

**ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF  
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN A LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
ORGANISATION**

By

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## DECLARATION

“I declare that A Study of investigating Organisational Justice perceptions and experiences of Affirmative Action in a Learning and Development organisation is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.”

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Munique George



## ABSTRACT

Affirmative Action (AA) is the main legislated strategy used to address the organisational challenge of equal employment opportunity in the workplace. South Africa finds itself over fifteen years into a hard fought democracy where the challenge is to address previous workplace, employee and organisational injustices and paving the way forward to committed, integrated, co-ordinated and fair employment. Organisational justice, similarly, is concerned with the central interest of fairness among managers in the provision of equal employment opportunities and also refers to employees' perceptions of fairness in the organisational setting. Conceptually and theoretically it can be divided into three components; distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice.

An important point to make right at the outset is that affirmative action ties into the theory of organisational justice by together representing fair and equal opportunity for all employees to compete and be assessed using pre-determined criteria. The Employment Equity Act (EEA) 55 of 1998 provides for AA measures in the workplace with established frameworks to address the employment of designated groups defined as black people, woman and people with disabilities. Black people are further defined to include Africans, coloureds and Indians. EEA enforcement is the responsibility of the department of labour and further provides codes of good practice to employees in implementing AA policies.

The Broad-Black Economic Empowerment strategy is a necessary government intervention to address the systematic exclusion of the majority of South Africans from

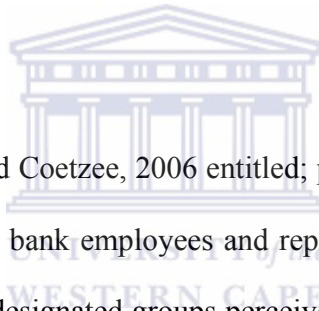
full participation in the economy (McGregor, 2005). There are several definitions offered to conceptualise the term affirmative action and include the following; ‘the movement towards increasing the representation of the designated group (Agocs & Burr, 1996). Another definition offered is ‘hiring by numbers’ though the truth is that the concept is much more complex and that a strict quota system or the hiring of potentially unqualified individuals is implied by this simple definition which of course is not the case (McMillan-Capehart & Richard, 2005).

The reality is that no consensus exists on the precise meaning of the concept of affirmative action however there is consensus on the intention of AA which is to assist groups systematically discriminated against in the past (Adam, 2000). Affirmative Action is concerned with the recruitment, development, promotion and retention of historically disadvantaged groups and the advancement of those with the ability to become component. The aim of this study is to further explore the perceptions held by employees on the organisational level regarding AA.

There have been good arguments made for the development of aggressive affirmative action policies with the end goal of quickly moving black South Africans into corporate and high ranks within management of organisations. One of the central arguments in favour of aggressive AA policies is the risk of racial polarization post-apartheid should a quick fix not be initiated. It makes good business and economic sense for AA policies to be implemented as black consumers coupled with black managers will have the eventual

end point of lower unemployment and crime, through job creation and security of the representative majority.

On the negative side AA strategies have been met with resistance and opposition where it has been concerned as reverse discrimination, quota driven, window dressing, preferential treatment rather than merit and lacking fairness. Also the pool of available previously disadvantaged persons able to fill high level job is extremely small. The challenge for employers is to abandon the practice of looking for “ready made” products and instead develop persons for upward movement for the organisation (McFarlin, Coster & Mogale-Pretorius, 1999).



A pilot study by Vermeulen and Coetzee, 2006 entitled; perceptions of the dimensions of AA had a sample study of 392 bank employees and reported to two important findings. Firstly, those employees from designated groups perceive the fairness of AA practices as less important than those from non-designated groups. Secondly, employers have different reasons to perceive the fairness of AA practices as more important than employees do.

The research sample was selected from a services organisation (n=137) and a biographical questionnaire as well as the Organisational Justice Questionnaire and the Affirmative Action Fairness Questionnaire was administered. A non-probability sample based on the method of convenience sampling was utilised. For the purpose of testing the research hypotheses, the Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient, t-test and

analysis of variance was calculated. Correlation analysis revealed there was a statistically significant relationship between organisational justice (distributive, procedural and interactional justice) and perceptions of affirmative action. There were also significant gender, race, age, tenure and marital status differences in perceptions of affirmative action. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made for future research.

### **KEY WORDS**

Affirmative action; Distributive Justice; Procedural Justice; Interactional Justice; Perceptions; Organisational Justice; Equal opportunities; Diversity; Fairness



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Pfeffer (1994, p. 9) argues that "...people and how we manage them are becoming more important because many other sources of competitive success are less powerful than they once were. Recognising that the basis for competitive advantage has changed is essential to develop a different frame of reference for considering issues of management and strategy. Traditional sources of success-product and process technology, protected or regulated markets, access to financial resources and economies of scale-can still provide competitive leverage, but to a lesser degree now than in the past, leaving organisational culture and capabilities, derived from how people are managed as comparatively more vital".

In order to redress imbalances of the past, significant changes have been effected in employment practices by virtue of various forms of legislation which have been promulgated in South Africa. The Employment Equity Act (EEA) 55 of 1998 provides for affirmative action measures in the workplace. It establishes frameworks to address the employment of designated groups defined as black people, women and people with disabilities. Black people are defined to include Africans, Coloureds and Indians (Dupper, 2002). The Department of Labour has the responsibility of ensuring the



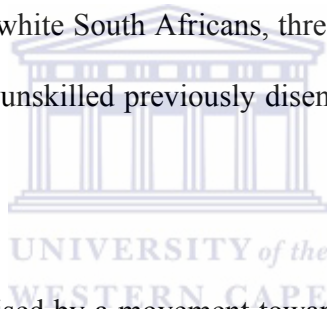
administration, monitoring and enforcement of the EEA. Codes of good practise are provided to employers with information that may assist them in implementing the EEA and affirmative action policies (McGregor, 2005).

One of the challenges facing the Constitutional court is to integrate its approach to affirmative action with its endorsement of the notion of substantive equality and the normative standards it has developed for the determination of unfair discrimination. The greatest measurable challenge being over or under inclusiveness of affirmative action in the workplace is required (Pretorius, 2001).

The nature of affirmative action was considered in some cases under the Labour Relations Act (LRA). Generally, the view was that affirmative action was a ‘shield’, not a right. Although the Act regulated affirmative action in terms similar to those of the EEA, which added a responsibility for designated employers to implement affirmative action, this was not the case under the LRA (McGregor, 2003).

In the post-apartheid era in South Africa the status of workplace representation of the South Africa’s diverse workforce are under the microscope. Approximately 40 percent of South African blacks are unemployed compounded by the fact that only 240, 000 blacks have university degrees compared with over one million white South Africans, despite white South Africans representing only about 10 percent of the population. Another South African managerial reality is the fact that blacks occupy less than 5 percent of such posts and further control less than 10 percent of stocks at the Johannesburg Stock

Exchange (JSE). There have been good arguments made for the development of aggressive affirmative action policies with the end goal of quickly moving black South Africans into corporate and high ranks within management of organisations. Amongst these arguments two have been highlighted as the central arguments in favour of aggressive affirmative action policies; firstly the risk of racial polarization post-apartheid should a quick fix not be initiated; and secondly, it makes good business and economic sense as black consumers coupled with black managers will have the eventual end point of lower unemployment and crime through job creation and security of the representative majority. The arguments against aggressive affirmative action include; reverse discrimination experienced by white South Africans, threats to white job security and the advancement of inexperienced unskilled previously disenfranchised (McFarlin, Coster & Mogale-Pretorius, 1999).



Affirmative action is characterised by a movement towards increasing the representation of the designated groups, sometimes referred to as ‘hiring by numbers’ (Agocs & Burr, 1996). Affirmative action is not characterised by strict quotas or the hiring of unqualified individuals (McMillan-Capehart & Richard, 2005). In South Africa, affirmative action involves not only the recruitment, development, promotion and retention of competent individuals from historically disadvantaged groups; it also entails the advancement of those with the ability to become competent either within the organisational environment or through educational and community ventures. Affirmative action strategies should be developed in discussion with trade unions and non-unionised employees and should be frequently supervised and assessed (Human, 1993).

Furthermore affirmative action is from time to time referred to by euphemisms such as corrective action, black advancement or positive action, as a related concept. Although the truth remains that little consensus as to the precise meaning of the concept exists. However, there is consensus that affirmative action is intended to assist groups systematically discriminated against in the past, who were denied equal access to skills development, opportunities and to resources (Adam, 2000).

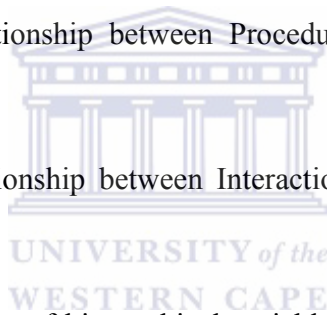
Organisational justice is concerned with the central interest of fairness among managers in the provision of equal employment opportunities. It also refers to employees perceptions of fairness in the organisational setting and theoretically can be divided into three components; distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice. Affirmative action ties into this theory of organisational justice by together representing fair and equal opportunity for all employees to compete and be assessed using pre-determined criteria and therefore does not mean designated groups will be appointed at all costs, although the truth is they will be granted a slight but not unreasonable advantage (Coetzee & Vermeulen, 2003).

South Africa finds itself 17 years into a hard fought democracy where the challenge is to address previous workplace, employee and organisational injustices and paving the way forward to a committed, integrated, co-ordinated and fair employee opportunities. Affirmative action (AA) is the main legislated strategy used to address these organisational challenges. This research wishes to further explore the perceptions held by

employees on the organisational level regarding affirmative action (Motileng, Wagner & Cassimjee, 2006).

## **1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- To determine the relationship between Organisational Justice and Perceptions of Affirmative Action
- To determine the relationship between Distributive Justice and Perceptions of Affirmative Action
- To determine the relationship between Procedural Justice and Perceptions of Affirmative Action
- To determine the relationship between Interactional Justice and Perceptions of Affirmative Action
- To determine the impact of biographical variables on perceptions of affirmative action



## **1.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

### **Hypothesis 1:**

- There is no statistically significant relationship between Organisational Justice (distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice) and perceptions of Affirmative Action.

## **Hypothesis 2:**

- There is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of affirmative action based on biographical variables.

## **1.4 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Although the present study could potentially make a contribution to the body of knowledge on employees' perceptions of affirmative action, a number of limitations are worth noting.

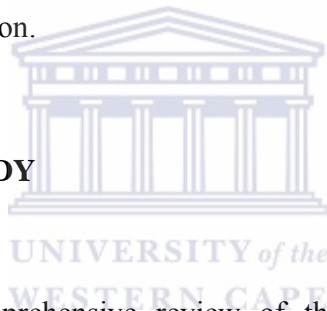
The first limitation pertains to the fact that the study will be based on a non-probability sampling method in the form of convenience sampling. As a result, certain groups could be under-represented. As a result, selection bias could be introduced, which reduces the extent to which the results of the study may be generalised to the entire population to which the research hypotheses apply.

Furthermore, although a sample size of 137 employees is deemed large enough to be representative of the approximately 700 employees in the population under study, a larger sample would, nevertheless, increase the generalizability of the research findings. The above shortcomings threaten the external validity of the study. Consequently, caution needs to be exercised when interpreting the research results since the generalizability thereof to the entire population under investigation could be reduced.

Moreover, the ecological validity of the study could be relatively low since the study is to be undertaken only in a single service organisation. The implication of this is that the research findings cannot be generalized to other manufacturing, industrial or service organizations, or to organizations outside the Western Cape.

In addition to the above factors, potential extraneous variables raise doubts with regards to the internal validity of the study. That is, possible confounding variables, may impact on employees perceptions of affirmative action. The fact that these variables may play a role reduces the confidence with which conclusions may be drawn with regards to research topic under investigation.

## **1.5 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**



Chapter two provides a comprehensive review of the literature which pertains to affirmative action and organisational justice, by examining recent developments within the field.

Chapter three provides a detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in the investigation, and outlines the sample, the manner in which the data was collected, as well as the statistical techniques employed in testing the research hypotheses and statistical techniques utilized in the current research.

Chapter 4 outlines the results obtained in the study and provides a discussion of these results.

In Chapter 5, conclusions are drawn based on the obtained results and the possible practical implications of the research findings are pointed out. Finally, some suggestions and recommendations are made that may be of value in future research.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

According to Nadler (1994, p. 63), " environmental demands are creating profound stress for most companies. Markets, supplies, and regulations are changing drastically. Competition is on the increase, forcing executives to rethink business strategy and methods of addressing unexpected challenges. As if these external forces are not enough to contend with, organisations are having to grapple with demands from within: worker attitudes are shifting; labour-management tensions are increasing, and productivity is declining".

In conjunction with this, the dynamic nature of modern organisations, particularly those competing in global markets and their susceptibility to external pressures, makes it imperative that managers and their organisations remain receptive to new ideas, approaches and attitudes. This receptiveness will enable them to anticipate the new ideas likely to have an impact on their organisations, accommodate these developments into their strategic and operational plans and maintain a competitive advantage (Bornman, 1992).

Within this hyperturbulent environment, organisations are being compelled to adapt in the face of a changing work-force, advances in technology and a fundamental transformation in



the values of their members (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1992). In accordance with these changes, procuring the highest calibre and qualified personnel requires attention to training and proactive management development programmes, combined with visionary leadership (Milkovich & Boudreau,1994). Moreover, dealing fairly with minorities and women requires attention to programmes of selection and appraisal (Beardwell & Holden,1994).

Pressures for increased organisational effectiveness and efficiency necessitate a movement toward strategic human resource management which is " the process used to establish human resource objectives, to develop strategies for attaining objectives and to identify policies governing the acquisition, utilisation, development and maintenance of human resources (Nkomo, 1988, cited in Adonisi, 1991, p. 28).

However, strategic human resource management is dependent on an organisation's strategic capability, which can be considered to be "the inherent capacity of an organisation to continuously learn about its environment and to mobilise its resources to compete" (McDermott,1989, p. 65).

Concomitant with these trends, human rights and social justice are increasingly revered in the workplace, with increasing pressures for self-determination, pressures for employee rights, pressures for job security, pressures for equal employment opportunity, and pressures for equity of earnings. As the demographic profile of employees undergoes radical transformations, workforce diversity brings with it new demands for managerial sensitivity

and understanding, as well as responsive employment practices (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991).

## **2.2 APPROACHES TO THE CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY**

The first attempts to achieve greater social justice and equality and to redress past unfair discrimination came about through the Labour Relations Act of 1995, which took effect in 1996, the Constitution of South Africa of 1996 and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997. Next came the Employment Equity (EE) Act of 1999 (amended in 2004), which contained anti-discriminatory provisions, the Skills Development Act of 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act of 1999.

The last two acts shifted the focus away from Affirmative Action (AA) appointments to the recruitment, succession planning and development and training of persons in the designated groups (Africans, Coloured's and Indians, as well as women and people with disabilities) and also emphasized the emergent skills gap (Horwitz et al. 2005; Rautenbach 2005; Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk & Schenk 2003; Thomas 2004). These changes were followed by the establishment of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Commission in 1999, and subsequent strategies and policies set by Government and Industry alike to increase black ownership of businesses and accelerate black representation in management.

Horwitz et al (2005) argue that the EE policy and practice debate is especially topical in South Africa, with the need to redress past and continuing unfair discrimination. They point out that the challenge to organisations is to create working environments in which employees experience job satisfaction through fair employment practices, while also optimally achieving company objectives. Greenhaus and Callan (1994; Jackson & Associates, 1992) have delineated three approaches to the challenges of diversity, which are addressed below.

### **2.2.1 VALUING DIFFERENCES**

Diversity is not simply replacing a repackaging of equal employment opportunities and AA. However, both the latter practices have major implications for managing workforce diversity in South Africa. An organisation that emphasizes quota filling as a major part of its diversity effort will undermine the true intent of valuing diversity. Instead emphasis should be put on accelerated training and development of the previously disadvantaged groups to equip them with competences that will enable effective performance. There is a need to integrate EE and skills development planning to ensure that these support one another to facilitate workforce diversity management initiatives in South Africa. One of the basic tenets – widely accepted today – of the holistic thinking and hence strategic management approach is that the employment relations (ER) subsystem is a key to competitiveness. Since differences, diversity and conflict are inherent ingredients of ER dynamics, diversity management is one such longer-term strategic area that should form

an integral part of a “world-class” business model (Kossek, Markel & Mc Hugh 2003; Mc Culston, Wooldridge & Pierce 2004; Slabbert & Swanepoel 2002).

According to Thomson (1993, p. 5), "acknowledging the existence of cultural differences within the workforce and establishing a systematic process of interaction to develop a learning organisation can provide the means to attain strategic goals with new organisational structures". Valuing differences is a philosophy that fosters among organisational members an acceptance, understanding and ideally an appreciation of the differences that exist among them, with the objective of fostering more harmonious and productive work relationships. The philosophy is anchored in the conviction that the broader the spectrum of differences in the workplace, the greater the synergy among employees and the more excellent the organisation's performance (Hall & Parker, 1993).

Moreover, valuing differences recognises the benefits that can be accrued from multiculturalism, including the challenging of traditional stereotypes and assumptions (Greenslade, 1991). This philosophy differs from the conventional approach to equal opportunities in that it seeks to create a climate whereby those involved wish to go beyond the achievement of a mere statistical goal by attempting "to encourage awareness and respect for diversity within the workplace (Thomas, 1991, p. 24).

This is typically achieved via the agency of celebrating diversity, or isolating particular days highlighting the particular culture of a racial or ethnic group (Kennedy & Everest, 1991). Programmes to increase awareness and appreciation of differences in people tend to focus

on changing attitudes. However, a criticism of such programmes is that they do not teach skills for working with diverse groups-skills such as negotiating and communicating (Hall & Parker,1993).

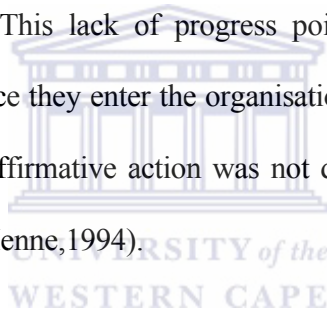
Thomas (1990, cited in Galagan, 1991, p. 42) points out "...an individual can appreciate difference, be free of bias, and still not know how to manage a diverse work team. You can value diversity and still not know how to create an environment and a set of systems that will naturally work for everyone. It boils down to a managerial issue". However, since an understanding and acceptance of diversity are not sufficient to maximise the contributions of all employees, managing diversity is required.

### **2.2.2 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**



Affirmative action has been defined as "a remedial concept that requests employers to improve the work opportunities of women, racial and ethnic minorities, handicapped workers and those who have been deprived of job opportunities" (French, 1990, p. 171). Gerber, Nel and van Dyk (1995, p. 202) maintain "affirmative action is a proactive development tool to assist with the creation of, inter alia, greater equal employment opportunity. It is a process which should be integrated and holistic, involving the entire organisation and all of its actors. It should not just be a series of ad hoc training programmes for Blacks and diversity programmes for Whites. These programmes are important, but are no more than one aspect of what often involves a fairly major restructuring of how human resources are recruited, promoted and developed".

There are a number of policies in democratic South Africa, which include affirmative action: the White Paper on Affirmative Action (1998), and the Employment Equity Act, 198 (Act 55 of 1998). The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998) provides the implementation framework for the guidelines set out in affirmative action policies, specifying that there should be suitably qualified people from the target groups across all occupational categories and levels. It is generally recognised that affirmative action has been at least partially responsible for the increase in women and racial minorities at entry levels within organisations, but recent attention has been drawn to the fact that members of these same employee groups have not progressed as rapidly into middle and upper management positions (Dominguez, 1990). This lack of progress points to the likelihood that what happens to these individuals once they enter the organisation may be playing a role in their lack of upward mobility, and affirmative action was not designed to deal effectively with these concerns (Ramudzuli & Menne, 1994).



According to Thomas (1990, p. 108), "affirmative action is an artificial, transitional intervention needed to give managers a chance to correct an imbalance, an injustice, a mistake, but affirmative action alone cannot cope with the remaining long-term task of creating a work setting geared to the upward mobility of all kinds of people".

Many organisations are realising the benefits of affirmative action policies. These policies seem to assist organisations to focus on minority underrepresentation and move towards effecting positive changes (Fischer, 1995). Employer's recruitment strategies may need to reflect this change. Laabs (1991, p. 3) postulates "if organisations actively solicit the best

available talent through aggressive proactive outreach from all segments of society, minority recruitment will no longer be a problem, it will be an asset".

However, although affirmative action has been successful in many respects, it is unlikely to solve the long-term needs of organisations and employees (Thomas,1991, cited in Greenhaus & Callan,1994). This is because historically, the affirmative action option has not called for permanent organisational changes (Primos,1994). Since the focus changes from eliminating discrimination in hiring to assuring the full contribution of all members of a diverse organisation, managing diversity is required.

Despite the intense attention that affirmative action, which is sometimes referred to by euphemisms such as corrective action, black advancement or positive action, as a related concept, has received in South Africa in the post-apartheid years, there is little consensus as to the precise meaning of the concept. Among those who invoke it as an antidote to the injustices of the past, a number of interpretations exist. There is, however, consensus that affirmative action is intended to assist groups systematically discriminated against in the past, which were denied equal access to skills development opportunities and to resources. Affirmative action can be understood as a remedial strategy which seeks to address the legalized historical exclusion of a majority. Unlike most other countries in which minorities form the target group, in South Africa a previously disenfranchised majority will be the beneficiary of affirmative action (Adam, 2000).

Affirmative action is defined as ‘the additional corrective steps which must be taken in order that those who have been historically disadvantaged unfair discrimination are able to derive full benefits from an equitable environment. In South African context affirmative action includes laws, programmes or activities designed to redress past imbalances and to ameliorate the conditions of individuals and specified groups who have been disadvantaged on the grounds of race, gender or disability (South Africa 1995, p. 53).

Affirmative action is therefore a remedial quantitative, compliance-orientated approach (Henderson, 1994) that can be viewed in South Africa as a means of correcting historical injustices but also as an attempt to work towards creating level playing fields where everyone can compare, on the basis of equal access to education, training and other relevant opportunities that were formerly only available to the white minority of the population. The motivation for the institution of affirmative action programmes in South Africa therefore generally lies in moral, legal and social responsibility issues (Thomas, 1996).

Affirmative action can be differentiated from diversity management on the basis that it tends to be an exclusive process / programme based on creating employment opportunities and securing promotions for previously disadvantaged people, while managing diversity is an inclusive process which seeks to utilize all employees fully by removing the barriers that prevent people from working together effectively. Unlike affirmative action, managing diversity is a long-term process that demands identification



from top management as well as commitment to the introduction of mechanisms to realize the potential of each individual involved in the organisation (Thomas, 1996).

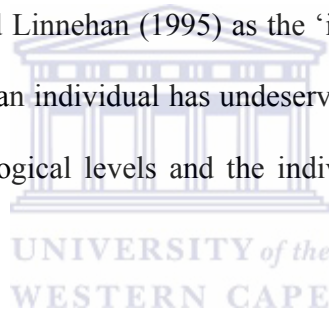
Affirmative action increases diversity but does not constitute the management of diversity. Managing diversity means having a more flexible approach to work in the organisation, and accordingly a greater measure of value to people while taking cognizance not only of institutional needs, but also of the needs of individual employees and employee groupings as stakeholders who have an interest in the organisation. According to Thomas (1996), managing diversity means harnessing the energy which flows from diversity in all its forms, and promoting co-operation and participation in the interests of all. Diversity management is an organisational or a management-initiated strategy that may be proactive: is based on operational reality and its aim is to utilize the increasingly diverse South African workforce in the best possible manner so as to optimize its contribution. In contrast, affirmative action is reactive and is based on statutory and moral imperatives. The improper utilization or underutilization of a diverse workforce is not a legal issue, but rather a managerial and leadership one (Ivanevich & Gilbert, 2000).

#### **2.2.2.1 Antecedent factors that have an impact on the success of AA programmes**

When determining the factors or variables involved in the perceptions of workplace affirmative action programmes (AAPs) a study by Little, Murry and Wimbush (1998) examines psychological variables such as *self-esteem* and *symbolic prejudice*. The two

hypothesis generated by the study related to these two psychological variables are as follows; low perceptions of self-esteem will be related to more negative perceptions of workplace AAPs and higher levels of symbolic prejudice will be related to more negative perceptions of workplace AAPs.

*Self-esteem* being the value placed upon oneself, in essence one's self-worth in society. There is a direct relationship between one's self-esteem and the expectations for successful job hunting; where individuals with low self-esteem have lower expectations for job success. Furthermore low self-esteem as a form of psychological variable is implicated in what Konrad and Linnehan (1995) as the 'imposter syndrome'; this occurs when feelings and beliefs that an individual has undeservingly benefited as a result of an AAP reach unhealthy psychological levels and the individual is left with the belief of unworthy success.



*Symbolic prejudice* refers to abstract and sociocultural beliefs rather than the traditional stereotypical beliefs held with regards to characteristics possessed by a minority perceived to be an advantage over the majority. In simpler terms it has also been referred to as 'modern' or 'new' racism as described in previous literature. Symbolic prejudice comes into play when the basis for support or opposition towards AAPs is rooted in social or political ideals and lack clarity in terms of whether it measures prejudice or individual justice ideology. The end result of symbolic prejudice is that negative perceptions with regards to AAPs are held based on the means of its implementation rather than the policies itself (Little, Murry & Wimbush, 1998).

### *Demographic factors*

When considering race and gender as factors influencing the success or failure of AA programmes there is the consistent finding that white females, males and blacks support the weaker forms of affirmative action than the concrete, stronger applications of affirmative action. Furthermore they may be the misperception or simply lack of knowledge about the nature of affirmative action that lead to the believe that a strict se-based hiring as opposed to the fact that it is indeed gentle preferential treatment with proportional hiring (Taylor-Carter, Doverspike & Cook, 1995).

In the Little, Murry and Wimbush study self-esteem and symbolic factors are described in relation to gender and race. Self-esteem illustrated a significant effect for race, with non-Whites reporting a higher occurrence with no effect for gender. Symbolic prejudice and perceptions of AAPs each illustrated a significant relationship for race and gender, with both Whites and males having a higher occurrence. The conclusion of this study's results was that the evidence seems to find that psychological factors more than demographic factors have an explanatory power on perceptions of AAPs (Little, Murry & Wimbush, 1998).

The term 'formerly disadvantaged groups' is the official euphemism in the post-apartheid South Africa for racial classification and applies in theory to the African, Coloured and Indian sections of the population. The reality in practise often is that Africans are seen as the most discriminated against and therefore enjoy political dominance, leading to middle groups feeling excluded from equal opportunities. The ANC government view these

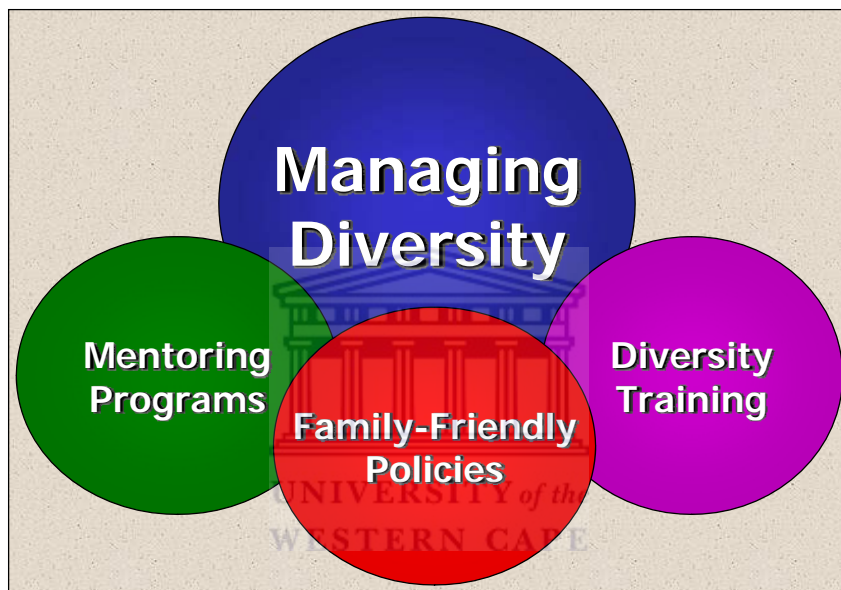
affirmative action policies as prerequisites for nation-building while opponents on the other side of the fence see these policies as undermining national reconciliation (Adam, 2000).

The apartheid era only discriminated and restricted the opportunities for non-White people; South African women as a whole were discriminated against and victimized, caused by discriminatory laws and practises that resulted in unfair inequality in employment, work and income within the South African labour market. South Africa was a white male dominated society, with stereotyped gender roles and racism limiting women's professional and social growth and development. Apartheid affected individuals negatively the black women were the worst hit victims of discrimination. South African men will have to learn to accept their women counterparts as qualified business women and as leaders by changing their perceptions about women's traditional roles as housewives (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

### **2.2.3 MANAGING DIVERSITY**

Within recent years, managing diversity has become a popular topic within management in general and organisational behaviour and human resource management in particular; however, as is true of many contemporary topics within management, considerable confusion exists as to what managing diversity actually is. A plethora of definitions have been advanced in recent years. Thomas (1991, cited in Williams & Bauer, 1994, p. 298) argues "managing diversity is a holistic approach to creating corporate environments that

allows all kinds of people to reach their full potential in pursuit of corporate objectives". Moreover, effective management of diversity requires "an environment catering for the full expression of the self, in a situation that is freely changing in reaction to the needs of all participants" (Biko, 1978,cited in Human, 1991, p. 122).



Historically, human resource management systems were developed to encourage and reinforce appropriate behaviours in a workforce that was relatively homogeneous. Managing diversity is a process through which those systems may be changed to be more receptive to standards and behaviours embraced by minority cultures (Zonia & Kossek,1995). The interest in managing diversity can be traced to two different trends within society. First, there is the concern that affirmative action has been only partially successful in achieving its

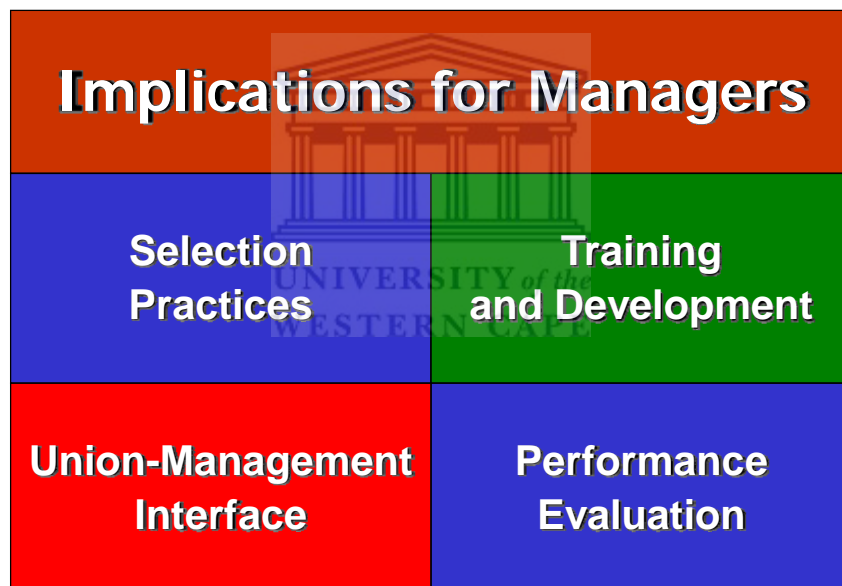
objective of minority representation at all levels within organisations (Dwyer, Gleckman, Segal, Smart & Weber,1991).

A second societal trend that has led to the widespread interest in managing diversity is the changing demographic profile of the workforce. It is now widely known that the majority of people entering the workforce from now until the end of the century will be women, and more predominantly members of racial minority groups (Johnston, Packer & Jaffe, 1987, cited in Lewan, 1990).

Cox and Blake (1991) refer to the necessity of attracting excellent employees from different demographic groups as "an inevitability-of-diversity" issue. Any organisation that is able to "achieve the same productivity, commitment, quality and profit from the new heterogeneous work force as from the old one... without creating artificial standards, without compromising competence, and without demanding conformity, will be able to make its business more competitive in the increasing global marketplace (Thomas, 1990, p. 112).

The motive for managing diversity stems from the fact that workforce diversity is a current reality and from the goal of organisational effectiveness rather than from legal requirements, moral responsibilities, or responses to internal and external group pressures. Managing diversity requires a managerial capability, and calls for assessments of organisational culture and systems, and for modifications to foster creation of an environment that will work naturally for all participants (Greenslade, 1991).

In essence, a pluralistic frame of reference is required, in which mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity among people who are diverse in various ways, is promoted (Caudron,1992). Maximising the level of those underrepresented groups' productivity is essential to achieving competitiveness. By adjusting better to the differing needs of various employees, employers will be better positioned to utilise more fully the talents of all employees (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 1994).



### **2.3 PRESSURES FACING MODERN ORGANISATIONS**

There are several areas in which organisations are likely to experience greater pressures from a diverse workforce. These include, inter alia, pressures for self-determination, for

employee rights, and for equity of earnings and for organisational restructuring (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993).

### **2.3.1 PRESSURES FOR SELF-DETERMINATION**

Diversity in the workplace implies that employees no longer desire to be assimilated into the prevailing culture of the organisation, but seek greater freedom to determine how to do their jobs and when to do them. Subsumed under pressures for self-determination are issues relating to decision-making; pressures for alternative work schedules; pressures for equity of earnings; and pressures for organisational restructuring (Beach, 1991; Kreitner & Kinicki, 1992; Armstrong, 1995).



#### **2.3.1.1 PRESSURES FOR PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING**

According to Laubscher (1991, p. 32), "participative management has, at times, been promoted as a panacea for poor morale and low productivity". Workforce diversity places pressure on contemporary organisations to increasingly grant workers a modicum of decision-making power. In conjunction with this, employee participation has been strategically identified as promoting increased productivity and improved quality (Laubscher, 1991). Cohen (1991, p. 2) postulates "the whole point about industrial participation is that it involves a modification to a greater or lesser degree of the orthodox authority structure, namely, where decision-making is the prerogative of workers in which workers played no part". However, in reviewing the work of Franke and Kaul, Locke



Schweiger and Latham (1986, p. 34), found "no productivity increase could be attributed to employee participation".

### **2.3.1.2 PRESSURES FOR ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES**

As organisations become more vulnerable to environmental turbulence and the vicissitudes of their employees, it becomes increasingly important to maintain a healthy balance between the activities which serve the needs of the individual and those which serve the needs of the organisation. Bolton and Gold (1994) maintain matching individuals to appropriate jobs ultimately raises individual capability, which contributes to the competitive advantage of the organisation. The multi-cultural organisation needs to acknowledge connections between work and family, and seek to create a culture that legitimises work-family issues and helps employees balance their involvements in different life roles (Armstrong, 1995).

Organisational initiatives need to be designed in order to positively affect productivity and the quality of work life (QWL). Thus issues of part-time employment, telecommuting, compressed work week, parent-tracking, flexitime, job-sharing, elder care and on-site child care centres are becoming an increasingly important feature in organisations (Russell, 1991; Kreitner & Kinicki, 1992).

Although there is a paucity of research on the benefits of flexitime, compressed work schedules and job sharing, research suggests these programmes help employees manage home/work conflicts and have a limited effect on productivity. Hence, the available

evidence suggests approaching alternative work schedules with caution when attempting to improve employee productivity (Beach, 1991). Employee diversity will have a sweeping impact on the human resources management function. Therefore, human resource management must be willing and able to participate fully in solving the problems that face organisations from a strategic, proactive and top-down approach (Messmer, 1990).

### **2.3.1.3 PRESSURES FOR EQUITY OF EARNINGS**

Status incongruity between males and females and between Black and White employees necessitates a revision of issues pertaining to remuneration (Snelgar,1989). Advocates of equal pay for work of comparable worth perceive job evaluation as a mechanism with which legal support can further reduce earnings differentials between males and females as well as the wage gap between White and Black workers. It has been proposed that people who perform comparable work receive similar remuneration (Meng, 1989). This proposal is of vital importance when considering the pay structure which may reflect both sexual and racial discrimination in prevailing pay rates (Auld, 1987). Moreover, designing flexible, cafeteria style benefits packages which are tailored to individual needs is another factor which organisations managing diversity will need to take into consideration (Armstrong,1995).

#### **2.3.1.4 PRESSURES FOR ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURING**

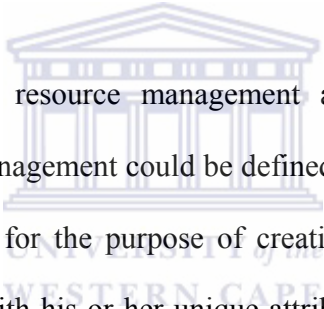
The globalisation of business activities forces issues of diversity into the foreground as organisations envision their strategic objectives. As they struggle to get closer to international and local customers and to win their loyalty, many organisations are changing their organisational structures. Some of these changes, such as increased use of work team accountability, highlights the importance of working through domestic demographic diversity (Russell, 1991).

Other changes, such as new strategic alliances, reveal new types of diversity that must be managed, including differences in corporate cultures and differences in the cultures that host an organisation's foreign operations (Jackson & Associates, 1992). The remodelling may be designed to improve the organisation's ability to compete for the most qualified job applicants or to promote the fuller development and productivity of the individuals they already employ (Rhinesmith, 1991).

#### **2.4 HOW DIVERSITY CAN IMPROVE AN ORGANISATION'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**

Cox and Blake (1991) delineate six areas in which an organisation has a well managed, diverse workforce, can gain a competitive advantage. They assert, as women and racioethnic minorities increase in proportional representation in the labour pool, organisations must compete to hire workers from these groups.

There are a plethora of approaches to the concept of diversity. The approach used in the organisational setting can be understood by three types of diversity. Firstly, *functional diversity* describes the distinction between organisational functions and responsibilities. Secondly, *business diversity* deals with the availability of products and services. Lastly, *workforce diversity* implies the different types of employees with their diverse set of attributes. Workforce diversity emphasising training issues and the credentials required for job performance, and social diversity comprising of differences and characteristics that describes the social identity of the person, such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, to mention a few (Argyriades, 2001).



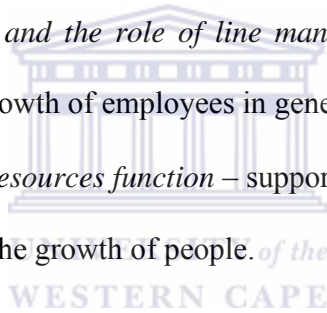
In the framework of human resource management and making consideration for affirmative action, diversity management could be defined as a managerial process that is planned, logical and inclusive for the purpose of creating an organisational setting in which every employee, each with his or her unique attributes, has the opportunity to be apart of the strategic and competitive advantage of the organisation, and where no person is excluded for reasons unrelated to productivity (Uys, 2003).

For clarity of concepts affirmative action and diversity management can be differentiated from each other in that affirmative action tends towards being an *exclusive* process based on creating employment opportunities and promotions for previously disadvantage while managing diversity is an *inclusive* process which seeks to utilise all employers fully. The latter being a long-term process and not as affirmative action which is a short-term

process. In the simplest of terms; affirmative action allows for growth in diversity but does not constitute the management of diversity (Thomas, 1996).

The effectiveness of Affirmative action suggested by Human (1996) as the critical success factors that need to be in place:

- *Employee development as a strategic issue* – the emphasis of developing people in general and black (African, Coloured/ Asian), female and disabled progression in particular
- *Staffing* – the way in which people are coordinated to jobs
- *Organisational culture and the role of line management in the development of people* – refers to the growth of employees in general
- *The role of the human resources function* – support line management by providing appropriate systems in the growth of people.



Managing diversity emphasises the skills, policies and competency needed to maximise every employee's input to the organisational objectives. Diversity management proposal is to enhance organisational morale, productivity and benefits. Diversity management would include efforts by organisations to recruit, retain and facilitate working relationships among from several backgrounds (Henderson, 1994; Miller, 1999).

The reasons for managing diversity in organisations are mentioned (Uys, 2003):

- Population and workforce changes taking place
- Failure of the 'melting-pot' approach
- Globalisation

- Value or ethical imperative
- Credibility, trust and stability
- Advantages of effective diversity management
- Results of failure to manage diversity
- Structural changes
- Development and nation-building

The challenges managers of diversity management in South Africa face are escalating and complex. Diverse workforces pose challenges to managers and peers or people working together because diversity brings with it differences in the way people act, their expectations and approaches. However, if not dealt with appropriately, it will result in conflict and disorder. Although the concern is that, diversity may at first lead to increased anxiety and conflict in the workplace. Conflicts relating to managing diversity are plentiful. In the diverse workforce the uncertainty that usually goes with conflict is a vital issue, since open communication and trust, critical elements for dealing with uncertainty, can be inhibited by the lack of general experiences as a frame of reference and/or lack of understanding of different values. The challenge the diverse workforce faces as far as communication is concerned is to create a universal understanding of expressions as well as clear insight of roles and responsibilities (Mathews, 1999; Smith, 1997; Uys, 2003).

#### **2.4.1 COST ARGUMENT**

Greenhaus and Callan (1994) maintain organisations have not been as successful in managing women and minorities as in managing White males. A corollary of this is therefore, organisations unable to manage an increasingly dominant part of the workforce will incur considerable additional costs which will have profoundly negative ramifications on their productivity.

#### **2.4.2 RESOURCE ACQUISITION ARGUMENT**

Organisations that can attract, retain, motivate and engage the most talented from diverse groups will be most likely to succeed, while those that do not may not even survive. However, current corporate attempts to address the specific needs of these new workers tend to consist mostly of isolated programmes managed at relatively low organisational levels and rarely connected to larger strategic initiatives. Hence, the benefits of these programmes to organisations go largely unrecognised (Hall & Parker, 1994).

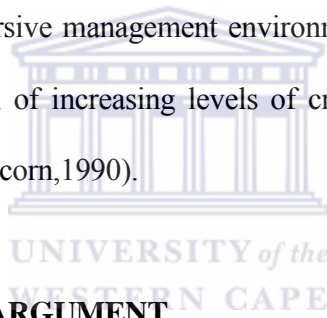
#### **2.4.3 MARKETING ARGUMENT**

Organisations that serve multi-national or domestically multi-cultural consumers will benefit from a diverse workforce that brings a blend of insights and cultural sensitivities to the organisation's marketing efforts (Greenhaus & Callan, 1994). In accordance with this view, Caudron (1990, p. 77) espouses the view "Ultimately, valuing diversity will provide us with

a competitive edge by helping us to understand our consumers and making us able to attract the best in the labour pool".

#### **2.4.4 CREATIVITY ARGUMENT**

The representation of varying perspectives in a culturally diverse workforce should enhance the level of creativity in the organisation. Homogeneity of the workforce leads to a loss of creativity, originality and innovation and creative energies must be suppressed to avoid anyone consistently differentiating themselves or challenging the status quo. These trends lead to a conservative, risk-averse management environment. However, heterogeneity of the workforce has the potential of increasing levels of creativity, thereby contributing to organisational effectiveness (Allcorn,1990).



#### **2.4.5 PROBLEM SOLVING ARGUMENT**

Creating a culture where the different backgrounds of people and their different styles of interaction are embraced, adds value to problem-solving and requires fundamental behavioural changes (Robbins,1993). Employees from different cultural groups bring different strengths and perspectives to the organisation that can enhance its effectiveness. Varying perspectives in a culturally diverse workforce should enable problem-solving groups to produce high quality solutions and decisions. Notwithstanding these views espoused, Greenhaus and Callan (1994, p. 295) assert "culturally



diverse organisations are susceptible to potential conflicts between different cultural groups. Language difficulties, stereotyping, mutual misunderstanding and resentments of perceived preferential treatment can also exacerbate intergroup conflict". However, proactive conflict management strategies will preclude the possibility of arousing dysfunctional conflict (Dodds, 1995).

#### **2.4.6 SYSTEM FLEXIBILITY ARGUMENT**

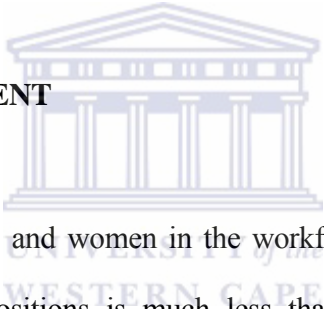
Rather than ignore differences between employees, wise visionary employers are learning to embrace them and to utilise diversity to create competitive advantage. Introducing more flexibility into the workplace has been found to result in higher morale, less absenteeism, improved productivity and reduced turnover (Hall & Parker, 1994). Organisations that manage diversity effectively become more fluid and flexible, which enables them to respond to environmental changes more quickly and effectively (Feldman, Doeringhaus & Turnley, 1994).

Workplace flexibility and investigations into creative ways of enhancing the fit between people and their work roles, is a key to corporate competitiveness. More specifically, it is a critical organisational ability that enables employers to assist employees express rather than suppress their identities and roles they have outside work. Flexibility can encourage higher levels of engagement in the activities and relationships that make up a job, and as a result, can produce better work performance (Hall & Parker, 1994).

## **2.5 FAIRNESS IN ORGANISATIONS**

From the perspectives of employees, issues of fairness are not constrained to sex, cultural background, age or other legally protected attributes. Many other aspects of personal orientation are deemed worthy of tolerance and respect as well, including political views, sexual orientation, family situations, and various personal idiosyncrasies. Employers who appear to favour some personal orientations and stifle others risk paying the price of low productivity due to a restricted pool of applicants, employee dissatisfaction, lack of commitment and turnover (Beardwell & Holden, 1994).

### **2.5.1 CAREER ADVANCEMENT**



Although the number of Blacks and women in the workforce continues to increase, their representation in managerial positions is much less than for White males. The small proportion of women and Blacks at senior management levels suggests that their careers are stalled or slowed down at lower and middle levels of management, a situation referred to as the invisible glass ceiling (Morrison, White & Van Velsor, 1987, cited in Greenhaus & Callan, 1994).

Differential treatment represents lost opportunities for women and minorities to develop job-related talents, which can detract from job performance and ultimately dampen career advancement prospects. Moreover, an imbalance in women and minorities in senior positions indicates a need for special career development programmes for women and

Blacks (Moshikaro, 1988). Thus, structural integration is achieved, that is, representation of cultural groups at all levels and functions within an organisation (French, 1990; Russell, 1991).

In conjunction with this, Oakley-Smith & Braxton (1993, p. 22) maintain "the process of valuing and managing a diverse work force must be an empowering process for all employees. One which creates an organisational climate which is motivating for all employees and where advancement is synonymous with personal potential in a self-actualising environment".

### **2.5.2 JOB PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS**

Ray and Eison (1984, pp. 179-180) maintain "it is important to make clear the purpose and performance measurements for each job ...The key to achieving greater and consequently higher productivity is the explicit definition of the purpose of each job and the measures of quality and quantity that show how well it is succeeding". It is evident from research that employers have a propensity to evaluate the performance of same-race and same-sex employees more highly than those of minority groups and women, which has a profound impact on the career advancement of these groups (Crooks, De Jung & Kaplan, 1962, cited in Landy & Farr, 1980). In conjunction with this, performance appraisal is increasingly coming under scrutiny. Jackets (1988) maintains performance appraisal, if properly implemented, is an effective tool in the management of people. However, "if cases of favouritism or victimisation become apparent, the whole system loses its value as a motivator, and if not

seen to be justifiably consistent, personal antagonism between employees and their supervisors can cause potentially damaging confrontations (Kinnie & Lowe, 1990, p. 47).

Huysamen (1995, p. 31) maintains "creating high performance in the face of relentless environmental change requires an organisation to redesign itself so that it is capable of sustaining efficient, high quality performance through time. The propensity and capability to adapt as performance requirements change must be integrated in the fibre of the organisation". Such pressures have culminated in organisations instituting changes in their performance evaluation systems, and in the adoption of performance management which is "a systematic approach to the management of people, using performance, goals, measurement, feedback and recognition as a means of motivating them (employees) to realise their maximum potential. It embraces all formal and informal methods adopted by the organisation and its managers to increase commitment and individual and corporate effectiveness. It is thus broader than performance appraisal and performance related pay, which are elements in a performance management system" (Armstrong, 1995, p. 37; Bussin, 1992, p. 24).

Erdogan (2002) proposed that perceptions of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice in performance appraisals either directly or indirectly predict employees' motivation to improve their performance. In the instructional setting, Chory-Assad (2002) found that student perceptions of procedural justice in a given course predicted more student motivation in the course.

Based on Locke's (1968) theory of task motivation, the following theoretical process is proposed here: when individuals receive performance feedback, they judge the fairness of 1) the feedback, 2) how the feedback was determined, and 3) how it was communicated to them. These perceptions of justice then predict goal acceptance/ compliance with the feedback instructions (Chory-Assad & Paulsel, 2004; Colquitt, 2001; Paulsel & Chory-Assad, 2005), which leads to motivation, and finally, to performance.

It is contended that when the elements of feedback lead to perceptions of fairness, goals are accepted, employees are motivated, and performance improves; however, when the feedback elements of feedback lead to perceptions of fairness, goals are accepted, employees are motivated and performance improves; however, when the feedback elements are perceived as unfair, acceptance of goals, work motivation, and performance are inhibited. Consistent with this reasoning, Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, and Taylor (2000) observed that perceptions of injustice related to performance appraisals were associated with declines in employee performance. Likewise, Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, and Ng's (2001) meta-analysis indicated that organisational injustice perceptions were negatively related to job performance.

When organisational members perceived that superiors communicated performance feedback in an unfair, insensitive manner, they were more likely to engage in indirect aggression toward superiors, to deceive their superiors, and to obstruct organisational processes. It is this type of response to negative feedback that demonstrates the need for a

better understanding of the relationship between justice perceptions and performance feedback.

### **2.5.3. LOST OPPORTUNITIES**

In comparison with White male employees, it is postulated women and minorities receive fewer opportunities to exert authority on their jobs, develop supportive relationships within the organisation, and become enmeshed in the informal network of friendship, power and influence. The lack of social ties between people who frequently work together could be a sign of exclusion in the organisation (Stephenson & Krebs, 1993).

Many researchers conclude that a contributing factor which has resulted in lost opportunities for qualified individuals is the cycle of discrimination plaguing minorities, women and older workers (Cross, 1986; Rhodes, 1983, cited in Goldstein, 1993). As a result of lost opportunities, increased litigation has focused on organisational decisions involving training opportunities and their lack of availability to members of minority groups, women, older workers and more recently disabled employees (Goldstein, 1993).

## **2.6 ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE**

*Organisational justice* refers to perceptions of fairness and evaluations regarding the appropriateness of workplace or processes (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997). In terms of organisational justice, performance evaluations can operate as outcomes in and of

themselves (Adams, 1965; Greenberg, 1986a, b) or as steps through which decisions (e.g., pay raises) are made. This study considers performance evaluations as outcomes in their own right, and as such, they may be perceived as rewards or punishments and may communicate the self-worth, value and career potential of an employee (Greenberg, 1986b). As outcomes, evaluations can also be judged in terms of distributive justice (Greenberg, 1986a, b; Magner, Johnson, & Elfrink, 1994).

According to Singer (1993) social psychological research has shown that justice is the central concern of human rights. In an organisational setting the organisational justice theory therefore seems appropriate. Gilliland (1993) developed a model that is based on organisational justice theory and that offers a concise overview of relations between important variables for understanding applicants' fairness perceptions in terms of certain organisational justice rules. The model proposes that applicants rate selection techniques as being fair /unfair on the basis of these rules. The organisational justice rules are divided into two main categories, namely distributive justice rules procedural justice rules

Organisational justice research emerged in the early 1900's as a viable and robust means of assessing how and why people feel the way they do about their jobs. Colquitt et al. (2005) refer to the development of organisational justice research as a distinctive set of 'waves' beginning in the 1950's with distributive justice; followed by the procedural justice wave in the mid-1970s; and then the emergence of the interpersonal justice wave in the 1980s. Distributive justice has been aligned with the perceptions of fairness held by organisational members with regards to the distribution of resources or decided outcomes

(Adams 1965; Colquitt 2001). Procedural justice dealt with the perceived fairness of the processes used to achieve those outcomes or decisions (Moorman 1991; Sweeney and McFarlin 1997; Thibaut and Walker 1975), and interpersonal justice focused on how members were treated during the decision making process (Bies and Moag 1986; Moorman 1991). Those perceptions of fairness held by organisational members towards those three dimensions and the integration of the dimensions formed the foundation for the organisational justice construct (Greenberg 1987, 1990; Greenberg and Cropanzano 2001; Greenberg et al. 1985).

Organisational Justice (i.e., perceptions of fairness in the workplace) has most frequently been separated into three forms: distributive, procedural and interactional. Distributive justice refers to the fairness of outcomes or final decisions in comparison to what others receive (Deutsch, 1985). Research has shown that perceptions of distributive justice predict satisfaction with pay (Folger & Konovsky, 1989). Procedural justice refers to the fairness of policies or processes used to make or implement decisions and distributive outcomes (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Individuals perceiving procedural justice sense greater control in the environment and respond with lower levels of absenteeism, reduced turnover intentions, and increased job performance and commitment to the organisation (e.g., Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000). Interactional justice, sometimes considered a component of procedural justice, refers to how one is treated (with respect and dignity) during the implementation of a process or procedure, and emphasizes the communication and interpersonal aspects of processes (Bies & Moag, 1986). Interactional justice shares the conceptual properties of status recognition specified in the



relational model of authority (Bies, 2001). Research shows that perceptions of interactional justice are positively correlated with commitment to the supervisor (Malatesta & Byrne, 1997), union support (Fuller & Hester, 2001), leader-member exchange and supervisory satisfaction (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), thus indicative of a positive supervisor- subordinate relationship.

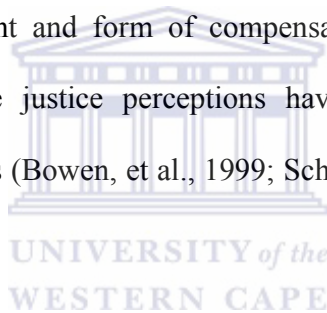
### **2.6.1 DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE**

*Distributive justice* refers to perceptions of the fairness of outcomes received in a transaction (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001; Homans, 1961). Most organisational justice scholars have assumed the rule for judging distributive justice is equity, although scholars recognize the possibility that rules such as need or equality may also be used (Adams, 1965; Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997; Deutsch, 1985; Leventhal, 1980; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). In assessing distributive justice, individuals evaluate and compare the outcome (e.g., performance appraisal) they received to a standard or rule (e.g., equity) and/or to the outcome received by a referent (e.g., co-workers) (Adams, 1965; Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997).

Perceptions of the fairness of organisational outcomes received in a given transaction are referred to as *distributive justice* (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001; Homans, 1961). Issues of distributive justice arise when something valuable is scarce, when not everyone can have what (s) he wants, or when something negative can not be avoided by all. Most scholars have assumed the rule for judging distributive justice is equity, although scholars

recognize that rules such as need or equality may also be used (Adams, 1965; Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997; Leventhal, 1980). In assessing distributive justice, individuals evaluate and compare the outcome they received to a standard or rule and / or to the outcome received by a referent, such as one's coworkers or past experience (Adams, 1965; Austin, 1977; Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997).

Distributive justice refers to fairness in the allocation of a set of outcomes to the defined circle of recipients. Distributive justice is said to exist when employees expectations are congruent with outcomes received (Adams, 1965). The primary concern explains how employees react to the amount and form of compensation they receive. It has been demonstrated that distributive justice perceptions have an influence over attitudes towards the results of decisions (Bowen, et al., 1999; Schappe, 1998; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997).



Research on organisational justice in the United States context has shown that distributive justices are related to a wide variety of individual and organisational outcomes (McFarlin & Sweeny, 1992). Greenberg (1986, p. 22) suggests that “Injustice, in other words, is the violation of the normative standard. Less powerful actors may recognise this violation when the legitimised distribution is disrupted in a way that serves the interest of the powerful, or when they realise the bias inherent in the existing system.” The lack of distributive justice can cause employees to lower their job performance, cooperate less with their co-workers, engage in stealing and experience stress (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). On the other hand, fair treatment can influence organisational variables such as

job satisfaction (Bateman & Organ, 1983), trust in and loyalty to the leader (Deluga, 1994), organisational citizenship behaviour (Morrison, 1994) and reduce employee theft (Greenberg, 1990). It was found that distributive justice was the more important predictor of job satisfaction than procedural justice (McFarlin & Sweeny, 1992). According to Coetzee (2004), managers should pay close attention to justice violations in the workplace because these may give rise to employees' lawsuits which, if successful could bring about various remedies.

According to Leventhal (1976), employees use three major rules to determine outcome justice: the equity rule, the equality rule and the need rule. The purpose of outcomes or decisions based on the equity rule is to achieve productivity and a high level of performance. The equity rule is used when the aim is to preserve social harmony, the needs rule is applied when the objective is to foster personal welfare and the equality rule suggests that equal opportunity is given to receive the reward. Because distributive justice focuses on outcome fairness, Adams' (1963) equity theory has been used to operationalise the construct (Tornblom, 1990). "According to the equity theory perceptions of distributive justice arise from comparisons for work outcomes, given inputs against certain referent others, and the comparison concept used by the employee" (Hendrix et al., 1998, p. 612).

Soon after the publication of Adams' (1963) theory, several empirical studies were conducted that tested various aspects thereof. Typically these studies hired experimental subjects to work on a clerical task after leading them to believe that similarly qualified

others were being paid more or less than themselves for doing the same work, that is they were either underpaid or overpaid (Andrews, 1967; Garland, 1973; Pritchard, Dunnette & Jorgenson, 1972). In keeping with equity theory predictions, these studies generally found that workers lowered their performance when they were underpaid and raised their performance when they were overpaid (Adams & Freedman, 1976).

Despite these successes, several early tests of equity theory were criticised on the grounds that some of the inequity inductions used were confounded in various ways for example, by challenging subjects' self-esteem, or by threatening their job security (Lawler, 1968; Pitchard, 1969) Despite these challenges, convincing rebuttals by Adams (1968) in conjunction with other supportive tests of the theory using unconfounded procedures for example, Garland (1973), have led reviewers to conclude that the evidence for equity theory is generally quite strong (Greenberg, 1982; Mowday, 1987).

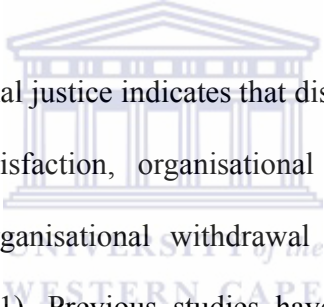
Of the conceptual variants of equity theory that emerged, one approach that promised to be especially applicable to the study of organisational processes was its proactive counterpart (Leventhal 1976, 1980). Leventhal and his associates researched the conditions under which people proactively employed various justice norms (Greenberg & Leventhal 1976). They reported that people believe that the maintenance of social harmony is promoted through the use of equal reward allocations, whereas, the maximization of performance is promoted through the use of equal reward allocation. Moreover, the maximisation of performance is promoted by systems, for example, pay for performance plans (Henneman, 1990) that allocate outcomes equitably, in proportion

to relative performance (Deutsch, 1975, 1985; Leventhal 1976). Research highlighted that certain goals are believed to be facilitated by certain norms of justice relevant to organisational behaviour insofar as it helps predict and explain administrative allocation decisions such as pay raises and budget allocations (Freedman & Montanari, 1980).

Together, Adam's reactive approach and Leventhal's proactive approach are referred to as conceptualisations of distributive justice (Cohen, 1987; Törnblom, 1990). Both focus on the fairness of outcome distributions. Despite the potential insight into organisational processes derived from both reactive and proactive approaches to distributive justice by the early 1980's these conceptualisations began to fall into disfavour (Locke & Henne, 1986). One source of frustration was equity theory's lack of specificity regarding what reactions to inequity would occur (Furby, 1986). At the same time organisational scientists such as Heneman (1985) and Mahoney (1985) began to raise questions about justice in various organisational milieus that were not adequately addressed by prevailing theories of justice. Specifically, questions of how pay plans were administered and what grievance-resolution practices were followed in organisations prompted concerns about fairness that were more process orientated. These questions dealt with how decisions were made as opposed to what those decisions were. In attempting to address such questions, theorists Folger and Greenberg (1985), Greenberg and Folger (1983) and Tyler (1987a) focused their attention on matters of procedural justice.

Distributive justice principles characterise what pay outcome is seen as fair. The outcome could be a pay level, a pay range, a merit increase or any other compensation or reward

outcome. The primary justice principle is equity which can be divided into external equity, internal equity and individual equity. In this situation, external equity involves employees comparing pay with employees in similar jobs at different organisations. Internal equity is based on comparing one's pay with pay of different jobs or jobs at different levels in the same organisation. With individual equity, employees compare their pay with other employees that are at same level in the organisation. It is difficult to maintain all three types of equity and employees will often perceive some violation of distributive justice. Bowen et al., (1999) are of the opinion that adequate procedural and interactional justice can offset distributive justice.



A meta-analysis of organisational justice indicates that distributive justice perceptions are positively related to job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and trust, and negatively associated with organisational withdrawal and other negative employee reactions (Colquitt et al., 2001). Previous studies have also shown that the lack of distributive justice is associated with destructive behavior organisations. For example, perceptions of distributive justice were negatively related to counter productive work behavior and conflicts at work (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Donnerstein & Hatfield, 1982). In addition, Scarlicki and Folger (1997) found that distributive justice was negatively related to organisational retaliation behaviors, including those such as faking sick and purposely damaging or wasting company equipment or materials. Aquino, Lewis, and Bradfield (1999) also found that distributive justice was negatively associated with interpersonal deviance, such as spreading rumours, directed toward individuals in the organisation.

Distributive justice deals with perceptions of the fairness of organisational outcomes in relation to either individual or group inputs. It is related to the equity theory developed by Adams (1965). In equity theory, the term “outcome” is used to refer to the level of benefit or harm received by the individual (Tang & Sarfield –Baldwin, 1996; Tata, 2000). The fairness of outcomes is also considered within the context of the relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1982) and the referent cognitions theory (Folger, 1986). Tata (2000) suggested that employees use the principles of theories such as equity or equality to establish the justness or unjustness of organisational outcome(s).

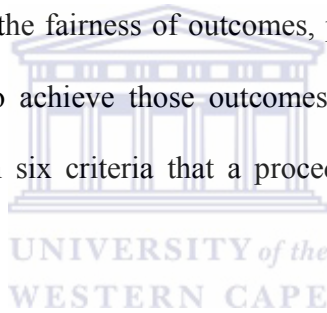
In terms of the distributive justice rules an applicant is influenced by his/her perception of the equality in the outcome of the selection decision that is the perceived fairness of the selection outcome (Singer, 1993; Ployhart & Ryan, 1998). Gilliland (1993) explains that the various distributive justice rules may be interpreted as follows:

- a) Equity: The equity rule proposes that applicants should receive rewards consistent with their inputs in the selection process – relative to a comparable other. For this reason the selection technique must generate objective information about the applicant.
- b) Equality: The equality rule suggests that all applicants should be given an equal opportunity to receive the reward, irrespective of differentiating characteristics, such as gender, race or beliefs.
- c) Need: the need rule proposes that rewards should be given on a basis of individual needs. Special needs in the work environment refer to preference being given to

individuals belonging to minority groups, to affirmative action programs, or to individuals with disabilities.

### **2.6.2 PROCEDURAL JUSTICE**

Folger and Cropanzano (1998, p. 26) define procedural justice as the “fairness issues concerning the methods, mechanism and processes used to determine outcomes”. Bowen et al., (1991) agree that procedural justice principles include consistent application of standards and soliciting input from employees. Greenberg (1991) purports that while distributive justice focuses on the fairness of outcomes, procedural justice addresses the fairness of procedures used to achieve those outcomes. Leventhal’s (1980) theory of procedural justice focussed on six criteria that a procedure should meet if it is to be perceived as fair:



- Procedures should be applied consistently across people and time,
- Procedures should be free of bias, for example, ensuring that a third party has no vested interest in a particular settlement,
- Procedures should ensure that accurate information is collected and used in making decisions,
- Procedures should have some mechanism to correct flawed or inaccurate decisions, and
- Procedures should conform to personal or prevailing standards of ethics or morality and procedures should ensure that the opinions of various groups affected by the



decision have been taken into account.

In view of the above, Leventhal, et al., (1980), Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996), and Gilland and Paddock (2005) support the notion that procedures are perceived as fair if decisions are made consistently, without self-interest and on the basis of accurate information, if there are opportunities to correct the decision and to appeal the outcome arrived at using the procedures, if the decisions represent the interest of all the parties concerned, follow moral and ethical standards and if they set ground rules for evaluation and decision making.

Whereas distributive justice deals with evaluations of the fairness of outcomes, perceptions of the fairness used to arrive at these outcomes is referred to as *procedural justice* (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001). Procedural justice is an individual's perception of the fairness of the process components of the social system that regulates the distribution of resources (Leventhal, 1980). In terms of evaluating procedural justice, Leventhal proposed that procedures are judged based on their consistency of application, their prevailing ethical standards, and their degrees of bias, their accuracy, their correctability, and the extent to which they represent all people concerned. Similarly, Thibaut and Walker (1975) emphasize individuals' control over the given process, along with ethics and consistency.

Fair procedures have been shown to encourage acceptance of smoking bans (Greenberg, 1994), pay systems (Miceli, 1993; Miceli & Lane, 1991), parental leave policies (Grover,

1991), and disciplinary actions (Ball, Trevino, & Sims, 1994), and to be positively associated with trust in management (Barling & Phillips, 1993; Colquitt et al., 2001) and job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Colquitt et al., 2001; Pettijohn, Pettijohn, Taylor, & Keillor, 2001). On the anti social side, organisational justice research indicates that perceptions of procedural injustice are related to hostility and obstructionism (e.g. Bies & Tripp, 1996; Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993) counterproductive work behaviours and conflict at work (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Donnerstein & Hatfield, 1982), and the use of organisational revenge strategies (Scarlicki & Folger, 1997).

Whereas procedural justice relates to processes involved in a decision or outcome, interactional justice refers to the fairness and quality of interpersonal treatment people receive when procedures are implemented (Bies & Moag, 1986). Interactional justice involves perceptions of the fairness of the communication involved in organisational practices. Research reported by Bies and Moag indicates that perceptions of interactional justice. When individuals perceive they have been communicated with in a sensitive and respectful manner and are treated with politeness and dignity by those carrying out organisational procedures (Bies & Moag, 1986; Cohan-Charash & Spector, 2001), they are more likely to judge this communication as fair.

Procedural justice concerns the fairness of the selection process (Ployhart & Ryan, 1998), the fairness perceptions of selection techniques when differentiation between candidates

is taking place. Procedural justice rules are categorized in terms of three components, namely formal characteristics, explanation and interpersonal treatment (Gilliland, 1993).

Formal aspects. The formal characteristics of a selection technique include justice rules as job-relatedness (subdivided into predictive validity and face validity), opportunity to perform, reconsideration, opportunity and consistency of test administration.

Research suggests that job-related selection techniques will be perceived as being fair (Reilly & Warech, 1990; Schuler, 1993). Smither and Pearlman (1991) explain that job-relatedness pertains to both content validity (test content relevant to work content) and predictive validity (test performance is prediction of work performance).

The second procedural justice rule is closely related to job-relatedness. Kluger and Rothstein (1993) reported that applicants who were given an opportunity to demonstrate their relevant skills, were of the opinion that they performed better than those applicants who were of the opinion that they had more control over factors influencing their performance and that the technique generated more accurate information about the applicant. For these reasons the selection technique was evaluated as being fair. Shuler (1993) suggests that the acceptability of selection techniques depend on the amount of participation and control the applicants have in a selection situation.

The third formal characteristic of a selection technique, the opportunity for reconsideration, or the opportunity to reevaluate selection results (thus being given a

second chance), is an important consideration (Gilliland, 1993). However this dimension was not included in the study, since not all selection techniques permit reconsideration opportunity.

The fourth formal characteristic of a selection technique is the opportunity for consistent test administration. Gilliland (1993) pointed out that if objective, reliable results are generated consistently over time, the selection technique will be perceived as applicants (in terms of content of the selection technique, scoring of tests and interpretations of test scores).

Explanation. Explanation or interactional fairness, to the quality of the information given to applicants, as well as the manner in which applicants are treated during a selection situation (Gilliland, 1993). This justice rules include both what is communicated during (and after) the decision-making process, as well as how it is communicated (Singer, 1993). The importance of interactional justice is determined by the extent to which the specific selection technique preserves the humanity and self-respect of applicants (Greenberg, 1994). This category is subdivided into two-way communication and the honesty that is displayed during the selection process.

Additional rules. Steiner and Gilliland (1996) added two rules to the existing model. They determined that when certain selection techniques are widely used, they will be perceived as being fair. Secondly, they reported that applicants evaluated a selection

technique as being fair when they were of the opinion that the employer has the right to obtain that information.

The term “procedural justice” is used to refer to perception of the fairness of processes that culminate in an event, decision or action and it is related to the means or procedures followed to reach that outcome (Harris, 2000; Sheppard et al., 1992). The concept of procedural justice evolved from two conceptual models: Thibaut and Walker’s (1975) dispute resolution procedures and Leventhal, Karuza and Fry’s (1980) allocation preference theory. Thibaut and Walker (1975) established that perceptions guide manager’s judgement of procedural justice, namely process control and decision control. Process control refers to the extent of an individual’s control over decision-making procedures. Decision control refers to the extent of the individuals control over the actual outcomes of those decisions. Thibaut and Walker (1975) suggested that employees who believe that they have some control over the process of implementing and administering organisational decisions tend to evaluate the procedures as more fair and just than those who do not perceive themselves as having such control.

Greenberg (1990) differentiated between two procedural justice elements, namely the structural characteristics of decision making and the interpersonal characteristics of decision making. The structural characteristics of a decision include the formal policies and procedures used by the organisation to make decisions (Konovsky & Brockner, 1993). One important structural characteristic of lay-off decision making, for example, is the amount of advance notice given to those who lay off (Kaufman, 1982). An additional

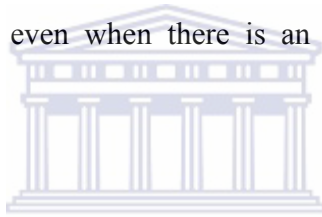
structural aspect of procedural justice in lay-off decision making includes the criteria that are used to determine whom to lay-off. Sometimes performance criteria or seniority are used. Alternatively, the employees to be laid off may be randomly selected (Konovsky & Brockner, 1993). The interpersonal aspects of procedural justice refer to the type interpersonal treatments people receive throughout the lay-off decisions are explained. Employees may provide varying levels of information to explain why lay-offs are necessary. Management may also exhibit varying levels of respect for the dignity of the employees who are to be retrenched, when informing them of the lay-offs (Konovsky & Brockner, 1993).

According to Leventhal et al. (1980), procedures are fair if they are made consistently, without self-interest, on the basis of accurate information, with opportunities to correct the decision, representing the interests of all the parties concerned, and following moral and ethical standards (Brockner et al., 1994). The following list summarises the principles of fairness referred to in seven recent articles on procedural justice (De Witt, 1998; Gopinatha & Becker, 2000; Harris, 2000; Konovsky, 2000; Simerson, L'Heureux, Beckstein, Ziamian, Dembowski & Freshman, 2000; Tang & Sarfield-Baldwin, 1996; Tata, 2000):

- Provide advance notice of intent or decisions.
- Provide accurate information and adequate feedback.
- Support two-way communication.
- Explain and justify decisions.
- Allow employees to influence the decision process.

- Consider the interests, views and concerns of all recipients.
- Permit appeal, review, reconsideration and correction.
- Treat employees with dignity, respect and sensitivity.
- Apply administrative procedures consistently.

Several studies have demonstrated that the principles (means, rules, etc.) by which outcomes are determined may be more important to employees' perceptions of fairness than the outcomes themselves (Brockner et al., 1994; Cropanzano & Folger, 1991; Greenberg, 1986; 1987; Harris, 2000). Thus fair procedures can result in an individual's perceiving a decision as just, even when there is an unfavourable outcome for that individual at a personal level.

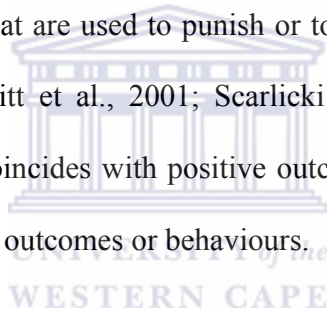


### 2.6.3 INTERACTIONAL JUSTICE

*Interactional justice* refers to the fairness and quality of interpersonal treatment received when procedures are implemented (Bies & Moag, 1986). When individuals perceive they have been communicated with in a sensitive and respectful manner and are treated with politeness and dignity by those carrying out the procedures (Bies & Moag, 1986; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), they are more likely to judge this communication as fair. Research has shown interactional justice to be positively related to employee performance, supervisor-directed citizenship behaviours, and job satisfaction (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000).

Interactional justice has been associated with various organisational phenomena. Perceptions of interactional injustice have been associated with both interpersonal and organisational workplace deviance (Aquino, Galperin & Bennett, 2004) and withdrawal behaviours, lower trust in management, lower affective commitment (Barling and Phillips, 1993), and lower satisfaction (Collie, Bradley, & Sparks, 2002).

In addition, Greenberg (1991, as cited in Greenberg & Alge, 1998) found that most negative employee reactions occurred among layoff victims whose notices were socially insensitive (inter-actionally unjust). Perceptions of the interactional unfairness have also been linked with behaviours that are used to punish or to get even with the organisation and its representatives (Colquitt et al., 2001; Scarlicki & Folger, 1997). Thus, when present, interactional justice coincides with positive outcomes or behaviours, and, when absent, coincides with negative outcomes or behaviours.



## **2.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has served to orientate the reader with respect to literature on affirmative action and organizational justice. Definitions of the variables which form the core of the research are provided as well as the link between variables is provided. The following chapter addresses the research methodology and design employed in the research.



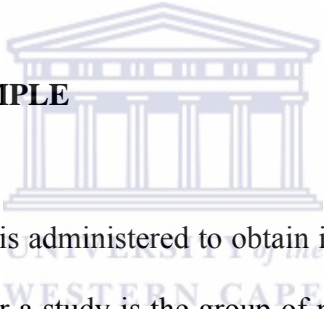
## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

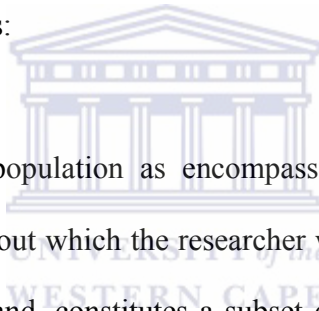
This chapter outlines the research methodology used to investigate the research topic at hand. It shall explore the selection of sample process, the measuring instrument employed to do the study as well as the procedure to gather data.

#### **3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE**



In the social sciences, research is administered to obtain information from the population of the study. The population for a study is the group of people about whom conclusions are drawn. It is almost never possible to study all members of a population that the researcher find a liking to. Therefore, the population are possible participants with specific characteristics that the researcher finds fascinating and able to explore. The population of this study was a large number of employees at a listed Learning and Training organisation in South Africa. The confidentiality agreement between the company and the researcher does not allow for the company's name to revealed (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Welman, Kruger and Mitchel (2005, p. 52) define a population as “the study object and consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions to which they are exposed.” According to Cooper and Schindler (2003, p. 179), “the basic idea of sampling is by selecting some elements in a population, we may draw conclusions about the entire population.” In order for the research results to be generalisable, a sample which is representative of the population is selected. Thus, the study of the sample and understanding of its properties or characteristics would make it possible for the researcher to generalise such properties or characteristics to the population elements. Furthermore, Bless and Higson-Smith (1995, p. 86) recognise the main advantages of sampling as:

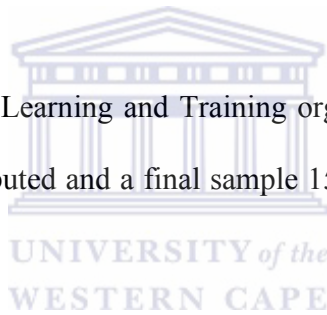


Huysamen (1994) defines a population as encompassing “the total collection of all members, cases or elements about which the researcher wishes to draw conclusions.” (p. 38). A sample, on the other hand, constitutes a subset of this population. Conclusions are, thus, drawn from the sample and are generalized to the population as a whole (Sekaran, 2000). Random sampling is the ideal way to select a study population but for the purpose of this study convenience sampling was adopted. This is a non-probability sampling design that entails taking all cases on hand until the sample reaches the size desired (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995). Non-probability sampling implies that the elements in the population have no probabilities attached to their being selected as sample subjects and is hence a convenient way of sampling (Sekaran, 2000).

A non probability convenience sampling design was primarily selected for this study due to the advantages attached to its use. Convenience sampling is (Bailey, 1987; Huysamen, 1994; Sekaran, 2000):

- Gathering data on a sample is less time-consuming,
- Relatively uncomplicated,
- Inexpensive. In addition to this, populations to be studied may be spread over a large geographical area, resulting in high travel expenses, and
- is free of the statistical complexity inherent in probability sampling methods

The study was conducted at a Learning and Training organisation where approximately 300 questionnaires were distributed and a final sample 150 were utilized for the purpose of this research.



### **3.2.1 Sample Size**

For the purposes of the present study, the population comprised of a large number of employees at a listed Learning and Training organisation in South Africa who were available to participate. The size of the total population was approximately one hundred and fifty (150) employees.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2003, p. 179), “the basic idea of sampling is by selecting some elements in a population, we may draw conclusions about the entire population.” In order for the research results to be generalisable, a sample which is

representative of the population is selected. Thus, the study of the sample and understanding of its properties or characteristics would make it possible for the researcher to generalise such properties or characteristics to the population elements. The sample characteristics were explored in the biographical details in section A of the questionnaire and included demographic information such as gender, age, marital status, educational level.

### **3.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

There are two methods of data collection namely, qualitative and quantitative. The purpose of this research topic a quantitative research method was used. Quantitative research is objective in nature and stresses the measurement of constructs in a precise, pragmatic and controlled approach, where data is deduced using statistical analysis. (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

#### **3.3.1 PROCEDURE**

Permission was requested from the HR Director or a listed Learning and development organisation to conduct the study in their organisation. Upon approval, the questionnaires were administered. Confidentiality and anonymity was stressed in the study and the decision of the respondents who did not want to participate in the study was respected. The purpose of the research was explained and contextualised for the participants and two-hundred self administered questionnaires were administered. The questionnaire

contained a cover letter inviting respondents to participate, as well instructions on how to complete the questionnaires.

### **3.3.2 Measuring Instruments**

The measuring instrument for the purpose of this study was the use of questionnaires. According to Sekaran (2001, p. 233), “A questionnaire is a preformulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives. Questionnaires are an efficient data collection mechanism when the researcher knows exactly what is required and how to measure the variables of interest.”

Questionnaires have both advantages and disadvantages as a measuring instrument. McCall (1994) lists both advantages and disadvantages as being cost effective, avoids potential biases and avoids placing undue pressure on the respondent and allows for responses to be thought through. However, they are less flexible when compared to interviews as respondents may feel they are not able to comment on all questions and the low response rate can influence any conclusions based on data

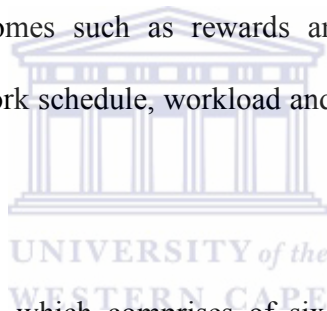
#### **3.3.2.1 Biographical Questionnaire**

For the purposes of the study, data had to be obtained from each respondent with regards to the six demographic variables of gender, age, years of service, current marital status,

current position/job level, and educational level with the organisation in question. This data was collected with the aid of a self-administered biographical questionnaire.

### **3.3.2.2 Organisational Justice questionnaire**

The Organisational Justice Questionnaire (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993), which comprises a distributive justice subscale, a procedural justice subscale and an interactive justice subscale and is scored on a 7-point Likert scale, were administered. The distributive justice subscale, which comprises of five items, describes the extent to which employees believe that their work outcomes such as rewards and recognition are fair. These outcomes include pay level, work schedule, workload and job responsibilities (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993).



A procedural justice subscale, which comprises of six items, describes the extent to which formal procedures exist and whether these procedures are implemented in a way that takes employees' needs into consideration. The formal procedures cover the degree to which job decisions are based on complete and unbiased information and that employees have opportunities to ask questions and challenge decisions (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993).

The interactional justice subscale, which comprises of nine items, consists of the extent to which employees perceive that their needs are taken into account in making job decisions

and that employees are provided with adequate explanations when decisions are finalised (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993).

#### **3.3.2.2.1 Reliability**

Interactional justice which measures the degree to which employees felt their needs were considered in and adequate explanations were made for job decisions was based on the one used by Moorman (1991) and had reported reliabilities above .90 for all three dimensions. The Niehoff and Moorman (1993) measure has a reported coefficient alpha for distributive justice which ranges from .72 to .74 (Aquino, Lewis & Bradfield, 1999; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). The Coefficient alpha for formal procedures was .85 and the alpha for interactive justice was .92. (Aquino et al., 1999; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). A 12-point item measure combining items for formal procedures and interactive justice had a coefficient alpha of .98 (Moorman, Blakely & Niehoff, 1998). Fernandes and Awamleh's (2005) study reports reliabilities using this measure as follows: The Distributive justice scale showed a reliability of .78, Procedural justice .87 and Interactional justice .91.

#### **3.3.2.2.2 Validity**

Niehoff and Moorman (1993) reported that formal procedures correlated positively with distributive and interactive justice. There was a strong correlation between distributive justice and interactive justice, respectively and the dimensions of organisational

citizenship behavior, that is altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). In addition, they report that procedural justice and interactive justice related positively with supervisor observations of employees work and interactive justice correlated favourably with formal meetings (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Moorman et al., (1998) report that procedural justice correlated positively with perceived organisational support, interpersonal helping, personal industry and loyal boosterism for an organisation. Aquino, et al., (1999) and Niehoff and Moorman (1993) examined the measures with confirmatory factor analysis and found that distributive, procedural and interactive justices were empirically distinct. Distributive justice also correlated negatively with deviant behaviours toward other employees and employee negative effect (Aquino, et al., 1999).



#### **3.3.2.2.3 Rationale for Inclusion**

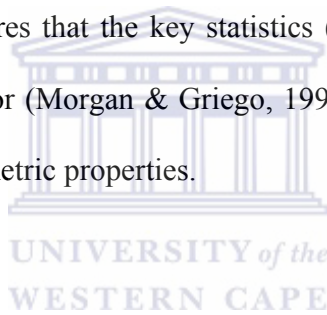
The rationale for the use of the Niehoff and Moorman's (1993) measure is based on the facts that Niehoff and Moorman's (1993) questionnaire has acceptable reliability and demonstrable validity for the measurement of the perceptions of organisational justice (Fields, 2002). Moreover, the scale was based one used by Moorman (1991) and had reported reliabilities above .90 for all three dimensions (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993)



### **3.3.2.3 Affirmative Action Fairness questionnaire (AAFQ)**

#### **3.3.2.3.1 Reliability**

The items of the four factors were subjected to item analysis. The mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis and coefficient alpha were computed for each of the factors. The factor means varied from 23,219 to 31,591 and the standard deviations from 7,139 to 8,215. The internal consistency reliability index for the four factors ranged between 0,806 and 0,884. The scores of the sample were approximately normally distributed. The assumption of normality requires that the key statistics (skewness and kurtosis) be less than 2,5 times its standard error (Morgan & Griego, 1998). The results confirm that the AAFQ has acceptable psychometric properties.



#### **3.3.2.3.2 Validity**

In order to determine which variables cluster together, the intercorrelation matrix of the 40 items was subjected to a principal factor analysis and rotated by means of the varimax rotation to identify the substructures in the data matrix. In order to enhance the discriminant validity of the AAFQ, items that cross-loaded on more than one factor and items with factor loadings less than 0,40 were omitted. Once 11 items had been excluded, another factor analysis was done. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity produced satisfactory results. The KMO value (0,933) was greater than 0,7. This meant that the data set was likely to factor well.

Bartlett's test of sphericity confirmed [ $\chi^2 (406) = 5374,294, p < 0,001$ ] that the properties of the correlation matrix of the item scores were suitable for factor analysis.

The factor analysis resulted in four-factor measurement model of which the constructs/dimensions seem to be congruent with existing organisational fairness theories. The results indicated that the respondents' perceptions about the fairness of AA are related to the way employees were informed and treated during the AA intervention (F1 = interactional justice); the procedures applied in making AA decisions (F2 & F3 = procedural justice); and the allocation of AA outcomes (F4 = distributive justice).

#### **3.3.2.3.3 Rationale for Inclusion**



The reliabilities of Factors 1, 2, 3 and 4, according to Cronbach's coefficient alpha, were 0,884, 0,864, 0,879 and 0,806 respectively. The alpha coefficient surpassed the minimum level of 0,70 recommended by Morgan and Griego (1998). The results of the factor analysis and reliability indices provided support for the psychometric adequacy of the AAFQ.

#### **3.3.2 Ethical Considerations**

It was of absolute importance that during conduction of the study voluntary participation and informed consent was obtained from participants. Measuring instruments were carefully structured and investigated for reliability and validity evidence, in order to

prevent harm to employees. It was my responsibility as the researcher to ensure that I had appropriate training for administering the various questionnaires. The human rights and welfare of the participants were acknowledged and protected. Confidentiality and anonymity also remained a priority. This research was strictly conducted according to the ethical code of psychologists, as stipulated by the Professional Board for Psychology.

### **3.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

Once the questionnaires have been returned, the data will be captured in SPSS and analysed based on the hypotheses generated for the purposes of the research. The product moment correlation coefficient was the appropriate technique for use in this study since it is an index that is used to detect the linear relationship that exists between two variables (Keppel & Zedeck, 1989; Mason & Bramble, 1989; Sekaran, 2000). Two important pieces of information can be derived from the coefficient.

The first is the direction of the relationship between the variables. A positive coefficient indicates that the two variables vary in the same direction, that is, the higher the scores in the one variable, the higher the scores in the other variable. When a perfect positive correlation exists between the variables, the value of the coefficient is +1.00. A negative coefficient, on the other hand, indicates that the two variables vary in opposite directions. As the one variable increases, so the other decreases. A perfect negative relationship between the variables will, thus, be indicated by a correlation coefficient of -1.00 (Keppel & Zedeck, 1989; Mason & Bramble, 1989).

The second piece of information that can be gained from the Pearson correlation coefficient is the strength of the relationship between the two variables. Values near zero indicate a weak linear relationship. The strength of the relationship increases as the value of the coefficient ( $r$ ) moves toward either  $-1.00$  or  $+1.00$ . If  $r$  is close to  $+1.00$ , it indicates a strong, positive linear correlation and if  $r$  is close to  $-1.00$ , it is indicative of a strong, negative linear correlation (Viljoen & Van der Merwe, 2000).

### **3.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

Below are the hypotheses developed for research in response to the given research topic:



- There is no statistically significant relationship between Organisational Justice (distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice) and perceptions of Affirmative Action.

#### **Hypothesis 2:**

- There is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of affirmative action based on biographical variables.

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has highlighted the methodology which was employed in assessing the relationship between organisational justice and perceptions of affirmative action. The procedure that was followed, the data collection methods, sampling design and sample size considerations, statistical techniques and ethical issues that were considered, were delineated. The following chapter presents the most salient results which emerged.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

After the data was collected by means of questionnaires, it was coded and quantitatively analysed using the Statistical Programme for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 18. The current chapter outlines the results obtained in the study and provides a discussion of these results. The descriptive statistics computed for the study are presented first in an outline of the characteristics of the sample with regards to the variables included in the study. Thereafter, the analyses of the constructs relevant to the study, that is, stress, organisational commitment and turnover intentions, are presented with the aid of inferential statistical procedures. The information provided and discussed in the previous chapters will serve as a background against which the contents of this chapter will be presented and interpreted.

#### **4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

The descriptive statistics calculated for the sample are provided in the sections that follow. That is, the data pertaining to the variables included in the study, as collected by the four measuring instruments employed, are summarised by means of graphic representation and the calculation of descriptive measures. In this manner, the properties of the observed data clearly emerge and an overall picture thereof is obtained.

## **4.2.1 Results of the biographical questionnaire**

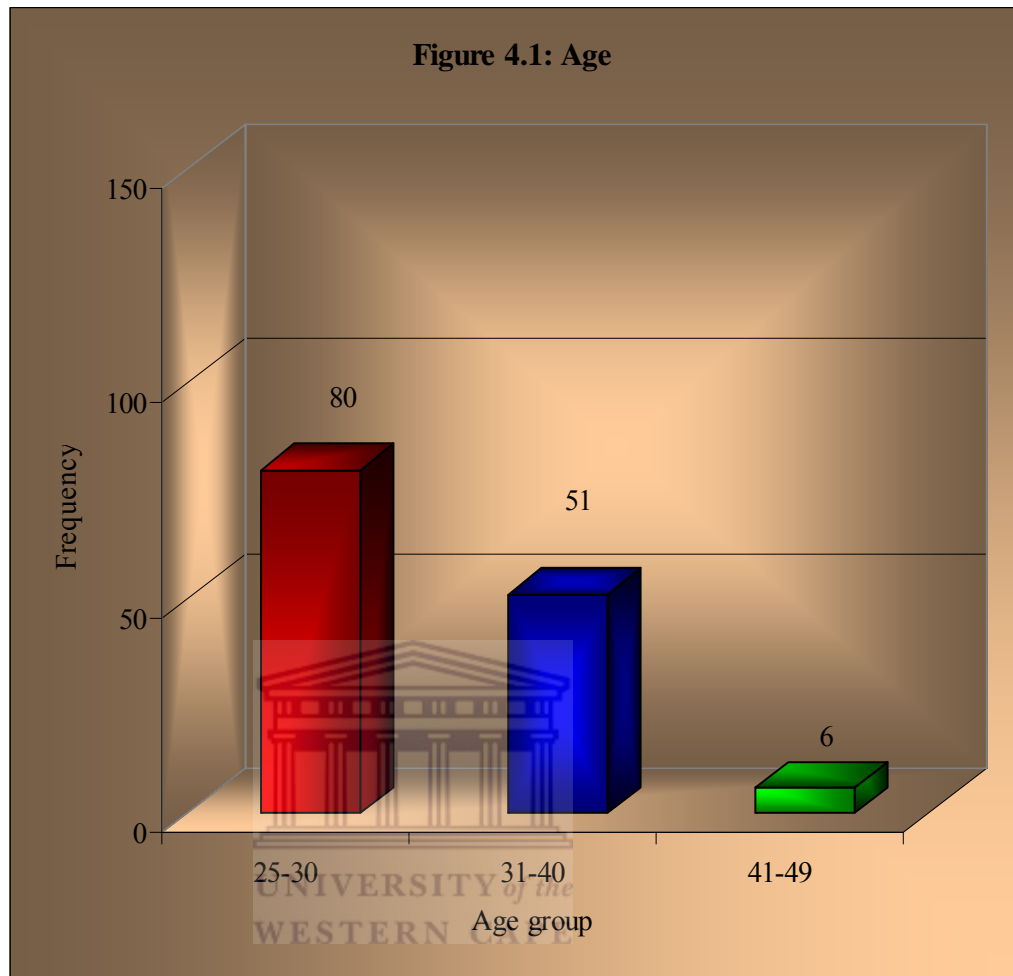
This section outlines the descriptive statistics calculated on the basis of the variables included in the biographical questionnaire. The demographic variables that received attention are as follows:

- Age distribution of the respondents
- Gender distribution of the respondents
- Race of the respondents
- Marital status
- Tenure of the respondents

Descriptive statistics, in the form of frequencies and percentages, are subsequently presented graphically for each of the above-mentioned variables.

### **4.2.1.1 Age distribution of respondents**

The subjects' responses as regards their age are presented graphically in Figure 4.1.



From the frequency distribution presented in Figure 4.1 it may be deduced that a total of 80 of the 137 cases in the sample are between the ages of 31 and 40 years. It can thus be seen that the majority of the individuals in the sample (58.4%) fall into this category. This is followed by the 41 to 49 year age category into which 37.2% (n=51) of the respondents fall, while only 4.4 % (n=6) of the respondents indicated that they are older than 50 years.



#### 4.2.1.2 Gender distribution of the respondents

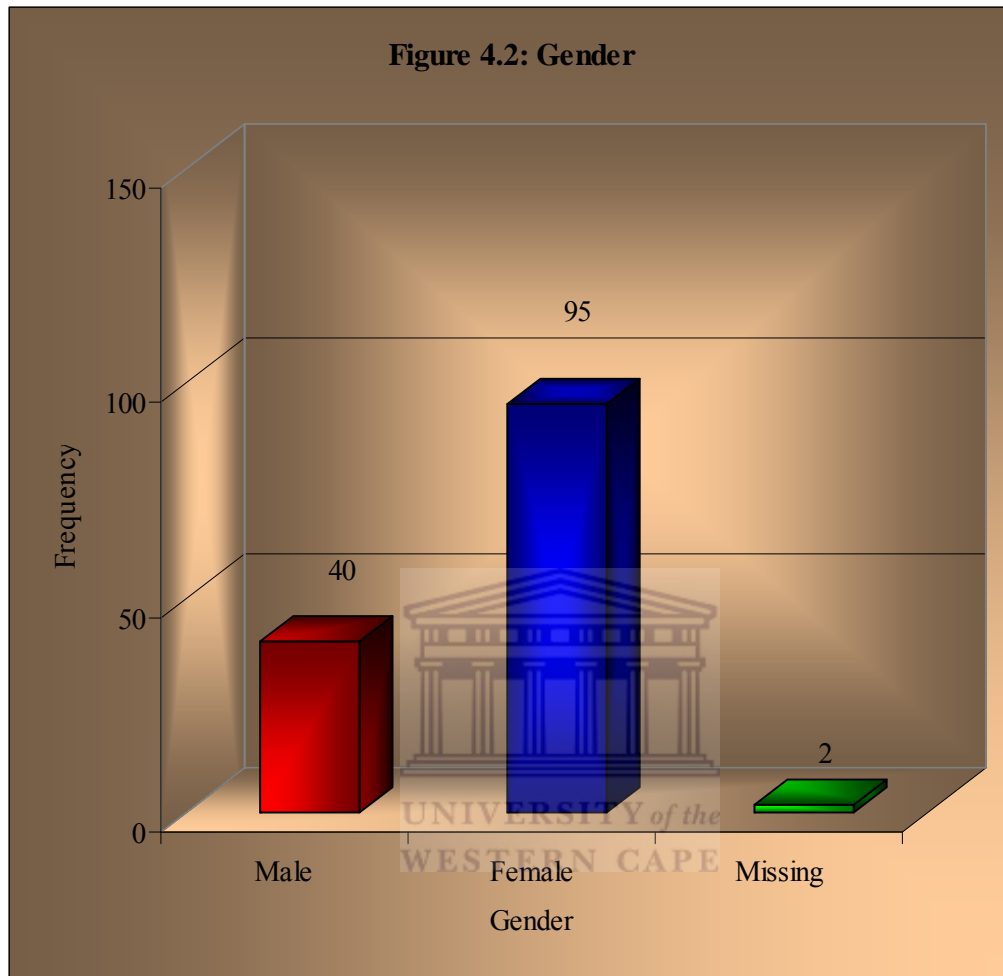
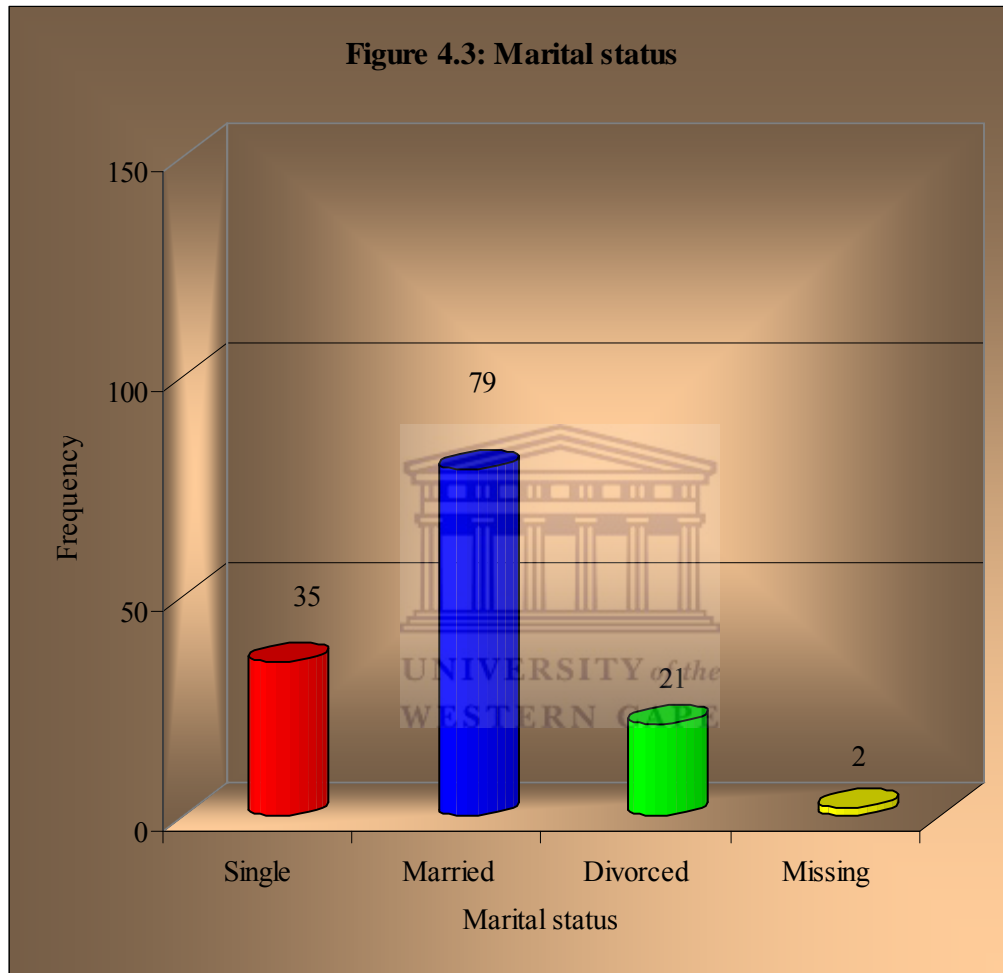


Figure 4.2 presents a graphical representation of the gender distribution of the selected sample. As can be seen from Figure 4.2, the majority of the respondents are female. More specifically, 70% (n=95) of the subjects are women, while only 29% (n=40) are male. Furthermore, two of the participants (1%) did not specify their gender.

### 4.2.1.3 Marital status of the respondents

The marital status of the respondents is presented graphically in Figure 4.3.



From Figure 4.3 the following may be deduced: The majority of the sample, 57.6% (n=79), are married. A total of 35 respondents (25.5%) indicated that they are single and 21 respondents indicated that they were divorced (15.3%). Two respondents (1%) did not provide an indication of their marital status.

#### 4.2.1.4 Race of the respondents

The distribution of the sample with regards to race is presented graphically in Figure 4.4.

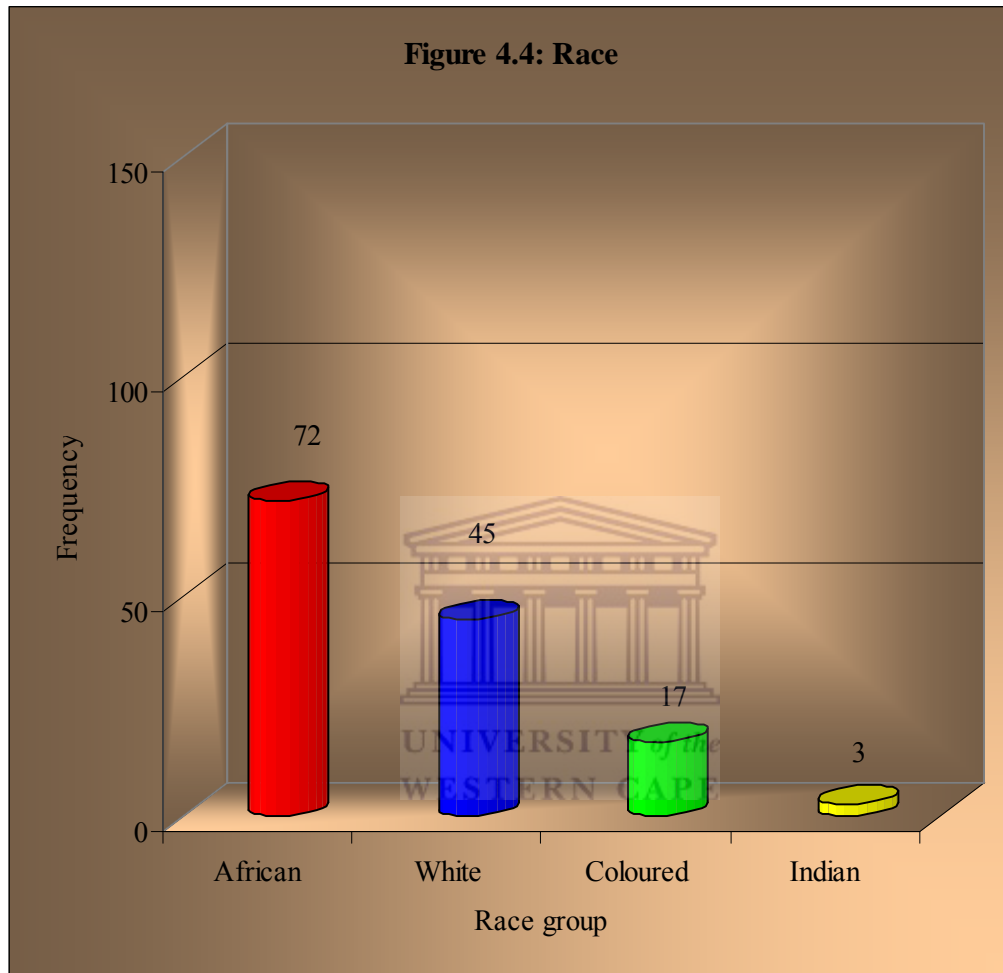


Figure 4.4 indicates that 52.6% (n=72) of the sample are African, 32.8% (n=45) are Coloured, while 12.4% (n=17) of the participants were White. Furthermore, 3 respondents (2.2%) were Indian.

#### 4.2.1.5 Tenure of the respondents

The respondents' years of service in the organisation under investigation are presented in Figure 4.5.

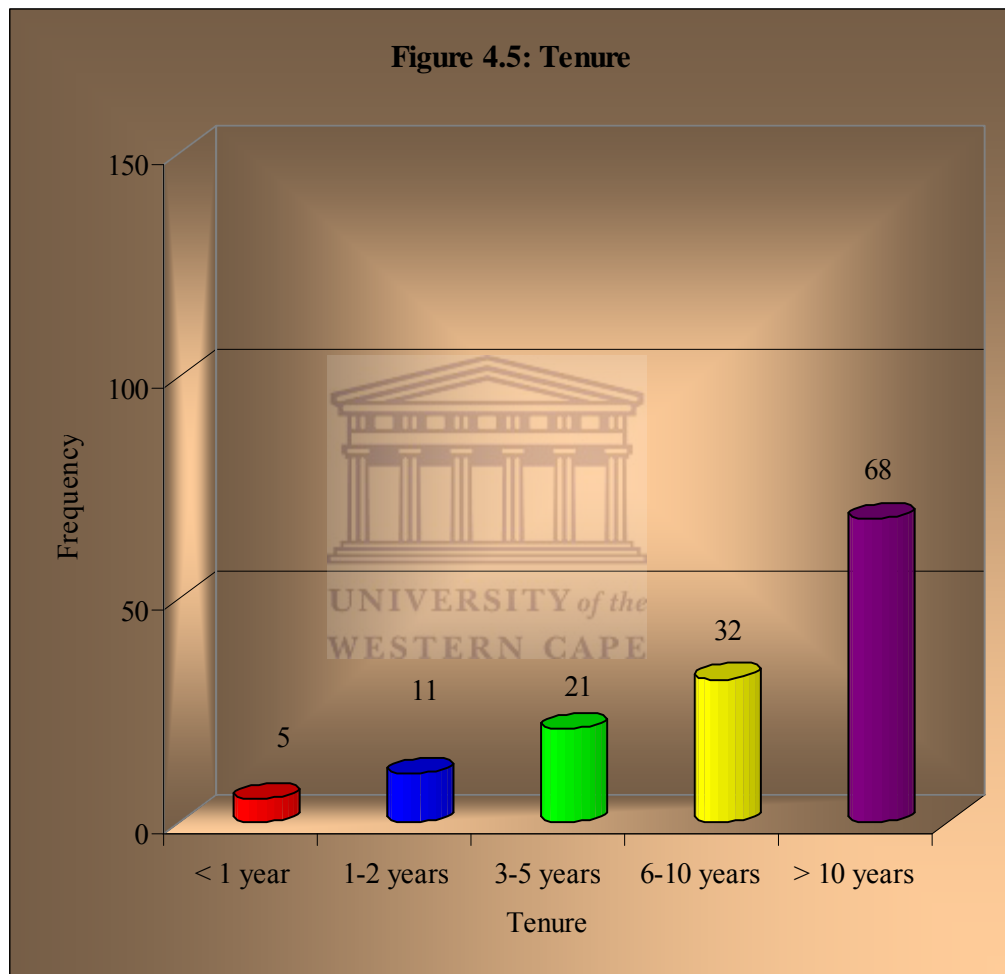


Figure 4.5 indicates that: Sixty-eight of the sample subjects (50%) have served more than 10 years in the organisation in question. Thirty-two respondents (23%) have worked for the organisation for between 6 and 10 years. Twenty-one of the participants (15%) indicated that they have been employed in the organisation for between 3 and 5 years.

Eleven (8%) of the employees in the sample have served between 1 and 2 years in the organisation, and only 5 of the respondents (3.6%) indicated that they have worked in the organisation for less than 1 year. This indicates that the sample represents a relatively tenured group of employees.

### 4.3 RESULTS OF THE ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE QUESTIONNAIRE

**Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics for the Organisational Justice Scale**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Items</b>
<b>Distributive Justice</b>	12.36	4.12	1	7	5
<b>Procedural Justice</b>	13.68	3.28	1	7	6
<b>Interactional Justice</b>	15.23	2.94	1	7	9
<b>Overall Organisational Justice</b>	63.18	2.65	1	7	24

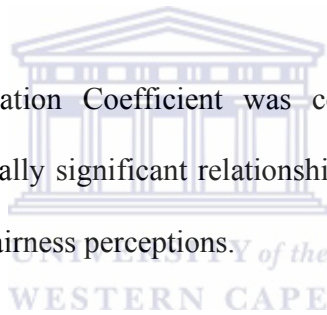
Table 4.1 presents the results of the descriptive analysis of the Organisational Justice Scale. The results reflect that most respondents rated all dimensions of the scale as not being fair (mean = 63.18, s = 2.47), distributive justice was low (mean = 12.36, s = 4.12), procedural justice was perceived to be low (mean = 13.68, s = 3.28) and interactional justice was somewhat higher, although still low (mean = 15.23, s = 2.65).

#### **4.4 INFERENCE STATISTICS**

In the sections that follow the results of the inferential statistics employed in the study are presented. For the purposes of testing the stated research hypotheses, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated. With the aid of these statistical techniques conclusion are drawn with regards to the population from which the sample was taken and decisions are made with respect to the research hypotheses.

##### **Hypothesis 1 : Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient**

The Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed for the purposes of determining whether a statistically significant relationship exists between organizational justice and affirmative action fairness perceptions.



**Table 4.3 Pearson correlation between Organisational Justice and Affirmative Action Fairness Perceptions**

<b>Affirmative Action Fairness Perceptions</b>		
<b>Pearson correlation</b>	<b>Sig (2-tailed)</b>	
<b>Distributive Justice</b>	0.665	0.00**
<b>Procedural Justice</b>	0.572	0.00**
<b>Interactional Justice</b>	0.413	0.04*
<b>Organisational Justice</b>	0.514	0.00**

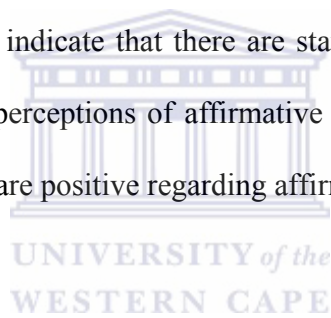
Table 4.3 indicates that the strongest relationship exists between distributive justice and affirmative action fairness perceptions ( $r = 0.665$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There was also a significant correlation between procedural justice and affirmative action fairness perceptions ( $r = 0.572$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Moreover, there was a significant relationship between organisational justice and affirmative action fairness perceptions ( $r = 0.514$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and interactional justice and affirmative action fairness perceptions ( $r = 0.413$ ,  $p < 0.051$ ).

**Table 4.4: t-test: Gender differences in perceptions of affirmative action**

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Perceptions of affirmative action</b>	27.6	31.23	-1.387	0.000**

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 4.4 depicts the t-test with respect to gender differences in perceptions of affirmative action. The results indicate that there are statistically significant differences ( $t = -1.387, p < 0.01$ ), in the perceptions of affirmative action. The results furthermore indicate that male respondents are positive regarding affirmative action (Mean = 27.6).





**Table 4.5: ANOVA: Biographical variables and perceptions of affirmative action**

<b>AGE</b>					
	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Between groups</b>	1645.898	4	411.474	0.456	0.001**
<b>Within groups</b>	41931.645	133	471.142		
<b>Total</b>	43577.543	137			
<b>RACE</b>					
		<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Between groups</b>	1965.864	4	491.466	1.273	0.001**
<b>Within groups</b>	34363.757	133	386.110		
<b>Total</b>	36239.621	137			
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>					
	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Between groups</b>	1546.924	4	386.731	0.810	0.001**
<b>Within groups</b>	42501.552	133	477.546		
<b>Total</b>	44048.476	137			
<b>TENURE</b>					
	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Between groups</b>	1324.934	4	220.822	0.574	0.000**
<b>Within groups</b>	34231.354	133	384.622		
<b>Total</b>	35556.288	137			

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 4.5 shows the ANOVA with respect to age, race, tenure, marital status, respectively and perceptions of affirmative action. The results indicate that there are statistically significant differences,  $F(0.810; p < 0.01)$ , in perceptions of affirmative action based on marital status, age ( $F= 0.456; p < 0.01$ ), race ( $F=1.273, p < 0.01$ ) and marital status ( $F=0.574; p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 4.4 Reliability of the OJ Questionnaire and the AAFPQ**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Cronbach</b>
<b>OJ</b>	137	0.822
<b>AAFPQ</b>	137	0.904

The reliability Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the scale. Table 4.15 shows that acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained for the various constructs which were assessed. The results indicate that the coefficient were all in excess of 0.7, thereby indicating consistency, stability and freedom from error (Sekaran, 2003).

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the most salient findings which emerged from the study investigating organizational justice and fairness of affirmative action. The results were graphically presented and descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were tabulated

and discussed. The next chapter provides a discussion of the results, and presents the findings in relation to previous research. Conclusions which can be drawn are presented and recommendations to individuals and organisations are highlighted.

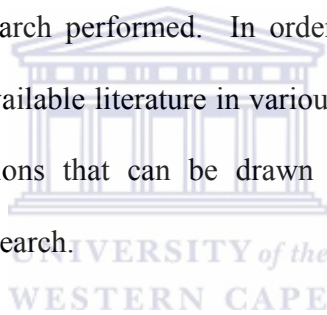


## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this study was to determine the relationship between organisation justice and perceptions of affirmative action amongst employees in a Learning and Development organisation. This chapter presents an overview of the most important findings of the research performed. In order to contextualize the research, comparisons are drawn with available literature in various settings. The remainder of the chapter provides the conclusions that can be drawn from the research as well as recommendations for future research.



#### 5.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results from the current research suggest that there is a statistically significant relationship between distributive, procedural, interactional and overall organizational justice and perceptions of affirmative action. **The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.**

Despite it being been several years since the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (EEA) was promulgated amid high expectations that equity would be introduced in the workplace (Human, 1996; Thomas, 2002), the continued attention being paid to this

sensitive issues, bears testament to its contentious nature. While it is fundamentally argued to be critical for the removal of gender and class discrimination, it could also fulfil a critical role in determining the future stability, economic and global success of the country (Human, 1996; Mdladlana, 2003, Thomas, 2002).

Since their implementation, employment equity (EE) and affirmative action (AA) practices have been associated with negative results such as tokenism and reverse discrimination (Maritz, 2002; Motileng, Wagner & Cassimjee, 2006; Thomas, 2002; Twala, 2004). Kovach, Kravitz and Hughes (2004) postulate that one way in which to promote equity and diversity without incurring allegations of reverse discrimination is to implement a fair, transparent and defensible AA programme. Coetzee (2005; Cropanzano, Slaughter & Bachiochi, 2005; Kovach et al., 2004) maintain that EE and AA programmes will only be effective if they comply with legal as well as fairness requirements.

The EEA (55 of 1998) was promulgated specifically to speed up the process of redressing the inequities of the past in the workplace. Section 2 of the EEA (55 of 1998) defines the purpose of the Act as follows: *The achievement of equity in the workplace by:*

- promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and
- implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace.

Deane (2006) contends that the main reason for ensuring compliance with legislative requirements of the EEA 55 of 1998 for organisations, and specifically designated employers, is that they are required to consult with employees, conduct a workplace analysis, prepare an employment equity plan (including affirmative action measures), and report to the Department of Labour on the progress made in implementing the employment equity plan.

According to Human (1993) and Thomas (2002), EE and AA programmes are generally seen as a recruitment issue to fill quotas and not as the induction into and development of the person in the organisational context and culture. They maintain that an exclusive focus on filling quotas does not inherently contribute to the development aspects on which true transformation pivots (Coetzee, 2005; Thomas, 2002).

Of greater concern is the assertion by Thomas and Ely (1996) who cite the main reason for organisations not achieving business benefits from a more diverse workforce is a lack of leadership commitment for managing diversity. This, they contend, is because, many leaders of organisations do not regard EE and AA programmes as a strategic business issue and as a result there is a lack of management commitment to the process (Human, 1993; Thomas, 2002; 2003; Twala, 2004). In addition, Kidder, Lankau, Chrobot-Mason, Mollica and Friedman (2004) and Werner (2007) maintain that most managers do not necessarily know how to manage a diverse workforce.

Skepticism is usually characteristic of those employees who regard the implementation of affirmative action measures to achieve employment equity as a form of reverse discrimination (Coetzee, 2005; Human, 1993; Thomas, 2002; Twala, 2004). South African organisations, however, face the double challenge of recruiting and retaining competent previously disadvantaged employees and implementing training and development strategies while at the same time moving a step further by creating a uniquely South African working environment that truly values everyone's contribution, also attains business imperatives and is self-sustaining, through its achievement of organisational objectives (Horwitz, Browning et al. 2002; Horwitz et al. 2005; Sadler & Erasmus 2003; Selby & Sutherland 2006; Thomas 2004).

A disconcerting trend detected in the EE Commission Reports (2002, 2003, 2004, and 2006) and confirmed in other surveys and research (Bennet 2001; Commission for EE 2006; Kilian et al. 2005; Sadler & Erasmus 2003; Selby & Sutherland 2006; Temkin 2003; Thomas 2004) that is related to organisational climate and culture is that the retention rate for black recruits has fallen and many South African firms are losing black people as fast as they recruit them. The following is a summary of suggested reasons for these high attrition rates, identified in the above studies:

- Slow EE progress at management level and inconsistent progress across departments in organisations
- Low commitments to EE from top management, with lip service by leadership about the need for EE

- Ineffective consultation and communication around EE progress and implementation
- A lack of cultural sensitivity where new recruits are expected to assimilate into the current organisational culture
- A lack of cultural awareness programmes and of an organisational culture that values diversity
- A white male dominant organisational culture that continues to exclude (formally or informally through exclusionary network practices) black recruits
- Black people are selected as tokens and not fully integrated into companies because of little delegation of real responsibility or decision-making authority, owing to the persistence of stereotypes
- Black staff are not systematically developed and trained – no effective talent management
- Lack of black mentors and role models

These challenges underline the need to address prevalent and persistent unfair discrimination and exclusion but are not peculiar to South African organisations, occurring internationally as well (Kilian et al. 2005; Thomas 2004). Scholars have offered a few theoretical paradigms and models for understanding barriers to EE and equal employment opportunities.

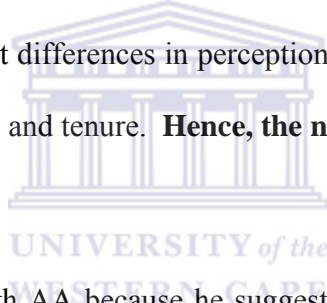


- There is no statistically significant relationship between Organisational Justice (distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice) and perceptions of Affirmative Action.

### **5.2.1 The impact of biographical variables on perceptions of affirmative action**

#### **Hypothesis 2:**

There is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of affirmative action based on biographical variables. The results emanating from the current research indicate that there are statistically significant differences in perceptions of affirmative action based on marital status, age, gender, race and tenure. **Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.**



Groarke (1990) takes issue with AA because he suggests that it penalizes young White men who were not, as individuals, responsible for historical discrimination. Vermeulen and Coetzee investigated perceptions of affirmative action in a sample of 349 employees in a financial services institution. They did not find any significant gender differences with respect to their perceptions of the importance of the AA fairness factors. They attribute this to the possibility that research (Watson & Allen, 1989) and Adler (1994), suggests that gender differences might be dissipating in the contemporary workplace.

They did, however, find significant differences in perceptions of affirmative action based on race, with White respondents scoring significantly higher than Black respondents in respect of interactional, procedural and distributive justice. These findings substantiate

those of Janse van Rensburg and Roodt (2005), who indicated that, in comparison with Black employees, White employees were the least positive in terms of their perceptions of employment equity. The finding is consistent with the results of several studies (Anderson, 2003; Resendez, 2002; Konrad & Spitz, 2003; Elizondo & Crosby, 2004), which suggests that ingroup-outgroup differences or self-interest are important moderators of fairness judgements of AA.

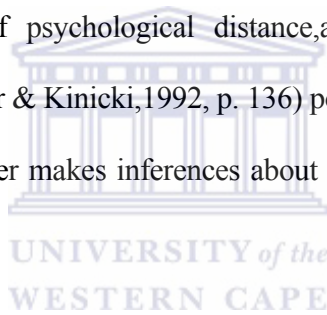
Estherhuizen and Martins (2008) did not find evidence of any gender differences with regard to treatment or opportunities for advancement based on gender. This is contrary to other studies, where significant differences between males and females were recorded (Duweke 2005; Van Zyl & Roodt 2003). They (Estherhuizen & Martins, 2008), also found no statistically significant differences in perceptions based on age group. However, other studies have shown significant differences based on respondents' age (Coetzee 2005; Duweke 2005; Walbrugh & Roodt 2003).

In the final analysis, the variables which influence overall perceptions of fairness may depend on the type of organisation, leadership style, and a range of other factors. In this regard, Greenberg (1987) and Ambrose and Kulik (2001) express concern regarding the context sensitivity of organisational justice perceptions.

### 5.3 STRIVING TO ATTAIN ORGANISATIONAL FAIRNESS

Organisations are increasingly feeling the impact of globalisation and there has hence been a substantial proliferation in the number of multinational organisations (Rhinesmith,1991). In response, today's manager must not only be capable of functioning within this turbulent environment and pursuing multiple and diverse goals, it may also be necessary to understand and work within the boundaries of other cultures (Cascio,1992).

Within this new environment, cultural dissimilarities between groups in organisations may produce stereotypes,feelings of psychological distance,and cultural misunderstandings. Hamilton (1979,cited in Kreitner & Kinicki,1992, p. 136) posits the view, "stereotyping is said to occur when a perceiver makes inferences about a person because of the person's membership in some group".



Research reveals perceptions of stereotypes associated with (White) men on the one hand and women and Blacks on the other, strongly influences the assessment of merit. These stereotypes include what women and men and Blacks are thought to be capable of and what kinds of work are suitable for them to do (Albertyn & White, 1994). When people with different habits and world views come together in the workplace, misunderstandings and conflicts inevitably occur as a result of dissimilar languages, expectations and norms (Neale & Mindel,1992). Workforce diversity hence calls for managerial sensitivity and commitment in addressing the needs of all employees and ensuring corporate environments

are free of prejudice. This, however, requires organisational programmes and policies to reflect this commitment (Motshabi,1993).

De Witt, (1998, Gopinatha & Becker, 2000, Harris, 2000, Konovsky, 2000, Saxby, Tat & Johansen, 2000, Simerson, L'Heureux, Beckstein, ZiaMian, Dembowski & Freshman, 2000, Tang & Sarsfield-Baldwin, 1996, Tata, 2000, cited in Coetzee & Vermeulen, 2003) summarises the principles of fairness:

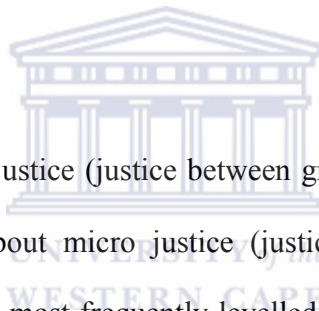
- Provide advance notice of intent or decision
- Provide accurate information and adequate feedback
- Support two-way communication
- Explain and justify decisions
- Allow employees to influence the decision
- Consider the interests, views and concerns of all recipients
- Permit appeal, review, reconsideration and correction
- Treat employees with dignity, respect and sensitivity
- Apply administrative procedures consistently

#### **5.4 ORGANISATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES**

Managing diversity will increasingly become a strategic business issue for many organisations as they seek more creative ways of pleasing customers and differentiating themselves from competitors. Many organisations will have to put into place practices that enable people with different styles of thinking and relating to work together creatively and

productively. In order for diversity initiatives to deliver, implementation must be based on a comprehensive management of change strategy (Dodds, 1995).

These programmes need to be designed to manage diversity in a comprehensive attempt to change the culture of an organisation so that all employees can contribute to the productivity and profitability of the organisation (Caudron, 1992). Hence, organisations are increasingly providing for the use of quality improvement teams to tackle the problem of retaining competent, though underutilised employees, with the objective of ensuring each employee has the opportunity to participate fully, to grow professionally and to develop to the highest level (Feldman et al, 1994).



AA is meant to ensure macro justice (justice between groups), but resistance frequently arises because of concerns about micro justice (justice for individuals) (Clayton & Tangri, 1989). The accusations most frequently levelled at AA are that AA is a form of reverse discrimination (Thomas, 2002); that AA appointees are less competent than some other applicants and lack the necessary skills, and that they are appointed to fill quotas or to window-dress (Van Jaarsveld, 2000); that AA implies inferiority and that it stigmatizes its beneficiaries (Resendez, 2002); and that AA decisions are based on preferential treatment rather than on merit (Elkins, Bozeman & Phillips, 2003).

Swim and Miller (1996) also claim that AA can be read as retribution against White people. Groarke (1990) takes issue with AA because he suggests that it penalizes young White men who were not, as individuals, responsible for historical discrimination.

Numerous studies have revealed that opposition to affirmative action is related to people's perceptions of fairness (or a lack of fairness) in their understanding of AA. One important reason for negative attitudes towards AA arises from a perception that organisations are not committed to fairness.

Several best practices that should be implemented by organisations to address the barriers, and enable the effective implementation of EE have been identified (Claassen 2005; Human 1996; Human 2005; Thomas 2003; Twala 2004; Werner 2007). These include *training and development* to address skills shortages, *transparent communication* with regard to EE issues, creating management commitment to EE as a business strategy, *reviewing employment practices* and job requirements to remove unfair discrimination, and creating an *inclusive organisational culture* that promotes equity and diversity. In addition, organisations that can effectively provide a pro-business *justification* for a diverse workforce may be able to reduce unfavourable attitudes towards EE and AA programmes (Cropanzano et al 2005; Kidder et al 2004).

Organisations are faced with additional pressures to ensure that their employees are optimally utilised. It is against this backdrop, that a commitment to human resource training and development, management training and development and organisational development becomes necessary (Armstrong, 1995).

#### **5.4.1 MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Since managing diversity is contingent on managerial capability, one of the most pressing issues facing organisations today involves the process of management training and development. Management development involves the process of "gradual, systematic improvement in the knowledge, skills, attitudes and performance of those individuals in an organisation who carry management responsibilities" (Kirkpatrick, 1978:292, cited in Viedge & Taffinder, 1986, p. 28).

The reason for this is "without conscious management development, managers run the risk of operating in outmoded ways" (Viedge & Taffinder, 1986, p. 29). Hence, management development is the logical means for overcoming this kind of obsolescence. Moreover, a commitment on the part of managerial level personnel to human resources training and development is required.

#### **5.4.2 HUMAN RESOURCE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

According to Armstrong (1995), an organisation's training strategy should largely be determined by its human resource plans, which in turn are derived from its overall strategies. The plans should indicate the types of skills that may be required in the future and the numbers of people with those skills who will be needed, that is, skills and manpower inventories need to be developed. These will allow organisations to determine the need for human resource training and development (Peterson, 1992).

Development training for women and minorities is one of the most effective steps an organisation can take to remedy the paucity of women and minorities at senior levels, and can help these groups into non-traditional areas of work (Paddison, 1995). Human resource development is defined as "the integrated use of training and development, organisational development and career development to improve individual, group and organisational effectiveness" (McLagan, 1989, p. 52).

Prekel (1987) posits the view that the development of any human resources requires inputs from at least three sources: the management of the company, the supervisors of the people concerned, and the individuals themselves. When dealing with a group of people previously overlooked and underutilised such as Blacks, women and those with disabilities, it is even more essential to ensure that each member of the development team contributes actively to the growth process. By identifying, understanding and tackling the challenges facing these groups in their careers, employers can ensure that valuable skills are developed and optimally utilised in order to create a polyvalent workforce (Muchinsky, 1990).

#### **5.4.3 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Human resource development and management development initiatives necessitate a process of organisational development, which is defined as "a method for facilitating change and development in people (styles, values and skills), in technology (greater simplicity or



complexity) and in organisational processes (relationships and roles)" (Huysamen,1995, p. 31).

Along with the pursuit of human values, organisational development is a set of techniques for improving the effectiveness of organisations. Several issues pertaining to managing diversity need to be strategically identified by organisations wishing to manage diversity effectively in order to enhance productivity.

### **5.5 COMMUNICATION REGARDING THE MEANING OF DIVERSITY**

Prior to embarking on programmes to manage diversity, it is deemed expedient for an organisation to understand what constitutes diversity, and signify the importance of managing diversity to its internal and external environment. In conjunction with this, an analysis of the relevant dimensions which need to be managed effectively, needs to be done. Moreover, the inclusion of a statement regarding diversity in its mission statement would communicate an organisation's commitment in this area (Greenhaus & Callan,1994).

Such a policy may communicate to individuals an organisation's concern with maximising the potential of all employees regardless of cultural or demographic characteristics, in which everyone is viewed as a valued contributor to the organisation (Fyock,1991). The results of prioritising the dimensions of diversity that are important should be used throughout all phases of planning, implementing and evaluating programmes for working through diversity.

## 5.6 UNBIASED HIRING SYSTEMS

In the light of the demands that workforce diversity is placing on modern organisations, organisations need to guard against discriminatory hiring practices and engage in proactive recruiting practices to locate the most talented applicants from all groups within society (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1992). The clearer and more job related hiring systems are, the more they will enhance employee productivity and perceptions of fairness. Since effectively working through diversity is a strategic imperative for success in a highly competitive global environment, short-term and long-term responses to diversity must address three challenges, namely, availability, fairness and synergy. This involves unleashing and taking full advantage of the latent potential of groups (Worchel, Wood & Simpson, 1991).

Previous South African research on EE progress indicates that limited progress has been made in achieving EE since legislation was engaged in 1996 (Booyesen & Nkomo 2006; Horwitz et al. 2005; Selby & Sutherland 2006; Thomas 2002) and international research (Bartlett & Ghoshal 2002; Kilian, Hukai & McCarty 2005) shows that while legislation is integral to addressing unfair workplace discrimination, it is not enough. Organisational culture change also has to take place. Organisational transformation must be systemic and compliance with legislation is merely the beginning of the change process. EE implementation needs to be supported by coherent employment practice strategies focusing on human capital development, inclusive practices and organisational culture change.

## **5.7 IDENTIFICATION OF CRITICAL DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Managing diversity requires organisations to conduct a culture assessment to ensure that their culture is congruent with strategic objectives of the organisation. Such an assessment could provide organisations with the impetus to ascertain what elements of the culture need to be altered and to create opportunities for all employees to develop in their careers and contribute effectively to the organisation (Greenhaus & Callan, 1994; Cascio,1992).

## **5.8 DIVERSITY TRAINING**

Many organisations implement training programmes on managing diversity to assist their organisations to become more sensitive to diversity issues (Stephenson & Krebs,1993). Race and gender awareness training allows for aspects of corporate culture that inhibit flexibility to be identified and addressed (Feldman et al.,1994).

Various types of training programmes can be useful components of the diversity management process. These include programmes aimed at helping employees to develop positive attitudes towards diversity, as well as bridging cultural gaps (Launer, 1995). External consultants and in-house trainers can assist by conducting sessions that help employees raise their levels of awareness about the issues of diversity in their workplace, some of which may be directed at learning about the cultural norms of different geographical groups (Jackson & Associates, 1992).

## **5.9 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

As women comprise an increasing proportion of the workforce, cognisance needs to be taken of special issues pertaining to women's rights in the workplace. This would necessitate employees interacting with previously underrepresented groups on a broader scale. According to South, Bonjean, Markham and Corder (1983, cited in Kreitner & Kinicki, 1992, p. 333), "under many circumstances including intergender interaction in work groups, frequent contact leads to cooperative and social relations".

However, intergender interactions do not always produce desirable outcomes. Within contemporary organisations, sexual harassment has become a serious problem, and as such demands proactive management intervention. The prevalence of sexual harassment within the workplace necessitates a strong policy statement which defines sexual harassment, indicates its seriousness, and specifies the consequences for perpetrators, if necessary (Greenhaus & Callan, 1994).

## **5.10 FULL UTILISATION OF CAREER SYSTEMS**

Career growth is enhanced when employees actively manage their careers and when organisations provide support in the form of performance appraisal and feedback systems, mentoring, training and development programmes, job redesign, developmental assignments, and promotion planning (Beach, 1991).

By managing diversity, organisations attempt to create a culture in which all employees can benefit from such support and grow in their careers, and in which individuals are not disadvantaged because of their cultural background. Hence, "managing diversity is a comprehensive managerial process for developing an environment that works for all employees" (Thomas,1991:10,cited in Greenhaus & Callan, 1994, p. 302).

### **5.11 LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Martin (1991,cited in Greenhaus & Callan,1994) observed that a lack of commitment and responsibility throughout the organisation was a major impediment to the successful management of organisational diversity. Cox and Blake (1991) maintain top management support and genuine commitment to cultural diversity is crucial. Leadership at all levels requires an understanding of the importance of managing diversity to the productivity of the organisation and the appreciation of the similarities and differences between members of different cultural groups (Caudron,1992).

An organisation seeking to manage diversity effectively should ideally develop a vision of multi-culturalism that is central to the organisation's mission and communicate that vision to all of the organisation's constituencies; eliminate discrimination in hiring; identify the most salient issues that interfere with effectiveness in the diverse work environment; provide opportunities for employees to understand and appreciate differences among people; address significant language conflicts; develop and implement effective sexual harassment policy; ensure that its career policies and systems do not give unfair advantage or

disadvantage to members of different cultural groups; develop family-responsive programmes and policies; and exercise consistent leadership and accountability for diversity throughout the organisation (Greenhaus & Callan,1994).

However, "creating and maintaining the enthusiasm necessary to keep alive the vision of a multicultural team working well requires a great deal of effort from all concerned (Neale & Mindel, 1992, p. 38).

## **5.12 THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY**

Although considerable attention has been paid to managing diversity within the corporate world, very little empirical evidence exists on the potential benefits or the advantages that might accrue to the organisation that adopts such a programme (Williams & Bauer,1994). However, Carnevale (1989,cited in Galagan,1993, p. 43) notes "diversity matters to organisations because new competitive standards are changing the way work is done. These changes will be more important than demographics in the long run because success will depend more and more on the ability of people to work in teams and communicate with people who are different".

Moreover, Thomas (1991, pp. 171-172,cited in Greenhaus & Callan, 1994, p. 292) posits the view "many individuals believe that there is a richness in diversity that you can't get from a homogeneous workforce. This may be true, but it's not necessary to support managing diversity. Whether there is a richness or not, managers will have employees with significant

differences and similarities. The compelling case for managing diversity lies in the fact that diversity is a reality-or soon will be. By focusing on the richness, you risk suggesting that the manager has a choice". However, Dodds (1995, p. 40) maintains "in order to add value from diversity, people must behave and relate to each other in new ways".

Organisations will thus be under increasing pressure to make use of affirmative action programmes that are technically and morally sound and can be shown to be so. This is of particular importance if one considers the fact that employees will be more inclined to challenge procedures that they regard as unfair (Cooper & Robertson, 1995).

### **5.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH**

Although the present study has made a contribution to the body of knowledge on employee retention, a number of limitations are worth noting. The first limitation pertains to the fact that the study utilised a non-probability sampling method in the form of convenience sampling. As a result, certain groups have been under-represented. As a result, selection bias has been introduced, which reduces the extent to which the results of the study may be generalised to the entire population to which the research hypotheses apply.

Furthermore, although the sample size of was deemed large enough to be representative of the population under study, a larger sample would, nevertheless, have increased the generalizability of the research findings. The above shortcomings threaten the external validity of the study. Consequently, caution needs to be exercised when interpreting the

research results since the generalizability thereof to the entire population under investigation has been reduced.

Moreover, the ecological validity of the study is relatively low since the study was conducted only in one financial services organisation. The implications of this is that the research findings cannot be generalized to other similar organisations, or to organizations outside the Western Cape.

In addition to the above factors, potential extraneous variables raise doubts with regards to the internal validity of the study. That is, possible confounding variables, such as job involvement, which may have impacted on employee retention. The fact that these variables may have played a role, reduces the confidence with which conclusions may be drawn.

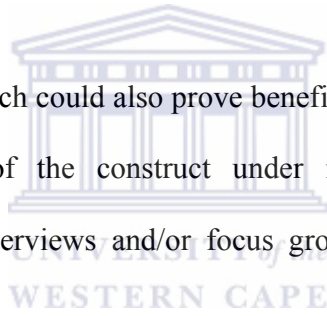
#### **5.14 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

On the basis of the present study, a number of suggestions may also be made with regards to future research that may prove fruitful. In order to counter the above-mentioned problems, it is recommended that future studies increase internal validity by utilising research designs that allow for the control of possible confounding variables which could influence the relationship between organizational justice and affirmative action fairness perceptions.



It is further recommended that external validity be enhanced by the selection of a larger sample as well as through the utilisation of a probability sampling design. By drawing a random sample of participants from the population, selection bias will be reduced. Subsequently, the sample will be more representative of the population under investigation, allowing for greater generalizability of the research findings. It is further suggested that future studies raise ecological validity by focusing on the selection of samples that are representative of a variety of manufacturing, service and industrial organizations in the country. Following such an approach will increase the scope of the applicability of the research findings by allowing for greater generalizability.

Utilising a triangulation approach could also prove beneficial, in that the researcher could gain greater understanding of the construct under investigation using qualitative information gathered from interviews and/or focus groups, in addition to the survey method usually employed.



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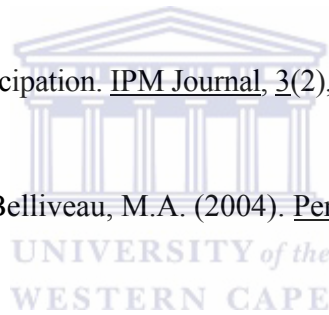
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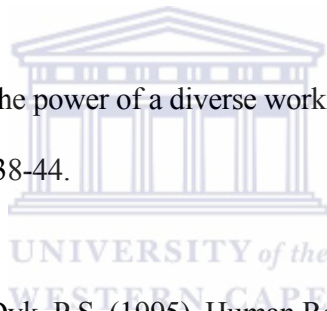
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February 2011

Dear Colleague

**REQUEST TO ASSIST IN A MASTERS RESEARCH THESIS (PROJECT)**

I am a Masters Student at the University of the Western Cape, conducting research for my thesis on Organisational Justice perceptions and experiences of Affirmative Action in a Learning and Development organisation.

Affirmative Action (AA) is the main legislated strategy used to address the organisational challenge of equal employment opportunity in the workplace. South Africa finds itself over fifteen years into a hard fought democracy where the challenge is to address previous workplace, employee and organisational injustices and paving the way forward to committed, integrated, co-ordinated and fair employment. Organisational justice, similarly, is concerned with the central interest of fairness among managers in the provision of equal employment opportunities and also refers to employees' perceptions of fairness in the organisational setting.

In order for me to gain further insight into Organisational Justice perceptions and experiences of Affirmative Action in your organisation I will need your assistance in completing two questionnaires. This will require approximately one hour of your time.

Please note, that as these are questionnaires, there are no right or wrong answers as these are your views and opinions.

Please be assured that your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence. For this very reason you will not be requested to write your name down on the questionnaire. Also be assured that no one will have access to this information. Once you have completed your questionnaires, it will be handed directly back to me.

Thank you for your willingness to assist in this regard.

**SECTION A – BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS**

Please mark the block that is applicable to you.

**1. Gender**

Male	Female
------	--------

**2. Age**

Younger than 30	30-40	41-50	51-60	Older than 60
-----------------	-------	-------	-------	---------------

**3. Years of service**

0 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 15	16 – 20	20 +
-------	--------	---------	---------	------

**4. Current Marital status**

Single	Married/Living with partner	Divorced	Widow/Widower
--------	-----------------------------	----------	---------------

**5. Current position/job level**

Please indicate with an X

Senior management	
Middle management	
Junior management	
Non management	

## 6. Educational level

Please indicate with an X

Doctorate Degree	
Masters Degree	
Honours Degree	
Bachelors Degree	
3 Year Diploma	

### ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle OR cross the number which is closest to reflecting your opinion about each statement



UNIVERSITY of the  
WESTERN CAPE

		Strongly Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Distributive justice items</b>								
01	My work schedule is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
02	I think my level of pay is fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
03	I consider my workload to be quite fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
04	Overall, the rewards I receive here are quite fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

05	I feel that my job responsibilities are fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Formal procedures items</b>								
06	Job decisions are made by the manager in an unbiased manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
07	My manager makes sure that all employee concerns are heard before job decisions are made	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
08	To make formal job decisions, my general manager collects accurate and complete information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
09	My manager clarifies decisions and provides additional information when requested by employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	All job decisions are applied consistently across all affected employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Employees are allowed to challenge or appeal job decisions made by the manager	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Interactive justice</b>								
12	When decisions are made about my job, the manager treats me with kindness and consideration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	When decisions are made about my job, the manager treats me with respect and dignity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	When decisions are made about my job, the manager is sensitive to my personal needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15	When decisions are made about my job, the manager deals with me in a truthful manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	When decisions are made about my job, the manager shows concern for my rights as an employee.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Concerning decisions made about my job, the manager discusses the implication of the decisions with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	The manager offers adequate justification for decisions made about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	When making decisions about, my job, the manager offers explanations that make sense to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	My manager explains very clearly any decision made about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON AA Fairness (AAFQ)**

*The information received in this questionnaire is strictly confidential and will be treated as such.*

**AA Fairness  
Questionnaire (AAFQ)**

**Think about your work/job over the last six (6) months.**

**Please circle OR cross the number which is closest to reflecting your opinion about each statement**



UNIVERSITY of the  
EASTERN CAPE

		Disagree Very Much	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Slightly	Agree slightly	Agree Moderately Much	Agree Very Much Much
<b>Factor 1: Interactional justice</b>							
1	Recognising the value that affirmative action employees bring to the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Acknowledging that employees from designated groups are capable of performing difficult tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Guiding employees from designated groups in having realistic career expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Informing employees about the	1	2	3	4	5	6



	affirmative action/employment equity policy, objectives and targets.						
1	Training supervisors to manage a diverse workforce.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Accommodating affirmative action employees' culture and traditions when organising social events.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Making accurate and complete records available in respect of appointments, promotions, transfers, performance appraisals, disciplinary hearings etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Informing employees about the implications of affirmative action for their career plans.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Factor 2: Procedural justice – input</b>							
2	Regarding all employees' career advancement as equally important.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Enabling employees to appeal when they feel that they have been discriminated against because of affirmative action.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Giving all applicants an equal chance for influencing the selection decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Joint decision-making by all interested parties.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Providing mechanisms such as suggestion boxes, grievance and disciplinary procedures policies	1	2	3	4	5	6

	to protect employees sufficiently against any unfair or discriminatory treatment.						
2	Applying procedures and rules strictly and consistently to all employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Adjusting current traditions, systems and practices so that employees from designated groups can be integrated successfully.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Factor 3: Procedural justice – criteria/standards</b>							
3	Applying selection criteria consistently to all applicants.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Using accurate performance data to evaluate employees' performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Using the same performance standards for all employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Using predetermined, job-related selection criteria to make selection decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Using more than one appraiser when evaluating an employee's performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Applying disciplinary action strictly and consistently to all employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6

<b>Factor 4: Distributive justice</b>							
4	Giving black managers token positions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Training employees from designated groups to replace current job incumbents.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Paying unrealistically high salaries to employees from designated groups in managerial positions in order to meet employment equity targets.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Appointing/promoting less qualified people from designated groups for employment equity purposes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Targeting people from designated groups to apply for a job by means of employment equity provisions in advertisements.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Using an affirmative action plan and the profile of the current workforce when appointing personnel.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Focusing on the development and advancement of employees from designated groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Using criteria such as ethnicity, disability and gender when making appointment decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6

*End of questionnaire*

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**