

# Diversity Management and Identity in Organisations



# Diversity Management and Identity in Organisations

*From Liminality to Inclusion*

By

Daide Bizjak

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Diversity Management and Identity in Organisations:  
From Liminality to Inclusion

By Davide Bizjak

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# FOREWORD

This book is the last step of a research project on Diversity Management and Organisation launched in 2013, originating from the partnership among the puntOorg International Research Network,<sup>1</sup> the Department of Economics, Management, Institutions of the University of Naples Federico II, and the Centre for Active and Participated Inclusion of Students (*Servizi per l'Inclusione Attiva e Partecipata, SInAPSi*) of the University of Naples Federico II. This represents a widely shared interest within the international scientific community of Organisation and Management scholars.

The first steps of this project consisted of a book (Oliverio *et al.* 2015) in which we gathered the contributions of an important *parterre* of researchers and authors (scholars coming from the University of Naples Federico II and other prestigious Italian universities, and professionals, intellectuals, and practitioners), focusing on the inclusion of transgender people in labour markets and business organisations. In that project, we assumed as a starting point the role played by academic research for social development. In this regard, Gaetano Manfredi (Chancellor of the University of Naples Federico II) wrote in the preface to that book (Oliverio *et al.* 2015: 21-22):

Apart from being engaged in the creation, transmission and application of knowledge for the benefit of society as a whole (according to the three directives of *Technological Transfer and Innovation, Continuing Education* and *Social Engagement*), the academic institution is a fertile ground on which knowledge, skills and not strictly academic competencies meet and make it possible to push the boundaries of research and, in turn, to receive impulses and tools to reconstruct social practices. [...] The redefinition of the terms of reflection on the role of the University in contemporary society seems to be one of the results of this book [...]. And the fact that results have been achieved starting from a 'liminal' issue [...] is a further demonstration of how the dynamics of inclusion, moving from marginality, aid its overall reconfiguration.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Further information on the puntOorg International Research Network can be found online at <http://www.puntoorg.net/> (Last accessed: December 29, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Translation mine.

A second step in our research project arises from the successful research partnership activated in those years with the University of Essex and, in particular, with its Gender & Equality Office. The result of this partnership was a second publication (Boncori 2017), bringing together different perspectives and narratives on gender identity and sexual orientation, rooted in the deepest and most personal part of our being, which is reflected in our interactions with the external world. That research was about who we are, how others see us, how we see others, and what differences gender and sexuality make in our lives, focusing on exploring and understanding matters in relation to the LGBT+ community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and all other gender identities and sexual orientations that individuals may identify with) from different perspectives, experiences, narratives, and subjects.

These two phases of this international research project made it clear that the connection between identity and work could be (probably) understood only through the pluralism of the visual angles, starting from the principle of self-determination in defining gender identity, emotional and sexual identity.

Further research launched in 2016 within puntOrg (and now soon to be published) is represented by the work carried out by Valerio *et al.* (2018), in which – among other things – the organisational dynamics of trans people on the counterpart of the labour market are observed, that is, everything that happens inside prisons: complex and contradictory organisations that also act as ‘containers’, like all organisations, that welcome people excluded from the physiological dynamics of the labour market.

Alongside these early publications, our research team has participated in major managerial scientific societies’ life. In particular, our most significant commitment was concentrated within the European Academy of Management (EURAM)<sup>3</sup> and the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism (SCOS). The attendance at these conferences has always been matched with the organisations of a cycle of seminars named “*En attendant...*”, which represent a chance to share ideas and develop early

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<sup>3</sup> In particular, I am referring to the EURAM track *Institutions, Resistance, Change and Power* (track chair: Luigi Maria Sicca, Edoardo Mollona, Ilaria Boncori, Stewart Clegg, Alessia Contu, Andrea Fumagalli, David Levy, Mariella Pandolfi, and Luca Solari) – Warsaw, June 17–20, 2015; and the EURAM standing track *Institutional Change, Power, Resistance and Critical Management* (track chair: Luigi Maria Sicca, Edoardo Mollona, Ilaria Boncori, Stewart Clegg, Alessia Contu, Andrea Fumagalli, David Levy, Mariella Pandolfi, and Luca Solari) – Paris, May 31–June 3, 2016.

research projects over the year. The organisation of these seminars represents for us as members of puntOorg a way to be the Italian players of research internationalisation, the latter considered as the main pillar of the national ministerial policy.

Consistently, several research projects have been carried out over the years with the twofold aim of recovering archetypical languages (such as Philosophy and Music, but also Linguistics and the 'hard' sciences, which are inevitable sparring partners) and sustaining the process of internationalisation of Italian research. In this matter, it is important to make reference to the *puntOorg Notebooks* (both artefacts and collections of techniques), the *puntOorg block #* (a place for young and older people to collect sketches, notes, and to look through the eyes of the other), and finally, the *puntOorg International Journal – PIJ* (an online, peer-reviewed, open-access journal that publishes outstanding research rooted in the tradition of social sciences, aimed at advancing the conceptual understanding of social phenomena).

The book by Davide Bizjak is the last step and a bridge with previous experiences through the influential role played by Critical Discourse Analysis research in languaging, experiencing and organising policies linked to Diversity Management, since the textual analysis (both as a 'method' and an 'object') is the distinctive feature of the contribution by Davide Bizjak in the field of Organisation Studies. Let's see where it comes from.

\* \* \*

When in 2009 puntOorg International Research Network, already in motion for many years, began to formalise the first steps towards a gradual process of institutionalisation, I proposed to some of the (then) young students of Business Organisation to participate in a research project focusing on the Organisation-Text equation. The basic question was already addressed in previous international research experiences under the label 'Organisational Culture and Symbolism': 'reading' and 'writing' organisations as if they were real 'texts', with their own grammar, syntax, and a textual and symbolic interpretation.

This approach consisted of overcoming the 'literary' metaphor (i.e. organisations are *like* texts), and giving space to a 'scientific' metaphor, so as to produce new networks of concepts (Boyd 1979), far beyond the aesthetic side of metaphorisation that is typical of the substitution of a proper term with a figurative one, thanks to a mere symbolic transposition of images. On that occasion, I proposed to Davide to work on the paper by John Hendry (2006). That was probably the first meeting of the author of

this book with the strategic role of textuality for the understanding of Management. The paper on which Bizjak worked explored the double tyranny of *economic thinking* and *technicism* to the detriment of seeing education and management, highlighting the strength of a humanistic management in basic research, applied research, teaching and management training. That challenge on textuality (and the debate on humanistic knowledge as a water-bearer of managerial and organisational knowledge) is today expressed in the (methodological and empirical) research carried out by Davide Bizjak through the exploration of three different topics: diversity, identity, and discourse.

\* \* \*

In our approach, LGBT+ people in organisations *make the essential visible*,<sup>4</sup> up to enriching and expanding the nature of the firm (Coase 1937). The need to enrich the nature of the firm by going beyond the tradition of industrial organisation studies is not recent (Sicca 2016): I am thinking, for instance, to the contribution of the Tavistock Institute (see Klein 1946, 1959; Bion 1961, 1962a, 1962b; Jaques 1955; Menzies Lyth 1959) that was able to meet the challenge of creating a bridge between theoretical disciplines and organisational practices, which might be perceived (perhaps only apparently) as very different from each other, thus, offering methods of analysis of institutions, both for research-action and organisational diagnosis. Following the tradition established by the Tavistock Institute, this methodological proposal affirms the idea that in addition to the declared, explicit, visible, formalised and shared functions, there are others that enrich the nature of the firm: these are the liminal ones, powerful sources of learning, sources of knowledge and value creation, one for all the invisible function of social mediation, starting from the management of anxiety. The organisations studied by Davide Bizjak make evident, as it happens under the lens of a microscope (Sicca 2000), that all organisations are specialised systems in the management of anxiety. A *container* is a space that *contains* something else: for example, the adult life of those who work in that *container*. A *container* marking the time of a society geared to productivity and efficiency. However, to *contain* also means to play a reassuring role with respect to infantile anguishes that remain unconscious even in adult life.

This is the double meaning derived from Wilfred R. Bion (first following Freud and, later, one of the founders of the Tavistock Institute)

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<sup>4</sup> Inspired by *The Little Prince's* (de Saint-Exupéry 1943: 86-87) famous quotation "what is essential is invisible to the eye".

to highlight a ‘function’ (also in the mathematical sense, as a relationship between two entities), which is essential for the mental proceeding and understanding of the development of identity.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, the organisations analysed by Bizjak are (also) *containers*, and they play these roles: working and providing identities. These organisations punctuate the times of sleeping and waking, productivity and affections; they establish the degree of socially necessary aggressiveness and the punishable quota. Like all other containers, they also perform the function of the metronome and mark the beginning and end principle.

\* \* \*

Davide Bizjak’s research deals with an increasingly important empirical field, through consolidated categories in the tradition of organisational studies. He does that by linking ‘object’ and ‘method’ through the central role of textual analysis. A bridge that arises from an interest deeply felt by the author, from his own intuition on the different ways to make discourse analysis a basis for managerial research. An insight which then becomes research militancy. And when intuitions are grafted onto tradition, intuitions themselves are like sparks capable of igniting the fire of innovation. A long-term innovation since it is a process innovation (method), which transcends the transience of products (objects).

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<sup>5</sup> See Bion (1962a, 1962b).



# INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this book is to advance a conceptualisation of gender identity within Diversity Management that takes into account the linkages between individual and organisational identity, thus, moving from liminality, where gender is considered merely as a binary and diversity as something to manage, to inclusion, where diversity means a commitment to supporting a processual way to approach both belongingness and uniqueness within organisation (Shore *et al.* 2011).

Although anthropologists have studied cultural diversity for many years, the idea of diversity has only been tackled in management literature in the last thirty years (Jonsen *et al.* 2011). The interest in diversity in organisation commonly starts with the report *Workforce 2000* (Johnston and Packer 1987). Diversity Management, as a scholarly concept, is used for the first time in this report published by the Hudson Institute (Tatli *et al.* 2012). Firstly, Diversity Management has been considered as a shift from the anti-discrimination paradigm (i.e. ruled by the law) to legitimacy concerns (Kwon and Nicolaidis 2017). Since then, diversity issues in organisation have raised awareness within the public discourse (Roberson 2006), nurturing societal pressures that have encouraged organisation in managing workplace diversity (Singal 2014).

Thus, Diversity Management, which can be defined as the “collective amount of differences among members within a social unit” (Gotsis and Kortezi 2013: 949), has increasingly become paramount for scholars due to many reasons. Globalisation requires more “interaction among people from diverse culture, beliefs, and background than ever before” (Senichev 2013: 337) and the demographic change in society is also reflected in organisations (Gotsis and Kortezi 2013).

What challenges does Diversity Management in organisations have to cope with, and to what extent the relationship between individual and organisational identity could help us prevent any form of discrimination (Shore *et al.* 2011) and foster inclusiveness in organisation?

Until the 1980s, the concept of identity was absent in organisation studies (Anteby and Anderson 2014). The first contribution on organisational identity is by Albert and Whetten (1985), claiming that identity is made by the most stable elements of the organisation, without which an intelligible recognition of the organisation is not feasible. Since

this first contribution, management scholars have traditionally inquired into identity, connecting the concept of identity to almost every topic in management studies (Alvesson *et al.* 2008).

From the extensive literature available on this topic, only those contributions that allow us to observe an interaction between identity, at the organisational level, and the construction of identity, at the individual level, might be considered noteworthy. Following this criterion, the concept of identity evolves, in organisational studies, from an individualistic (Albert and Whetten 1985; Huff 1990; Fiol and Huff 1992; Brown and Starkey 2000; Gioia *et al.* 2000) to a social view (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Scott and Lane 2000; Alvesson and Willmott 2002; Hatch and Cunliffe 2013).

The variable of gender (meant here as the variable of the construction of individual identity) implicitly explains how the frontier of diversity in organisations moves from a restrictive approach to an extensive one (Sicca 2016). The world of gender in Diversity Management is often seen from a binary perspective without considering one of the most significant sources of discrimination in our daily experience of organisation that is linked to the sexual orientation and gender identity of individuals. For instance, Simon (1947) claimed that a process of identification is complete when the decision-making process is made on the basis of the consequences at a group level rather than at an individual one. The binary view in western societies daily influences some of our behaviours and fosters some practices of exclusion within organisation (Gagné and Tewksbury 1998). Gender is assumed as defined in only two ways of male/female (Dentice and Dietert 2015; Knights 2015). This distinction is taken for granted, designing the intelligibility of agency within our social systems (Butler 1999).

The view of the world, seen as ruled by heteronormativity and masculinity (Schilt and Westbrook 2009), implies that those who do not perceive themselves as conforming to this binary system, live in organisations in a constant state of resistance. Butler (1999) considers how sex and gender are considered too close in our binary society, exploring the world of drag queens who challenge the pre-constitutive view of a binary system where the performativity confirms gender stereotypes on a daily basis (Spicer *et al.* 2009).

While most people support biological determinism, a question should be raised on whether or not biology determines gender identity and if it is possible to change one's sex and assume a new identity (Dentice and Dietert 2015). Indeed, as "Butler (1999) argues that both sex and gender differences are equally cultural constructions but ones that are dominated

by norms of heterosexuality” (Knights 2015: 203), this entails that “dissolving binaries, by contrast, invites a collapsing of the terms so that they no longer sustain and reproduce the polarities, which reflect and reproduce the domination of discourses of masculinity” (Knights 2015: 206).

More than other methodologies, Critical Discourse Analysis looks adaptable to analyse the context of discrimination in the case of people’s gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity, among others. Indeed, the two main characteristics of CDA are the attention to the context where the discourse is produced (Leitch and Palmer 2010) and its relation to power (Wodak and Meyer 2001). This method is based on the use of text, as artefacts produced by organisations (notably, financial report, ethical codes, and many others); and talk, as discourse daily produced by members of organisations.

On the basis of the previous observations, this research is mainly qualitative in its approach (Myers 2013), and it is based on desk-based research, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with public organisations in a UK county, such as law enforcement agencies, the county council, social work services, and others. These methods have been employed both with managers (especially coming from bigger corporations with a clear diversity policy) and employees.

The analysis of the data is mainly based on an interpretative approach (Silverman 1993), and it has been carried out with the support of the NVivo 11 Pro software (QSR International Pty Ltd. 2015). The purpose of this multifaceted methodology is to grasp the dark side of organisational inclusion and, at the same time, the profound reasons of discriminations, which sometimes occur even through the most inclusive actions. These different sources will be placed in the same stream of interpretative results through content analysis, aimed at intercepting the different point of view of managers and workers.

Indeed, Diversity Management studies are currently polarised towards at least two approaches (Tatli 2011): a critical approach, where discrimination among groups is seen through the lens of power and resistance; and a mainstream approach, where all the solutions and the practices adopted in managing diversity are linked to performances. Establishing a relationship between diversity and performance makes the interplay among different dimensions challenging to grasp. Diversity Management deals with age, race, nationality, disability and sexual orientation (Salomon and Schork 2003). Therefore, the concepts of gender and identity are often interconnected, not always with an explicit

acknowledgement by diversity scholars, especially within the Diversity Management literature.

In order to foster interaction between identity at the organisational level and the construction of identity at the individual level, it is worth trying to set a dialogue between gender and identity into Diversity Management literature. Setting the boundaries and including minorities imply a relationship between the identity of those who embody the minority population and the organisation (and its boundaries). In this context, the term 'liminality' is proposed to capture this phenomenon (van Gennep 1960; Turner 1969). Liminality refers to the faintness of the perception on the part of the organisation that condemns that group or individuals to a quasi-invisibility. The recognition of the specificity of people, who move from a condition of liminality to its opposite, that is, a condition of acceptance, can be compared to the process of inclusion of those people that move along a continuum from a condition to a new one, and stop in a place in-between (Dentice and Dietert 2015).

The observation of identity's social construction processes (both for individual and for organisation), the different ways in which minorities are discriminated within organisations, could be interpreted as new ways to foster inclusive processes. Instances of discriminatory acts can be classified in forms of formal discrimination (e.g. harassment, insults, acts of violence) or informal discrimination, that is, the set of acts or lack of policies that do not include and protect minorities (Priola *et al.* 2014). Avoiding both forms of discrimination means fostering the construction of inclusion. A sense of belongingness needs to be accompanied by the fostering of uniqueness. According to Shore *et al.* (2011), we can assume the concept of inclusion as the result of the relationship between belongingness and uniqueness. Hence, the feeling linked to being part of a group alone is not a sufficient condition in order to make inclusiveness flourish. It does not matter whether an employee occupies a good position in the organisation's chart. What truly matters is that the elements that make that individual unique are involved in decision-making processes.

In order to accomplish the aforementioned objectives, the book will unfold as follows: in Chapter 1, the issue of Diversity Management is addressed through a systematic literature review of this field of investigation (Tranfield *et al.* 2003; Crossan and Apaydin 2010), followed by an introduction to identity issues in organisations, with some insight concerning the possible meaning of identity for both individuals and organisations. Chapter 2 introduces the methodology used to analyse the empirical data, that is, Critical Discourse Analysis. This kind of method gives the possibility to observe acts of resistance and power relationships

through the analysis of texts coming from different sources (Fairclough 1989, 1992, 1995). In Chapter 3, after a presentation of the tools (both theoretical and technological) used in conducting the interviews and in the collection of the corpus of texts, the empirical field will be presented and analysed. The research has been conducted in the UK, within one of the counties based in England. In particular, seven organisations have participated to the study at a twofold level: the first was allowing the author to participate in meetings of the LGBT+ committee, established and promoted by the university of the county, which comprised all the organisations involved in the study. The committee has the primary aim to promote a culture of inclusion and share knowledge and best practices for issues concerning the discrimination towards LGBT+ people<sup>1</sup> in the workplace. In order to accomplish this task, the committee encourages the participation of both private companies and public bodies, in order to create positive contamination among areas of interventions.

Drawing on the analysis conducted, some significant issues of distance between the discourse and organisational practices have emerged. Indeed, even in gender and equality policies, diversity categories (e.g. inclusion, anti-discrimination, equality, etc.) are usually far from people-related issues (e.g. community, individuals, members, etc.). These results, which will be analysed in Chapter 3, have emerged from an innovative theoretical and methodological perspective, which combines the organisational analysis conducted through the interviews and the content analysis made through the methods coming from the Critical Discourse Analysis tradition. From a theoretical point of view, concepts related to diversity and identity have been discussed within the policy adopted by the organisations themselves, and then they have been confirmed in some of the interviews conducted with people that deal daily with discrimination and exclusion issues. Somehow, the importance of the relationship between individual and organisational identity has emerged as a critical means of anxiety containment, as discussed in the next Chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> The acronym LGBT+ is used here to refer to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities and individuals. The plus at the end of this acronym is used to include other groups relating to non-conforming sexual orientation and gender identity, such as Asexual, Genderqueer, Intersexual, Non-Binary, Pansexual, Queer, Questioning, etc. individuals. No form of disrespect or erasure is intended here in not using other types of initialisms or terms appropriate to different languages and cultures. The author has adopted the acronym LGBT+ because he feels it represents the most inclusive, concise, and comprehensive way to refer to this ever-growing community.



# CHAPTER ONE

## DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND GENDER IDENTITY ISSUES IN ORGANISATION

### 1.1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is twofold: on the one hand, its aim is to provide a systematic review (Tranfield *et al.* 2003; Crossan and Apaydin 2010) of the literature concerning Diversity Management as both a field of research and a managerial issue. This approach has been adopted as a possible solution to reduce and contain the researcher's bias that otherwise might originate from a narrative review. A systematic review also enables replicability, thus giving the chance to apply the same method with a different sample. On the other hand, the aim of this chapter is also to frame gender identity to bring into focus diversity *per se* within organisations. In this sense, diversity is not merely understood as something to manage. Indeed, diversity has only been explored as a management instrument, even without considering issues such as discrimination, inclusion, and harassment, while the debate on gender and identity has traditionally involved both organisations and workers. However, we must highlight that, in accordance with the dominant view in western society, gender is generally subsumed under the traditional dichotomy of male vs. female (Claire and Alderson 2013; Dentice and Dietert 2015; Knights 2015). Additionally, "as a system, gender is taken for granted, [and] often completely overlooked" (Gagné and Tewksbury 1998: 81). This binary contraposition shapes some of our behaviours, encouraging practices of exclusion (or non-inclusion) in organisations. Thus, a systematic literature review of Diversity Management is proposed on the basis of the classification of this field of investigation into four non-overlapping turns (i.e. Demographic, Economic, Political, and Critical), proposed by Lorbiecki and Jack (2000).

More specifically, this chapter focuses on the topic of inclusion – firstly seen as a political chance for Diversity Management and then as a process to challenge the binary contraposition –, including recent changes

in management within the field of Diversity. The topics addressed in this investigation can be seen as ‘dramatic’ since they represent strong plots that need to be cultivated and subverted at the same time (Czarniawska and Rhodes 2006) through the lens of the resistance to change, which should take into consideration the problematic aspect of whether the demand of giving new and feasible directions in an organisation may compromise the organisation itself.

Thus, are we tackling new strong plots in recent years? Are there some possible evolutions of these turns? How have these concepts been developed in recent years? These may be some of the questions arising from the analysis of a previous narrative review like the one proposed by Lorbiecki and Jack (2000). A systematic review of the literature, carried out by tackling the contributions that concern Diversity Management published in international literature over the last 23 years, represents a chance to renew the application of a conceptual framework on the four turns introduced by Lorbiecki and Jack (2000). Therefore, the objectives of this chapter are:

- to pinpoint confirmations in the identification of these four turns in relation to the existing Diversity Management literature;
- to scrutinise the literature searching for new perspectives concerning the four turns with reference to inclusion and gender;
- to relate the abovementioned concepts to the specific case of transgender individuals in organisations.

Therefore, this chapter critically investigates existing debates on Diversity Management, looking at the evolution of the ideas related to the four turns that characterise this review, up to the point of adopting the same method proposed by Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) and proposing an overall turn (linked to gender identity) as an expression of the centrality of the human being.

In order to achieve this, the chapter is structured as follows: after a brief inquiry on the interest that organisations have towards diversity (Section 1.2), the methodology adopted in carrying out the systematic review of the literature on Diversity Management is introduced (Section 1.3). However, some of the concepts highlighted in the literature and within the observations made by Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) are also criticised (Section 1.3.1, Section 1.3.2, Section 1.3.3, and Section 1.3.4). Then, after coding and critically evaluating the phenomena highlighted in the literature review, a different and comprehensive turn is proposed, drawing on characteristics that have been traced in the others (Section 1.4).

In the following section (Section 1.5), the concept of identity and its relation to gender binarism (both in the context of organisations and individuals) are explored. People who do not identify themselves with any of the two genders recognised by the dominant discourses bring forth an opposition addressed to organisations and, in particular, to organisational culture itself. Actions of resistance and reactions to them will be addressed in Section 1.5 of this chapter. Then, the two final sections are articulated as follows: in the first (Section 1.6), the concept of liminality is explored, both as a starting point for inclusion and as a research method, while in the second (Section 1.7), a singular approach to inclusion will be explored, merging insights from pedagogical and organisational contributions. Finally, a brief discussion on the aspects of diversity currently in practice is undertaken, which sees in organisations a mediating social role that, if understood and embraced, could offer a different perspective on cages that represent an obstacle to fostering and improving diversity (Thomas 2012).

## 1.2. Diversity in organisations

Although the research field of cultural diversity has been fertile in different fields of investigation far from management and organisation studies (i.e. Anthropology), the concept of diversity has only been tackled in management literature recently (Howarth and Andreouli 2016). The interest towards diversity in organisations has been commonly linked to the report *Workforce 2000* (Johnston and Packer 1987), in which the issue of imminent demographic changes is raised (Cukier *et al.* 2017), and a significant participation of women and people of colour in the US workforce is predicted (Haynes and Alagaraja 2016). Diversity Management, as a scholarly concept, is used for the first time in this report published by the Hudson Institute (Tatli *et al.* 2012). There are several ways to use the term ‘diversity’ in the field of management studies.

Firstly, Diversity Management has been considered as a shift from the anti-discrimination paradigm (i.e. ruled by the law) to legitimacy concerns (Kwon and Nicolaidis 2017). Since then, the engagement with diversity issues in organisation has raised awareness within public discourse (Roberson 2006), nurturing societal pressures that have encouraged organisations in managing workplace diversity (Singal 2014).

Diversity is based on two broad categories, one comprised of surface-level differences (Bendl *et al.* 2009; Singal 2014): gender, race, ethnicity, and age, which are also protected by law; and some other characteristics, which are not observable but correspondingly represent an issue to deal

with in managing organisations, such as cultural and cognitive differences (Kochan *et al.* 2003).

Thus, Diversity Management, which can be defined as the “collective amount of differences among members within a social unit” (Gotsis and Kortezi 2013: 949), has increasingly become paramount for scholars due to many reasons. Globalisation, for instance, requires more “interaction among people from diverse culture, beliefs, and background than ever before” (Senichev 2013: 337), and the demographic change in society is also reflected in organisations (Gotsis and Kortezi 2013).

According to the classification suggested by Lorbiecki and Jack (2000), Diversity Management is characterised by four non-overlapping turns. Namely, these turns are defined as the demographic, political, economic, and critical turn. Each one of these turns embodies a specific focus and different approach to diversity in organisation, and are the focus of the next sections.

### **1.3. A systematic analysis of diversity in the business and management literature**

The literature analysed in this section “adopts a replicable, scientific and transparent process” (Tranfield *et al.* 2003: 209). The sample has been selected using the database SCOPUS and a research query that comprises all the journal articles in the Business and Management field that contain the exact phrase ‘Diversity Management’ in their title, abstract or keywords. The initial sample comprised 220 articles. After a general review of these sources, nine of them have been removed from the sample because they were actually abstracts rather than full papers. Furthermore, the full-text of seven of the initial sample was not available at the time of the analysis. Therefore, the final sample consists of 204 papers that have been analysed by using the software NVivo 11 (QSR International Pty Ltd. 2015).

Table 1.3.1 offers an overview of the journals comprised in the sample and the number of articles (per journal) from 1994 to 2017 (up until May 2017, i.e. the time when the data were collected):

<b>Journal</b>	<b># articles</b>
<i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>	19
<i>International Journal of Organizational Diversity</i>	7
<i>Scandinavian Journal of Management</i>	7
<i>Human Resource Management International Digest</i>	6
<i>Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality &amp; Tourism</i>	6
<i>Journal of Management Development</i>	5
<i>Journal of Organizational Behavior</i>	5
<i>Review of Public Personnel Administration</i>	5
<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources</i>	4
<i>Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences</i>	4
<i>Human Relations</i>	4
<i>Personnel Review</i>	4
<i>Advances in Developing Human Resources</i>	3
<i>European Journal of Industrial Relations</i>	3
<i>European Management Journal</i>	3
<i>Group &amp; Organization Management</i>	3
<i>Human Resource Management</i>	3
<i>Human Resource Management Review</i>	3
<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	3
<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	3
<i>Journal of Management &amp; Organization</i>	3
<i>Journal of Management Education</i>	3
<i>Leadership &amp; Organization Development Journal</i>	3
<i>Organization</i>	3
Papers in journals with less than three articles	98

Table 1.3.1. Overview of the journals and the number of papers (per journal) that are part of the sample under investigation.

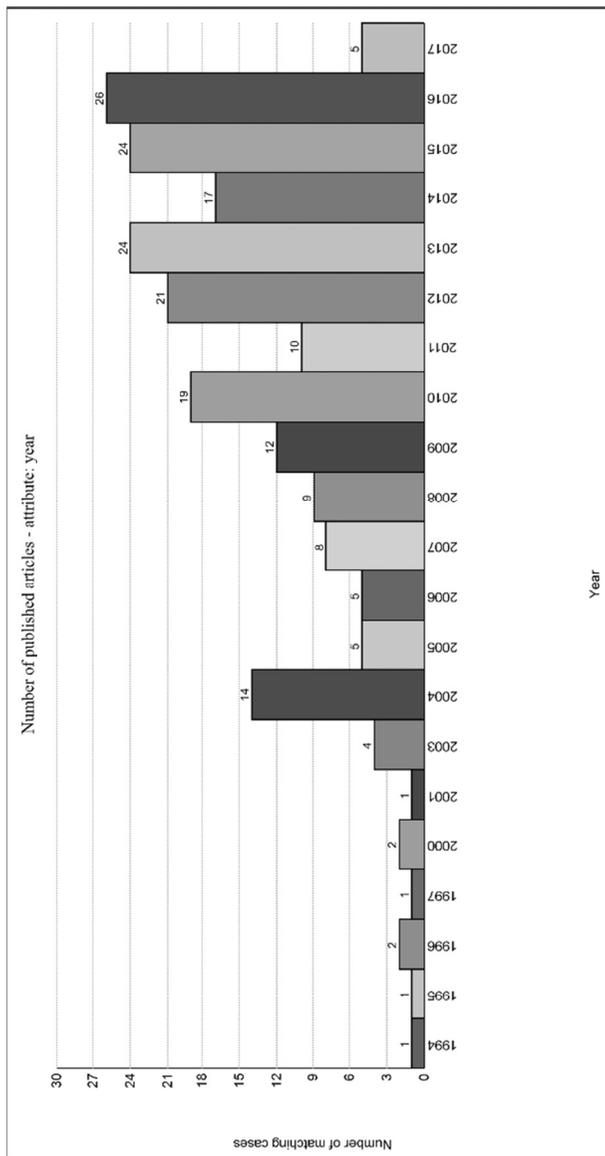


Figure 1.3.1. Number of articles published over the years on ‘Diversity Management’ in the sample under investigation. All the full texts available have been singularly coded using the keywords related to the four turns (Lorbiecki and Jack 2000): Demography, Inclusion, Performance, and Critical.

Figure 1.3.1 shows the distribution over the years of the articles published on ‘Diversity Management’ in the sample under investigation. This overview could be considered secondary in relation to the aim of this work. Nevertheless, Figure 1.3.1 highlights two attributes of observation: the amount of papers published on ‘Diversity Management’ over the years and the specific ‘when’ of the debate.

### ***1.3.1. The demographic turn***

Research on workplace diversity suggests that through the demographic account of visible personal attributes, such as race, gender, and age, culture in organisation can be studied to enhance commitment and collaboration within the workforce (Guillaume *et al.* 2014). Even if demographic attributes are more visible in defining different groups, value congruence more likely encourages positive work outcomes and general satisfaction at work (Gonzalez 2016). Despite the emerging interest in demographic issues such as women’s ratio in the workforce (Rodríguez-Ruiz *et al.* 2016), culture is considered as the main result of demographic composition, and consequently, demographic composition is considered as the cause of the necessity of managing diversity (Olsen and Martins 2012). In order to pinpoint pitfalls in culture, specific relations among attributes have been analysed to highlight contradictions in stereotyping given groups (Furunes and Mykletun 2007). Therefore, looking at the primary attributes used to categorise the workforce (gender, race, and age), and according to the relational demography, in-group workers show more trust towards the inclusiveness of organisation, and they display fewer withdrawal behaviours (David *et al.* 2015).

Visible differences among workforce are still noteworthy because of the perception of the visible traits of a minority group that might be judged by the dominant group as a threat, thus, activating resisting behaviours (Lorbiecki 2001). Far from claiming Demography as being out of date, the set of attributes that are visible and easy to categorise is still relevant because of the tendency shown by hiring managers to recruit people similar to themselves in relation to race, gender, and religion (Taap Manshor *et al.* 2003). In Herrera *et al.* (2011), the fostering of a collectivist culture is an excellent lever to enhance the adoption of diversity practices. In this sense, it is paramount to see Diversity Management not from a strategic point of view but, preferably, as an effect of a cultural behaviour.

### ***1.3.2. The political turn***

The demographic approach to diversity has an inherent limitation: the mixed composition of the workforce, which represents an effective action *per se*, considers differences as a commodity with its exchange value (Roberson 2006). That is what happens, for instance, when companies show their diverse workforce through advertising or other affirmative actions. On the other hand, ‘filling up’ the organisations with a variety of minorities is not enough to evaluate diversity as managed.

Although inclusion is considered as the diversity challenge of the recent years (Sabharwal 2014), many definitions of inclusion have been put forth, some of them directly related to the concept of diversity, to the point that inclusion goes beyond the concept of diversity (Sabharwal 2014). For instance, Roberson (2006) considers the two words ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ quite distant from one another. The author considers diversity only in comparison to demography in organisations, and inclusion as the capacity to remove obstacles to people’s fulfilment. In this light, inclusion is increasingly substituting the concept of diversity (Roberson 2006). Therefore, people participate in organisations not only in a formal way but even when they are out of office, in those moments that become a sort of ritual in organisational life. However, it must additionally be highlighted that it is even more important to foster inclusion and participation in informal groups by adopting a social exchange approach. Few authors adopted the continuum between inclusion and exclusion (as its opposite) to explain how diversity is an ongoing process and not a matter of fact. Not only belongingness and uniqueness (Shore *et al.* 2011) but also these two attributes in defining the individual in itself (Gonzalez 2016) should be considered. Indeed, feeling like a member of a group, as an insider, may be seen as a source of self-esteem (Sabharwal 2014). The introduction of the word ‘inclusion’ within the debate on Diversity Management may clash with its pragmatic oversimplification of having several minorities represented in the workgroup without thoroughly involving them in organisational processes. According to organisational goals, the ideal of a full participation of people is an opportunity that has to be taken (Roberson 2006). Therefore, the organisational debate around inclusion is defined by Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) as a political turn, due to the fact that inclusiveness is considered more appealing in comparison to affirmative action.

The introduction of the concept of inclusion in management has stimulated many questions related to what inclusion is and what it is not. Thus, inclusion is both considered as a tool to maximise competitiveness in the labour market (Day and Greene 2008) and related to the concept of