

**THE IMPACT OF DIVERSITY TRAINING ON EMPLOYEE
ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR WITH REGARD TO DIVERSITY
IN WORK ORGANISATIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF A DIVERSITY-
TRAINING PROGRAMME IN A NAMIBIAN WORK
ORGANISATION.**

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Florentia Amuenje

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ABSTRACT

Diversity training programmes are formal efforts to prepare the workforce to work with individuals from different cultural backgrounds and to improve organisational effectiveness. Although many studies have described diversity training programmes in the workplace, only a few have been evaluated to assess their effectiveness and impact on job outcomes. This thesis describes a study that assessed the impact of a diversity management-training programme on employee attitudes and behaviour towards diversity in a manufacturing company in Namibia. Kirkpatrick's (1959) four-level model, which examines the trainees' reactions to the training, the learning acquired, the behaviour change and improvement in organisational results, was used to measure the impact of the training programme. Data was collected through pre-and post-assessment semi-structured individual interviews and a focus group was conducted two months after the training. Data analysis indicates that the first two levels of the evaluation model showed an impact. The participants had positive reactions towards the course and said that they had learnt from the course. The data also showed that the training did not have any impact on the behaviour of the participants and on organisational outcomes. The research also revealed that lack of improved productivity and organisational results might have been influenced by unrealistic expectations, past political conditions, job insecurity and unemployment and the training context. Some recommendations for both the diversity training programme administrators as well as the management of the company are made.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, diversity has become a favourite topic of discussion in academia, government institutions and work organisations across the globe (Karp & Sammour, 2000). Namibia with its diverse population, which has been divided and segregated along racial and cultural lines, is no exception when it comes to the challenge of managing differences in the workplace. It is increasingly acknowledged that managing diversity is important for the success of organisations that employ diverse people and serve a diverse customer base. Employers need to create an understanding of diversity in the workplace to ensure the development of successful workforce relationships.

Pretorius (2002) views diversity as all the ways in which people differ and the effect of those differences on people's thinking and behaviour. Diversity includes all those differences that define individuals as unique beings. These differences may be cultural, ethnic, racial, gender, nationality, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, educational background, experiences, opinions, beliefs and abilities (Kossek & Lobel, 1996; Cox, 1994; Jackson, 1992). These authors further state that managing diversity through understanding, respect and valuing differences would allow organisations to capitalize on the benefits that diversity brings to the workplace. The value of this research lies in its attempt to contribute to a better understanding of managing diversity in Namibian workplaces and to ensure that management initiatives succeed in creating an environment in which differences are understood and appreciated by everyone.

1.1 Diversity In The Namibian Workplace

Historically, the Namibian society, which has been divided along group lines, has not celebrated the diverse nature of its population due to the apartheid ideologies. Socialisation and segregation during the apartheid era led to a negative perception of 'others'. Human (1996) notes that the apartheid system has promoted stereotypical attitudes towards cultural groups, who were perceived to be inferior. People who did not conform to the apartheid ideologies and questioned the system were imprisoned or where excluded from the mainstream employment and education system. For example,

admission to schools in Namibia has been by virtue of the race (ethnic group) of the pupil, and area of residence, which also affected their chances of better employment. These discriminatory practices were carried into the workplace and were used to discriminate against those groups that were perceived to be different (Sonn, 1996). Biased attitudes and workforce tensions due to white dominant group supremacy in the workplace have caused problems of poor communication, lack of cooperation and have aggravated the already poor labour relations and conditions of employment in Namibia. Ill-treatment and low salaries of employees characterise these practices, which have often led to strike action (Van Rooyen, 1996).

After independence, the Namibian government adopted a constitution of national unity and reconciliation as a remedial action aimed at redressing past injustices. The constitution forbids all forms of discrimination and advocates attitudes and behaviour that promote equality and justice for all. In addition, the government passed the Affirmative Action Act 29 of 1998 and the Labour Act 6 of 1992, which were aimed at influencing diversity in the workplace. The acts respectively state that members of designated groups (less dominant groups) should enjoy equal employment opportunities at all levels in the workplace. These acts are also geared towards the improvement of labour relations, which is conducive to economic growth, the improvement of wages and employment conditions of all employees.

As a result of these socio-political developments, which introduce the rights of diverse people in the workplace, Namibian employers are faced with the tremendous challenge of developing appropriate change in their organisational culture. It is imperative for the employers to create a workforce that is trained and prepared for the challenges that accompany interactions between diverse people. Milliken & Martins (1996) argue that as organisations increasingly operate in a multicultural context, understanding how the diversity of people within work organisations affects the outcomes such as job satisfaction, creativity and turnover will be of increasing importance. Therefore organisations need to learn how to manage more diverse workgroups than they have managed previously, especially in terms of cultural differences, which is the important diversity dimension facing the Namibian workforce.

Jackson (1992) suggests that the general approach used in organisations to manage workplace diversity and change is referred to as organisational development. Managing diversity as an organisational approach has gained prominence in many organisations worldwide. Sono (2001) argues that these approaches provide a way in which diverse people can interact and work cooperatively with each other in order to create a workforce in which diversity is understood and valued. The challenge of diversity management strategies is changing people's attitudes and behaviour and ultimately the organisational culture. Therefore organisations should create a learning environment in which people learn about others and consequently change their attitudes and behaviours towards those that are different from them.

Learning about diversity through training programmes is expected to assist a diverse workforce to be better prepared to predict the behaviours they encounter of diverse customers or co-workers. Karp & Sammour (2000) indicate that diversity-training programmes were designed to improve relationships among people who work together. However, despite the best intentions, some diversity training programmes produce the opposite effect. This is so because the demand for change might not be in the best interest of the trainees or it is experienced as an attack on their self- image (Bush & Ingram, 2001). It is therefore important to assess training programmes in order to establish what the value of the training was.

1.2 The Study

The aim of this research is to assess attitudes and behaviour of employees in a Namibian work organisation before and after a diversity-training programme in order to determine its effectiveness and to ascertain whether the training programme has evoked any changes in people's attitudes and behaviours towards diversity.

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter Two examines definitions of diversity and explores literature on cultural diversity as an inherent dimension of workplace diversity. It also provides a discussion on Social Identity Theory (SIT), which attempts to explain human interaction in culturally diverse settings. Finally, the

formation of attitudes is described and how several attitudinal and behavioural components impact on diverse workplace interactions.

Chapter three focuses on the approaches of how to manage diversity in the workplace. It attempts to provide organisational development strategies for managing a diverse workforce in order to transform organisations into multicultural organisations that value and understand diversity. This chapter also highlights the need to evaluate change efforts to determine their effectiveness in the light of set goals.

Chapter four describes the research methodology and data collection strategies used in this paper. Chapter five presents the results. In Chapter six the research results are discussed; Chapter seven presents recommendations to both the trainers and the company management. Chapter eight outlines the references.

CHAPTER TWO: DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Understanding diversity and its implications for work organisations is crucial, especially in the wake of social and political change and the transformation experienced in virtually all societies. It is not an easy task to manage diversity in the workplace because merely changing the law and introducing new legislation will not change peoples beliefs, values and ways of thinking, which are part of their cultural backgrounds. These differences need to be managed in order to create a workplace that is representative of the demographics of the workforce and society. The successful management of differences will create a workplace in which differences are understood, valued and appreciated.

Sonn (1996) asserts that the personal values, beliefs and attitudes we hold affect our interactions and work relationships with others who are perceived to be different. To be able to establish an understanding of workplace diversity and the management thereof, this chapter will define diversity and explore some of its inherent elements such as culture, attitudes, stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination and considers how these can hamper positive human interactions. The Social Identity Theory will be discussed in order to understand the impact of group identity on human attitudes and behaviour and how that is experienced in the workplace.

2.1 Understanding Diversity

Diversity has been defined as differences between people based on cultural background, race, nationality, gender, age, geographic origin, sexual orientation and educational background (Erez & Early, 1993; Triandis, 1995; Harris & Moran, 1996; Thomas, 1995). People who differ along these lines often portray different beliefs, values, abilities, perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. Diversity is also defined as differences in worldviews resulting in potential behavioural differences among cultural groups (Triandis, 1996) and differences in-group identity in relation to other groups (Tajfel, 1978). Based on these differences people tend to identify with those whom they share certain characteristics with and reject those who are different.

There are a variety of dimensions on which diversity is based, however cultural diversity is one dimension commonly observed in the Namibian workplace especially with the entrance of historically excluded groups to the workplace. It is important to understand culture and its attitudinal and behavioural components and how these impact on the issue of diversity in work organisations.

2.2 Understanding Culture

Culture can be defined as a shared meaning system wherein members of the same culture are likely to interpret and evaluate situational events and practices in a similar way (Triandis, 1995). Larkey (1996) defines shared meaning systems as occurring in social group interactions and which may refer to objective elements such as roads, tools and clothing or subjective elements such as beliefs, values, norms and attitudes. Erez & Earley (1993) further note that culture shapes a society's core values and norms, which are passed on from one generation to another through social learning and observation of the socially accepted behaviours in one's own society. They go on to say that culture must have been functional at some point in history for people to develop shared language systems, beliefs and attitudes, which are carried over to emerging generations. Based on these differences, members of different cultures develop different ways of thinking and perceiving the world (Triandis, 1996).

Cultural differences have a huge impact on human behaviour and hold potential for misunderstandings in business contacts, which might become barriers to communication and understanding between people (Goodwin, 1995; Nkomo & Cox, 1996). For example, employees from a collectivist cultural background value collective efforts and achievements in the workplace, whereas the individualist greatly associated with western cultures values individual efforts and personal rewards (Hofstede, 1997). These differences could be a source of conflict and major workplace disruptions.

Schauber (2001) explains some variations in values and beliefs of different cultural groups, which might be applied to the Namibian work situation. She found a difference in the way people perceive time for example. The western cultures perceive time as

sequential and a crucial factor in all aspects of life. Westerners may be more accustomed to punctuality, whereas the traditional African cultures see time as a plentiful resource and an opportunity to be with others.

Erez & Earley (1993) explain that subordinates in African cultures are more satisfied with a directive style of leadership, whereas the western cultures value participatory and consultative practices. They go on to say that individualism associated with western cultures focuses on the importance and achievement of individual goals. Managing a workforce in this culture emphasises the management of individuals, and task accomplishment prevails over relationships. People in collectivist cultures, which are associated with African worldviews, are born into a social network, which continues to protect them in exchange for loyalty. Identity is based on the group to which the individual belongs. Managing a workforce in this culture is a management of groups, and relationships prevail over task accomplishment (Erez & Earley, 1993).

It is clear from the above discussion that understanding cultural differences is central to understanding intergroup dynamics. Turner (1999) cites that shared cultural knowledge and attitudes accords a group its identity, which differentiates them from other groups. It is well known that future organisational success will rely on effective intergroup behaviour and work relationships (Kossek & Lobel, 1996). In order to understand the interactions of diverse people and the effects of group identity on human behaviour, this research examines the Social Identity Theory, which explains group interactions in diverse settings.

2.3 Social Identity Theory (SIT) in understanding attitudes and behaviours of cultural diverse groups

There are several social psychological theories that could be drawn on to understand diversity especially in terms of differences based on group divisions. The SIT, as suggested by Tajfel (1981) however, provides a deeper understanding of how different groups interact in diverse settings and assists in examining the nature of group interactions, attitudes and behaviours in the workplace.

Tajfel (1981) defines social identity as the individual's knowledge of belonging to a certain group together with some sense of 'who they are' in relation to their in-group. The SIT asserts that people are born into a particular society and adopt the social categories of that society, from which they also derive their identities and perceptions. Tajfel (1981) maintains that society consists of social categories, on the basis of nationality, race, class, culture, occupation, sex, religion and other variables. People are part of these social categories, which lend a society its distinct social structure. The differences that are experienced in the various groups could be ascribed to these social categories.

Social categorisation also influences intergroup relations, communication and behaviour, which reveals clear preferential treatment for the in-group members (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). These attitudes and behaviours, which are unique to the different groupings, affect the individual's interactions with the world in which they live and work. Similarly it could be said that people's attitudes, behaviours and communication patterns in the workplace are largely determined by the culture and history of their social groups.

This theory states that belonging to a group is distinct from being a separate individual and that this confers social identity or shared representation of who one is and how one should behave (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). It also follows that psychological processes associated with group identity are responsible for group behaviours, such as solidarity within one's group, conformity to group norms and discrimination against out-groups.

SIT makes an important contribution to understanding the dynamics of group relations. It asserts that people think in terms of their group membership when situations in which they find themselves are defined along group membership lines. For example, in a workplace where employees are structured along lines of group-based differences, the SIT explains that the dominant group has the material power to impose its own version of the nature of society onto the less dominant group. That is "it imposes the dominant value system and ideology which is carefully constructed to benefit itself, and to legitimate and perpetuate the status quo" (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, p.27). Consequently

the dominant group may discriminate against the less dominant groups and their communication, attitudes and behaviours are biased towards these groups and hence affect work outcomes.

According to Nkomo & Cox (1996), various aspects of intergroup relations such as in-group loyalties, negative stereotypes and distrust of out-groups often impede cooperation and communication among members of diverse work teams and reduce effective performance. It is therefore important to explore how human attitudes develop and impact on work behaviour and interactions in the workplace.

2.4 Understanding Attitudes

Oskamp (1991) defines attitudes as learned predispositions, which allow people to respond favourably or unfavourably to a given group or object. He further notes that attitudes are learned through early teachings and influences in a particular culture.

Attitudes are important because they affect job behaviour. For example, if workers believe that their manager does not value and appreciate their efforts they might take on an attitude that could affect work outcomes negatively (Robbins, 1989). It is necessary to try and understand how these attitudes are formed and their impact on work behaviour.

There are a number of attitudinal and behavioural components that underlie the interactions and work behaviour of diverse people. These components are stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, which could affect diverse interactions and will be discussed in the following section.

Stereotyping is a perceptual and cognitive process in which specific behavioural traits are ascribed to individuals on the basis of their apparent group membership (Cox, 1994). According to Pretorius (2002) stereotyping involves generalisations and categorisation of people based on their own experiences. Faulty assumptions are made about a person based on his/her group membership and that person is judged unfairly, which then gives rise to prejudice.

Prejudice as referred to by Cox (1994), is an attitudinal bias and involves prejudging someone on the basis of some perceived characteristic. He further indicates that prejudice may be defined as negative feelings or attitudes toward certain groups and their members that are seen to be different. These feelings and attitudes are greatly influenced by the history of intergroup relations between the groups involved and are based on inflexible generalisations (Pretorius, 2002). Carr-Ruffino (1996) describes prejudice as a tendency to view people who are different as being inferior or inadequate and to exclude them from certain work activities based on those assumptions. This is how discrimination is born when people start to act upon these assumptions.

Cox (1994) defines discrimination as a behavioural bias toward a person based on the person's group identity. Pretorius (2002) argues that discrimination is a negative action taken against one or more members of a group simply because of their group affiliation. In the workplace, discrimination can lead to favouritism towards one group or person while certain group members are denied access to organisational resources and are at times excluded from meaningful participation in work activities. These biased attitudes and behaviours are no exception in the Namibian workplace with its history of cultural segregation and apartheid.

Oskamp (1991) and Kahle (1984) indicated that attitudes are changing continually through assimilation, accommodation and organisation as new information is obtained and old information is enhanced or clarified. Attitudes are therefore not static and can change and are adjusted continually. However individuals in work organisations comprise of a diverse population, with diverse attitudes and behaviours. According to Pretorius (2002), we all have prejudices and stereotypes but we can choose to change them. In order to change stereotypes and prejudice and to create a workplace that is free from discrimination, people need to develop an awareness of why people think and behave the way they do. Oskamp argues that attitudes could be changed through learning and reinforcement systems. One therefore could say that it is possible for employees in the workplace to change their biased attitudes through change efforts that are directed towards learning new attitudes and skills.

The incorporation of diverse cultures, which reflect varying values and beliefs, could make an organisation more effective by adding a richness of increased creativity and adaptability to change (Schauber, 2001). To be able to become an effective culturally diverse organisation it is essential for organisations to change the culture of the organisation to become more inclusive of other values and belief systems that exist among its employees. Cox (1994) indicates that it is essential for employers and for educational institutions seeking to prepare people for an effective culturally diverse organisation to be able to manage diversity effectively. Approaches to managing diversity will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: APPROACHES TO MANAGING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Historically managing diversity was regarded as an extension of the affirmative action and equal employment opportunity legislation (Jackson, 1996). However, this legislation does not offer mechanisms, which may enable people from diverse backgrounds to work together towards a common organisational goal. Carr-Ruffino (1996) states that business leaders have realised that the workforce legislation has been an effective tool for opening doors to all, but that it does not provide an adequate basis for managing diversity.

Thomas (1995) suggests that managing diversity is a broad approach that encompasses all dimensions of diversity and that focuses on changing people's attitudes and behaviours. He lists several points entailed in managing diversity. Firstly he advocates that managers should be open to the possibility of changing the organisational culture and systems rather than fitting employees into existing cultures. Secondly managing diversity should create an environment that taps the full potential of the diverse individuals. Finally managing diversity calls for a problem-solving approach aimed at addressing the challenges of diversity instead of focusing on the disadvantaged employee.

Literature has shown that managing differences and efforts to create work environments in which diversity is valued and appreciated has far reaching benefits for organisations. To illustrate these advantages Cox (1994) and Heneman, Waldeck & Cushnie (1996) suggest that companies with a well-managed diverse workforce have reduced turnover and absenteeism, as well as increased productivity. These companies also experienced an enhanced image with the previously disadvantaged groupings that are clients and customers.

Cox further suggests that organisations wishing to enhance the benefits of workforce diversity in terms of improved communication, cooperation, productivity, reduced

conflict and turnover must transform monolithic and plural organisations into multicultural organisations.

The monolithic organisation:

The monolithic organisation according to Cox (1994) is mainly culturally homogeneous and features high levels of occupational segregation. Affirmative action plans may be in place, but they are subtly resisted and not enforced. In addition, many members of this organisation exhibit prejudice and discrimination in the form of pressure on perceived out-group members to conform to the mainstream organisation culture. Given the drastic changes in workplace demographics, Larkey (1996) indicates that a monolithic organisation is not a favourable option and most organisations have made a transition away from this model in an effort to create more plural organisations.

The plural organisation:

In a plural organisation, the workforce is more heterogeneous with the previously excluded members well represented in numbers, although they largely hold lower level jobs. In this case, policies of equal employment opportunities are in place, but employees are expected to conform to the existing culture of the organisation. In plural organisations prejudice and discrimination are still evident, but might be less intense than in the monolithic organisation. These organisations also fail to address the cultural aspects of integration. However there are improved opportunities for out-group members to participate in organisational activities that were previously reserved for in-group members. Yet much needs to be done in order to manage the difficulties and conflicts that arise within these organisations due to differences.

The multicultural organisation:

The multicultural organisation is the ideal in its effort to integrate diverse employees. The previously disadvantaged groups are represented at all levels of the organisation and expression of diverse cultural values, thoughts and actions are encouraged rather than suppressed. In this case, prejudice and discrimination are almost eliminated, and there is an absence of institutionalised cultural bias in organisational policies and practices. An ideal diversity climate, according to Larkey (1996), is one that is shared

by all employees and that encourages diverse ideas, communication and management styles.

For organisations to be able to change into multicultural organisations a broad understanding of change is required. This understanding will enable the people involved to perceive change management as a continuous process and a shared responsibility within an organisation. According to Deluca & McDowell (1992), managing diversity effectively and transforming organisations into multicultural ones means managing organisational change. The next section will explore the notion of organisational change as a process.

3.1 Understanding Organisational Change

The political and social change that is taking place in society at large is prompting similar changes in work organisations. Change is therefore inevitable in organisations and the leaders and members of these organisations need to understand the process that is required in order to initiate change. Change is a process of continually renewing the organisation's direction and capabilities in order to serve the ever-changing needs of the workplace (Moran & Avergun, 1997).

Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) add that change is an on-going process that occurs in multiple phases and takes a great amount of time before any results can be expected. According to these authors, it is clear that change is a continuous process and that it cannot result from a one-off intervention. It is also evident that no one person can implement change successfully. It requires the involvement, commitment and support of others in order for it to be a sustained effort.

According to Cox (1994), changing an organisational culture is a long-term and difficult process, which is accompanied by resistance from all levels of workers.

Every change initiative moves through several predictable change phases: firstly denying the need for change, secondly, admitting the need for change, and finally, searching for solutions to accomplish the type of change agreed on (Moran & Avergun, 1997). Change leaders must be able to create an environment in which people who are

involved in the process of change will be open to new and diverse ideas. The process of change needs to be supported and sustained in order for it to have a lasting effect. It is important for employers to seek ways of understanding the effects of diverse cultures on work behaviour and their impact on business success. Jackson (1992) states that the general approach used in organisations to manage workplace diversity is referred to as organisational development.

3.2 Organisational Development (OD)

In order to bring about effective and lasting change in a diverse workforce, organisational development approaches could be employed to facilitate change and to ensure organisational productivity. Organisational development is a planned and ongoing effort, which is geared towards change (Johns, 1996). It focuses on changing the beliefs, attitudes, values and structure of organisations so that they can better adapt to new challenges (Johns, 1996). Johns (1996, p.573) further asserts, "organisation development seeks to modify cultural norms and roles so that the organisation remains self-conscious and prepared for adaptation".

Beckhard (2002) defines organisational development as an organisation-wide effort that is managed from the top to increase organisational effectiveness through planned interventions. He also indicates that OD represents a unique strategy for system change and advocates that change efforts in organisations should be considered and implemented if organisations are to attain the desired change. OD programmes are long term firstly because changing a system's culture is a difficult and complicated issue. Secondly, there is an assumption that organisational problems such as cultural diversity are complex and a one-off intervention can probably not solve such problems. Finally, OD efforts are sustained based on the assumption that follow-up efforts are needed in order to ensure organisational change.

Schauber (2001) remarks that a desired diverse organisation is one in which an obvious effort is made to get people with different backgrounds, skills, and abilities to work together toward the goals of the organisation. Although change in corporate culture is accomplished slowly it would be a mistake to conclude that all useful initiatives require

decades to implement (Schauber, 2001& Jackson, 1992). They argue that managing diversity is without doubt a challenge to the organisational leadership of today. Employers are therefore required to groom a leadership that is able to lead a diverse workforce and is prepared to face up to the challenge that is posed by diversity in the workplace.

Another factor in diversity management is that the companies today are faced with the task of accommodating a culturally diverse workforce especially the previously excluded members. This scenario might create a situation in which those who hold power, under the current situation, will feel threatened by the prospects of losing their influence with the advent of change. These people are therefore likely to resist change. According to Sono (2001), all employees must learn how to deal with their colleagues of different cultural backgrounds to overcome this resistance.

However to encourage people to change needs more than only training. Sono, (2001) suggests that for change efforts to have a lasting effect it must be combined with action. In addition top management must be committed to the change and should visibly demonstrate support. Management should develop a shared vision for change to ensure participation by all employees in the planning and implementation process.

3.3 Leadership as a Central Feature In Diversity Management

Leadership according to Chemers & Murphy (1995) is a process in which the leader induces followers to apply their energies and resources to a collective objective. They also believe that to be effective in a diverse organisation the leaders should empower and motivate the diverse subordinates and assist them in reaching their full potential.

Fernandez (1998) suggests that leaders should make a considerable effort to work effectively with subordinates from different backgrounds. To be able to achieve this objective they should be aware of the different cultures present in their workforces because empowerment strategies that work in one culture may not work in another culture. These strategies might be unsuccessful because different people have different perceptions of what a good leader is. This was illustrated in the previous discussions,

which highlighted cultural differences and their impact on work behaviour. The process of globalisation has created opportunities for transferring managerial techniques across cultures and such attempts have not always been successful (Erez & Earley, 1993).

Cox (1994) indicates five challenges that a true future leader must be willing to accept in order to create change and establish a diverse workforce. Firstly, they must be willing to become more sensitive and understanding towards the diversity challenges in their workplace. Secondly, they must have a vision for the workplace that broadens the corporate culture. Thirdly, they must be willing to create and implement different employment practices and policies that enhance fairness and equality in the workplace. Fourthly, they must be committed to helping the diverse workforce to perform at its best. Finally they must be able to create a work environment that is attractive to a diverse population.

Moran & Avergun (1997) suggest that for leaders to be able to manage these challenges they should be role models who embody the change philosophy and make it part of the whole organisation. Leaders should foster an environment that will sustain change by encouraging others to act and behave in desired ways. Successful change leaders also need to continue looking for ways to sustain the change by using organisational policies and practices to support the change. A change model could be used to sustain change initiatives. This model proposes a guide of how diversity could be managed in order to create change in the workplace.

3.4 A Model for Guiding Diversity Management in Work Organisations.

Cox (1994) proposes a model for guiding diversity management and organisational change. This model has been borrowed and modified and is presented diagrammatically in Figure 1.

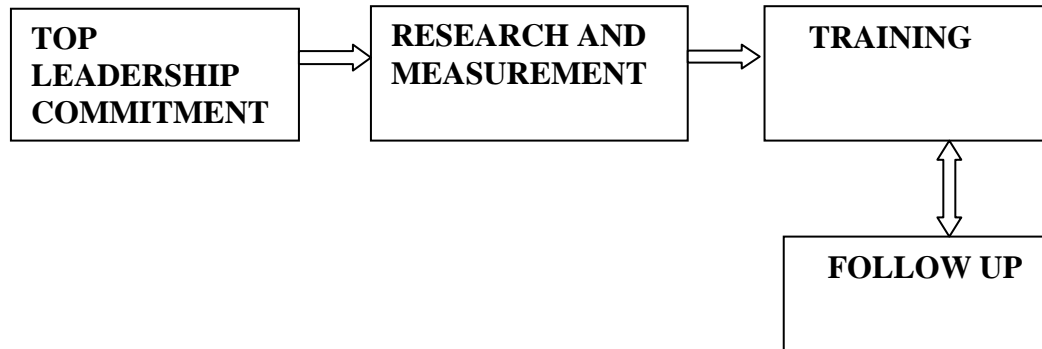


Figure 1: A model to guide organisational change.

In the following section each of the four components shown in Figure 1 will be discussed briefly.

Top leadership commitment:

The role of leadership in a diverse workforce has been discussed in the preceding sections and it is reinforced in this model as one of the components to be considered in diversity management. The top leadership of any organisation must show commitment and support for the course of diversity management. Diversity management should be carried out with regard to all key management policies and practices such as recruitment, selection, reward systems and promotion strategies. It is also necessary for the top leadership to develop explicit cross cultural communication strategies due to the sensitive nature of diversity issues. Commitment from top leadership alone is not enough to diversify the workforce. The commitment of lower level workers is also necessary.

Research and measurement:

Before any diversity management efforts are embarked upon, it is vital to collect information about diversity related issues, which could serve as a point of departure and an indication of where the organisation is in terms of diversity awareness. That will ensure that diversity management does not take place in isolation but as part of an effort that is geared towards addressing the needs of the organisation. Research is also needed to identify areas of organisational culture, management practices and interpersonal relations where changes are needed and to provide clues as to how to make these changes.

Training:

Training could be regarded as the starting point for a managing diversity effort that could create change. A one to three-day workshop or training programme with the aim of building knowledge, awareness and sensitivity around diversity is recommended. The aim of this training is to change people's attitudes and behaviour towards diversity and to ultimately change the organisational culture. Ideally, it is suggested that all employees should be trained to ensure that managing diversity becomes an organisational culture rather than a one-shot intervention.

Follow up:

The effectiveness of the change efforts, such as training programmes, need to be evaluated on a continuous basis against the set goals so that the change becomes part of the regular on-going process of the company. This component is important because it provides feedback to the stakeholders with regard to the impact of the programme. It is also suggested that follow-up allows organisations to modify the training approach and content to suit the changing needs of the organisation. The outcome of this component also indicates whether further training is necessary or not.

3.5 Training as an Organisational Development Effort to Create Change in a Diverse Workforce.

Cox (1994) refers to the training component in the diversity management model as an important aspect in creating awareness in a diverse workplace. Training could be regarded as an organisational development effort, which is aimed at creating learning organisations that are innovative and adaptive to change (Harrison, 1993). To address the challenge of increased workplace diversity, Ford & Fisher (1996) suggest that training is an avenue to explore in developing a more effective workforce. This is based on the assumption that increased knowledge and skills could change perception, attitudes and behaviour.

Diversity training involves educative processes that are intended to promote cross-cultural learning through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, which helps to change attitudes and behaviour towards those who are different from one and enables them to interact effectively across different groups of people (Pretorius, 2002). In order to embrace diversity and the value it brings to an organisation, management should realize that understanding, valuing and appreciating diversity has a huge benefit in terms of the productivity of the company (Pretorius 2002).

Ford & Fisher (1996) state that diversity training is a valuable tool for leading cultural change due to its direct nature of approaching the issues and concerns that arise in a changing workforce. Hickman (1998) notes some assumptions illustrating why diversity training is important for organisations employing a diverse workforce.

Firstly, organisations need to learn more about cultural differences and their own responses to those who are different.

Secondly, there is a low degree of personal comfort with cultural differences due to a limited knowledge and a resistance to change.

Finally, there are a number of costs (e.g. high turnover, absenteeism, recruiting and retraining costs, miscommunication, conflict, etc.) associated with not being proactive when it comes to diversity.

Diversity training is therefore imperative to any organisation that operates in a diverse society.

According to Kossek & Lobel (1996), differences are appreciated when people have the opportunity to learn about other cultural backgrounds. This facilitates a greater acceptance of these cultures, alleviates intergroup tensions and reduces conflict. Ultimately, people build skills in managing differences and creating a comfortable work environment that improves communication with one another such that all employees feel accepted and valued in the organisation, irrespective of their differences.

The rapidly changing and somewhat uncertain environmental situations in which training programmes are operating today are forcing programme administrators to continually reassess the existing programmes and the way in which they are implemented and maintained. Efficiency and success are important assets for any project or programme; therefore the challenge is to achieve the goals the training programme has set out to achieve. As a result, the programme administrators are constantly searching for new ways to achieve success and to improve performance, while at the same time the needs and demands of the programme recipients are regarded as priorities. To achieve the balance between the services delivered and the needs of the programme recipients, the administrators must ensure that the existing programmes are continually evaluated.

Several diversity-training programs have been designed to change people's attitudes about other people and to improve their working relationship. However, little research has been conducted to assess the impact of the training programmes on attitudes and behaviour change in the workplace (Karp & Sammour, 2000). Ford & Fisher (1996) agree that training evaluation has only focused on the reactions of trainees and the amount of learning that occurred during training. It is therefore essential to evaluate training programmes to determine their effectiveness in the light of programme goals and to assess the transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes in the workplace. Training is relevant and functional only when it is evaluated (Kelley, Orgel & Baer, 1984).

3.6 Programme Evaluation

Clarke & Dawson (1999) define programme evaluation as a systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of programmes for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness and make decisions with regard to what those programmes are doing. They go on to say that evaluation is a type of policy research designed to help people make informed choices about future programming. Van Dyk, Nel, Loedolff & Haasbroek (1997) perceive evaluation as a process for testing the appropriateness of each critical event in the design of a training system. They also indicate that evaluation is a part of the process of designing and implementing a training programme and not just a specified happening at the end of the training.

Sims (1993) contends that the primary purpose of evaluation is to improve training by discovering which training processes are successful in achieving their objectives. He states that programme evaluation is also conducted to, firstly, improve the training programme, secondly, to provide feedback to programme planners, managers and participants, thirdly, to assess participant's skill levels. Evaluation is also useful in assessing the trainers in order to justify the time and money that were spent on the training. Kirkpatrick (1979) summarizes evaluation strategies as they apply to four broad aspects, which are reaction, learning, behaviour and organisational results.

3.6.1 Kirkpatrick's four-level training model

Kirkpatrick (1979) asserts that, to determine the effectiveness of a training programme each trainer should ensure the evaluation of all his/her training activities. Kirkpatrick has recommended a four-level model to assess the impact of a training programme. The four levels address the trainee's reaction, learning, behaviour change and the organisational results after the training.

Level 1: Reaction

Reaction may be defined as how well the trainees liked the training programme. The feelings of the participants are determined with regard to the clarity of the course content, the preparedness of the trainer and the participant's satisfaction with the training in general. Overall, the reaction level is intended to assess the trainee's reactions to the course and the trainer respectively.

Level 2: Learning

Learning is defined as attitudes that were changed and knowledge and skills that were gained as a result of the training. It does not include on-the-job use of the attitudes, knowledge and skills.

Level 3: Behaviour change

Behaviour change is regarded as more powerful than the previous two levels and is intended to assess on-the-job changes in individual and team behaviours that are aimed at improving the processes targeted by the training. Can trainees now do the things they could not do before and do they demonstrate new behaviour on their job? These are some of the question that needs to be answered in order to assess behaviour change.

Level 4: Change in organisational results

At this level, any improvements in organisational performance resulting from the training intervention are being assessed for example increased productivity, decreased absenteeism, reduction in grievances, improved morale, reduced staff turnover and improved company performance.

There is an assumption that diversity training is intended to evoke behaviour change in trainees (Kossek & Lobel, 1996). However training does not always produce favourable responses. Nemetz et al (1996) define the responses to formal diversity training programmes in terms of negative response, which include emotions, attitudes and behaviours consistent with confusion, disorder, hostility, punishment, resentment, vulnerability and anger. On the other hand, they define positive outcomes as emotions, attitudes, and behaviours consistent with bias reduction, harmony, inclusion, creativity,

productivity and approval. In order to assess these responses and to assess whether the diversity training has evoked change in behaviour and attitude it is important to evaluate the training programme.

The aim of this research is to assess the impact of a diversity- training programme on people's attitudes and behaviours towards diversity in the workplace. Kirkpatrick's (1979) four level model will be used, which relates to the reactions of the participants, the learning that has taken place as a result of the training and the behaviour change and outcomes that could be ascribed to the training.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Goals

The goal of this research is to, firstly, assess the participant's experiences and perceptions about diversity before they had been trained. Secondly it aimed at assessing whether the training has evoked changes in employees' attitudes and behaviours towards diversity in their work organisation. Kirkpatrick's (1979) four-level model, which assesses the trainee's reaction to the training, learning, behaviour change and any tangible results achieved due to the training was used to assess the impact of the diversity training programme.

4.2 Background

4.2.1 The Company

The research took place in Company X in Namibia. Company X started business about twenty years ago as one company. About eight years ago, Company X merged with a transport company then called Company Y. Two years ago, management realised that the transport division (company Y) was not profitable and sold it to the present Holding Company Z. Despite being two separate companies, Company X is responsible for the administrative work of both company Z and X. The companies have a combined workforce of 80 employees with 40 employees in each company. The workforce consists of about 65 (81%) black and about 15 (19%) white employees, of which 95% are men and 5% women. The age range of these employees is between 25 and 59 years. Overall, the black male employees are predominantly in lower job levels and the white employees in higher-level jobs. For the purpose of this thesis, the two companies will be referred to as The Company.

4.2.2 The Training Programme

The diversity-training programme that took place was conducted over two days per session. The employees were divided into 4 groups of 20 employees each of whom attended the training programme on a Friday and Saturday. The training took place over four consecutive weekends from the 8th February to 2nd March 2002. The training programme is laid out in Appendix A.

The main reasons for commissioning the training were:

Firstly, the fact that the company management realised that there were definite problems among their employees, especially between the white and black workers, which they assumed were related to their different cultural and racial backgrounds. Secondly, management, which is predominantly white, controlled the company's resources, operations and reward systems, and lacked appreciation and understanding for other cultures and their differences.

Finally management believed that the course would change the employees' attitudes and behaviours towards each other.

4.3 Research paradigm

A qualitative research approach was used in this research to provide an understanding of the various attitudes and behaviours towards diversity and how diversity is managed. According to Weiss (1998), the qualitative evaluator emphasises understanding rather than precise measurement of events and hence tends to rely on detailed knowledge of the processes by which the programme takes shape and how it affects the participants.

Clarke & Dawson (1999) also posit that for the qualitative researcher "reality is not a single entity which can be subjected to objective measurement. Individuals and groups will construct their own version of reality (p.39)." They go on to say that the task of the researcher is not to validate those responses that are closer to the 'truth', but to ensure that the different responses are accurately recorded and reported. Consequently, the researcher is able to get close to the data and acquires insight in order to develop understanding of the phenomena under study as well as about the participants' points of view. Greene (1994) argues that qualitative methods allow the researcher to capture unintended effects and outcomes of the programme initiatives and consequently gives rise to a situation whereby the programme could adjust to the changing circumstances in which it is operating.

4.4 Sampling Procedures

Eighty employees, which is the entire workforce of The Company, attended the diversity management-training course. Fifteen employees were selected to participate in the pre- (before) and post- (after) training assessment interviews using purposive-sampling techniques. This sampling technique was used to ensure that the sample drawn from that population was as representative as possible in terms of the most important characteristics (gender, culture and job level) of the population. A further 10 employees were selected in a similar manner to participate in the Focus Group Discussion. The sample for the individual interviews and the focus group are presented below:

Table 1: Profile Of The Research Sample (Individual Interviews)

Participant	Gender	Age	Education	Job level	Race
1.	Male	25-35	Tertiary	Manager	White
2.	Male	25-35	Primary	Labourer	Black
3.	Male	36-45	Secondary	Labourer	Black
4.	Male	36-45	Primary	Labourer	Black
5.	Female	46-55	Secondary	Office worker	White
6.	Male	25-35	Primary	Labourer	Black
7.	Male	36-45	Secondary	Supervisor	Black
8.	Male	36-45	Secondary	Office worker	White
9.	Female	36-45	Secondary	Labourer	Black
10.	Male	36-45	Secondary	Labourer	Coloured
11.	Male	25-35	Primary	Labourer	Black
12.	Male	36-45	Secondary	Office worker	Black
13.	Male	36-45	Secondary	Supervisor	White
14.	Female	25-35	Secondary	Labourer	Black
15.	Male	25-35	Secondary	Labourer	Black

Table 2: Profile Of The Research Sample (Focus Group Discussion)

Participant	Age	Sex	Education	Job level	Race
1.	25-35	Male	Secondary	Office worker	Black
2.	25-35	Male	Secondary	Supervisor	Black
3.	25-35	Male	Secondary	Labourer	Black
4.	46-55	Female	Secondary	Office worker	White
5.	25-35	Male	Primary	Labourer	Black
6.	36-46	Male	Primary	Labourer	Black
7.	25-35	Male	Primary	Labourer	Black
8.	36-46	Male	Secondary	Labourer	Coloured
9.	36-46	Male	Primary	Labourer	Black
10.	25-35	Male	Primary	Labourer	Black

4.5 Data Collection Procedures

The research data were collected using pre-and post-assessment semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion. The same fifteen participants were interviewed before and after the training. The pre-assessment interviews (Appendix B) were aimed at assessing the participant's perceptions and experiences of diversity and diversity in the workplace. After the training, a post-assessment interview (Appendix C) was conducted with the same participants to assess the participants' reactions, learning and behavioural changes following the course. Two months after the training, a focus group discussion (Appendix D) was conducted mainly to assess behavioural change of employees within the company and how the changes had influenced the organisation outcomes. The individual interviews and the focus group discussion were tape recorded and transcribed for analysis purposes.

4.6 Data Analysis Procedures

For the purpose of analysing the research data, a grounded theory approach was employed. Grounded theory is based on the notion that social science theory can emerge from data obtained by field methods. Two sociologists, Glaser & Strauss (1967), initiated, developed and promoted grounded theory as a research process by means of which theory could be obtained systematically from social research. They

argue that theory provides modes of conceptualisation, describing and explaining data as well as providing categories that ensure the verification and generation of data from social science research.

Grounded theory data analysis involves a simultaneous conceptualisation and assessment of the similarities and differences in interactions constituting human relationships (Kendell, 1999). In addition, the grounded theory method emphasises that theory must come from data, not from prior knowledge and that the operations leading to theoretical conceptualisations must be revealed. Thus grounded theory embraces the local knowledge and the ideas of the research subjects. In this research, the grounded theory method was used to explore the employees' experiences of diversity, their perceptions about the course and their experiences of diversity after being on the course.

Glaser & Strauss (1967) pointed out that this method involves coding, constant comparison and integrative diagramming. This research makes use of the grounded theory techniques based on the steps used by Van Vlaenderen (1999):

Step 1: Preparing data for coding

The researcher immersed her in the transcribed individual interviews and focus group material by reading through the transcripts to understand the diversity of knowledge and experiences of the employees before and after they have gone on a diversity-training course. Understanding the data allowed the researcher to prepare the data for coding and the creation of indicators. It further created an opportunity to identify words or phrases that seem important within the context of diversity management in the work place.

Step 2: Coding

In this step indicators were categorised and coded. The categories were coded by being provided with conceptual labels (codes). The indicators were compared to refine and identify similarities in order to adjust the coded categories. An example of the categories are indicated in appendix E and F.

Step 3: Integrative diagramming

In this step the interpretations of each of the individual and the focus group transcripts were combined. The codes of the individual transcripts were compared with each other's codes and indicators. This was done to integrate the different interviews and focus group discussion data. As a result two integrative diagrams were produced one that refers to the conceptualisations and experiences of diversity (pre-assessment) and one that refers to the diversity training impact (post assessment).

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Considering that the research subjects in qualitative research interviewing are human beings, Fontana & Frey (1994) suggest that great care must be taken to prevent harm to these people. They further said that the ethical issues to be considered are the issues of informed consent (the researcher having received consent from the subject before data collection commences and after the subject has been adequately informed about the research), the right to privacy (protecting the identity of the participant from the reader) and protection from harm (this entails physical, emotional or any other harm to the subject in the course of the research). Ethical considerations mentioned by Punch (1994) also revolve around the same issues of harm, consent, deception, privacy and confidentiality relating to the participants and the data.

In this research, consent was obtained, firstly, by talking to the financial manager, who was instrumental in commissioning the course, to gain his trust, support and permission to conduct the research on the premises of this company. Consent was also obtained from individual participants before they were interviewed. The nature of the research was explained to them and after several questions on anonymity and confidentiality had been answered and the participants had been reassured that their identities as well as the information would remain confidential, they agreed to take part in the study. Consequently the interviews were conducted and tape-recorded and transcribed anonymously for analysis and the report writing.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The results obtained from this research are presented in two integrated diagrams. The first diagram (Figure 2) illustrates the participants' perceptions, conceptualisation and experiences of diversity before they had been trained. The second diagram (Figure 3) illustrates the participants' perceptions and experiences about the course after they had gone on training. These perceptions are based on Kirkpatrick's four level model of evaluation, which refers to the reactions, learning, behaviour change and improved organisational results due to the training.

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¹ The numbers next to the quotes (in italic) starting on page xxx are derived from the sample profile of the participants (shown in tables 1 and 2). These numbers indicate each participant's response statement

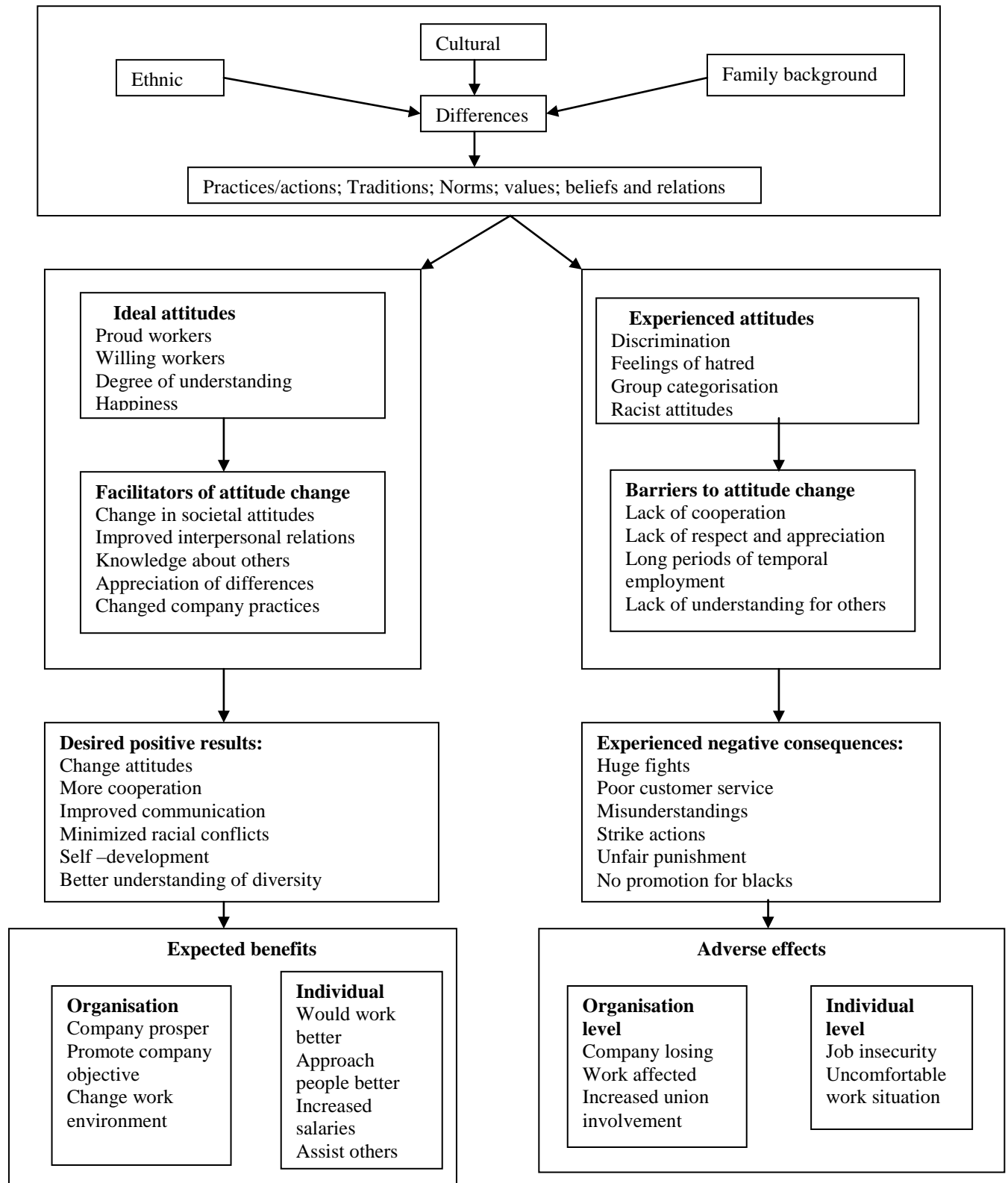


Figure 2: Integrated Diagram of The Conceptualisation And Experiences of Diversity (Pre-Assessment)

5.1 Pre Assessment: Conceptualisation and Experiences of Diversity

5.1.1 Conceptualisation of Cultural Diversity

The participant's understood diversity as ethnic, cultural and family background differences leading to differences in practices, norms, values and beliefs. These conceptions were captured in the participants' responses such as:

'It is the different ethnical backgrounds and practices, for example, how funerals are done and the different family relations' (7).

'Different ethnic groups in society' (8).

'Different ways in which we were raised, different ways of thinking, different actions and how different people treat each other' (5, 7)

Seven participants struggled with the conceptualisation of cultural diversity and referred to it as "a strange" concept. The following statement indicated this view.

'Don't know what diversity is, don't even know what culture is' (2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11).

5.1.2 Experiences of Diversity in the Company

The participant's experiences of diversity within the company are presented in Figure 2. The participants reported that their work environment is diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, age, and cultural background. They also mentioned that they experienced discrimination, feelings of hatred, group categorisation and racist attitudes in the workplace. They also reported negative consequences due to these attitudes.

They reported experiences such as:

- Huge fights
- Poor customer service
- Strike actions and unfair punishment
- No promotion for blacks.

'No communication, negative attitudes and hatred amongst employees' (10).

'People don't communicate and there are huge fights as a result of small disagreements' (3).

'Management that is predominantly white does not appreciate others traditional practices. Currently there is a lack of appreciation for each other's differences and hence the racial tension' (1).

A distinction was also made between experienced attitudes and ideal attitudes within the company. The experienced attitudes of discrimination and feelings of hatred were said to create barriers to attitude change. It was indicated that these attitudes led to lack of cooperation, lack of respect and misunderstandings among workers. These in turn resulted in poor customer service, fights and strike actions, which further led to organisational effects such as increased union involvement and consequent losses to the company. At individual level effects such as job insecurity and an uncomfortable work environment were reported.

5.1.3 Experience of Diversity Management in the Company

The participants reported that they were not aware of how diversity was dealt with in the company. They indicated that there are no policies in place regarding the issue of diversity management. However they mentioned that there is definite discrimination and inequality in how white and black employees were treated in the company.

Participants said that there was some degree of understanding about other cultures but the management, which is white lacked respect for other's cultures. They also reported that there were committees in place that were dealing with the day-day to problems within the company. However these committees failed to address the racial tensions among the workers.

'There is no specific ways in which differences are dealt with' (2, 5, 7).

The participants made suggestions of possible factors that could facilitate change. The following comments were raised with this regard:

- Change in social attitudes
- Improved interpersonal relations
- Knowledge about others
- Appreciation of differences
- Changed company practices

5.1.4 Expectations of Training and Reasons for Participating in the Course

The participants expected the course to be a platform to discuss problems in the company and a strategy to assist the employees to deal with these problems. They mentioned that they expected to:

- Discuss problems within the company.
- Learn ways to change attitudes
- Increase communication and cooperation amongst the workers.

‘To improve work relationship and cooperation among management and the workers’ (7).

- Teach workers about each others cultures
- Understand and respect each other in the company.

‘The course is about human relations and to learn about different ethnical groups and their traditions’ (5).

The participants mentioned disempowerment and negative experiences with resulting adverse effects to both the company and the individual as reasons why the course was commissioned. These reasons included:

- Conflicts and misunderstandings.

‘People were sent on training because of conflicts within the company, due to misunderstandings’ (5, 11).

‘The training is important to increase cooperation among workers’ (6).

- Company is losing.
- Increased union involvement and strike action

‘To address strike actions and other problems in the company’ (12).

- Discrimination in the company.

‘To remove unacceptable attitudes and apartheid practices’ (14).

- Job insecurity

‘We are being employed on temporary basis for more than a year to two years’ (15)

The participants’ expectations about the benefits of the training were perceived as individual and company benefits.

Individual benefits

The participants reported that learning about other people's cultures would increase their acceptance of differences, which might then decrease racial conflicts and improve human interaction in the company. It was also suggested that the elimination of racial discrimination could lead to people being appointed on a permanent basis. They reported the following benefits:

- Progress of company
- A change in the workers attitudes
- Improved communication and work relationships
- A better understanding of differences.
- Enhanced communication skills and group interaction skills.
- Sensitivity to different cultures
- The creation of a platform for workers to express their views

Six participants indicated that it was difficult for them to express any specific expectations for the course because they were not informed about the course.

'Don't know much about the course and therefore don't know what to expect' (1, 7, 10, 12).

'We were told about a training that was compulsory to all but don't know what it is about, but I am happy to attend' (13, 15).

Company benefits

The participants expected that the course would benefit the company as follows:

- To discuss problems within the company.
- Enhanced customer care skills.
- Improving communication and cooperation.

'To improve the working relationship between white and black workers.'(13).

'If people are aware of differences they will appreciate other cultures'. (1)

- Improved company productivity and profitability.

'Peoples attitudes will change and that is an advantage for company productivity.' (8).

- Increased salaries and improved conditions of employment

5.2 Post Assessment: Perceptions and Experiences about the Course after Training

Kirkpatrick's (1979) four-level model, which addresses the participant's reactions, learning that has taken place, behaviour change and outcomes due to the training was used to assess the impact of training. These results are illustrated in an integrated diagram (Figure 3).

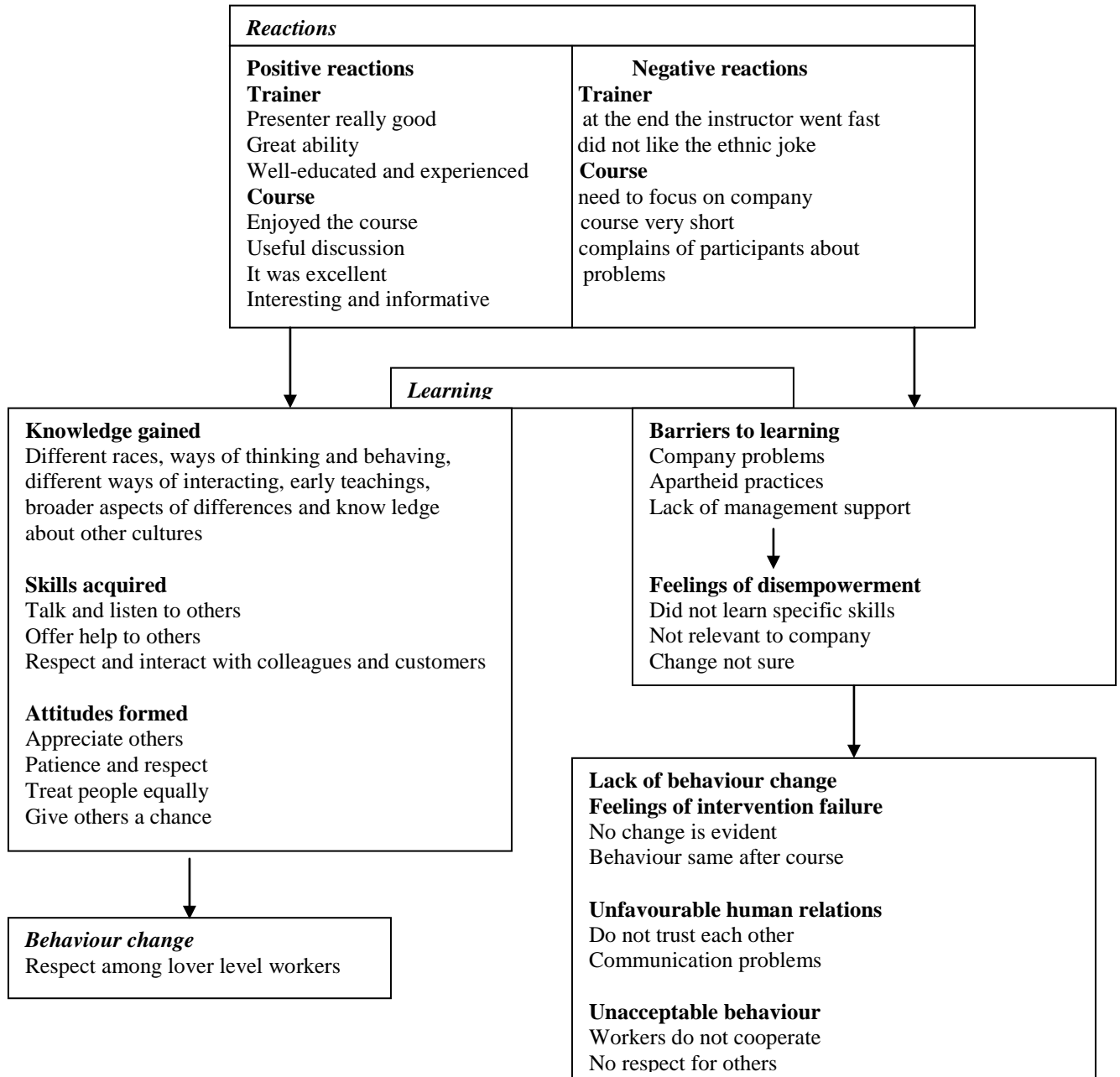


Figure 3: Integrated Diagram Of The Impact Of The Diversity Training (Post-Assessment)

5.2.1 Level 1: Reactions

The participant's reported positive and negative reactions towards the trainer and the course respectively.

Positive reactions

The majority of the participants felt that the course was well presented. It was informative and relevant to their needs. They also said that even if they did not have much prior information or expectations about the course what had been discussed was valuable information. Some said that their expectations were met in the sense that what they wanted to hear and learn had been covered. They all agreed that the trainer was well prepared and the sessions were interesting and clear.

'I think he did a great job and has a great ability' (1).

'The trainer was well prepared and well educated' (5).

'The course presentation was excellent, very clear and understandable' (4,8,13,9).

Negative reactions

The participants had some criticisms in terms of isolated issues, which are mentioned below:

- One participant said that he did not like the way the participants were complaining about company problems not related to the training.
- Another one said that the joke related to his ethnic group was not appreciated.
- The course was not presented within the context of the company.
- It was also felt that the course was too short.

5.2.2 Level 2: Learning

The participants' reported an increased learning with regard to the following:

Understanding diversity:

After attending the course the participants understood and could conceptualise cultural diversity in terms of:

- Different beliefs and practices.
- Different ways in which, people were brought up.

- The diverse influence of early teachings in society.
- Different ways of thinking, communicating, behaving and interacting.

Enhanced knowledge and skill in managing diversity:

The participants indicated that the training had facilitated an increase in their knowledge and skills about cultural diversity and its effects on the workforce.

Amongst the learned issues the participants reported:

- Increased knowledge with regard to other cultures.
- An enhanced insight about the Namibian labour history and the origins of discrimination.
- The ability to appreciate and respect different cultures.
- Improved communication and cooperation.

'I learnt about peoples cultures and how to cooperate with them' (9).

'How to talk to colleagues' (2).

- Not being judgemental towards others and their cultures.
- Communicating with and understanding people from different backgrounds.

'I learnt how to communicate with different races and I am trying to implement that at work' (4).

- Accepting others and assist them irrespective of cultural differences.

'Now I can work with different people' (6).

Attitudes formed towards diversity:

The participants reported how the training helped them in forming attitudes of appreciation, patience, and willingness to work hard and to respect others.

Feelings of disempowerment:

The participants reported feelings of disempowerment despite attending the training course. The participants identified factors in their company that were barriers to learning, such as apartheid practices in the company, misunderstandings and perceived lack of support by management. They also indicated that they did not learn specific skills, which empowered them to make a change.

5.2.3 Level 3: Behaviour change

Most participants said that only the lower level workers had changed their behaviour. They indicated that these worker's interaction and communication with customers, colleagues and supervisors had changed. The participants perceived behaviour change in the following ways:

- Better communication with customers and clients.
- Better communication and cooperation among lower level workers.
- Respects for other's cultures and the differences of lower level workers.

Some participants indicated that they had not changed and mentioned that it was too early to comment on whether there was change. They added that their behaviour change depended on whether management would also change. However it was felt that management had not changed with regard to their behaviour towards the workers. Participants at managerial and supervisory level who were trained agreed that the top management had not changed. They still managed and interacted with mindsets influenced by past apartheid and discriminatory practices.

'There is no change in this company; things are just like before or maybe even worse.'

'The problem is still between management and the lower level workers' (Focus group).

'Management should support the change effort otherwise it wont be effective in its working' (Focus group).

'The past apartheid history of our country is still in the workers minds.'(Focus group).

The participants indicated their desire for improved interaction and work relationships, which could benefit the company's productivity and profitability. The above statements from the participants indicated that if inequality and discrimination were eliminated the workers would be more cooperative and the company could benefit. They also mentioned that if management could commit themselves to change and transparency the company would benefit.

Most participants also had feelings of intervention failure. They mentioned that they did not think behaviour would change, or that the course would change the workers. They said that behaviours were still the same after the training for example insults from managers, and people were still preoccupied with ethnic and racial differences. The increasing fear of being a temporary employee and the threats of dismissal, which creates insecurity were emphasised.

Level 4: Change In Company Results

The participants reported that there was no change with regard to job behaviour within the company. They said that management and the workers did not have a working relationship that was conducive to improving productivity in the company. The participants said:

'The attitudes of managers are detrimental to the productivity of this company and should change' (1).

'Things are deteriorating' (7).

'I am not sure about productivity and if there is change it is very little' (2).

'To just work for a company that does not show appreciation is very difficult' (4).

The participants also noted that attitudes and behaviours were not easy to change and therefore it was too early to assess organisational improvement as a result of the training.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

This chapter attempts to synthesise the research findings of the semi-structured individual interviews and the focus group discussion. In the analysis of the findings Kirkpatrick's (1979) four level model of training evaluation was used. This model assesses the trainee's reactions to the training, learning, behaviour change and any tangible results in the organisation achieved due to the training.

The findings of this study indicated that the diversity-training programme used in the company had an impact at the first two levels of Kirkpatrick's model, but hardly at the third and fourth levels. The participants indicated that they had enjoyed the course and had learnt from it but reported that behaviours within the company did not change, especially not amongst the managers. No tangible results were reported. The findings of this research are discussed in detail in the following sections.

6.1 Conceptualisation of Diversity and Cultural Diversity

The results indicated that, for some of the participants, diversity was a new concept and they were not able to describe or define cultural diversity in any way. Those who had an idea of what cultural diversity was tended to conceptualise it as differences in ethnicity, cultural background and family background. This conceptualisation seemed to be in agreement with aspects of Triandis (1995) and Cox's (1994) definitions of diversity. These authors put emphasis on a variety of areas in which people differ and define diversity broadly to include physical, social and psychological differences, which are changeable. Participants in the present study perceived it as a narrow concept, which focus on differences, which are static and unchangeable. After the training programme the participants reported their understanding of diversity as different ways of thinking, communication and behaving as a result of the influence of early teaching and socialisation processes.

The participants' understanding of diversity, which focused on observable differences such as race, ethnicity and family background, could have reduced the options that could be exercised in managing differences effectively. These views led to the

unfavourable attitudes experienced in the company because people were categorised strongly along group-based lines, which determined their personal values, beliefs and attitudes. The Social Identity Theory shows that situations in which people are divided along group lines might cause group categorisations, which might lead to in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Sonn (1996) acknowledged that similar attitudes and beliefs affect interactions and work relationships with others who are perceived to be different.

6.2 The Experiences of Diversity

The participants who understood the meaning of diversity reported an experience of unequal discrimination especially between white and black workers. They said that management privileged whites and the blacks were kept at lower levels. This inequality exacerbated stereotypes, feelings of hatred, group divisions, racial and cultural discrimination amongst the different groups.

The participants suggested that the discrimination experienced in the company was demotivating and influenced the company's outputs and communication negatively. Issues such as insecurity due to temporary employment and lack of promotion at lower levels were experienced as demotivating to the employees. This led to the company losing money through strike action and increased union involvement, which affected work productivity negatively. It is also clear that the lower level workers i.e. black workers are at the receiving end of these unfavourable experiences. Triandis (1995) found in his research that group identification in the workplace had effects on the career outcomes of individuals. He also affirmed that workers in less dominant organisational levels might experience alienation effects more than others in higher job levels.

The presence of racial and cultural discrimination indicates that the company lies between the monolithic and the plural organisation(s) as described by Cox (1994). The company portrays negative values such as high levels of occupational segregation, prejudice and discrimination in the form of pressures on black employees.

The company might face a crisis because of pressing requirements to change the composition of their workforces from monocultural to multicultural. The requirement

to accommodate diversity implies that management must avoid unfair discrimination and ensure that employees value and respect each other. In order to create understanding with regard to diversity and to establish a workforce that values differences, the management resorted to training as a possible vehicle for change. This expectation by management is in line with the research findings by Cox (1994) that learning about diversity through training programmes could assist a diverse workforce to manage differences effectively. It is also emphasised by Karp & Sammour (2000) that diversity-training programmes were designed to improve work relationships and interactions in diverse settings.

6.3 Reactions

From the participants' responses, it was evident that the reactions of all participants to all facets of the course were positive. This finding is not different from what the literature review reveals, that trainees usually react in this manner when asked how they felt about the training they received. During the interviews, both black and white participants provided supporting evidence for the popularity of the diversity-training course. Statements such as: 'I enjoyed the course' and 'it was an informative and excellent course' were provided. The positive reactions towards the course also stemmed from the popularity of the trainer since he was perceived to be a good trainer by most of the participants.

Kirkpatrick (1979) indicates that the trainees must like a training programme in order to obtain maximum benefit from it. Although, positive reactions to training do not always lead to learning, acquisition of knowledge and skills it seems evident that for learning to take place one must show interest and enthusiasm. Positive reactions are therefore a valuable first step needed for learning. However, the fact that the participants liked the course and the trainer does not guarantee that learning has taken place. Nor is it an indication that the participant's attitudes and behaviour will change as a result of the training. In fact, trainee reactions constitute the lowest level of training evaluation (Larkey, 1996) and can often create confusion in terms of the popularity of the programme and the actual learning that took place.

Although the reactions of participants to the training might provide useful information for improving some aspects of the training programme in terms of the teaching style and use of teaching aids, the data collected on the last three levels of Kirkpatrick's (1979) four level model, generally provide more accurate information regarding the success of the training. It is therefore important to assess the amount of learning that has taken place.

6.4 Learning

The second level of analysis in the evaluation process is that of learning. According to Kirkpatrick (1979) learning involves the understanding and acquisition of principles, facts and skills that were absorbed by the participants during the training. Figure 3 illustrates the participant's perceptions of learning as knowledge gained about diversity, attitudes formed and skills acquired during the training.

Knowledge gained about diversity

After the training all participants could explain the notion of diversity as physical differences such as race, skin colour and ethnicity. They also mentioned non-observable differences such as diverse ways of thinking and behaving. This compared favourably with the fact that only a few participants made these points in the pre-assessment interviews as indicated in Chapter 5. These responses indicated that diversity was understood in broader terms than before. It is also clear that the new perceptions about diversity agree with the definition by Triandis (1995) and Cox (1994), which show that people are different at physical, social and cognitive levels. New knowledge and understanding might enable the participants to experience workplace diversity in a different light and hence behave differently towards others. These perceptions could also enhance the process of positive attitude formation and change and are in line with the literature on attitude formation. Oskamp (1991) argues that attitudes are learnt predispositions, which allow people to respond favourably or unfavourably to others. He also suggests that learning efforts might change attitudes and behaviour during social interactions.

The participants indicated that they had learnt from the training course. The following responses could illustrate this:

'I learnt about the different practices and beliefs of my colleagues and know now the differences that exist among these people' (4).

'I learnt about the Namibian work history and some labour laws, which I was not aware of before' (2).

Skills gained

The participants indicated that they had acquire skills from the diversity-training course and mentioned that they are more sensitive and aware of others' differences within the company. The participants also tended to believe that they had gained skills in how to manage diversity effectively. The best indicators of skill acquisitions were the words of the participants themselves.

'I know how to listen and talk to colleagues' and 'I know how to work in groups and how to give cooperation to others' (6).

Given the results reported above it can be concluded that the diversity training seems to have had an impact in producing an increase in knowledge about cultural diversity and skills concerning the effective ways of dealing with others. Ford & Fisher (1996) support this finding by indicating that in the second stage, diversity training is concerned with increasing understanding, sensitivity and tolerance of others. This understanding is expected to lead to attitude and behaviour change and an improved work environment in which diversity is understood and valued.

Attitude formation

The participants indicated that they are more appreciative of others, and assisted colleagues irrespective of racial and cultural differences. However the participants emphasised a lack of cooperation and respect among both white and black employees, which indicate that they might have learnt from the training but did not change their attitudes. Kirkpatrick (1987) found that most training programmes are able to increase learning and skill acquisition since the objectives of most programmes relate to

awareness raising and the understanding of facts and principles, but do not translate learning to the work situation.

Swierzek & Carmichael (1985) argue that learning merely indicates whether a person is aware and knowledgeable and have certain skills, but it does not indicate whether he/she will use these skills in any way. To establish whether the learnt knowledge and skills are being used on the job, it is essential to assess the behaviour change and on-the-job use of acquired knowledge and skills.

Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) note that the general effect of change as a process has been conceptualised in several change models on employee behaviour change. For example, Cox's (1994) change model as illustrated in Figure 1, indicates that change is an on-going process, which occurs in multiple phases that takes a great amount of time.

Clark, Szivas, Wilkie & Wood (2000) argue that attitudes are learnt through the cultures of which we are a part, and attitudes are conditioned by the social norms of society. It is therefore fair to say that some participants did not experience immediate attitude and behaviour change from the two-day training course and that change might unfold if the training effort is not seen as an event but rather as a continuous process.

The final responsibility to support and sustain attitude and behavioural change rests with the company management. They should continuously strive for performance improvement by reinforcing the learnt attitudes. Some participants mentioned that the provision of equal opportunities, respect, understanding and acceptance by management could lead to a positive change of attitudes and behaviour within the company. Management could then use these findings as reinforcement strategies to create policies and practices that out rule racial discrimination. McDaniel & Walls (1997) note that it is the management's task to create an environment, in which people are respected, understood and listened to irrespective of racial differences.

6.5 Behaviour Change and Transfer of Learning

Kirkpatrick's third level in the evaluation model assesses the behaviour change as a result of training, which is also referred to as the transfer-of-learning stage. The extent of behaviour change brought about by the training was evaluated in terms of the participants' perceived behaviour change and their experiences of diversity after the training.

The participants indicated that behaviour change was evident among the lower level workers. They also noted that they were more respectful and understanding of other people and that had improved cooperation and teamwork in the company. On the other hand, it was felt that management had not changed; the following statement showed this:

'Things are just like before or have gotten worse' (focus group).

Participants at supervisory and managerial levels agreed that members of top management had not changed their behaviour towards the predominantly black lower level workers. These findings are interesting to note, because the majority of the participants were black and in the lower level work groups and their perception that behaviour among the lower level workers had changed might be an indication that the training did not affect any behaviour change towards the diversity challenges that were experienced in the company. Racial tension and discrimination among black and white employees were the main reasons why the training was commissioned. One could conclude that the racial biases and discriminatory practices did not change since it was mentioned that the work relationship between management, which was predominantly white, and the lower level workers, who were predominantly black, was deteriorating. One participant also noted that management and the lower level workers were *'at war'*. This finding is an indication that very little or no behaviour change had taken place in this company and that these two parties were not working towards a common goal to create a coherent teamwork climate within the company.

These findings are also supported by the view of the manager who commissioned the training that top management lacked support and commitment for the training programme. He also mentioned that top management harboured past discriminatory

and biased attitudes towards black workers. These practices create unfavourable bias toward people of different racial and ethnic groups. Cox (1994) also found that feelings and attitudes of individuals toward others of a different culture group are very much influenced by the history of intergroup relations of the groups involved. In this company the Namibian past history of segregation and apartheid has an influence on how the predominantly white management relate to the black lower level workers. These practices of bias and discrimination were also the main reasons for commissioning the training, as indicated in Chapter 4.

The research outcome is not surprising considering Kirkpatrick's (1979) view that having learnt certain skills and knowledge does not mean that it will be used in the workplace. It is also clear that the process of change is long-term and cannot be achieved in a short period of time or through a one-off intervention. This point is illustrated by the participants' concern about time, for example the fact that they needed time to change is illustrated in the following comment:

'Change maybe after some time' and 'more future courses could bring about change' (6).

It is therefore clear that behaviour change needs more than a two-day training course. These findings affirm Cox's notion that attitude and behaviour change towards diversity requires time and that it is an on going process.

These concerns require a more intensive approach, which could consider the nature, policies and practices of the company. Organisational development approaches together with the diversity management model suggested in chapter three could be used to ensure that learning is transferred on the job and will result in behaviour change. Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) note that the general effect of change as a process has been conceptualised in several change models on employee behaviour change. For example, Cox's (1994) change model, indicates that change is an on-going process, which occurs in multiple phases that take a great amount of time.

Jackson (1996) shows that team members often tailor their behaviour based on cues from the leader. Therefore leaders have a huge influence on team dynamics through

their own attitudes and behaviour. In this research, the participants indicated that *'change depends on the managers'* and *'people will not change unless management had changed'*. These comments are indicative that management are to be role models and to change their attitudes if general change in the company is to be achieved.

Birkenbach, Kamfer & Ter Morshuizen (1984), Kelly, Orgel & Baer (1984) and Bush & Ingram (2001) used Kirkpatrick's four-level model in their research on evaluating training programmes to improve interpersonal skills of people in diverse work settings. They found that the participants had positive reactions towards the course and that they had increased their knowledge of ways of effectively dealing with diverse colleagues. However, no significant behaviour change was reported in these studies as a result of the training and it was found that the training had not had any impact on bringing about organisational change.

These authors also found that most training programmes are knowledge-based and do not go beyond knowledge and awareness creation. They went on to say that two factors that often hamper the transference of learning are the organisational policies and practices, which might be inconsistent with the training programme objectives. They also note that the participants realised that diversity training requires much more time because to respect and successfully interact with members of diverse cultures is a long-term process. These findings are echoed by the findings of this research, where participants admitted that time was needed to change attitudes and behaviour.

6.6 Change in Company Results

At this level, an attempt was made to assess any tangible results that could be ascribed to the training. Possible indicators to assess the results were company productivity, absenteeism, company policies and practices that were in place to support the training initiative. The findings showed that there was no change in results that could be ascribed to the training. The manager who commissioned the training indicated these but was hopeful that attitude change might take time.

According to Kirkpatrick (1979), it is very difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate certain programmes in terms of results. Kelly, Orgel & Baer (1984) showed that very little programme evaluation has attempted to measure organisational results due to the fact that most training programmes are concerned with imparting knowledge, skills and awareness.

The diversity-training programme administered to this company could be one such programme, because the desired company outcomes such as improved productivity and performance were not linked to the training objectives. This is an indication that the training was presented in isolation from the company's needs and expectations and was not result-oriented. This could be the case because the participants knew very little about the course content and had no expectations at all. Also the fact that very little or no diversity needs assessment was done with regard to company needs might have led to the lack of training impact. Day (1995) suggests that it is best to evaluate training programmes directly in terms of desired results and to clarify the rationale for the diversity initiative up front. This would show links between diversity and business goals and will help everyone to understand why diversity is important and how valuing differences relates to the overall business goal.

This research also found several other factors that might have led to the lack of behaviour change and result accomplishment. These factors are: unrealistic expectations, time span and the training context.

6.7 Factors in the Lack of Change

6.7.1 Unrealistic Expectations

It seems that the workers expected management to change soon after the course and when that did not happen, it resulted in frustration and tension from the workers. This could have led to the one-day stay-away from work, six weeks after the training. The participants mentioned expectations such as, '*workers expect change from management only*' and '*there are still problems between management and the workers*'. These responses indicated that the course was perceived to be a tool to solve problems immediately; this could have created confusion in the aim of the course and the training

strategy used. It seems that the training had sensitised the participants to the point that it had unintentionally exacerbated the very conditions that the training was designed to alleviate.

On the other hand the participants were not sufficiently prepared and informed about the course. The lack of information could have created unrealistic expectations amongst the workers. It is also possible that the training was seen as an event and not as the beginning of a process and the expectations raised by this could have created barriers to change and result achievement.

There is a possibility that the diversity-training course might have created additional conflict in the company. It is possible that the participants were blaming the culturally dominant group for the experienced conflicts and discrimination in the company and therefore only expected change from this group. Ford & Fisher (1996) argue that training programmes that highlight biases and discrimination may have the effect of making individuals feel guilty for past injustices and create greater resistance to change. This might have been the case in this training programme, which focussed extensively on past apartheid and discriminatory laws, which did not address the issue of behaviour change.

6.7.2 Time Span for Change

It was mentioned that one of the reasons this training was commissioned was the realisation of the presence of racist attitudes and biases that are the remnants of the apartheid laws practiced in this country before independence. The participants indicated that the workers in this company still experienced discrimination on the basis of race and cultural differences.

When people are born into a society where racist attitudes and practices are firmly entrenched, these attitudes and beliefs tend to be present in the work situation because the company happens to be part of that society. Participants mentioned issues such as, *'past history is still in peoples' minds'* and *'problems come a long way'*. These deeply engrained discriminatory attitudes affect work interactions in the company and call for a greater consideration of the understanding and appreciation of differences. However

to create lasting change and to change peoples attitudes and behaviour needs time and long-term efforts. Bush & Ingram (2001) suggest that valuing diversity and incorporating it into the organisation over a long term could impact favourably on the bottom line and also create an innovative and creative workforce.

6.7.3 Context of Training

6.7.3.1 The need to contextualise training:

This company realised the need for change and the need to manage a diverse workforce effectively. In order to do this, they embarked upon a diversity- training course for all the employees, which was aimed at increasing people's knowledge and ultimately changing their attitudes and behaviour towards those that are different from themselves. This training could be perceived as an organisational socialisation strategy, which was aimed at influencing and sensitising the workforce with regard to diversity in the workplace. However the participants mentioned that the training was not company specific and did not address problems within the company and therefore did not facilitate transfer of learning to the workplace.

According to Cox (1994), organisations convey their goals, norms and preferred ways of doing things to their members through organisational socialisation strategies such as training. Through these processes members come to understand the values, expected behaviours and social knowledge essential to execute organisational roles. It is essential that these organisational efforts consider the social backgrounds of the employees to prevent training in isolation from social realities.

Ford & Fisher (1996) state that while organisations may be striving for greater tolerance and understanding of diversity there are still limits to what organisations can do to redress the ongoing societal impact in the workplace. They further argue that societal differences in culture, beliefs, values and practices cannot be overcome by organisational efforts such as training only.

6.7.3.2 Social Influences:

Despite the fact that people went on training as an organisational socialisation effort, they still have to return to the same society that was in the first place responsible for the formation of their attitudes, work values and beliefs. This social interaction might lead to the reinforcement of the attitudes and behaviour that the training attempts to change. The Social Identity Theory also suggests that peoples' informal groups influence much of their communication, interaction and behaviour. These external influences might render the company's training effort unsuccessful, unless there is consistency between the organisational socialisation processes and societal influences. It is therefore important for the company to create joint efforts with education institutions or any other informal social institutions that has an influence people's attitudes in society. These joint efforts should have the common goal of creating a society and a workplace in which diversity is valued and respected.

Management should therefore be committing themselves to change before they can build diversity management into their company routine. It is therefore crucial that managers start seeing the factors that transpired during this research in another light that is beneficial for both the worker and the company. Bush & Ingram (2001) note that respecting and successfully interacting with members of diverse cultures is a long-term process. When managers in the company acknowledge the reality that a two-day training course cannot change attitudes and behaviours, then they might be more likely to devote time and resources to diversity efforts and practices that are relevant to their differences and the customer base of the company.

Diversity in the workforce is a powerful aspect that might impede the process of change in the workplace and hence require an effective management strategy. Management must be able to recognise the challenges posed by diversity and the demand for change in order for them to address the likely barriers to change in a holistic manner. This knowledge will enable the managers to intervene proactively and implement the necessary strategies to create diversity and change within the company. This will include investigating why people resist change and how their fears and insecurities could be reduced or dealt with.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In light of the findings of this research, recommendations are made to the training programme administrators to assist in the improvement of the diversity management course. Furthermore, recommendations are also made to the company management to assist in the management of cultural differences in the company.

While it is evident from the findings that the diversity-training programme was liked and that the participants were able to learn from it, it is clear that the participants' behaviour did not change nor did the organisational results improve. Therefore the following recommendations are made to both the training administrators with regard to the training programme and to the client company management.

7.1 Training Programme Administrators

The diversity-training programme was designed to increase understanding about diversity, to improve work relationships among people in diverse work environments and to change people's attitudes and behaviour towards diversity. Despite the best intentions of this training, it seems not to have produced the expected results.

7.1.1 Programme Objectives

The objectives were to impart knowledge and understanding of diversity whereas the training expectations were to change attitudes and behaviour of workers towards diversity. Instead, the programme objectives should have been geared towards the provision of skills and abilities to manage cultural differences in the workplace. Such training could be supplemented by videos and behaviour modelling programmes that showed diverse interactions and cross-cultural communication in diverse settings. Furthermore the participants strongly felt that the course objectives should have been explained to the participants before the training had started and should be relevant to the specific work environment. The second phase in Cox's model, which addresses the research and measurement before training, supported this view. This phase emphasises that, before any diversity training efforts are embarked upon, information must be

collected to indicate where the organisation is in terms of diversity awareness and that could assist in adjusting the training programme to suite the specific company.

7.1.2 The Programme Content

The course content did not really focus on imparting specific cross-cultural communication and interaction skills, but rather to raise awareness and sensitise the participants to issues of diversity, racism, past laws, and their influence in the workplace. This focus of the training course might have done more harm than good and created resistance to the acceptance and respect for other cultures and groups. According to Ford & Fisher (1996), programmes that stress differences and discrimination might threaten participants and create conflict. For a training course to change attitudes and behaviour, there is a need to demonstrate and create specific diversity management skills, which address specific behaviours within the company. Ford & Fisher (1996) suggest that companies should consider a more holistic approach to training, i.e. an approach that is customised to meet individual needs better and is proactive to the problems that are challenging the workplace.

7.1.3 The Duration of Training

The participants felt that the course was too short to change their attitudes and behaviour. Based on this feedback, the training should be regarded as a valuable starting point for creating awareness, because for individuals to value and accept other cultures cannot be achieved in a two-day training course. Bush & Ingram (2001) indicate that respecting and successfully interacting with members of diverse cultures is a long-term process. One could suggest that the course should be seen as the beginning of a change process and therefore a means to an end and not an end in itself. If this understanding is communicated to the participants they might not have had unrealistic expectations that people would change immediately. Knowing this might also motivate the participants to explore other avenues of attitude change. From the literature on attitude formation it was clear that attitudes are formed over a long period of time and are achieved through numerous reinforcement efforts. To develop new attitude will also need time and organisational and societal reinforcement practices. This view was

also affirmed by the participants with responses such as ‘change might take time’, ‘too soon to say there is change’ and ‘problems come a long way’.

To ensure the effectiveness of the training course and to ensure improvement in organisational results and a lasting attitude and behaviour change, the trainer should be available for follow-up discussions and meetings with the company. The effectiveness of the change effort should be evaluated on a continuous basis for the change to become part of the on-going processes of the company. At this point, it could be suggested that the trainer should consider a guiding model on diversity similar to the one that was provided by Cox (1994) and presented in chapter 3.

7.2 The Company Management

Fine & Johnson (1990) assert that the acceptance and understanding of diversity is not enough to create a committed workforce that is willing to use the learnt skills on the job. Managing diversity is more concerned with drawing the best out of people and fully tapping their human potential to be productive (Kossek & Lobel, 1996). It is a broad managerial process, which includes the creation of company policies and practices that are appropriate for a diverse workforce and which would address issues such as unequal reward systems, extended probation periods, restrictions on the use of certain company facilities such as toilets and telephone.

There are also other issues such as stereotypes, beliefs, values and attitudes, which cannot be changed immediately after a two-day training course. To improve this situation it is vital for management to commit itself to the change process by recognising and accepting the presence of differences in the company and to adapt its policies accordingly. It is also important to realise that it is not realistic to fit people into existing company cultures (Jackson, 1996) but instead to expand these cultures to accommodate the diverse needs, values, opinions and goals of people in the company. Only when the various groups within the company respect and accept each other irrespective of their differences is the company ready to manage diversity. That would lead to the creation of a multicultural organisation, which is described by Cox (1994) as the ideal organisation resulting from effective management of diversity. The key task

of management is therefore to explore how differences might be used to the advantage of both the company and the workers.

Furthermore, it is also important for the company to groom a leadership that understands differences and that realises the contribution differences could make to the company. The participants indicated that they would change their attitudes and behaviour if management were prepared to change as well. This indicates that it is expected that management should be role models of the required behaviour in the company. Fernandez (1998) also suggests that leaders should make considerable efforts to work effectively with subordinates from different backgrounds. In order to do that leaders should be aware of the diverse cultures involved and should be ready to value, respect and appreciate these cultures. Erez & Earley (1993) also suggest that transferring managerial techniques across cultures have not always been successful. It is important for leaders to realise cultural differences, in order to build trust and commitment within a diverse workforce.

7.3 Conclusion

This research focussed on the impact of diversity training on employees in a Namibian company before and after they had gone on the diversity-training course. It was aimed at assessing the impact of training on participant's attitudes and behaviours towards diversity. Pre- and post- assessment interviews and a focus group discussion were used to collect the data and a grounded theory approach to analyse the data.

The research results drawn from the pre-assessment interviews showed that the participants' perceptions of the notion "diversity" were guided by the traditional definition of diversity as being differences based on ethnic, cultural and family background. Their diversity experiences, which were mainly related to the separation of cultures, discrimination, poor workplace interactions and the lack of understanding of other cultures, might have been caused by the perception of differences as static and are unable to be changed.

It is evident from the post training results that the diversity-training programme had an impact on the first and second levels of Kirkpatrick's model. The findings indicated that the participants liked the programme and conveyed positive feelings towards the course and the trainer. They also felt that they had learnt and acquired knowledge and skills from the training programme. However it was found that very little or no behaviour change had taken place and no improvement in company results was reported. It was found that a number of other factors such as unrealistic expectations, time span of change and the training context might have affected the transference of learning and hence a lack of improved company results.

Recommendations were made with regard to course objectives and course content to the trainers as well as to the company management. It is believed that the recommendations may assist in enabling the training course administrators to revisit the training guide and the client company management to develop policies and practices that could support the effort of managing diversity effectively.

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APPENDIX A: The Consulting firm's diversity management training programme

About the course

The course is designed in such a way to address day-to-day social issues that have direct influence on how people relate to each other in the workplace. Through extensive discussion, a significant realisation emerges among people about different customs, cultures and understanding of various issues. This will give rise to a harmonious appreciation of various customs and way of thinking.

Based on our recent and distant history, there are so many issues that may have an impact on relationships at work. These issues may have a negative influence on the next person. It is therefore important to iron out differences and understand the motives why people think and behave in particular ways.

The course will touch on issues such as culture, racism, sexism, race, colour of skin, discriminatory laws, language, ethnic groupings and their various customs, stereotyping, attitude, human relations, affirmative action, employment equity, common purpose at the workplace. It means that the course is built around topical issues that we deal with on a daily basis at work.

Objectives

On completion of this course, the participants should be able to:

- Understand diversity and important parameters/dimensions of diversity
- Understand why sensitivity to diversity issues is important
- Understand their own experience of diversity
- Understand the effects of racism
- Understand culture and some important cultural issues in the Namibian context
- Understand the competence continuum
- Understand the various steps, which help to develop sensitivity/ competence in dealing with diversity

- **Course content**
- The story of the rainbow and how it relates to the company
- The definition of diversity for the company
- What is racism? What are the trends at the company
- Diversity in Namibia
- Diversity of culture
- Diversity of language
- Namibian cultures/ Ethnic groupings in the company
- The competence continuum
- Strategies to develop sensitivity
- Various paradigms for management and employees
- The story of cultural diversity for the company
- The effects of industrial action. Could a better understanding avoid all these?

Target group

This course was presented to eighty employees of this company. The intended goal of the training was to create awareness and understanding among employees with regard to diversity and ultimately change their attitudes and behaviour towards people who are different.

Duration and time of training

Two days: two day training sessions with a group of twenty employees per session. The training took place over four consecutive weekends on Friday and Saturday.

Diversity training: Agenda: Day one

- 08H00-08H30** Course registration- welcome
- 08H30-09H00** Ice breakers
Aims and objectives
Workshop guidelines
Expectations
- 09H00-10H30** Defining the terms: Diversity, Affirmative action and
Employment equity etc.
- 10H30-10H45** **Tea Coffee**
- 10H45-11H30** Understanding diversity
Exercise: Activity 1
Stereotyping/racism/sexism
- 11H30-13H00** Diversity in terms of our past, present and future
Exercise: A case study on Namibian law
- 13H00-14H00** **Lunch**
- 14H00-14H30** Impact for various customs and practice on the Namibian
cultures by: Language, ethnic groupings, and race/colour of skin.
Etc.
- 14H30-15H30** Exploring discriminatory laws in pre-independent Namibia and
its impact on present day Namibia
- 15H30-15H45** **Tea/ Coffee**
- 15H45-17H00** Discriminatory laws (continued)

Diversity training: Day two

08H00-08H45	Revision on day one
08H45-10H00	Cross-cultural exchange Different Namibian languages
10H00-10H30	Exercise: Activity 2
10H30-10H45	Tea/Coffee
10H45-11H45	Developing cultural diversity competency: Individual Organisational
11H45-12H15	Exercise: Action plans on competency
12H15-13H00	Developing cultural competency
13H00-14H00	Lunch
14H00-15H15	Report back in plenary
15H15-16H00	The way forward Teambuilding exercise End of day two/course

APPENDIX B: Pre-assessment interview guide

STUDY NUMBER? []

1. Gender:

- 1.male []
- 2.female []

2. Educational background:

- 1.Primary []
- 2.Secondary []
- 3.tertiary []
- 4.none []

3. What kind of work do you do?

- 1.Manager []
- 2.Office worker []
- 3.Labourer []
- 4.Other []

4. How old are you?

- 1.under 25 []
- 2.25-35 []
- 3.36-45 []
- 4.46-55 []
- 5.over 56 []

5. What is your nationality?

6. What is your ethnicity?

7. What do you think the course is about?

8. What is your understanding of cultural diversity?

9. What are your expectations for this training course?

10. What do you expect to learn or to gain from this training course?

11. Why do you think you were selected to participate in the training course?

12. In what way do you think the training will assist you to do a better job for your company?

13. How do you regard your work environment with regard to cultural diversity?

14. In your view why did the organisation decide on diversity training for its employees?

15. Whom do you think in your organisation should attend the diversity training course?

16. How do you think this course will benefit your organisation?

APPENDIX C: Post-assessment interview guide

1. What was the course about and what did you learn from it?
2. To what extent were your expectations met during the training?
3. How do you understand the notion of cultural diversity now?
4. From what you learned what skills do you think are needed to deal with cultural diversity?
5. Do you feel it has changed you in any way? And how?
6. What did you enjoy least (if anything) about the training course? And why?
7. What did you enjoy most about the course? And why?
8. Would you like to attend future training programs of a similar nature? And why?
10. In your view will the diversity-training course benefit your organisation? And how?
11. Will the training help you to do a better job for your organisation? And how?
12. Why do you think employees should be aware and sensitive of cultural differences in their work organisations?
13. Would you recommend this course to people in other work organisations? And why?
14. What do you think needs to be done to enhance understanding of cultural diversity in your organisation?
15. How well was the trainer/ instructor prepared?
16. How was the course presented with regard to clarity of concepts and language use?
19. What would have made the training more effective?

APPENDIX D: Focus group questions

1. Did you observe any behaviour changes with regard to cultural diversity amongst your co-workers and in what way?
2. In what way do you think has the training make contributions to the success of your company?
3. If you could compare the awareness of cultural diversity before and after the training within your company what would you say about it now?
4. In what way do the practices of your company create an environment in which members from different backgrounds can excel after the training?
5. What level has your company reached in being sensitive and aware of people from different backgrounds and how is that evident?
6. What could you say about the overall performance of your company after the diversity training was presented?
7. To what extent has the diversity-training programme improved the working relationship within the company if at all and how?
8. Is there anything else that you want to say about cultural diversity and how it is perceived in your company?

APPENDIX E: Indicators and categories (pre-assessment interviews)

Example of the process of coding categories in the pre-assessment interview with participant no. 1.

Codes relating to the concept of diversity

Categories

Indicators

Perception about diversity

...different ethnic backgrounds
...Different cultures
...Understand and appreciate others

Ideal attitudes

...proud and willing workers
...Degree of understanding

Facilitators of attitude change

...knowledge about others
...Respect for others
...Changed company practices

Barriers to attitudes change

...lack of cooperation
...Lack of understanding
...Apartheid practices

Desired effects

...change in attitudes
...Minimised racial conflicts
...Improved communication

Codes relating to the experiences of diversity

Categories

Indicators

Experienced negative results

...strike actions
...Misunderstandings
...Poor customer service

Unfavourable attitudes

...discrimination
...Group categorisation

Organisation level effects

...company loosing
...Union involvement

Individual level effects

...better understanding

Diversity management

...no specific ways

...Committees in place

Codes relating to diversity training

Categories

Indicators

Expectations:

Personal level

...attitude change

...Learn more about other cultures

...Learn to communicate with others

Organisational level expectations

...create ways to deal with diversity

...Discuss company problems

...Hope to eliminate apartheid practices

Benefits of training:

Individual benefits

...all employees exposed to the same
experience

...To know each other better

...Opportunity for self-expression

...To provide knowledge

Organisational benefits

...to address strike action

...Maintain good human relations

...Improve customer service

...Platform to solve problems

APPENDIX F: Indicators and categories (post-assessment interviews)

Example of the process of coding categories in the post-assessment interview with participant no. 1.

Codes relating to reaction, learning, behaviour change and tangible results

Categories	Indicators
Reaction:	
Positive reactions	...I enjoyed the discussion ...Useful course ...Presentation was clear ...Course was well organised
Negative reactions	...at the end the instructor went fast ...Course needs to focus on a ...specific company ...Course was very short
Learning:	
Knowledge gained	...learnt about other cultures ...Understand differences among colleagues ...Learnt about the Namibian work history
Acquired diversity perceptions	...people are raised differently ...Different thinking and behaving ...Early teaching influences ...Unique ways of interaction
Formed attitudes	...Appreciating others

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...Forget about race differences ...Treat people equally ...Willing to be patient
Feelings of disempowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...Did not learn specific skills ...Change may not be soon
Barriers to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...Apartheid practices ...Old company policies
Behaviour change:	
Intervention failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...others did not change ...Don't think behaviour will change ...Top management did not change
Unfavourable human relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...no trust among workers ...Poor communication ...No understanding of differences ...People are still complaining about management
Unacceptable behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...Workers do not cooperate ...Unfair salary deductions ...Management refuses to listen ...Name-calling

Codes relating to reasons that might have led to lack behaviour change

Categories

Unrealistic expectations

Indicators

...change expected from
management only
...Workers very demanding
...Top management should
change
...If there is change it is little

Time span for change

...change maybe after some time
...Long-term process
...Course too short
... Problems comes a long way

Training context

...training not relevant to
company
...Social background influences