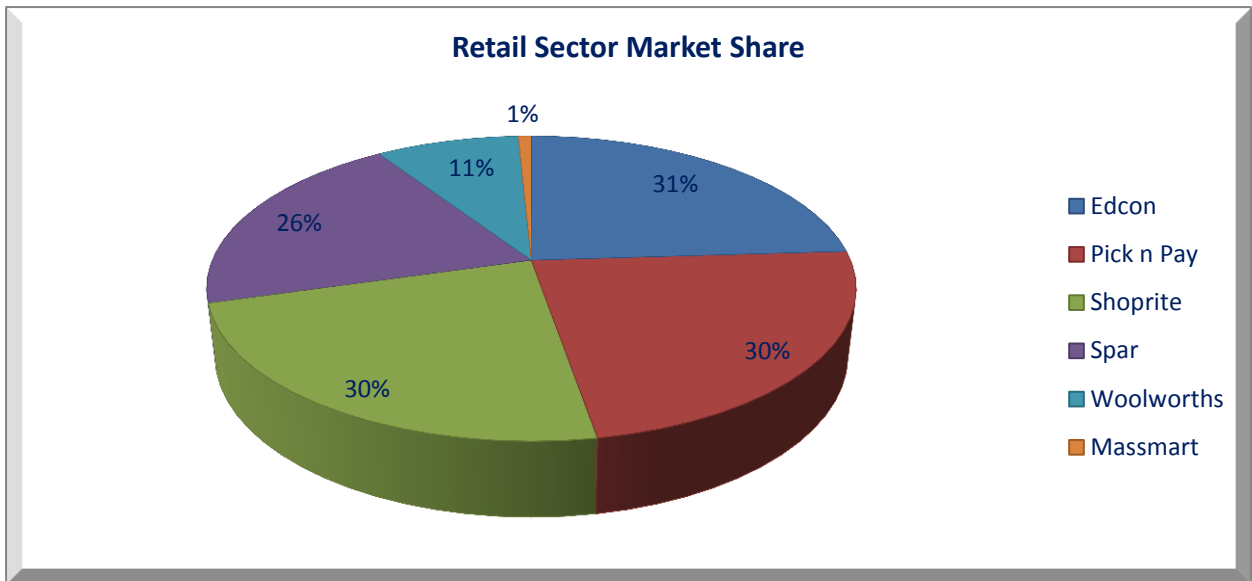
Notwithstanding the above, this organisation was specifically showcased by the Director General of the Labour Department for effective disability strategies. Indeed, the organisation has done well in complying with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act. They have put in place disclosure processes via an online platform, established workplace committees which persons with disabilities form part of, implemented learnerships and improved representation of persons with disabilities to beyond 3%. The organisation, however, does not make the links between dis/ability, race and gender intersections. This leads to the construction of some employees as merely embodying a disability identity without any racial, gender and sexual orientation identity. In fact, while the bank grapples with issues of whiteness and masculinity, issues of sexual orientation are not on the radar. This silo approach leads to incoherence in how the organisation drives diversity and transformation. Talent management and development systems also have this silo approach.

6.4 Case Two – organisation B

Organisation B is one of the largest retailers in the world. This corporation ranks in the top 150 out of the world's 250 giant retailers (Deloitte & Touche, 2013). The revenue of the top 250 global retail giants amounted to \$4.3 trillion in 2012 and the average size of these giants surpassed \$17 billion in 2012. A retail company needs to have revenue of at least \$3.8 billion to be listed in the top 250 giants. This is almost 57 billion South African Rand. Global sales in the retail sector rose to \$22.492 trillion in 2014 and are anticipated to rise to \$28.300 trillion by 2018.

In South Africa, the retail sector is the second largest contributor to the GDP. Retail space covers nearly 18, 418, 073m² (2010) with almost 1443 shopping centres with sales of nearly R 504bn in 2008. This vastly wealthy industry has 7,613 active enterprises which collectively employ some 751,848 persons (W&R SETA, 2016). The majority (78%) of enterprises in this sector fall into the category of small enterprises while the dominant large enterprises make up a mere 7%. However, the dominant six large retailers have the largest market share as depicted in the diagram below:

Diagram 8: Market Share of Dominant Retailers



Edcon has the largest market share with 1,228 stores. Pick 'n Pay (794 shops manned by 49,000 employees) and Shoprite (1,303 corporate and 427 franchise stores employing 95,000 employees) have a similar market share though different in size. Spar (800 stores), Woolworths (295 stores and 145 franchised, employs nearly 23,304 employees), and Massmart Holdings (265 stores and employs over 30,000 employees) employ the balance of workers in this sector.

The sector employs nearly 3.2 million – 20% of the country's workforce. About 60% of these are employed permanently while 1 million are informal workers. The staff profile in this sector still epitomises the apartheid hierarchies. Whites account for 35% of all managerial jobs and majority of professional positions. Coloured and Indian employees occupy most of the services jobs (72%), clerical support (38%) and elementary (33%). Elementary positions are held primarily by Africans.

6.4.1 Document analysis of organisation B

Organisation B is one of the largest corporations within the wholesale and retail sector. The organisation has a total asset value of \$11.19 billion and employs in

excess of 53,000 employees. The Corporation's 2015 BBBEE certificate indicates that blacks own 12% of the company's shares and 88% of the corporation's shares are held in white hands. Nearly 49% of the company's shares are held by a single family.

Organisation B has developed a histogram showing some significant milestones since the formation of its "empire". Apart from the key historical events, I could not find a firm organisational position on issues of broader social transformation and the commitment to this cause. Nonetheless the organisational documents state that this "empire" was formed on the same year Professor Christian Barnard performed the world's first heart transplant.

The organisation's vision affirms a commitment to creating a "conducive environment in which people can thrive and realise their dreams". The documents further confirm the company's commitment to diversity. Accordingly, the company has put in place a diversity management programme with the aim of "helping employees get to grips with issues around inclusiveness". The company sees diversity as encompassing age, race and gender and as a "competitive advantage". The company documents attribute the organisation's winning of the Department of Labour award to their commitment of building a diverse workforce. The company commits to continue driving diversity in the workforce to mirror the customer and community profile. They intend to achieve this through new appointments, promotions and training and development.

6.4.2 Transformation manager's social construction

The interview took place in the transformation manager's office. He welcomes me and offers me a sit on a round table. His personal assistant offers me coffee. The atmosphere is friendly. The office has quotes on the walls most of which are of a political nature. Following the introductions and I offered congratulatory remarks to the transformation manager for the company's winning of the award. The interview then begins after seeking permission and consent to proceed. Key themes that emerged in this interview

include compliance driven reforms, integration of transformation and diversity into key performance indicators (KPI's), race-gender-disability focused diversity initiatives, non-transforming corporate leadership echelons, disability focused initiatives, navigating the tension between political ideals and business priorities, assimilation and lack of psychological resources for Africans, and a guided revolution (see page 173) that is needed to realise real reforms.

6.4.2.1 Recognised for getting ready to transform

Subsequent to the compliment I offered for being showcased for effective diversity strategies, the participant clarified that the award has been misunderstood by external and internal stakeholders. He explained that the award is no indication of the state of transformation within the company. In his view, the award is an indication that the company has finally begun the process. He regards the company he works for as far from being transformed and being diverse:

In fact to me it tells that the country has a long way to go if people like us win because we certainly do not see ourselves as one of the transformed companies. It is not saying that we have transformed but it is basically acknowledging our efforts in putting things in place that are going to help us to get into a point where we can reach our transformation goal.

The participant explains that the first step the organisation took was to establish the Transformation and Diversity office. The participant was then appointed General Manager for this portfolio. This resulted in the company being compliant with the requirements of employment equity pertaining to appointment of a senior employment equity manager.

6.4.2.2 Navigating being an oppressed change agent

The participant acknowledges the complexities and contradictions associated with managing transformation as a black person in a white corporation. His introduction acknowledges his role as an activist, as a change agent and a member of the subjugated group. He advises of his previous role as a labour representative and therefore someone who is passionate about issues of fairness and justice. He describes his role as demanding ability to hold the courageous conversations about uncomfortable issues of transformation:

I'm the General Manager for the Transformation and Diversity office. I am an activist in it and I'm not afraid to say it. So transformation is not something that I do because I am employed to do... it lives in my heart. Transformation is something that I signed for in the streets. But then again my background also is that of an activist as well, I've grown in the union ranks until I joined management. So I've worked for this company for 27 years and half of it, 14 years was in the unions.

The interviewee sees transformation as a social and a political agenda. He suggests that leading transformation demands deep passion for it rather than being a mere profession. He justifies that the role contends with complex reactions including resistance to change and the transformation manager/office needs to have the courage to push back:

It is a political agenda whether you like it or not, so if you just have Model C [laughing] they just read the book and doesn't have it at heart. That is just a glimpse of resistance then you shy away. You are not going to receive anything. So there has been a lot of hard pushing and putting some little things in place that are making people very uncomfortable, cause it is an uncomfortable subject. You don't have to pretend that people like to hear you talking about it because they don't, you understand.

6.4.2.3 Integrating transformation and diversity into KPI's

The participant advises that the company has included transformation into the key performance indicators for all senior managers. He states that this takes the issue of transformation to the head and hands by creating responsibility and accountability regardless of whether the senior managers genuinely buys into it or not:

Some will pretend that they like it, some will help because they are force to do so because it is within the sphere of their roles to make it happen as well. For instance all general managers in the company have it as their KPIs.

The building of transformation objectives into the KPIs is, however, a recent development within the organisation and it is envisaged that the transformation KPI will be linked to financial incentives: "It's built into their KPIs and it's something that we have just started. There isn't a specific incentive yet but it has been said that it could affect your current incentive such as performance bonuses in the near future. So that's it!"

The participant acknowledges that mainstreaming transformation into the organisation's performance management and rewards system needs to be accompanied by capacity building to assist organisational leaders in dealing with the complexities, ambiguities and discomforts of the transformation process:

It's got to be education, a lot of education need to go into it... It's all training that has to do with diversity coming from this office, so we have diversity problems, diversity management and awareness.

6.4.2.5 Race, gender and disability diversity programmes

According to the participant, the organisation has put in place diversity management and awareness programmes to deal with these multiple diversity problems. The programme

deals with issues of race, gender and disability. It places emphasis on the importance of working together as a collective, respecting others and being conscious of biases. Greater attention thus far has been given to issues of disability inclusion. Most of the work which the company was showcased for relates to the educational posters that were placed on notice boards regarding disability issues. The company has not yet measured the impact or return on investment on these diversity programmes.

... It's difficult to measure. So you are able to see that this region is making progress, so it is therefore working. So you can only measure it by level of transformation in the divisions.

6.4.2.6 Disability focus: coming out for the numbers

Upon probing what the measurement dimensions are, the respondent advised that the organisation measures both the numerical and non-numerical dimensions. These dimensions include the provision of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, retention and the number of employees with disabilities within a particular business area:

... so in our case we have numerical and even non-numerical measures. For instance (we measure) some accommodation strategies, some regional or general managers will be very easy to accommodate people individually so that they are able to retain. So it shows in the numbers. So ultimately it boils down to the number.

The participant argues that the numbers are important as much as the shifting of attitudes and behaviours. In this organisation transformation is not taking place at the same pace across different areas of the business. The regions seem to be progressing at a better rate compared to the head office structure:

It has been quite interesting to see that the regions are transforming the numbers. Maybe it's because they always take it as an instruction from head office. But our corporate divisions have been the most difficult ones.

The participant indicated that they also have attempted to encourage employees to declare the disability:

We've had a campaign in the past two years which is called the disability awareness campaign. Disability awareness campaign was basically about getting employees to declare their disability. So the numbers we report on disability are not correct. We have more disabled people than we actually report on. Why? Because majority of them have not declared.

He states that the campaign entailed printed material. The material provides educational information on definitions of disability, process of declaring the disability, reasonable accommodation as the benefit of declaring. He states that most employees don't read the material. So the Organisation took a stance to stop focus on encouraging voluntary disclosures and rather focus on externally recruiting persons with disabilities: "... we then said we now stopping focusing on this, we've done this, its fine and now we hoping people are made to declare as they come in but now we said our focus is now in the employment, people with disabilities".

He states that the programme and pamphlets they distributed also aimed to change the organisational culture to be more inclusive of persons with disabilities:

... its built with that diversity awareness, there's a section that deals with disability and we speak about disability in terms of what is disability, what is the law on disability, what we need to achieve on disability and also we write about it... these all are efforts to trying to reach employees.

6.4.2.7 Persistent domination of white masculinity in leadership echelons

The participant associates the lack of transformation at head office level to positional power and influence, which historically and presently lie in the hands of white males.

So I think the difficult question has not been asked a lot in the past. So that's why we ended up with top structures looking the way that they currently are.

In his view the organisation has begun to tackle these difficult issues by putting in place a transformation policy and designing an employment equity plan which serves as a strategic document for transformation. They have also established workplace transformation committees:

One of them is policy which did not exist two years ago. Now we have got now an Employment Equity and transformation policy in place' alright. So it is a challenge to make people to adhere to that, in fact firstly gets to know about it and understand it. Secondly, you build some sort of structures which are very important. Transformation structures such as EE forums; so we've got the national EE forum that's looking at the company wide policies, practices and procedures and overall reviews; and then we have regional forums which include a corporate forum which serve as regional forum, so that forum all corporate divisions they sit in that forum. So they are starting to talk transformation and Employment Equity in those forums.

The interviewee explains that the committees consist of multi-level and multi-disciplinary teams including management, organised labour, persons with disabilities, and white men. Additionally, the company has put in place some policies and an educational programme. The educational programme is separated for managers and for employees. Managers undergo a programme called diversity management while employees undergo diversity awareness training:

There is a level meant for people that are managing others, because it is quite a different challenging area when you manage other people. So

you've got to integrate it (diversity) into your management style. Unlike a person who is not managing anyone. You want them to just be aware in the environment and be able to live with others. So we have separated it like that, we have two programmes, those who manage others and those who don't manage others.

Upon further probing on the other dimension of diversity they deal with the participant referred to Employment Equity legislation, he acknowledges race as the critical cause of structural inequalities. He refers to racialised and gendered job roles in which white males dominate the top while non-white employees and women are predominantly in the lower positions:

Okay in the top structures there is no diversity at all, in all aspects. You find that there are more white males as we go up. So that gender and race is the big issue for us in the top structures in the organisation. Then areas such as age and education depend on what you do obviously but yes I'd say the most critical ones are those two, gender and race.

6.4.2.8 Navigating the political aspects of diversity and business priorities

The interviewee states that there are three different approaches that are normally followed within the diversity management programme, namely the political approach, the business approach and the social approach. He is personally interested in the combination of the political and the business approaches:

... Now mina (me) I'm more interested in the business and political.

He motivates that the political approach is grounded in the understanding of history of inequality and the issues of race that remain rampant in the country:

... yes, racism is present. It's not just historical. So the political side then it is to say then look political dispensation that we are in as a country and there is enterprise of businesses. We've got a part to play, you know, in our own environment.

The interviewee makes reference to Professor Jonathan Jansen's expression that through transformation: "... we are trying to tell a story in a way that should not wound and embitter people. So the things that we do shouldn't wound and embitter people as if we are different to the people's history".

He asks if I understand the quote. I responded by asking him to clarify what exactly this contradictory quote means. He responds that: "One must narrate the story of our past in a way (that does not) offend whites and does not to annoy blacks. That's the balance".

I ask the participant how we can achieve this balance. He responds that there needs to be that consciousness about the complexities and the ambiguities involved in nation rebuilding. However, in his narrative he admits that change is not happening. He also acknowledges that the changing customer profile and the questions that may be asked by the diverse customers necessitate the business focusing on diversity. Thus customer retention is the key motivating factor for doing diversity:

... we live in a country that has not healed. In fact it's not about to heal. Things are still the same. That's the political side of looking at it. The business side of looking at it is that the country is obviously changing; the dynamics are changing in the country. Our customer is no longer the customer of the past. Customers are well educated about such matters and they notice these things. Cause everyone would like to see a reflection of themselves being represented on the other side.

Asked which aspects of the customer profile he is referring to and how this profile influences the dimension they cover in the diversity management programme, he

indicates yet another contradiction. This contradiction relates to the acceptance and denial of race as a primary contentious issue in South Africa. Organisations thus find themselves shifting between acknowledging other human differences and being grounded in dealing with the race issue:

So we always say that it's not about race but it is also about race. It is primarily about it (race) in the actual fact but it (race) cannot only be about it because people are diverse in many aspects. Even me and you we look the same but there is a lot of diversity in us. So maybe if we could start and work together in this office you will find that YEERR we cannot stand each other. We can actually kill each other (laughing) for different reasons. So yes there is all the aspects of diversity, we actually look at that.

6.4.2.9 Compliance promotion

The interviewee feels that the Department of Labour's evaluation of diversity programmes within organisations and the associated awards is a good initiative aimed at encouraging organisations that are trying to contribute towards transformation:

Firstly I think it's a good thing that they did to try and encourage and acknowledge companies that are doing something in trying to get there. What they are doing, Canada started doing twenty years ago. I had an opportunity of being in a delegation from this company that visited the Canadian diversity office so we had a meeting with them in Canada in 2001.

He also acknowledges that the focus for the preceding 15 years has been on promoting compliance. He states that it is now time to move on to more substantive issues:

The department should be commended for it; but having said that I'm not putting blame on the department but I just think that it had obviously for the past fifteen years focused on compliance which I think is not a bad thing

because you must get people to understand to do what the law says which is a part we have done quite well since our review now we are really complying. Now I think they need to set themselves into the next stage, pushing companies to transform because we cannot keep talking compliance forever.

He argues that corporations prefer compliance and the department of labour creates an environment that promotes this compliance appetite. He states that corporates do not want to delve into real issues of transformation. They cite investor confidence as the reason for preferring a mild business oriented approach to doing transformation and diversity: “You are always reminded every day that you can’t raise your finger because investors are going to run away [laughing]”.

He states that this is a mere scarecrow because other Governments, backed by China, insist on 80% indigenisation if a multinational corporation intends to develop a business in their country. He states that this courage is lacking in South Africa and the corporates under the investor guise are leveraging it.

6.4.2.10 Assimilation and lack of psychosocial resources for Africans

The interviewee indicates that the corporate culture is exceptionally difficult to live in especially for Africans:

In many ways things are just difficult for us [laughing] especially Africans. In an African’s point of view things have been seriously difficult for us because of the issue of lack of role models. Corporates don't have enough role models of people that look like you [referring to the researcher who is an African male]. So even the one or two that get in there [laughing] it’s so cold because you would sit in a board room with twenty Afrikaans speaking men making Afrikaans jokes and you sitting there like a fool.

He adds that one gains legitimacy in the corporate spaces by allowing oneself to be Europeanised. In his view this flies at the face of liberation and democracy:

... the other problem within the issue of culture is that we have to do everything in a foreign language. You just can't help it [laughing] because all economies are being run in a foreign language but we calling ourselves liberated people. Now that in itself you know you sit there with people that are actually speaking their language and they expect you to understand things at the same level [laughing] and there you are wishing things could be turned around and said in Zulu [laughing] so those are the type of things that happen in the corporate world against the African person.

6.4.2.11 A need for real transformation through a guided revolution

Asked how the transformation within organisations assists in changing these unequal power relations, the interviewee states that there is a need for a guided revolution that will drastically change all facets of life:

Revolution! But a guided revolution. I'm not saying let's use guns but if necessary let's do it [laughing] but revolution means we need to drastically transform every aspect of our lives without begging anyone... using the laws of the country that are revolutionary. at the moment we are such an irritating reformist nation [laughing] that is actually taking us nowhere, I'm angry now because I'm old and dying and I'm leaving my children with the problem that I had. It's irritating!

He concludes that there needs to be an active influencing of the society which will propel organisations to change. He states that organisations have potential to reshape society in more positive ways. He states that this is far from happening because organisations do not want to talk about hard-core issues: "Absolutely even corporate South Africa is

shy of talking about these issues... you will never find this serious discussion in the boardroom so maybe everyone talks about this to their friends outside”.

6.4.3 Focus group

The focus group in this organisation comprised of eleven employees. One of these was an Indian woman, nine Africans, one white woman and one white male. Participants' ages ranged between 25 and 40 years. Five participants worked within the human resources department fulfilling different roles for various divisions of the business, three represented labour and formed part of the transformation committee, and four were interns.

I opened the discussion by thanking the participants for partaking in this process, outlined the purpose of the study and sought their consent to participate and to record the interviews. Following this introduction I asked the participants to introduce themselves and provide an indication of their perceptions in the organisations based on their own experiences.

6.4.3.1 Transforming white male enclaves – ‘the oppressed people’s responsibility’

An Indian female opens the discussion by acknowledging that the retail sector has historically been an enclave of white men. She hastens to state that some pockets within the organisation are critical of this historical phenomenon and she states that she doesn't understand the logic of this critique. She feels that this critique hides the gains made by the organisation in trying to diversify the workforce. She views this critique as a means of absolving the personal responsibility all managers in the organisation have in terms of creating the talent pools in order to close the diversity gap and to shift the mind-set within the organisation. In her view the organisation does not discriminate:

There has to be some development. So our task is to start a talent pool and focus on previously disadvantaged groups to close the gap and change the mind-set. Specialist buyers are white males because they have been in the business for a long time. So it's okay, its fine, we don't discriminate but how do we close that gap and the aim for sustainability?

“It is okay, it is fine” suggests acceptance of what the participant would otherwise regard as unpalatable. It suggests a sense of acceptance of the status quo and the responsibility to shift it while ignoring how this reality sustains unequal power relations and poses limitations to the degree to which those who are not in these positions of authority can shift organisational culture.

6.4.3.2 Degendering work

Two participants (one white and one Indian female) proceed to point out the gains made by the organisation in degendering work. The cashier job was used as an example. This role was previously reserved for women only. Previously the organisation believed that women were good with numbers and possessed better customer skills. The organisation has now begun to employ men in this role. Participants argue that the organisation has realised that men are also good with numbers and customer skills required for the till. This shift is acknowledged by participants as not a smooth process due to some managers who still believe that men are better suited for store room work where they can lift heavy objects:

So in our region we are trying to employ male as cashiers because they are also very good with numbers and the till and stuff. You are just surprised at how many of them actually enjoy being a cashier. But then we get store managers who find that males are better at lifting stuff [laughing] in the store room....

An African female participant interjects to point out that the degendering of work is a huge challenge within her environment. She argues that decision-making positions in her department are still gendered in favour of males: “You still get more males dominating in the store manager positions versus females”. She explains that this phenomenon is fuelled by entrenched notions of caregiving being assigned to women while men are devolved from this responsibility. Men are therefore favoured because they are regarded as capable of working longer hours. She points out that these normative ideas are being challenged and disrupted through employment and pipelining programmes:

I think it comes with the past beliefs that males work longer hours and women have to look after the families after hours and must be there for the kids and all of that. But that barrier has been closed because we now have a pool of females that are being appointed in store manager position.

6.4.3.3 Race and gender intersections

The African female participant proceeds to argue that the gender dynamics in the store environment intersects with race dynamics. The dynamics play out between white men and women of all races. However, black women are constructed as being further subjected to the race dynamic by virtue of being black:

In supply chain where I am, it is very different from the retail side. We are still very challenged in terms of breaking these barriers of white male versus female. Because it is a very high intensity environment where long hours and females don't last, it's a fact. Those that last are females with no family because of the long hours.

The participant proceeds to define these unequal power dynamics by situating them within the traditional organisational culture, which is predominantly white Afrikaans male. This narrative gives insight into the prevailing social relations and the challenges experienced in attempting to transform these traditions:

The culture and supply chain is still very very traditional. They still speak Afrikaans. They are really personalizing it. So if someone comes to the environment with no understanding of that culture, you kind of like feel uncomfortable you know, and they (entrants) get highly excluded and they just don't stay. They (white Afrikaans men) stick to their values... females don't belong. They just feel it's not for me. As a result you will find that people who are mostly in senior positions in supply chain are white females or white males.

6.4.3.4 Employment equity compliance, talent development and fair discrimination

Participants agree with the transformation manager's construction by stating that the changes that are beginning to take place in the organisation are largely due to the increasing demand to comply with Employment Equity legislation. This piece of legislation allows the organisation to analyse representation across racial and gender categories and to set numerical goals accordingly:

I can say that from my side (the change) is triggered by being involved in Employment Equity because it kind of guides us regarding the race aspect and correcting percentage in female and male ratios in different groups.

Participants state that Employment Equity legislation enables them to also analyse the barriers and put in place plans to build the pipeline in order to meet the equity commitments:

... so you've to look at your EE stats and go back to say okay, these are barriers and how do you close those barriers and if you find that there is a loop of identifying, I mean appointing females into the store manager position then that's where you go back and look at your talent pool and to say that these people are actually fit enough to actually fit those positions.

Participants proceed to construct transformation as a long process that requires talent development strategy, which encompasses succession planning and training and development. These talent processes are however framed by one participant (Indian female) as gender-and-race blind. She states that the organisation does not discriminate on the basis of gender or race anymore. The organisation instead appoints persons on the basis of fitness for the job. This narrative brings together meritocracy and blindness discourse as seen in the first case study. An interesting contradiction is that this meritocracy-blindness discourse erases and re-writes the earlier narrative about the organisation's greater focus on women empowerment:

The development of a career path sets how the company progresses... you know. So we don't discriminate anymore between male and female or white and black because... it's about who can do the job, who is the fittest that can do the job based on their development and their growth.

At this stage I argue that there's natural tension between fair discrimination to address existential unequal representation and how this contradicts the idea of not discriminating on grounds of gender or race for positions. Two participants (Indian and white females) respond to state that appointments in this organisation are made purely on merit and not race or gender: "I think we've done quite well in actually navigating that tension... the job is given to whoever is assessed and found competent and signed off to fill the position which can be filled by either a male or female".

6.4.3.5 Diversity management

Participants advise that the organisation has begun to implement a diversity management programme to try and deal with these hard race and gender issues. The programme covers dimension of Employment Equity compliance, race, gender, age, disability and culture.

It was confirmed that white males find discussions about race during the diversity management programmes very uncomfortable. Participants agree that the race discussions are sensitive and have to be navigated with care to ensure buy-in from senior management. It became apparent that while males become fragile, guilty, defensive and offended by race discussions resulting in white males either abandoning, disrupting or becoming passive-aggressive towards the diversity programme:

And you still find people who are a bit sensitive or misunderstand the intention of diversity. They still feel like it is bringing back the past. They misinterpret it. You find that they give excuses all the time. They do not attend because they feel that it's not changing them, it's taking them back. The discomfort comes more around race issue which is predominantly the majority of the content because it gives reference to that. So... yah....

It was quite interesting that participants used phrases such as “people” and “they” to describe the social group that battles to hold conversations about race. I found this avoidance and/or discomfort quite revealing about the revered power and authority of this spoken about group. So I resolved to probe further on who exactly is this group. An African female participant broke the tension by stating that the discomfort is experienced more by senior managers. The analysis of the company's workforce profile shows that senior managers are predominantly white and male. A white female participant agrees with the African female participant:

I sit in those diversity trainings – in both the awareness groups as well as the management groups and I feel that when there are white male managers in those groups they feel very secluded. I know a lot of them outside of the training and they are quite bubbly. They are quite interactive. But as soon as they are put in that position they don't say a word. It is very uncomfortable in that kind of environment.

At first I was inclined to read this discomfort as the “white guilt” about the past and the reverse discrimination narratives, which are common discourses in corporate transformation. This guilt can be useful or become a barrier to real transformation if not dealt with appropriately. In this instance, while white male sensitivity is being navigated cautiously, white men do not return this courtesy. They reject the diversity management programme and yet continue to behave in ways that engender an inconsiderate and exclusivist white male Afrikaans culture at the peril of others. This insensitivity suggests resistance to transformation and rejection of any means that seek to change status quo. The discomfort is rather a strategic performance of power, an assertion of power in non-verbal ways that position this minority group as “untouchables”.

The African female’s narrative confirmed that white Afrikaans men have closed off the working space in the stores department in favour of whiteness, Afrikaans language and masculinity. White women seem to be gaining some degree of legitimacy by virtue of being white and able to communicate in Afrikaans language. These identity similarities serve the function of binding white men and white women. However, white women still have the burden of navigating their femininity in this boy’s club environment. Nonetheless, the common binding identities of whiteness and Afrikaans language equally perform the work of resisting non-conforming “different” others, more specifically blackness, non-Afrikaans speakers and femininity:

... well, from a personal point of view the two (white women) that I'm close to are not as satisfied as their male counter parts are. Women in the department do not stay. They leave. But black women do not stay at all. It becomes very difficult for them, so they end up quitting.

6.4.3.6 Contestations about turnover due to organisational culture

The Indian female participant hastens to moderate the African female's narrative of high mobility amongst black women by arguing that mobility is a common phenomenon these days. She argues that the employer-employee psychological contract in modern times is changing and challenging the traditions of loyalty. She argues that loyalty is being replaced by perceived richness of work experience which one gains through working for different companies and roles.

While this explanation is not necessarily incorrect in terms of global human resource trends, in this instance it is raised to erase or trivialize the personal encounters of women and Black women's own realities of navigating racism, sexism and exclusion on grounds of being non-Afrikaans speakers:

You know, we are now entering a generation where people don't stay in one organisation for 10 or 20 years. They obviously want to grow and build their own career and oneself through understanding different environments. So we get a lot of people that go back into the banking sector, financial sector or the opposition. How does our company compare to another retailer with regards to the colour thing? I don't know. I think that people want to grow so quickly in an organisation and when it doesn't happen then they already itching to put the feelers down there because they hungry for growth and development.

This narrative is common in South Africa's corporate transformation discourse. This narrative is only invoked when black people leave organisations due to their untransforming culture. It shifts the focus away from the real driver of turnover. It places the blame on the very subjects that are rejected and ejected by the exclusivist culture. It is a statement of intent not to transform. This narrative according to Ndzwayiba, Ukpere and Steyn (2016) tends to construct the very victims of marginalisation and exclusion as ungrateful and disloyal to the organisation that developed them. Indeed, this narrative soon emerged from the Indian female participant:

The young generation, we got to obviously have a retention strategy because we invest so much in them, so we need to be ready how we retain them. You know you invest in them then they don't last. We then end up asking ourselves questions like were the benefits not good enough, is it maybe the job satisfaction? What are we doing wrong so there are a lot of factors that we need to be aware of?

The white woman soon interjects to state that there is no single explanation to turnover trends within the company. She offers that in her environment they see higher turnover amongst variable time employees. These are casual workers. An analysis of the organisational workforce diversity shows that these casual workers are predominantly African. These casual workers contend with complexities of apartheid geographical spatial arrangements, high costs of transportation to access casual work and the pittance pay they receive which is swallowed up by transportation costs. The participants' narrative suggests that the promises of western education are bearing no fruits for these Africans as the majority of them hold degrees and diplomas and yet queue up for casual work of packing fruits in the stores:

They don't get enough hours and the money is mostly spent on transport and a lot of them have diplomas and degrees but they end up packing fruits and items on the shelves. So we try and keep them on for like two or three months. You will be surprised at how high the unemployment rate is. Some of them have been sitting at home. I employed a lady about four years ago... she did travel and tourism, she just couldn't find a job; and when she came for interview I told her that it's for a fruit and veg shelf packer and she said you know what I'm desperate, I'll take it. And she has been with us she's still with us training manager so hopefully she will become store manager one day.

The participant, however, does not explain why they do not keep the casual workers beyond three months. I read this as the company's avoidance of responsibility and costs associated with full-time employment. The casual work system is prevalent in the retail sector. The Labour Relations Act stipulates that a person employed longer than three months is regarded as full-time and must therefore be offered salary and benefits that are not less than favourable to the full-time employee. So retailers terminate employee contract just before the three months are up and re-hire the person on a new casual contract again at a later stage.

6.4.3.7 Disability inclusion

Employees also seem to appreciate the work done by the organisation in trying to employ persons with disabilities. The narratives, however, indicate the complexities of complying with legislation, doing genuine work of breaking down barriers that keep this social group out of employment and participant's social positionality as able-bodied persons. First they acknowledge that the company realised that the stores are not disability friendly in terms of structures: "We have actually done quite a bit of work over the last year... as a company I think they started to realise that our stores are not disability friendly so the new stores that have come up they need to bring in ramps, things like that".

They indicate that the company has also managed to create employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and implemented some culture change interventions to shift stereotypes about disability:

Last year we managed to employ 10 disabled people; which is a lot if you think of... It is difficult because our environment is harsh, retail is harsh. There is nothing easy about working; even a fully able person finds it difficult to work in retail. It's manual labour, when you think about the packing, the... So if your body is not a hundred percent there and it is very

hard to retain a person with a disability at the store level as well. But I think we've done quite well last year, we hoping to continue, find people with disability people in our region is hard because many disable people want to be in the office hours and in our region we don't offer that in our region.

The above narrative also indicates some problems latent in the description of work and capability by able-bodied people on behalf of those that are constructed as less capable. In this narrative, persons with disabilities are seen as a homogenous group that shares weak bodies in relation to strong able-bodied persons who are seen as sometimes even having difficulties in dealing with the demanding tasks of this environment. This dynamic has very little to do with work itself. It has more to do with the politics of power and the body. This attitude is further affirmed by the paternalistic views possessed by some participants that construct persons with disabilities as childlike and as fragile beings that need able-bodied people's help:

So there are minimal areas where we can appoint them. Even when we do find people with disability sometimes when you talk to them they are actually chilled. Sometimes it's almost like you owe them something. I'm not trying to be rude. We've appointed one service provider to focus on helping people with disabilities. So they will actually train them and get them ready for work in whatever positions available.

While provision of training opportunities is central to access jobs in the market, efforts are generally made to ensure alignment between the training and incumbent's job interest and/or preferences. The above narrative suggests that the organisation will employ persons with disabilities in whatever areas positions are available. This once more plays into this childlike construction of disability and positions this social group as incapable of making own career decisions. This attitude continues to permeate the conversation in which the Indian female states that "her guys" don't want to disclose even though she has seen some of them with half fingers. By the same token she

acknowledges that the cutting of the finger is a tradition within some Xhosa traditions. In fact she implies that the cutting of the finger “ingqithi” is a Xhosa tradition. This is indeed an exposure of a lack of awareness of this practice and the tradition. However she does not comprehend the offensiveness of implying that a tradition or cultural ritual is a disability: “My guys don’t want to disclose. There are so many people I know; I think it’s a culture thing. And I say please just declare it. I think it’s just that concept ‘I’m not disabled’, it’s a traditional thing that happened... in Xhosa they do that”.

6.4.4 Case synthesis

The preceding case study shows that organisation B is primarily owned by a white family and investors and adopts a philanthropic approach to issues of transformation and diversity. As a profit-oriented organisation, the organisation uses Employment Equity legislation as a compliance tool and the framework for driving diversity. While the Corporation has been showcased for having effective strategies in place, the transformation manager’s social constructions suggests that this is merely for showing compliance with legislation rather than as an indication of being transformed or transforming. In fact, this transformation manager openly suggests that this organisation is far from valuing diversity and transformation.

Apart from policies and numerical goals, the organisation has put in place a diversity management programme that is rejected by white senior leaders when it comes to issues of race as the resurrection of history. Yet, the same managers continue to behave in ways that belittle and exclude non-white and non-Afrikaans speakers. Employees’ social constructions suggest that the strategies employed in this organisation are not effective. They have not begun to shift unequal power relations and inequality regimes.

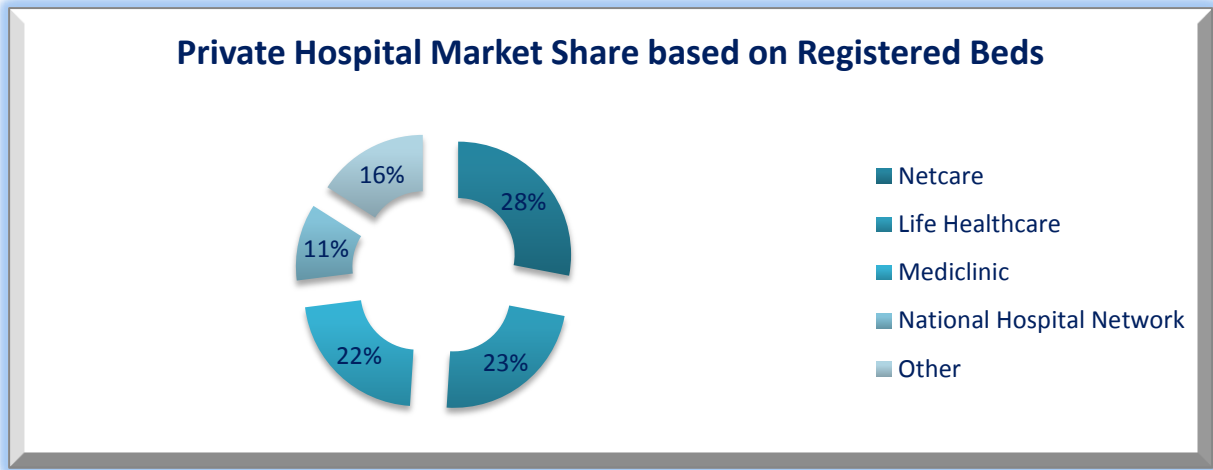
6.5 Case Three – situating organisation C

Organisation C operates within the private healthcare and pharmaceuticals sector. South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world in terms access to quality

healthcare. The private healthcare system consumes over 50% of the country's healthcare spending (Centre for Health Policy, 1998). For instance in 2014 the country spent R 293 billion on healthcare (Health and Welfare SETA, 2015). Almost 52% of this healthcare expenditure was attributable to the private sector (Health and Welfare SETA, 2015) even though this sector services the healthcare needs of only 8.5 million people who have medical insurance compared to 43 million citizens without medical insurance who therefore rely on the public health system. Inequalities within the country's healthcare system reflect the asymmetries of capitalist system. For instance the profit-oriented private healthcare sector has world-class infrastructure with 215 private hospitals that cater for the 8.5 million middle class South Africans (Deloitte, 2015). Contrarily, the overburdened public healthcare sector has just over 400 hospitals that service the healthcare needs of 43 million people (Deloitte, 2015). Thus, private healthcare is accessed by 16.3% of the population at a cost of 4.2% of the country's gross domestic product.

South Africa's private healthcare sector has nearly 215 private providers and this sector is dominated by three private hospital groups. The three mega private hospital groups own 73% of private sector beds and 30% of total hospital beds in the country (Econex, 2014) as illustrated below.

Diagram 9: Private Hospital Market Share Based on Registered Beds



South Africa has a huge shortage of healthcare professionals with 77.6 medical doctors looking after 100,000 patients (the average is 150:100,000) and 403 nurses looking after 100.000 lives (Mediclinic, 2016). However, the dominant private sector healthcare corporations utilise services of 14,000 (contracted) medical doctors who look after the 8.5 million insured patients, compared to the public sector which has a total of 16 000 medical doctors looking after 43 million lives.

6.5.1 Organisational conceptualisation of diversity

Organisation C has placed transformation and organisational diversity as one of its strategic pillars. By so doing the organisation has repositioned the transformation agenda as a boardroom phenomenon. Similar to organisations B and A, organisation C has also mainstreamed issues of diversity into the balanced scorecard linked to executive’s performance and financial rewards. The objectives, which appear to be solely numeric, are cascaded down to all levels of the organisation using the chain of command. The organisation has set in place governance structures that monitor progress at various levels.

While the documents suggest that the organisation understands injustices that need to be redressed, inequality and marginalisation are seen as legacies of the past.

Leadership commitment to transformation is thus framed within this imperative of correcting the past:

We, the leadership recognise the injustices of the past, and honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land.

Documents suggest that the organisation uses the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment legislative framework as the tool for redressing these injustices. The documents also state that the organisation intends to promote equity in the workforce, assist employees in realising their potential and to contribute towards upliftment of the societies the organisation serves. These commitments fall under what the organisation terms “accelerating transformation and normalisation”. Consequently, the degree to which this organisation sees itself as transformed is based on the BBBEE rating.

Organisational documents show that this organisation is sustained by nearly 80% women, the majority of which are black. However, the top executive structure is predominantly white and male. The senior management level is predominantly white women while the middle management level is also 70% white. Conversely, all lower levels are dominated by black women. Nonetheless, this organisation has received numerous accolades for the work they do in promoting organisational diversity.

6.5.2 Leadership’s social constructions of diversity

While I recognised that organisations across South Africa probably battle the same challenges, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) provinces provide some unique dynamics and challenges. These provinces do not only contend with white economic domination but they also struggle to deal with ethnic and tribal dynamics between Indian people, Zulus and Xhosas in KZN; and between Coloured and Xhosa speaking people in the Western Cape. My interest was to see how organisations navigate this complexity and how they adapt organisational diversity strategies to respond to these complexities, contradictions and ambiguities.

Interviews with transformation managers in both KZN and Western Cape were attended by hospital general managers as well. This resulted in a total of 4 managers being interviewed. Hospital general managers are the most senior persons in the private hospital setting. The KZN and Western Cape data was similar in many respects. I resolved to only include the KZN data as it proved richer than the Western Cape's. So in KZN the transformation manager, who also fulfilled the human resource management role, was an Indian female while the general manager was a white male. As I walked into this establishment I was struck by the contrast of racial-ethnic division of labour. The security guards were African and Zulu-speaking men and women, the cleaner was an African woman, professionally uniformed nursing staff were chiefly Indian and the management office was primarily white and Indian. I wondered for a second if KwaZulu-Natal was the appropriate name for this province. KwaZulu directly translates to the place of the Zulus. However, the workforce profile I observed in this organisation suggests that Zulus are at the door of the occupational hierarchy while white and Indian people are predominantly in the core competency and leadership echelons.

6.5.2.1 Employment equity compliance

Leadership in this establishment seemed to confine the issue of diversity to employment equity compliance criteria. This phenomenon was the same in KZN and the Western Cape. In both instances, leadership argued that their hospitals have put in place workplace transformation committees. The committees are a consultative structure that deliberates and ratifies the setting of numerical goals, and sign off on the employment equity plans. Though expressed differently, leadership advised that they have developed employment equity plans. The plans comprise numerical and non-numerical goals.

6.5.2.2 Geospatial arrangements

In KZN, management advised that their establishment is nested by a predominantly Indian population. This was offered as justification for the dominance of the Indian

population group in the workforce despite this population constituting almost 11% of the population. Africans, which would be predominantly Zulu speaking, constitute 81% of the population in this province, yet they are barely visible in this organisation. Whites make up 7% of the population in this province, yet they constitute 100% of senior managers and nearly 50% of middle management roles. Africans constitute 4% of middle managers while Indians make up 35%. Management attribute this disparity to the geo-spatial arrangement of the apartheid regime. However, they regard this issue as also being tied to convenience.

We have a huge challenge with geographical placements in this area. There's an issue of distance and convenience. Patients and staff come from nearby communities. This (phenomenon) reminds of (specifies the name) hospital where all staff were white. Even the cleaner was white. So when this company took over, we literally bussed in black workers from townships to create diversity.

Indeed, the establishment is located in a wealthy white suburb. Interestingly, the mostly Indian township and the African township are in close proximity of about 5 km apart and nearly 10 to 15 kilometres from this establishment. According to management's narrative, the geo-spatial difference of 5km converts into total inclusion or exclusion in core business and leadership echelons depending on which side of the 5km the ethnic group resides. Interestingly, the establishment (from observation and reports) employs mostly African people in the lowest paying jobs. When it comes to appointment of professional and senior roles that have power and decent pay, management argued that the African township is too far and poses inconvenience for potential applicants. These dynamics reveal how historical legacies and modern-day racism in organisations work together to hold intact hierarchies of inequality which in turn sustain racialised social class formations. The African was at the bottom of the scale under apartheid – this positionality seems to be reinforced through contemporary discourses of empowerment in this establishment.

6.5.2.3 Racialised competence – justification for African exclusion

The interview proceeds. The transformation manager offers another reason for low representation of Africans in the establishment. The transformation manager states that finding people with the right skills, right fit and meeting the requirements is a challenge. Given the gross underrepresentation of Africans in this establishment, this statement refers to this population group. This narrative invokes the behavioural sciences theories of person environment fit (P-E-F) that abound in human resource field. The challenge in this establishment and in South Africa generally is that there's been little critical engagement and interrogation of what "fit" precisely means in a social context that is transforming and reconfiguring the fit itself. This lack of critical engagement is resulting in employment practices that benefit those that seem to fit into a pre-establishment culture without seeing the need to reconfigure the culture for greater diversity and inclusion.

Linked to the above, management hastened to advise that they have put in place programmes such as a shift leader development course and a buddy system to assist (African) appointees to fit in.

We find it very difficult to find the right people with right skills and meet the requirements. Right fit is a huge challenge. Right fit is in terms of meeting inherent requirements of the job, the team and organisational processes. But we have put in place an induction course, a buddying system and some management and leadership programmes to help the appointed persons to fit in and to adapt to the organisational culture.

6.5.2.4 Diversity competent organisational culture

Despite the above narrative being indicative of an assimilationist organisational culture, management proceeds to construct organisational culture as characterised by diversity competence. They view leadership as being diverse and modelling the behaviours related to equality culture. Management seems to believe that there are no diversity-

related issues in this establishment according to management especially those of racial nature:

People seem to get on hey. There's unity on the ground. Leadership is modelling diversity. Everybody is treated equally according to the level of work you give. Leadership models the desired culture, so it filters through to the rest of the organisation by default.

Management seems unperturbed by the absence of Africans in the management team and the fact that this modelling of leadership diversity is problematic.

6.5.2.5 Racist medical doctor behaviour - spoiling organisational culture

Management cited that the behaviour of doctors is their biggest challenge. The doctors were reported to not embrace diversity. Leadership in this establishment explained that some doctors were socialised under the white supremacist apartheid regime and still carry stereotypical thinking and behaviours of such an oppressive system. Participants seemed to only view apartheid as a racist system without due regard of the ableist, heteropatriarchal and sexist intersections of the same system. This limited view has implications on how the organisation approaches diversity promotion and management which thus far ignores discriminatory attitudes and behaviours on a wide range of axes of difference. Despite this, leadership in this establishment finds it hard to challenge the racist doctors' behaviours. The difficulty emanates from the fact that the performance of the establishment is dependent on the doctors. The doctors were also constructed as hard to deal with as they are at the prime of their careers:

Doctors don't embrace diversity and we are reliant on them. They do not adhere to policy, values and behaviours of this organisation. But they are an

ageing population. They were socialised under apartheid. It's very hard to challenge their behaviours because they are at prime of career.

Asked how the organisation deals with this unacceptable behaviour, the first participant explained that they adopt a case-by-case management strategy. So they deal with one issue at a time despite the problem being systemic and endemic in the organisational culture.

We deal with it on a case by case basis. They can really be nasty towards the staff. They say things like.... You are incompetent... You shouldn't be here... Did they scrape the bottom of the barrel to find you?

Management explained that the difficulty in managing doctor behaviour emanates from a business model which is influenced by legislation that prohibits private hospital groups from employing medical doctors. This prohibition restricts management's ability to deal with the toxic doctor behaviour decisively:

The difficulty in arresting the situation is that doctors are not our staff.

Organisational leadership seems to battle to admit that the difficulty to deal with the unacceptable behaviour of the doctors decisively is also linked to financial power doctors have. In the private healthcare sector model, the doctor is the lifeblood of the system. Doctors bring patients into the establishment and determine how long the patients stay depending on procedures to be performed and health requirements. The establishment derives revenue from admitted patients. So without the doctor admitting patients in this particular organisation, the organisation will not exist. Thus, doctors hold the key to the organisation's bottom line. Management is thus placed in a difficult position of generating profits and taking care of employees in this hierarchy of power.

6.5.2.6 Management complicity in the doctors' racist behaviour

I became interested in understanding whether management is complicit in the abuse of power of doctors towards subordinate staff or if management disrupts and challenges these unequal power dynamics. The response suggested that management is struggling to deal with the contradictory positions they play as custodians of the business and custodians of workers. Management is caught between profit and people just as people are caught between abusive doctors, management and profit. The common factor is profit and doctors and the organisation cannot realise profits without the doctors. Consequently, management falls back on blaming legislation that prohibits private hospitals from employing doctors. Management argues that this causes major challenges and inhibits their ability to arrest the situation. This narrative, however, presupposes that doctors have greater power than the organisations that grant them admission rights. This is not so because the organisation determines the rules of admission rights to various doctors and the organisation has power to revoke the rights should the doctor fail to adhere to contractual agreements, including values and behaviours desired by the organisation.

Notwithstanding the above, the organisation has put in place an induction programme to socialise new generations of doctors into the desired values and behaviours. However, according to management's narrative above, newer doctors embrace diversity. The abusive behaviours which were admitted to be underpinned by racism are the real problem. So by excluding these problematic doctors on the programme, management is being complicit. Management hopes that the newer generation of doctors will influence culture change. Child (2016) recently exposed how older medical doctors bully junior doctors. This casts doubts on the ability of abused junior doctors to wield adequate power to challenge and change the status quo.

Asked about the programmes the organisation has put in place to facilitate diversity within the organisation, the human resource manager advised of a disability integration programme. "We employ persons with disabilities. Last year we had 22 but through natural attrition, we now have 11".

6.5.3 Employees' social constructions

Approximately 14 employees had confirmed interest in participating in the focus group. Due to operational demands, 14 employees of different races, gender, abilities, sexualities and job roles arrived. All participants in this focused group work in an affluent hospital in the Durban area of KwaZulu-Natal. The focused group consisted of eight Indian women, two African males and two African women, and two white employees of which one is male and another is a woman. This sample was reflective of the demographic diversity within the hospital. This is striking because the province within which the hospital is located comprises 89% Zulu-speaking Africans, 12% Indian populations, 11% white persons and the other population groups form a minority.

6.5.3.1 Racial hierarchies and colour blindness

The analysis of social class stratification shows that whiteness is at the top of the hierarchy followed by the Indian population and Africans (predominantly Zulu speaking) are at the bottom of this chain. English language serves to bind the white and Indian communities and to other the Zulu-speaking persons. English is also a business language in this establishment and this is common in South Africa as a former British colony. However, employees' social constructions of their own identity seem to acknowledge the race, gender and ability identities they embody but invoke the blindness discourse when narratives of racial discrimination are brought up. For instance, the majority of the participants agree that race does not play any role in this organisation to determine how one is treated.

6.5.3.2 Toxic organisational culture – “fucking gods”

Employees unanimously argue that the organisational culture is extremely toxic due to the hierarchical power structure that defines social relations and interactions:

It's kick the underdog culture here. You know the saying that when dad comes home he is going to give you a hiding. Then the wife kicks the child, the child kicks the dog and the dog has no one to kick. Disrespect is the name of this place.

Participants explain that medical doctors are at the top of this hierarchical power structure. Doctors are seen by staff as holding absolute power based on their revenue generation capabilities:

The top two money spinners have absolute influence. They run this place. If they say jump you only ask how high. If they say run, you ask how fast. If you stand up against them you will be the one who is punished, not them. These doctors know that.

All participants appear very agitated, disempowered and brutalised by this discourse of doctor's totalitarian power in the institution. Participants take turns to describe how rude, arrogant, abusive, undermining, disrespectful and dehumanising the unacceptable and yet constantly excused doctor behaviour is. One participant angrily opined,

Doctors think they are fucking gods. They run this hospital as they please. The company does not run this place. Doctors do. It's too much. They are the God of the hospital.

Social relations in this organisation are shaped by these hierarchical power dynamics in this organisation:

The doctors are on top. Sisters {registered nurses} are better treated while enrolled nurses and enrolled nursing assistants are treated with great disrespect. Student nurses and cleaners are the worst treated in this hospital. Most ENAs' and students feel they are useless in this place.

Management is seen as creating an organisational culture that enables this toxic culture. In fact management is seen as participating in “kicking the staff down” by silencing their voices and threatening to report them to the regulatory body {South African Nursing Council} for small mistakes and this is motivated by the need to protect the doctor at the staff’s expense.

Interestingly, participants do not acknowledge how this hierarchical structure intersects with racial classifications. They agree that doctors and management are predominantly white and Indian. They agree that ground staff is primarily black African. However, they do not relate the “lowest kicked dog with no one else to kick” phenomenon with racial hierarchies in the structure. Nonetheless, they state that the environment is very silencing and that if an employee speaks up they will be punished. They state that even though managers do commit errors at times, none of the staff can speak. In fact they feel that company procedures shift to suit the doctor’s narrative.

6.5.3.3 Agency and solidarity – a survival strategy

Employees here seem to have a great sense of camaraderie. They share the frustration of seeing the people below them being an object of abuse based on the hierarchical structure of the organisation. They all see each other as an in-group of colleagues that is oppressed by the doctors only. The doctor abuse creates a sense of solidarity which is needed for survival in this environment. This explains why all employees adopted the race blindness discourse. Participants also took turns to explain how they rely on each other’s’ support and how they have developed survival strategies.

When doctor (mentions name) comes in, I just know that I must be strong and not take anything personal. We even talk about him with colleagues. Everybody has a story to share. It’s not funny but we even laugh about it. It’s painful. But what can we do.

Employees suggested that they have taken these complaints to management previously and no one did anything. However, they explained that there's a new leadership team in the hospital. New leadership has not implemented many strategies as yet. This presents an opportunity for leadership to create a new organisational culture.

6.5.3.4 Gender binaries and heteronormativity

Asked how the organisation manages gender-related issues given the predominance of women in this organisation, participants signalled that there are no real issues amongst staff. One participant countered this narrative arguing that he is often stereotyped as gay because of the nature of work he does:

I am the personal assistant to the executive leadership team. So everyone gives me this frown that says are you gay? And I think what's that got to do with anything?

The above narrative suggests entrenched heteronormativity which remains bounded with the division of labour. In the healthcare sector, a man generally is in a leadership role as a doctor, manager and/or porter. While males have begun to enter the nursing role, they are also frequently stereotyped as being gay. This discourse re-enacts a binary logic which presupposes that men use physical and mental strength to do work while women have to do work that is associated with caring. This binary logic, however, thrives in this organisation without being disrupted.

6.5.3.5 Disowned blackness

Another striking factor in this focus group is how Indian employees do not associate themselves with being black. For this group, black means African. There is a degree of cognitive disassociation with the black identity amongst the Indian participants. However, they acknowledge that they are black under Broad Based Black Economic

Empowerment: “black here means black like (mention the name of the two African gentlemen). We use black and Indian here. But for Employment Equity we use black for everyone”. This phenomenon is striking as it suggests that Indian employees shift between disowning the black identity and owning it for the purpose of benefiting from legislative reforms. The African participants, however, do not have an option to disown the blackness identity. It would seem as though it becomes ascribed to them even by those who are also defined as black under the law.

6.5.4 Case synthesis

Similar to other two cases above, this case shows that organisation C is located within the capitalist paradigm and uses Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment legislative frameworks to contribute towards transformation. Discourses of diversity in this organisation are mainly informed by legislative compliance. The organisation has put in place governance structures and a development Employment Equity plan which comprises some numbers to be achieved over a certain period of time. The organisation has mainstreamed these Employment Equity targets into the balanced scorecard and attached financial incentives to their achievement. Progress, however, suggests that the organisation has mainly focused on empowering from the Indian population and less so the African population despite Africans constituting the majority in the province. Geographical locality of Africans relative to the organisation’s buildings is used as an excuse for this exclusion despite the distance being as little as 5 km away from the Indian location. Also, Africans were found mainly in lower entry-level positions in this organisation and the representation of persons with disabilities has regressed by almost 50% over 12 months.

Organisational culture here is toxic. It is characterised by hierarchies of power and inequality between medical doctors and nursing staff. An abused person syndrome exists in this organisation as the abused nurses in turn abuse lower level staff. Those that are at the bottom of the occupational scale bear the brunt of this toxic and abusive

culture. Management was constructed as complicit in the abuse and as fostering a culture of silence and punishment. Employees regard management as solely interested in profits. Consequently, persons that are regarded as money-makers are protected even at the expense of others. Management acknowledges the existence of the problem but downplays it. Consequently, management is not taking active steps to arrest the situation. There was very little information obtained about the nature and depth of diversity strategies, as management regarded the diversity culture and climate to be good for all employees. Interestingly, this was the first time an Indian and white leaders were interviewed as persons responsible for transformation strategies. Mapped against other case studies, this may suggest that data was well controlled by these participants.

6.6 Conclusion

The preceding chapter provided data collected from each case study. The chapter was outlined in such a way that it locates each organisation within a specific sector. This aided in contextualising the orientation of the organisation in relation to capitalist and socialist orientation. None of the studied organisations were located in the latter. Documents were analysed using CDL and CDA to understand the conceptual frameworks of diversity. Transformation manager's social constructions of diversity strategies and initiatives were also captured and found to align greatly with the organisational conceptual frameworks. Employee's social constructions were also brought in to triangulate the data. It emerged that at this point in time, there is no organisation that can be declared as having best practice diversity strategies in corporate South Africa, at least amongst the studied organisations. In the next chapter, I synthesised the themes that emerged from all the cases and apply critical diversity literacy framework to make sense thereof.

CHAPTER 7

CROSS-CASE SYNTHESIS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 provided a detailed analysis and synthesis of each case study. The single synthesis served the purpose of triangulating themes that emerged from document analyse, social constructions of transformation managers and focus groups with employees. The single case synthesis yielded descriptions of organisational diversity

discourses thereby providing a better understanding of consistencies and inconsistencies within each case.

In this chapter I provide a cross-case synthesis. As Baxter and Jack (2008) postulate, the multiple-case study design enables the researcher to explore the similarities and differences between cases with the intent of replicating findings. These authors further argue for adoption of a systematic cross synthesis approach that is underpinned by a specific theoretical lens in order to delineate common themes across cases. Baxter and Jack (2008) emphasise the importance of ensuring that the thematic delineation is linked to the central research question of the study. Following this guidance, this chapter contrasts similar and dissimilar themes that emerged in different case studies reported in Chapter 6. I then contrast the synthesised themes against critical literature with the intent of illuminating the deeper underlying meaning of such themes and the implications thereof for acceleration of organisational diversity and justice.

7.2 Findings of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the conceptual frameworks and the effect of appraised diversity discourses in some select JSE-listed corporations on engendering equality and justice. The diagram below provides an outline of some key themes that emerged from the cross-case synthesis:

Table 5: Key Themes Emerging from the Cross-Case Synthesis

Conceptual Frameworks

- Profit-Centred – Neoliberal Corporate Social Responsibility Frameworks
- Compliance-Focused Diversity Approach
- Employment Equity and Human Rights Based – A Western Agenda

Strategy and Practice

- Policy and Governance
- Inclusion of Diversity in Organisational Performance Management System
- Human Resource Processes Re-engineering
- Targeted Recruitment
- English and Afrikaans – Affective Languages
- White 'Merit' and Black 'Incompetence'
- Depoliticised and Reproduced Gender Binaries
- Medicalised Disability

Efficacy

- Race-Conscious Africans
- White Fragility – Transformation Resistance Strategy
- "Fucking Gods" – Profit Over People

7.2.1.1 Conceptual framework

Miles and Huberman (1994) and Jabareen (2009) explain that conceptual frameworks are useful for understanding the interrelated systems of concepts, assumptions, beliefs, expectations and theories that inform decisions and actions. The interest of examining the conceptual framing of appraised diversity discourses was to understand the compatibility of such frameworks with the social justice imperative. Critical diversity studies have mostly examined intra-organisational systems of power and linked them to social discourses. There's a scarcity of critical literature that examines the link between intra-organisational frameworks of thinking and doing diversity with industry-wide and global systems of power. As a contribution towards closure of this gap, this study examined the entanglement of intra-organisational diversity framework with industry, society and global systems of power and inequality. This systems analysis was vital for assessing the organisation's location in the neoliberal global systems. I therefore applied CDL criteria in assessing compatibility of the diversity frameworks of appraised

organisations with the imperative of deepening democracy and social justice. More specifically, I used the following CDL criteria to assess the conceptual frameworks:

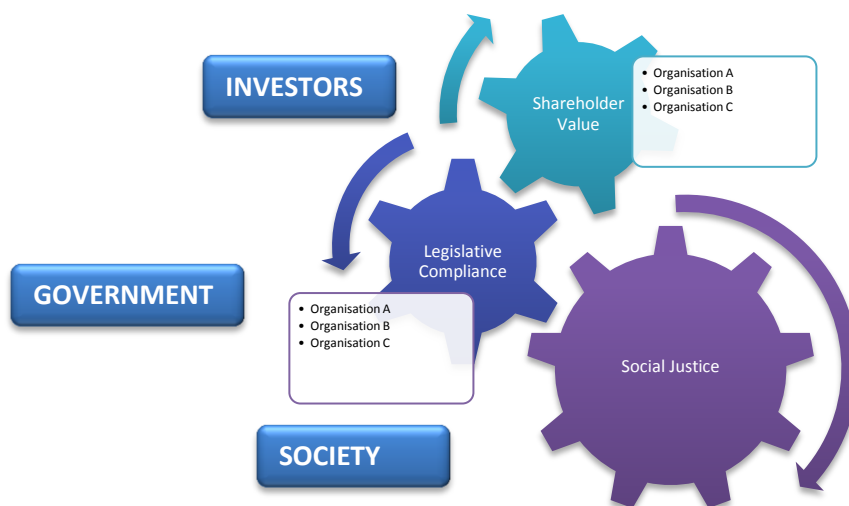
- The definition of oppressive systems of power as current social problems that are not only historical legacies.
- Analytical skills at unpacking how these oppressive systems intersect, interlock, co-construct, and constitute each other, and how they are reproduced, resisted and reframed.
- An engagement with issues of transformation of oppressive systems towards deepening democracy and social justice in all levels of social organisations.

The findings are discussed below.

7.2.1.2 Profit centred – neoliberal corporate social responsibility frameworks

The three case studies show that organisations are caught between their primary mandate of accumulating capital growth for shareholders, complying with transformative legislation, and some commitments that are aimed at deepening democracy and social justice. I refer to this as the trichotomy which I depict in the diagram below:

Diagram 10: Frameworks of Diversity



In all the three cases studies, the interest of investors or shareholder value was prioritised. Investors, despite being invisible, had immense power in determining whether transformation and diversity issues are given strategic prominence and the investment that goes into such strategies. So diversity, in all three studied organisations, is located within the profit-oriented discourse to ensure that shareholder power and value doesn't shrink. Consequently, diversity was found to be mostly positioned within the good corporate citizenship or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perspective. This conceptual framework is now famously known as the triple bottom line (Elkington, 1997). The triple bottom line concept attempts to balance corporate profiteering with social responsibility and environmental sustainability (Alhaddi, 2015). This perspective tames (Heres & Benschop, 2010), depoliticises (Groschl, 2011; 2016) and obscures critical issues of structural power and inequality which need to be addressed by organisational diversity discourses. Thus, issues of diversity become secondary in diversity approaches that are capsuled within profiteering, business performance and competitiveness (Grosch, 2016). This approach is typical of neoliberal market fundamentalism.

Neoliberalism marketizes and commoditizes everything in society including diversity (Scarritt, 2013; Wilkins, 2012). Wilkins (2013) builds on the work of Scarritt (2013) to explain that neoliberalism inherently appreciates diversity through promotion of multiculturalism as its interest is free-market expansion. Consequently, the diversity frameworks in neoliberalism are inherently divisive and open no space for challenging of power. I refer to this as the "Big Brother is watching you" phenomenon. Big Brother denotes the totalitarian controllers of global and local markets who persistently wield power for self-enrichment through various mechanisms under the umbrella of industrial revolutions and market competitiveness while reproducing and or sustaining the status quo of inequality. Even more unsettling about the frameworks of diversity in these three cases is the acknowledgement of inequalities as being caused only by historic factors and only limited to race and gender. This view calculatedly obscures the evident numerous sexist, ageist, homophobic and ableist forms of injustices that are institutionally embedded and stymie social reforms (Eagleton-Pierce; 2016). Eagleton-

Pierce (2016) explains that neoliberal frameworks of diversity dilute, weaken and break the ties with critical issues of social injustice. Instead they invoke commitments to bringing into the system or organisation human differences without revealing and dismantling the power that operates the institutional systems. This umbrella power structure works well with legislative compliance.

7.2.1.3 Compliance centred-framework

In addition to profit orientation, all three organisations focused on developing Employment Equity plans following the criteria prescribed by legislation. These findings align with Kelly et al. (2010) who found that South African organisations predominantly operate within the anti-discrimination and fairness paradigm. While the anti-discrimination and fairness paradigm is useful in creating equal opportunity, fair treatment, recruitment, and compliance with the legal requirements of the Equal Employment Opportunity legislation, attention is paid more on demographic representation of Blacks, women and persons with disabilities. This perspective acknowledges the prejudice that has kept members of certain demographic groups out of organisations and then constructs Affirmative Action as a fair means of realising organisational diversity. The definition of diversity within this perspective is limited to representativity and anti-discrimination based on the demographic differences prescribed by law. This perspective also focuses on reengineering managerial processes to ensure that all employees regardless of their identity differences are treated equally. The reengineering of managerial processes generally entails provision of psychosocial resources, induction and on boarding programmes, career development and diversity awareness initiatives to promote tolerance and respect of differences. While this perspective seems to align with a social justice perspective, diversity is measured by the extent to which recruitment and retention objectives are achieved rather than the extent to which organisational culture has changed to allow diverse employees to realise their potential and utilise their talents (Kelly et al., 2007). This perspective adopts the colour-blind and gender-blind discourse,

often called the “melting pot” outlook where we are all seen as the same (Kelly et al., 2007). While the workforce profile may change, the culture and nature of work remains in place, protected by assimilationist discourses that are intended to ignore the differences. This leads to organisations and employees missing the opportunity to learn from differences to inform organisational cultural change and to improve individual relations and organisational practices.

Given the profound influence of the Employment Equity Act in shaping organisational diversity strategy, policy and practice, a question arises about the fitness of this Act to drive real social change. Presently, there’s a contentious debate about the interface of Employment Equity/Affirmative Action and neoliberalism (Ncube, Shimeles, & Verdier-Chouchane, 2012; Ratuva, 2015). Organisational critical diversity studies in South Africa have not yet taken up this debate. It is crucial to tackle this question in this study as the central question seeks to examine the suitability of diversity frameworks in appraised corporations for social and organisational justice. For this purpose, I briefly trace the origins of Employment Equity as the International Labour Organisation’s and United Nation’s human rights project.

7.2.1.4 Employment equity and the International Labour Organisation

South Africa is a member of the International Labour Organisation. Accordingly, South Africa ratified the ILO’s declarations for decent work. Employment Equity is one of such declarations that have been ratified by South Africa. These declarations aim to promote decent work and productive work for all as conditions of freedom, equity and human dignity (Cohen & Moodley, 2012). Decent work is understood as a source of income, personal dignity, family stability, peace and economic growth (Cohen & Moodley, 2012). Standing (2010), however, argues that employment is the product of a compromised ILO’s shifting role from its original objective of curbing capitalist abuses of labour to being an agent of capital globalisation.

Referencing Polanyi (1944), Standing affirms that the formation of the ILO was intended to balance the “conditions of competition amongst the nations so that trade might be liberated without danger to standards of living”. This provision, however, only applied to industrialised and colonised countries, although the ILO obscured this reality under the rhetoric of “common standards for all countries” (Standing & Standing, 2008). Thus the ILO served as a structure for locking in the “international division of labour to the advantage of the affluent capitalist countries” (Standing, 2008). In this context the ILO had the role of regulating the employer-employee relation and to protect the labour force, which was predominantly male and unionised. The protectionist declarations of the ILO has for a long time been centred on sustaining capitalism in various forms and offering forms of social insurance to the “male bread winners” (Standing, 2008). These social insurance conventions (Convention 111 of 1958 and Convention on Social Security No. 102 of 1952) required member states to offer the employed breadwinner medical aid, sick leave, unemployment insurance, pension fund, injury on duty compensation amongst others. These protectionist conventions held intact the Eurocentric heterosexist, patriarchal design of capitalism. Beneficiaries of these social insurances were restricted to a family, which is defined in Eurocentric terms that assume a nuclear family structure comprising of a husband, a wife and two children. The woman is thus seen as a dependent beneficiary to the main beneficiary (the man) while gender non-conforming subjects are relegated to a zone of non-existence. Nonetheless, the introduction of neoliberalism saw the ILO wobble in its pro-employee orientation and align its policies with the World Bank’s structural reforms which were geared towards deregulation and pro-markets policies (Standing, 2008). The ILO took no stand against the impact of neoliberal ideology on labour and this is attributed to perceived superior leadership capacity within the World Bank, IMF and OCED and the dependence of the ILO on the World Bank for funding. The ILO has since gone through three stages that compromised its credibility and these include the globalisation era in 1970s, then the declaration floor ceiling in the 1980s; and lastly the recent shift from equality to equity.

The ILO continued to bow under the market globalisation pressure leading to the shift from in its objective of advocating for vertical equality to horizontal redistribution. Instead of focusing on inequality between capitalists and workers, the ILO promulgated a plethora of horizontal “equity”-oriented instruments including the Discrimination in Employment and Occupations Convention No. 111 (1958), Equal Remuneration Convention No. 100 (1951), and “Decent Work” (1990). Horizontal instruments focused on equality amongst humans. This gave rise to Employment Equity policies which focus on equal opportunity, positive discrimination, gender and race parity, income parity between white collar and blue collar workers, and anti-discrimination clauses. The notion of decent work for all, of which Employment Equity is part, was also intended to align with the UN’s programmes on poverty alleviation, globalisation and the Millennium Development Goals (Standing, 2008). The “decent work” mantra has successfully enabled the ILO to shift attention away from ideological issues, which question the justness of the hegemonic neoliberal global economic policy. Employment Equity discourse is thus a neoliberal ideology instrument that serves to sustain the status quo of structural power relations, inequality and social injustice while promoting the rhetoric of (horizontal) human rights. I now turn to the examination of the link between Employment Equity and the human rights discourse.

7.2.1.5 Employment equity and human rights discourse

In South Africa, Employment Equity acquires credence from (section 9 of the Bill of Rights) the Constitution, which is aligned with the Universal Declaration for Human Rights. The universal declaration of human rights is a lauded international instrument for enabling focused attention on human rights violations and restoration of human dignity. However, the universality of human rights is a contested subject (Wood, 2013; Jahren, 2013). Santos (2002) explains that human rights policies mainly serve the economic and geopolitical interests of the hegemonic western capitalist states leading to the generous and seductive discourse that permits awful atrocities that have been evaluated and dealt with according to double standards. According to Santos (2009) and Jahren (2013)

human rights were created by western colonial empires post-Second World War at the time when most societies in the Global South were under the brutality of colonial administration. This makes human rights discourse a language of western progressive politics originally designed to prevail only in the metropolitan societies and not in the colonies (Santos, 2009). Hence, the majority of the world's inhabitants are not the subjects of human rights, but rather they are objects of human rights (Santos, 2009). Abdulqawi (2013) adds that colonised subjects did not qualify as human under the human rights instruments. These arguments bring the universality of human rights into serious question.

Santos (2002; 2009) further contends that the abstract universality of human rights stems from the west's tendency to disregard the plurality of conceptions of human dignity in the Global South. For Santos (2009) this is typical of western modernity as it always constructed its dominant ideologies on the basis of an abyssal thinking that divided the world sharply into binary oppositional (developed) metropolitan and (primitive) colonial societies. This binary construction was such that the realities and practices existing on the colonised side of the line could not possibly challenge the universality of the theories and practices in force on the western side of the line (Santos, 2009). By so doing, western modernity discourses invisibilised the realities and practices of the colonies. A question thus arises on whether the abolition of formal colonial administration shifted these unequal power dynamics and permitted for an inclusive (re)definition of human rights to give them universal legitimacy.

Santos (2009) argues that far from being eliminated with the end of historical colonialism, international law and human rights doctrines are used by western powers to guarantee continuity of the abyssal line that produces radical exclusions of non-western societies in the form of neo-colonialism, racism, xenophobia, permanent state of exception in dealing with alleged terrorists and undocumented migrant workers. In fact the era of George Bush and Tony Blair recently has seen the rhetoric of natural law and human rights being used to justify colonial wars against non-Western states (Barreto, 2013). The tragic

decimation of Maubere people in East Timor in which more than 30,000 lives were taken has hidden and facilitated the ongoing smooth thriving international trade in Indonesia (Santos, 2009). Similarly, the continuing dehumanisation of nearly one hundred million “untouchables” in India and the success of apartheid pre-1994 in South Africa are some of the atrocities that have taken place under the human rights discourse. Mutua (2001) alludes to the “biased and arrogant rhetoric and history of human rights enterprise” as the newest manifestation of the historical continuum of the Eurocentric colonial project. Ignatieff (2000) adds that human rights are being progressively acknowledged as the dialect of moral imperialism that is as ruthless and “self-deceived as the colonial hubris of yesteryear”. This relates to what Gott (2002) calls the uncomfortable reality of human rights project being imperial humanitarianism. Jahren (2013) explains that these views emanate from a terrible irony in the human rights claims and the omnipresence of neo-colonial tendencies that enforce the power of dominant Western states and international institutions. Jahren (2013) adds that western neo-colonial tendencies are frequently disguised under the need to empower the poor and excluded while alienating non-western countries in the process where the use of human rights discourse elevates the power of those capable of defining its meaning. Given these problems, is the human rights framework appropriate for grounding pro-social change policies, strategies and interventions in non-western contexts?

Barreto (2013) argues that the human rights model needs to be rethought in a manner that decolonises and delegitimises the (use of) human rights as tools of imperialism. Decolonising human rights, according to Santos (2009), entails exposing the Eurocentric profile of human rights to intercultural dialogues so that it may encompass other grammars and conceptions of human dignity that emanate from the Global South. Barreto (2013) adds that there’s a need to reclaim the anti-imperial and emancipatory potential of human rights and a re-imagining of theory that is grounded in the landscape of the history and geography of modern imperialism and neo-colonialism. He states that this can be achieved by challenging the dominant Eurocentric tradition of liberal individual rights. A new approach for Barreto (2013) could re-write the history of human

rights to include a number of eccentric events such as the resistance to the conquest of the Americas in the 15th and 17th centuries, the independence later gained by colonies throughout the Americas, the struggles against slavery, the Haitian and Mexican Revolutions, the anti-apartheid movement, the struggles against right-wing and leftist dictatorships and totalitarian regimes in Latin America and Communist Europe in the 1980s. He adds that the human rights discourse needs to accept the indigenous groups, social movements and people in the Global South that are fighting today against the abuse and devastation caused by contemporary states, empires, transnational corporations and international financial institutions. These factors necessitate the rethinking and or decolonisation of human rights in order to face challenges of globalisation and neo-colonialism (Barreto, 2013). Barreto (2013) concludes that this can be realised by categorising mainstream theory of rights as Eurocentric and to elaborate a more complex theory through a critical dialogue between Eurocentric and third world perspectives, one that accompanies the longstanding South – South dialogues.

7.2.1.6 Summary on conceptual frameworks

The preceding discussion shows that the conceptual frameworks of diversity in the studied corporations are situated within the Eurocentric neoliberal ideology. The capability of neoliberalism to reinstating the desired social change is highly questionable. Inequality and dehumanisation of subjects that differ from the Cartesian model of humanism are inherent in neoliberalism. The negative effects of this ideology, however, are well masked under the rhetoric of human rights, Employment Equity and corporate social investment models. It became evident from literature applied in the above discussion that such instruments have double standards and refocus attention on horizontal inequalities as a strategy of shifting focus from vertical inequality inflicted by global capitalism. Therefore, conceptual frameworks of diversity that are grounded in neoliberal ideology perpetuate social inequality and injustice.

7.2.2 Diversity strategies: design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation

The second objective of this study was to examine the nature of diversity strategies developed by these organisations. This objective was formulated against the backdrop of South Africa's transformative legislative instruments being designed to dismantle systematised power of white able-bodied heteropatriarchal Christian masculinity especially in the economic sphere. This objective was thus formulated to examine the extent to which the appraised diversity strategies in the studied corporations disassemble the interlocking systematised oppressive ways of thinking, doing and being human and how they engender what Mampela Ramphela (2009) calls "...the antithesis of everything that was wrong about colonialism and apartheid".

More specifically, the cross-case synthesis here focuses on similar and dissimilar themes that provide an indication of oppressive systems targeted by the designed strategies and the extent to which they deal with the intersections of such systems. I applied the following CDL criteria:

- The possession of a diversity grammar and vocabulary that facilitates a discussion of (capitalism) race, racism and antiracism, and the parallel concepts employed in the analysis of other forms of oppression.
- Analytic skills at unpacking how systems of privilege intersect, interlock co-construct and constitute each other

The key themes that emerged from all three cases based on transformation manager's social constructions are discussed below.

7.2.2.1 Policy and governance

The three organisations studied in this inquiry had formulated policies, procedures, a consultative forum and an Employment Equity plan to drive organisational diversity and transformation. These documents and consultative structures serve to ensure organisational compliance with the requirements of Employment Equity legislation. This affirms the finding stated above of an Employment Equity compliance-driven diversity

discourses in South African corporations. In addition to conducting the analysis of opportunities and setting numerical goals, these organisations had also put in place some systems which are discussed below.

7.2.2.2 Performance management system

The organisations have mainstreamed improvement of workforce demographic representation in the performance management system. Accordingly, all managers have numerical goals as one of the business priorities included in their performance contracts. Transformation managers viewed this mainstreaming as an important step forward for ensuring line manager's accountability and ownership for the diversity programme. Utilising the performance management system to drive certain objectives is grounded in the belief that leadership accountability plays a vital role in shaping organisational culture (Eustance & Martins, 2014) and organisational performance (Ferreira & Otley, 2009). This perspective believes that organisational leaders influence the urgency and prominence with which the rest of the organisation treats issues of importance, including organisational diversity, equality and inclusion (Syed & Ozbling, 2015). Performance management processes, however, are complex and dependent on various antecedents (Moynihan & Pandey, 2010). Chief amongst these is the issue of leader's bias and the influence of leadership's cultural paradigm (Mbingi, 2004). In the South African context, corporations are predominantly led by white males while the majority of the workforce at lower levels is black African. This nuance is crucial to factor in as it speaks to the leader-follower identity intersections and locations in the matrix of power and domination. Thus, the pace of and passion with which transformation is driven in the organisation is really determined from the top end of this unequal power dynamic and the performance

management system cannot resolve this issue as the performance evaluators are also located in the top echelons.

According to participants, this mainstreaming often translates to a smoke screen as it does not necessarily translate to genuine commitment and leadership ownership of the process. Some leaders were found to be doing diversity because the company wants them to do so and also due to the financial rewards linked to this performance indicator. Nonetheless, the inclusion of numerical goals in managers' performance contract is a step in the right direction, but it remains insufficient to drive the desired change.

7.2.2.3 Human resource development processes

The studied corporations viewed human resource development as fundamental to the success of the transformation project. Accordingly, the organisations have put in place learning and development programmes aimed at developing the skills of black people, women and people with disabilities. Organisations A and B have put in place graduate internship programmes. Some of the beneficiaries of the programme were invited into the focus groups. Organisations A and C have also put in place management and leadership development programmes aimed at assisting affirmed groups to transition from technical experts to leaders.

The human resource development-based approach is part of South Africa's transformation strategy (South African Government, 2009). The national human resource development strategy (2009) recognises the disparities in education, training and development competencies between white and black citizens and appeals to employers and sector education and training authorities to invest in skills development (SAHRDS, 2010). The strategy prescribes that the beneficiaries of skills development initiatives need to be 85% black, 54% women and 4% persons with disabilities. The former Minister of Labour, Hon. Membathisi Mdladlana (2001) devised these quotas with intent of ensuring greater alignment between Employment Equity and skills production.

The intended alignment, however, does not seem to be understood and realised in studied organisations. In organisations A, B and C skills development initiatives are inclusive of black persons and persons with disabilities up to skilled and professional occupational levels. Thereafter, the profile of skills development beneficiaries becomes predominantly white. Consequently, leadership echelons remain predominantly white able-bodied heterosexual males. This finding confirms the trends observed by the Commission for Employment Equity (2016) that white males are consistent beneficiaries of recruitment, promotions and training at top and senior management levels. The following statements of participants confirmed this phenomenon: "... in the top structures there is no diversity at all, in all aspects. You find that there are more white males as we go up". In this study, some participants identified this pattern as being reflective of corporate willingness to comply with legislation but remain resistant to real transformation. Ironically, the CEE and the department of labour appraised these organisations as exemplary despite their reproduction of oppressive racial and gender hierarchies of the apartheid epoch. This reproduction of hierarchies goes along with a paternalistic narrative of skills disparity between black and white talents. The observed paternalism assumes that blackness is inherently inferior to whiteness and therefore perpetually deserving some form of development intervention to help them improve. But the improvement is also controlled and restricted to certain forms of labour that are below white talent. Corporates, then, invoke a discourse of meritocracy that has constantly shifting criteria to justify the paternalism and exclusion.

7.2.2.4 Targeted recruitment strategies and unequal empowerment

In all three cases, organisations had greater focus on recruitment of previously disadvantaged groups. The recruitment initiatives were linked to the numerical goals contained in the Employment Equity plans. The targeted beneficiaries were mainly black people, women and persons with disabilities as defined by Employment Equity legislation. These recruitment strategies, however, seem to reproduce the colonial –

apartheid hierarchies through unequal empowerment of the social group within the black category.

Corporates demonstrated greater interest in hiring from the Indian population at top, senior and middle management levels. The CEE (2016) reports have consistently shown that Indians make up 2.7% of the national economically active population (EAP), yet this social group is 300% (8.7%) more numerous at top management relative to their EAP (CEE, 2016). Coloureds make up 4.5% of top management echelon and this is nearly 60% below their EAP of 10.8%. Africans are the worst underrepresented groups as they only make up 10.8% of top managers despite their EAP of 77.4%. Africans are thus underrepresented by more than 600%. This hierarchy of unequal blacks is presided over by white males and, to a lesser extent, white women despite this social group making up a mere 9.9% of the EAP. White persons dominate top leadership echelons with 72.4%. This represents nearly 700% over-representation. This pattern repeats itself at senior management level and starts to change from professionally qualified level and becomes the total reverse in lower levels. These patterns illuminate the findings made earlier by the Human Sciences Research Council (2011) and the Wits University study that was commissioned by the Minister of Higher Education, Dr Blade Nzimande (2012). These studies found that corporates prioritise employment of white graduates compared to their non-white counterparts. The majority of African graduates (nearly 75%) end up being employed in the public sector. So in this discourse, whiteness remains in the superior positions and status while the various categories of black are being added to the corporate structure in a manner that protects whiteness and divide the black groups. Charles Mills' (1997) racial contract theory is useful for comprehending this problematic practice.

Mills (1997) describes the racial contract as prescribing for its signatories “an inverted epistemology, an epistemology of ignorance, a particular pattern of localised and cognitive dysfunction (which are psychologically and socially functional), producing the ironic outcome that whites will in general be unable to understand the world they

themselves made". The purpose of this epistemological contract which developed throughout modernity along white racial domination (Steyn, 2015 p. 383) is the eternal distinct privileging of whiteness in relation to blackness, the misuse of bodies, land and resources of non-white subjects and the denial of socioeconomic opportunities to them (Mills, 1997). Mills explicates that all white subjects are beneficiaries of the racial contract even though some whites are not necessarily signatories to the contract. Mills explains that the racial contract creates a clear demarcation between the "superior" statuses of whites in relation to the "inferior" status of non-whites. This, according to Mills, reproduces and secures the privileged positionality of whiteness with a corresponding sub-ordinate positionality of the black "Others". Mills states that "... the consent expected of white citizens is in part conceptualised as consent, whether explicit or tacit, to the racial order, to white supremacy, what would be called whiteness". This study shows that the promulgation of Employment Equity amongst other equal opportunity laws seems to have imposed what Haley McEwen called addition of non-white subjects to the racial contract as annexures instead of striving for the re-writing of the racial contract anew.

Adding annexures does not change the core principles of the main contract but merely adds layers to an established system. Corporates are electing to divide and add the annexures as different sub annexures with Indians being added as annexure A, Coloureds as annexure B, and Africans as annexure C. This approach serves to secure the privileged positionality of whiteness while reproducing tensions amongst those defined as black. Such tensions serve a strategic and a political function of shifting focus away from the actual oppressive racial contract that needs to be challenged and shifted. The study also found that dominant groups use multiple tropes under the guise of merit to cement the tensions within the black category and to create layers of privilege and subversion. These tropes included proficiency in one of white languages, model c schooling, middleclassness, docility and conformance to the established white norms. Proficiency in one of two dominant white languages in South Africa seemed to be a well-recognised signifier of this willingness to assimilate and perform whiteness. In the next

section, I use Sarah Amed's (2004) "Affective Economies" to make sense of how this language proficiency meritocracy performs political work of keeping the racial contract intact while also serving to foster zones of solidarities and rejection.

7.2.2.5 English and Afrikaans – affective languages

Ahmed (2004) posits that emotions do not reside in subjects or objects but are produced as objects of circulation to create the very effect of the surfaces and/or boundaries of bodies and worlds. Ahmed (2004) explains that emotions circulate as symbolic resources to construct a shared social reality and to organise the "like" and "unlike" figures based on a socially constructed resemblance. Constructions of the like and unlike, according to Ahmed (2004), become economic in that they circulate between signifiers in relationships of difference and dis/placement. In the context of the three case studies the English and Afrikaans languages emerged as strong signifiers that perform the work of binding and rejecting.

Africans were found to be the least preferred candidates in corporations due to their "heavy accents". The perceived heaviness is in relation to the non-heavy accent of non-African subjects. Black subjects within the Indian and Coloured categories were viewed as possessing a "better" accent and greater English and or Afrikaans proficiency, a phenomenon that served to gain them some degree of privilege and closer proximity to whiteness in relation to the heavy accent of Africans. Corporations displayed less predispositions to recruit Africans especially from traditional black-only universities. Africans from these universities are seen as "not Europeanised enough" hence the heavy accents. These Africans were constructed as having a language barrier compared to their Indian, Coloured and Model C graduate African counterparts. Thus job descriptions which require "ability to communicate effectively or fluently" have "eloquence or dialect" as the subtext rather than mere comprehension of English and/or Afrikaans. The incumbent must not just have a grasp of the white languages but must speak them in

ways that mimic white English and Afrikaans speakers. As one participant advised, “this flies at the face of liberation and democracy”.

The language issue, as one participant correctly argued, is an issue that needs to be dealt with at national policy level, as official work and programmes including economic activities in South Africa are conducted in a foreign language. So the democratic dispensation has permitted a double standard in which Africans are expected to master the colonial language while non-Africans are not required to reciprocate in terms of indigenous languages. This links to the perpetual demanding of non-white subjects to forego their being and modes of being in exchange for income, survival and acceptance. Heller (2003) explains this phenomenon as the bounded commodification of identity and language in the globalised capitalist economy.

Veronelli (2015) links language with coloniality and modernity arguing that language exchange amongst indigenous people was regarded as being less than an exchange of knowledge by colonialists. Colonialists discredited indigenous languages as ill-mannered and savage and therefore deserving to be taught the master’s language (Veronelli, 2015). Veronelli explains that the process of making colonial subjects therefore entailed an intentional separation of indigenous people from their own tongues; a process that was constructed as the separation of animal-like beings from civilised human beings (Veronelli, 2015). This modernist monologic closed possibilities of being in conversation with indigenous languages and indigenous knowledge systems (Veronelli, 2015).

Cole and Graham (2012) expound that language is a powerful weapon of social exchange that can both hurt and defend. Language in this context is seen as operating as a powerful strategy for (re)producing masters and servants, privileging and excluding. Thus transformation that does not decolonise language is bound to lead to sustain the dominance of Eurocentric languages and subordinate positionality of indigenous languages in South African corporations.

7.2.2.6 White merit – black “African” incompetence

Shared perceptions of merit were also found to bind the beneficiaries of the racial contract as merit is seen as white. By close proximity to whiteness on grounds of shared language and geographical location, Indian and Coloured employees were constructed as embodying a greater degree of competence in relation to African subjects. Consequently, Africans were constructed as perpetually lacking and deserving development. Africans, according to participants, have to work ten times harder than their white counterparts and other black social groups to prove their worth and competence. Consequently, Africans tended to have a higher propensity to quit and return after a year or two, citing leadership style and organisational culture as drivers of their quitting behaviour. Many authors both nationally and abroad have written extensively on how systemic racism operates under the guise of meritocracy (Canham, 2014; DiTomaso, Post, & Parks-Yancy, 2007; DiAngelo, 2011). This study illuminates how Indian and Coloured social groups in the South African context tend to be somewhat associated with merit compared to their African counterparts who are constructed as the total embodiment of incompetence. The study also links mental and emotional exhaustion of Africans from proving their worth with relatively higher turnover behaviour amongst this social group. Steyn (2015) agrees that those who are socialised into spaces of relative disadvantage are more likely to understand and recognise the “oppressive” systemic odds and content with unearned barriers in the way of their advancement, being predominantly situated in positions of service and support to those who are advantages. But they also have to work through feelings of shame and humiliation as threats to their mental and physical health; and also have to confront the perils of nonconformity if they challenge expectations set for them.

The phenomenon of turnover amongst black subjects that emerged in this study has been topical since the dawn of democracy in 1994. Ndzwayiba, Ukpere, and Steyn (2016) recently wrote on this phenomenon. These authors explain that blacks have consistently been constructed as a homogenous group that job hops in search of

financial rewards (Sibanda, 1995). The authors refer to various publications (Business Day, 2008; 22 September; McGregor, 2008) to show how the dialect and tonality of this rhetoric increasingly became pejorative over time with phrases such as “disloyal, greedy, unreliable and incompetent black professionals”. Ndzwayiba et al (2016) refer to scholarly works of (Wood, 1995; Matuna, 1996; Wilkins & Gulati, 1996) to show that this narrative has been refuted since the 90s to date as mythological and thriving on victim blaming to obscure untransformed corporate cultures that are hostile to black professionals as the real push factors of turnover amongst black professionals (Vallabh & Donald, 2001; Cruz, 2006; Nzukuma & Bussin, 2011).

7.2.2.7 Depoliticised and reproduced gender binaries

Gender in organisations is generally unrecognised, dismissed and/or denied (Pullen & Knights, 2007). Moreover, gender binaries in organisations are often routinized and concealed within the “employee” category, an identity category that is generally viewed as neutral. In the South African context, organisations are obliged by legislation to drive gender empowerment; hence the evident focus in this area. However, it became clear from the studied organisations that both race and gender empowerment strategies are mainly framed within the legislative compliance prism. Accordingly, scholars (Cilliers & Stone, 2005; Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Carrim & Nkomo, 2016) have examined discourses of gender empowerment in South African organisations and showed some positive and negative gains. Broadly speaking, there’s been recognition of some improvement in numerical representation of women in corporations, albeit at a slow pace, but women are reportedly navigating complexities and their identity in these androcentric spaces.

The findings of this study add an interesting dynamic to the existing body of knowledge on gender in corporations. The study found that the predominant compliance-driven approach to gender empowerment fails to recognise gender as a political and contested phenomenon. The dominant frameworks of doing gender empowerment fail to recognise

gender, in Judith Butler's (1988) terms, as a social construct and a performance of social script. Unger and Crawford (1992) explain that gender as a category of analysis encompasses "sexuality, sexual differences, and social constructions of male – female – masculinity and femininity". However, in the organisations studied in this inquiry, gender was parochially conceived within the binary oppositional logic of man – woman. As Knights (2015) correctly posits, this problem points to the normalised dominant discourses of masculinity and the binary epistemologies, ontologies and methodologies that are reproduced within organisational life on a daily basis. This study found two key challenges within this binary thinking; the rejection of feminist discourses, and the invisibilised non-binary conforming social groups.

While studied corporations had put in place some programmes to empower women into leadership roles, corporations rejected initiatives that are grounded in feminist thought. Corporations viewed such feminist-oriented initiatives as political and aggressive towards their male counterparts and therefore inappropriate for corporate environment. The study also revealed that even some male transformation managers tended to be dismissive of feminist-oriented proposals for gender empowerment. These corporations and transformation managers silenced such proposals as the "Beijing and ANC Women's league" phenomenon. Thus, men in corporations are not only the embodiment of bodies that matter (Butler, 1993), they also have the power to decide who speaks about women issues and the perspective from which such a speaker needs to speak. This total control reproduces the gender hierarchies and re-entrenches the male power and privilege the very transformation efforts seek to change.

The study also found that 'genderqueer' was not at all recognised as a category or function of gender. Despite the availability of research studies that unearthed perpetual marginalisation and oppression of employees that differ from this cisgender norm (Martinsson, Reimers, Rengarde & Lundgreen, 2007; Van Zyl, 2015), the studied corporations showed great reluctance and lack of tools to tackle this issue. In fact, participants in this study tended to gravitate towards regurgitating sexual harassment

policy provisions when engaged on the topic of sexuality: “We are aware of them, we’re to say, we even for instance when we sexual harassment we also tell them to say they can be same sex as sexual harassment, don’t assume that a male can’t sexually harass another male, so we are aware”. These findings confirm Butler (1988), Warner (1991) and Acker’s (2006) postulations about gender norms being embedded in most organisational processes and interactions to reinforce gender hierarchies and heteronormativity. These findings also affirm how heteronormativity as the naturalisation of heterosexual bodies, subjects, norms, and practices (Warner, 1991) indeed continues to be reinforced as the ideal of being human. Thus, heterosexuality was assumed to be the norm in these corporations (Fausto-Sterling, 2000). The studied organisations seem unaware of how current conceptions of gender and practices of gender empowerment continue to normalise and privilege heteronormativity and cisgenderism while equally enforcing compliance with these socially constructed norms. This finding aligned with Martinsson et al.’s (2007) findings in which heterosexual men and women were completely ignorant of the hegemony of their heterosexuality in Lithuanian workplaces. The non-recognition of non-cisgender employees and the tacit expectation for all employees to conform to this norm is an injustice, and non-recognition of their being and culture, and these injustices remain undealt with.

While researchers have examined the experiences of LGBTI employees in workplaces and revealed a plethora of challenges and made recommendations, I suspect that the lack of attention on this issue could partially be related to the lack of tools and capacity of transformation managers to deal with gender complexities. More research work is required in this area in corporate South Africa’s transformation trajectory. Such work is critical for ensuring that gender is deconstructed, challenged and changed in the workplace transformation discourses so as to engender real gender equality.

7.2.2.8 Medicalised and hyper-individualised disability strategies

In all three case studies, corporations developed strategies aimed at enhancing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. The strategies ranged from learnerships, internships and recruitment drives. The strategies employed in these organisations were found to have increased the number of employees with disabilities beyond the 2% representation required by the South African government. In fact, almost all three organisations were showcased for their disability initiatives and progress.

All three organisations have run disability sensitisation workshops and implemented learnerships to develop the skills of persons with disabilities for employability purposes. Organisations have also run disability disclosure campaigns. In these campaigns, employees with disabilities are encouraged to disclose their disabilities using an EEA1 form. While Employment Equity legislation does not require employees to disclose if they do not wish to, the BBBEE legislation requires proof of medical confirmation of the disability if the company wishes to be recognised for employing persons with disabilities. Consequently, companies are requiring disclosing employees to complete the EEA1 form and a copy of the medical certificate.

These checks and balances are somewhat beneficial for statistical recording and reporting purposes and for monitoring progress made in employing persons with disabilities. Recording statistics would assist the nation in monitoring progress made in correcting the barriers and challenges of unemployment, underemployment and inequality in this social group as found by scholars (Philpott & McClaren, 1997; Eide & Ingstad, 2011; Mbanjwa & Neeson, 2002; Ngwena, 2010). The studied corporations' strategies seem to respond to a certain degree to some of the challenges pointed out by Matsebula et al. (2000) and Hurling (2008) regarding social factors that limit employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, and issues of workplace discrimination and reasonable accommodation. The majority of persons with disabilities in studied corporations were employed in the lower echelons, and they were mainly black. Only fewer persons with disabilities were employed in the professionally qualified and senior leadership echelons, and those that were employed at these levels were mainly white.

These findings correspond with other studies (Gottlieb, Myhil & Blanck, 2009). These findings also speak to a broader problem in which disability is viewed in silo as if there's a non-racialised, non-gendered human category whose bodies carry only the disability mark. Additionally, this study confirmed Mtsebula et al's. (2000) concern about disability integration strategies that are mainly framed within the context of "helping" the "other". There was very little involvement of persons with disabilities in the crafting of corporate strategies regarding disability mainstreaming. In two case studies, persons with disabilities were included in the workplace transformation committees. These committees however, have no decision-making power and their ability to influence strategy is highly questionable.

The above findings reveal that conceptual frameworks of disability in the studied corporations straddle between the medical and social models. While these models are generally criticised for their limitations, I think they have some value and some inherent limitations. As Gottlieb et al. (2009) explained that the social model examines barriers in the environment, society and attitudes that prevent persons with disabilities from participating maximally in society. While this model raises some awareness about exclusion and marginalisation, it continues to neglect some of the key issues raised by the critical disability model. Scholars such as Potheir and Devlin (2006) clarified that disability is neither a medical nor a phenomenon of sensitivity and compassion, but a subject of politics and power. The politics and power in this instance speak to the critic of the normative – socially constructed superiority of the abled body and the upholding thereof as the standard of being human. The critical model views the very conception of ablebodied and disabledbodied binaries as oppressive and intended to control those deemed disabled (Barnes & Oliver, 1993). Hence Linton (1998) viewed disability as a social, political, and cultural phenomenon.

The need for incorporation of the critical disability model is evident in how ablebodied persons in studied organisations craft strategies on behalf of persons with disabilities and even engage in processes of job reservations for this talent. While these efforts are well-

intentioned, as Dick-Masher (2015) argues, they still reveal how able-bodiedness continues to be institutionalised as the norm and therefore qualifies to think and act on behalf of the disabled counterparts. Dick-Masher (2015) correctly argued that this discourse falls short of accounting for the bodies and minds of workers with disabilities by naturalising the idea that people with disabilities do not belong in certain job categories. This job reservation discourse further affirms Siebers' (2011) views about the predominant "hyperindividualization" of disability which renders persons with disabilities as quasi-human (Siebers, 2011). It is rather recommended that organisations need to prioritise the interrogation of the very idea of ability as a normal human trait and the marker of humanity (Murphy, 1990 Siebers 2011). Additionally, there's a need to consider how disability intersects with other identities such as race, gender, and sexuality so as to craft strategies that respond appropriately to these nuances. Van Zyl (2015) has written quite extensively about these intersections. However, there is not evidence that corporate empowerment strategies take cognisance thereof.

7.2.3 Employee's social constructions of diversity in the organisations

The above discussions revealed a variation of diversity strategies and challenges that are experienced in the studied organisations. Transformation managers seemed comfortable with some of these strategies and believed they were effective. They equally acknowledged some of the challenges and limitations. I reasoned that the best measure of the effectiveness of these strategies would be the lived experiences of different employees within each organisation. In this section, I outline some of the key findings that emerged from focus groups across different cases.

7.2.3.1 Race conscious Africans

The study found that white and Indian participants tended to invoke colour blindness while African participants somewhat took up the hard work of raising consciousness about race and related oppression. The ownership and dis-ownership of blackness between African, Coloured and Indian participants confirms Steyn's (2015) views about the complexities that subordinate groups contend with as they tend to be aware of systematised oppression and the personal risk associated with challenging these discourses. The findings also confirmed Steyn's (2015) views that those that are socialised in relative positions of privilege tend to have lesser awareness of the very social conditions that created their advantage. In this study white participants adopted race blindness and displayed discomfort and defensiveness on issues pertaining to race in workplaces. Interestingly, Indian participants tended to protect the white narratives of race blindness. Africans, on the contrary, took the responsibility of interjecting and disrupting these blindness discourses. African participants owned the black identity to claim the authority of the "I" and the authenticity of their own lived experiences in a white-dominated corporate world. Thus, the most oppressed social group took risk and the responsibility of doing the work of transformation.

The African participants highlighted that transformation is only taking place at the lower levels of occupancy and that in the upper echelons that have real power, influence and financial rewards there is no real change. They argue that diversity is taking place at a junior level. Consequently, the bottom levels of occupations have become chiefly black. Africans thus became challengers of the status quo while other groups became moderators serving to cushion the attacked whiteness. Challengers persisted to ask why transformation is not taking place in the top levels. They further challenged the idea that the pendulum has swung arguing that if it had, the top would be as diverse as the bottom echelons.

In all three cases the moderators counter argued that the top management remains white and male because it takes a considerable amount of work experience and qualifications to climb to these upper echelons. Indian participants seemed to be

strategically deployed as scaffold between notions of white superiority and African inferiority with a clear intent of protecting the white racial contract. As such, these participants shared the sentiment that transformation that disrupts power and privileged positionality of white masculinity has the potential to collapse the organisational systems. This narrative reveals how white masculinity is psychologically internalised by these oppressed subjects as the embodiment of competence and blackness as the embodiment of incompetence.

7.2.3.2 White fragility – A transformation resistance strategy

Case studies showed that white males were reportedly “sensitive”, “uncomfortable”, “felt targeted”, “felt reverse discriminated against” and “felt guilty” when issues pertaining to race and transformation are being discussed in various platforms. This dominant minority group was stated as conflating the intention of diversity efforts with bringing back the past. Consequently, they provided excuses to avoid actively engaging in the process of confronting inequality regimes. Interestingly, this social group seemed comfortable to discuss issues of sexism and ableism and to engage in philanthropic transformation discourses that entail training and development of black people and persons with disabilities.

These discourses of convenient dis/comfort are theorised best by DiAngelo (2011) as white fragility. DiAngelo describes white fragility as “the state in which a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves”. The range of emotional reactions according to DiAngelo includes anger, fear, guilt and behaviours such as argumentation, silence and exiting the stress-inducing environment. South African corporations can thus be viewed as white fragility protectionist. Diversity programmes that invoke white fragility tend to receive less leadership support and be exchanged with programmes that enable minimal stress on whiteness. White fragility can thus be viewed as a strategically deployed manipulation tactic that serves the function of shifting the focus away from the questioning and challenging of power and privileged

positionality wielded by this dominant minority social group. Interestingly, this group continues to behave in oppressive ways that reproduce racial hierarchies. Additionally, they engage in philanthropic and often paternalistic transformation discourses that are frequently predicated on internalised racist assumptions about the inherent deficiencies of non-white groups that can be developed by white persons' aid. White fragility and guilt are thus soft transformation resistance strategies that perform the disciplinary function to set boundaries of engagement clear and to protect the racial contract. This in turn permits the prevailing culture silences genuine conversations about race as the focus group is multiracial. Thus far, there is no corporation that has found ways of disrupting the norm and creating an environment in which the discomfort is transcended.

The white (Afrikaans) men reject the diversity management programme and yet they continue to behave in ways that are inconsiderate and exclusivist towards the different others. This insensitivity suggests resistance to transformation and rejection of any means that seek to change status quo. The discomfort is rather a strategic performance of power, an assertion of power in non-verbal ways that position this minority group as "untouchables".

7.2.3.3 "Fucking gods"

Prioritisation of profit over people came out strongly throughout the study. This theme was triangulated through employees' own lived experiences across all the corporations. In the retail sector, the issue of the casual worker system which remains interlaced with race is a typical example of how profit margins need to be realised at the cost of people's livelihood. Similarly in the banking sector, the articulation of transformation as a necessary evil which has better financial returns for corporations is another example. However, the private hospital group case stood out in terms of how profit, power, and

normalised identities work together to dehumanise the less powerful groups at work. In this case, an elite group of white male able-bodied heterosexual male medical doctors were described as exceptionally racist, abusive, dehumanising and rude. Employees expressed utter frustration at the way they are treated by this elite group which they called “fucking gods”. “Fucking gods” denoted the superior status of this elite group in the structure, the power and influence they have over the entire organisational system, and their permitted malicious behaviour. Employees felt that management was selling them to these abusive doctors in the interest of making money. Leadership on the other hand excused the abusive doctor behaviour as a matter of a few old white males that were socialised under apartheid and are near retirement. Leadership also expressed a sense of limited delegated authority to enable them to challenge the abusive male doctors as head office structures believed that these abusive doctors bring the most profit to the organisation. Employees unanimously described the organisational culture as toxic. They described these doctors as “fucking gods” and as running the show unabated.

These finding affirm Acker’s (2006) theorisation of organisations as power laden structures that reproduce inequality regimes and oppression. Acker explained inequality regimes in organisations as systematised disparities between participants in power and control over goals, resources, outcomes and decision-making authority. When such power is exercised without due attention to promotion of justice, fairness and equality, it leads to the infliction of injustice on subordinates. In this case study, oppression is evident in the violence and the culture of silencing. Young (2014) posits that violence is one of five faces of oppression and is perhaps the most visible. Young explains that certain oppressed members of society constantly live with cognizance that they must fear arbitrary, unprovoked attacks on their person(hood) or property. Such attacks, according to Young, do not necessarily need a trigger or motive as they are intended to humiliate, damage and destroy the person. Such violent oppression often leads to a state of powerlessness. Young (2014) explains powerlessness as the lack of authority and those over whom power is exercised. The powerless, accordingly to Young (2014), are

positioned such that they perpetually take orders without having an opportunity to give them. In this instance, powerlessness extends to closure of space for those upon whom power is exercised to have a voice or even question the status quo.

Thus, violence, power and powerlessness operate in this organisation to routinize oppression and to foster what Freire (1970) called the culture of silence. The culture of silence, according to Freire, produces oppressed subjects that are inflicted with oppression but they cannot talk about their oppression (Freire, 1970). Freire postulates that the deeper level of silencing happens when the oppressed are indoctrinated and believe that they are inferior to the ruling group. Such negative imaging becomes internalised to form part of the oppressed subjects' own beliefs. Freire states that at this point, the oppressed subjects do not become silent because they are silenced but because they have learnt to be silent and choose to be silent. He concludes that the only way for silenced subjects to free themselves and claim their voice is by gaining critical consciousness. In this case study, a nuance that emerged is how politics of believability inculcate the culture of silence. Believability in this instance refers to which bodies embody credibility and truth, and how these values are tied to the currency of power and privilege. The doctors referred to here as "fucking gods" are mainly the embodiment of credible white heterosexual able-bodied males and they are a great source of revenue stream for a profit-oriented organisation. Therefore, their behaviour does not deserve scrutiny. Instead, the lower level workers who mainly differ from this powerful normalised credible body bear the burden of proving their credibility but still have greater chances of still being unheard or not believed. The participants' narrative of "fucking gods" was a powerful narrative of claiming their own voice, the credibility of their own lived experiences and the maximising of the afforded space to speak about the oppression. This finding also signals the need for further research on the operating models in the private healthcare sector and how these models perpetuate inequality and oppression.

7.3 Conclusion

The preceding discussions show that corporations in South Africa are battling with the concept of workplace diversity. Thus far, frameworks of diversity are mainly framed within profit-oriented neoliberal ideologies and the complimentary Employment Equity policy. Strategies in place seem to promote employment of different groups, particularly those that were previously excluded in certain forms of labour. However, the hierarchies of power remain intact. Viewed within the CDL criteria, the diversity interventions in place seem to be shallow and failing to address injustices that are latent in organisational culture, processes and systems.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a précis of the study, implications for theory, methodology and practice, as well as recommendations for future studies. As such, the main purpose of the study, the main research question and the methodology are briefly revisited. The chapter proceeds to provide a synthesis of key findings. The limitations of the study are also outlined.

8.2 Main Purpose of the Study

The study appreciated the positive gains in transforming South Africa's societies and workplaces, and further recognised that more transformation still needs to be done to bring about the desired equality at various levels of the social system. Mamphela Ramphele (2009) states that such transformation needs to alter structures, institutional arrangements, policies, modes of operation and relationships in society. She further argues for such transformation work to encompass the political, economic and social aspects. Ramphele (2009) also posits that South Africa still needs to deal with the ghosts from the past. This study recognised that workplaces, as an extension of a transforming society, are bedevilled by the same ghosts of inequality, racism, sexism, ableism and heteronormativity. Thus, laying ghosts to rest also requires expose of such ghosts so that they can be challenged and changed.

Many South African scholars have examined processes and attitudes related to transformation and diversity work in South African organisations and revealed a plethora of challenges. This study sought to look at possible solutions by exploring the diversity discourses in some corporations that were recently showcased by the department of labour for having some effective diversity strategies. This inquiry investigated these acclaimed best practice diversity discourses using Critical Diversity Literacy as the lens.

Accordingly, the main research question was therefore formulated as follows: What is the nature, the texture and the depth of diversity discourses in JSE listed corporations that

were recently show-cased by the Director General of the Department of Labour in the CEE report?

The main objective of this inquiry was to evaluate three dimensions of the acclaimed best practice diversity discourses. These included the conceptual framework of diversity (nature), the interpretation and implementation thereof by transformation managers as agents charged with the responsibility of facilitating transformation in corporations (texture), and the efficacy thereof in engendering an organisational culture of diversity appreciation and equality based on lived experiences of diverse employees within such corporations (depth). This study intended to understand the conceptual framing of appraised diversity discourses in select corporations.

8.3 Summary of key findings

The main finding of this study is that diversity discourses in appraised organisations mainly comply with criteria of Employment Equity legislation. More specifically, the appointment of a senior Employment Equity officer, the establishment of an Employment Equity committee, the development of Employment Equity policies and plans and the submission thereof to the department of labour before or on the due date. The appraised organisations seem to have made some gains in employing some of the marginalised social groups, particularly people with disabilities and black women. Some of the corporations further included Employment Equity compliance targets in the manager's performance plans. The performance plans are also linked to financial rewards.

Substantively, the studied corporations demonstrate greater interest in profit maximisation. This discourse affirms the location of these corporations within the neoliberal system, a global power structure that inherently instigates inequalities. Critiquing these organisation's frameworks of diversity, however, calls for a broader review of national transformation policy framework against which these organisations' frameworks align. As Taylor (2007) advised, the broader national framework for socio-economic transformation

have been hugely influenced by powerful white capitalist corporations that were more concerned about losing their investment rather than real social reforms. The transformative legislation and the constantly shifting national government strategies are indicative of the continuous search for the middle ground between economic growth stimulation and social transformation in a country that is captured by global neoliberalism (Taylor, 2007; Posel, 2010; Godfrey, Maree, Du Toit, & Theron, 2010 p. 27). Hence all studied corporations' frameworks showed alignment with South Africa's legislative framework of transformation and diversity promotion. In this framework, corporations mainly viewed transformation and diversity as a corporate social responsibility. The prerequisite for corporate social responsibility is profitability and increased market share (Scarritt, 2013), and this criteria is fundamental to neoliberalism (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016). Neoliberal frameworks are fraught with injustice and are incapable of engendering equality. Examples of these injustices became apparent in this study when participants spoke about the casual labour system and their silenced voices amidst violent doctor abuse. These injustices were inflicted on the participants for the bigger goal of gaining profit.

Transformation in the studied corporations appeared to be mainly a rubber stamping exercise done to appease government and gain legitimacy in a transforming society. Consequently, there was disconnect between the commitments enshrined in the organisational documents and actual practice. The practices of diversity in these organisations failed to regard oppression and marginalisation as present phenomena that are produced and reproduced through organisational systems, processes, structures and social interactions. This was partially due to the fact that organisations viewed issues of oppression as an apartheid legacy and thus a past phenomenon. The advent of modernity, cultural imperialism and the symbolic value of hegemonic identities such as whiteness, masculinity, heterosexuality and ability were not viewed as interlaced systems that continue to entrench inequality and oppression. This non-recognition led to perpetual reproduction of these oppressive systems in various ways and the development of shallow

diversity interventions. Notwithstanding this, transformation managers in these organisations attempted to challenge the prevailing race dynamics. However, the interventions they put in place were primarily limited to recruitment, skills development and career mobility. Interventions that have been put in place to facilitate dialogue on issues of race in order to build social cohesion seem to be rejected by white males. The same white males were found to be in control of these organisations. This fragility of whiteness juxtaposed with their sustained dominance and oppressive behaviour suggested lack of intent to transform the status quo and engender new organisational environments of difference. Thus, white males in particular were found to be doing their best to hog power.

Additionally, the diversity interventions implemented by the show-cased corporations also failed to comprehend the complexity and intersectional nature of identities and one person may be marginalised based on a set of identities they embody and be privileged on others. This is partially due to the fact that these interventions are not linked to critical diversity, decoloniality and/or postcolonial thinking. Consequently, these interventions reproduced the gender binaries, ignored the existence and marginality of LGBTI employees, and failed to recognise disability as an issue of politics of power and control. These failures inevitably led to the inability of these diversity strategies to deepen social justice for all.

The failure to deepen social justice for all was evident in the narratives of transformation managers who often felt like tokens that are charged with driving depoliticised transformation programmes. One participant argued that “we need a revolution” in transformation management. This statement spoke to the need for a different kind of transformation that tackles critical issues of marginality, inequality and oppression particularly for Africans. In all studied entities, Africans were found to be contending with worst forms of marginalisation and oppression. The organisation’s transformation programmes reproduced the racial and gender hierarchies in which white males are at the top of the scale, followed by white women. Indian and Coloured employees formed some form of a buffer between whiteness and Africans. Consequently, white people were

predominantly located at the top of occupations with power and high pay, with Indian and Coloured people in the middle, while most Africans were predominantly in the lower levels.

Ability to communicate fluently in English and Afrikaans seemed to earn Indian and Coloured employees some degree of legitimacy and proximity to whiteness. But they still remained out of the core circle of whiteness. Africans, on the other hand, were seen by all these groups as the “Other”. Africans were seen as embodying incompetence, inability to communicate effectively, and deserving of some development programmes. This discourse of the developer and the developed revealed the sustained colonial attitudes about the inferiority of the “primitive” Africans who were conceived as being in need of western civilisation and Christianisation. The study also found that the “black” identity was chiefly assigned to Africans even by Indian participants. According to South African legislation, Indian and Coloured groups are regarded as black. However, during apartheid, the distinction between Indians, Coloureds and Africans (blacks) served to divide these groups and instil a false sense of superiority and inferiority. The assignment of the black identity to Africans is evidence of the failure of these organisations’ diversity initiatives to dismantle these artificial “mental” barriers. This perception of the African as the most inferior in the structure also came up strongly during focus groups. White and Indian participants tended to adopt the blindness discourses particularly on race and gender. African employees took up the work of pointing out a different reality based on their lived experiences. However, these employees’ narratives were often dismissed by the Indian participants who always showed greater sympathy with the white narrative.

The preceding thus reveals some fundamental limitations with the department of labour’s measurement instrument for best practice. Given these limitations and the prevailing injustices and inequalities in appraised corporations, this study concluded that the acclaimed best practice diversity discourses are not necessarily the best.

8.4 Implications of the Study

Transformation of South African society and workplaces is vital for sustainable socio-economic reforms and for social cohesion. South Africa, now more than ever since 1994, is experiencing people's growing impatience with the slow pace of reforms and the brunt of inequality. The Fees Must Fall, Rhodes Must Fall, justifications of the unjustifiable xenophobic attacks, prolonged strike actions and service delivery protests amongst many movements are indicative of this growing social impatience with the pace of reforms in post-apartheid South Africa. A pertinent question thus arises: can South African organisations achieve real reforms through managerial instrumentalism oriented policies and programmes? As Groschl (2011) and Healy (2016) argued managerial instrumentalism places emphasis on leveraging human differences for organisational profits while disregarding core issues of inequality and injustice. This study confirmed that the predominant managerial instrumentalism oriented approaches in local corporations are ineffective in terms of challenging and altering ideological processes, unequal power relations and inequalities in organisations. For these reasons this study recommends a greater focus on adoption of a transformative paradigm in conceptualising, implementing and evaluating discourses of diversity in organisations. The transformative paradigm has greater potential of producing models that tackle issues of intersecting inequalities and social injustices that implicate identities in organisations (Healy, 2016). This shift in thinking and doing diversity is critical for accelerating transformation and the realisation of the constitutional ideals of equality, freedom and justice for all.

As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, critical diversity studies have arisen to take up this challenge. However, this work is still relatively new in South Africa. Professor Melissa Steyn, Professor Stella Nkomo, Doctor Claire Kelly and others have been at the forefront of advancing this body of knowledge locally. Thus, there are more areas that still need to be explored from a critical diversity perspective in organisations. Zanoni et al. (2010) recommended critical diversity scholars to investigate best practice diversity discourses amongst other existing knowledge gaps in this body of knowledge. This study sought to contribute towards the closure of this gap. The main contribution of this study therefore is

the emphasis on the criticality of situating the examined best practice diversity discourses within the broader global ideological systems of power. This is crucial for enabling the examination of such strategies and interventions in totality and within the context of challenging interlinked inequality regimes at all levels of such oppressive systems. This does not necessarily mean that scholars must not pay attention to context specific nuances. It rather means that context specifics must not be delinked from the broader interconnected struggle for social justice for all marginalised societies and social groups globally and the imperative of challenging and changing the broader hegemonic system that instigates such injustices. This approach has greater potential of leading to the development of holistic theories and models that will ultimately lead to the transformation of the entire system.

8.5 Epistemological implications

The studies of diversity have mainly relied on modern/colonial epistemologies. These epistemologies prevail in management sciences and practice. Scholars in this domain have barely situated these epistemologies with the global hegemony of capitalism and coloniality of power, knowledge and being. By so doing, they perform the work of sustaining status quo of inequality and marginality. The study raises grave concerns about the capability of such modernist epistemologies to assist societies, particularly marginalised groups, in realising freedom and social justice. Thus, examination of diversity in organisations needs to be located within the transformative paradigms, particularly the decolonial paradigm.

The Decolonial paradigm is concerned with global equality and justice. Accordingly, decoloniality emphasises that Western democracy is not the only two models to position our thinking and doing. Rather, decolonial arguments promote the communal as another alternative to capitalism and communism. Most importantly, decoloniality challenges the claimed universality of western-centric epistemologies. The geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge are some of the concepts that buttress each other in decolonial thinking and

these concepts shift the geography and bodies that are hailed as global producers of thinking and knowledge (Mignolo, 2011). Mignolo (2011) explains that Western Christianity and Western Europe were effectively acclaimed as the geo-historical locations where specific biographies of Christian and European men were thinking and producing knowledge and the Restern periphery “was to be civilised”. Thus “the first world has knowledge and third world has culture” (Mignolo, 2009).

The geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge within the decolonial paradigm stresses locality as not merely a geo-historical location of the knowing subject but also the epistemological correlation with the sensing body, perceiving the world from a particular locale and history (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2009) state that this shifts attention from what is enunciated to the enunciation. This turns upside down Descartes’s dictum that thinking comes before being to acknowledge that it is a racially marked body in a geo-historical marked space that feels the urge or get the call to speak, to articulate, in whatever semiotic system, the urge that makes of living organisms “human beings”. They add that decoloniality calls for rethinking of the Cartesian formula “I think therefore I am” into “I am where I think” and that this rethinking has to be accompanied with the discrediting of neoliberal market ideology and the “last progressivist universalist vector of global history together with the last closed utopia of the global salvation”.

Mignolo (2011) concludes that locations of knowledge can no longer be controlled by the languages, actors, institutions, and categories of thought on which Western civilisation and Western modernity were imagined, described and built. He argues that the west can no longer be the point of reference and of epistemic legitimacy. This postulation implies that scholars that are genuinely interested in realisation of equal and just organisations have to rethink and challenge the normative western-centric epistemologies of diversity that prevail in academia and social organisations as well as the think tanks of the financial sector that delink identitarian based inequalities from the historicity of coloniality. It further appeals to scholars that are interested in critically evaluating organisational diversity discourses for social justice purposes to transcend the parochialism and ethnocentrism

abound in the modernist paradigm which tend to detach business, politics, society and biography. Scholars should consider adopting transdisciplinary approaches that have the capability of assisting in reimagining a just egalitarian society and organisations in which we can re-humanise the dehumanised and be “different together” (Steyn, 2010).

8.6 Methodological implications

Once more, diversity research in management sciences has relied heavily on a modernist paradigm and philosophical assumptions. Conducting research on diversity in organisations especially in the Global South also requires adoption of postmodernist and poststructuralist critical paradigms. This may entail a board range of methods and strategies including the decolonial perspective. I select the decolonial perspective here as it demands what Mignolo calls “epistemic disobedience”. Epistemic disobedience is grounded in the rejection of modernist-based methodologies that assume that the knowing subject in the discipline is objective, transparent, detached from the known and untouchable by the geo-political configuration of the world in which people are racially ranked and regions are racially configured. From this ostensibly detached and neutral point of observation, the knowing subject maps the world and its problems, classifies people and projects what is good for them. This pseudo-objectivist stance abounds in the studies of diversity in management sciences. Thus, there is a need for in-depth studies that are based on personal narratives of lived realities in corporations. As much as focus groups provide this space, the narratives are often silenced or interrupted by counter-narratives which often deny the speaking person the right and authority of own lived experience. Such methodological approaches will yield rich data on the nuances involved in the production and sustenance of oppression in workplaces.

8.7 Implications for policy

The critique of Employment Equity policy offered by Standing and Standing (2008) provides some key areas of focus for policy evaluation. The first limitation of current policy

related to Employment Equity is a product of a shift within the ILO's objective from advocating for vertical equality under a market globalisation to greater focus on horizontal redistribution. This inherently keeps inequalities amongst developed – developing countries as well as between owners of means of production and workers intact. This inevitably sustains the global power structure that instigates inequalities.

This study elucidated the fact that Employment Equity policy forms part of the ILO's horizontal "equity" instruments. The hierarchies of power and inequality between the employer "including management categories" and the employees are left unchallenged. Reality is that to this end, these vertical power relations remain racialised, gendered and able-bodied. Thus critical questions about the capability of this policy to promote real diversity amongst and across different levels of occupations need to be considered. To this end, the horizontal equality enhancing policies assume the male body as the sole bread winner and further extend most benefits to a nuclear family structure. By so doing, they hold intact the gender binaries while invisibilising the humanity of the different others.

Therefore, there is a need for a critical review of current legislative framework beyond the neoliberal ideologies of the dictatorship of the global financial structures that have captured the ILO. Such a review needs to take into account Biko's (1978) assertion that

... we believe that in the long run the special contribution to the world by Africa will be in this field of human relations. The great powers of the world have done wonders in giving the world an industrial and military look, but the great gift is yet to needs to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face.

8.8 Implications for practice

The current practices of diversity in organisations remain normative. There's a need to delve into the deeper level and for practitioners to engage with critical diversity literacy and to begin to create safe space for multiple voices to emerge. The ability to create such

space will result in different thought processes on key issues of how to do diversity better. As participants argued, current practices of diversity are “taking us nowhere”. Organisations need to work closely with other social organisations that represent different interests groups including LGBTI, disability, black consciousness movements amongst other with intent of learning from the wealth of knowledge in these institutions. Such learning should assist in sharpening diversity promotion strategies that are implemented in organisations. The truth remains that organisations have potential to reshape society in more positive ways. Thus far, corporations have yet to take up the hard-core issues of diversity and inequality. Until such crucial conversations take place, transformation will remain a mere rhetoric and a chess game.

8.9 Limitations of the study

Simon and Goes (2013) correctly posit that no matter how good a study may be, there'll always be limitations. The first limitation relates to the fact that this study acknowledged the need to situate examination of diversity discourses within what Santos (2009) referred to as the omnipresent global hegemony of western modernity spread by colonialism and imperialism and the consequent asymmetries of power and inequality in all the zones of western contact under the guise of globalisation. Santos (2009) argues that the asymmetries of power in the contact zones are far larger, broader and more numerous than they were in the colonial era; and that “the contact experience is always an experience of limits and borders”. As Santos (2009) posits, this results in a discrepancy between strong questions and weak answers. He explains that strong questions do not only address specific questions pertaining to individual and collective lives but also the “societal and epistemological paradigm that has shaped the current horizon of possibilities within which we make our options”. He argues that there are weak-weak answers and strong-weak answers. Weak-weak answers according to Santos (2009) assume that the prevailing paradigm provides all the required answers and therefore does not need to be altered. However, weak-strong ones do not necessarily provide concrete solutions but embrace the possibility of the collapse of the dominant paradigm, produce positive energy

and consciousness about the possibility of opening space for political and social innovation and assist in opening untravelled paths towards the emergence of new paradigms outside western modernity. This study thus falls within the realm of strong questions with strong – weak answers as it does not provide concrete model for doing diversity best in organisations but opens space for new possibilities of conceiving and doing diversity from a transformative postmodernist perspective.

Linked to the above, the second limitation of this inquiry is that it only contrasts neoliberal models with socialist oriented ideals as found in literature without necessarily exploring alternative models particularly in communist and socialist countries such as China, Russia and Cuba and other emergent possibilities. This posed a limitation in terms of the study's ability to compare practices across a broad spectrum of perspectives and to leverage empirical evidence on other ways of conceiving diversity outside neoliberalism. This omission was intentional as it would have extended the scope of this inquiry. It is therefore recommended that future studies should explore this possibility.

Thirdly, this study sought to understand how a broad range of diversity strategies impact on the emancipation of marginalised groups across multiple intersecting axes of difference. Thus, the inquiry adopted more of a deep stick approach. Consequently, high-level themes that indicate fault lines within frameworks, strategies and practices of diversity were discovered. This inquiry did not necessarily delve into the granular detail to unpack the complex nuances involved in each of these findings. Notwithstanding this, this inquiry was important for advancing critical diversity studies in the South African context and to map some contours for future interrogation by future scholars. This is particularly important given the emergent nature of critical diversity studies in South Africa, particularly in corporate settings.

Fourthly, a multiple case study design was adopted in this study. The strength of this approach lies in the richness of data that is collected from and triangulated amongst multiple sources within a single case. Themes emerging from each case can also be

contrasted against those emerging from other cases in order to get a better sense of similarities and differences. The limitation, however, is that the data collected in the studied cases cannot be generalised across other organisations and individuals that did not participate in the study. However, the findings provide some key insights into potential areas of similarities and differences based on the cross-synthesis of multiple case studies and the readers may recognise resonances with other organisational contexts they are familiar with.

Lastly, critical diversity literacy and critical diversity studies provide useful criteria for analysing diversity strategies. While the criteria provide an indication of what best practice diversity strategies ought to lead to, there's paucity of concrete models that can assist researchers and organisations to monitor and measure best practice from this perspective presently. This inquiry, however, forms part of the studies that are beginning to interrogate best practice so as to ultimately build such models. In the absence of such models at this stage, this inquiry made broad findings and recommendations using the CDL criteria.

8.10 Recommendations for future studies

Given the above findings and limitations, it is highly recommended that future studies focus on the following key areas:

- To investigate alternative models and strategies of doing diversity at work outside of the neoliberal capitalist system as part of building “strong-strong” answers.
- Further investigate the conception of gender in gender empowerment strategies with key focus on gender-queer identities and empowerment strategies.
- Investigate the ownership and dis-ownership of the black identity amongst social groups that are classified as black in South Africa's transformation legislation.
- Focus on unpacking the intricacies of disability empowerment through a critical intersectional lens.

- Assist with research inquiry that aims to build a repository of best practice diversity strategies so as to assist transformation managers and organisations in benchmarking.
- Assist in developing criteria that will focus on substantive change that can be utilised by the department of labour to measure transformation progress beyond above compliance.

8.11 Conclusion

This study affirmed that industrial capitalism and its entrenched western modernist conceptions of being and doing the human remain intact and institutionalised in the studied post-apartheid South African organisations. This is despite a plethora of government enforced transformation instruments and corporate commitments to reforms. While scholars have previously examined discourses of diversity in South African corporations, no study had examined diversity strategies in corporations that were showcased by the department of labour as exemplary. More specifically, no study had applied critical diversity literacy to interrogate the conceptual frameworks of such strategies, the translation thereof into practice and the effects thereof in employee social cohesion. This study contributed towards the closure of this gap by critically evaluating declared best practice diversity strategies in corporations using critical diversity criteria. While almost all strategies fell short of meeting the CDL criteria, this study points out some gaps that need to be explored further with intent of closing these gaps in order to deepen democracy for all. Clear recommendations have been highlighted for future research studies, corporations and the department of labour. Thus, the significant contribution of this study was to raise consciousness amongst corporations, employees, department of labour and academics about the need to interrogate declared best practices and to point out gaps so that these can be resolved in order to realise the desired equality in organisations.

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