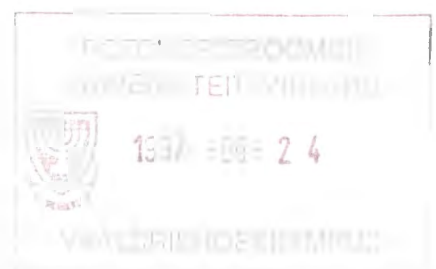


**CERTAIN ASPECTS CONCERNING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN
INDUSTRY : A LITERATURE STUDY**

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**CERTAIN ASPECTS CONCERNING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN INDUSTRY:A
LITERATURE STUDY**

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VAN DER BIJLPARK

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AFRIKAANSE OPSOMMING

SEKERE ASPEKTE RAKENDE REGSTELLEDE OPTREDE IN DIE NYWERHEID 'N LITERATUURSTUDIE

INLEIDING

Die oorgangsfase wat tans in Suid-Afrika plaasvind, het baie veranderinge op verskillende terreine van die samelewing teweeg gebring, insluitend die nywerheid. Verskillende programme vir die opheffing en ontwikkeling van individue en groepe geniet voorkeur by maatskappye en vakbonde. Nywerhede het ook nie die euforie van 'n demokratiese bedeling vry gespring nie en die veranderinge wat in die samelewing plaasgevind het moet nou ook in die werksplek materialiseer.

PROBLEEMSTELLING

Regstellende optrede word beskou as 'n baie kontroversiële onderwerp, as gevolg van politieke, ekonomiese en sosiale verbintenisse daaraan. Dit kan waarskynlik ook te danke wees aan die verkeerdelike persepsies of toepassing van sekere basiese grondbeginsels van regstellende optrede. Sekere grondbeginsels omsluit onder andere aspekte soos die kompleksiteit van bestuur, bevordering en bemagtiging van werknemers as sleutel ontwikkelingsareas in regstellende optredeprogramme.

DOEL

Hierdie studie ondersoek sekere aspekte wat 'n grondige basis kan skep vir regstellende optrede, ten einde ekonomiese groei, welvaart, werkskepping en die opheffing van Suid- Afrika as geheel te bewerkstellig.

METODIEK

'n Literatuurstudie word aangewend om die nuutste ontwikkelinge in die regstellende optrede te ontdek, asook om navorsing deur deskundiges in hierdie studie te verwerk.

BEVINDINGS

Uit die literatuur kan afgelei word dat daar verskeie aspekte rakende regstellende optrede is wat oorweeg moet word, soos bv. beleid, strategieë, werknemerdeelname, bestuur van diversiteit asook die bemagtiging van werknemers.

Die opleiding en ontwikkeling van werknemers kan beskou word as die kardinale element van die suksesvolle implementering van 'n regstellende optrede program. Die verantwoordelikheid en die monitering vir die implementering van 'n regstellende optrede- program berus by topbestuur.

Regstellende optredeprogramme behoort beskou te word as 'n integrale deel van die organisasie se aktiwiteite en behoort geïntegreer te word by die algemene prosedures en praktyke.

'n Kwotasistiem gaan nie die probleem te opsigte van die ontwikkeling van mense doelmatig aanspreek nie. Daar behoort eerder klem gelê te word op die opheffing van werknemers in 'n organisasie om sodanig die organisasiedoelwitte te bereik.

GEVOLGTREKKINGS

Die bestuur van regstellende optrede is 'n belangrike uitdaging vir veranderende organisasies. Veral van belang is die integrering van die kulture van die verskillende werknemers in die organisasie en die vestiging van normes soos wedesydsse respek en vertrouwe in mekaar.

Samewerkende deelname van al die rolspelers sal bydra tot die groei in die ekonomie en bydra tot die totale opbloeï van die Suid-Afrikaanse ekonomie. Regstellende optrede behoort die bestuur van die diverse werksmag te beklemtoon. Bemagtiging van werknemers behoort oordenk te word.

AANBEVELINGS

Daar word voorgestel dat indien 'n organisasie regstellende optrede met sukses wil implementeer dit nodig is om eers die toegewydheid van die verskillende rolspelers te verkry en die kritiese aspekte, soos bespreek, en die kultuur van 'n onderneming aan te spreek.

Topbestuur behoort die verantwoordelikheid te neem vir die effektiewe daarstelling van 'n regstellende optredeprogram in 'n organisasie. Die implementering van sodanige programme behoort gemonitor te word. Evaluering van huidige programme behoort diskriminerende praktyke uit te skakel.

Die organisasieklimaat behoort wedesydsse respek en aanvaarding aan te moedig. Die bestuur van doelwitte is belangrik in die implementering van die programme.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND SETTING OF PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past centuries paradigm shifts have taken place in the management and development of employees. These paradigms have created the mind set of modern management perspectives and is continuing to influence the environment in which employers and employees interact with each other. The changes in the political, economical and social sphere have automatically infiltrated the work floor and the impact thereof cannot be denied. In the South African context the upliftment of the underprivileged has taken priority with the election of the government in 1994. Organised labour has become the outlet of political hopes of the masses, and a vital instrument in determining the direction of the working class in this country. The newly elected government campaigned that it envisage a strong, dynamic and balanced economy directed towards eliminating poverty and inequality, broader participation in economic decisions, and specifically addressing the development of human resources.

The affirmative action concept has been philosophied and placed on the agenda of various political parties over the last few years. Various experiences in different countries on the issue has led parties to believe that the affirmative action concept could address the inequalities in the development of human resources in South Africa.

To understand the concept of affirmative action one needs to explore the history of the development of underprivileged employees. De Beer (1996:1)

argues that five different paradigms can be identified, which the writer assigned to era's, namely:

- paternalistic era (± 1652 - 1977);
- equal opportunity era (± late 1970's to early 1980's);
- black development era (± early 1980's to late 1980's);
- affirmative action era (± late 1980's to mid 1990's);
- management of diversity (± 1994 and onwards).

Paternalism originated in the Middle Ages where villeins worked for landlords, just as black employees worked for predominant white male employers in South Africa. In this paradigm the employer accepted the fatherly (paternal) role and made decisions on behalf of the employees, because he believed that he knew what was best for the employees (De Beer, 1996:1). The history of affirmative action in South Africa supports the view that it has always been used by politicians to bribe noisy constituents. The first affirmative action law in the modern South Africa was probably the Wage Act of 1925 which set up a hierarchy of salaries ostensibly in favour of white miners. Alongside was the Mines & Works Act of 1926 which, among other things, reserved certain jobs for whites. Black affirmative action was pioneered by US multinationals through the Sullivan Code in 1977, because of the Soweto revolts in June 1976. With the acceptance of the "apartheid" - principle, employers unilaterally decided which exposure and development would be granted to black employees, and hope to ensure that this would cause no threat to the whites.

In the equal opportunity era the Wiehahn - report formalised the principle that all employees are equal before the law (De Beer, 1996:8). However, workers cannot only enjoy rights and protection, but can often take steps

actively to protect their interests or to improve their situation (Levy, 1992:3). Management equalised opportunities with respect to competition for positions in companies, but neglect to address the poor education and development system of the underprivileged. The playing field therefore, remained unequal.

Black development received support in the 1980's by means of various basic development programmes such as literacy training, health and hygiene training, training in western protocol, as well as leadership training (De Beer, 1996:15). He further adds that if educational expenditure rose, their share in income remained constant. It could therefore be deducted that black employees still needed active involvement and support from the organisation to adapt to the changing environment.

The concept of affirmative action originated in America. Hanmer (1993:15) states that whites and blacks in America agree that affirmative action has gone too far. It has gone to the extent where people are hired according to racial quotas. Trendsetting California voted to end race - and gender based affirmative action by state institutions, as the measure placed a special burden on minorities and women, by denying them the right to receive special treatment available to other classes of people (Barber, 1996:16). Affirmative action will not be viewed by South Africans in such a negative light as in America (Sonn, 1993:2).

The concept of affirmative action has been debated in depth the last couple of years. Various definitions have developed as people's perception and knowledge on the subject has increased. Affirmative action could be seen as creating equal employment opportunity and not as reverse discrimination. A distinction has to be made between affirmative action as a means of

redressing inequality and reverse discrimination which preferentially advantages certain groups at the expense of others. Human (1993:1) is of a opinion that a distinction also has to be made between the broader concept of affirmative action and affirmative action in employment. Herbert (1994:3) adds that it is about change in the business sector.

Thomas (1992:12) argues that there are many of the dimensions of affirmative action, including:

- the political sphere and the decision making process;
- education and culture;
- breakdown of segregation in social life;
- sport, entertainment and recreation;
- housing and residential infrastructure;
- welfare services;
- black business advancement;
- job / employee advancement and training;
- symbolism and the historical perspective.

Creating employment equity in organisations dominated by white males is thus only one aspect of affirmative action.

The African National Congress (ANC) has also suggested that pressure be placed on organisations to increase black representation on boards, black participation in equity, and external purchases from black suppliers. Affirmative action has generally been conceived as a process to eliminate discrimination rather than a process whereby one form of discrimination is replaced by another. Affirmative action programmes are also generally viewed as temporary interventions which will cease as soon as equal

employment opportunity has been achieved.

Nelson Mandela (1991:51-70), argues that:

"The primary aims of affirmative action must be to redress the imbalances created by apartheid ... We are not ... asking for handouts for anyone. Nor are we saying that just as a white skin was a passport to privilege in the past, so a black skin should be the basis of privilege in the future. Nor ... is it our aim to do away with qualifications. What we are against is not the upholding of standards as such but the sustaining of barriers to the attainment of standards; the special measures, that we envisage to overcome the legacy of past discrimination, are not intended to ensure the advancement of unqualified persons, but to see to it that those who have been denied access to qualifications in the past can become qualified now, and that those who have been qualified all along but overlooked because of past discriminations, are at last given their due ... The first point to be made is that affirmative action must be rooted in principles of justice and equity".

Affirmative action is thus a temporary intervention designed to achieve equal employment opportunity without lowering standards and without unduly trammelling the career aspirations or expectations of current organisational members who are competent in their jobs. A positive outcome of implementing affirmative action programmes are better management of human resources and a raising of standards.

Remarks are often heard in business circles to the effect that affirmative action constitutes another form of racism and sexism and that the truly non-racist and non-sexist company wants to forget about labels together and "just practise equal opportunity".

Affirmative action is a process or a strategy whose result should be the achievement of a greater level of employment equity.

Venter (1994:28) interprets that affirmative action could in a sense be seen as the tool to fix parity in organisations, and to create new horizons for all employees and alter the shape of the organisation into a more manageable structure. The researcher interprets that as a understanding and accepting of cultural differences and not to force people to change and live in a new cultural setting.

The term, affirmative action, has suddenly become the new philosophy, the new mechanism to change things the right way in an organisation. It is seen as a programme by which all the systems and practices that are discriminatory be eliminated. If this process is ignored, the status quo will hardly change and the people who are suppose to benefit from it will see no visible results. The unfair advantage which many whites received could be eliminated by this process.

Therefore, the practice of affirmative action includes the following:

- A deliberate search to find suitably qualified blacks, bearing in mind that qualifications does not simply mean academic degrees, but takes into account the wealth of appropriate experience that many without degrees may have attained over the years.
- Training people, who have historically been discriminated against, to empower them to assume certain posts and move up the career path, while guarding against tokenism.

Employees need encouragement to develop greater confidence in themselves, their peers and the country as a whole.

The latest phase, De Beer (1996:40) suggests to be the managing of diversity era. Here he suggests that economical success could be reached if the various diverse groups can be unified in nation building. This can however, only be reached if the basis of equal opportunities, support and development programmes and change in the organisational culture (to name but a few) have been achieved. It is therefore the ideal phase at this stage of the development of the underprivileged, to reach. His opinion is shared by the writer as a developing phase in affirmative action by which employees' are treated as individuals and developed as individuals.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Molele (1995:12) states that the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) contains at least the following seven elements, which will be considered as cornerstones of question in this study:

- A programme of education and training, adult basic education and recognition of prior learning will overcome the apartheid's legacy.
- Individuals, communities and groups should be empowered to promote collective rights and capacity of workers to negotiate workplace issues.
- Principles for hiring and promotion of workers will prevent discrimination against those previously disadvantaged by apartheid.

- **Collective bargaining mechanisms should be in place to accelerate the eradication of workplace discrimination.**
- **Job security for pregnant woman and the provision of proper child care facilities must be available to enable women to successfully participate in the workplace.**
- **Measures should be instituted to enable the development of special expertise in South Africa to take priority over the import of outside personnel; and**
- **Legislation should be established and a strong ombudsman appointed to monitor & implement affirmative action measures? (Seijas & Singh, 1994:49).**

There are a few questions that can be asked in respect of affirmative action:

- **The controversy surrounding affirmative action. For example: could a quota system be applied in South Africa? To which extent should employees be involved in affirmative action? These questions will be explored in more detail in chapter 2.**
- **The implementation of an affirmative action programme will be costly. Direct costs such as budgets for training and development programmes, salary increases due to changes in structures should be considered. Indirect cost such as administration costs of policy negotiations and communication briefs should not be overlooked when budgeting for the implementation of an affirmative action programme.**

- The organisation's financial support is important to this scheme in order to follow it through to the end. The writer is of the opinion that affirmative action should be holistically approached, and the whole budget of an organisation should be focussed to improve profit. The employees yielding the profit should share in it, by receiving a proportional return, of which development and empowerment of the employees should not be excluded. It is therefore believed, that the financial support system of affirmative action should be in place to assist in the upliftment of employees.
- Is affirmative action in effect not reverse discrimination? The writer will briefly discuss direct and indirect discrimination and echo Ezorsky's (1992:133) opinion that if South Africa ever wants to become a fully integrated society, we (especially employers) must be willing to take steps to open those doors.

Common problems about affirmative action which are summarized in the report of the Labour Commission (1992:4) includes the dangers of creating a cycle of dependency and erosion of progress already achieved by individuals, a possibility that a wrong subgroup of the population could be targeted, and the danger that affirmative action could lead to racial conflict. The very problems which give rise to the concept of affirmative action have important demographic roots in addition to obvious political causes.

If affirmative action is seen as steps taken to encourage the participation of target group of people at all levels of public and private sector, major demographic questions which should concern organisations in South Africa today include:

- Many people are needed to maximise productivity now and at other specific periods in the future. Sapsford & Tzannatos (1993:98) state that the desired output changes are translated into occupational structures and into educational output which combined with existing capital and technology will produce a given level of output.
- The demographic profile of our work force with reference to the following should be: age, sex, marital status, occupation, ethnicity, race, adulation, language, household size and structure and geographical residence. Barker (1992:108) predicts that adequate and generally accepted education opportunities to everyone is absolutely fundamental not only to future economic success in South Africa but also socio-political stability. The writer proposes that organisations should reflect the demographic profile of society to enhance socio-political stability and to distribute economic growth to the principal stakeholders of the organisation.

1.3 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The general objective, is to address aspects pertaining to affirmative action, to create a solid base for an affirmative action plan in order to establish economical growth, welfare, employment and the total upliftment of South Africa, both, nationally and internationally.

Hence, the primary objective will be to facilitate the implementation of successful affirmative action programmes in organisations, by means of addressing the race aspect, as it lies at the heart of the debate.

The secondary objective will be to advance the relations between

management and labour through perspectives of the support systems necessary to enable the smooth transition of organisations from the affirmative action era into the management of diversity era.

1.4 BASIC HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

In many respects affirmative action is no more than good human resource management, with particular emphasis of race and gender. Therefore, labour relations should be seen as a vehicle for effective handling and management of affirmative action and diversity. The following propositions will be utilised as basis for the reasoning in this study:

- Affirmative action seeks to increase the opportunities of formerly excluded groups without recourse to tokenism, which will cease to exist once the playing field has been levelled. It is stated that appointing staff according to criteria other than merit reduces productivity and will hamper South Africa's economic recovery and ability to compete in the world economy. Tokenism is therefore seen to be degrading and embarrassing to "affirmative action appointments" (IDASA, 1995:8).
- Affirmative action is viewed as a critical vehicle for democracy in the workplace as it seeks to empower those previously disadvantaged to participate in the decision making process. Escom (1995: 41) sees it as a key business priority and the basis for a sound democratic environment in which the political, social and economic imperatives and interests of the various stakeholders are met.
- Discrimination in the workplace reflects the society's attitude and

behaviours. De Beer and Botha (1996:3) confirm that affirmative action initiatives by the private sector have contributed to the elimination of racial stereotyping and to create an improved level of tolerance for cultural differences. This eventually leads to a less adversarial industrial relations environment.

- Many role players in affirmative action especially management, consider affirmative action as a way to reverse race discrimination. Bender(1991:146) states that opponents of affirmative action believe it is unfair to penalise present white workers for the sins of their fathers.
- Communication in many organisation is not transparent enough. Cummings and Worley (1993:252) state that communication can be a barrier, but it is only a symptom; the cause itself lies deeper. In a cultural system the values of the employees, influence the objectives which they pursue.

The writer therefore believes that employees would be committed to, and interpret past and present events which would benefit them. If communication is open and transparent employees will easily adapt to new paradigms and misaligned perceptions will be eradicated. However this kind of process does not happen over night and ample time frames should be established to reach this goal.

1.5 METHOD OF PRESENTATION

This presentation will be in a form of a literature study. Moolman (1996:18) is of the opinion that a thorough and well planned literature study is an

essential requirement for a successful research. On the importance of a proper literature study he continues to state that it is the most important method to come abreast to the developments of a certain knowledge field. Finally he states that a literature study embraces the general works of experts in a particular field and research literature on present research in the investigation territory.

1.6 DESCRIPTION OF CERTAIN CONCEPTS

For the purposes of orientation and clarification the following comments and definitions apply:

1.6.1 Affirmative action

Affirmative is planned and is a positive process and strategy aimed at transforming socioeconomic environments which have excluded individuals from disadvantaged groups in order for such disadvantaged individuals to gain access to opportunities, including developmental opportunities, based on their suitability (Herbert, 1994:6). It is added by Orlans and O'Neill (1992:7) that affirmative action is a conscious effort to increase the representation of women and other designated groups in particular organisations, whilst Hanmer (1993:8) states that it was designed to create a more equal and balanced society.

IDASA (1995:12) formulate affirmative action as a process designed to achieve equal employment opportunities and to eliminate barriers in the workplace which restrict employment and progression opportunities.

1.6.2 Diversity

Carnevale and Stone (1994:22) states that it implies differences in people based on their identifications with various groups, and a process of acknowledging these differences. Human (1993:77) refers to it as “ubuntu”: a respect for individuals.

1.6.3 Labour relations

Bendix (1996:3) states that labour relations deals essentially with people who, because of their mutual involvement in the work situation, have been placed in a specific relationship with one another. She continues to state that the relationship is dynamic and ever-changing.

Gouws (1986:10) explains that labour relations is not restricted to certain facets in the employee-employer relationship, but it stretches over the total relationship beyond the barriers of the individual organisation.

Margerison (1979:247) adds that labour relations includes a study of people in a situation, organisation or system interacting, in the doing of work in relation to some form of contract.

1.6.4 Discrimination

The inferior treatment of some workers with respect to hiring, promotion and wages owing to factors not related to their abilities, seniority, skills level, or experience (Barker, 1992: xiv).

1.6.5 Productivity

The relationship between the quality of output and the quality of input used to produce that output. It is therefore a measure of input efficiency (Barker, 1992: xvii).

1.6.6 Unemployment

A situation where members of the labour force are without work, are currently available for work and are seeking for work (Barker, 1992: xvii).

1.7 DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 defines the concept and history of affirmative action, and state some of the problems which will be investigated during the study. In chapter 2 a theoretical overview on some perspectives on affirmative action, including an investigation into the integration of the concept into business. Insight into certain aspects surrounding gender and racial upliftment, including issues such as empowerment and advancement, are explained in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 examines the managerial approach to affirmative action and presents a model for the implementation of affirmative action. Chapter 5 explores the concept managing of diversity as a new dimension to affirmative action. Chapter 6 concludes by stating the various findings and recommendations arising from the study.

CHAPTER 2

A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the critical aspects, that South African managers have to face, is whether they have enough and appropriate information available to manage their human resources. The shift from managing labour relations to the management of human development would be one of the crucial aspects which these managers have to manage in their quest. To progressively, by means of constructive interaction between the different levels within the organisation, create a dynamic organisational culture and common values with which all employees can identify, the organisation has to develop an affirmative action strategy. This strategy will be conducive to the management of a diverse workforce.

All South African organisations may in future have to prove that they have developed an affirmative action policy and to demonstrate their progress in achieving affirmative action objectives. Some definitions on affirmative action as well as the history pertaining to affirmative action was explored in chapter 1. The need for affirmative action arises from historical disadvantages brought about by the apartheid system, by male dominance in business and society, the lack of consideration for the disabled and prejudice against individuals who hold convictions, orientations or believes contrary to those of dominant groupings. The purpose of affirmative action is thus to ensure not only such persons are no longer subjected to discrimination, but also that male dominance and prejudice are eliminated. The need for such correction becomes obvious when it is considered as

late as 1994, white males (constituting just over six percent of the population) occupied more than 96 per cent of top positions. In fact in the light of these statistics, affirmative action is not merely a socio political necessity but also makes good business sense according to Bendix (1996:592). However, Wingrove (1993:20) states that affirmative action will cause whites discomfort at best and great fear, anger and frustration at worst.

Barker (1992:171) states that affirmative action is a recognised way of promoting the principle of equality of opportunities in societies where this principle has suffered as a result of discrimination or where less developed persons have to compete with more developed persons. It is recognised in international law as being non discriminatory, as long as it is temporary and is not enforced against the will of the minority. In appropriate cases it does not amount to discrimination, since the fact that those who have lost their positions in a programme of affirmative action properly executed, do not actually lose anything they would have had in a fair race. Programmes of affirmative action must be implemented with great care if reverse discrimination is to be prevented.

South Africa's competitive position with regard to the skills base, closely mirrors other developing economies. As sanctions disappear and as the country fully reenter the global economy there is no doubt that if business organisations and South Africa intend becoming global players, we will have to develop our skills base to bring it more in line with those of our trading partners in the developed and developing economies such as South Korea, Singapore, Argentina, Turkey and Poland, amongst others. Education and training will become a critical engine for change in the new South Africa.

2.2 A LABOUR LAW PERSPECTIVE IN RESPECT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The Constitutional Bill (200/1993) has great impact on discrimination and related issues with respect to the employment relationship as well as rights of citizens in general. Section 8 of the constitution, the so-called equal treatment clause, is also relevant. Section 8 (2) provides that there shall be no unfair discrimination against a person, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of " race, gender, sex, ethnic of social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, believe, culture of language". However, section 8 (2) is qualified and ought not to be viewed in isolation. Section 8 (3) stipulates that section 8 does not preclude measures designed to achieve the adequate protection and advancement of persons or groups of persons or categories of persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, in order to enable their full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms (Kruger, 1995:39).

In terms of the Labour Relations Act (66/1995), Schedule 7, Part B, Section 2(1)(a) states that no employee may be discriminated against. Section 2(2) (a) continuous and declare that an employee includes an applicant for employment. Taking cognisance of this definition therefore, it may become an unfair labour practice if an employer discriminates on arbitrary grounds like race or gender. (Section (1)(1) (a)) on a person. However, employment policies and practices which are designed to achieve adequate protection and advancement of persons or groups disadvantaged by unfair discrimination (Section 2(2)(b)), and discrimination based on an inherent requirement of the job (Section 2(2)(c)) are specifically excluded by the act. According to the writer affirmative action programs can therefore be implemented in an organisation.

2.3 AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The purpose of this section is to provide an international perspective on the issue of affirmative action. The researcher will explore affirmative action strategies of the United States, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Namibia.

- **United States**

Affirmative action, positive discrimination, rectification programmes, or preferential policies were initially introduced in the United States in order to deal with racial discrimination and inequality. America has a variety of diffuse societal programmes to redress inequality where the private sector takes much of the initiative. However, organisations have tended to lose sight of what is that they are trying to accomplish and the fundamental purpose behind the process (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994:38). In states where legislation exist, organisations must meet a target where four-fifths of staffing must reflect the current labour pool (Mitchell & Arnott, 1992: 13-14).

Criticism levelled at the USA is that affirmative action programmes tend to focus on the select few rather than utilising a “broad brush” approach. The argument goes that there is still a permanent “underclass” in America, people who cannot escape the ghetto and are caught in a cycle of poverty. The few African Americans who have made it up the ladder are considered to have deserted their fellow black Americans, and therefore, the collective group motivation found amongst, for example, the Puerto Ricans or Vietnamese is not present. In effect the advantages of individual affirmative action are never translated into group affirmative action (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994: 39).

The writer believes that only if South Africa takes cognisance of and eliminate some of the more common and blatant, conscious racist and sexist procedures practised overtly and covertly in the USA, will organisations in South Africa be able to ensure success of its affirmative action programmes.

- India

At the time of independence in India there were two large programmes that were conceived, and affirmative action, or positive discrimination, was only one of them. The other was a massive programme of land, or agrarian, reform. Affirmative action has been relatively successful in that it focused on elements of the most disadvantaged sections of society: the untouchables and the tribals. Considerable gains were made in these groups in terms of bridging disparities in literacy and elementary and secondary education. The Indian government introduced a programme of coercive affirmative action across the board, including mechanical and numerical quotas (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994: 40).

From the Indian experience the writer agrees with Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:41) that positive discrimination is self-defeating if it is used as an instrument of creating a balance of power. Affirmative action is only effective when there are clear inequalities between groups which the programmes seeks to address. Any affirmative action program must be use to be both politically and economically driven.

- Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's affirmative action programme has been particularly successful in impacting on the overall state of health, education, and quality of life in rural

communities. In Sri Lanka, on the other hand, deep divisions, which were misused as an instrument of political power, resulted from enforced quotas. Consequently, it is not simply a matter of what policies pursued but how those policies are adapted (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994: 41).

- **Malaysia**

According to Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:41) the Malaysian model is of particular interest to South Africa. Many parallels exist in terms of a majority benefiting from affirmative action programmes and religious differences coinciding with ethnic ones. Malaysia has made significant strides in implementing affirmative action when the minority Chinese government and the Malaysian majority, anticipating a coalition government, set up a comprehensive plan to implement affirmative action while still maintaining economic standards. Castle (1995:22) adds that education was given a central role in the development strategy, to equalise opportunities and to promote national unity. The researcher is of the opinion the upliftment of the whole society is crucial for economical growth and political stability, as that it can be reached through a process of affirmative action.

- **Namibia**

Under the obligatory affirmative action scheme proposed by the Namibian government, employers will be required to give preferential treatment to suitably qualified persons in designated groups. The proposal will affect all employers who employ twenty-five or more people. A regulatory body, the Employment Commission, attached to the Ministry of Labour, will monitor the application of affirmative action programmes, investigate unfair labour practices, and research the structural package (Charlton & Van Niekerk,

1994:42).

Castle (1995:17) indicates that legislative programmes to govern the affirmative action programmes are essential. It requires as an example the following:

- action the eliminate or revise practices which tend to discriminate against persons in the designated groups;
- the setting up of numerical goals that the employer hopes to achieve;
- the establishment of procedures to monitor the attainment of these goals.

The writer believes that although Namibia's affirmative action legislation addresses the need to recruit and promote employees on the basis of their qualifications and skills, a more defined and principled strategy which emphasis competency and experience may be more relevant for SA, where educational qualifications are more unreliable predictors of competence.

- Zimbabwe

The Master and Servant's Act (1901), the Land Apportionment Act (1930), and the Industrial Conciliation Act (1934) in Zimbabwe are examples of discriminatory legislation, which resulted in huge disparities between black and white Zimbabweans in terms of income, employment, and ownership (Castle, 1994:7).

No explicit policy of affirmative action was introduced in that country for the private sector, although dramatic changes have occurred in the public sector. In 1980 the public service commission received a presidential directive to achieve the rapid acceleration of blacks, precipitating a rush of voluntary resignations, emigration, and movement to the private sector by whites, who at that time occupied 90 per cent of senior - and middle -management positions. The above process was facilitated by limited career prospects, attractive retirement schemes and pensions paid in foreign currency.

Consequently, 1989 saw 95 per cent of the public sector staffed by black Zimbabweans, but there was a shortage of engineers, scientists and accountants, as was revealed in a study carried out by the Commonwealth Secretariat (Hofmeyr & Whata, 1991:13-21). According to Bennel & Strachan (1992:31) the most significant contribution to the black occupational advancement in the private sector of Zimbabwe was made by a commitment from the top management to develop black managerial expertise. The researcher agrees that the commitment from top management is necessary to enhance the affirmative action process.

2.4 THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PERSPECTIVE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC)

The importance of the ANC's perspective on affirmative action lies in the fact that this political party governs South Africa. In alliance with some labour groupings such as COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) their viewpoint should be considered in designing affirmative action programmes. Innes (1994:1) summarises the key areas of their policy as follows:

- **Black representativeness should be appointed on company boards of directors.**
- **Companies should ensure that they promote black management development and training as well as accelerated advancement.**
- **Blacks should participate in the equity of companies, and companies should enter into joint ventures and business partnerships with blacks.**
- **Companies should promote worker empowerment. This includes developing co-determination and participative approaches to decision-making as well as sharing of information.**
- **Companies should promote black education both through adult basic education as well as through more formal school and university education.**

2.5 CORNERSTONES OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

- **Dealing with discrimination**

The researcher considers discrimination to be the differentiation by one person of another on the basis of gender, race, religion or any other unacceptable ground, which has the effect of one person being treated less favourably than another. Campanella (1993:18) states that discrimination is the denial of equality, the effect of discrimination is to exclude people from benefits just because of some quality like skin colour or sex, and so stifle

opportunity.

In terms of the Labour Relations Act (66/1995), Schedule 7, Part B, Section 2(1)(a) states that no employee may be discriminated against. The definition explicitly indicates that it would be unfair to discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against an employee on arbitrary grounds, which includes, but are not limit to race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age disability, religion, conscience, believe, political opinion, culture, language, marital status or family responsibility.

The researcher is of opinion that direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another person less favourable on a specific ground like race or sex. Indirect discrimination occurs where the employer applies a particular benefit to all employees irrespective of race or sex, but the application of the requirement or condition has the effect that persons of a certain race or sex do not have the same access to that benefit, cannot comply with the benefit or suffer to their detriment because access to that benefit is denied. It can be difficult, however, to prove indirect discrimination.

Slabbert, *et al.* (1994:13-7 to 13-8) differentiate between the micro and macro impact of discrimination, namely:

- Micro impact

He states that micro-societal effects of discrimination may be found in the break down of individual and family structures, insubordinate feelings and attitudes, lower attainments of educational levels, cyclical patterns of unemployment and underemployment, poverty and general limitation on the improvement of the quality and productivity for the black labour force.

- **Macro impact**

The societal macro-impacts according to Slabbert, *et al.* (1994:13-7) find expression in mass frustrations, conflicts and tensions, leading to overt behaviour such as riots, strikes, crimes and provocative acts.

- **Equalising opportunities**

The Employment Standards Statute (1996:13) points out that income distributing in South Africa, ranks among the most unequal in the world. An unusually small share of the national income goes to the majority of the population. Black people, and especially black women, are clustered at the bottom, while most whites appear at higher income levels.

The following are inequalities in income and status related to race and gender:

- **Substantial inequalities still exist between blacks and whites and men and women, even when they have similar occupational status and education.**
- **The nature of inequalities faced by different groups, has to be defined first and the extend to which these inequalities arise within the labour market, only then can successful measures on employment equity emerge.**
- **Close to half of black women were unemployed, compared to a quarter of black men - and under 5 per cent of whites. African women alone makes up one in five employees, but one in two unemployed people.**

In contrast, white men make up one in seven employees, but less than one in a hundred of the unemployed.

- Almost one in three African employees earned less than R 500 a month, compared to less than one in twenty whites. A third of black people earned under R 500 a month, compared to under 5 per cent of Whites. Thus, in top management, only half of black people earned more than R 2 000 a month, compared to over half of white men and a quarter of white women.
- Differences in income proved even more extreme for self-employed people. Over a third of African women were self employed, and two thirds earned under R500 a month. In contrast, a fifth of white men were self-employed, and their incomes averaged over R 15 000 a month.
- A white man was 5000 times as likely to be in top management as an African women. Generally, whites were heavily over-represented in the professions and management, and virtually none were elementary workers. White women dominated in secretarial work. Black women were most heavily over-represented among self-employed elementary workers and the unemployed. Black men were over-represented only among shop floor workers.

The writer wants to point out the following aspects:

- Levelling the playing fields by means of accelerated training and development.

- Improve life skills of disadvantaged people.
- Implement support systems:
 - * Role models.
 - * Mentoring.
 - * Coaching.
 - * Implement bridging programmes to address the educational gap.

Blakemore & Drake (1996:114) add that the specific areas, in relation to racial discrimination, that are of particular concern are:

- Continuing patterns of occupational segregation and exclusion.
- The position of blacks, women and disabled people on the occupational ladder.
- Inequalities in earnings and economic status.
- Day-to-day discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

Gerson (1993:26) adds that the main moral problem with affirmative action is that it is based, ineluctably and inherently, upon the concept of "group rights". Equality between groups - rather than individuals - is emphasised. Compensation for past injustices is directed at members of the group rather than individual victims themselves. The fact that this may involve relatively privileged members of the oppressed group is usually ignored.

Because affirmative action is necessarily focused on the concept of the group, it has the side-effect of raising ethnic consciousness. Furthermore, because groups are inherently difficult to define, unintended groups or groups with lesser claims for compensation often become the prime beneficiaries of

affirmative action measures. This frequently fans the flames of ethnic conflict. Deep down in the minds of most proponents of affirmative action are certain unspoken anxieties. Chief among them is the view that access to "a level playing field" will fail to empower the disadvantaged groups.

In the South African context proponents of affirmative action noting the paucity of blacks in the higher echelons of society, often make the pessimistic assumption (consciously and unconsciously) that the imbalances are unlikely to be remedied without special measures to help the disadvantaged. Such pessimism may be unwarranted for several reasons.

Firstly, it is extraordinary how much progress has occurred over the past twenty years despite the persistence of apartheid policies and the poor performance of the economy. During this period, blacks more or less doubled their share of personal disposable income. Secondly, demographic factors have ensured the ascendance of blacks within the economy, political obstacles notwithstanding. There are simply too few whites to go round. One may rest assured of one development: affluence in South Africa is going to become thoroughly multiracial even though poverty, which will endure for the foreseeable future, will remain largely, but not exclusively, black. There is no point to window-dressing if the genuine article is at hand (Gerson, 1993:27).

Yet the pigmentation of privilege, which is assured, can take place in two ways a benign way and a malignant way. The low road would involve penalising the old white elite, which would gradually emigrate, vacating places to be filled by blacks. Under that scenario, damage to the economy could be severe and the masses would bear a heavy burden.

- **Actively integrating the organisation**

By actively integrating the organisation people are brought into certain positions which they could not occupy in the past. Certain of these integrating aspects are as follows:

- **A dramatic organisational culture change.**

As the number of black managerial employees increases, the days of "We, the whites, insist that you, the blacks, change your values to reflect ours" will disappear together (Charoux, 1991:14). He continues to state that organisations will witness, at least in the enlightened organisation, a deep mutation taking place and words like "common values" and "cultural synergy" will replace the once popular "cultural differences" and "understanding the black workers."

- **A re-examination of policies and standards.**

Almost immediately under the spotlight will be policies and standards of performance which have up to now characterised the white managerial structure. Out of the existing First and Third World status quo, a new order, a Second World status quo, a new order, a Second World, will have to be found which will satisfy the aspirations of both parties involved (Charoux, 1991:15).

- **A deeper awareness of concept such as "tokenism" and "fast track potential".**

Companies will come under pressure to show progress at virtually all costs and, in view of the existing shortage of qualified, competent and ready-made black managers, both tokenism and paternalism, the scourges of the mid-1970's, will once again come under the spotlight (Charoux, 1991:15).

- Implications for chief executives.

Charoux (1991:15) indicates that chief executives have a unique and specific responsibility to shoulder once the legislation is passed. The following two major points are:

- Act now, do not wait - once legislation is passed, there will be a scramble to meet targets, find and develop talent,
- Insist on a well researched and proven strategy. There are a four phased strategy plan: condition your environment, identify potential, integrate potential into the core of your organisation and monitor effectiveness.

The researcher is of the opinion that organisations will have to evaluate their responsibilities with respect to affirmative action in three key performance areas:

- Achievement of business success.
- The development of their staff.
- Achievement of the affirmative action targets.

The three key performance areas will assist the organisations in evaluating whether their aspirations in actively integrating affirmative action into the

organisation was successful.

- Involvement in the community

It is vital for organisation to participate in the socio-economic development of the community in which it operates. Douwes-Dekker (1992:25-31) explains that employers have an important role to play in the transition period with regard to the shaping of the new social and public policies on issues such as:

- Access to land.
- Housing packages.
- Township development
- Primary health facilities.
- Educational issues.
- Security issues.
- Training facilities.
- Vocational service programmes.
- Job creation schemes.

The writer agrees that affirmative action should include programmes for upliftment in the society in which the organisation's employees find themselves.

2.6 THE NATURE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The term affirmative action refers to the purposeful and planned placement or development of competent or potentially competent person in or to positions from of competent or potentially competent person in or to

positions from which they were debarred in the past, in an attempt to redress past disadvantages and to render the workforce more representative of the population, on either local organisational level. Consequently, affirmative action has numerous facets (Bendix, 1996:592).

It entails, firstly, the search for persons with known competencies or potential to fill positions worthy of their ability, secondly, the training and development of previously disadvantaged persons so that they may in future possess greater mobility. Thirdly a continuous monitoring and adaptation of the demographic spread at all levels of the organisation. Affirmative action constitutes an active intervention. In this aspect it differs from "equal opportunity". The latter refers merely to a policy of fairness whereas, in the case of affirmative action, organisations have to ensure access - or even limited preferential access - to disadvantaged groups. Affirmative action can have only a limited lifespan. Sooner or later, the previously disadvantaged should have caught up. At that stage, a switch over must occur towards an equal opportunity policy (Bendix, 1996:592).

According to Gouws & Booyens (1994:1) affirmative action programmes must be applied in a sensible manner, and people should be appointed on merits. Jankowitz (1995:4) advises that affirmative action is not about fads, morals, levelling playing fields or moving of goal posts, but about developing a growth strategy that will result in the business becoming world class and competitive by investing in human potential. Empowerment and accompanying aspects would be discussed in chapter 3. Mkhwanazi (1994:5) adds that affirmative action should be linked to the whole question of transformation, democratisation, reconstruction and development. However, the researcher believes that changes should not be implemented for the sake of change but, changes should be focused on growth and

development.

2.7 WHY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMMES FAIL

Adams (1993:82) is of the opinion that many affirmative action programmes fail. Affirmative action programmes fail for a number of very important reasons. Some of them are:

- Affirmative action programmes often fail because they are simply in terms of filling quotas in recruitment rather than in terms of the recruitment and development of the individual within the organizational context. Quotas in recruitment can easily do more harm than good. If positive discrimination means promoting inferior women over better men, for the sake of filling a quota, the company will suffer. Filling quotas, in the absence of stringent people development systems, is detrimental to all. The researcher seconds this statement but needs to add that a formal affirmative action programme should at least guide the elimination of discrimination and develop various skills.
- Affirmative action cannot be seen simply in terms of pumping education and training into formerly under-represented groups and then expecting them to function in an organisation context in which issues such as attitudes and expectations have not been addressed. Unless we also address prejudice, racism, sexism and the people management skills and responsibilities of current managers, then education and training per se will have limited pay off. The researcher believes that adequate support systems like communication should be in place.

Rawana (1994:11) suggests that educational programmes need to be supported by mentorship programmes that will ensure an understanding of practical economic and business processes, which will equip students to constructively contribute towards the economic process.

- The most crucial, practical reason why affirmative action programmes fail is that top management is often not committed to them. In some instances, top management seem to want to appear to be making the changes whilst in practice retaining the status quo. In other instances, commitment is sorely tested by the predominance of other crucial strategic objectives, particularly in times of economical turndown. To achieve results, affirmative action as a subject of people development requires the long-term commitment of top management. However, the absence of legislative pressure governing the employment and development of women, it is difficult to be anything but pessimistic about programmes to combat gender inequality. Where firms do make genuine efforts to promote women, it is often not because they want to, but because they have to. The researcher believes that the time has arrived in South Africa for organisation to leap beyond barrier of legislation and to address the social upliftment issue in the organisations's respective social sphere.
- People development, and affirmative action as part of a people development process, are not quick fixed. Development is a long term process requiring long term commitment and the attitudes, structures, policies and procedures to go with it. The researcher agrees with this statement, but is of the opinion that not only long term but also short term strategies should be developed to ensure that the involved parties does not become frustrated in their current position because of ill

career planning. The researcher further believes that adequate support systems should be in place to help the affirmative action candidates to prosper in their development, these include bursary schemes, study leave and mentorship programmes.

- Questions have to be asked about the extent to which blacks and white women are willing to put time and effort into developing themselves. Political developments have raised expectations, sometimes beyond the level of realism. Organisations will be unable to function optimally until blacks and whites, men and women are prepared to face up to their own strengths and weaknesses. Development requires realism and humility. It also requires a great deal of effort on all sides.

The writer is of the opinion that strong support services should be in place prior to the establishment of a affirmative action programme, as affirmative action candidates should at the very least be afforded the opportunity to increase the level of knowledge and skills.

2.8 TIME FRAME FOR ORGANISATIONS TO REPRESENT THE DEMOGRAPHY OF SOUTH AFRICA

According to Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:18), by the year 2000 business will have to ensure that non-whites comprise of different percentage on each level in the organisation. See Table 1: Percentage of blacks in organisations by the year 2000.

Table 1: Percentage of blacks in organisations by the year 2000

PERCENTAGE	LEVEL IN THE ORGANISATION
30%	Non-executive directors;
20%	Executive directors
30%	Senior management
40%	Middle management
50%	Junior management
70%	Supervisors
80%	Trainees

Source: (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994:18.)

Ryan (1993:1) of the Black Management Forum (BMF) proposes that the seats hold by black executives should at least be 50 per cent. He also states that large investment in education and training is expected by organisations during this period. The writer believes that the principle of target setting rather than the specifics will guide organisation's affirmative action programmes. Therefore, it is believed that the demographics of an organisation's society, but especially the nation should guide the targets.

These proposed targets needs to be evaluated against the number of affirmative action programmes currently in place. Russel (1996:4) states that the number of programmes declined from 94 per cent in 1995 to 82 per cent in 1996.

2.9 THE LEARNING CURVE

There are several common characteristics that underpin the ability to learn and consequently to achieve excellence according to Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994: 32). These include:

- A willingness to be wrong

Unless an organisation or individual acknowledges that there is a problem, no growth can occur. A precursor to growth is the honest recognition that “we” have a problem. This change from “what for” to “what if” thinking involves taking responsibility for change and liberating your people to do the same. This pre-supposes drawing a distinction between “good” and “bad” pain. The former entails the sting of stretching, growing, and operating on the outer edge of competence, the latter, in contrast, is characterised by denial, fear and ultimate stagnation (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994: 32). The writer believes commitment and directives should come ideally from the executives in a organisation.

- Personalising the need for change

From an affirmative action perspective, learning and improved productivity in the workplace start with these questions:

- How am I part of the problem?
- What can I do to change myself?

It is often not the people who are hidebound by the past, but the leadership. The need to personalise responsibility for change needs to occur at the

highest level of national and corporate life (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994: 34). Effective affirmative action must make it clear that it is designed to adjust for the pervasive but often subtle biases in the social system and not to compensate for the deficiencies of identifiable groups of people (Clayton & Crosby, 1995:7). The writer believes that an affirmative action programme should specifically address responsibilities in the programme.

- **Recognising interdependence**

No permanent growth will occur unless we do something different. The circular way of thinking understands that every action is connected to someone or something else, just as the body and the mind are inextricably connected, and very often the problem, particularly in terms of affirmative action, lies in the mind set of the manager who sees and treats people as incompetent and therefore evokes a self-fulfilling prophecy of catching people doing things wrong, instead of right.

Leaders can only lead if they have followers. There are four essential characteristics that followers expect from leaders: honesty, competence, foresight, and inspiration. Managers who had high credibility and exhibited the above had employees who responded with high commitment to the organisation. Alternatively, managers with low credibility were insensitive and out of touch with their people. This inability to empathise was manifest through arrogance, pride, failure to listen, and taking people for granted (Charlton & Van Niekerk, 1994: 35). The writer is of the opinion that every affirmative action programme should be accompanied by programmes for supervisors and management in leadership styles and programmes to cope with the management of a diverse workforce.

Charoux (1986:58) has predicted that "classical" predictors of leadership potential was a notoriously deficient in the identification of black leadership potential. He suggests that black leadership potential have to be individualised and managed by a committee made up be committed affirmative action individuals.

- **Actively seeking feedback**

Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:35) add that people who are committed to growth, do not perceive feedback as failure, but as an opportunity to learn to do something differently. Similarly involvement in the growth process of other people involves the risk of giving constructive feedback. The following competencies are vital to the learning process and that underpin excellence is any sphere of human endeavour:

- **seeking to understand what is preventing an organisation or department from growing and achieving its objectives;**
- **ability to diagnose and change inappropriate behaviour and independently to take constructive action;**
- **acceptance of responsibility for creating individual life experience, rather than blaming situations or people for misfortune;**
- **perception of change and threatening situations as challenges and opportunities for personal and organisational growth;**
- **commitment to self-development and continual learning;**

- development of personal strengths and weaknesses and a realistic view of self.

In essence, a commitment and productivity crisis needs to be understood in the context of leaders who have failed to instil vision, a sense of meaning, and trust in their followers. A productivity problem tells us as much about the leader as it does the worker. Leaders need to personalise responsibility for creating a context where routine jobs become meaningful, where the human spirit is liberated, and where people are transformed from a position of working to live to one of living to work.

The researcher is of the opinion that management needs to know the aspirations of the workforce and the driving force (motivation) of these employees to be able to understand and develop a conducive working environment where the aspirations and needs can be met.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The satisfaction of basic human needs beyond minimum material requirements will remain a challenge in the 1990's and beyond. The formation and formulation of the community relation function by companies and employer associations to respond to that challenge has started. Objectives in one such formulation are as follows:

- Contribute to the peace, justice and stability in the areas from which companies draw their labour.
- Ensure continued production.

- **Contribute towards the stabilisation and normalisation of South African society.**
- **Prevent boycotts and deterioration and the relationship between business and the community.**
- **Act as a facilitator and catalyst to bring together all parties who could possibly be involved in such a dispute.**
- **Prevent bloodshed, violence and loss of life.**
- **Provide a forum for all interested parties to meet, discuss the issues and if possible formulate a plan of action to prevent any escalation of violence based on political, cultural, religious and other backgrounds (Mbatha, 1992:14-16).**

He continues and states that employers have an important role to play in the transition period with regard to the shaping of the new social and public policies on issues such as:

- **access to land;**
- **housing packages;**
- **township development;**
- **primary health facilities;**
- **educational issues;**
- **security issues;**
- **training facilities;**
- **vocational services programmes;**
- **job creation schemes.**

From that, the researcher assess that the following learning pointers are essential:

- Peoples perceptions of affirmative action must be clarified, prior to and during the process.
- It is vital that organisations are well informed about issues surrounding affirmative action prior to formulating strategy.
- We need to look beyond the emotive issues and events and understand the underlying the message.
- The purpose and scope of legislation must be clear.
- Affirmative action is not about quotas and preferential treatment. It is about overcoming the subtle and not so subtle barriers to opportunity.
- Quality and quantity can co-exist. Targets need to be set, while appropriate standards are maintained. Promotion needs to occur on the basis of competence - provided extensive opportunities have been made to redress past inequalities.
- We need to take into account relevant quantitative and qualitative information when assessing the intent/impact of affirmative action.
- Relevant, "culture free" - screening and selection procedures need to be developed that and under covering people exhibiting competence.

- It is critical that affirmative action involves the accelerated development of women as well as other disadvantaged groups.
- The cost of quotas should be viewed in terms of the availability of competent people and the long-term benefit to the organisation.

The researcher is of the opinion that South Africa should learn from the experiences of other countries which implemented affirmative action programmes and actively seek ways around the problem areas which lead to affirmative action programmes not being so successful in those countries. The researcher believes that none of these countries really sets an applicable example to be followed directly by South Africa. Thus, South Africa should seek ways not to only implement a successful affirmative action programme, but to lead the path in reaching beyond affirmative action, and start to manage its diverse people, in a way that could set an ideal model to be followed by other countries.

The researcher believes that people should be treated fairly in order to create equality, but at times will have to treat some people differently. This is because employment decisions are made within a context that contain established patterns of discrimination and inequality that go back for generations. In order to overcome these inequities, employers must take account of race or sex by making special efforts to hire and retain employees from groups that have been treated unfairly.

The writer further suggests to organisations to set a goal reflecting the percentage of blacks available for managerial jobs within the existing workforce and possible even from outside. In this way, white men and women are not shut out from the opportunity to become managers.

CHAPTER 3

ASPECTS SURROUNDING GENDER AND RACIAL UPLIFTMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Affirmative action usually denotes the promotion of members of disadvantaged groups to positions of seniority in various walks of life so that every echelon (in business, government and the professions) becomes more representative of the broader population mix, even if this entails (up to a point) passing over more meritorious applicants.

The rationale for affirmative action stems partly from a desire to promote equality between groups (as distinct from individuals) as an end in itself and partly from a concern to correct the wrongs of past discrimination. Acceptance of the need for affirmative action in South Africa, is rapidly gaining ground. The corporate sector, too, has endorsed it and is sparing no effort to find suitably qualified persons.

Many companies have programmes via which they seek to play a development role in the workplace. This chapter is dedicated to aspects of the upliftment of black employees within the organisational context. The key initiatives stemming from the moral poverty of apartheid which resulted in a poverty of human resource development such as black advancement and empowerment will be addressed. As was stated in chapter 1, employees need encouragement to develop greater confidence in themselves, their peers and the country as a whole.

Frost (1993:10) states that for too long too few people have controlled too

much of everything in South Africa. He continue and declare that decision-making on virtually every issue in this country needs to be pushed down to individuals and groups who should take responsibility and accountability for shaping their own futures and contributing to the shaping of the future of this country.

The contribution of unions towards the quest of empowering the masses and leading the country into a unified democratised nation from the work floor to the government of this country, can therefore not be denied. Section 3.2 would be dedicated to the union's role in affirmative action. Various other aspects such as black advancement and empowerment through which affirmative action strive to uplift people will also be explored.

By understanding these concepts, the reader would be able to appreciate the next generation of industrial relations and show a greater understanding for the management of diversity concept which will be discussed in chapter 5.

3.2 THE UNIONS ROLE IN RESPECT TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

3.2.1 The Oxford School perspective on the contribution of trade unions

Van Wyk (1990:26) states that Durkheim made a contribution to the modern theory of trade unions. The main components in his analysis are as follows:

- ethics, values and social justice;
- the distribution of labour as an important factor in the process of community development and changes;

- the problem of autonomy and the obliged distribution of labour in terms of union-management relations; and
- the relation between individual companies and the Government.

The mechanics in terms of social integration was important for Durkheim. He was of the opinion that long-term social integration could be reached only when work rules and work ethics are combined. The latter could be reached if normalized codes are being used in industry. All workers should be treated reasonable and just in a normal labour relation environment. Durkheim's contribution could be seen as a political philosophy and not as a theory of labour relations (Van Wyk, 1990:27).

The researcher is of the opinion that the principles set forward by this perspective are reasonable, if one evaluate those against the quest of South African Unions. The principles underlying the basic theory coincides with the restructuring of the South African economy through political power, which was reached by means of an integrated labour attempt to change the way in which our country conducts it selves.

Alperson (1993:24) states that although management's definition of affirmative action is fairly straightforward, union perceptions are relatively fluid. There are two reasons for this:

- different interpretations of affirmative action within the union movement, as a wide ranging approach to the upliftment of the masses of workers or a way to address the needs of woman, and

- because many unions are necessarily focusing on the fundamental survival issues of job security, a living wage, and ending mass retrenchments.

COSATU considers information disclosure an important concern in the debate about affirmative action. "Unions wants a greater say in how decisions are made on all levels." Coetzee (1994:61) confirms COSATU's statement with respect to participation. He declares that affirmative action could be a death-blow to organisations if it is not accompanied with participatory management styles, which support alliance and ownership in an organisation.

3.2.2 Unions perspective on affirmative action

Alperson (1993:24) is of the opinion that most companies' affirmative action programmes focus on identifying, recruiting, training and promoting blacks (and, less often women) into junior management positions. For trade unions, affirmative action normally refers to something quite different, a comprehensive strategy to overcome the imbalances caused by apartheid and racism. The overwhelming percentage of people in South Africa need affirmative action. Unions criticise corporate affirmative action policies because of their narrow focus on identifying and promoting a select number of black managers - often for "soft" jobs in public relations or human resources - without simultaneously addressing a mass form of affirmative action on the shop floor or at production level. When companies do institute some form of production level affirmative action, it is limited to educational programmes aimed at "levelling the playing fields". However, such programmes rarely make a real difference to workers in terms of salary or upward job mobility.

The researcher supports the union's statement in as far as a comprehensive strategy is necessary to overcome the imbalances caused by apartheid and racism. Organisations should take cognisance of the reason why affirmative action was necessary in the first place, as well as the motivation for specifically black orientated unions in the past decades to struggle towards empowering employees. In conclusion trade unions are a vital stakeholder group in affirmative action and their input and observations are essential to the acceptance and success which can contribute to the legitimacy, design and implementation of the affirmative action programmes in organisations. If the organisations fail in affirmative action programmes, it is likely that the society as a whole will fail.

3.2.3 A survey of COSATU shop stewards

- Background and attitudes of shopstewards

The over riding principle of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is worker control and democracy. There are more than twenty-five thousand shop-stewards in COSATU. They are spread across nine regions and thirteen of COSATU's fourteen affiliates (no shop-stewards have yet been established in the SA Domestic Workers Union (SADWU). Yet not much is known about the shop-stewards by management, academics and politicians, and even by union organisers.

The study began with a request by the Communications Department of COSATU for help in identifying the social background and attitudes of shop-stewards - the target group for a planned journal.

The "typical" shop-steward in COSATU is in his mid-thirties, with some high

school education. Although his home language is Xhosa, Sotho or Zulu, he considers himself to be a South African and does not see himself in ethnic terms. He prefers reading in English. He is Christian and attends church services regularly with his wife (or partner) and children. He would like to spend more time with his family but “the struggle” takes too much “family” time. He owns a TV set and a radio and uses both regularly.

Outside the home, the shop-steward takes on another identity. His central concern is the struggle for better living and working conditions for himself and his fellow workers. He has been working for the same company for over eight years as a semi-skilled worker. He earns less than R 250 per week which he tries to increase by working overtime.

His experiences at work, and in the union movement, have led him to hold radical views on the future of the workplace and of society. He believes that worker committees should run the factories and that nationalisation is necessary to redress the inequalities of the past. Although he supports the African National Congress (ANC), and will vote for it, he believes that COSATU best represents the interests of workers. As a result he has participated regularly in stay-always called by COSATU to demonstrate workers' opposition to apartheid capitalism and its effect on workers.

Pityana & Orkin (1992:2) investigate and found that the involvement of shop-stewards in issues beyond the factory marks the South African Shop-steward as distinctive from his European counterparts. In South Africa shop-stewards emerge as crucial leaders in the struggles that began in the 1980's in the townships over rent, shack removals, education and township upgrading. The emergence of a powerful shop-steward movement opens up the possibility of a distinct role for the working class in the process of

transition to a new democratic order.

- **Studies of shop-stewards and workers in the South African context**

Shop-stewards were introduced into trade unions in South Africa in the late 19th century, by British craft workers. However, they operated rather weakly until the 1970's when, influenced by the growth of a shop-steward movement in Britain, the emerging industrial unions placed central emphasis on building a working class leadership based on the shop-floor.

In contrast, the shop-floor unions developed a cautious policy towards involvement in broader political struggles. These unions (in particular those which later affiliated to COSATU) emphasised instead the building of democratic shop-floor structures around the principles of worker control, accountability and mandating of worker representatives.

Jay Naidoo, who was to become General Secretary when COSATU was formed, announced that the November 1984 stay-away symbolised in a real way the first political intervention by organised labour on such a large scale since the militant actions of workers in the 1950's. It further laid the basis for a developing alliance between students, youth, and the worker-parents and gave the political leadership of the workers the confidence to assert the leading role of the working class in the broader struggle of our people (Pityana & Orkin, 1992:9).

The growing involvement of organised labour in liberation politics was to culminate in the formation of COSATU in late 1985.

- **Gender and family life**

The effects on women, who became the effective heads of these households, were contradictory. On the one hand, they acquired more decision-making power and performed a more active management function in the allocation of household resources. But they also had to cope with often insurmountable problems arising from the scarcity of resources, particularly as the remittances from men in the cities were inadequate and often dried up together.

This literature also highlighted the high rate of illegitimate births due to the social dislocation caused by pervasive migrancy and described the situation of elderly women caring and providing for small children (their grandchildren or children of relatives) in the impoverished rural areas, while their parents sought work in urban areas. The issue of women as migrant workers was also explored.

The disintegration of the family, and the social and economic pressures on women as heads of households, have increased during the 1980's. Pityana & Orkin (1992:13) claim that a relatively high proportion of African women are widows, especially in rural areas, because they retreat into their family networks after the death of a husband and because many rural-based women are married to migrant mineworker among whom there is a high death rate due to accidents and disease.

A survey of the Durban area showed that 58 per cent of African women were single and had never married. This demographic study illustrates graphically the widespread breakdown of traditional family structures under pressure from the migrant labour system, less restricted urbanisation and severe economic decline. The female-headed household is a reality for many

urban and rural African women. This reality is in contrast to the traditional ideal among many African communities in which marriage and patriarchy are ideologically dominant.

- **Social background of the COSATU shop-stewards**

COSATU has a total membership of one and a quarter million workers organised in fourteen affiliated unions in nine regions. COSATU shop-stewards are also relatively young: a third are younger than 29 years old, and a half between 30 and 39. Only about a fifth of the shop-stewards are older than forty. These figures are much the same for men and women.

- **The workplace : Conflict and co-operation**

Shop-stewards are a deeply committed group of activists who take their responsibilities seriously: 46 per cent report attendance at shop-steward meetings several times a week. In some unions, such as NUMSA and NUM, over 60 per cent weekly attendance is recorded. Hostel-dwellers seem to attend shop-steward meetings most frequently, while single parents have the lowest attendance rate.

Shopstewards are, on the whole, drawn from the traditional industrial working class, predominantly from the unskilled and semi skilled categories (55 per cent). Shop-stewards tend to be more educated and better paid than their constituents. Nearly a quarter, 24 per cent, have some form of post-matric education and 60 per cent have gone beyond primary school education. This is in stark contrast with the African population as a whole, of whom 55 per cent have not completed primary school (Pityana & Orkin, 1992: 22).

In spite of these differences there are important mechanisms which keep the shop-stewards in touch with their constituents. In the first place, a strong democratic political culture has been built up inside the labour movement. An overwhelming majority of respondents, 95 per cent, agree with the statement that shop-stewards are bound by workers' mandates. Secondly, shop-stewards have internalised the idea that they must represent the interests of workers. In the survey they define their chief duties as representing workers (47 per cent) and promoting worker rights (19 per cent).

However, this role contains many tensions. Shop-stewards are faced by constituents whose expectations are greater than their capacity to deliver. Consequently, 80 per cent of our respondents feel that they may be in conflict with their constituents: they agree that occasionally they are required to discipline their members.

An important qualification in evaluating the perceptions of shop-stewards on the capacity of workers to control industry is their limited knowledge and experience of management. For example, the least-educated respondents are the most sure of the workers' ability to run factories (81 per cent with less than tertiary education, versus 65 per cent of those with tertiary education). The lowest earners, particularly those earning less than R100 per week, also feel worker committees should run factories. It is those shop-stewards with tertiary education, with high incomes of over R500 per week, and technicians in particular, who are sceptical of the workers' ability to run factories.

The fact that 70 per cent of shop-stewards believe that the interests of workers are best represented during constitutional negotiations by COSATU,

as against 21 per cent who support the ANC and 9 per cent the SACP, suggests that the consciousness of shop-stewards goes well beyond the factory, and that they have working-class politics. Thus, their responses point towards the desire for a radical social transformation. However, if management and the state respond more creatively to this desire and involve labour more centrally in decision-making, the end result could be a system of co-determination.

Shop-stewards provide the key link between trade union members and officials. Shop-stewards are active in attending union meetings. Attendance at meetings of COSATU local committees is less frequent, although one-fifth of the shop-stewards from CAWU, NUMSA and POTWA attend several times a week. Interestingly, the highest rate of attendance is by technicians and semi-skilled workers.

The unions provide the shopstewards with training, seminars, organisational assistance, information and, in some cases, finance.

3.2.4 A survey of COSATU shop stewards

Pons (1994:18-10) states that it is expected that the trade union movement of the future will take up the challenge of ending discrimination in employment practices more directly and ensure that affirmative action strategies are jointly developed. Their emphasis could conceivably be in the establishment and measurement of specific targets and development of appropriate training techniques to meet the generally low levels of education of their members. As training and development is essentially an area of broad common interest to employers and employees it would be suggested that this is an important area for negotiation between parties.

Finally, employers who ignore the needs of the unions in the process of developing affirmative action processes may find that their plans lack legitimacy of the workforce and could be doomed to failure.

3.3 BLACK ADVANCEMENT

The Oxford dictionary (1984:11) defines advancement as progress, rise in rank and help on. The researcher therefore deduces that from an industrial relations viewpoint, with emphasis on blacks, that black advancement could be defined as helping blacks to progress.

Maphai (1993:6) is of the opinion that affirmative action must concentrate on building the economic and social ability of people. The replacing of white workers with black workers or to redistribute wealth by taking wealth away from white people and giving it to black people. This is a quick fix attitude which cannot work and which will have disastrous long term economic results for South Africa.

Maybe the time has come to talk about social harmonisation rather than affirmative action thereby acquiring the buy-in of all the people in South Africa. Human (1993:28) founds that implicit assumptions of the black advancement model are that blacks currently have not the wherewithal to succeed in business and that organisations change, educate and place them in the organisations without fundamentally changing the organisations themselves.

Mbatha (1992:15) believes that black advancement would become irrelevant for the following reasons:

- Blacks are not a separate species which should be treated differently to whites. The general reason for “ under performance” to the western culture stems from inferior education, difference in culture, township life, poverty, lack of assertiveness, being disadvantaged, absence of work ethic, no concept of time. Therefore, the researcher deducts from Mbatha’s explanation that he argues that blacks should not be patronised, but white as well as black behaviour should be investigated to give explanations for certain behaviour.
- Secondly, Mbata argues that blacks advancement make children out of blacks. He declares that blacks aren’t helpless people that waits to be saved by whites. He continues, and state that blacks can take charge of their own development, and determine their own destiny. At this stage the researcher believes that this can only occur, if all employees are empowered to take charge of their own development.
- Finally, Mbata concludes that real advancement of blacks will only happen when blacks are in a position of power and control. The researcher notes that this was said prior to the elections in 1994. After the election, a great deal of change has occurred in the socio-political and economic sphere of South Africa. Affirmative action programmes strive to give effect to this changes within the organisations.

Anstey (1992:8) agrees with Mbata’s last statement towards worker democracy, but adds that the new industrial relations also includes a technological revolution. He continues and state that managers, workers and trade unions alike will face major challenges in revision their ideologies. He insists that old behaviours must change, and believe that revised thinking

on issues such as managerial prerogative, participative endeavour, skills development and levels of control in the production process should occur. The researcher agrees with this statement but believe that one should learn from the legacy of apartheid. The researcher suggests that special attention should be given to address the human development poverty, to be able to successfully integrate employees in this new envisaged participatory endeavours.

The South African Chamber of Business (1993:26-28) concludes from the black advancement scenario that the following learning aspects should be remembered in developing further management programmes:

- Special attention should be given to quality training and education.
- The “victim consciousness” (a believe that on is a potential victim of discrimination) should be addressed. From this statement the researcher deducts that people should be treated in a non-discriminatory fashion so that unmotivated entitlement ideologies does not negatively impact on the working environment.
- Appointing mentors with the appropriate attitudes has proven itself as a way of dealing with difficulties in mutual misperceptions.

Some of these aspects will be discussed in 3.3 of this chapter. The researcher believes that the solution lies in education, training, job creation, community development and small business development. Ability and qualifications should not be measured in a rigid and bureaucratic way. From the above the researcher concludes that black advancement could be seen as an insult to blacks, as was declared by Milazi (1996:1) if it does not

include the empowering of the said people.

3.4 BLACK EMPOWERMENT

From the previous section (see 3.3) it was deduced by the researcher that the upliftment of blacks should be accompanied with the proper empowerment programmes. The Oxford dictionary (1984:240) defines empowerment as the giving of power or authority. From an industrial relations perspective the researcher defines black empowerment as someone giving power or authority to blacks. Moss-Kanter (1994:98) defines empowerment as the act of giving power to people who operates within organisations.

Human & Pringle (1986:24-31) consider empowerment from the organisational perspective. They state that empowerment is a process of creating an environment where people are willing, able and allowed to perform to their potential. Foy (1994:3) states that empowering people must not mean disempowering managers. People want to be managed. Organisations are not empowered, but people are. Organisations can give power, or take it away. The empowering organisation puts the spotlight on winning, on giving people opportunities to perform to their maximum effectiveness.

Various aspects of empowerment could clear the definition. These are:

3.4.1 The dimensions of empowerment

Cook (1993:287) develops a development cube model which allows for three dimensions of empowerment, namely:

- **Objective empowerment.**

This describes the individual's movement from oppression to influence and opportunity in organisational terms. These may include job enrichment, promotion, being exposed to empowering leadership, organisational re-design in places of decision-making and authority, and by belonging to a learning organisation. Cook believes that line management should look at ways of removing organisational restrictions and create opportunities for people.

Drawing heavily on Conger & Kanungo (1988:471-482), it is suggested that line management should deal with this in the following steps:

- **Managers should identify and remove those characteristics of the organisation that restrict the employees, like bureaucratic style and poor communication.**
- **Managers should examine their own supervisory style, like authoritarianism and negativism.**
- **Reward systems must support development and not withdrawal.**
- **Employee's role should be clear and realistic goals should be set.**

The researcher suggests that the best way to possibly implement these steps, is by implementing an participatory scheme, by which employees are included to a certain extent in the decision-making process.

- **Subjective empowerment.**

This refers to a self-efficacy, motivation, enjoying people's high expectations and a reliance on one's own initiative. The researcher suggests that managers should equip themselves in the management of motivation, and should acquire a sound knowledge of various motivational theories and practices, by which they can enhance the development of their subordinates.

- Inner power.

This refers to that mysterious black box which sits inside people and determines whether or not they have the confidence to strike out and achieve. General racist criticism against black advancement stem from people's perception that achievement from blacks or the lack thereof arise from a lack in self-determination. The writer believes that a lack in understanding and support of those critics may just be the reason for potential black supervisors leading everybody else to disappointment into failure of their competencies.

3.4.2 Black economic empowerment

Mkhwanzi (1993:22) notes that it has been fascinating to observe political developments over the past three years. On the one hand, they have filled one with hope and enthusiasm for a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa. On the other hand, these developments have filled one with sadness, despair and hopelessness: the violence that is tearing our nation apart, unemployment queues that are swelling into millions, poverty that permeates our society, while bankruptcies and liquidations proliferate.

The most pressing need in South Africa at present is indisputably the development and upliftment of its black people, and full and meaningful

participation - not only in the country's political and social progress, but particularly in its economic development.

He continues and states that there are two fundamental issues. Firstly, when we talk black economic empowerment we are talking about the ownership and control of the productive assets of our country, land, capital, management and entrepreneurship and labour, i.e. economic power. Therefore, the discussion includes economic parity, full and meaningful participation of blacks in the mainstream of the economy, no more, no less.

Affirmative action usually denotes the promotion of members of disadvantaged groups to positions of seniority in various walks of life so that every echelon (in business, government and the professions) becomes more representative of the broader population mix, even if this entails (up to a point) passing over more meritorious applicants. The rationale for affirmative action stems partly from a desire to promote equality between groups (as distinct from individuals) as an end in itself and partly from a concern to right the wrongs of past discrimination.

The high road involves promoting economic growth. Opportunities would then open up for many upwardly mobile people, of which the majority would be black. The burden of the masses would be alleviated (Gerson: 1993: 26). The implementation of affirmative action means both embracing the incumbents and ensuring a conducive and supportive environment (Khonza, 1993:23).

3.4.3 Barriers to black economic empowerment

Bezuidenhout (1993:22) is of the opinion that affirmative action can improve

the economic ability of black people if it focuses on overcoming the barriers to economic empowerment as well as creating the right conditions for economic wealth creation.

SACOB (1993:8-15) states that affirmative action programmes focus on:

- Normalising racist tensions and conflict by identifying and rejecting racist behaviour and developing new non-racist behaviours in organisations and the community.
- Investing in the development of black intellectual and entrepreneurial resources in the fields of engineering, manufacturing, construction, maintenance, transport, trade and creating opportunities for the building of these intellectual and entrepreneurial skills through appropriate training and experience in the business world and support for small business development.
- Providing bridging education at tertiary level in study disciplines such as science, mathematics, language, technology, social and learning skills to black students with the ability and ambition to pursue tertiary education.
- Improving ineffective components of the education and training system of South Africa. The components of the system which show the greatest need for improvement, are the education and training of black mathematics, science and language teachers, the education and training of school principals in leadership and management and the creation of community learning centres with access to learning resources such as books and audio-visual equipment like television,

projectors, video machines, radios and cassette tapes as well as science and technology learning instruments. A deliberate effort with adequate resources and drive which focuses on these three priority areas will bring about a major shift in the delivery of appropriate and quality education.

- Investing in the establishment and development of small businesses, which can serve the community. Small businesses only become viable when they are supported by the community and given the opportunity by big business to survive. Big business in South Africa has a tendency to buy up successful small businesses and incorporate them in their bureaucratic cultures. This invariably results in the small business dying because the first person to leave is the entrepreneur who started and led the business to its success.
- Investing in the education of those members of the workforce whose level of numeracy and literacy prevent them from learning new, more demanding and productive jobs. The numeracy and literacy education must not be for the purpose of education per se but must enable the worker to learn new jobs and to contribute more value as a person. This will result in improving the worker's marketability in the world of work. Too many of the current numeracy and literacy training programmes endeavour to substitute or recover many years of no or poor education with very little effect. These courses should rather focus on improving the employability and promotability of the worker.
- Education and career guidance at primary and secondary school level. Very few black children have mothers and fathers who possess professional qualifications and do professional work and therefore they

do not have role models to guide them in their education decisions. Organisations and individuals must put a concerted effort into organising programmes, events and interactions which provide guidance on education choices and career opportunities especially with a view to the future world of work. Only through a deliberate emphasis on education and career guidance can the delivery of skills be shifted to the areas of greatest needs.

- Building culture compatible communities with integrated social services on those terrains, which were chosen for squatting by squatters. There is a major challenge for the design intelligence of South Africa to reconstruct squatter camps and to create productive culture friendly environments in which people can work, relax, play, interact and learn. Violence and crime which are driven by the many basic social needs of the community will be addressed at their root cause by the reconstruction of derelict community structures.

Black managers are tired of being passengers on the affirmative action plane, according to Mbabane (1996:8). For many years some black managers were content to be business class and first class passengers on the slow affirmative action plane. This plane had been piloted by white managers, who thought they knew best where it was supposed to go, and to some passengers it did not matter, as long as they were guaranteed business class seats. This had now changed as black managers wanted to have a direct say in the determining the direction of affirmative action programmes.

The Black Management Forum (BMF) is encouraging black managers to form BMF sub-branches in their companies as a guide to implementing and monitoring affirmative action programmes. Black managers wanted an all-

inclusive process of affirmative action in their companies. South Africa had to work towards a situation where a company's demographics reflected those of the nation. Industry's track record over the past two decades in attempting to accomplish this had left much to be desired, and there was no evidence to suggest the situation would change of its own accord. Black workers and managers must seek direct involvement in planning and monitoring progress in affirmative action in their companies (Vermeulen, 1995:2).

3.5 EFFECTIVELY INTEGRATING EMPLOYEES IN DECISION-MAKING

Many young black professionals openly despair about what they see as the reluctance of corporate South Africa to open its doors and boardrooms to talented black people. Labour minister, Tito Mboweni sympathises with them and says companies should be more willing to make a deliberate effort to change apartheid styles of management in training and recruiting staff, and to break their more recent habit of resorting to tokenism. Mboweni said further: "People are being recruited through very narrow contracts". Indeed, a quick flip through the Johannesburg Stock Exchange handbook shows that very few listed companies have black board members and, if they do, a few names dominate. Inside those companies, black advancement is uneven and talk of "window dressing" among black professionals is commonplace (Loxton, 1993:10).

The writer believes that corporate South Africa should seriously consider democratisation programmes within organisations to reflect the political situation, which will lead to greater economic growth. The writer supports ESCOM (1995:3) statement that companies and organisations which want to be relevant in the mid-1990's and into the future have to recognise that

they have to move beyond the paradigms and comfort zones of the past and actively change their work environment and culture to reflect the political, social and economic changes underway in the country and address the expectations of the workforce, among them, meaningful participation in the decision making processes and an opportunity to grow in the organisation.

Employers who are not willing to take up these challenges run the risk of becoming irrelevant. A participative and inclusive decision-making style is emerging the world over as one of the hallmarks of leading organisations. In today's globally competitive world, hierarchical organisational structures are having to give way to de-layered, flatter structures where decisions are taken at the workplace by the people directly involved in the particular work activity.

3.6 WHERE ARE THE BLACKS?

At present the supply of black candidates exceeds the demand for them. Black accountants, black bookkeepers, black engineers, black computer personnel, black general managers, all of these and more are available. There are thousands of black professionals currently in search of work. What can be done to this problem? Companies should be committed to two things: fined goalposts and a fixed time frame. Fined goalposts means not prolonging the endless search for the "ideal black". A fixed time frame means committing oneself to a deadline, "by the end of this month we must hire a person to fill this particular job". No whining about not being able to find people, rather a commitment to do it now (Stern, 1993:46).

The writer is of the opinion that proper culture-free selection and

appointment criteria should be utilised in the appointment of the candidate.

3.7 A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Meintjies (1993:32) mentions that the following aspects should be included in a affirmative action programme, for it to be successful:

- Affirmative action initiatives requires support and backing from the highest level in the organisation.
- Affirmative action is a successful policy in those companies which believe that it can be done, taking a strategic approach. Companies should hire black candidates for posts which are significant, not because it's the nice thing to do or because it's "socially responsible." They should do so because, in the short term, it makes good business sense. All too often companies feel they are doing the country or blacks a favour by hiring them. This attitude is patronising and certainly not business like.
- A company should have clear value statements rejecting discrimination. There needs to be a clear goal. For example that the process is meant to result in guidelines or in enhanced staff-performance.

The writer believes that the organisational culture should also be checked for racial and cultural (and other discriminatory) practices, to be able to enhance a contusive organisation. These implementation of these strategies are discussed in chapter 4.

3.8 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TECHNIQUES

The first step in any affirmative action programme is to identify and stop all discriminatory practices, both direct and indirect. Some of the techniques for achieving affirmative action are:

- **Advertising**

Campanella (1993: 20) states that an employer can start by declaring that it has adopted a policy of equal opportunity. This means that all jobs are open to suitably qualified applicants, irrespective of race and gender. Employers should consider the Labour Relations Act (66/ 1995), Schedule 7, Part B, Section 2(2)(a) which declares that an employee includes an applicant for employment.

- **Recruitment/selection**

Fuhr (1994:15) states that it is particularly in this area that many blacks and women have traditionally been excluded by indirect discrimination. Selection criteria should, therefore, be objective, i.e. related to the inherent requirements of the job as determined by the demands which that job places on the worker performing it.

Regarding training and promotion, the employer may target suitable employees from disadvantaged groups for training to allow them to qualify for promotion.

- **Confronting racism**

Fuhr (1993:18) states that he grew up believing that blacks were not to be trusted. "They were the enemy".

He continues and states that the tragedy of South Africa is that the tensions created by years of racial polarisation and mistrust have multiplied to the point where we have now become debilitated by fear, fear of an uncertain political and economical future, fear of a seemingly uncontrollable wave of violent crime, fear of fundamental change in both society and the workplace.

Employees of all races, even with the best intentions, often respond to the ingrained stereotypes of white superiority and black inferiority. Effectively isolated by apartheid, the behaviour of all South Africans has been conditioned by a lifetime of assumptions based on isolation and ignorance, the basic ingredients of racial fear. The researcher is of the opinion that only through the acceptance and respect for fellow people, can working environments prosper.

3.9 A DEVELOPMENT TOOL IN THE BUSINESS INTERFACE

Adams (1993:59) observes that affirmative action is part of day-to-day behaviour in most spheres of social and economical life. The question is no longer whether or not there will or should be some type of affirmative action, but rather in what spheres it is most likely, what it will entail and how it can be handled effectively.

In virtually each case the emphasis falls on access, affordability, the creation of scope or opportunities, and/or some pro-active involvement aimed at the strengthening of black entrepreneurs with respect to the particular

critical area. In line with the main arguments around affirmative action it is not suggested here that all these interventions should amount to “doing it for the black entrepreneur” or providing services or inputs at zero cost whilst non-blacks have to pay market rates. The emphasis falls on the process of addressing all the needs and opening up opportunities rather than on charity or subsidization, even though afford ability during start-up or learning processes is often quite critical (Adams, 1993:59).

Johnstone, *et al.* (1992:1) agree with Adams and state that affirmative action have become a part of the daily life of business. The statement continues that affirmative action is seen to the operating of a successful business. The researcher considers affirmative action necessary for the effective functioning of business process. For, without an affirmative action programme little effort would be made by organisations to embed the political and social changes of this country.

The researcher is of the opinion that organisation should not lose track of investments, job creation, profits and economical growth. Without economical growth an affirmative action programme will be worthless. Therefore, affirmative action should be part of a company’s overall strategy but should not be the only focus of an organisation. In this respect Primos (1994:32) states that most corporate recruiters have shifted their focus from seeking the “best candidate for the job” to seeking the “best black candidate”.

The fundamental characteristics of affirmative action in relation to (small) business success, is described in Table 2.

Table 2: The fundamental characteristics of affirmative action in relation to (small) business success

CRITICAL AREA	NEED OR SCOPE FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
1. Management Experience	Formal training, in-service experience, mentorship support, ongoing "hand holding", scope for self-development.
2. Finance	Access to regular external capital, leniency on securities demanded, compensation for lack of own starting capital and low asset base, financial partnerships.
3. Markets	Access to established markets outside as well as inside townships, experience sharing in marketing techniques, help in breaking down market barriers.
4. Premises	Deregulation of zoning and other barriers to the use of lowcost premises, access to low rental premises in appropriate locations, flexibility in lease arrangements during start-up phase of periods of strain, scope for interaction with nearby entrepreneurs.
5. Trained staff	Access to trained/experienced staff or help to appropriately train or skill-supplement own staff, help with respect to own staff development efforts
6. Technology transfer	Access to technology and know-how relevant to the firm's production, marketing and administrative processes.
7. Sector involvement and know-how	Access to the operational, marketing and general business know-how of the relevant sector.
8. Small business info and advice	Access - at affordable cost - to more general information and advice services pertaining to day-to-day business practices, eg. Legal, regulatory and fiscal matters, labour matters, credit control hints.
9. Networking and lobbying	Access to existing and evolving networking systems and decision-making processes relevant to the particular sector/industry, markets, local area and other business spheres.
10. Creation of an entrepreneurial environment and tradition.	Involvement in youth and adult programmes to strengthen entrepreneurial awareness and commitment.

Source: Adams (1993:59.)

Ryan (1993:1) is of the opinion that the Black Management Forum (BMF) proposes that the seats held by black executives should at least be 50 per cent. They also state that large investment in education and training is

expected by organisations during this period. The researcher believes that the principle of target setting rather than the specifics will guide organisations affirmative action programmes. Therefore, it is believed that the demographics of an organisation's society, but especially the nation should guide the targets.

These proposed targets needs to be evaluated against the number of affirmative action programmes currently in place. Russel (1996:4) states that the number of programmes declined from 94per cent in 1995 to 82 per cent in 1996.

In order to grasp the areas for affirmative action in the business interface one must take a closer look at the preconditions for business success. Given the virtual absence of a small and medium enterprise tradition amongst Africans in this country - due to a whole range of explicitly and implicitly discriminatory forces as well as the neglect of support in the past - it is necessary to look at the full spectrum of these preconditions in order to achieve a significant business development breakthrough in the near future. The latter, again, seems necessary for the stimulation of overall economic growth and job creation and for a more balance black, white business interface. The critical areas and the scope or need for affirmative action one should differentiate between the needs and potential of large, medium and small enterprises (Adams, 1993:62).

3.10 PERPETUAL TRAINEES

Another major problem is the "training syndrome". Managers are insistent on training blacks because, allegedly, they come from a "different" mind set that needs special training. Blacks need training in exactly the same way as

whites do or do not need training, depending on the circumstances in the particular case. It is in fact true, that in South Africa, blacks generally, need training more than whites, but this generalisation is injurious when applied to blacks who have already acquired professional training and experience.

One often hears requests from graduates who will then be "trained" and "imposed" to the particular company's industry and peculiarities. After some time, many of them complain that they have no real job being kept as trainees endlessly without getting responsibilities. Black professionals should be hired for real jobs with real responsibilities. The possibility of failure exists, but the promise of success mirrors the hope that we can save the country from a dismal future (Stern, 1993:46).

For many years Nafcoc (National African Federated Chambers of Commerce) was regarded as a tame club for black businessmen. A new focus was present in a resolution passed at a conference, this stated that 10 years hence" all JSE-listed companies must have at least 30 per cent black board members, 40 per cent of shareholders must be black, 50 per cent of outside purchases must come from black-owned suppliers and 60 per cent of top management must be black".

Nafcoc Chairperson, Sam Motsuenyane said the targets had been set to ensure black economic empowerment. The process would have to be coupled with black access to land and capital, labour mobility and openings for good education and training.

In 1979 close to 96 per cent of executives were white and only about 300 employees of other race groups had been appointed to management positions from 1960 - 1980, according to management consultant Roy

Smollan. This has changed.

First National Bank reveals that in 1967 less than 1 per cent of its clerical staff were black, coloured or Asian. By 1977 the percentage had risen to 13 per cent, today it stands at 33 per cent. Of the clerical staff 8,1 per cent are Asian, 7,7 per cent black and 17,3 per cent coloured. This compares with 5,4 per cent, 5,9 per cent and 11,6 per cent five years ago. There are now 487 black, coloured and Asian departmental heads in the bank compared with 153 five years ago, and 76 black, coloured and Asian managerial staff as against 30 five years ago.

In the mid-Eighties, Nedbank had blacks represented only on the lower management scales. Of the total of 29 only two were Africans. Today they have one African executive (there are no coloured or Asian executive) of nine senior managers, one is African. Of 105 lower-management staff 40 are coloured, 52 are Asian and 13 are African.

In the past, the experience of many blacks, are indeed women of all race groups, was the same, recruitment was less a problem than advancement. After a few years of banging their heads against the middle-management door, most left - or accepted that the company would not permit further advancement.

James Nkosi, Eskom's first and so far only black executive, recalls that when he joined the company blacks could aspire only to the two lowest ranks on the company ladder. Now Eskom claims one of South Africa's most progressive employment policies. It includes a 14-point, short-term action plan, with target dates, responsibility and support structures. For example, by certain dates all E-band (executive level) white managers had to get

themselves a black mentor. By another date critical areas had to be identified, and by yet another, candidates with potential for development in those areas had to be pinpointed.

Mashuda Romano, Executive Director of the Association of Black Accountants, says blacks are traditionally placed either in a front office or service related fields - rarely in positions where they have to make financial decisions for the organisation. Blacks were kept out of the inner circle of decision-making. It is the middle management, most human resources experts and management consultants agree, which is the true test of workplace integration and advancement. If a company has black executives at the top but none in the middle, advancement as such is not taking place.

Engen began its programme almost six years ago. Mel Palmer, Human Resources Manager says: "We realised if we wanted to get further into the ever increasing black market, we could not hope to do it with a company staffed by whites with totally Western concepts. People are different." The programme succeeds, Palmer says, because it is driven from the top. All the successful advancement projects surveyed not only have top management blessing but active involvement from the CEO down. Such programmes are not cheap however, Engin has spent more than R20 million on its Project, and management consultants agree that there are no quick-fix solutions. Successful advancement has to be based on a deliberate company policy, facilitated by deadlines, targets and deliberate employee assessment at all levels. It is apparent that middle management have to become aware that not only must they not put up obstacles, but success and promotion are tied to the advancement and increased skills of the staff under them.

An early Engen failure, Palmer says, was hiring black graduates who would

come into the workplace and "feel alienated" because of the Westerners, under supported because there were not enough people of the same race groups and not knowing how to apply the knowledge they had. Mentorship is critical. Mentors can be of either race group and are sponsors rather than supervisors. The mentor helps his/her charge fit into and learn about the corporate culture, and also about the background of the mentor.

Some blacks have "learnt helplessness". Black people have been put into a poverty syndrome which means "nothing I can do can improve the situation, but I can blame circumstances".

Keith Rosmann of Cards - human resource consultants for groups such as Eskom, Sasol, AECI, Transnet and Middelburg Steel & Alloys - points out that affirmative action will never work if simply targeted at the promotion of just one person. It needs to be part of an environment or culture and requires total corporate involvement. Some companies, he says, employ graduate blacks when the company has no definite position or career path for them "They set them up for failure, then say, "This engineer we advanced has failed" "Many affirmative action programmes fail, he adds, because there are no support programmes and too little understanding of cultural background." Black men, for example, come from different cultural, education and political background than their white counterparts (ANON, 1991:5-15).

3.11 GENDER AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Myakayaka-Manzini (1992:1) defines gender as the social construction of masculinity and femininity. It refers to the differential social and cultural characteristics that we attribute to men and woman. Gender attributes

construct men as dominant and women as subordinate in any familial, social, legal, economic or political relationship. Preukel (1989:12) states that the subordination issue is a specific challenge facing black women. Thus, Myakayaka-Manzini (1992:1) continues, gender is not sex. Sex refers to the biological characteristics of men and women.

Gender differences are not necessarily sex differences. Gender attributes play an important role in shaping the sexual division of labour in the home, in society and in the labour force. They influence work which women have to do, their remuneration, the value of their labour, and their visibility in society. The linkage between women's social reproduction roles and paid work roles is crucial in maintaining women's subordination. But mere recognition of this problem doesn't solve the problem of women workers. Young (1993:128) states that it is a mistake to assume that all women would necessarily work for women or against gender subordination. Yet there is reason to believe that women may be more likely to open doors for talented women and to provide new balance and comprehensive attention to gender in the decision-making process.

Alpers (1993:36) adds that the constraints women's development needs to face are:

- Attitudes in South Africa are so entrenched that specific gender roles are acceptable. If a woman is perceived as aggressive, she may have problems.
- Teenage girls are not encouraged to study maths or science. Yet these subjects can provide a foundation for professional development.

- Once in the workplace, many female employees encounter two types of men: those who do not acknowledge women's equality or potential and those who think they do women a favour when they give them less work because they have household chores to do.
- South African companies may say that they encourage women's advancement, but a survey conducted by Wits Business School for the Executive Women's Club of South Africa found most such assertions to be token gestures. Few offered benefits such as day care support, even though such amenities can help retain valued employees.

Prekel (1989:12) adds that cultural problems may still hold back women.

These are:

- The Labola system, which may make a successful black woman "unaffordable" in terms of the bride-price her parents demand for her or a family who may veto some of her career-related decisions.
- Some black men's traditional views on equal wages (seen as an insult to men), and reluctance to accept instructions from or via a woman.

Clayton (1995:64) indicates that affirmative action is a societal response to a societal problem. He continues and states that in the absence of group identification problems by men or women, gender discrimination is likely to be perceived as an abstract social problem rather than an immediate personal threat. He believes that women with a low level of gender consciousness may express concern about gender discrimination, but assume it doesn't affect their own lives. Their response to any personal disadvantage, if they perceive it at all is likely to be that it is a personal problem. Stress and feelings of guilt may result. But solutions to a societal

problem can only come from taking societal action. The researcher therefore believes that affirmative action should empower the various genders to be able to uphold themselves in a working environment.

Alperson (1993:36) states that affirmative action programmes should include the following:

- All vacancies in organisations should be opened to women workers.
- Organisations should offer appropriate training to women.
- Equal pay for equal value should be paid.

The researcher believes affirmative action measures should look specifically at measures that can improve the status of women in the workplace. In conclusion the researcher believes is limit but through affirmative action programmes can undergo change. Women face special circumstances pertaining to structural and cultural dynamics, given their vast underrepresentation in managerial roles in organisations. Affirmative action programmes should seek to address the under representation in aspects that range from individualist human capital approaches to group and structural change to, finally transformed organisational cultures. Support systems like day care facilities should be offered to women to encourage employment and enhance the quality of work which can only be rendered if the mother does not need to worry over her children safety and welfare during working hours.

3.12 CONCLUSION

The increasing complexity of the South African business environment as we know, is placing heavy and new demands on management. This, combined with greater freedom for people to question authority, place a high premium

on management capacity and leadership ability.

The international competitive environment is another important dimension we cannot overlook. It places its own limitations and agenda on the way we manage and develop our people. World markets are highly competitive. They also behave in a certain fashion and offer formidable challenges.

This together with an uncertain and volatile South African business environment will place severe demands on management which has been protected and lineated from the world. It is clear that a participative approach to management holds the key to the survival and success of our companies and the country as a whole.

People should be developed and trained in a fashion to enhance their performance. Employers should look out not to show tokenism to the various genders and races who have previously been disadvantaged by discriminatory practice which emanated from socio-political ideologies. Organisations should seek ways through participatory schemes, by involving the various role players, to build capacity in organisations and to invest human capital, by means of proactive-active development and opportunities.

The successful implementation of affirmative action programmes need the commitment of all the relevant role players especially those of the unions. It is therefore important to understand the broad perceptions of unions regarding affirmative action programmes as well as the role which unions could play in the furthering of affirmative action programmes in organisations.

The concept of black advancement progresses to the concept of black

empowerment. Various dimensions of black empowerment could lead to the betterment of affirmative action and the writer considers these as vital for the advancement from the affirmative action stage to that of managing diversity. The implementation of these would enable the workplace to become more democratised and reflect the political and social changes in the broader society.

Makwana (1994:25) adds that the competitive edge of companies is no longer going to be determined only by the quality of service or products, but also by the extent to which an organisation has demonstrated clear commitment to transforming its organisational culture and its external corporate environment within the context of embracing economic empowerment of men and woman who have clearly been disadvantaged by the apartheid economic policies of past governments.

The researcher is of the opinion that companies should rather focus on targets and clear goals in terms of their affirmative action policies. Affirmative action should also focus on relationships across the hierarchy which serve as the conduits of human energy necessary to shape a transformative environment in which affirmative action can thrive.

Companies should implement training courses and it should be monitored in order to establish if the courses were successful. Follow up courses should address the problem of unsuccessful courses. Education and training is the only way in which employees could reached success the their work environment and also results the upliftment of the individual. Training targets are vital to the survival and success of organisations.

Workshops should be held on a regular basis where blacks and whites could

discuss their differences. Cargill (1994:12) adds that whites dislike blacks because, they talk too loudly, they practise mass action, they have no respect for human life (perceived black-on-black violence), their eating habits are unacceptable, black people think the world owes them a living, they have no respect for property, they have no work ethic, do not pay for electricity and housing and they are narrow minded. Blacks, on the other hand, dislike whites because, they have exploited blacks, they have no respect for black people or their culture, they are greedy and self-centred, they have taught their children bad things about blacks, they look down on black people and they prefer animals to blacks. The last item illustrates the extent of the hurt, resentment and polarisation.

It is important that affirmative action in South Africa does not only include programmes to uplift people of different colour or ethnic groupings but also incorporate the various demands women need to become stakeholders in the process of upliftment. Only if South African organisations give all their employees a fair change to grow, opportunities for economic development will grow, and will these organisations be able to meet the demands of the international markets.

CHAPTER 4

MANAGEMENT APPROACH TOWARDS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMME

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Venter (1994:28) explains that the term, affirmative action, has suddenly become the new philosophy, the new mechanism to change things the right way in an organisation. In a sense, affirmative action can be seen as the tool to fix the parity in organisations, to create new horizons for all employees and to alter the shape of the organisation into a more manageable structure. But why the controversy surrounding affirmative action? What about the costs of implementing an affirmative action programme? Has the organisation enough money to support this scheme and follow it through to the end? Is affirmative action in effect not reverse discrimination? Much too often in big organisations it is a case of "this is what we have decided and here are the ways in which our decisions will be implemented."

Blakemore & Drake (1996:183) state that managers are by definition interested in the implementation and in the application of ideas in real situations. However, this does not mean that they are always concerned with one narrow reality, nor that they are impervious to fads and fashions in management thinking. Jankowitz (1995:4) adds that affirmative action is not about fads, morals, levelling playing fields or moving goalposts, but about developing a growth strategy that will result in the business becoming world class and competitive by investing in human capital.

The researcher is of the opinion that culture differences should be

understood and the people should not be forced to change and live in a new culture setting. Affirmative action lies in the ability to understand and accept cultural differences and not to force people to change and live in a new cultural setting. Herein lies, the puts of our assumption, changing mindsets to develop a shared vision to break down the wall between dominant Western culture and marginalised African culture.

To change internal relationships so that everyone can see, experience and accept the other - horizontally and vertically - it is necessary to implement a number of actions according to Venter (1994:29). These actions are as follows:

- A programme to change the mind set of top management towards the importance and reality of affirmative change.
- Leadership courses for all supervisors and managers to make them aware of "open cage management".
- An education programme for black and white employees in which they can experience their different cultures so that the implications of change would become clearer to them. This programme must be launched at all levels of the organisation.
- A programme for black and white employees to participate in career development. An affirmative approach towards literacy and the development of language and numeracy skills for black and white employees to an acceptable level set by management. It is imperative for each employee to see and know what is expected of him/her. This is an effective way of getting rid of dependence on others.

- Ensuring a well-designed glass pyramid communication system throughout the organisation.
- Training leaders to accept and endorse core values so that they are able to communicate these values to all employees.
- Of necessity it implies a thorough introduction to the basics of capitalism, if employees are capable and feeling the benefits of an adapted socialistic capitalist system, they should be more than willing to perform actively and positively in that system.

4.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IMPLEMENTATION MODEL

Jewson, *et al.* (1990:9) identify a number of management initiatives that were associated with equal opportunities in the past. These were:

- A legislative approach by managers which emphasised compliance with perceived legal requirements and codes of practices.
- Managerial initiatives which are built upon models of good practice and which, through training or other channels, attempt to persuade employees of the value of equality measures.
- A strategy based on the organisation's own rules (rather than laws or external regulations) and the specification of procedures to be followed to achieve defined outcomes.

Affirmative action programmes often try to create "white" blacks who can

easily be slotted into the existing system. In the absence of an equity model, one would be trying to gain access to defined power structures and those power structures were defined by white men (Ramphela, 1993:12). The reader should compare this statement with 3.3 as this statement could be termed a perception of black advancement.

4.3 MODEL BUILDING

The researcher is of the opinion that an implementation model for affirmative action should be practical and easy to understand and apply.

- Description of a model.

Van Staden (1994:39) describes a model as follows:

A model is a conceptual framework or structure that has been successfully developed in one field and is now applied, primarily as a guide to research and thinking, in some other, usually less well developed field.

The Oxford dictionary (1984: 472) defines a model as a simplified description of a system for calculations. Van Staden (1994: 39) considers a model as an ideal to attain. The model building has its right to existence due to the prediction value of the model. The use of the term model relieves the investigator, or at least may be intended to relieve the investigator of the responsibility for checking the adequacy of any substantive theoretical propositions. However, it is expected of the researcher to accept responsibility for the creation of relationships in the development of a model.

Model and theory are closely linked. A model consists of theories. A theory

is regarded as a group of logical coherent propositions which is presented as a systematically description of the relations between different facts of a case, or a group of related matters (Van Staden, 1994: 40).

The researcher believes that a model and theory could be integrated and directly linked to an affirmative action plan.

- Advantages of a model.

The use of a model have the following advantages according to Van Staden (1994:40-41):

- Focus on systems.

The use of models serve as purpose to view occurrences as a complete view and not in isolation. The advantage proceeding from the use of a model give rise to the physical advantage.

- Physical advantage.

The physical advantage suggests the manipulation of symbols rather than people. The physical advantage of using symbols rather than people contribute to the economical advantage.

- Economical advantage.

The economical advantage indicates a cost and time saving through usage of a model rather than people in a organisation, for the purposes of research, and without hindering the operational functions of a organisation.

- **Scientific method.**

Model building is a basic part of scientific methods. The model building process is similar to the hypothesising process.

- **Accuracy of thoughts.**

The ultimate aim of the use of a model is to accomplish accuracy in concepts.

It is evident from the above that the advantages should be utilised in reaching the goals of an affirmative action plan.

Mbigi & Maree (1995:60) state that the challenge of organisational transformation is not about implementing techniques. The greater challenge is about managing the paradigm shift. Therefore, the researcher is of the opinion that a model should assist management in managing affirmative action.

- **Choice of a model.**

The main criteria at the choice of a specific model is the purpose why the model is developed and used for.

Van Staden (1994: 41) indicates the five following aspects, which should be taken into consideration when deciding on a appropriate model, namely:

- the nature of the subject under discussion;
- the level of knowledge currently on the subject;

- the level of measurement the subject requires contrary to the level of measurement which should actually be reached;
- the purpose of the end result the researcher want to reach;
- the time and sources available.

4.4 THE APPROACH WHICH WILL BE FOLLOWED FOR THIS STUDY

A system approach as a form of model will be utilised for this study.

- The system approach.

As previously mentioned in this chapter, the use of a model has the advantage that occurrences are not viewed in isolation, but as a whole. Affirmative action, especially because it has a lot of influence on various parties, cannot be viewed in isolation. The system approach are therefore ideal for a structure on the democratisation of the workplace. For the sake of completeness a description of the concept of a system will be provided.

- Description of a system.

Van Staden (1994: 42) adds that a system could be described as follows:

A system is an organised whole, consisting of interrelating and interdependent parts. Van Staden (1994:41) expresses that there is a interdependency between the various parts of a system. A interdependency is a key concept in systems theory. The elements of a system interact with

one another and are interdependent.

In this regard, Wingrove (1993:33) states that the real issue remains, there is a limited time and a major task to implement a process that will yield measurable results and align the organisation to meet the political and socio-economic demands without too great an impact on its bottom line and retaining its capacity to remain competitive.

- Features of a system.

Van Staden (1994: 42) identifies the following system dispose characteristics:

Firstly, the system objectives. Secondly, the systems environment. Thirdly, the resources of the system. Fourthly, the components of the system with, in turn, their activities, goals and measures of performance. Finally, there is the management of the system. Van Staden (1994: 42) proposes that the following attributes to a system be directly utilised in the development of an affirmative action model:

- affirmative action is specifically utilised to reach a certain end result;
- affirmative action falls within the environment which has a definitive influence of processes in the working environment;
- during the affirmative action programme, if it is correctly instituted, information is gained form various sources;
- affirmative action comprise of various interdependent parts;

- during the process of affirmative action can be managed.

Jackson, *et al.* (1991: 61) is of the opinion that the system approach embraces five major commitments. It seeks to demonstrate critical awareness; it shows social awareness; it is committed to the complementary and informed use of system methodologies; to the complementary and informed development of all the different strands of systems thinking at the theoretical level; and it is dedicated to human emancipation. The researcher proposes that the practical use of the system approach be the focus and emphasis of this model.

The drivers of strategy to determine the organisation's direction, spread and results are firstly resources. The goal of management is to "sweat these assets" for the greatest possible returns, secondly the vision. The leader's goals, dreams and ambitions come together in his vision of the future. He must make a careful judgement about how high he aims, given the fact of limited resources. Thirdly, assumptions, all decisions are based on assumptions about the present and the future. Fourthly values with which he makes sense of the individual act under given circumstances (Manning, 1988: 11-12).

4.5 PHASES OF AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMME

Fuhr (1993:15) adds that racial fears and tensions have historically shaped white management style to the point where thoughtless prejudice and stereotypical reactions have become the norm. They have also learned the power of instilling fear and how best to manipulate it. The sentiment has been "blacks only respect someone they fear". The researcher believes that

all the individuals and groups who have a stake in decision-making should be part of the process of affirmative action, to reduce fears, as stated by Fuhr.

Practitioners and commentators broadly agree that "muddling through" an affirmative action process even if guided by the best intentions and the greatest enthusiasm of staff and management, is not the most effective and promising approach. Basic principles of human resources management and the experience of hundreds of organisations suggest a logical sequence of steps through which an affirmative action programme should go. There cannot, of course, be a mechanical precision about the elements, their sequence, or the time-span of each phase, since management styles differ, personalities often play a critical role, and circumstances vary from firm to firm - let alone the differences in the socio-political and economic environment of each country, region or economic sector.

Clayton & Crosby (1992:97) state when evaluating the success of specific affirmative action programmes as they are initiated in actual organisations, that there is a more multifaceted measure of effectiveness needed. An affirmative action plan, in other words, does not alienate significant portions of the work force in an organisation as it operates to achieve justice. Nor does it undermine the confidence of the people benefitting from justice. Against that background the following 18 month time table might help organisations to assess their progress in this field. It includes the critical preparatory phase during which a formal programme is worked out - most South African organisations are still somewhere in that phase - and the first year after the launch, up to the first performance audit. See Table 3: Affirmative action programme phases and elements, for a proposed example of affirmative action phases.

Table 3: Affirmative action programme phases and elements, for a proposed example of affirmative action phases.

	PHASE AND ELEMENTS	TIME PHASE IN MONTHS
A	Preparatory phases	
1	Awareness of needs - organisation out of step - internal tensions - external criticism - lone-voice proposals not backed by top management	-
2	Pre-assessment of internal situation: ad hoc or more systematic - initiative sometimes crisis-triggered	1-2
3	Top-level commitment to non-discrimination with respect to blacks, women and other disadvantaged	3
4	Preparation of a systematic programme with specific targets (by in-house human-resources specialist, external consultants, or a management task group)	3-5
5	Securing commitment at middle management level	4-5
6	Comparing plans with other organisations	5
7	Formal commitment to programme * announcement/launch * establishment of monitoring committee	6
B	Implementation phases	
8	Adjusting the recruitment process	7-9
9	Internal sensitising at all levels and in all sections	7-10
10	Negotiation with unions (if applicable) or staff association(s)	8-10
11	Supplementary training of black staff	8+
12	Adjustment of promotion and advancement system	9+
13	Working out other areas of equalisation and black/female involvement * social development/support * education and training (eg bursaries, literacy programmes) * work atmosphere recreation and inter-personal contact	10+
14	Establish/fine-tune monitoring system, including regular board/executive feedback	10+
15	Refinement of the programme in the light of problems and ongoing performance evaluation	12+
16	Expansion of the programme to effectively reach all relevant groups	12+
17	Internal and external public relations of the programme	13-16
18	Sharing of experience with other firms	13-17
19	Preparation of first major audit, including internal discussion by monitoring committee	16-17
20	Release of first annual programme audit with top-level response and confirmation of commitment	18

Source: (Die Suid-Afrikaan, 1993:40).

The researcher is of the opinion that good affirmative action policies and procedures should:

- use new recruitment techniques, including staff members from disadvantaged groups, recruitment companies and non-profit organisations;
- evaluate criteria for selection and promotion, assessing their validity and bias;
- experiment with non-traditional career paths - including longer probationary periods, on-the-job training, mentoring, and alternative structures - but making sure to guard against their becoming either second class or ways to end-run performance requirements.
- experiment with linking part of employees' compensation with indication of their performance.

4.6 A TYPICAL AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

4.6.1 Definitions

The writer is of the opinion that the following definitions should be considered:

- Economically active population:

All persons who offer their employment to the labour market against remuneration. This include persons employed formally or informally, the self

employed who would wish to take up employment.

- **Line management:**

Any person in the management dispensation who is responsible for managing the enterprise.

- **Objectives:**

Broad goals set by top management which will direct the achievement of affirmative action.

- **Quotas:**

Specific, measurable goals set by top management.

- **Incorporate affirmative action in labour relations policy.**

A labour relations policy could be defined as an attempt to define an organisation's proposed courses of action in its dealings with its employees and their trade unions. The primary purpose is to provide management with a clear statement of the organisation's employee relations objectives (Moolman, 1993:58-59).

The researcher advises that it is important to incorporate the company's affirmative action policy and values into the labour relations policy to ensure sound equality practices and to enhance labour peace.

4.6.2 Need for affirmative action

The researcher is of the opinion that organisations should be committed to taking positive action to ensure equality of opportunity and equitable treatment in the conduct of business without prejudice on any grounds other than ability. To achieve this, certain equalisation will need to take place so that there truly is equality of opportunity.

The company comments itself to the development of employees so that they can fulfill their potential, and to the creation of a working environment which makes this possible. In a "New South Africa", the company will have to be in step with the changes taking place.

Affirmative action is also necessary because of the changes taking place in the marketplace. Black consumers will represent an increasingly dominant share of the market in the future and the company realises that to understand and to have credibility in its markets, the company's structure will have to be more representative of its market. Urbanisation will result in an increase in black consumers. Failure to change the company's profile will result in antagonism from consumers, unions, and other stakeholders.

Given the current skill shortage in certain categories and the predicted shortages in the future, the continued upgrading and training of staff is a priority. In particular, employees who previously have been disadvantaged will need particular attention through the process of affirmative action. If the process is managed with sensitivity it could result in being a stronger more representative organisation which all employees see opportunities for development, and to which they can feel committed.

Clayton & Crosby (1992:100) further add that affirmative action is only one of the social policies that can and must counteract the harmful conditions that condemn so many people in our nation to a life of diminished opportunities and rewards. The most effective affirmative action programme, hence, on its own will not be sufficient.

4.6.3 Statement of intent

Human(1993:99) indicates that affirmative action means taking positive action to redress historic inequality and injustice. In a practical sense, affirmative action is a proactive development tool which requires a re-evaluation of the organisations current policies, practices, and procedures in the following areas:

- promotions;
- selection and recruitment;
- development and training;
- performance appraisal;
- the responsibilities of line managers and human resources personnel;
- job evaluation and reward systems;
- corporate culture; and
- outreach programmes.

In the light of the above factors, it is necessary to:

- Compensate for disadvantages.

Continue to provide training and development opportunities for all employees, but particularly for those previously disadvantaged. This could

include additional and new training programmes such as literacy raining, adult education programmes, skills training, and accelerated management programmes. Donnelly, *et al.* (1987:350) claim that behavioural patterns of people are influenced significantly by their values systems. The researcher therefore suggests that organisations should note this and apply this in their internal cultural structures in the quest for an unified statement of intent.

- Actively integrate the organisation.

Act affirmatively to make the organisation more representative of the demographics of the society. Such integration should take place across functions and at all levels in the hierarchy, so that Africans, Coloureds, Indians, women and the handicapped are not only found in staff functions or the lower levels of management.

- Embark on a total systems intervention to ensure that no discrimination exists.

To achieve the goal of equal opportunities and a racially balanced organisation, any existing policies or practices which discriminate against Africans, Coloureds, Indians, women and the handicapped will have to be eradicated. This applies to all aspects of employment and conditions of service. It also refers to "qualitative" aspects such as interpersonal relations, assessment, training and retraining and promotion opportunities.

- Set objectives and quotas.

It is necessary to set objectives and to establish quotas to manage and monitor its affirmative action programme. The targets should be discussed

between line management and unions/associations It should reflect local demographics, but should also be in line with the quotas established at corporate. Pearce and Robinson (1991:14) states that long and short term objectives should be set to ensure that the affirmative action strategy is reached.

- **Maintain professional standards.**

The organisation maintains its commitment to achieving and maintaining high levels of efficiency, quality, and customer service.

- **Expand community involvement.**

It will be necessary to continue to make a contribution to upliftment in the broader society. This involves participating in community and other activities and projects, partly to improve perceptions and legitimacy of the organisation. Upliftment and developmental activities include, inter alia, child support programmes, maths and science teaching, bursaries, and support to small businesses and employee assistance programmes.

According to the researcher training and development are a crucial support structure in terms of the upliftment of the society. Structured development will play an important role in the upliftment of the society.

4.6.4 Business definition

Affirmative action constitutes a central part of the business plan. It is directed towards improving the mix of racial and gender groups both horizontally and vertically, in order to:

- Be relevant in a new socio-political order.
- Uphold and improve standards through development.
- Enhance the Company's competitive edge.

Affirmative action refers to:

- equalising opportunities by providing additional training and development to employees who have been historically disadvantaged, and
- pro-actively recruiting and advancing Africans, Coloureds, Indians, women and the handicapped, to make the company more representative of the demographic of South Africa.

4.6.5 Strategic objective

It is realistic to set objectives for the achievement of affirmative action. It is not intended to impose a once-off quota, but rather that regions and divisions should negotiate with the unions quotas which take into account their situation and their location. According to Adams (1993:154) it is essential that all parties taking part in the process of change and liberation in South Africa must guard scrupulously against the creation of unrealistically high expectations

Given the absence of Africans, Coloureds, Indians, women and the handicapped in skilled, supervisory and management positions, the objectives will have to make provision for rapid advancement of these groups. Adams (1993:154) explains that in terms of a quota system, standards could be reduced, the level of professionalism diminished and productivity damaged.

The researcher also does not agree with a quota system. An imbalance of professionalism would be created and this could have a negative effect on economical growth.

The quota system take into account the following:

- The racial and gender mix of the economically active population in the region under consideration.
- The work disciplines where there is a limited supply of candidates.

Kochan & Barocci (1985:115) point out that the ability of an enterprise to attain its strategic goals is affected by the human resources in three ways, namely:

- cost economy;
- ability to function effectively; and
- ability to establish new enterprise and change operations.

The researcher is of the opinion that it can therefore be stated unequivocally strategic planning cannot be carried out efficiently without due consideration of human resources management in an enterprise. Ultimately, strategic planning is implemented by human resources in an enterprise, with their unique abilities.

4.6.6 Responsibilities

According to the researcher for affirmative action to succeed, top management will have to show its commitment to achieving the stated objectives. It is the experience of other South African companies that unless top management takes the lead and drives the process, Affirmative action remains rhetoric, and nothing changes. This is particularly important because a changed ethos and support systems will be needed for affirmative action.

Initially the top management will have to play the major roles to drive the process until it gains momentum. Affirmative action managers in the departments will play a leading role to ensure that objectives are met. They will have to furnish details in the position of their departments as well as report on the reasons why objectives are not met (if applicable). They will report any shortcomings to management. Affirmative action managers will also have direct access to the corporate affirmative action section. Ultimately, however, line management will be held accountable for result.

It is recommended that, as far as possible, all line managers should be made aware of the need for affirmative action so that they accept the reality and take up the challenge of achieving their objectives and quotas. It will be necessary for top management to take a firm stand regarding the achievement of affirmative action objectives, so that where there is resistance this is not allowed to stop progress. The achievement of agreed objectives should be non-negotiable.

Frost (1993:10) adds that on the macro level everyone who has any form of influence in South Africa should be lobbying actively to ensure that the best possible use is made of all educational facilities throughout the country.

Gerber, *et al.* (1987: 305) state that enterprises have a responsibility towards the community and the environment in which they operate. The community expects enterprises to become involved in real social problems of the community within which they function. In the past many enterprises probably had maximum returns as their ultimate goal. Today, however, enterprises pursue multiple goals with emphasis on social awareness, social care and social commitment. From this, the researcher deduce that the organisation has a responsibility to uplift and develop its employees to effectively interact in the community in which lives.

4.6.7 Supporting activities and plans

The researcher is of the opinion that to achieve the stated objectives, the organisation will need to develop or unsolidate systems, programmes, and procedures such as: (where appropriate unions/staff associations will be insulted for their recommendations).

- Assessing and adjusting, where necessary, selection techniques, criteria and mechanisms to ensure that no discrimination take place and that selection standards are culture free and realistic, without lowering performance standards.
- Recruitment channels must facilitate and accommodate identification of affirmative action candidates. Explore new versus traditional channels of recruitment.
- External employment policy must give high priority to recruitment and selection of African (and to a lesser extent Coloured and Indian) candidates, women and the handicapped of all races in order to

achieve affirmative action targets. Preference is to be given to internal candidates wherever possible.

- Where appropriate, certain posts may be earmarked for affirmative action candidates so that when they become vacant they are filled by an African, Coloured, or Indian candidate, a female candidate, or a handicapped candidate.

- With regard to internal promotion policy, ability to perform in a particular post should be the criterion for promotion to that post. To achieve affirmative action targets, where African, Coloured or Indian staff, women, or the handicapped are awarded the same merit rating as their white counterparts, preference will need to be given to the African, Coloured or Indian candidates, women, or handicapped candidates if the Affirmative action quotas are to be met.

- The current merit system and/or promotional (assessment) criteria in an organisation need to be re-assessed to eliminate any bias which may exist.

- Implementation of training, development and upliftment programmes such as:
 - * literacy and numeracy;
 - * tertiary education for adults and school children;
 - * bridging education programmes;
 - * accelerated development programmes;
 - * re-training;
 - * maths and science programmes;

- * bursaries;
 - * management of diversity programmes;
 - * cross-cultural programmes.
- Design an implementation of integrated, accelerated supervisory and management development programmes to support advancement into the management levels.
 - The performance management system will have to emphasise the importance of people development and affirmative action as key performance areas for all managers. The performance management system will have to take cognisance of successes and failures in these areas.
 - To supplement in company programmes, and to become more relevant in a "New South Africa", various external/community activities will be needed such as:
 - * supporting external educational programmes;
 - * allocating a percentage of business activities to small businesses;
 - * supporting activities which lead to social and economic upliftment;
 - * supporting housing development through community-based organisations;
 - * financial support of child-care facilities; and
 - * preventative health and safety programmes, aids and hygiene.

4.6.8 Essential principles

The researcher is of the opinion that some important principle should guide an affirmative action programme:

PRINCIPLE 1

Meaningful involvement in shaping, implementing and evaluating affirmative action efforts must be inclusive:

- This means all levels of management and supervision, unions as well as outside professional and other stakeholder groups.
- This principle must not distract from line managers being fully responsible and accountable for achieving affirmative targets.

PRINCIPLE 2

The affirmative action strategy in each region or division will have to be translated into researched, focused, time lined business objectives and action plans.

PRINCIPLE 3

It will be necessary to adopt an aggressive approach to training and development:

- This will require the development of innovative programmes and processes to accelerate the development of candidates with potential

for advancement.

- Adequate funds must be made available for this purpose.
- The percentage of the training budget to normal salaries will have to be increased systematically.
- The principle of training by objectives will be maintained.
- In terms of training and development budgets, it may be necessary to analyse the current allocation of resources and to redistribute them "affirmatively" to equalise opportunities.
- Internal education, training and development must be given priority, but will not exclude selective "affirmative action" recruitment from external sources.
- Line managers will be held responsible and accountable for training and development. Human resources will provide assistance with the identification of talent and the provision of training and development.

PRINCIPLE 4

In the short to medium term it will be necessary to pro-actively develop and advance employees from targeted groups in order to achieve the objectives set. In the longer term a situation of equal opportunity and fully integrated employment should exist when all employees can compete on an equal opportunity and fully integrated employment should exist when all employees can compete on an equal footing.

PRINCIPLE 5

Affirmative action will be the responsibility and accountability of each line manager and will be included in his/her job responsibilities/objectives, on which he/she will be assessed. As a matter of policy, line managers will need to be evaluated in terms of three variables:

- the achievement of their business objectives;**
- the development of their people; and**
- the achievement of affirmative action targets.**

PRINCIPLE 6

Performance standards must be maintained at all times.

PRINCIPLE 7

Regular communication of affirmative action policies and plans will be required to create a climate which is conducive to affirmative action in the organisation. Mistrust and suspicion between the races had to be eliminated if the new generation of leadership which South Africa needed was to become a reality. Three reasons why such programmes had met with limited success were: window dressing, a lack of commitment and a lack of training and mentoring. No affirmative action programme will ever succeed if support structures, networks and mentors are not provided, and if those previously disadvantaged do not undergo the necessary training programmes.

4.7 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

4.7.1 Formulating of an affirmative action policy

The first step is obviously always for top management to issue a formal policy statement along the lines that "we regard ourselves as an affirmative action company and we intend doing our best to advance those who are disadvantaged because of their race, sex, education and developmental opportunities".

4.7.2 Formation of a committee

A steering committee should be constituted to pilot and oversee the implementation of such a strategy into the organisation. Members of this committee should consist almost exclusively of the top team.

4.7.3 Use a solid strategy

The next phase is for the steering committee to adapt a strategy to suit its particular needs and to "cascade" its contents to all levels by involving all present.

The four components of this overall strategy are:

- prepare the organisation;
- identify potential;
- integrate identified potential; and
- evaluate.

4.7.4 Set objectives and go for them

Once the ground work has been laid, each organisation has to set specific affirmative action objectives, work towards achieving them, evaluate the progress made and take the necessary corrective actions.

4.7.5 Communicate your intentions with care

Affirmative action is an emotive issue. White workers are justifiably jumpy about it because it threatens their security and their prospects. Some blacks, on the other hand have unreasonable expectations of what it might deliver. It is important that everyone in an organisation knows its strategy. It's equally important that they have a sense of what lies ahead for them, so that they can either buy into that opportunity and prepare themselves for it, or make another career choice. Affirmative action needs an especially sensitive communications strategy. Beware of dashing into print with announcements that will trigger instant fear and resentment.

4.7.6 Think long-term

The transition to a much talked about new South Africa is generating lots of heat and little light. It is easy to be suckered into short term decisions. But now is the time to lay the foundation for competing differently in a different environment. Lay out a long term strategy with affirmative action as a key element.

4.7.7 Aim for some visible successes

As a matter of urgency, blacks and whites need to change their perceptions of black's potential. Many blacks have a poor self-image and many whites are too ready to say, "I told you so! when blacks fail. Apartheid taught us to expect too little of black people. Affirmative action must teach us to expect more. So when you make a black appointment make every effort to help that person succeed. Recruit carefully. Introduce the new person to your company properly. Provide whatever training, information, and support they need to perform.

The most important skill needed to treat others in the way that they want to be treated is empathy or understanding. Once you understand someone you'll know how to treat him or her in the way that he or she wants to be treated. It implies:

- Understanding their needs.
- Understanding what motivates them.
- Understanding how they "tick".
- Understanding important aspects of their culture and their feelings.

Underlying empathy are:

- listening skills;
- being non-judgemental of others;
- mixing and communicating with people who differ and accepting and not rejecting those who differ.

Treating employees properly or, more correctly, interacting with them effectively is one side of the story. Their performance has to be managed too. Managing performance means focusing on performance, not people. Focusing on people means focusing on subjective things. It boils down to judging people against a background of physical size, age, looks, dress, mannerisms and so on. The criteria against which we judge people usually grow out of prejudice and, as a result, the judgements we make are bad. Even worse, when focusing on the person and not the job, we see the incumbent as male/female, black/white. That usually leads to discrimination which is anathema to all principles of fairness. Considering the low productivity and the high levels of conflict in our society, it is essential that managers manage diversity and affirmative action in the manner described there where they have:

- the skills to work effectively with people in order to integrate them into the organisation so that they all feel committed to organisation and its goals;
- the ability to manage performance so that everyone performs well thus preventing standards from dropping.

It all boils down to management. Nothing works unless management makes it work. Criticism of affirmative action is a criticism of management.

4.8 CONDITIONS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

There are a few aspects that must be considered if an organisation wants to implement a successful affirmative action plan (Human, 1993: 13-14).

- Affirmative action must be seen as increasing the pool of talent available for development. In other words, affirmative action must not be seen simply in terms of recruitment but should rather be viewed as a crucial element of the broader development of people within the organisation. Many organisations make the mistake of viewing affirmative action as an additional policy rather than as a total organisational development intervention which evaluates, and often changes, the way in which people are recruited, selected, trained, developed, promoted, and retained.
- Development should not be seen simply in terms of providing education and training for the disadvantaged en masse. Development depends on ability but also on motivation and context. Equally important to the process of development are the expectations, prejudices, and people management skills of current managers. As the most significant development generally takes place "on the job" rather than as a carry-over from training programmes, it is important that context, in the form of managerial prejudice and motivation to develop subordinates, is addressed. The process of development is a process of setting realistic goals and moderate risk-taking in line with individual (not perceived group) strengths and weaknesses. This involves line managers in the process of developing their subordinates, in the identification of individual training and development needs and in plotting individual career paths. The psychological success model of development hinges on providing challenging but achievable goals and requires an environment which provides ongoing constructive support and feedback to enhance self-confidence and job performance. It involves the manager or coach or mentor to the same extent as it involves the subordinate. The responsibility for development does not

lie with the human resources department; it lies with each and every line manager who should be trained to manage a diverse workforce.

- The development of blacks and women should be part of the general development of people within an organisation. Once in the organisation, blacks and women should be promoted according to workforce, succession, and career plans which take the backlogs of blacks and women in specific positions into account. Again, organisations often make the mistake of concentrating on the training of black people at the expense of broader people development systems when what they should be doing is strictly monitoring the development of blacks and women within their general systems.
- Affirmative action should take place at the selection and recruitment stage; thereafter, all employees should be developed and promoted according to workforce, succession and career plans which take backlogs into account. Recruitment need not be at the minimum entry level only; recruitment can take place at any level in the organisation as long as the individual who is recruited is competent to do the job. A check should be kept, however, on the numbers of blacks and women being provided with promotion opportunities. Special training opportunities should be provided where numbers fall short of acceptable targets. A principle of "promotion from within" should be adopted whereby blacks and women are promoted to positions formerly occupied by white men.
- People development should be identified as a key strategic objective and top management should be actively committed to both implementing it and monitoring it.

- As promotion and development from within and on merit are the major means of job advancement, workforce (manpower), succession, and career plans have to be developed.
- Realistic racial and gender targets, based on workforce, succession, and career plans need to be developed and monitored on an annual basis.
- Methods of selection and recruitment should be seriously evaluated and assessed in terms of predictive validity with respect to job performance. In other words, selection criteria should be job-related and not simply reflect assumptions about what is required.
- Negative racial and gender stereotypes and expectations should be managed and monitored through both training and performance objectives.
- Managers should be trained in people management skills and critically evaluated on their performance in relation to the development of their subordinates.
- All employees should be helped to understand the process of development and their responsibility for developing themselves.
- Employers, employees and union members should initially be involved in the development of a people development/affirmative action strategy based on an organisational assessment.
- A committee composed of employer, employee, and union

representatives should continuously monitor, evaluate, and refine, the people development/affirmative action strategy.

Vertex (1993:33) believes that a cornerstone for the successful implementation of affirmative action is education and development of employees and the participation of organisations in the development of employees.

4.9 CONCLUSION

There are two main purposes of affirmative action firstly, to eradicate discriminatory practices and secondly, to promote the skills and abilities of those who suffered as a result of past discriminatory practices.

The need for affirmative action as a survival strategy has also emerged, not primarily because of possible legal or political pressure, but also because:

- business has a need for skilled and productive workers;
- business needs to expand its pool of management talent which simply cannot be met from amongst the white (male) population alone;
- business has an interest in operating in an environment with the least possible levels of unemployment, poverty, violence and crime.

It is clear that affirmative action has to be coordinated with other strategies and that more than one section of an organisation needs to be involved. Company resources may have to be allocated to these strategies which may commit the organisation for a long period of time. Affirmative action has to be treated as a strategic issue (Bezuidenhout, 1996:16).

The researcher is of the opinion that affirmative action should be dealt with by means of an organised model (see 4.3). This model should serve as a guideline for implementation of affirmative action by means of its various phases. The actual visible successes of the implementation of the various phases of the model could serve as a motivational factor for the continued success of the affirmative action within a company.

Commitment and support for affirmative action by the various stakeholders in the programme is regarded by the researcher as crucial components in the successful unfolding of the affirmative action programme. A strong visible communication programme and underlying cultural support programme is also considered by the researcher as significant in the advancement of the affirmative action programme.

Black supervisors and foremen have been found to occupy a difficult position in many companies. Their black subordinate believe, on the one hand, that they have gone to "work for the enemy" by joining the ranks of white management. On the other hand, they expect these black supervisors to be extremely lenient because "they know us, they know our problems". Management pulls from a different direction, exhorting these supervisors to almost forget their black subordinates (Easton-Leadley, 1994:46).

The strategic, competitive edge of companies is no longer going to be determined only by the quality of service or products, but also by the extent to which a company or organisation has demonstrated clear commitment to transforming its organisational culture and its external corporate environment within the context of embracing economic empowerment of men and women (Makwana, 1994:25).

The researcher feels strongly about the fact that if organisations are not economical viable an affirmative action programme will not be successful. An affirmative action model should, therefore, be an integrated process in a company's human resource development program.

The researcher is of the opinion that the success of affirmative action in South Africa will be determined by the way in which organisations manage it, and the co-operation of the various parties into the process. It is a clear that if the stakeholders do not share the same vision and strategy in terms of an affirmative action programme, it is bound to fail, but the failures of the various affirmative action programmes in organisations may well lead to the downfall of the economy of South Africa. A focused, well-planned model should be implemented by management in order to reach the organisational goals.

CHAPTER 5

MANAGING DIVERSITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The demographic composition of the labour force is changing around the world. More and more individuals are demographically dissimilar from each other, than at any time since the Industrial Revolution. Since 1990 increasing interest has been shown in South Africa in the concept of managing diversity. This interest appears to flow from developments overseas, particular those originating in the USA and the UK. Human and Bowmaker-Falconer (1992:25) notes that the approach to managing diversity in these two countries appears to differ. In the USA, managing diversity programmes generally appear to constitute a substitute for a more direct engagement with racism and sexism, in the UK, such programmes generally appear to have attempted to raise awareness to the inhibiting nature of these forms of discrimination as a forerunner to tackling development issues. It would appear that managing diversity programmes in South African followed the American model.

Once an equal opportunity environment has been created and everyone has a equal chance of be considered for a position or promotion and the deciding factors will be individual performance, ability and potential. When start actively integrating people (refer to chapter 3), bringing people into certain positions, which they could not occupy in the past. The practice of in house appointments can be started. This helps the previously disadvantaged groups realise that their potential is taken seriously and that the organisation recognises their potential and their ability to have an input in the viability of

the organisation. It is at this point where it is necessary to import external appointments, bringing in people from which these groups were previously excluded. It should be emphasised that these should be more than anything else, competent individuals who are given meaningful jobs to avoid any frustration and traps of window dressing.

At this stage management of diversity becomes critical because it is only through proper management that a diverse workforce could be utilised in a manner that allows the individual to reach their potential. Diversity management emphasises the significance of creating an environment that works for everyone whilst pursuing the company's objectives. Managing and valuing of diversity encourages a shift from a monocultural mind set, i.e. the existing organisational culture in the right way, to a multicultural mindflex which is arrived at after going through an awareness and understanding phase and here people begin to accept that there are other valid ways thus bringing in some flexibility.

The application of diversity at this stage will mean that the employees are being valued for their individuality, they are being valued for being different and the whole diversity element is seen in a positive light. Again employees are not just expected to conform to existing culture. In the past it was expected of an employee to learn the culture of the organisation but diversity emphasis that the employees just need to understand the culture of the organisation.

Powell (1995:115) deducts that those organisations that promote equal opportunity do not necessarily value cultural diversity within their ranks. Equal employment opportunity was originally implemented to end discrimination. Affirmative action programmes, which are an outgrowth of

the equal opportunity concept, have contributed to quantitative changes in the composition of the workforce in many organisations. In contrast, organisations that value cultural diversity attempt to bring about qualitative changes through increased appreciation of the range of skills and values that dissimilar employees offer and increased opportunity to manage work groups. From the previous discussion, the purpose of this chapter is thus, to enlighten the term management of diversity and to explaining the relation between affirmative action and managing diversity.

The word management of diversity brings to mind differences that could bring new skills and new perspectives to any organisation, Human (1995:8) indicates that managing diversity concerns the management of people irrespective of race, gender, ethnic background, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:91) explain that in essence the diversity approach rests on the unique flavour and potential contribution and how this heterogeneity can be allowed to add value to organisation life and productivity.

The Central Training Unit (1994:2) argues that the achievement of workplace equity is seen as an output that is a consequence of a process. It rests on the fundamental value of managing towards full inclusiveness of diversity. This means social and people diversity, in other words all individual diversity. Compare the definitions of various other authors as stated in 1.6.

Two types of managing diversity programmes can be identified according to Bowmaker-Falconer (1992:25). These are: The first type is an excuse for not confronting and changing attitudes and behaviours which get in the way of creating a truly diverse workforce on merit. It is a way of avoiding the difficult task of confronting the individual; it is a way of pretending that things are right when they are not. It is paternalistic and belittling to the people we

are pretending to equal ourselves, whilst believing that they are not. The second type comes from a diverse workforce which has been developed on merit. Lets look at the concept of managing diversity in relation to affirmative action.

5.2 MANAGING DIVERSITY CONCEPT

Clayton & Crosby (1995:104) mention that the new focus on managing diversity is partially a reaction to what most human resource specialists agree have been the shortcomings of affirmative action. They continue and state that there has always been a discomfort with affirmative action. Human (1995:8) argues that affirmative action and managing diversity are no synonymous. It would appear that the terms, affirmative action and employment equity, both encompass and are encompass by, the concept of managing diversity. As part of an organisation's affirmative action strategy, employees in general and line managers in particular, are required to be competent in managing diversity. This paradox is probably a fact of life in many countries of the world. Managing diversity at one level incorporates employment equity and yet, at a particular level, is one of the competencies required for the effective implementation of programmes to increase equity.

Wick & Leon (1993:151) mention that a working environment that buoys rather than debases employees results in a double gain, people are fulfilled and the company is more profitable in the long run. Such an environment fosters diversity, promotes a sense of security, makes people feel optimal, and encourages risk taking. Human (1995:8) further indicates that managing diversity, at this level thus concerns the management of people irrespect of race, gender, ethnic background, religion, disability, sexual orientation and so on. But it is more than this. She continuos and argues

that this is where the difference between managing diversity and multiculturalism has to be reckoned with.

Human (1995:10) is of the opinion that with the question of culture, "multiculturalism" in South Africa is now talking on most bizarre proportions. A decade ago, African culture was seen as a major blockage to success in the business world. Today various new maximalist perspectives argue that certain stereotype African values are curial to the long terms success of the capitalist enterprise.

Van der Spuy (1994:9) states that an entirely new way of managing organisations is required for a new South Africa, a global economy and a new century. Companies will experience a significant shift in organisational culture and values as we move towards a transparent management style in which open communication is the norm and in which managers value and build on diversity, rather than perceiving the variety of cultures within the company as obstacles or threats.

In terms of the abovementioned, the researcher wants to emphasis the fact in order to reach economical growth management has to focus on training, upliftment and acceptance of all cultures. Human (1995:10) concludes by saying that most individuals crosscut many different communities with national or ethnic culture constituting no more that one aspect of an individuals identity. Managing diversity thus concerns the ability to manage individuals who are impacted by many social variables of which "National cultures" is but one. Meaningful and effective intercultural, interethnic, intergender and interclass situations require an ability to manage diversity in the broadest sense.

Madi (1993:101) indicates that over the past two years, more and more South African organisations have shown interest in the concept of employee diversity and that these organisations have portrayed the concept as something new, something nobler, and something more effective than affirmative action. However, in most instances, when one lifts the veil of verbiage all signs seem to point towards the fact that this has become a euphemism for social responsibility or an escape outlet from social responsibility or an escape outlet from this rather sensitive subject. He further argues that many organisations with bad memories from previous black advancement era's still very strong in their minds have been looking for a better phrase with which they can reintroduce affirmative action. When the United States and the United Kingdom manufactured "diversity" as a concept of multi-cultural management, many South African organisations latched on to it and then re-introduced affirmative action under this banner.

In an environment in which empowered employees are encouraged to use their initiative to operate with pride in an organisational environment which is conducive to positive self-image and extra effort, the question of quality standards or productivity levels will scarcely be an issue, successful role models will without doubt abound according to Van der Spuy (1994:9).

Powell (1995:133) states that organisations increasingly recognise that they need to understand and prepare for the changing demographic trends in the labour force. Dana (1993:43) suggests a four-step method for building better relations. He continues and states that this method is for people who appreciate the value of working at relationships, and who want to prevent differences from leading to destructive conflict.

The researcher believes that this method should serve as base for the establishment of a programme for the improvement of an implementation

model for affirmative action by the incorporation of the diversity concept.

- **Step 1 - Find time to talk.** Communication is necessary for managing all human differences. The three social skills are especially helpful: listening, negotiating and assertiveness. It is also suggested that the relevant stakeholders should keep each other updated on their side of the story, refrain from using intimidation and stay physically present during the time in which they sort their differences out.
- **Step 2 - Plan the context.** The context is the time-and-place environment within which step 3 occurs. The purpose of planning the context is to create a setting for effective communication. The researcher believes that people of diverse natures should find time to confer with each other to learn to understand and respect each other's differences.
- **Step 3 - Talk it out.** It is important that some professional organisational development consultant should guide the process where people of diverse nature meet with each other. The writer believes that this would help the parties in the process to stay engaged in the process as well as help to enhance, strengthen and support conciliatory gestures, which parties might make towards each other.
- **Step 4 - Make a deal.** It is important that the parties should move from the me-against- you, to us-against-the-problem. The problem, implying how the differences between the parties could be managed. The researcher believes that this process serve as a model by which parties could deal with the problem, of dealing with their differences in an amicable way.

Wick & Leon (1993:151) have made it clear that organisation's future is directly tied to how it promotes diversity within the work force. Many managers must realise, at least intellectually, that diversity will play an important role in their organisation's future success. These manager's commitment should go beyond an intolerance of overt racism and sexism. It must be made clear that differences and not similarities, will lead to new ideas and fresh approaches, adding a depth and dimension that cannot be achieved in a company of clones.

5.3 SOME DEBATE ON THE THEME MANAGING DIVERSITY

Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:91) indicate that in essence the diversity approach rests on the imperative of understanding and accepting the unique flavour and potential contribution of different cultures and traditions and how this heterogeneity can be allowed to add value to organisational life and productivity. While Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:91) observe that this a breakthrough, compared with the melting pot- approach towards a single organisational culture, it has to be asked whether managing diversity is a substitute for a more direct import from the USA. Managing diversity sometimes conjures up images of desperately trying to cater for and appease a vast range of cultural, racial, gender and class differences and somehow trying to weave these into an organisation with a common focus in South Africa can also prove problematic in terms of reinforcing stereotypes concerning underperformance of blacks as a group.

Charlton & Van Niekerk (1994:91) indicate that the diversity approach raises a number of concerns. Does it simply mean the acceptance of different cultures as they were or not? By appealing to what is a common need in the

munity of all people? What about programmes to manage “sameness” - identifying and building on the things, we have in common - as well as programmes to manage diversity?

Fuhr (1993:88) argues that organisations should concentrate on the recognition of diversity and not be consumed by the search for commonality. They should go to great lengths to understand the political, social and ideological complexities that exist in our trouble land. It is of absolutely no benefit to speak of such shared values as respect, dignity and honour when the grassroots issues such as violence, township stress, transport, education, health and housing have not been properly addressed.

Fuhr, (1993:90) also states that those who build a common vision based on all that is good in people, and sweep 300 years of history under the carpet. Those who ignore the differences that exist between races, who see “colourless human beings” instead of blacks and whites, who do not tackle the real hard issues head on, are doomed to wander yet another 40 years in the old South Africa. If you do not understand the basic values, expectations, and aspirations of all the people in the organisations, you will never be able to break down the perceptions and stereotypes that have consistently gnawed away at all that is good in our society, It is time that we begin to accept and respect our differences rather than smothering them in the search for integration.

Fuhr (1993:91) concludes by stating that the aim therefore is not to seek one common vision but to establish a multi-vision approach which recognises the diverse needs and aspirations of the organisation and caters for the melting pot of conflicting goals and objectives.

Human (1993:71) indicates that managing diversity is part and parcel of the process of managing people, a process which in turn, is vital to the success of affirmative action drives. Managing diversity is not about teaching generalised and stereotyped descriptions of people from other national cultures. National cultures are not as homogeneous and static as these generalisations would have us believe. This way of working also tends to enhance the differentness of other cultures. Human further indicates that the opposite approach - an approach which sees an individual action according to the demands of the situation is equally problematic. The more individualistic approach denies people their common sense understanding that general differences between cultures do exist and also presents employees with the dilemma of having to judge each situation anew.

Human says further that one solution for the problem is to see national culture as just one part of the individual's identity. But there are other parts to that identity as well. These include social class, region of origin, urban versus rural dwelling, religion, family and personal idiosyncrasies. This argument defines that organisations need to understand the individual in a broader context in order to maintain a sensitivity to both individual and situational differences.

In South Africa, years of apartheid have led to a situations in which many white people believe openly or tacitly that white culture is superior to that of blacks. Negative expectations of blacks, together with discrimination, can impact negatively on the expectations black people have of management. Such negative expectations and stereotyping impede the process of development by impacting on the level of self confidence of individuals as well as on the opportunities for recruitment, promotion and development afforded to them.

The challenge for South African business is to install an integrated management style which is aligned with overall corporate strategy and which facilitates individual self management and ensure that every individual focuses his work efforts on appropriate company goals.

Primos (1994:33) perceives that the broad perception to be job hopping amongst employers is that affirmative action is breeding a gravy train mentality amongst black management candidates who are milking the system for inflated salaries at the expense of building solid expertise and a stable track record. Human (1993:72) concludes by stating that managing diversity is not about pretending that all cultures are equal, it is about addressing negative expectations and negative perceptions of black cultures and black people without reinforcing cultural differences. The reason why the presentation of cultures in terms of stereotypes is so problematic in South Africa is that apartheid has created and reinforced the us and them syndrome, where black culture is looked down upon as inappropriate to the business world.

Moolman (1996:335) mentions that effective management of diversity brings about the following positive impact on healthy labour relations within an organisation:

- maintenance of labour peace;
- decrease in the absenteeism rate of employees;
- decrease in labour turnover;
- decrease in disciplinary actions;
- decrease in grievance by employees;
- decrease in industrial action;
- positive involvement of employees;

- work security of employees;
- increase of productivity;
- positive relationship between management and unions.

Powell (1995:115) distinguishes between three types of organisations in comparison to their basic attitudes towards cultural diversity. These are:

- **Monolithic organisations** are characterised by a large majority of one group of employees, especially in the managerial ranks. Differences between majority and minority groups are resolved by the process of assimilation, whereby minority groups are expected to adapt the norms and values of the majority group to survive in the organisation. This would be a typical example of organisations in South Africa practising black advancement (see 3.3)
- **Plural organisations** have a more heterogeneous workforce than monolithic organisations. As the writer interprets this type in South African conditions, this would imply that hiring and promotional policies are stressed to advance certain disadvantaged groups and the management of equal opportunities. Powell continues and stresses that prejudices are likely to exist in plural organisations.
- **Multicultural organisations** value diversity. They respond to cultural differences by encouraging members of different groups to adopt some of the norms and values of other groups, in contrast to the assimilation practised by monolithic and plural organisations. A multicultural approach involves increasing the consciousness and appreciation of differences associated with the heritage, characteristics, and values of many different groups, as well as respecting the uniqueness of each

individual.

5.4 THE UBUNTU CONCEPT

One recurring theme in managing diversity in South Africa has been the concept of “ubuntu” which if translated means humaneness or respect for individuals (Human, 1993:77). The African cultural dimension, whether expressed in terms of language, dress, humour, styles or attitudes, will come through naturally and strongly when people of African origin take their rightful place at all levels of economic life (Sachs, 1992:7). Thus, the African personality will express itself as part of the South African personality, neither claiming hegemony nor accepting inferiority, just demanding its rightful position as a major ingredient of the whole.

He continues and states that if we address the more burning issues of racism and sexism, dignity and respect, the way which we talk to one another, and the development of people through professional and fair human resource systems, the question of culture will take care of itself. Diversity and synergy come together when there is an acceptance of the principles of unity, equality, integrity and trust, and when a genuine effort is being made to both provide development opportunities in order that individuals can compete on merit and to inculcate a believe in ability which is not linked to racial and gender stereotypes.

Mbigi (1993:11) states that it is possible to have both graceful conflict and harmony through interdependence and a common creed of trust. The point of departure in the South African situation is suggested to be the prevailing adversarialism. He continues and mentions that it is only possible if workers are empowered to influence decision-making in a meaningful and cooperative

manner. Therefore, he suggests that continuous improvement teams based on the natural working team and focussing on operational efficiency with the supervisor or team leader should be formed. The aim is to stimulate bottom-up communication, knowledge and empowerment giving access to information, knowledge, training and the democratisation of the workplace.

5.5 GUIDELINES IN THE APPLICATION OF DIVERSITY PRINCIPLES AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMMES

Ramudzuli & Menne (1994:21) describe the following affirmative action strategic issues as crucial in the development of a managing diversity programme. These are:

- **Affirmative leadership.** The affirmative leadership component of the overall strategy includes the visioning process of designing the integrated change process, involving all stakeholders. The purpose of affirmative leadership is:
 - * **To create the environment for responsible and good organisational governess.**
 - * **To establish the broader social mission of the organisation and how the organisation will interact with all stakeholders.**
 - * **To lay the foundations for the representative demographic realities of South Africa inside the organisation.**
 - * **To create the vehicles through which all stakeholders can be consulted and through which they can participate to create the**

new position.

- * To treat affirmative change as a commitment to a long-term strategic goal.

- **Affirmative empowerment.** Through greater degrees of empowerment, this aspect of affirmative change seeks to:
 - * Gain active support for the change process from the middle management layer and to empower them with competencies to deal with the new realities.

 - * Implement meaningful training and educational opportunities for workers at every level of the organisation.

 - * Redesign jobs so as to evaluate job context and output, rather remaining preoccupied with qualification.

 - * Implement methodologies which assist in determining mutual targets, outputs and deliverables against which teams and individuals will be held accountable.

 - * Reevaluate the boundaries of decision-making and devolving accountability to the lowest level, empowering people to deploy policy.

- **Affirmative learning.** The process of affirmative change is by and large a learning experience. It is not an exercise in altruism or correcting the imbalances of past. In essence, affirmative learning seeks to:

- * Develop comprehensive guidelines for proactive multiskilling and job rotation.
 - * Create an effective network of support structures between people and allow them to learn through on-the - job development.
 - * Develop a core knowledge and competencies for each job.
 - * Allow people rapid access to system by way of learner controlled training which focuses on skills acquisition and application for which people are rewarded.
 - * Create an understanding of concept that a learning organisation will inevitably result in a productive organisation.
- Affirmative action. Affirmative action should serve no other purpose than to cope with need for sound management in future. To this end, affirmative action is a process to:
 - * Determine a comprehensive medium and long-term human resources development strategy which takes into cognisance natural attrition, demographic needs and competencies at all levels in organisation.
 - * Jointly determine clear-cut paths for achievers and mutual standards and targets with relevant incumbents.

- * Implement appraisal system which ensure overall evaluation by teams and from peer group.
- Affirmative practices. It is essential that all actions within organisation are checked against values to determine congruence and that people are given opportunity to develop skills.

A common value base forms foundation for affirmative change process, with affirmative practices ongoing result. This change is thus clearly to reposition South African organisations or inevitable competition which is going to faced upon reentry into global market. There is no escape from fact that South African organisations need to empower total workforce. Blank & Slipp (1994:192) reveal a few guidelines to apply in this respect. These are:

- Every employee should be approached as an individual. Although members of different groups may be diverse in appearance, speech, values, believes, and behaviours, they have many things in common, that cut across different groups.
- Understand the cultural tendencies such as language, mannerism and communication patterns are not necessarily indicators of a worker's performance and capabilities. Within each group there is a range of people, from those are highly qualified for a position, to those who are not. Mangers must understand differences and not allow them to cloud judgements of competence and motivation.
- Recognise and confront the issue of discomfort, in dealing with a diverse workforce. The manager should act as a role model of

acceptance by including all worker in social situations, coaching all staff on the norms of the organisation, and making it clear that everyone is in the running up for opportunities in the organisation.

- Appreciate and utilise the different perspectives and styles of diverse workers. All workers want to succeed on the job and to be accepted by the organisation, but they also want to maintain their own senses of identity and have their special perspectives and assets acknowledged and appreciated.
- Convey clearly the expectations for the work unit, while at the same time recognising group differences in communicating and perspectives. The task of the manager is to determine on which of these issues differences can be accommodated or utilised and on which they may interfere with work requirements.
- Use equal performance standards for all workers. Managers should check on their judgements to make sure that they are not magnifying deficits or overlooking problems that legitimately require feedback and correction.
- Provide feedback often and equally to all members of the workforce. Failure to give legitimate feedback because of fear that the manager may be labelled sexist, racist or discriminatory in some other way, demeans the importance of the workers career goals and expectations.
- Openly support the competencies and contributions of workers from all groups. It is essential that the credentials of new employees be openly stated and that the achievements of all workers be

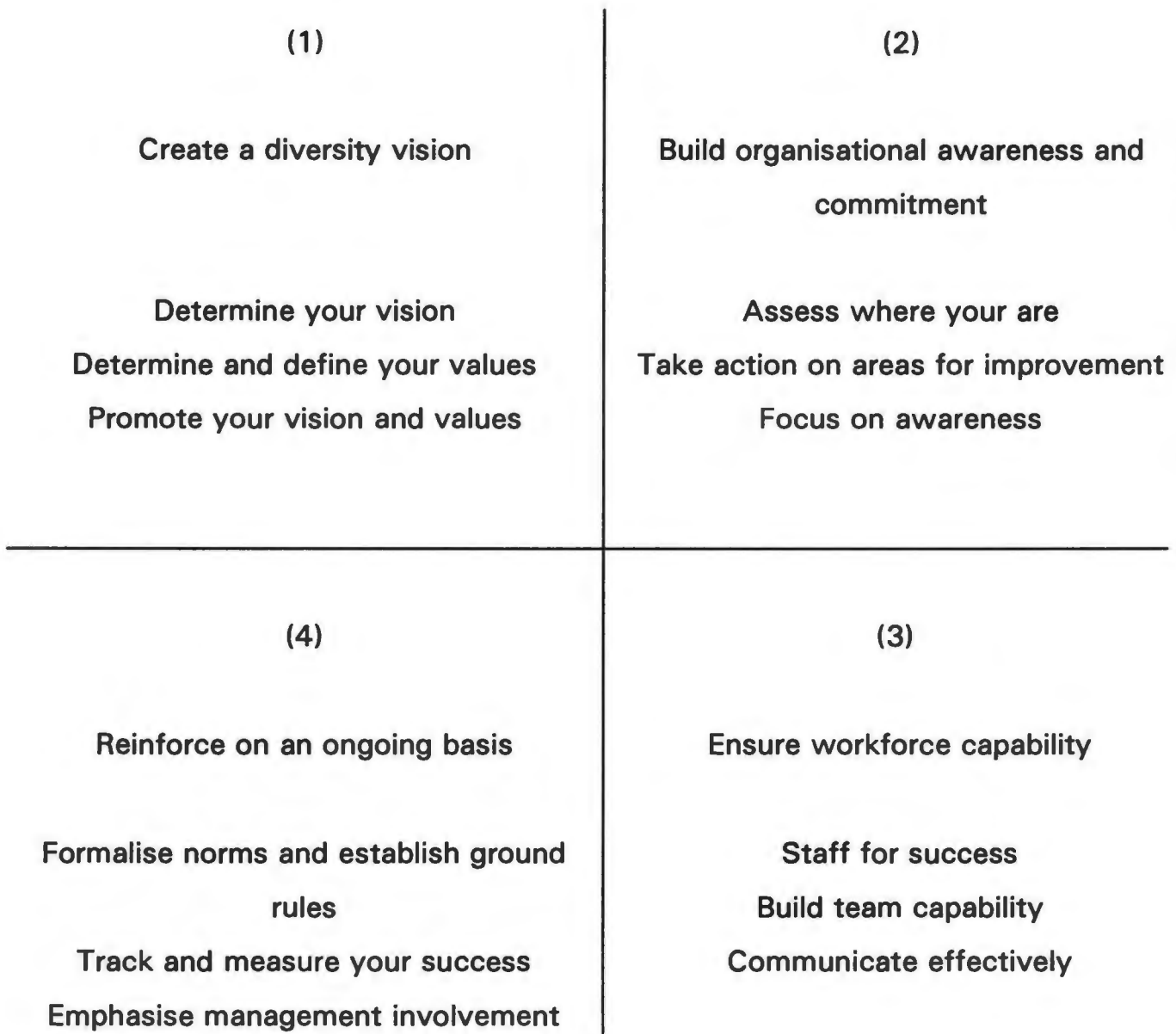
acknowledged.

- Confront racist, sexist or other stereotyping or discriminatory behaviour. Managers should make their positions clear by stating that they would not tolerate discrimination in the workplace.
- Assume responsibility for trying to influence change in your organisations such as decisions.

Harris & Myers (1996:5) has developed a organisational success model, underlying their guidelines. See Figure 1, the organisational diversity success model. The researcher has deducted from the model that one should have an understanding of workplace diversity, and the importance of valuing it, in the workplace. Addressing past inequities must become part of the fabric of organisations. Just as profit targets are vital to the survival and success of organisations, so the concept of operating a normal organisation in a normal society is vital to corporate success.

Organisations should have a very definite and shared vision on consideration for its diverse workforce. Supervisors should eagerly promote value stemming from this vision. By building organisational awareness, organisation should asses as to where is stands in empowering its diverse workforce (refer to 3.4).

Figure 1: The organisational diversity success model



Source: (Harris & Myers, 1996:5.)

Cargill (1994:14-15) highlights the following areas that are pertinent to restructuring:

- Education, training and productivity.

- Improving competitiveness.
- Investments that add value to South Africa's commodities will be favoured.
- Affirmative action.
- Job creation.

Easton-Leadley (1994:48) is of opinion that organisations should consider programmes which highlight importance of employee in adding value, in process of wealth creation. This implies a shift in orientation from creating profits to creating wealth.

Organisations should focus on ensuring a capable workforce by building on strengths of its diverse workforce. Lastly, management should commit themselves to a process of managing their diverse workforce, and seek ways to ensure ways of measuring success of diversity programmes. Affirmative action programmes are vital in progression of organisation's development of its people. Through affirmative action programmes values with regard to eradication of discriminatory practices are promoted. Values are crucial stepping stones by which management can start to create shared vision.

By improving awareness of people, employees will show greater understanding for issues arising from them being different. This will also help them to build empowered relationships in which they work together as true team members.

Carnevale & Stone (1994:22) have investigated organisations and have identified following organisational barriers to developing diversity, namely:

- Poor planning resulting in failure to give to many nontraditional employees (previous disadvantaged employees) breadth of experience and credentials required to compete for more senior positions.
- A lonely, unsupportive and sometimes hostile environment for many nontraditional managers, especially in upper management.
- A lack of corporate political skills on the part of nontraditional managers which make them feel vulnerable.
- Many people are more comfortable in dealing with people similar to themselves.

These barriers occur at three different levels namely, the individual, the group and the organisation. These interact with each other to create a climate toward diversity efforts. Makwana (1994:25) states that the South African economy as been under performing dramatically and its industrial relations are conflict-laden because of overreliance on white skills as the sole source of leadership and management. The researcher is of the opinion that by managing diversity the scarcity of proper leadership will decrease.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The researcher agrees to many of the viewpoints as stated in this chapter and confirms in conclusion that there is a difference between affirmative action and the management of diversity. These differences should be taken

note of for the application and the management of affirmative action and an affirmative action programme, as described in chapter 4. These differences are:

- Affirmative action is responsible for bringing into the work environment people from the disadvantaged groups through recruitment and promotion depending on their ability and potential. Managing diversity is the intervention used to create an environment in which people from different backgrounds would be able to perform to their full potential in pursuit of the company's objectives.
- Affirmative action emphasizes getting rid of discrimination in an organisation and achieving equal opportunity. Managing diversity places more emphasise on building specific skills and creating strategies which get the best from every employee.
- Affirmative action targets specific groups for accelerated development and training in order to correct imbalances through maximising of the potential of people. Managing diversity encourages the diverse workforce to create new ways of working together in a pluralistic environment. Managing diversity envisages a shift from the culture of assimilation and a move towards appreciation in which everyone feels valued and accepted. With diversity the focus is more on attitudes, values and perceptions with a view to encourage culture change.
- Affirmative action helps to bring disadvantaged people into the system at all levels. Affirmative action is aimed at certain target groups. Managing diversity ensures that people maximise the potential of affirmative action candidates and not have tokens. Managing diversity

includes all employees. Managing diversity is about creating an environment which works for all employees. They are parallel but distinct strategies. Affirmative action brings diversity issues to the table (e.g. fears, frustrations, standards, expectations and racism), not the other way around. Valuing diversity broadens the debate beyond race and tries to build a more positive paradigm towards differences. Valuing diversity helps to deal with stereotyping, cultural assumptions, sabotage, fears and conflict.

In many respects, valuing and managing diversity is nothing more than good management in changing times. It is clear that management of diversity is an integral part of the process of implementing affirmative action programmes.

Any organisation will have to actively endeavour to create an organisational culture that is vital to the process of implementing affirmative action programmes. The mind set of the South African organisations will have to be changed to enable them to manage the broad diversity that exist in the organisations.

Change will continue in future and individual employee, particularly first time job seekers, must adapt to cope with changing environment. Informal sector will continue to grow and expand, number of professionals opting for private practice rather than corporate employment will continue to rise and range and extent of opportunities open to entrepreneurs will be greater than ever.

Organisations will have to accept that managing diversity is part and parcel of the process of managing people. The aim of managing diversity is not to

merely seek one common vision but to establish a multi-vision approach which recognises the diverse needs and aspirations of the various employees in a organisation and caters for different and diverse cultures that exist in the Southern African organisations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

There is no universal definition of affirmative action, the concept is being understood differently and implemented inconsistently by more and more individuals, companies and institutions. With the conceptual interpretation of affirmative action failing to state why an assertive policy on people's rights is necessary, affirmative action is an incorrect description that could undermine the entire mission and vision of rectifying the imbalances and injustices of the past (compare 1.2).

There is a high level of pressure on organisations to change due to radical changes in a political, economical sphere. This results in negativity, conflict and resistance against change. The relations between employers and employees are becoming negative. Managers must find a solution urgently, in order to solve this problem (Moolman, 1996: 317).

Affirmative action is also an American term, and can be seriously misconstrued in South Africa. Corrective action would be a better word than affirmative action. Corrective action would mean the upliftment and advancement of all the previously disadvantaged. These disadvantaged include blacks, women and disabled. Moolman (1996:317) confirms the fact that affirmative action is often seen as reverse discrimination.

The researcher is of the opinion that the dangers of creating a cycle of dependency and erosion of progress already achieved by individuals, a

possibility that a wrong subgroup of the population could be targeted, and the danger that affirmative action could lead to racial conflict do exist.

If affirmative action is seen as steps taken to encourage the participation of target group of people at all levels of public and private sector, major demographic questions need to be answered for effective policy implementation. Specific demographic questions which should concern organisations in South Africa today include:

- How many people do we need to maximise productivity now and at other specific periods in the future?
- What should be the demographic profile of our work force with reference to the following : age, sex, marital status, occupation, ethnicity, race, education, language, household size and structure and geographical residence? (Chimere-Dan, 1992: 3).

The researcher adds that business has a serious responsibility:

- to remain viable, create wealth and generate jobs and opportunities for personal growth;
- to sensitise people to the need for change;
- to help them learn new behaviours and thus bring about change.

In order to let affirmative action work in a company the people must be treated fairly in order to create equality, at times some people will be treated differently. No reasonable person will deny that racism and sexism

have had and continue to have a powerful impact on the structure of the South African workforce and economy. The fairness or otherwise of an affirmative action programme involving employment preferences in favour of disadvantaged groups will have to be evaluated on the facts of each particular case.

An employer will, for example, not be required to promote every targeted employee who participates in an affirmative action training programme. If this were not so, an employer's right to manage his business would be unfairly trammelled. The unfair labour practices jurisdiction of the Industrial Court has to be exercised with due regard to fairness to both employer and employee.

An employer should also take care that, where reference is made to race and/or sex in its programme, such criteria are merely examples of a number of factors to be taken into consideration in applying its affirmative action programme. There are commentators who believe that it is preferable that an affirmative action programme does not contain any reference to race or sex, but rather contains some other objective criteria in identifying suitable individuals or groups for special treatment (Verster, 1994:25).

In order to contribute to the upliftment of the community, objectives must be formulated by companies, such as:

- Contribute to the peace, justice and stability in areas from which companies draw their labour.
- Ensure continued production.

- **Contribute towards the stabilisation and normalisation of South African society.**
- **Prevent boycotts and deterioration of the relationship between business and the community.**
- **Act as a facilitator and catalyst to bring together all parties who could possibly be involved in such a dispute.**
- **Prevent bloodshed, violence and loss of life.**
- **Provide a forum for all interested parties to meet. Discuss the issues and if possible formulate a plan of action to prevent any escalation of violence based on political, cultural, religious and other backgrounds.**

6.2 FINDINGS

The following factors are identified by Human (1991:15) as pertinent to the successful implementation of affirmative action;

- **the organisation has to recognise people development as a key strategic objective as reflected in both its value and reward systems;**
- **the development of people is a responsibility of line management, with the necessary guidance and support of the human resources function, this is particularly critical in the light of the fact that line management usually lacks good interpersonal skills;**

- promotion and development from within, hence, human resources succession and career planning are vital for the development and motivation of people;
- top management must be committed to people development and to actively and seriously evaluate management behaviour with regard to the development of people;
- affirmative action should be seen as an integral part of general processes of people development and individuals must then be managed and developed in accordance with individual needs.

It is clear that affirmative action is not just a simplistic process of black versus white or replacing a white face with a black one. The end result of such a process being to create diverse work teams based on egalitarian principles, namely to bring about a culture of equal employment opportunity.

Crime and violence are on the point of becoming endemic in South Africa society. The causes are many and varied but include unemployment and poverty. A large part of the population is uneducated, have no houses and suffer from the consequences of a lack of health care facilities. Business has responded with social investment programmes especially in the field of education. Yet business still has the image of focusing on profits and of not caring. As mentioned in 1.2 it is evident that training and education is a very strong solution for South Africa's problems, i.e. high rate of unemployment, violence and crime. There is many more, but it is affecting everybody in South Africa, direct or indirect in one way of another. The researcher is of the opinion, the more people spent their time on training and

education the less time will be spent on violence.

People will realize that training and education will set some goals to reach, they will feel they belong in society, they also have place and they will realise that they have to work together for the upliftment of all in South Africa. Everybody will at the end of the day benefit. The researcher is positive that he has reached his goal in proofing that training and education are essential aspects or probably the important aspects of an affirmative action programme.

According to the researcher employees, black and white, need encouragement to develop greater confidence in themselves, their peers and the country as a whole. There is so much South Africans can take pride in and so much that gives one hope for the future.

Impact of change could be measured as follows according to Moolman (1996: 322-323):

- employees loyalty towards the organisation;
- moral of the employees, before, during and after the implementation of the change;
- employees productivity level;
- labour turnover in the organisation;
- absence in the workplace;
- increase or decrease of grievances; and
- increase or decrease in disciplinary hearings.

Most companies have formal programmes of affirmative action which primarily target blacks (as opposed to Indians and coloureds), but all companies have some form of policy in this area (formal or informal). The

Chief Executive Officers (CEO) seems to play a monitoring role in the affirmative action programmes. Well-structured programmes of affirmative action are doomed to failure if not driven by the CEO.

Given the business-organised labour ongoing debates in South Africa, the involvement of unions should be more seriously addressed. Lack of commitment to affirmative action on the part of management, line management and non managerial staff, as well as the overt or covert sabotage of affirmative action programmes was noted according to Thomas (1995: 35).

The human resource practices of recruitment, selection and training appear to have been modified by companies in order to employ a greater number of black employees and train them, especially in the area of skill development. It appears that programmes of induction and orientation have not received as much attention and it could be anticipated that new affirmative action appointees may initially be left in the dark when they are appointed. Employees are experiencing quite a number of problems with regard to affirmative action (see 1.2).

The researcher is of the opinion that some of the problems are as follows:

- The knowledge that is lost when experienced employees take early retirement packages. This will have a negative effect on the efficiency of an organisation.
- Employees do not understand the concept of affirmative action or the role that they should play.

- The support system in organisations are non-existing. Affirmative action candidates are not getting enough support in order to develop themselves in their new positions.
- White male employees are very negative. They are feeling that the blacks are taking their jobs. This can be the result of the conservative and negative outlook of white males towards blacks according to Moolman (1996: 326).
- Some affirmative action candidates are appointed in positions without any experience or abilities. They are often appointed above employees with years of experience. A negative attitude can be expected towards that person and towards affirmative action.
- If one person out of a group of five for example does not speak Afrikaans, then the meeting will be conducted in English in order to accommodate that person. This action could be seen in a negative as well as in a positive light. Social change has to take place in an organisation according to Mulder (1994: 289), and also refer to chapter 5.

The researcher does not agree with a quota system (see 4.6.3). A quota system will result to an imbalance of qualified employees in an organisation. Employees will be employed just in order to balance the numbers. An organisation must be economical viable in order to achieve success at the end of the day (see 4.8). The above statement addressed the problem that was raised in 1.2, if a quota system should applied to South Africa.

Bendix (1996: 598) adds that business needs to make its affirmative action policy known to its customers and clientele, not for the purpose of

canvassing kudos but to gain support and understanding, particularly when certain employees are being developed into positions.

According to Thomas (1995: 36) a positive finding is that companies seem to require that line managers are responsible and accountable for ensuring that the affirmative action programme is effectively managed in their departments. However, the manner in which such accountability is measured appears to be in relation to numbers (targets met, people promoted, staff turnover) and not according to the more holistic development of affirmative action appointees.

6.3 RECOMMENDATION

According to the researcher the following actions are recommended to implement the process of affirmative action:

1. The responsibilities for the execution of the affirmative action programme should be delegated to the Chief Executive. An positive approach towards affirmative action by the Chief Executive influence his colleges. It is also his task to ensure that the affirmative action programme is monitored in order to establish if it is successful.
2. The implementation of an affirmative action programme should be monitored. This is to establish if there are any problems with the current programme to address and also if the goals have been achieved.
3. An affirmative action officer should be appointed in order to support the activities pertaining to the affirmative action program. His task will be to

ensure the full participation of all the employees to the programme. He will be in other words be running and coordinating the programme.

4. Evaluate all current human resources policies, practices and procedures to eliminate all existing discriminatory practices. The affirmative action officer should monitor the current situation in the organisation and eliminate the discriminatory practices.
5. To create and maintain an organisational climate that will encourage mutual respect and understanding by means of an intervention to address employers fears and expectations in terms of affirmative action. Employees should learn about the different cultures in their organisation. A newsletter once a month about situations in the organisation, activities, changes, people and their cultures will be a good way to start an action.
6. The setting of targets are essential to affect representivity on all the levels of the organisation and also to be able to quantify the progress of affirmative action in terms of representivity. These target setting should only be for a limited period in the initial stages of the affirmative action program. Affirmative action is a process. With all processes their are a start and a ending to it. A target should be set for five to eight years for an organisation to reach their targets. There must be a deafened time limit to an affirmative action programme.

Esmeraldo (1995:195) adds that the following further actions are recommended to implement the process of affirmative action.

- The approval of a written affirmative action policy document. The

researcher believe that all the stakeholders should be involved in this.

- The allocation of responsibilities to the Chief Executive, line managers and the human resource manager. The researcher also believes that financial allocation and involvement by the unions in terms of monitoring should be included.
- The appointment of an affirmative action officer in order to support the activities pertaining to the affirmative action program.
- To set clear and unambiguous objectives or targets in respect of headcount.
- The policy on affirmative action should be communicated to all the relevant stakeholders.
- The implementation of interventions to address fears and expectations pertaining to the affirmative action programme.
- To evaluate all current human resources policies, practices and procedures to eliminate all existing discriminatory practices.

The major inequality in South Africa today, is that between persons of race and gender. It should be emphasized from the outset that any action to address inequalities in South Africa will be confronted by major obstacles. The most important one is probably the fact that the disadvantaged group is by far the majority of the population. Whites will for many decades to come, form a critical component of the labour force and any action aimed at reducing inequalities should not result in whites leaving the country, as this

will seriously damage economic growth and thereby have a negative impact on the ability of the economy to rapidly reduce inequalities and to increase living standards. Inequalities should be addressed as follows according to Barker (1992:167):

- Higher economic growth. The researcher is of the opinion that by improving the development of organisation's diverse human resources, productivity would be advanced. Thus, economic activity would be stimulated and economic growth will be increased.
- Education and training. According to the researcher the controversial issue of training and development relates to the previous disadvantaged groups being excluded from the privilege of human development in terms of education. The legacy of apartheid, now been eradicated, should serve as fundamental cornerstone for accepting the diversity of the various individuals in an organisation. Specific attention should be given to the needs and aspirations of the various individuals in the organisation. These could be accelerated training, adult basic training and even managerial development, but are not limited to those aspects of training and development.
- Entrepreneurship. Attention needs to be given to the accelerated training and development of entrepreneurs, for example special training and financing programmes.
- Government employment and tender practices. Accelerated schemes to ensure a more representative civil service will be required. This will necessitate special training programmes in management and administration to ensure that standards are maintained or even improved.

- Legal remedies. Legal remedies could consist of either negative remedies, such as placing a prohibition on any type of discrimination or such positive actions as affirmative action programmes.
- Equal pay for work of equal value (refer to 2.6).
- Affirmative action is a recognised way of promoting the principle of equality of opportunities in societies where this principle has suffered as a result of discrimination or where less developed persons have to compete with more developed persons.

Affirmative action is essentially an attempt to better historical workforce imbalances and to open up opportunities in spite of prejudices. Companies need to see beyond the target or number game and seriously consider how they will begin to address the harnessing of their workforce diversity for competitive advantage in both changing local and global marketplaces.

6.4 CONCLUSION

During the course of this study, a relatively broad area of the sphere of affirmative action was covered. In exploring the history of affirmative action the legacy of the apartheid era was uncovered and the poverty in the development of human potential discovered. If South Africa is to maintain and increase its economic well being and growth, it is sure to follow a path of developing its most valuable asset, namely human potential. Through the decades various paradigms were followed. The latest programme in the development of human potential is that of affirmative action and a growing

interest in the managing of diversity. It is only through a joint effort by stakeholders, especially organisations that the previously disadvantaged groups can enjoy and spread the fruit of change in their change to upliftment to the growth and development of the country.

Affirmative actions programmes are in various stages of development in organisations today. The main features of such programmes are to positively enhance the image of the relationship between management and the employees in the organisations, and to address negativities in the workplace. It is only through a better understanding of each other, and a commitment from all the stakeholders that affirmative action programmes will reach its goal, namely of giving every individual irrespective of possible discriminatory attachments the opportunity to optimise their potential.

Management must strive to manage its diverse workforce by means of a proper policy and strategy to enhance the relationship. To be equipped to deal with a dynamic changing working environment, all the parties to that relationship must learn to accept the differences of each other, they must learn how to manage their conflict, but above all they must learn to respect and trust one another.

The researcher is of the opinion that the purpose of this study as described in 1.3 has been successfully reached. An affirmative action model has been briefly described in in chapter 4. The shift from affirmative action to diversity of management has been effectively dealt within chapter 5. In terms of the race aspect it is important that employees in an organisation should learn more of the different cultures, accept each other, uplift each other towards mutual goals.

The researcher adds that a company which openly acknowledges itself as a candidate for change unlocks the first door to facilitating the participation of all employees in a change programme, i.e. an affirmative action programme.

If employees have mutual goals, this action will ensure growth in the economy and the total upliftment of all. Management and labour have to work together in setting up goals for an organisation. Smooth transition of organisations from the affirmative action era into management of diversity could only be obtained by mutual acceptance and targets. Unions have to bare in mind that only by economical growth can a country grow and the upliftment of the people will be the result thereof.

The researcher is of the opinion that the hypothesis as stated in 1.4, has been proven and is accepted.

Gavin Relly, former chairman of the Anglo American Corporation said "... perhaps we have not perceived quickly enough that we are in a society which is changing radically. We have laid our plans on the basis that the future will be substantially the same as the past and, however, find the goals which we have set ourselves - and many people have done extraordinarily well - they have locked the crucial element of a more realistic view of the future."

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