Global diversity management: towards a conceptual framework

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A recent large-scale survey of global Fortune 500 companies and other global organizations (Dunavant and Heiss, 2005) revealed that 100 per cent of surveyed organizations perceive global diversity as an important or very important issue. Attention to the issue of global diversity has been increasing due to the expansion of national laws and international policies aimed at eliminating discrimination, as well as a concomitant rise in the number of high profile litigations against global firms. Yet because the forms of discrimination that are considered unlawful diverge across countries, and there is extensive national variation in interpretation and implementation of equal opportunities laws (Ozbilgin, 2002), the 'how' of global diversity management remains complex and unclear for many organizations.

Indeed, despite unanimous agreement about the importance of global diversity, only 50 per cent of firms surveyed reported considering global stakeholders when determining their diversity strategies, only 39 per cent provide extensive multicultural training for all employees, and only 27 per cent routinely evaluate progress towards diversity goals. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for diversity programmes of multinational corporations (MNCs) to be run based on the ethnocentric assumption that domestic definitions and targets are appropriate abroad. We have even read about US-based MNCs that have demanded that their Latin American offices develop plans for how they will increase representation of African-Americans, Latin-Americans, and Asian-Americans (Dunavant and Heiss, 2005). Not only are the '-American' labels simply ridiculous outside of the US context, many Latin-American countries do not have sufficient populations of Asian and black people to even be able to fill such targets. The main problem with such an assumption is that it ignores the situated nature of diversity. In addition, assuming that diversity is primarily about race-related issues can lead to grave blind spots. For example, in Canada, a major diversity issue revolves around Francophones versus Anglophones, both of whom are Caucasian. Another example is Japan, wherein 99 per cent of the population is ethnically

homogeneous, and thus setting race-based targets for organizations is simply nonsensical. As these statistics and examples illustrate, it is obvious that there is a lot to learn within the practice of global diversity management.

Surprisingly, however, unlike some other areas of the organizational sciences in which research knowledge exceeds or precedes practice in that area, research on global diversity at present lags behind practice, even though global diversity practice is still relatively undeveloped. A recent review of the organizational literature using terms such as 'global diversity' or 'diversity' in combination with 'culture,' 'international,' or 'country' resulted in very few results, suggesting to us that there was a need for research in this area. In discussing what other search terms we might use to find relevant research, it soon became evident that the very idea of global diversity is quite amorphous. This became even clearer to us when we perused the 2006 programme for the Annual Conference for the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, in which we found a poster session devoted to the topic of 'global diversity'. It appeared that this label was being used to tie together a large body of disparate research, with many papers in the session not even containing a global or international focus. Instead, many of the papers focused on gender and race differences in selection, performance management, promotions, goal setting, and career advancement within the US alone, while the papers with an international focus ranged wildly from focusing on cultural values, repatriation and acculturation among international students. With minimal effort, most if not all of the papers could be re-categorized into topic headings that are already well established in the organizational literature (e.g. race differences in selection).

To what, then, does and should global diversity refer? At the most general level, we see global diversity as referring to two primary issues. The first is the management of diversity across countries, with the goal of understanding how each country might differentially define and conceptualize diversity from a social, legal and political perspective. Such a definition implies that part of the quest is to

understand how US or Western-centric diversity management programmes may be inappropriate in other cultural contexts in which diversity issues are vastly different from those in the US. In addition to its focus on diversity within countries around the world, we also see global diversity as referring to the management of cultural diversity across employees and countries within a global firm. This view implies that important questions centre on understanding how to manage multicultural teams, develop cultural or global competence, and facilitating smooth and effective interactions among global employees and units.

The research that we have been able to find on global diversity fits into either of these two perspectives. With regard to the first, that managing global diversity effectively requires an understanding of cross-national differences in the definition and understanding of diversity, Agocs and Burr (1996) begin by debating the usefulness of the US diversity management approach in other national contexts. They point out, for example, that the melting-pot metaphor on which US diversity management rhetoric is based contrasts with the mosaic metaphor of employment equity programmes in Canada. While the former is associated with the assimilation of group-based differences for the sake of individual recognition, the latter recognizes identity-based differences across various groups in society. Based on such differences, the authors argue that the potential usefulness and appropriateness of particular diversity management approaches – in terms of their fit with the country's specific national concerns, workplace systems and structures, and core business objectives – should be evaluated before transferring those approaches to another cultural context.

Such arguments suggest that multi-domestic approaches to diversity management are likely to be the most effective, given economic, social, political, legal and cultural differences across countries. Multi-domestic approaches in which organizations expect their country-level or regional-level businesses to define, fund and implement diversity management programmes with only general

guidance from headquarters, indeed tend to be the most common (Egan and Bendick, 2003). However, Egan and Bendick (2003) argue that the multidomestic approach may not necessarily be the best. While such approaches can benefit from considerable local creativity and commitment because they rely on local staff to define their diversity needs, agendas and strategies, they can also be difficult to sustain over the long-term without the resource support and central knowhow of corporate headquarters. Through their research, they reveal that for some organizations, such as Royal Dutch/Shell Group, a more global approach may be more effective, given its alignment with the company's overall degree of globalization in its corporate operations. Although top-down approaches may take longer to implement, when carefully constructed, they may ultimately be more effective for companies adopting more centralized approaches in the rest of their corporate operations. Ultimately, the best approach for each company must emerge, they argue, through a consideration of its strategic objectives and organizational structure, as well as the different demographic environments in which the company operates. We agree, but further argue that the ideal approach is likely somewhere in between a multi-domestic and global approach in that the global diversity function should serve a more deliberate function than that implied by bottom-up multi-domestic approaches. It should facilitate knowledge creation, disseminate and organize initiatives across domestic diversity management offices, equip local units with the necessary skills and resources to move their diversity initiatives forward based on shared experiences in the branch network, and develop global strategies that transcend the narrower perspectives that emanate from domestic networks.

The general idea that diversity management approaches developed in one national context may be inappropriate for other national contexts is insufficiently recognized in the academic literature. For the most part, North American and Western European research on domestic diversity management is presented without reference to the particular national context of which it is a part, and instead assumes

a pseudo global applicability. This has caused research from other parts of the world to be marginalized into an 'international' category, with the implicit assumption that such research is specific to that country's context and is not generalizable beyond. This absence of contextual elaborations combined with seeming over-confidence about the global applicability of domestic research findings is problematic. As the diversity research area continues to grow, we hope to see scholars make more explicit reference to the context specificity of their findings.

Compared to research on cross-national differences in diversity management, more research has been conducted within the second key area of global diversity management – that on the effective management of culturally diverse teams and organizations, and on the development of global competence among employees. Indeed, research on multicultural teams (e.g. Earley and Gibson, 2002), global competence (e.g. Chang and Tharenou, 2004; Earley and Peterson, 2004), and conflict management in multicultural groups (e.g. Barkema et al., 2003) has been emerging in the last decade; it simply has not been labelled a part of global diversity management per se. However, to date, there are no unifying frameworks for studying global diversity, with the exception of one by Mor Barak (2000), which focuses on the connection between subsidiaries and the larger communities in which they are embedded. While we agree that this is an important issue, many leaders of global firms first want to know how to manage global diversity within the confines of their organization. Thus, one of our goals in introducing this special issue on global diversity is to propose one such framework, to serve two primary aims: (a) to provide a framework within which to situate the papers that appear in this special issue; and (b) to stimulate future research in the area. In what follows, we briefly describe this framework, and then we introduce the papers for the special issue.

An inclusive model of global diversity

We used as a starting point for the development of a model of global diversity our observations about why the efforts of many MNCs to expand their diversity programmes globally have failed (as documented in Dunavant and Heiss, 2005, and in our interviews with global diversity managers). We define failure in terms of initiatives that lack relevance and legitimacy overseas or initiatives that are met with backlash and resistance overseas. Many of our examples are drawn from US MNCs that have expanded their diversity programmes abroad, largely because diversity-related research and practice has been most active in the US as compared with other countries (Egan and Bendick, 2003) due to the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, and diversity management has become an important component of human resource management in most large US corporations, more so than elsewhere in the world.

The first and perhaps most obvious reason why some early global diversity initiatives failed is because companies attempted to directly export their US domestic diversity programmes abroad. In doing so, they failed to recognize that the US concept of equal treatment and opportunity across race, colour, sex, age, national origin, pregnancy and disability does not readily translate into other cultures where, for example, the racial mix is rather homogenous (for example, Japan), or the gender divisions are clear and rigid (for example, in Saudi Arabia). The fact that such blind exportation of US-based diversity programmes abroad failed to paymuch attention to demographic and cultural differences is ironic, given that the main message of many diversity programmes is sensitivity to differences.

Another related reason for failure of diversity programmes abroad has been that only half of the 'best' firms have tended to involve their foreign operations in diversity programme planning (Dunavant and Heiss, 2005). Again, this is rather ironic given that one of the oft-touted goals of diversity programmes is to develop inclusive organizational climates. Without an emic – that is, culture-specific –

understanding of the subsidiaries' cultural context, such organizations risk implementing programmes

that are destined to fail due to cultural inappropriateness. For example, empowerment programmes,

which are thought in the US to allow diverse employees to exercise their diverse preferences in the

design of work (Gelfand et al., 2004), have been shown to fail in high power distance and high

uncertainty avoidance contexts. Yet another key problem with the blind exportation of US diversity

programmes is that they fail to address cross-cultural issues that are relevant in a global context but not

necessarily so in a domestic US context, such as (a) the development of a global mindset or cross-

cultural competencies; (b) attention to how cross-cultural differences influence global information

sharing, and, even more basic, how best to engage in effective information sharing when geographic,

language, and cultural barriers separate employees worldwide; and (c) the development of talent

globally, not just at headquarters, as a source of sustainable competitive advantage.

Formulated in part to address the aforementioned causes of failure of global diversity

management programmes, our model for global diversity management is pictured in Figure 1.1 We start

by defining what we see as global diversity management, as shown in the middle column of the figure.

First, in order for global diversity management to be effective, it should be premised on the inclusion of

global units, both culturally and in decision making within the organization. As is the case in domestic

diversity management, true inclusion, or the achievement of a multicultural work environment (Cox,

1994) is not achieved until all employees feel they are valued and trusted to be themselves within the

organization. Similarly, in global organizations, employees in not just headquarters (HQ) but also in

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

subsidiary units need to feel that they are truly valued and empowered to provide input regarding

organizational processes and decisions. Otherwise, it is more likely for organizational decisions to reflect

HQ preferences rather than what is good and appropriate for employees globally (Caligiuri and Stroh,

1995). Effective information sharing requires the establishment of trusting, collaborative relationships (Butler, 1999) across global units, as well as the inclusion of regional representatives in key decision-making bodies.

The second main component of global diversity management involves flexibility in the design of human resource practices. Unless HR practices, broadly speaking, are designed with sensitivity towards and understanding of possible cultural differences, attempts to implement global diversity and inclusion practices are likely to be met with resistance due to the contradiction in the intended message of inclusion and the application of ethnocentric, non-inclusive HR practices in global units. Achieving appropriate levels of flexibility or localization requires collaboration with cultural 'informants' who can share local knowledge and norms with HQ representatives. Establishing channels for bidirectional communication to avoid imposing what HQ perceives to be appropriate is especially important. This is not to say that all practices should be localized, but rather that an optimum mix of standardization and localization needs to be achieved through an open and careful consideration of cultural differences.

Assuming that these first two factors are in place, the stage is set for global diversity practices to have a chance at being effective. The key in developing a global diversity programme is to attend closely to the definitions and practices that are part of the diversity initiative such that

(a) definitions of diversity take into consideration the socio-historical power discrepancies within each cultural context (Cavanaugh, 1997), without assuming that definitions of diversity and meaningful societal group differences coincide across countries, and carefully considering the local impact of encouraging the employment and advancement of members of disadvantaged groups (e.g. women in Saudi Arabia);

(b) goals for alleviating specific sources of discrimination are locally defined; while also ensuring that,

(c) the overall goals and objectives of the global diversity initiative are unified across global units so as not to fragment the organization's attainment of its larger purpose of fostering an maintaining diversity.

Our interviews with chief global diversity officers indicate that these goals are more easily accomplished when there is someone who is responsible for diversity programmes in each foreign subsidiary or relevant region.

Finally, a primary component of managing global diversity, which is distinct from the requirements of managing domestic diversity, is the responsibility that MNCs have to develop the global competence of their employees. Unless employees worldwide (and not just in HQ) have opportunities to broaden their outlook and develop their ability to work effectively with people from different countries, collaboration across borders can pose more difficulties than benefits. International assignments that require employees to live and work effectively in foreign cultural contexts are perhaps the most effective means of developing global competence (Schneider and Barsoux, 2003), but given the expense associated with them, providing international assignments for all employees is clearly an impossibility. Access to cross-cultural training and opportunities to work on global work teams represent other important mechanisms for developing global competencies.

Turning next to the first column in Figure 1, we propose a number of leadership and cultural foundations that serve as antecedents to global diversity management. Research on upper echelon theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984) has shown that characteristics of the top management team (TMT) influence the decision making of an organization. Consistent with this notion, we expect that the

composition of the top management or policy-making team of an organization will influence the extent to which the organization effectively engages in global diversity management. TMTs that themselves are culturally diverse and are composed of individuals who value the importance of cultural diversity, have international experience (e.g. have lived in more than one country and who understand first-hand the relationship between culture and management), score high on cultural intelligence (Earley and Peterson, 2004) or similar constructs (e.g. Mol et al., 2005; Sizoo and Serrie, 2004), and who work effectively together with few dysfunctional power dynamics, are more likely to engage in effective global diversity management practices.

In addition, we expect that an organization's culture will influence the effectiveness with which it engages in global diversity management, such that organizations with domestic HQ cultures that are multicultural (Cox, 1994), rather than plural or monolithic, will be more likely to engage in effective global diversity management. The main differences among these three types of cultures have to do with the structural and cultural inclusion that diverse employees experience. In monolithic organizations, very little attention is paid to including diverse employees. In plural organizations, attention is paid to increasing diverse representation and enhancing fair treatment, but individuals are still expected to assimilate to dominant norms. In the most ideal multicultural organization, policies and practices focus not only on reducing discrimination and increasing representation, but also on creating a work environment that 'feels' inclusive to all individuals, and to facilitating the full utilization of diverse human resources to maximize both the employees' and organization's potential. Without question, an organization with a multicultural HQ or domestic culture is more likely to be adept at incorporating global differences into the design and implementation of its practices.

In the third column of our model are some of the diversity-related outcomes that organizations can expect to benefit from when engaging in effective global diversity management practices. First,

when an organization achieves inclusion of global units, appropriate flexibility in human resource

management, cultural sensitive diversity definitions, and the development of global competencies

among employees, it will be more likely to benefit from effective global knowledge creation, sharing,

and dissemination across units. This improved knowledge creation is due to several factors including

higher levels of trust between HQ and subsidiaries, greater skills at coordinating and communicating

across cultures/global units, and better use of human resources in global units due to culturally

appropriate management practices. In addition, there will be a greater likelihood that processes and

technologies necessary for effective knowledge sharing will be in place (e.g. information sharing

technology, global HRIS, best practice forums, sensitivity to time and communication differences).

The second major outcome of effective global diversity management deals with stakeholder

reactions to an organization's global diversity programme. The more context-sensitive global diversity

definitions and practices are, the more likely it is that global employees will accept the global inclusion

effort as evidenced in lower levels of backlash, more 'buy-in' and commitment towards the effort, and

greater satisfaction about and perceived fairness toward the effort. As stated earlier, the global diversity

management effort is also likely to be met with less resistance when HQ's management practices more

generally are culturally sensitive, such that messages of global diversity and inclusion are consistent with

global units' actual experiences of inclusion. Furthermore, greater context-sensitivity of global diversity

management efforts will likely also engender more positive local reactions about the organization as an

employer within the local communities of the global units, as well as fewer legal problems associated

with inappropriate diversity management.

A third outcome of interest involves the organization's performance and levels of innovation.

We propose that, consistent with the value in diversity hypothesis (Cox et al., 1991), organizations that

effectively manage global diversity will ultimately tend to see better unit performance across their

global units and, subsequently, better overall firm performance. This is likely to be true on a range of performance metrics – including, but not limited to financial performance. Some additional performance metrics include greater responsiveness to global customers, greater performance across global units in terms of product or service quality, better health and safety records, and greater success of international assignees. Additionally, firms with global diversity management practices in place will also tend to have more effective cross-national teams due to higher levels of global competence among employees, and will therefore be better able to capitalize upon talent worldwide.

The last organizational outcome in our model is employee engagement, which is an important goal in its own right. We propose that MNCs that effectively manage global diversity will tend to have worldwide employees report a sense of being 'included' as a valuable member of the global firm; higher levels of perceived organizational support; positive perceptions of organizational justice, job satisfaction and organizational commitment; and greater perceived mobility and advancement potential of worldwide employees (not just those stationed in HQ).

The final component of our model is a feedback arrow linking the diversity-related organizational outcomes to the leadership and cultural inputs to global diversity management. This arrow suggests that the effectiveness of global units will influence

(a) TMT members' beliefs and attitudes, such that when global units are highly successful worldwide, TMT members will believe in and value the importance of cultural diversity;

(b) the selection of top management team members, such that when global units are highly successful worldwide, it is more likely that the TMT will be composed of members from locations worldwide; and

(c) the organizational culture, such that highly successful global units will perpetuate the

development and maintenance of a multicultural organizational culture.

As such, global organizations that effectively manage their international diversity will tend to

create a self-sustaining cycle.

Papers in this issue

The paper submissions that we received for this special issue represented a wide range of topics, with

some papers addressing cross-cultural or international issues that we felt were not directly relevant to

global diversity management. Of those papers that were pertinent, eight were selected for this special

issue. Not surprisingly, the majority of them (six out of eight) have to do with global diversity definitions

and practices. The remaining two papers focus on cultural diversity at the group- rather than

organizational level of analysis, and more aptly can be categorized as fitting into the development of

global competencies box within our Figure 1.

Global diversity definitions and practices

The first of our papers, by Sippola and Smale, describes the global diversity management

philosophy and practices of a large Finnish multinational company, TRANSCO. In thei paper, entitled 'The

global integration of diversity management: a longitudinal case study', Sippola and Smale draw from an

in-depth case study which revealed that, although the company has centralized its global diversity

management philosophy, their practices and policies remained largely multi-domestic. The authors

describe the regulatory, normative and cognitive challenges faced by TRANSCRO as they faced the

strategy formulation, design and implementation stages of their global diversity management initiative.

Their study revealed that the multinational company was differentially receptive to diversity and

discrimination issues surrounding gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation across its global units. This suggested a level of sensitivity to situational and contextual requirements and needs in terms of diversity management across multi-domestic settings. Therefore, the authors suggest that the global integration of diversity management should be supported by an attention to multi-level diversity management issue as well as a recognition of the situated nature of diversity policies in institutions and society.

The second paper, which explores the interplay between domestic and global diversity management policies, is by Healy and Oikelome. In their paper, 'A global link between national diversity policies? The case of the migration of Nigerian physicians to the UK and USA', the authors drawon the experiences of Nigerian physicians in Britain to argue that the focus of global diversity management research should shift away from explicating the disadvantaged position and experiences of migrant workers towards scrutinizing the systemic, structural constraints and enablers that shape their labour market opportunities at home, in the host country and in the diasporic community at large. Only through such an understanding, the authors explain, will it be possible to generate migration and employment policies and practices that foster conditions of inclusion in social and economic life.

Turning next to explorations of the context-specific nature of diversity definitions and practices, we introduce a paper by SuB and Kleiner entitled 'Diversity management in Germany: dissemination and design of the concept', in which the authors draw from a survey of 210 companies in Germany to describe diversity management practices in Germany. Overall, they report that the size and scope of diversity management discourse and practice has been increasing exponentially in Germany in the last decade, and that they expect this trend to continue in future years. Unfortunately, however, the authors reveal that the design of diversity management policies in German subsidiaries of US firms often fails to capture the specificities of the German context. Given that their study is the first known study to

examine diversity management practices in Germany, the authors urge others to conduct more research on diversity management in Germany, particularly research of a qualitative nature.

In a second country-specific paper in this issue, Syed reports the results of a trend analysis of recent archival data of sex discrimination and race discrimination complaints filed under the federal legislation in Australia over a five-year period. In his paper, '"The other woman" and the question of equal opportunity in Australian organizations', Syed unravels the intersection of race and gender and discusses its implications for minority ethnic women in the Australian labour market. Indeed, this focus is important, as the intersection of multiple minority identities has generally been ignored in the diversity literature more generally (Ferdman, 1995). Syed's paper makes an important contribution by demonstrating how the present equal opportunity discourse in Australia, with its focus on 'the mainstream woman', i.e. white Anglo-Celtic women, overlooks the multiracial feminist perspectives of other, minority ethnic women.

The paper draws on critical race and feminist theories to elaborate how and why minority ethnic women's workplace experiences differ from those of their mainstream counterparts.

The fifth paper in this issue, 'British diversity professionals as change agents – radicals, tempered radicals or liberal reformers?' focuses on the role of diversity professionals, including managers, specialists and champions, in organizational change. Through their qualitative analysis of 39 diversity professionals in Britain, Virton et al. conclude that the dichotomy between liberal and radical approaches to equality which was introduced by Jewson and Mason (1986) is insufficient to account for the role that diversity professionals play in organizational change. Instead, they argue that Meyerson's (2003) notion of tempered radicals, or change actors, whose ambitions for organizational change are tempered by power relations at work, more closely resemble the experiences of diversity professionals and their roles in organizational change. Their analyses highlight the fact that diversity professionals as a

group enjoy limited access to resources and bases of power and legitimacy. Therefore, the way they are

tempered by lack of organizational resources should not be misconstrued as conservatism but

understood as attempts at seeking legitimacy, power, and influence in organizational channels in order

to materialize their plans for organizational change.

The sixth paper in this issue, 'Methodological considerations in conducting research across

gender, "race", ethnicity and culture: a challenge to context specificity in diversity research methods', is

useful for the study of global diversity definitions and practices because in it, Kamenou offers a range of

methodological considerations for researchers who wish to embark on diversity-related research that

involves diverse participants. She takes into consideration the still under-explored factors that influence

(and complicate) people's variable identifications with gender, ethnicity, class and other social

background categories. Based on this analysis, she recommends that researchers avoid simplistic

assumptions regarding the similarity of researchers and their participants and instead engage in

dialogue with study participants to uncover possible differences in social identity-related meanings. The

author suggests that dialogue can be facilitated by giving voice to the central concerns of the

participants whilst retaining a conceptual and methodological rigor which pays due attention to

different cultural requirements. Similarly, she argues that when MNCs focus on corporate-level

definitions of diversity, they will miss these nuanced differences in the meanings associated with various

social categories across countries, meanings that are inextricably linked to particular socio-historical

contexts.

Development of global competencies

The first of the two papers which focus on group-level conflicts involving diversity is entitled

'Illuminating a cross-cultural leadership challenge: when identity groups collide'. In this paper, Chrobot-

Mason et al. identify four possible leadership strategies that can be adopted to overcome identity-based

conflicts at work. The first of these strategies, the 'decategorization' strategy, requires leaders to underplay group identity categories in their interactions and instead emphasize personal identities, based on research evidence which suggests that a focus on personal identities tends to facilitate positive interactions more easily than group-identity based norms, which can stimulate group-based conflicts and biases in interactions. The second strategy, 'recategorization', involves highlighting a super-ordinate category or identity shared amongst workers in order to re-establish in-group and out-group boundaries in the workplace. The third strategy, 'subcategorization', is focused on highlighting the synergies among the contributions of involved parties by emphasizing their distinctive roles in the work process, as doing so encourages a re-examination of the relationships shared by the parties. The last strategy, 'crosscutting', involves designing the distributive profile of the workforce in such a way that group roles and category membership do not co-vary and workers are fairly represented across. The authors then expertly outline the implications of individualistic and collectivist cultural settings for the above four leadership strategies and actions.

The last paper in our special issue, by Dameron and Joffre, draws from a case study of a joint venture between British and French telecommunication companies, to examine the interplay between diversity management and co-operative relationships. Their paper, 'The good and the bad: the impact of diversity management on co-operative relationships', suggests that contrary to common wisdom (and hope), diversity at the team level in this study group was not perceived as an opportunity, but rather seen as a problem. The authors identified the development of a 'mirror effect', in which both the French and British group members projected negative, or opposite-to-us, characteristics, onto the other country's group members. Similar to Chrobot-Mason and colleagues, Dameron and Joffre suggest that such a mirror effect can potentially be ameliorated by emphasizing a super-ordinate, shared identity between the two groups. Through their description of what transpired in this joint venture integration

team, the authors help the reader to understand some of the differences between what they call community-based co-operation and complementary cooperation in diverse teams.

Conclusion

As is reflected in the contents of this special issue, there is growing research attention being paid to cross-cultural nuances or differences in diversity management, as well as to some of the challenges and opportunities faced in global diversity management. The field of global diversity management, with its unique set of tensions involving transfer versus emergence, centralization versus decentralization, and globalization versus localization of its prescriptions, offers a new challenge to scholars and practitioners who explore the nexus of globalization and diversity management. We hope that this special issue helps to bring more attention to this area, and that, in particular, research which examines other aspects of global diversity management described in our model and elsewhere (e.g. Mor Barak, 2000) is pursued in the future. We also urge researchers to carefully describe the potential cultural boundedness of their research findings, and avoid (implicitly or explicitly) assuming that research findings from one culture will generalize to other cultural contexts.

Note

1. This model is based on work presented by Jana Raver and Lisa Nishii at the Diversity as a Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy conference sponsored by the Martin J. Whitman School of Management, Syracuse University, on 7–8 October 2005.

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