

# MANAGEMENT AND DIVERSITY: THEMATIC APPROACHES

# INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EQUALITY,  
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION VOLUME 4

# MANAGEMENT AND DIVERSITY: THEMATIC APPROACHES

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Jean-François Chanlat and Mustafa F. Özbilgin

This volume with collection of essays on perspectives of diversity and management from a wide range of countries is outcome of a collaborative effort by a diverse group of international scholars who are associated with the Chair of Management and Diversity at the Université Paris-Dauphine.

This volume is the second of two volumes on management and diversity and focuses on central issues in management and diversity. The purpose of this volume is to bring some issues, which are old, new and emerging, and to give some perspectives for the future. As the first volume, we also would to shed light on how we can build intersectional solidarity across countries and categories of difference in order to promote equality and to offer progressive approaches to diversity and management.

As editors of this volume and co-chairs of the programme, we are both committed not only to contextual analyses of management of diversity in different national settings but also to important issues and future. Chapters in this volume bring a certain number of issues, which are very relevant to our field.

As the first volume, already published (Özbilgin & Chanlat, 2017), this second volume was made possible by participants of the two international symposia, which were held at the Université Paris-Dauphine in 21–22 October 2011 and 1–2 October 2015. Contributors of this volume are the participants of the both symposia. Chapters in this volume have been presented during

the symposia and authors had time to reflect on questions and feedback as well as other presentations at the event to develop their papers.

Diversity is now a globally recognised concept in management studies (Barak, 2013; Nishii & Özbilgin, 2007; Özbilgin, Tatli, & Jonsen, 2008). While the concept of diversity is well recognised now, its meaning, purpose, applications at work and interpretation in practice in different local settings remain highly divergent (Tatli, Vassilopoulou, Al Ariss, & Özbilgin, 2012). This divergence in priorities of diversity across national borders bodes well for contextual insights to be garnered and national models to be considered for innovation in diversity interventions. We contend that linguistic diversity (Chanlat, Davel, & Dupuis, 2013) is essential if we want to access diverse repertoires of diversity meanings. Therefore, these two volumes that we have edited will be published at the same time in English and French. We hope that this collective desire will improve the reach of the volumes to a wider international audience.

In this second volume, there are 15 chapters and epilogue, each covering a unique issue, or proposal for the future. Below, we present a brief overview of each chapter. The collection of chapters focalises on a number of central issues around diversity and management. Some are quite well known, others not so much; some are dealing with some important issues, other are trying to propose an agenda for the future. We have divided this volume in three parts: the first one includes all the contributions focalising on the relationship between diversity and competency, performance and creativity.

In this first part, the first chapter, written by Alain Klarsfeld, tries to link diversity with competency management two notions coming in the French context from the USA. He tries and highlights the fact that there are many links between these two concepts, mainly concerning the notion of social justice and the way it is applied in the field of management practice, to address what can indeed be a wide variety of issues. First, he shows how the concept of competency, and management of or by competency can be a factor in helping more people find employment, improve employability and develop competency, thus contributing to increased diversity in the workforce at every level of an organisation. He then examines a different part of the literature, more closely related to organisational learning, which finds that deviance and diversity can potentially boost competency. Second, he looks at diversity management as an organisational competency and as an individual competency. He observes that management by competency and diversity management advocates employ the same rhetoric of economic rationality, with both types of practice being justified by an objective change in the environment. In opposition to this supposed rationality as seen by companies, he shows

that, in France, the two concepts of competency and diversity interact closely with institutional processes of mimetism, normalisation and coercion. In the final section, he looks more closely at critical views of management by competency and diversity, as the criticisms of the two concepts are very similar and question their claims to be propelling society towards a fairer society.

In the second chapter, written by Maria Giuseppina Bruna, Jean-François Chanlat and Mathieu Chauvet, analyses the link between diversity and performance through the focus of a social change process. In effect, they think that the implementing of a diversity policy cannot be reduced to a style of management, to professional rhetoric or to a set of superficial or illusory initiatives. So, they have chosen to portray the deployment of such an approach from the standpoint of an organisation-changing process, which can alter the language, the standards and the practices of the organisation in question. Standing at the point where the voluntary and the mandatory cross, the implementation of a diversity policy can be understood as an answer to institutional injunctions, reinterpreted within a given framework of management. Based on a dynamic collective learning process and on social regulation, any diversity process aims to involve an increasing number of actors (from experts in the field to citizen-collaborators), and thus, little by little, to cover more and more larger fields of intervention. The result is a dynamic spiral, which is at the same time expansionist, cyclical, and, being by nature a work in progress, always perfectible. From an organisational point of view, implementing a diversity policy allows an enterprise on the one hand to reposition itself strategically, notably by adapting to the cultural expectations of the stakeholders, and on the other hand to reinforce its legitimacy as defined by [Suchman \(1995\)](#). As it contributes equally to both organisational and social performance, implementing a policy of this kind, according to them, can have a potential for economic leverage. This is the framework within which they attempt to describe the process, from the analysis of diversity policies as levers for change, to the study of diversity management practices as factors of performance and led them to identify three managerial levers capable of transforming team diversity into performance enhancers.

The third chapter, written by Allain Joly, is based on an interesting issue: the creative class and creative cities (Florida, 2012). Based on Richard Florida works in the early 2000s on this question, many mayors from the US rust belt were emboldened by his uplifting views on the new wave of wealth creation. Many city halls began to revitalise their former derelict downtown districts in order to attract there the Bohemians that Florida described as the magnet attracting the creative class members as they were the ones who were revitalising such decrepit urban centres. Montréal did

not escape this trend as municipal authorities, hand in hand with the superior levels of government (provincial and federal), embarked in a series of projects which aim was to build from scratch an engineered receptacle in which both cultural and technological initiatives could be born, develop and allow a whole new economy to flourish.

As tolerance is a central feature of the cities where a creative class is contributing heavily to their renewed prosperity, Allain Joly wonders whether Montreal offers such a tolerant milieu where the Bohemians and the creative class can develop and prosper. In order to get as close as possible to an answer, he examines in the first section the treatment that the Québec society affords to its immigrants. Having concluded that the immigrants fare less well in Québec than in Ontario, the neighbouring province, and Canada globally speaking, he endeavours to understand this state of affairs through Hofstede's "Uncertainty Avoidance" cultural dimension (2011) and through Gladys Symons' tribalistic behaviour in the local business enterprises towards women (2001). He delves deeper into the creative class dynamics by mainly using Florida's results in order to better contextualize the Montréal case. For him, Montréal stands as an interesting "problem" as this is a city where the English-speaking community recent growth in numbers has been raising strong enough concerns in the Quebec French-speaking majority so that one can reasonably expect a government intervention in order to rein in this ongoing evolution. He demonstrated that the key for a full integration of the creative people in this society, the labour markets, and some professional cultures are resisting in comparison with the openness that has been observed in the public services and some private organisations. For him, as these are characteristics proper to "Uncertainty Avoidant" societies, he thinks that legislative measures will be necessary to unlock this ultimate obstacle to the immigrants economic integration in their newly adopted country.

The fourth chapter, written by Norbert Alter, is based on a research on "atypical" bosses done in France. Rather than following the path drawn out for them, these types of bosses have preferred to draw their own. If they hold today advantageous and envied social positions, 20 or 30 years ago, their difference represented a considerable social disadvantage. In effect, descendants of visible ethnic minorities, handicapped, autodidacts, women, or homosexuals, they have become bosses, business managers, or directors, even though these positions are usually reserved for men who are straight, white, from bourgeois families, graduates of French *Grandes écoles*, and displaying a "correct manner". Being strangers, not mobilising what is implicit in the dominant culture, leads them to look, rather than to see, to question the meaning, usefulness and purpose of all kinds of social practices taken as granted by the

majority. Difference, from this perspective, because it forces exteriority and engagement, also represents a considerable strategic resource which atypical bosses have been able to mobilise to invert their destinies: it provides the ability to distinguish that “normals” fail to identify, and it leads to taking risks where “normals” would prefer conformist actions. This does not mean that atypical bosses “find a place” in the world of work. Rather they tend to cross through it, to move, this displacement having itself become a culture, that of adventure. Innovation is clearly linked to these diverse profiles.

The second part includes all the contributions dealing with some critical reflections about some diversity categories and discrimination.

In the first chapter, written by Mustafa Öztürk, analyses when the freedoms collide, notably around the competing claims for religious rights and sexual orientation equality at the workplace. The equality, diversity and inclusion literature has traditionally specified a vector of difference located in the individual, based upon a specific category (race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, disability, religion, etc.) and attempted to identify the mechanisms through which people occupying a given minority subject position in the organisational sphere might be subjected to marginalisation, exclusion or discrimination by dominant groups. The literature found finer tuning and deeper nuance in the more contemporaneous consideration of subject positions through the lens of intersectionality, with the sophisticated appreciation that in many cases a multiplicity of differences could be located simultaneously within specific individuals or groups of individuals, where antecedents and consequences of victimisation might prove more enduring and intractable and solutions offered might seem incomplete, if the analysis centred on specific categories in isolation. Based on [Berlin reflection on Freedom \(1969\)](#), Öztürk writes that there are two possible conceptualisations of freedom: negative liberty and positive liberty. With negative liberty, the governing principle is that rules and regulations imposed on the individuals by social contexts in which they operate take away from their autonomous sense of personhood with detrimental results for human agency. Conversely, a view oriented towards the tenet of positive freedom favours the imposition of some external boundaries as well as obligations upon the behaviour of individuals and/or groups, especially as they relate to other individuals and/or groups in a socially interactive and interconnected space. For him, the default position, especially in the US but to a large extent in the UK as well, has traditionally been to look at religious freedom from the perspective of negative freedom and sexual orientation equality from the perspective of positive freedom. On the other hand, sexual orientation equality, which has often been perceived as a positive freedom, seemed to be a laudable goal to be pursued

to the extent that it would not induce problems for other minority or majority groupings at the workplace and beyond. He argues that, although UK equality legislation has broadly provided support for LGBT individuals in the cases brought to courts, the atmosphere created by religious liberty-based challenges to LGBT equality has had a chilling effect on the advancement of LGBT rights in practice. The issue has serious human resource management consequences for organisations as well in the sense of continually having to rebalance and renegotiate the claims to exemption rights lodged by individuals with religious beliefs contrary to LGBT equal opportunities concerns. In the US, the situation is much more drastic and less grey as compared with that of the UK. So, the legal framework must be informed with the principle that incompatibilities between religious belief and sexual orientation equality claimants need not be seen as concepts in a vacuum, but in the context of sociality, whether it be within the work organisation or beyond, so that each claim is viewed in the light of positive freedoms with the understanding that freedoms are to be maximised for all parties with social effects and circumstances considered at each turn.

The second chapter of Isabelle Barth and Anne-Lorraine Wagner presents one of the invisible discrimination: the physical appearance. Their interest in appearance through the lens of discrimination stems from the fact, that it affects the whole world. Its familiarity paradoxically makes it a form of invisibility as, given its consistency, its use is never called into question, no matter where, when or what the type of relationship involved. The confrontation with appearance begins at birth with the game of similarities and continues through school with the frequently reported bias in teachers' appraisals and assessments due to appearance. Differences in judgement and treatment due to appearance obviously continue throughout life and impact on individuals' careers. Their chapter is based on empirical data. They conducted a study with 16 leading firms and organisations that belong to AFMD (French Association of Diversity Managers). The 18-month study included talks with experts, discussions with human resource and diversity managers, documentary research and the organisation of focus groups in four of the companies. Their joint collaboration led to the creation of two tools: a short animated video designed to raise public awareness, and a training kit to help company managers to run sessions on the issue. After in the first part of their paper define the notion of physical appearance and put it into its historical and cultural perspective, they examine in the second part the phenomenon within the contours of working life, and in the third part they put forward some recommendations for business organisations, based on their research. They conclude that physical appearance is specific in that it concerns everyone and



encompasses many other factors: disability, age, ethnic origin, pregnancy and religious beliefs, to name just a few. Paradoxically, its omnipresence makes it something that is rarely called into question and leads to very few complaints. In effect, one may presume that everyone has assimilated and legitimised it because it just seems so natural. If some organisations are now beginning to raise awareness to the harm caused by these implicitly accepted diktats whose origins are unknown, one therefore have to move away from the implicit and from silent acceptance, go beyond appearances and open up the debate as their chapter tries to do it.

The third chapter, written by Mélia Djabi and Sakura Shimada, puts the emphasis on the generational diversity in organisation. Demographic changes in post-industrial countries create new challenges for the management of organisations. Having become particularly popular amongst the managerial press and consultants, the importance of this topic has become exacerbated with the apparition of institutional legislations such as the “Senior Plan” and the “Generation Contract” in France. Since the 1st of January 2010, French businesses employing more than 50 employees must have reached an agreement or have an action plan on the employ of older employees. According to them, the generational phenomenon raises a double stakes for human resource managers. On the one hand, that concerns the issues circumscribed to a particular generation; in case of questions of the integration and retention of so-called “generation Y”, and of questions relevant to the maintenance of skills and motivation of employees reaching the end of their careers. On the other hand, it raises the intergenerational issue, with challenges of cooperation and transmission of knowledge. If the management literature is rich on this topic, it suffers from conceptual and methodological limits: multiple definitions and terminological confusions, methodological ambiguities and contradictory results. Faced with the managerial challenges and limits associated with this literature, the aim of their chapter is to understand how researchers handle the notion of generations in organisation. To answer this question, a multidisciplinary approach has been used to allow the capture of the polysemic origins of its uses. Then, a meta-analysis of 145 studies dealing with the concept of generations in HRM, from the 1990s up to 2013, shows a more detailed vision of its conceptualisation in the organisational sphere. Following certain recent studies which offer a nuanced picture of generational diversity in organisation, their results highlight eight generational aspects at the intersect of two dimensions, identified in the multidisciplinary literature, and the four levels of generation that emerge from their meta-analysis. Three main contributions are underlined. First, the distinction and reunification of age and cohort measures under the notion of generation allows a dialogue

to take place between both literatures and the overcoming of terminological ambiguities associated with this notion. Secondly, the distinction of generational levels appears to be important in the context of the de-synchronisation of societal and organisational time. The classification of articles according to their analytical framework demonstrates the existence of areas of research, which remain relatively unexplored in HRM. Finally, this matrix approach to generations allows the overcoming of stereotyped views of generations, amplified by the media, and enables resistance against their spread in the academic literature and the professional press.

The fourth chapter, written by Patrick Banon, analyses some religious issue around the sacred food at the workplace. Debates in that matter are nothing new. Dietary obligations and prohibitions, in all their diversity, have always been the object of comment, critique or even concern from one human group towards another. The consumption of meat or its prohibition has always been about more than its nutritional function. So, as Banon writes, reducing religious dietary obligations to hygienic or gustatory practices would be an unrealistic attempt to erase the diversity of the procedures which people undertake to give meaning to life, death and the world, and to locate themselves in relation to “others”. These rites, legitimated by myths, inevitably provoke phenomena of influence, reciprocated within and outside groups. In effect, the selection of food – of meat in particular – plays a primordial role as a social marker by tracing differences between individuals, between men and women, and between communities as, for example, observed in India. Religions as a whole primarily organise the social order as Durkheim put it and to this end prioritise legislating on two fundamental vital functions: diet and sexuality. As Banon shows in this chapter, questions are now raised about the contemporary management, in shared spaces, of a diversity of dietary prohibitions and obligations: What place should be reserved for dietary particularities in collective catering, in school canteens, businesses and human organisations? How do we measure the impact of religious dietary rules on social cohesion? What limits should be given to the expectations of each regarding dietary purity or fasting? When it comes to religions, it is indeed respecting the rite that maintains the group. Whilst faith organises private life, rites organises public life. Is demanding that others respect dietary obligations that concern only proselytism, even discrimination? Is it an ostentatious religious display when a practice implies the separation of people on grounds of purity? Or should dietary prohibitions of a religious nature be considered as simple, personal, nutritional practices destined to for example to avoid allergies, eat “vegetarian” or “organic”, or even follow a diet based on other personal health and taste motivations? At the end of his chapter, Banon writes

if Democracy protects private life whilst theocracy considers private life to be a public affair, businesses must be able to protect the anonymity, intimacy and indifference to difference of their employees. Intimacy must be respected to ensure that no prejudice comes to pollute the professional activity of an employee or their relations with their colleagues. Not providing a sacred diet, but offering dietary choices contributes to guaranteeing equality and thus the preservation of social cohesion.

The third and last part includes all the contributions focalising on some socio-political issues on diversity management and trying to give some perspective from them.

The first chapter, written by Mina Karatas-Özkan, is focalising on the issue of entrepreneurship. As she underlines, entrepreneurship is a politically charged discourse. It has positive aspects but also destabilises societal, economic and political power relations, and leads to various categories of inclusion and exclusion. Despite the Western governmental grand narrative that portrays a vision of society whereby the entrepreneurial values such as resourcefulness, risk-taking, self-efficacy, autonomy and confidence can be appropriated by everyone, regardless of their background and profile, entrepreneurship, according to her, does not often elevate and liberate marginalised people who are in subordinate positions. So, the presupposed assumptions of entrepreneurship should be challenged. This is the aim of this chapter. It makes several contributions: First, it presents a critical review of key elements of diversity in entrepreneurship literature, by identifying major trends in knowledge and historical shifts in understandings. Second, it brings together several strands of diversity and entrepreneurship literature in a single study departing from the premise that intersectionality between these strands is crucial in advancing scholarship in diversity and entrepreneurship. Third, it puts forward a research agenda for a more inclusive approach in the field, which is imbued with policy and practice implications. According to Karatas-Özkan, entrepreneurship is not only a socio-economic process but also functions as a political ideology, which can be instrumental in reproducing and reinforcing conservative assumptions and actions and hence shape public policy and public perception in ways that serve conservative political or capitalist ends, as evident in the case of social enterprise and entrepreneurship in the UK. Therefore, policy implications of the intersection of diversity and entrepreneurship are fundamentally important and analyse from the framework presented in this chapter.

The second chapter, written by Annie Cornet and Françoise Fatoux, is looking to an issue, which is not very studied until recently. It is the link between Trade Unions and diversity management and the social dialogue,

which can exist between these two actors, notably in France and in Belgium. The chapter's aim is to take stock of the aspect of the social concertation in the framework of policies of diversity management. It is based, in particular, on the work of a commission created by the AFMD (French Diversity Manager Association), in partnership with ORSE (Social Corporate Responsibility Observatory). This commission has involved several large French companies. Meetings were organised between the representatives of the different employers' and workers' organisations. Another source of this chapter is the numerous actions led by the Labour Unions in Belgium in the framework of the Consortium Diversité Wallonie, which exists since 2007. The two authors try to remind some objectives of social concertation in regards to policies of diversity management, to take stock of the legal constraints on concertation in regards to particular targets, to show the multiple conceptions of this notion of diversity management among social partners, to give an overview of the content of the agreements, and to present the steps of a social concertation sensible to diversity. The analysis of the group agreements related to diversity and equality of opportunities produced by some researcher leads to talk of a "deception": the engagements would be nothing more than the respect of the legal principle of non-discrimination. So, the insertion of diversity management in the social concertation remains a real challenge. For the social partners are key actors in the implementation of policies of diversity management. They can play several roles: transmit diversity policy to the employees and stakeholders (contractors, customers, users, etc.); suggest actions to implement them; control the implementation of the agreements; and process the complaints on discrimination.

The third chapter, written by Lucy Taksa and Dimitria Groutsis, is presenting the swings and roundabouts concerning Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Diversity Management in Australia from an historical perspective. They show that if most publications on the management of diversity in Western countries pay homage to history by referring back to the way regulatory frameworks developed to promote equal treatment and to oppose discrimination, this genealogical orientation is usually designed to establish historical foundations. However, according to them, this approach to history has promoted an impression of linear evolution. Based on [Hobsbawm \(1997\)](#) and [Lawrence \(1984\)](#) works, the general aim of this chapter is to show how an historical perspective can help uncover continuities in regard to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Affirmative Action (AA) and Diversity Management (DM) policies and strategies in Australia, particularly in relation to the management of cultural diversity in Australian workplaces. Considering the way that scholars have represented the evolution

of these three policies, they outline the contextual factors that influenced the way EEO, AA and DM were implemented in Australia. In this way they highlight the assumptions and imperatives that informed policy-making, laws, legal remedies and management strategies. Rather than seeing development in linear terms, their aim is to highlight connections and the implications of such connections. This requires attention to such government initiatives as multiculturalism, anti-discrimination laws and what became known in Australia as “productive diversity” policies. Through such an approach challenge the lip service paid to historical perspective in prevailing treatments of EEO, AA and DM, particularly insofar as they relate to people from Non-English migrant speaking backgrounds. As they see it there is a pressing need to address these issues. In the first place, for some time in Australia, the term “diversity” and DM strategies adopted by both public and private sector organisations have both been focused almost exclusively on women’s issues. While there has been growing attention to Indigenous employment issues over the past decade, such issues are treated separately from employment and management issues related to people from Non-English speaking migrant backgrounds. A more nuanced historical perspective is needed too to come to terms with the fact that the evolution from EEO and AA to DM has done little to address racial discrimination and vilification in Australian workplaces. In this way their chapter have identified how multiculturalism, anti-discrimination and EEO and AA laws and policies were linked together from the outset, and have shown the way multicultural policy absorbed the assumptions, rhetoric and imperatives of the business case for DM. Contrary to the prevailing view that the anti-discrimination, EEO and AA laws and policies focused on social justice outcomes, while DM has centred on the pursuit of business efficiency, they demonstrated that efficiency concerns pervaded the introduction of EEO and managerial imperatives have informed the practice and outcomes of anti-discrimination laws, particularly in relation to race discrimination.

The fourth chapter, written by Ahu Tatli, is focalising on diversity management as a career and how professional identity of diversity managers is a multi-level and political construct. If diversity management is now a well-established field of research in organisation and management studies, the majority of the managing diversity studies are based on quantitative research, whereas some others use qualitative data or case studies in order to explore issues related to diversity management. This chapter is a rare example, which offers an analysis of empirical data by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods. Although, there is a growing body of academic writing on diversity management, the mainstream diversity management literature

engenders a tendency to de-contextualise the diversity management process by isolating it from its socio-economic and organisational settings, to overlook the issues of power, which are embedded in organisational processes of diversity management. Furthermore, the agency of diversity managers, who are the most visible actors in the process of managing diversity, still continues to be an under-researched area. By excluding the agency of diversity managers, empirical research on diversity management deems the role and agency of diversity managers irrelevant. And prescriptive works on diversity management are underpinned by the implicit assumption of diversity managers as autonomous and rational individuals who are to a large extent free from organisational and social constraints in leading diversity management initiatives and programmes. So it is against such prescriptive tendencies and tendency to overlook the role of diversity managers in the processes of managing diversity, that this chapter focalised on diversity managers, whose agency is relational and multi-layered, and are important actors in diversity management process.

This chapter elaborated the components of diversity managers' professional identity, in its institutionalised form, by exploring the issues of expertise and skills, job status and organisational support. The analysis of the empirical evidence that is generated in the study presented in this chapter demonstrates the value of Bourdieu's conceptual categories for organisational and management research (Chanlat, 2015; Tatli & Özbilgin, 2015).

In the fifth chapter, written by Mustafa Özbilgin and Natasha Slutskaia, the two authors examine the interrelationship between politics of neoliberalism and practices of equality and diversity in the workplace. In so doing, they want to illustrate how macro-national politics, in particular the contemporary neo-liberal expansion, has a great impact on definitions, activities, beneficiaries and overall impact of diversity management at the organisational level. The chapter focuses on three fundamental assumptions of neoliberalism, beliefs in the utility of deregulation (voluntarism), individualism and competition in order to organise economic and social life. The chapter goes on to examine the reflection of these neo-liberal beliefs on construction of diversity management in contexts where neo-liberal politics dominate. The chapter concludes by a critical assessment of how diversity can be freed from the clutches of neoliberalism, which merely serves to limit the repertoire and imagination of interventions for diversity management. In this chapter, they show that the expansion of neo-liberalism has mixed consequences on equality and diversity at work in organisations. On the one hand, neo-liberal expansion widened the repertoire of equality and diversity interventions. On the other hand, neoliberalism had a number of negative consequences for equality and diversity at work. They identified that despite the dominance

of neoliberal discourses, some practitioners have resisted the monolithic and narrow approach of neoliberal agenda to diversity management. Although they argue that resistance is not futile for equality and diversity work, the main problem that faces equality and diversity practices has been the context of trust deficit, in which equality and diversity professionals had to operate in their organisations as well as in their sectorial and national setting. Trust deficit that comes with neoliberalism manifests in the form of mistrust in systems and interventions of equality and diversity that are driven by legal regulation, solidarity and service logics. This trust deficit is also contested by more critical practitioners and academics who developed various ways of resisting the impact of neoliberalism on practices of equality and diversity.

The last chapter, written by Quinetta M. Roberson, is starting from the substantive body of research that investigates the concept of diversity, its effects, and the mechanisms through which such effects occur. Despite all these works, its findings and the subsequent conclusions that can be drawn are complex. A number of questions regarding the “what, why, when and how” of diversity still remain. This chapter provides an overview and assesses the state of the field to highlight important areas for future research that can advance our understanding of the meaning, importing, operationalisation and consequences of diversity in organisations. It draws attention to overarching topics within the diversity literature, such as the conceptualisation of diversity, theoretical perspectives, diversity management, and system approaches to the phenomenon, underscoring conclusions that can be drawn from such work. More importantly, it identifies gaps in each of these areas as well as points of integration to offer directions for future research. While multiattribute conceptualisations of diversity may more accurately represent complex interactions between diversity attributes in groups and allow for more appropriate tests of the effects of heterogeneity in groups, additional exploration of the diversity construct may lead to a more comprehensive understanding of how it operates. Even as people identify with, or distinguish themselves from, others based on categories embedded in social environments, individuals’ identities are a complex interaction of meanings that derive from group memberships, self-appraisals, interpersonal encounters and beliefs, rather than represented by a single or finite set of structural characteristics. Consequently, diversity conceptualisations that incorporate objective and subjective attributes, self- and other-perceived attributes, and account for interaction dynamics within social environments, are likely to better capture multi-layered identity structures and their explanatory power (Syed & Özbilgin, 2009). Paramount to understanding the construct of diversity is accounting for variation among people and societies. Such



variation is represented by culture, which is a way of thinking that guides everyday behaviour and characterises the way people experience their social world. Taken as a whole, research shows that diversity yields both positive and negative effects on individuals, groups and teams, and organisations. Similarly, the study of diversity has yielded both negative and positive outcomes for the field. On the negative side, there is still much we do not know about diversity. On the positive side, there is still much we do not know about diversity. Thus, there is both the challenge that diversity research may remain stagnant by continuing along similar paths of investigation and the opportunity that evolution in research may advance our understanding of the meaning and operation of diversity. According to the author, greater diversity in our conceptualisations, theoretical approaches, and methodologies may reveal more and varied information and expertise about diversity as well as ways that researchers can collaborate across disciplines. Thus, the “value” in diversity research may also be diversified.

At the end, we finish by an epilogue written by Robert Lattimer who is an important actor in the American society on this issue of diversity. His epilogue presents the orients of the diversity movement in the United States, its cultural roots from the American, African-American civil rights movement, to its impact on shaping equal opportunity, employment equity governmental legislation, its influence on managing diversity from the organisational context, to the demographic transformation shifts. His reflection based on results of research and daily managerial practices, including the implications to problem solving and decision making as one important aspect of the promise of diversity management, concluded by presenting a powerful case of how diversity management is an essential element for increasing levels of creativity in both the global society, and within organisations. According to him, the promise and practice of diversity management could very well improve the quality of life in the 21st century. This epilogue falls totally into line with all the reflections and studies published in its second volume, which each of them has defended the strength of differences in managerial settings.

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