

A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF  
CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN HUMAN RESOURCES PROVISIONING AT  
UMKHANYAKUDE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

BY

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requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the  
Department of Psychology at the University of Zululand

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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my work and that all the sources that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date:.....

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## SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

This study was conducted to ascertain whether uMkhanyakude District Municipality complies with the provisions of the Employment Equity Act No55 of 1998 and to examine whether the Municipality has devised recruitment methods that provide access to a wider pool of job applicants.

Some of the outcomes derived from diversity initiatives are not easily quantifiable or measured but they clearly demonstrate the benefits that can be realized by an organization. Benefits such as:

- ❖ Improved organizational image stemming from more diverse positive reputation and the presence of diverse employees in key positions.
- ❖ Improved co-operation and communication within diverse work-teams, few as they are.

Findings of this study indicated that cultural diversity is the least understood phenomenon and that the municipality has not made an effort to diversify. This is indicated by the fact that there are no African or White females in the strategic or decision making positions. This under-representation of women constitutes gender discrimination. Also the municipality has not made an effort to develop a strategy on diversifying despite submitting the workforce profile to the Department of

labour; no help has been forthcoming in order to develop equity policies to address high levels of under-representation.

## CHAPTER 1

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Many employers have identified the objective of recruiting and selecting a diverse workforce as an important organizational goal. Being considered or viewed as the "employer of choice" by the most talented individuals in today's world of work is the most critical capability needed in order to compete successfully in an increasingly competitive workplace (Kossek & Lobel, 1996:65).

In most organizations, the representation of culture groups in the overall workforce, especially in high positions, is skewed and men are predominant in high positions. For organizations that subscribe to equal opportunity principles, a major motive for investing in managing-diversity initiatives is that it is morally and ethically the right cause to follow.

According to Dadoo, Valmont, Lephoko & Lebbe (1997:35) men, women and minorities do not share a common culture of organizational life; rather each group identifies, defines

and organizes its experience in the organization in its unique ways. Cultural diversity brings a unique perspective to organizing experience. It is important to realize that any organization operates within larger cultural frameworks and employees in a specific organization bring their own cultural habits and customs with them. In that way, cultural differences help shape how employees view the organization. Tomorrow's workforce will be even more diverse than today's and researchers still have a long way to go in understanding cultural diversity; it is, however, critical for an organization's management to ensure that they understand all the principles of cultural diversity.

Today's multicultural workforce offers a number of challenges such as recognizing that cultural differences are assets not liabilities and therefore respecting and supporting one's own values and those of one's co-workers is vital. A further challenge is dealing with one's prejudices so that one acts fairly (Cox, 1994:79).

## 1.2 MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH

In South Africa there has been pressure, including legal constraints, to prevent employers selecting employees on the basis of criteria that are unrelated to the requirements of the job. The employer that seeks to manage diversity in a comprehensive manner will need to ensure that in recruitment there is no discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, colour, race, nationality and ethnicity. But the aim is more than simply avoiding discrimination. It is about making sure that the organization has searched the labour market thoroughly and found the best people to fill the available positions (Bruce, 1997:21).

According to Nel (2002:80) the focus of the Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998) is the eradication of unfair discrimination in any form when hiring, promoting, training and retrenching in an organization. The Act also aims at achieving a diverse workforce that is representative of all the people of South Africa. In terms of section 15 (1) of the Employment Equity Act, there is a need for organizations to comply with, or adhere to, the measures of Affirmative Action that are designed to ensure that

suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all categories and levels in the workplace.

Managing diversity is a comprehensive process for developing a workplace environment for all employees. It is inclusive rather than exclusive and addresses workplace behaviours and the understanding of differences. The challenge is to ensure that the systems, policies and practices within the organization do not benefit one group over another and that the differences each employee brings to the organization are respected and used to enhance the organization's capacity, strengths, service and adaptability (Lessem,1997:67).

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

According to Finnemore (2002:125) the implementation of Affirmative Action is full of difficulties, including the shortage of well-trained and educated job applicants from disadvantaged communities. Resistance from whites who believe that their job opportunities are threatened by such actions is also a reality. Political transformation and

increased pressure for human resources development have demanded that organizations transform the old apartheid-style workplaces into organizations that are more representative of the population and provide equal opportunities to all women and men.

Clearly therefore, the legacy of inequality inherited from the past cannot be left to formal equality alone with the assumption that it will correct itself through market forces over a period of time. As a result it is not sufficient to simply remove racist laws from statute books; one has to ensure that similar laws will not be enacted in the future.

#### **1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of this study is to, inter alia,

- examine whether uMkhanyakude Municipality has devised recruitment methods that provide access to a wider pool of job applicants.
- to ascertain whether the uMkhanyakude Municipality complies with the provisions of the Act (EEA).

- to determine whether the uMkhanyakude Municipality provides for the appointment of people with disabilities.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.5.1 POPULATION**

The ideal (target) population will include all administrative staff at uMkhanyakude Municipality.

### **1.5.2 INSTRUMENTATION**

Multiple sources of data collection methods will be used. These will include structured interviews and questionnaires and these will be used to collect data from the subjects for the purpose of comparing responses for evaluation. All responses will be systematically recorded. The researcher also intends to obtain information from the Human Resources policy documents. Neuman (1997:228) states that during the interview process the researcher asks questions and participants simply provide answers. Surveys will give the researcher a picture of what many people think about the

participants and, to a greater extent, questionnaires will be used to collect data from the participants.

### **1.5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

In social sciences research, it is not always easy to receive co-operation from the subjects or participants. However, the researcher does not foresee threats to internal validity with respect to the location, loss of participants, extraneous events or maturation because of the duration of the study.

### **1.5.4 ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESEARCH FINDINGS**

When analyzing data, descriptive statistics and content analysis will be used because they serve as a technique for gathering and analyzing the content of the text. In content analysis the researcher will use objective, systematic counting and recording procedures.

## **1.6 VALUE OF THE STUDY**

The Department of Labour in South Africa is putting institutions under pressure to ensure that their workforce is diversified and that it is representative of all the people of South Africa. This study will assist umkhanyakude in determining whether it has successfully complied with the provisions of the Employment Equity Act.

## **1.7 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION**

### **1.7.1 CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

The concept 'diversity' is used broadly to refer to many demographic variables including, but not limited to, race, religion, colour, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, education, geographical origin and skill characteristics. South Africa's diversity has given this country its unique strengths, resilience and richness. The concept "diversity" is also used narrowly in recruitment and retention efforts to refer to race, gender or disability so that the plan developed in an organization

focuses on achieving diversity in these areas (Cox, 1994:15).

### **1.7.2 RECRUITMENT**

Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk & Schenk (2003:259) define recruitment as those activities in Human Resources Management which are undertaken in order to attract sufficient job candidates who have the necessary skills, competencies, traits and qualifications to fill job needs and to assist the organization in achieving its objective.

### **1.7.3 SELECTION**

Selection is the process of choosing for employment a subset of applicants for hire and it implies that some applicants will get hired and others will not (Muchinsky, Kriek & Schreuder, 1998:165).

#### **1.7.4 SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

According to Reece & Brandt (1996:142) sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature when

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile or sexually-offensive work environment.

#### **1.7.5 CULTURE**

Culture is defined as integrated and unifying systems or patterns of shared ideas, behaviours, values and beliefs of a specific society or shared by a group of people. Culture

is composed of life-customs, habits and laws (Reece & Brandt, 1996:123).

#### **1.7.6 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

Organizational culture is the "unwritten feelings" part of an organization. Usually it is considered to represent values, beliefs and shared understanding in an organization. It is also intangible and difficult to define and measure. Organizational culture is the backdrop against which all organizational behaviour is enacted and it serves as a foundation for the organization's management systems as well as the set of management practices and behaviours that both exemplify and reinforce the principles that shape the life in the organization (French & Bell, 1998:64).

#### **1.7.7 ORGANIZATIONAL ACCULTURATION**

Acculturation means adjusting and adapting to either a subculture within one's own country or to another culture in a foreign country. It is regarded as a way of solving cultural differences and of cultural change and adaptation between groups. The extent to which diversity is valued in

an organization will influence the organization's acculturation mode (Dadoo et al, 1997:21).

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Workforce diversity is an issue for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today's workforce is becoming more diverse as it brings together people of different races, ages, culture, abilities, genders, sexual orientation, family structures and lifestyle. Organizations are constantly developing diversity-focused initiatives to create policies, practices and procedures for making diversity work in order to establish diversity as a resource for meeting organizational goals.

In addition, increasing globalization requires more interaction among people from diverse cultures, belief systems and backgrounds than ever before. People no longer live and work in a highly-restricted workplace; they are now part of a worldwide economy with competition coming from nearly every continent. As a result organizations need diversity to become more creative and open to change.

The management of diversity is an organization's reaction to rapid cultural and sociological changes. Internally, diversity management means providing a climate where all employees feel that they are valued and are contributing to an organization. Externally, it means that organizations are flexible and have to take advantage of the changes taking place in the world of work.

It is one thing for an organization to welcome diversity and quite another to invite diversity with the expectation that individuals will bring their whole persons to work, that is, their core values, beliefs and aspirations as fully-dimensional human beings. The organization that encourages diversity at such a profound level will be an organization that supports self-actualization of its members; not only is there enrichment but continual positive transformation also occurs at both the individual and group level.

## **2.2 A GUIDE TO THE COMPONENT VARIABLE AND DIVERSITY MODEL**

### **2.2.1 VALUES AND MISSION**

The organization's policy and practices must at all times be consistent with its key business priorities and customer needs (Gadenswartz & Rowe, 1993:85).

### **2.2.2 REALISTIC, SPECIFIC AND TIME-BOUND OBJECTIVES**

The organization should ensure that measurability monitoring and the possibility of achievement are enriched. The action plans must be developed at team level with specific line management responsibility and allocated time scales (Gadenswartz & Rowe, 1993:88).

### **2.2.3 INTEGRATION WITH QUALITY STANDARDS AND PROCESSES**

It is the concern of all managers and not just the Human Resources department's responsibility to see that both people and systems do not discriminate unfairly and that there is a consistency of approach. Positive actions,

protection from harassment, clearly-publicized policies and accessible legal remedies are a prerequisite for a fair working environment (Gadenswartz & Rowe, 1993:90).

#### **2.2.4 SENIOR MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT**

High visibility involvement for uppermost echelons of leadership and its understanding of the drivers for change with respect to managing diversity is particularly crucial (Gadenswartz & Rowe, 1993:95).

#### **2.2.5 INVESTMENT OF RESOURCES**

Management must make the requisite resources available both by way of information as well as finance and staffing to promulgate and sustain change. Induction, recruitment and selection, appraisal systems, reward strategy, training and development functions and image management (with respect to its social responsibility profile) all require dedicated resources to reflect diversity-consciousness (Gadenswartz & Rowe, 1993:102).

## 2.2.6 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A learning-to-learn culture where self-directness is encouraged is essential. Therefore, awareness training should focus on both service deliveries as well as on how to develop and manage others (Gadenswartz & Rowe, 1993:106).

## 2.3 ADAPTING HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEMS TO MANAGE DIVERSITY

According to Kossek & Lobel (1996:68) organizations and their cultures are a function of the kind of people in them; they are a result of an attraction, selection and attrition cycle. Human Resources policies enable the organization to attract, select and retain different kinds of people; this is one of the reasons various organizations act and reflect the feelings of different cultures.

Basically, people make the workplace but the design and administration of Human Resources systems make the people of the organization.

Individuals are drawn or attracted to and selected by organizations that appear to have members with values similar to their own, and over a period of time employees who do not fit in well with the majority culture eventually turn away from the organization. As a result, in the long run, workplaces can be characterized by more homogeneity than heterogeneity. Many organizations have traditionally had Human Resources systems based on model homogeneity in that they promote similarity not diversity.

Human (2005:69) states that managing diversity is a process that requires regular and ongoing communication; this is based on the fact that not only do employees regularly change jobs and departments but also because diversity is a moving target. Management needs to accept the unique characteristics of employees from different backgrounds. In addition, issues of gender and disability are not ignored but faced head on.

The implementation of management of diversity starts with managers not employees. It nevertheless requires employees to accept that each group's unique characteristics are in fact assets that can be utilized to benefit the whole organization and enrich the people in that organization.

Importantly it is generally accepted that in the management of diversity members of the previously-disadvantaged group cannot develop and advance in the job hierarchy if the organization does not initially implement change.

Jackson & Alvarez (1992:62) provide a number of examples illustrating how traditional Human Resources Management models foster workforce homogenization. Firstly, the recruitment practices emphasize attracting people from sources that have historically been reliable.

Secondly, selection practices stress choosing candidates similar to those who have been successful. Thirdly, training programmes foster uniform ways of thinking, and policies that are designed to limit a supervisor's latitude in addressing employees' unique needs. Decision makers have also tended to hire, promote and evaluate people in terms of the degree to which they are like their own image. Such an approach has been coined "homosocial reproduction" by Kanter (1997) when referring to the tendency to use selection and promotion systems to allow only employees to pass through if they fit the image of the group which predominates.

Human Resources policies which support diversity can help the culture to continually adapt in response to new demands; such systems are vital for attracting highly-skilled, diverse groups of people or employees who possess the key success factors needed to compete in today's changing workplaces.

## **2.4 DIVERSITY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE IN ORGANIZATIONS**

The theory of Psychological Type was developed by Jung as a schema for distinguishing core differences in psychological approach based on distinctly delineated parameters that act as universal variables in the psychology of the individual. It can be used to shed light on how particular cultures and certain forms of social organization come to be preferred over others.

Jung used a minimum number of dimensions along which individuals could differ but permitted a maximum degree of qualitative differences amongst individuals. He explained two different orientations to the world: extraversion and

introversion and four general preferences or styles of experiencing the world related to what he called four functions of consciousness which are sensing, thinking, intuition and feeling that every human being possesses (Pinchot & Pinchot, 1993:226).

According to Jung each individual demonstrates a preference for one of the four functions which is referred to as "dominant", superior or first-function preference. It is not a matter of conscious choice and is not conceived as being easily changed.

Jung states that it is the dominant function that is typically relied upon by the individual; this function becomes more highly-developed under the person's conscious control. The dominant function may be assisted by one of the remaining functions, referred to as auxiliary, as the individual's secondary function. The secondary function is somewhat less-developed and the tertiary function even more so (Pinchot & Pinchot, 1993:231).

Jung postulated that when the dominant function in an individual is any one of the four functions, an inferior function will by definition be its partner in that pair.

For example, if sensation is the dominant function, intuition in that individual will be inferior, or if intuition is the dominant function, sensation will be inferior.

Singer (1992:214) states that Jung was particularly interested in the inferior function, which is the least-developed function in the individual because it is the function that is least conscious. The Jungians conceive of the inferior function as immersed in the unconscious of the individual where it is contaminated by unconscious urges and impulses. For example, in an individual who has thinking as a dominant function, feeling will be underdeveloped, crossed and differentiated. Such a person may be prone to becoming carried away by their feelings or express them inappropriately. Individuals of this type will be prone to "sentimentality", and also inclined toward making gross value judgments. They will ignore the subtle shades in the spectrum of feelings available to human beings.

Likewise for someone whose dominant function is "feelings", his inferior function, thinking, can be described as underdeveloped, undifferentiated and cross. These people

can be carried away by overly-simplistic thinking, expressing themselves in what might appear to the thinking type as platitudes; such individuals can be described as having thoughts which are more crudely formed, underdeveloped or even very unexciting or trite (Singer, 1992:220).

According to singer (1992:230) in the feeling person opinions appear to be adopted without much deliberate conscious consideration of alternatives, such a person will operate according to underdeveloped, oversimplified systems of logic and may appear to be opinionated or lacking in analytical skills.

## **2.5 PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE: BEGET'S PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE**

Beget's psychological type suggests that if managers control the kind of people with whom they want to work, the chances are that they will select people who are more like themselves. With regards to this psychological bent there is a possibility that the dominance of one type amplifies that particular type overall (Singer, 1992:229).

Diversity fails to bring excitement to the organization if any particular group dominates; it fails if position, status, learning opportunities and rewards are triggered to flow to the dominant people and groups. It means there is an even greater imbalance of type in the higher echelons of management than there is in the general population.

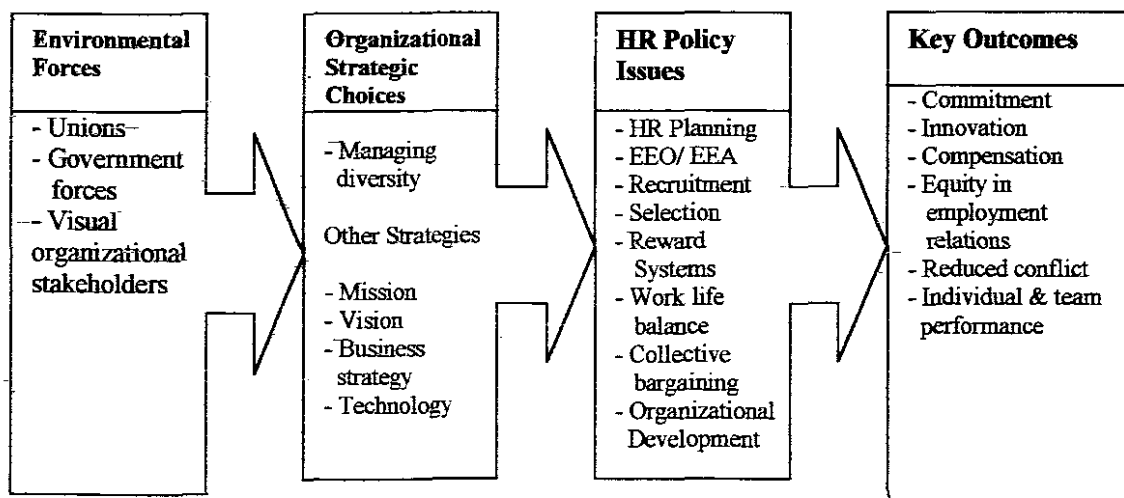
## **2.6 THE OUTCOMES STATISTICAL IMBALANCE IN FAVOUR OF ESTJs**

According to Kroeger & Thusen (1993:215) if there is a predominance in Thinking Judgers (TJ) type over Feeling Types (FJ) within management then there are aspects that can be predicted about the typological make up of the higher echelons of management in the workplace:

- ❖ As long as management is predominately TJ, women are statistically destined to be in the minority because to TJ's there are simply fewer thinking women in the population; this biased view affects recruitment.

- ❖ Most of the women obtaining top-level positions will look typologically like male counterparts. More than likely they will be TJs.
- ❖ The few FT types who make it to the top typically do so for two reasons: to prove to themselves that they can do it or because they have the desire to change the organization.
- ❖ The feeling-perceivers get to the top not because the system has accepted them but because of their ability to play the TJ game. While at the top the idealists do have some impact, but as soon as they leave their progress is often obliterated.

## 2.7 A FRAMEWORK OF HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING DIVERSITY



Kossek & Lobel (1996:6) state that this diagram is designed to assist decision-makers and researchers to understand the connection between environmental forces, the managing of diversity and organizational strategic choices. The first box of the diagram illustrates some of the key environmental forces that include:

- ❖ **Unions:** These play a significant role in determining the composition of the organization's workforce. Many unions have been seen as the vehicle for change; this is because in the past unions have been successful in putting pressure on the employers and the government

to introduce changes in the organization, e.g. the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 excluded all blacks, disallowed mixed unions and imposed job reservation for white workers.

- ❖ **Government forces:** These have a significant impact on how organizations manage diversity. In South Africa the implementation of Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunities and the Employment Equity Act serve to indicate that the government is serious about equality and change.
  
- ❖ **Stakeholder pressure:** Those who perceive that they have a major role to play in the management of the organization are now becoming increasingly vocal and involved in the management of the organization, according to Kossek & Lobel (1996:7). Another stakeholder group that is becoming more powerful is the local community. Communities are becoming increasingly vocal regarding their expectations that organisations be like good corporate citizens and provide jobs for members of local communities. This indicates that the organization has a social responsibility to provide jobs for the community.

The second box of the diagram illustrates organizational strategic choices. Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk & Schenk (2003:167) state that "strategy focuses on the big picture, that is, who the organization is, what it is trying to achieve, where it is aiming to go in the long term and how it intends to achieve this in the context of the organization's competitive and general external environment".

As a result, the managing diversity strategy must fit with the mission and values of the organization. Jackson & Alvarez (1992:65) argue that diversity strategy should also be incorporated into business strategy such as globalization, innovation and customer services.

Managing diversity amounts to more than paying lip service to the acceptance of differences found in the workplace. Diversity management requires active steps to identify and maximize the positive advantages of having a multi-cultural workforce and to take note of and respond to some of challenges involved. A diversity management strategy is therefore one which aims to:

- ❖ Identify and raise awareness of cultural differences within the workforce.

- ❖ Analyze the existing corporate culture and identify practices and behaviour that support and undermine diversity.
- ❖ Develop processes and behavioural norms to manage diversity that strengthen the positive and redresses the negative aspects of the existing culture.
- ❖ Institutionalize diversity management by integrating it with the organization's management practices (White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service: 1997).

The development of the diversity management strategy is a collective and consensual exercise undertaken with the employees, and the success of this strategy depends on the active support and participation of everyone in the organization. The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service (1997) proposes that diversity management strategy should be developed in line with the following principles:

- ❖ Ultimate responsibility for providing leadership in development of a diversity management culture should be the responsibility of the head of department;

however, the overall application and implementation should involve everyone in the organization.

- ❖ A diversity audit should be carried out to identify and acknowledge the feelings and perceptions of the workforce about the ways in which they believe that the organization supports or undermines their cultural values, needs and aspirations.
  
- ❖ The findings of the diversity audit should be measured against the organization's existing management practices, working culture and behavioural norms for the purpose of identifying gaps which need to be filled.
  
- ❖ Ideas for filling the "gap" between the existing organizational culture and employees' needs and aspirations as revealed by the diversity audit should be developed and should involve the entire workforce.
  
- ❖ The diversity management programme should be regularly evaluated and improved in the light of experience.

- ❖ The third box and the fourth box illustrate Human Resources policy areas and key outcomes, and these two areas are discussed in full in section 2.4 of this document.

## **2.8 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY AREAS**

Kossek & Lobel (1996:12) state proper implementation of the Human Resources policies lead to the achievement of the main outcomes (indicated in the fourth box of the framework). These policies relate to attitudes and behaviours of the individual employee and groups of employees. It also relates to economic and organizational issues. Outcomes at policy and group levels include:

### **2.8.1 COMMITMENT**

Human Resources policies promote commitment if they are designed not only to enhance performance but also to promote individual identity, psychological involvement and self-worth. As a result, Human Resources Policies should be formulated in a way that will enable or motivate the employees to work together towards achieving the common goals of the organization. Cascio (1992:125) states that to

ensure adequate commitment, senior personnel should encourage all staff to feel involved and to discuss their concerns, including the difficulties in attempting to change attitudes of all the employees.

### **2.8.2 COMPETENCE**

Human Resources policies should enable the organization to attract, develop and retain the right number of people with a mix of skills and talents needed at the right time and at the right place. Competence as an outcome of managing diversity effectively means that the organization will have representation from diverse groups of people throughout the organization (Sheppard, Lewick & Minton, 1992:39).

### **2.8.3 A PERCEPTION OF EQUITY**

An equity challenge in managing diversity relates to the assumption that what is provided for one employee must be offered to all employees. As a result, managers of the organization need Human Resources systems that will enable them to say yes to one employee and no to another and will still enable their decision to be viewed as fair. According

to Sheppard *et al* (1992:45) the Human Resources outcomes are more likely to be seen as fair if there is:

- ❖ a limited right of review for groups that may want to challenge a decision.
- ❖ representative members of diversity at all decision-making levels.

#### **2.8.4 IMPROVED COMMUNICATION**

Good or improved communication is essential among the members of different cultures. If there is a hostile work environment employees who are members of minority cultural groups will feel threatened and more likely to have a need to hold on tenaciously to what they consider to be important. Morrison (1992:45) argues that people are more likely to reach out to others if they feel that their own needs are not ignored.

## **2.9 TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS**

### **2.9.1 MONOTHOLIC ORGANIZATION**

This type of an organization is not culturally integrated even in the formal structure. It is demographically and culturally homogeneous. The representation of persons from culturally disadvantaged backgrounds is very limited in the overall work population as well as in the power structure of the organization.

Monotholic organizations are characterized by an extremely high level of occupational segregation, concentrating women and ratio-centric groups in low-status occupations. One positive note is that intergroup conflict and other potential drawbacks of diversity are minimized in this type of organization by virtue of the relative homogeneity of the workforce (Cox, 1994:225).

### 2.9.2 PLURAL ORGANIZATION

This type of an organization has a more heterogeneous membership than a monotholic organization and takes steps to be more inclusive and accepting of people from different cultural backgrounds that differ from dominant groups. The steps undertaken to be more inclusive include Affirmative Action programmes, management training on equal employment opportunity issues such as the Employment Equity Act, sexual harassment and audit of compensation systems; these steps ensure the absence of discrimination against previously disadvantaged groups. According to Cox (1994:226) the plural organization represents a marked improvement over the monotholic organization in effective management of employees of different cultural backgrounds.

It should also be remembered that this type of organization is not multicultural; this is due to its continued assimilation approach to acculturation. The plural organization tends to be diverse in terms of phenotype, but genuine cultural diversity in these organizations may actually be quite limited.

### **2.9.3 THE MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

According to Cox (1994:229) an organization is considered to be multicultural only if it values diversity. The multicultural organization has the following features:

- ❖ A culture that fosters and values cultural differences.
- ❖ Absence of institutionalized cultural bias in human resources management systems and practices.
- ❖ Minimum intergroup conflict due to the proactive management of diversity.
- ❖ Pluralism as an acculturation process.
- ❖ Full structural integration.

### **2.10 VARIETIES OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES**

According to Greenberg & Baron (2003:177) diversity training is recognized as low-cost and high-return value for organizations. Diversity training helps organizations create a satisfactory, safe and meaningful environment in which people thrive. Through diversity training efforts

inclusive of human characteristic such as race, gender and spirituality or status as disabled person, organizations demonstrate to their employees that they are seen, recognized and valued. This translates into willingness by employees to put greater effort and greater creativity into their jobs. For diversity training to make a difference, it needs to occur in a supportive culture and be accompanied by other initiatives and activities.

In recent years, recognition of the importance of multicultural training awareness, understanding and skills have grown in the workplaces of South Africa. The growing diversity of the workplace is one of the greatest challenges affecting South African organizations today. Organizations are using a broad range of initiatives in their efforts to value and manage diversity. Organizations are spending millions of rands on diversity training and Human Resources Development is seen as one of the most important functions of Human Resources Management.

### 2.10.1 AWARENESS-BASED DIVERSITY TRAINING

This type of training is designed to raise people's awareness of diversity issues in the workplace and get them to recognize the underlying assumptions they make about people. It involves teaching people about the business necessity of valuing diversity and making them sensitive to their own cultural assumptions and biases (Pope-Davis & Coleman, 1997: 243).

The objectives of awareness based training are:

- ❖ To provide information about cultural diversity.
- ❖ To enhance awareness and sensitivity through uncovering hidden cultural assumptions and biases.
- ❖ To assess attitudes, beliefs and values.
- ❖ To correct myths and stereotypes.
- ❖ To promote individual and group sharing.
- ❖ To emphasize awareness of heightening awareness by promoting important information about the culture of the various groups in South African workplace to uncovering unconscious assumptions and biases.

## 2.10.2 SKILL-BASED DIVERSITY TRAINING

Greenberg & Baron (2003:179) state that this training is designed to develop people's skills with respect to managing diversity and it goes beyond raising awareness to developing strategies needed to interact effectively with others. There are four main strategies involved in this process:

- ❖ Cross-cultural understanding; understanding the cultural differences responsible for why their co-workers behave differently on the job.
  
- ❖ Inter-Cultural communication: learning to ensure that verbal and non-verbal barriers to communication across cultures are overcome.
  
- ❖ Facilitation skills: training in how to help others alleviate misunderstandings that may result from cultural differences.
  
- ❖ Flexibility and adaptability: cultivating the ability to patiently take new and different approaches when dealing with others who are different.

### 2.10.3 DIVERSITY SENSITIVITY TRAINING

The greatest challenge to diversity training is the extent to which it touches people's emotions, values and beliefs. The success of diversity sensitivity training depends on the extent to which people are willing to question and make changes in their behaviour. It also reinforces for employees and management, the various laws and codes of conduct pertaining to non-discrimination on the basis of age, disability, race, sexual orientation and national origin, (Retrieved July 20, 2005 from the World Wide Web <http://www.broworld.kiz.fl.us>).

Cultural diversity training can be off putting to people who believe or see it as politically correct and a waste of time. To those who give it a chance, it is an eye-opening experience and it can make a difference in helping employees and managers interact with each other more positively. Diversity training can increase productivity and morale if it is handled correctly. By understanding diversity, people can work better together and respect each other and employees are better able to utilize everybody's strength and skills. Trainers should not forget that cultural diversity training should be congruent with the

goals of the organization. However, for most organizations understanding diversity and sensitivity to cultural differences are not of the organization.

Diversity training can be perceived as extraneous or even seen worse and anti-ethical to the goals of the organization. Too often training professionals find themselves reacting to calls for desperately needed training, instead of being given an opportunity to plan training initiatives in advance.

## **2.11 BENEFITS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY TRAINING**

Carrel & Mann (1997) state that cultural diversity helps employees to:

- ❖ become more observant of ethnic differences.
- ❖ be more accepting of the differences of co-workers.
- ❖ be able to identify negative and harmful stereotypes.
- ❖ learn how to manage conflict.
- ❖ establish a more relaxed environment in the workplace.
- ❖ develop greater workgroup bonding.
- ❖ develop better communication skills

Benefits of cultural diversity training for organizational communication are identified as:

- ❖ It sensitizes employees to the implicit expectations of different cultures by fostering understanding and respect for one another.
- ❖ It provides greater self-esteem and co-operation among employees, as language and communication skills improve, employees are better able to follow directions better and they naturally develop closer working relationships with supervisors, co-workers and customers.
- ❖ It sends an important message to employees, it actually indicates to them that the organization wishes to help them to do their jobs better and the organization is willing to offer them the skills to improve their performance.
- ❖ It encourages them (employees) to voice their concern about their jobs; this can have positive effects on the quality of product or service provided.
- ❖ It enhances an understanding of employees' skills and strengths (Carnevale & Stone, 1994:22-28).

## 2.12 PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE CULTURAL DIVERSITY TRAINING PROGRAMMES

There are sound and identifiable principles that make successful cultural diversity training programmes stand apart from the rest. According to Carrel & Mann (1995:102) before implementing cultural diversity training programmes, employers should ensure that:

- ❖ they communicate a clear vision of desired outcomes and that they measure current reality against this standard.
- ❖ workers know that they are valued as the organization's greatest asset or most important resources.
- ❖ their organizations have "investment mentality" and has created and follow a plan identifying the who, what, when and how of actions needed to achieve the vision.
- ❖ their organization's demonstrates consistency and commitment to follow through on their plans and achieve its vision.
- ❖ training is perceived positively by employees.
- ❖ realistic goals are clearly established.
- ❖ training sessions involve all employees.(organizations are learning that diversity training programmes are more

effective when they are inclusive and when they focus primarily on interacting in the present rather than on making accusations about injustices of the past.

## **2.13 APPROACHES TO MANAGING DIVERSITY**

### **2.13.1 DIVERSITY ENLARGEMENT**

This approach increases the representation of individuals of different ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds in an organization. With this approach, the newly-appointed employees are expected to buy in to the organizational culture. The primary goal of this approach is to create diversity by changing an organization's demographic composition and increasing the number of people of colour in the organization.

Employers tend to assume that increasing diversity and exposure to the minority will lead to improved individual and organizational performance. Diversity enlargement also suggests that little or no change needs to be made in organizational systems in order for previously

disadvantaged groups to perform to their potential (Kossek & Lobel, 1996:74).

### **2.13.2 DIVERSITY SENSITIVITY**

According to Kossek & Lobel (1996:78) diversity sensitivity acknowledges the existence of cultural distance and attempts to educate or teach individual members about cultural differences using training sessions that are held to help sensitize employees to stereotyped differences of various employee racio-centric and gender groups. The primary aim of this approach is to promote effective communication and understanding in order to help build interpersonal relationships among members from different cultural backgrounds.

### **2.14 STAFFING AND DIVERSITY PHILOSOPHY**

A significant component of deciding how to staff the organization is staffing philosophy. One element of this philosophy is how much attention has to be devoted to diversity considerations in staffing decisions. According to Heneman & Heneman (1994:151) this philosophy can be spelled out in "value or aspirations statements" regarding

the importance of diversity activities to the organization and these statements outline the extent to which the organization commits itself to diversity.

There are two major philosophical approaches used in staffing and diversity. The first approach is known as the **legalistic approach** where staffing a diverse workforce is only done up to the point of considering people for jobs that are legally protected. Certain organizations follow this approach in order to be in compliance with Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA) laws and regulations. The goal of a legalistic philosophy is to simply do only what is required by the law.

The second approach is known as the **business-oriented approach**. This is a proactive philosophy where the staffing of a diverse workplace is voluntarily initiated. The goal is to increase organizational effectiveness by having a diverse workforce that may be a source of competitive advantage for organizations.

## **2.15 DIVERSITY PARADIGMS**

### **2.15.1 DISCRIMINATION AND FAIRNESS**

Pioneers of this paradigm believe that it is not desirable for diversification of the workplace to influence the organization's culture; they look at diversity by focusing on equal opportunity, fair treatment, recruitment and compliance with legislation. This paradigm leads to increased demographic diversity and often succeeds in promoting fair treatment; the problem with this paradigm is that it leads to the assumption that everyone is the same and aspires to the same.

It also makes it unlikely that managers will try to explore how the differences between workers can generate a diversity of effective ways of working, leading, viewing the market, managing people and learning (People Dynamics September; 2001:17).

### **2.15.2 ACCESS AND LEGITIMACY**

This paradigm is based on the acceptance and celebration of differences. Due to increased multiculturalism and new

ethnic groups gaining consumer power, organizations need a demographically more diverse workforce to help gain access to differentiated segments. Many organizations peddling consumer products that use market segmentations that are based on gender, racial and other demographic differences, frequently create dedicated marketing positions for each segment (People Dynamics September, 2001:17).

This has led to new professional and managerial opportunities for women and people from disadvantaged groups. This paradigm has its strengths and weaknesses. Its negatives include a tendency to over emphasize the role of cultural differences in order to see how they actually affect the work that is done (People Dynamics September, 2001:17).

### **2.15.3 CONNECTING DIVERSITY TO WORK PERSPECTIVES**

With this paradigm the employer recognizes that employees frequently make decisions and choices that draw upon their cultural background. Organizations favouring this paradigm have developed an outlook on diversity that enables them to incorporate employees' perspectives into the core functions of the organization.

Another advantage is that work has been enhanced by rethinking primary tasks and redefining markets, products, business practices and cultures. Organizations utilizing this paradigm tap into the true benefit of their diverse workforce and it allows organizations to internalize differences among employees so that it learns and grows through them (People Dynamics, September, 2001:18).

## **2.16 RECRUITMENT**

Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner (2004:220) define recruitment as the process of attracting, locating and identifying the most suitable candidate who will then apply for the job.

Many organizations are unclear about why diversity in the surrounding population is not reflected in their workforce. This situation may arise from equal opportunity not being applied; even if such principles have been accepted, resistance to recruitment of people from previously disadvantaged groups might arise. In fact staff from the traditionally dominant group often believe that staff from other cultural groups have not been recruited on merit. Their understanding can be that successful staff are there

not on the basis of meeting the selection criteria of the job but because they received preferential treatment to satisfy equal opportunity laws (Ansari & Jackson, 1995:145).

The employer that seeks to manage diversity in a comprehensive manner will need to ensure that in recruitment there is no discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality and age. The aim is more than simply avoiding discrimination but about making sure that the organization has searched the labour market thoroughly and found the best people it can get. It also encourages those applicants, who have the skills and qualifications necessary to meet the organization's needs, to apply for employment.

According to Johnson & Redmond (2000:45) the recruitment process can be divided into the following stages:

- ❖ Decisions to seek new staff.
- ❖ Advertising for applicants.
- ❖ Provision of information or application forms for enquiries.
- ❖ Selection of applicants for further consideration.

- ❖ Shortlisting and selection that is often based on a preliminary interview.
- ❖ Final selection often followed by interviews.

## 2.17 DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS WHICH INFLUENCE RECRUITMENT

### 2.17.1 BARRIERS TO ENTRY

Individuals with diverse backgrounds are sometimes not targeted or pursued by organizations. According to Kossek & Lobel (1996:79) there are explanations as to why certain segments of the labour market are overlooked. The first explanation centres around **stereotyping**. Organizations may target and pursue individuals for jobs on the basis of stereotypes held about the job, the person and the interaction between the person and the job.

For example, some jobs are classified as being for males; these include Heads of Departments, policeman, doctors and firefighters, while others are characterized as being for females; nurses and social workers fall into this category.

Also, men are seen as having masculine features (strength) and women as having feminine features (nurturing).

The second explanation is the **conflict between work and personal lives**. This approach is based on the belief that lifestyle choices outside of work have a negative impact on the performance at work. Individuals with diverse backgrounds are excluded simply because they have personal obligations such as child rearing, caring for the elderly or assisting a partner with AIDS. These personal life circumstances are seen as hindrances to good job performance.

The third explanation is **self-selection** and it is based on the argument that persons with certain attributes do not want to hold certain jobs. Self-selection implies that individuals with diverse backgrounds take themselves out of consideration for recruitment efforts by organizations. For example, an employer may assume that people with physical disabilities may not want to be considered for a certain position in the organization (Kossek & Lobel, 1996:81).

The fourth explanation is the **segregated social network**. This explanation argues that for getting hired "who you

know" is more important than "what you know". Individuals with diversity characteristics may not be as well-situated in terms of having a network of social relationships that lead to information about job openings (Kossek & Lobel, 1996:82).

## **2.18 STEPS TO EMPHASIZE DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS**

According to Heneman & Heneman (1994:128) the recruitment process typically involves the following steps:

### **2.18.1 PLANNING**

The main objective of planning is to ensure that the organization has the right number of people of the right kind and are available to the organization in the right places and at the right time. It is very important to note that organizations cannot function without adequate human resources. According to Mitchell & O'Neal (1994:36) the establishment of the diversity council can serve as a link between the management of the organization and the people of diverse backgrounds.

This is because the organization cannot diversify its workforce without the involvement of top management and top management should demonstrate the link in valuing diversity and business excellence. They should wholeheartedly participate in the planning and implementation of diversity initiatives, commit resources to the process and demonstrate personal commitment. The organization may also employ a diversity coordinator to ensure that diversity programmes are carried out.

#### **2.18.2 RECRUITMENT STRATEGY**

The development of recruitment strategy deals specifically with the examination of when, where and how to search for diversity candidates. Qualified candidates with diverse backgrounds are in strong demand in the labour market. This means that recruitment efforts in this arena may need to start much sooner than in traditional recruitment. For example, candidates from disadvantaged groups can be given early exposure to the relevant organizations through in-service training or internships (Kossek & Lobel, 1996:126).

### **2.18.3 CONDUCT SEARCH**

To attract diverse applicants an organization can develop brochures that emphasize diversity intake and advertisements can be used which target the needs of diverse groups. Nel et al (2004:214) state that in searching for applicants too much emphasis is often placed on advertisements, but in fact research has revealed that job applicants (lower levels) report obtaining jobs through family and friends. In order for the organization to make contacts with friends and family it must be proactive in the community.

### **2.18.4 EVALUATION**

With evaluation the attention should not only be devoted to the number of diverse candidates hired but also to the success of those who have been placed. Attention over time should also be paid to monitoring the experiences of those hired workers in order to be sure that they are properly introduced or assimilated into the organization and placed in meaningful jobs that match their talent and interests. It also becomes clear that the aspiration statement guiding diversity efforts must include operational statements in

which categories of the workforce are considered "diverse" (Cox, 2001:69).

## **2.19 SELECTION**

The second main or major area relating to staffing is selection. According to Ivancevich & Glueck (1999:182) selection is the process by which an organization chooses from a list of applicants the person or persons who best meet the selection criteria for the available position, considering current environmental conditions. Kossek & Lobel (1996:225) believe selection refers to the assessment and evaluation of the applicant and this assessment is based on the extent to which the applicant's qualifications, experience and abilities meet the requirements of the job. Selection decision is also influenced by diversity considerations.

In the past, selection was often thought to be an easy decision. The boss interviewed applicants, sized them up and let his or her gut reaction guide the choice. Decisions were based on subjective "likes" or "dislikes" of the boss. Selection tools were designed to aid this gut reaction. For most selection decisions all the tools were designed to

increase the proportion of successful employees selected. Today selection is viewed as being more than simply relying on intuitive feelings.

#### **2.19.1 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE SELECTION**

It is very important to note that selection is an assessment and evaluation process rather than a once-off hire or no hire decision. Cox (2001:125) states that candidates or job applicants progress through a series of stages as they move from being applicants to being extended a job offer:

- ❖ Firstly, they become candidates when the assessment and evaluation shows that they have the minimum qualifications for the job.
  
- ❖ Secondly, they become finalists when the organization is still willing to consider them, based on an additional assessment that is to be conducted.
  
- ❖ Thirdly, finalists become offer receivers.

At each stage of the selection process there may be barriers to effective assessment due to diversity factors and these factors include, among other aspects, the following:

#### **2.19.1.1 THE AGE STEREOTYPES**

There are many stereotypes about older workers; among them is the belief that as people grow older or age their performance declines. It is also often assumed that being too young is harmful to performance because one does not have the necessary experience and knowledge to perform. It is also assumed that being too old is detrimental to performance as ageing is believed to be associated with becoming slow and forgetful.

These negative stereotypes may be true but they limit the ability of the organization to develop a more heterogeneous workforce with respect to age. Siegal (1993:87) reveals that studies indicate that older employees are viewed as being less promotable than younger employees due to stereotypes about age.

#### 2.19.1.2 RACE STEREOTYPES

Research on race stereotypes is frequently conducted using very theoretical rationale. As a result three different theories of stereotypes have been developed; these go beyond Human Resources and try to explain why racial discrimination takes place (Kosseck & Lobel, 1996:123).

The first theory is known as the **complexity-extremity theory**. It suggests that the majority (Blacks in South Africa) do not receive the same consideration in selection decisions as the minority (Whites) because less information about black applicants is sought about their qualifications, abilities and skills, knowledge of the job and experience (Siegal, 1992:92).

The second theory is based on **assumed characteristics**. It suggests that whites are assumed to have more positive values, traits and socio-economic status than blacks. As a result, whites may be assumed to be good prospective employees, unless, or until, disconfirming evidence is brought up.

Blacks may be rejected before they even have a chance to present their positive features because of initial assumptions that serve as a strong signal to reject them. This theory therefore suggests that minority applicants are assumed to have good and adequate qualifications and experience while the majority is assumed to have poor qualifications based on factors such as economic status (Kosseck & Lobel, 1996:127).

The third theory is the **expectancy-violation theory**. This is when a person has certain perceptions and rates a member of one group higher than a person from another thus violating the chances of a person from the latter group. For example, one stereotype held by the recruiter might be that students from Natal Technikon are more competent than the students from Mangosuthu Technikon. If a recruiter were recruiting from Mangosuthu Technikon, students from this Technikon would definitely receive below-average ratings (Kosseck & Lobel: 1996, 129).

### **2.19.1.3 DISABILITY STEREOTYPES**

With disability stereotypes, employers are often so embarrassed by disability that they do not recognize the

person, only the disability. However, some employers manage to notice the person behind the disability and benefit from it. According to Moorhead & Griffin (1995:521) people with disabilities are, for the most part, just like everyone else. They have to live, eat, sleep and support themselves by working, and like everyone else, are often found to be excellent employees in jobs appropriate for their skill types and levels. These workers are often referred to as "physically challenged" to indicate respect for the abilities that they have that make them unique and able to make valuable contributions to the organization.

## **2.20        MANAGING DISABILITIES**

In many countries there are government regulations that compel employers to avoid discrimination and provide facilities for disabled people and these regulations apply specifically to recruitment and dismissal procedures as well as to discrimination in general. In South Africa the Employment Equity Act no 55 of 1998 requires organizations to open up their workplaces to people with disabilities. Most organizations have not responded to this aspect of the legislation as they focus on getting the racial and gender

representation right. A responsible employer should, according to Johnson & Redmond (2000:126) make sure that they do not directly or indirectly discriminate on the grounds of:

- ❖ Recruitment procedures.
- ❖ Terms and conditions of employment.
- ❖ Opportunities for advancement.
- ❖ Training and development.

Managing disabilities entails enabling people who have some form of disability to make their full contribution to the organization. Disability is a challenge to be met, overcome and managed.

An organization that employs people with disabilities needs to take steps to ensure that the environment is conducive to them and consequently organizations need to modify existing facilities and make them accessible. They also need to modify the work schedule, modify equipment and adjust training materials to suit their standards (People Dynamics April, 2004:30-31).

## **2.21 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT DIVERSITY**

### **2.21.1 DIVERSITY AUDIT**

The first step in any organization's attempt to harness their advantage is to conduct a diversity audit, because failure to identify the demographics, attitudes, values and latent skills within a workplace represent missed opportunities. The process and aims of diversity audits are similar to skill audits and the information sought includes cultural identification of employees and information relating to language skills. According to Junor & Coventry (2001:73) this audit should pay particular attention to the demographics and attitudes of middle and upper management.

Even organizations that show up as quite diverse in numerical terms may in fact be homogeneous higher up the hierarchy. Mono-cultural dominance may be harmful as the views and expectations of this power group are likely to have the most significant influence on organizational norms and expectations. Also these norms, expectations and biases will be embedded in the policies and practices of the

organization and will need to be attended to if diversity is to be harnessed. Most importantly it sends mixed signals to employees if top management is pioneering diversity from a mono-culturalist perspective (Junor & Coventry, 2001:86).

### **2.21.2 CULTURE AUDITS**

Corporate culture is the sum total of workplace behaviours (it focuses on how employees do things and how things get done). A culture audit is an assessment of the existing culture of the organization with its strengths and weaknesses relating to organizational goals and objectives. Culture audits measure attributes such as risk tolerance, reward structure, values and innovation versus adaptation.

Cox (19994:231) suggests that it is very important for the organization to conduct an audit on the processes, organizational culture and Human Resources policies to identify any institutional bias that may exist. For this process to be effective, organizations need to establish a diverse task team that consists of employees from across the organization. The task team should be charged with examining the importance of behaviours in the bigger picture of organizational success and setting out new

behaviours which ought to be encouraged, rewarded and hopefully translated into organizational culture. The culture audit may need to be facilitated by an external diversity consultant who can conduct an open evaluation of current practices in areas such as compensation, recruitment, training, performance management and promotion.

When the organization needs to change direction, the audit will enable management to determine whether culture is acceptable or adaptable to change, whether two diverse cultures can be merged successfully and whether new practices can be successfully employed within the existing cultural norms. The advantages of a culture audit include:

- ❖ Raising the level of awareness about stated and unstated assumptions.
- ❖ Facilitating a shared vision.
- ❖ Designing and testing new corporate models and systems.
- ❖ Documenting and communicating the cultural change process.
- ❖ To energizing and retaining key employees.

### 2.21.3 SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND COHESION

Culture audits indicate areas where human resources management strategies can assist in creating social integration and cohesiveness. Recognizing the inherent in a workforce and responding to these differences can reduce absenteeism which is an important precursor to turnover. It can also increase job satisfaction and commitment and improve employee's worklife. The lack of social integration or cohesion is a major barrier to group functioning and performance.

The basic link between quality of worklife and productivity is social integration or cohesion. Cohesion is considered to be the key to smooth group functioning and it reflects similarity and liking. If similarity and liking can be encouraged, then communication flows are smoother and interpersonal conflict reduced. According to Iverson (2000:271) higher levels of social integration are associated with lower levels of dissatisfaction and higher levels of commitment; lower absenteeism and turnover is likely.

## **2.22 CULTURAL FIT**

For the success of an organization, it is important that the individual employee's personality and the culture of the organization are in tune with one another. A mismatch can hamper the attainment of both personal and organizational goals. When it comes to building a workforce that will contribute to organizational success, managers are usually caught in a damned-if-you do not dilemma. According Bond & Pyle (1998:252) if management select employees who fit the organizational culture, they simultaneously reinforce the organization's core values and preserve its historical demographics. Conversely, if they select new employees to increase diversity, they broaden the organization's perspective but erode its cohesiveness

### **2.22.1 PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURAL FIT**

Pioneers of organizational cohesiveness favour employment decisions that reinforce and develop an organization's existing strengths and weaknesses. These regard people who cannot look, dress, act or communicate like the organization's norm as potential problem employees who must be managed. On the other hand those who prefer

organizational diversity favour employment decisions that extend the range of the organization's strengths, believe that inclusion of cultural diversity in the organization increases the total human energy available to the organization. An inclusive organizational culture allows for contribution from a broader range of styles, perspectives and skills which provide a greater range of available routes to success.

Neither perspective is wholly satisfactory nor a new integrative view is needed which builds on the advantage of both organizational cohesiveness and diversity, which both reinforce fit and extend fit. The degree between employees and their organization impacts on a variety of work outcomes, including organizational socialization, commitment and employee turnover. The diversity climate of an organization may influence individual career experiences and outcomes. This in many organizations employee morale and satisfaction are related to identity groups such as gender and racio-ethnicity.

The actual career achievement of individuals as measured by such aspects as job performance ratings may be related to group identities in some organizations. These individual

outcomes in turn are expected to impact on organizational effectiveness measured as work quality, productivity, absenteeism and turnover (Bond & Pyle, 1998:265).

## **2.23 A BRIEF LOOK AT THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION MEASURES**

### **2.23.1 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

According to Van Jaarsveld & Van Eck (2005:288) it is unusual for the government to prescribe to employers who may and may not be appointed at the workplaces. When apartheid policies were introduced in South Africa the National Party government established a number of legislative measures aimed at regulating racial matters. These measures were intended mainly to promote the interests of white employees. These are examples:

- ❖ The Bantu Building Workers Act of 1951 was introduced to prevent blacks from doing skilled work in white areas and restricted it to black skills in black areas.

- ❖ The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 provided for the facilitation of job reservation whereby specified work could be made the exclusive preserve of whites only.

It is argued that black people, in particular, suffered far reaching and harmful disadvantages as a result of job reservation and lack of access to skills and education. Groups of people such as women (white women included) and people with disabilities have also felt or experienced the effects of discrimination in society. The management of workplace diversity is founded on the premise that there are distinct economic and social benefits from a workforce that is broadly representative of society generally.

#### **2.23.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT**

Nel et al (2004:169) state that the purpose of the Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998) is to achieve equality in the workplace by:

- ❖ Promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination.

❖ Implementing Affirmative Action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups (Blacks, Coloureds, Indians, women and people with disabilities) in order to ensure their equitable representation in all categories of employment and levels in the workplace.

Van Jaarsveld & Van Eck (2005:291) point out that the Employment Equity Act places a positive obligation on all employers to promote equal opportunities in the workplace by eliminating unfair discrimination in the employment context. In terms of section 6 (1) of the Employment Equity Act, no person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly, in any employment policy, on grounds of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age and disability, culture, language and birth. The concepts "direct" and "indirect" discrimination are also worth considering. With direct discrimination, the person is specifically overlooked for promotion because of age. Indirect discrimination, however, is where there is a glass ceiling, which at first might appear to be objective but certainly is not.

It is also said that an advertisement in small, exclusive English community newspapers might appear to be indirect discrimination.

The law is definitely pushing for real equality in the workplace and it is argued that this could be realized only in cases of Affirmative Action programmes. The term "fair discrimination" tries to achieve a delicate balance between negative and positive discrimination and the aim is to eradicate the inequalities of the past, according to Michael Bagrain in *People Dynamics*, 2006:07).

Thomas & Robertshaw (1999:82) state that to achieve employment equity, it is very important for organizations to ensure that all human resources activities are in harmony with their objectives. This applies to the full spectrum of human resources functions including recruitment, selection, training and development, job evaluation, promotion, performance management, employee benefits and industrial relations.

If employers have employment equity plans or affirmative programmes in place, these should be outlined in advertisements, and recruitment policies should be adhered

to very strictly. Any deviation might lead to a legal claim (Michael Bagrain in People Dynamics, 2006:07).

### **2.23.3 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION MEASURES**

The Affirmative Action measures are designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories in the workplace of the employer. According to Herholdt & Marx (1999:58) the Affirmative Action measures implemented by the designated employer must include, among other aspects, the following:

- ❖ Measures to identify and eliminate employment barriers, including unfair discrimination, which adversely affect people from designated groups, should be in place.
- ❖ Measures designed to further diversity in the workplace based on equal dignity and respect for all ought to be a priority.
- ❖ The development of blacks and women should be seen as part of the general development of people within the organization.

- ❖ Affirmative Action should take place at the recruitment and selection stages and a principle of promotion from within should be adopted allowing for blacks and women to be promoted to positions formerly occupied by white males.
- ❖ Realistic racial and gender targets based on workforce and career plans need to be developed and monitored on an annual basis.
- ❖ Managers should be trained in people-management skills and be critically evaluated on their performance in relation to how they relate to their subordinates or to how competently they deal with subordinates.
- ❖ Retaining and developing employees from designated groups and implementing appropriate training measures, including measures in terms of the Act of Parliament for skills development, needs to be a serious consideration.

Affirmative Action has taken on several negative and inappropriate connotations. Affirmative Action has sometimes served to stigmatize people from disadvantaged

groups who may be treated as though they obtained employment just because of their previously disadvantaged status.

Herholdt & Marx (1999:60) argue that Affirmative Action does not mean hiring or promotion of unqualified people or the less qualified but it means making race, disability and gender the determining factor in employment decisions with the motive being legal, moral and reflecting social responsibility. Another connotation closely related to the stigma is that of quotas. This is related to the perception that employment opportunities are zero-sum games where one group's gain implies another group's losses. Nonetheless Affirmative Action is often equated with imposition of quotas that lead to the hiring of unqualified people just to make up the right "numbers".

## 2.24 THE PRINCIPLES OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

The principles of merit and equity are crucial to the management of workplace diversity. These principles include the following:

- ❖ Merit is about selecting the most competent person for the position, having defined the relevant key selection criteria in a manner that incorporates the recognition of the diversity experience. The concept of merit refers to a relationship between an individual's qualities and those which the person requires to perform in a particular position.
- ❖ Equity is about treating people fairly and impartially and should be a priority.
- ❖ The prevention of direct and indirect discrimination within employment practices and within the workplace is essential.
- ❖ Processes should ensure a competitive applicant field for vacant positions.

- ❖ Staff selection decisions must be documented and able to stand scrutiny.

Everyone has a right to fulfill their potential within a work environment that provides for:

- ❖ Fair and equitable treatment;
- ❖ Application of the merit principle in the selection process;
- ❖ A discrimination and harassment-free environment (Retrieved August, 25 2006 from the World Wide Web:<http://www.doe.tased.edu.au>).

## **2.25 THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A CULTURALLY-DIVERSE WORKFORCE**

Ansari & Jackson (1995:65) state that in order to motivate all sections of the organization to work towards valuing diversity, the benefits of having a culturally diverse workforce need to be taken into consideration. These benefits are presented on the table below;

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Departmental</b>	<b>Organizational</b>
Widens managerial experience.	Maximizes human resources available to the team.	Improves the wider public image of the organization.
Develops a professional image.	Improves staff performance and motivation.	Eliminates discrimination or victimization in the workplace.
Develops own potential to the full.	Retains and develops diverse talents and skills.	Attracts into the organization a wider range of staff with broad range of skills.
Able to work comfortably.		Creates the environment where a staff feel welcomed.
Satisfies own sense of justice and fairness.	Taps into a diverse range of talents for the team.	Ensures that the organization recruits and develops the best available people by tapping into all sections of the community.
		If the organization deals with cultural differences skillfully, those differences could be turned into a powerful advantage. Effectively managed heterogeneous groups can outperform homogeneous groups in both quality and quantity.
		Organizations become an 'employer of choice' people positively choose the organization from among others.
Opens up career prospects.		

The absence of diversity in an organization impacts on:

- ❖ The opportunity for individuals in associated minority groups to contribute to organizations at their highest level of ability and to reap the respective rewards for making such contributions.
- ❖ The enrichment of other members of the organization: Absence of diversity deprives them of frameworks and value-systems, alternative languages and styles implicit in different cultural approaches, ethnic groups and gender differences.
- ❖ The richness of the organization itself: Diversity can promote flexibility in organizations and enhance the capacity an organization has for change, making it more responsive in turbulent times or environments.
- ❖ Cultural diversity adds flavour and character to the organization and makes the workplace a more exciting place to work in.
- ❖ Cultural diversity multiplies resources of shared knowledge and wisdom.

## 2.26 ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIERS TO DEVELOPING DIVERSITY

These barriers include:

- ❖ A lonely, unsupportive and even hostile environment for many minority employees, and managers in upper management.
- ❖ Managers being more comfortable dealing with people similar to them.
- ❖ Difficulty in balancing career and family needs especially for women.
- ❖ A lack of corporate "savvy" or political skills on the part of minority employees and managers which makes them seem awkward and feel vulnerable.
- ❖ Poor career planning, resulting in the failure to give many minority employees the breadth of experience leading to credentials required to compete in senior management positions (Cox, 1994).

**2.27 THE WHITE PAPER ON HUMAN RESOURCES  
MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

The White Paper on Human Resources Management, as published in the Government Gazette, 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997, states that "South Africa is a country of rich cultural diversity" and there is a need to develop a culture of diversity that goes beyond simply maintaining a representative workforce. Encouraging a diversity of culture can help to generate new ideas and get them adopted.

Moreover, an environment in which differing cultures are valued is likely to improve employee morale and contributes to increased job satisfaction and this leads to increased productivity. In addition, developing a culture of diversity is therefore necessary to legitimize the Public Service, but is also an essential and powerful tool to develop an efficient, effective and stable Public Service.

## 2.28 CONCLUSION

Employers benefit from managing diversity. When managing diversity one needs to know about people, to understand how their social conditioning affects their beliefs about work and one needs to have the communication skills to develop confidence and self esteem among the employees of diverse work groups. In addition, stereotyping, which involves judgments made about others that reinforce superiority/inferiority belief systems, can lead to exaggerating the worth of one group while diminishing the worth of others. This can result in prejudice.

Management systems built on prejudice are inappropriate for a diverse workforce. It should also be noted that the focus of valuing diversity is on utilizing all the differences among workers for the benefit of employees themselves and the organization.

At the individual level, performance can be enhanced when negative diversity-related barriers to productivity and service delivery are removed. When diversity is managed properly groups will develop processes that can enhance creativity, problem-solving skills, cohesiveness and

communication. At the organizational level, performance may improve, marketing may be enhanced as a result of being able to better adapt to diverse markets and flexibility may be heightened. Improved recruitment of the best new workforce can result. It should also be remembered that workforce diversity is a multi-faceted concept that continues to evolve as more organizations move toward a global marketplace.

Most people hold the belief that every human being is of equal worth entitled to the same privileges and opportunities, without regard to race, gender, disability or age. This fundamental belief has led to changes in management practices primarily relating to the recruitment, training and retention of employees who reflect the changing face of South African organizations.

Diversity consciousness cannot simply be mandated into a system, integrated into a co-operate culture or promoted by financial incentives. It is reflective of an attitude that organizations and their staff must adopt that which allows them to change their basic concepts about workers, and converts "them" into "us". People Dynamics August (2004:11 states that it makes good business sense to retain where possible, the skills and experience of employees who become

ill or disabled. The code of good practice on the employment of people with disabilities provides a great guidance on how the barriers to competence at work could be removed and productivity achieved.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is qualitative in approach and it focuses on issues related to cultural diversity, especially issues involving the Human Resources Provisioning processes. This study is located within an interpretive programme that regards knowledge as socially constructed by people who are active in research.

According to Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:65) qualitative research methodology refers to research which produces descriptive data, generally in people's own written or spoken words; no numbers or counts are assigned to observations. The indispensable condition for qualitative methodology is a commitment to seeing the world from the point of view of the participants. Qualitative research entails discovering unanticipated findings which can lead to the possibility of altering research plans in response to accidental discoveries. One also bears in mind that the

core of qualitative research is a phenomenological one where the participant's perspective is the empirical point of departure and its focus is upon the real-life experiences of people.

Qualitative research methodologies therefore allow researchers to know people personally, to see them as they are and to experience their daily struggles when confronted with real-life situations. This allows or enables the researcher to interpret and describe the actions of people.

What can be discovered by qualitative research is not sweeping generalizations but contextual findings. This process of discovery is basic to the philosophic underpinning of the qualitative approach.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Miller (1991:79) defines research design as the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions. In addition research design is the consideration and creation of means of obtaining reliable, honest, transferable and valid data by means of

which pronouncements about the phenomenon of education may be confirmed or rejected.

This study has adopted an interpretive approach which makes use of a qualitative research method. It is concerned with how the social world is viewed, understood and interpreted. The interpretive approach is, in addition, the systematic analysis of socially-meaningful action through the direct understanding of people in their natural setting; in other words, the researcher strives to understand and interpret how people create and maintain their social world.

Furthermore, qualitative research is based on methods of analysis and explanations which include the understanding of the context. It is aimed at producing a well-rounded understanding on the basis of contextual and rich data. Qualitative research methodology provides descriptions and accounts of the processes of social interaction in their natural settings and it is based on the combination of observation and interviewing of the participants in order to understand their perspectives.

Culture, meanings and processes are emphasized rather than variables and outcomes. In addition, qualitative research

methods aim to generate theories of hypothesis from the information that emerges and possibly the inappropriate frame for reference on the subject of research. This basically means that there is a far greater degree of flexibility concerning research design, data collection and analysis; in fact aspects of each of these sometimes occur simultaneously throughout the duration of a research project.

Qualitative researchers do not rely on statistics to show the confidence they have in their representation of their fieldwork. Instead, they build confidence in their findings or contributions by attempting to saturate themselves with observations of the phenomenon in question. From a qualitative perspective, generalizability enables researchers to be confident that the way they describe a phenomenon is the best generalization they can make.

This chapter is also concerned with outlining an appropriate research strategy but does not offer an elaborate philosophical discussion on phenomenology. This study is devoted to an understanding of phenomenology's philosophy in so far as it pertains to a method of conducting research. It is apparent in modern literature

that the phenomenological approach to research is becoming more widely recognized and it has recently been felt that providing reasons and justification for doing so in research is no longer considered necessary.

### **3.3 PHENOMENOLOGICAL REDUCTION**

In phenomenological reduction the quality of the quality of the experience becomes the focus. The aim of reduction is to describe the general features of an experience, excluding everything that is not immediately within one's conscious experience. Thus a researcher needs to literally reduce the world to a world of pure phenomena, where the reduced phenomena are claimed to be as they are for the consciousness that beholds them, with no mention of the experience (Giorgi, Barton, Maes, 1983:212).

The researcher can thus deduce from this that the purpose of the reduction is to satisfy the demands that are described as central to phenomenology. The reduction ensures that the object described by phenomenology will be the phenomenon or intentional object of experience and not something else; it is not a construction made by a scientist or a trans-experiential object that 'common

sense' teaches us to see. The reduction enables the researcher to look at what he or she simply observes (Miller, 1984:123).

Applying the above to this research, one understands that when the narratives used in this study have been read, the researcher has to limit himself or herself to what is eminent to the participants' experiences. According to Davidson & Cosgrove (1991:93) the researcher has to look more deeply into the experiences of the participants rather than outside of them.

As a result of this reduction, one acknowledges an entirely different sphere from the one traditionally regarded by science as constituting the subject matter. Rahilly (1993:24) employed a phenomenological epoch and bracketing before she formulated a research question about authentic experience. Many researchers have explicitly bracketed and formulated their presuppositions about the phenomenon under investigation. In his later work called Cartesian Meditation, Husserl continues to use the phrase phenomenological reduction, but in this period the reduction becomes a transcendental reduction. It is referred to as transcendental because it moves beyond the

everyday to the pure ego in which everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time. Schmitt (1967:61) points out that it is called phenomenological because it transforms the world into mere phenomena. It is called reduction because it leads the researcher back to the source of the meaning and existence of the experienced world.

### **3.4 BRACKETING**

Bracketing is done in order to understand the experiences of the participants as they truly are. According to Husserl bracketing is a preparation for deriving new knowledge, but also a process of setting aside prejudices and predispositions. Valle & King (1978) state that in order to achieve this, the researcher has to be prepared to enter the world of the participants with an open mind, free of preconceptions. This is done by making the presuppositions and assumptions explicit by laying them out so that they appear in as clear form as possible to oneself.

As the researcher brackets the assumptions and presuppositions, it is believed that more emerges at level

of the reflective awareness. Regular practice of bracketing is believed to increase the researcher's competence in achieving this state. It should, however, be noted that certain entities, such as life experiences that are intensely ingrained so that they are not part of conscious awareness, are not easy to bracket (Moustakas, 1994:125).

Once the researcher has obtained a thorough description of the phenomenon under investigation, and after the formal and scientific explication has been completed, the stance might then change to an interpretive stance, where the researcher moves beyond what is immediately evident.

### **3.5 PARTICIPANTS**

All administrative staff of the uMkhanyakude Municipality will participate in this research. Participants include directors, managers and general employees of the municipality. All participants will be assured of confidentiality of their participation and their responses. Statements describing the study will also be provided for respondents to read. Van Kaam (1969), as cited in Rahilly (1993) recommends six important criteria for participants in the research:

- ❖ The participants must have a capacity to express themselves with relative ease.
- ❖ They must have the capacity to sense and express their inner feelings and emotions without shame and inhibitions.
- ❖ They must have the ability to sense and to express the real experiences that accompany these feelings.
- ❖ The participants must have experienced the phenomenon or situation under investigation at a relatively recent date.
- ❖ An atmosphere that the participants find sufficiently relaxing to enable them to put the necessary time and orderly thought into reporting or writing about what was happening to them, should be created.
- ❖ A spontaneous interest in their experiences ought to be evident.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

#### **3.6.1 PRIMARY SOURCES OF DATA**

The primary sources of data will include documents from the Human Resources Department. This will enable the researcher

to gain accurate information regarding the composition of the municipality's workforce.

### **3.6.2 SECONDARY SOURCES OF DATA**

In order to obtain clarity about the research questions, a questionnaire will be submitted for completion to the participants. Probably no other data collection tool is used more frequently in social research than the survey questionnaire. Surveys give the researcher a picture of what participants think about the subject. It allows for the accumulation of ideas from individuals at relatively low cost to the researcher. Survey search, however, has some limitations.

These limitations include the inability and unwillingness of research participants to participate. Non-responses in mailed questionnaires are a significant factor that limits the generalizability of the findings. Those that do not respond might (consciously or unconsciously) withhold information that is threatening or in some way destructive to their egos. Respondents might also be unable to provide certain information such as subconscious motivators.

Memory bias is another factor that renders a respondent's inability to provide accurate answers or information. Interviews will also be conducted with the management staff as another data collection method. Leedy (1993:132) states that at its heart (the interview), is the proposition that an interview is a form of discourse.

Its particular features reflect the distinct structure and aims of interviewing; that it is discourse shaped and organized by asking and answering questions. An interview is a joint product of what interviewees and interviewer converse about together and how they talk with each other. The record of an interview the researcher makes and then uses in the analysis and interpretation of the representation of that conversation is important. What characterizes the interviews presented in the research report is the depth of the conversation that moves beyond surface talk to a rich discussion of thoughts and feelings.

In qualitative studies, interviews often take place while there is a participant observer, although people in the setting may not realize that the informal conversation they have been engaged in is an interview. In the field it is sometimes possible to arrange interviews with people with

whom the researcher believes may add to his or her understanding of the phenomenon.

### **3.7 CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The drawing up of the questionnaire is an activity that should not take place in isolation. The researcher should seek advice from specialists at all times during the construction of the questionnaire. Questions to be included in the questionnaire should be tested to eliminate errors. A question may appear correct to the researcher when written down but can be interpreted differently when presented to another person. There should be no hesitation in changing the questions several times before the final formulation but at the same time keeping the original purpose in mind. The important factor to be taken into consideration when designing a questionnaire is that it takes time and effort before being finalized (Bailey, 1987: 189).

Bailey (1987:201) argues that the use of a questionnaire in a study of this nature has the following advantages:

- ❖ It is the most commonly-used research instrument. It is assumed that respondents will not have a problem in filling it in, provided they are fully informed about the purpose of the study.
- ❖ It is a useful tool for collecting data from a widely-dispersed population as cheaply, rapidly and efficiently as possible.
- ❖ Respondents express their views more freely in questionnaires as compared to interviews, where anonymity may be doubtful.
- ❖ The questionnaire gives the respondents time to contemplate his or her responses to questions. This is important when investigating sensitive issues such as the reasons for resigning from work.
- ❖ The absence of a researcher when the questionnaire is filled in encourages honesty and prevents bias.
- ❖ Measurement is enhanced because respondents respond to the same questions.

The researcher usually considers the questionnaire, particularly the open-ended questionnaire as the best tool to probe below-the-surface attitudes, feelings and reactions of respondents. Leedy (1993:187) argues that data is sometimes buried deep within minds and reflect attitudes, feelings or reactions of individuals.

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical considerations taken into account when conducting this study include:

#### **3.8.1 PERMISSION FOR THE STUDY**

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the employing authority, the management of uMkhanyakude Municipality. (See Appendix A and B)

#### **3.8.2 INFORMED CONSENT**

Bailey (1987:136) states that, informed consent means giving a full explanation to respondents and ensuring that the respondents have adequate information regarding the study. They are at liberty to comprehend information and make a choice as to whether they voluntarily consent to participate or to decline participation in the study. Participants were also informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences to them and their work or other circumstances. The full explanation

of this study was given to the prospective respondents and it was emphasized that participation was voluntary

### **3.8.3 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The respondents were told not to indicate their names anywhere in the questionnaire. They were also assured of complete confidentiality.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the presentation of the data collected from research participants. Participants were approached in their work environment at the uMkhanyakude District Municipality. Also participants were interviewed independently during working hours. Questionnaires were distributed and respondents were asked to fill them in and return them immediately. Data was also obtained through interviews with the management staff. A total of 80 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and 65 completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher.

Neuman (1997) states that the central purpose of analyses in qualitative studies is to sift, sort and organize the masses of information in such a way that it addresses the original research problem.

#### **4.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA**

Each question presented in the questionnaire is evaluated independently. The data is presented in the form of

tables. Responses to open-ended questions are summarized and categorized into appropriate classifications through the process of content analysis.

## SECTION A

### DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS

**TABLE 1: OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES**

Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	Category E	Category F	Category G
Legislators Senior officials Managers	Professionals	Technicians Associate professionals	Clerks	Service and sales workers	Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	Elementary workers

Table 1 depicts all the occupational categories at the uMkhanyakude District Municipality. (Also refer to the first part of the document analysis for detailed information on these occupational categories).

**TABLE 2 YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT.**

Year	Frequency	Percentage
2000	30	46.1
2001	05	7.7
2002	04	6.2
2003	05	7.7
2004	10	15.4
2005	09	13.8
2006	02	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 indicates the number of people who have been appointed by the municipality since its establishment; year 2000 has the highest percentage because the municipality was established in that year.

**TABLE 3: NATURE OF THE POSITION**

Position	Frequency	Percentage
Permanent	51	78.5
Temporary	06	9.2
Part-time	-----	-----
Casual	-----	-----
Contract	08	12.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3 shows that 78.5% of the respondents who are appointed on a permanent basis also constitute the majority. 9.2% of the respondents are appointed on a temporary basis and 12.3% are appointed on a contractual basis; this group is comprised of the management staff.

**TABLE 4: GENDER**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Males	40	61.5
Females	25	38.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Out of 65 employees who participated in this research project 61.5% were males while 38.5% were females. These

percentages indicate that the municipality employs more males than females.

**TABLE 5: RACE**

Race	Frequency	Percentage
Africans	62	95.4
Whites	02	3.1
Coloureds	----	----
Indians	01	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table indicates that Africans predominate the labour force (95.4%) and there are no Coloureds appointed by the municipality. The Whites and Indians constitute the lowest percentage; this suggests that Whites, Indians and Coloureds are underrepresented at the uMkhanyakude Municipality.

**TABLE 6: MARITAL STATUS**

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	38	58.4
Single	25	38.5
Divorced	02	3.1
Full-time Partner	----	----
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6 indicates that the municipality employs married divorced and single people and there were no responses from people who were not married but lived with their partners permanently.

**TABLE 7: ETHNIC ORIGIN**

<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Zulu	62	95.4
Xhosa	-----	-----
Ndebele	-----	-----
Sotho	-----	-----
Setswana	-----	-----
Afrikaans	02	3.1
English	01	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Table 7 indicates that the majority of employees (95.4%) of the municipality come from the Zulu-speaking community. Other ethnic groups are not represented in the municipality. This may be due to its location in Northern Zululand and because the positions are only advertised in the local newspapers. Also, prospective employees may not be prepared to relocate or work in rural areas.

**TABLE 8: AGE**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
18-25	09	13.8
26-30	33	50.8
31-36	15	23.1
36+Years	08	12.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 8 indicates that 13.8% of employees are within the age range of 18-25, 50.8% within the age range of 26-30, 23.1% within the range of 31-36 and 12.3% within the age

range of 36 and above years of age. This shows that the municipality has a diverse range in terms of age. These results, however, indicate that the majority of respondents fell within the age range of 26-36.

**TABLE 9: CITIZENSHIP**

South African	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	65	100
No	-----	-----
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 9 shows that the participants are all South Africans.

**TABLE 10: HOME LANGUAGE**

Language	Frequency	Percentage
IsiZulu	62	95.4
IsiXhosa	-----	-----
English	01	1.5
Afrikaans	02	3.1
Other	-----	-----
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 10 indicates that the majority of the participants (95.4%) speak isiZulu as their home language whereas 1.5% are English-speaking and 3.1% are Afrikaans-speaking

people. Other South African languages are not represented in the municipality's workforce.

**TABLE 11: PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES**

Disability	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	02	3.1
No	63	96.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data concerning the nature of physical attributes indicate that people with disabilities are not well represented at the uMkhanyakude Municipality as they constitute only 3.1%; the reasons could be that people with disabilities, especially in rural areas, are not encouraged to study. As a result the district municipality does not have a pool from where these people can be drawn into the local government system. Another reason is that people with disabilities cannot work on site because of the nature of the work; it is not suitable for them.

**TABLE 12: EDUCATIONAL LEVEL**

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	-----	-----
Secondary	65	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>

Data regarding the level of education of participants indicate that 100% of the respondents have secondary education, while none has only primary education.

**TABLE 13: POST-MATRIC QUALIFICATION**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
University	36	55.4
Technikon	13	20
Technical	16	24.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Data regarding a post-matric qualification indicate that 55.4% of the respondents have a University qualification, while 20% have a Technikon qualification and 24.6% have a technical qualification.

**TABLE 14: LENGTH OF SERVICE**

Length (years)	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	25	38.5
5-10	40	61.5
10-15	-----	-----
15+years	-----	-----
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 14 indicates that 61.5% of the respondents have been with the municipality since its establishment. It further indicates that they are willing to retain their positions at the municipality.

**HOW DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THE POSITION YOU ARE CURRENTLY OCCUPYING?**

**TABLE 15**

Source of Information	Frequency	Percentage
Newspaper	63	96.9
Referral	-----	-----
Government Circular	-----	-----
Walk in	02	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 15 shows that 96.9% of the respondents obtained their employment information through a newspaper

advertisement, while 3.1% walked into the municipality to obtain information about the vacant positions.

**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT WORKING WITH PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS?**

**TABLE 16**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Comfortable	52	80
Not Comfortable	-----	---
I do not care	13	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 16 indicates that 80% of the respondents do not have a problem working with people from a different cultural background, while 20% of the respondents are not concerned; this could be due to the lack of diversity training or it could be pure ignorance on the part of the employees of the municipality.

**WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THIS MUNICIPALITY?**

About 67% of the participants responded to this question and these are some of their *direct* responses:

- ❖ People should understand that races are now equal in this new South Africa.

- ❖ Workers with different cultures can work together without any form of discrimination, also, one can learn from other cultures and this can have a positive contribution and improve work.
- ❖ The municipality is trying to bridge the race gap but due to the nature of our community, Africans dominate in the labour force.
- ❖ There isn't much of that as we are predominately black.
- ❖ If the organization has different people from different cultures.
- ❖ Cultural diversity is where we respect Amakhosi and councillors as if we were not in this municipality.
- ❖ There are people or employees from different cultures like Whites and Indians but they are in the minority.
- ❖ Even though we are mainly Africans in this municipality we still have varying cultural backgrounds because we come from different regions within KwaZulu-Natal.
- ❖ The municipality does not discriminate but respects employees.
- ❖ There is no cultural diversity since all employees are black and Zulu-speaking. There are only two White employees and one Indian.
- ❖ It is not up to standard because there is only one race that dominates the staff.

These responses indicate that some of the participants have an insight into the meaning of cultural diversity; this is because the majority of respondents recognize the differences in the municipality's workforce. They are also aware of Employment Equity which encourages organizations to diversify their workforce.

Some respondents did not answer the question appropriately; they were basically asked to define "cultural diversity" but some responses were off the point suggesting that no awareness programmes around cultural diversity are in place. It would seem that in a situation where Black local employees are in the majority is a divisive strategy or the rest could feel marginalized.

**DOES THIS MUNICIPALITY HAVE A STRATEGY TO MANAGE DIVERSITY? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN.**

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	06	9.2
No	59	90.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority (90.8%) of the respondents state that the municipality does not have a strategy to manage diversity; 9.2% indicate that the municipality has a

diversity-related strategy and these are some of the explanations given by those who believe that the municipality has a policy:

- ❖ The municipality treats each culture as important and everyone is free to practice his or her culture in conditions that do not compromise the conditions of service.
- ❖ We have all races at uMkhanyakude though we have few people of different races.
- ❖ It complies with Employment Equity.
- ❖ There are employees from other cultures.

Looking at some of these responses it is evident once again that there are respondents who do not know or understand the meaning of "diversity".

**WHAT ARE THE AREAS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY THAT NEED TO BE IMPROVED WITHIN THIS MUNICIPALITY?**

Some of the questionnaires did not have answers to this question, but about 73% of the respondents provided answers to the question and here are some of their direct responses to the question:

- ❖ Gender equality and different race groups.

- ❖ Understanding of various cultural backgrounds.
- ❖ There should be at least 10% of Whites, Indians and Coloureds and 90% should be Africans.
- ❖ I am not sure and there is nothing I can think of.
- ❖ uMkhanyakude has its cultural activities and there is no need for them to be improved, but they need to be used so that they will be recognized worldwide.
- ❖ Hiring people from different racial groups.
- ❖ The promotion of women into senior management positions.
- ❖ More people with disabilities should be hired because they are capable.
- ❖ Traditional healers must be recognized and be given medical certificates.
- ❖ At national level I would like to see more females and people with disabilities being hired.
- ❖ We seem to strike a good balance and there is tolerance.
- ❖ There is a belief that cultural religion is still not covered and it needs to be improved.
- ❖ Employ more from other cultural groups especially Whites, Coloureds and Indians.

Here again some of these responses suggest that some of the respondents are, firstly, not equipped with the

knowledge of cultural diversity, and secondly, have not received any training in cultural diversity and working with people from different cultural backgrounds.

It is also evident that the majority of respondents are aware of the areas of cultural diversity that need to be improved within the municipality even though they see no evidence of an official strategy.

**IS EMPLOYMENT EQUITY A PROBLEM OR AN OPPORTUNITY? IF EE IS VIEWED AS A PROBLEM, PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY?**

96.9% of the participants view Employment Equity as an opportunity whereas 3.1% view it as a problem but failed to cite the reasons why Employment Equity is seen as a problem. Employees need to be educated in Employment Equity because it enables them to work comfortably with people from different cultural backgrounds and ensures that diversity is celebrated.

#### **4.3 INTERVIEWS WITH MANAGEMENT STAFF**

There were problems the researcher encountered when trying to secure interviews with the management staff; the problems were associated with the unavailability of

time and unforeseen circumstances. They were only willing to complete the questionnaire rather than voice their opinions in an interview. However, two most senior officials agreed to participate in an interview session.

Due to anonymity and confidentiality of information supplied, interviewees are hereby referred to, as Participant A and Participant B. Here are their responses to the interview questions:

**1. WHAT IS THE VISION AND THE MISSION OF THIS MUNICIPALITY?**

**Participant A:** The vision is to meet the basic needs and improve the quality of life of all residents of the uMkhanyakude District Municipality. My vision is to see this municipality run by competent local people who have a vested interest in the area and an understanding of local needs, with at least 25% of the management being females. Our mission is to deliver basic services to all our people. Our values are integrity, equity, teamwork and respect.

**Participant B:** The vision is to improve the quality of life of all community members served by the municipality.

Our vision includes equity, transparency, and integrity, respect and team work.

**2. DO YOU ADVERTISE YOUR POSITIONS LOCALLY, PROVINCIALY OR NATIONALLY?**

**Participant A:** Positions at the uMkhanyakude are advertised locally in the following local newspapers: Ilanga and Zululand Observer.

**Participant B:** Local newspapers such as iLanga and the Zululand Observer are the sources where our positions are advertised, because the aim is to attract and encourage members of the local community to apply.

**3. WHAT STRATEGY DO YOU HAVE TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY DISADVANTAGED ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR POSITIONS?**

**Participant A:** Our advertisements state clearly that the first preference will be given to people who were previously disadvantaged. Also, when they are appointed they go through a development programme to help improve their skills and the knowledge of the job.

**Participant B:** There is no strategy that we use but we encourage them through the use of development programmes.

**4.1 HOW DO YOU ENSURE THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE ATTRACTED TO AND RETAINED BY THE MUNICIPALITY?**

**4.2 DO YOU HAVE A POLICY ON THE APPOINTMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?**

**Participant A:** When we advertise positions, especially positions for receptionist or switchboard operators, we clearly state in the advertisement that only people with disabilities will be appointed into those positions. However, this is limited to those who have the skills necessary to do the job.

**Participant B:** We are able to achieve this if "disability" is an inherent requirement of the job.

**5. HOW DO YOU ENSURE THAT THE WORKPLACE IS A "DISCRIMINATION FREE" ENVIRONMENT?**

**Participant A:** It is part of our ethos to respect each other and I also believe in participative management.

**Participant B:** Through teamwork where everyone is able to contribute meaningfully and to treat each other with respect.

6. THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR REQUIRES INSTITUTIONS TO ANNUALLY SUBMIT THEIR EMPLOYMENT EQUITY REPORT TO ITS DIRECTOR GENERAL TO ENSURE THAT THEY COMPLY WITH EMPLOYMENT EQUITY. DOES THIS MUNICIPALITY SUBMIT ITS REPORT TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF LABOUR?

**Participant A:** Yes, I think our department of Corporate Services takes care of that.

**Participant B:** I think yes, through our department of Corporate Services.

## SECTION B

### DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

#### 4.4 WORKFORCE PROFILE

The workforce profile from the municipality's department of Corporate Services indicates the following:

##### CATEGORY A: MALES

Occupational Category	African	Indians	Coloureds	Whites
Legislators Senior officials Managers	25	0	0	0

##### CATEGORY A: FEMALES

Occupational Category	African	Indians	Coloureds	Whites
Legislators Senior officials Managers	02	0	0	0

African Males who are in management or decision-making positions dominate this category. Females are not properly represented in strategic or decision-making positions of the Municipality. This shows that attracting and retaining female talent in traditionally male dominated fields remain a challenge in South Africa.

**CATEGORY B: MALES**

Occupational Category	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Professionals	05	0	0	01

**CATEGORY B: FEMALES**

Occupational Category	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Professionals	01	0	0	0

African males again predominate in this category with one white male and one African female. This is in line with the discussion on the psychological types; this states that "as long as management is predominately T.J, women are statistically destined to be in the minority".

**CATEGORY C: MALES**

Occupational Category	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Technicians Associate Professionals	09	0	01	01

**CATEGORY C: FEMALE**

Occupational Category	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Technicians Associate Professionals	04	0	0	0

African males and African female predominate in this category.

**CATEGORY D: MALES**

Occupational Category	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Clerks	03	0	0	0

**CATEGORY D: FEMALES**

Occupational Category	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Clerks	22	0	0	0

African females predominate in this category; this could be attributed to the nature of the work which is usually done by women.

**CATEGORY E AND CATEGORY F**

The document indicates that there are no people appointed in these two categories.

**CATEGORY G: MALES**

Occupational Category	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Elementary employees	03	0	0	0

**CATEGORY G: FEMALES**

<b>Occupational Category</b>	<b>African</b>	<b>Coloureds</b>	<b>Indians</b>	<b>Whites</b>
Elementary employees	02	0	0	0

African males and African females dominate this category. All these occupational categories clearly indicate that the municipality's workforce is understandably manned mainly by Africans. It also indicates that there are no Coloured people, White females and Indian females appointed into any position within the municipality.

**4.5 EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

According to the Director of Corporate Services, these plans have now been created; also, an Employment Equity Committee has been established. These documents were not available for the researcher for reviewing purposes.

**4.6 HUMAN RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Director Corporate Service states that after much "consideration" this plan was implemented with some revisions. These documents were not available for the researcher for reviewing purposes.

#### 4.7 CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The recruitment policy of uMkhanyakude district municipality as provided in the Conditions of Service provides that uMkhanyakude district municipality is an equal opportunity and Affirmative Action employer, in order to achieve maximum participation with minimum delays in the appointment of staff and in order to obtain the best applicants for positions, notwithstanding that the appointment of staff is delegated to the municipal manager, the following policy is adopted:

- ❖ When permanent staff are recruited, the vacancy shall first be advertised internally for five days and if there are no suitable candidates then it will be advertised in the press and management will allow at least fourteen days for applications to be submitted. The internal advertisement does not apply in respect of the positions of Municipal Manager.
- ❖ For positions of Municipal Manager, Directors and other senior positions or specialized positions, these positions must appear in the national press.
- ❖ Vacancies for staff in lower positions shall be advertised in the Zululand Observer and iLanga newspapers.

❖ Non-specialized vacancies shall be advertised on the official notice board.

This policy does not say much about the municipality's commitment to diversity, and does not stipulate how Affirmative Action and Employment Equity programmes are implemented. Concerning advertisements of positions, the Conditions of Service states that "the municipality shall ensure that advertisements of vacancies to reach, as efficiently and effectively as possible, the potential applicants, including persons historically disadvantaged. The question is, when referring to historically disadvantaged", here are they only referring to the members of the local community who have access to local newspapers?

Concerning the determination of requirements of employment, the Conditions of Service provides that "the municipality shall based on the inherent requirement of the post, determine composite requirements for employment in terms of education, skills, competence and knowledge. Again the nature of disability, gender and race are not stipulated. This indicates that the municipality discriminates on the basis of disability, race and gender.

#### 4.8 SUMMARY OF COMMON THEMES FROM PARTICIPANTS

The overall impression the researcher got from analyzing the questionnaires and interviews with the management staff was that cultural diversity was the least-understood phenomenon and that the municipality was not making an effort to diversify. This is indicated by the fact that there are no African or White females in the strategic or decision-making positions; one of the participant's responses states that he wished to see at least 25% of appointees being women in management positions. This under-representation of women constitutes gender discrimination which is prohibited by the Employment Equity Act. These are some of the stated reasons for the under representation of women in the municipality:

- ❖ The psychological prejudice and stereotyping by men that women are the weaker sex.
- ❖ Female candidates are not given an additional score in interviews.
- ❖ Women do not apply for senior positions.
- ❖ Most women keep to their comfort zone. They do not apply for posts, especially in higher positions.
- ❖ There is a shortage of women who are suitable for positions.

- ❖ Women have developed an inferiority complex.
- ❖ Men are always given the first preference as opposed to women.
- ❖ Affirmative Action in recruitment is not apparent, and, anyway, Affirmative Action is not implemented. There were few women on the selection panel.
- ❖ There are not enough qualified technical women.
- ❖ Management does not think that women are capable.

The responses further suggest that achieving equal representation in terms of gender is still a challenge for the municipality. All these ideas are difficult to implement if there is no strategy or policy on the advancement of women.

Also, other ethnic or racial groups are under-represented in the municipality's workforce; this could be due to the fact that the municipality is situated in a predominately Zulu-speaking community which serves as an employment pool from where the municipality draws its employees.

In addition, the management is not making an effort to lay down specific policies that regulate the employment and the utilization of people with disabilities, despite what was stated by participant A and B in their comments

about advertisements for posts for people with disabilities.

The responses further indicate that the municipality does not make an effort to educate/workshop employees on the issues relating to the importance of diversity and the challenges or joys of working and interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Neither is it educating employees about the requirements of the Employment Equity Act and Affirmative Action. For example when asked about what they understand about cultural diversity in this municipality, one respondent pointed out that: "there isn't much of that as we are predominately black". Presumably he or she is saying that in that area knowledge of cross cultural communication is not a necessity.

The municipality has not made an effort to develop a strategy on diversifying despite submitting the workforce profile to the Department of Labour; no help has been forthcoming in order to develop equity policies to address high levels of under-representation. (It should be remembered that the rationale for managing diversity includes moral and ethical reasons such as fairness and upholding the dignity of everyone).

The responses of the management staff indicate that the municipality has not done enough to attract and to retain a workforce that is representative of the nation. It is evident that the municipality has not devised any recruitment method that provides a wider pool of job applicants as positions are only advertised in the local newspapers. This contravenes the principles of Equal Employment Opportunities law which states that positions are to be advertised in the medium that is commonly read by employment seekers (for example. national newspapers)

KPMG in their project handover report (March: 2002) specifies that Human Resources division of the municipality is, among other things, responsible for advertising positions in terms of Council policy (i.e. in the following newspapers: iLanga and Zululand Observer) and that members of the local community needed to be appointed to jobs because they had a vested interest in the service delivery of their community.

According to Kossek & Lobel(1996:247) there are principal tasks that the organization can do to create a working culture that is favourable to a wide variety of people, those principal tasks include:

❖ There must be equal treatment in hiring.

- ❖ There must be equal opportunities for advancement.
- ❖ Employees should be given opportunities to express their individuality.
- ❖ Organizations need to recognize employee's responsibilities in their "non-work-life."

#### **4.9 A PROPOSED MODEL THAT PROMOTES CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

##### **4.9.1 RE-LOOKING AT OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE MUNICIPALITY**

The objectives should be such that the municipality is not just paying lip service when complying with the Employment Equity Act and implementation of Affirmative Action; objectives should attempt to point out the essential tasks that need to be performed in order for the municipality to operate efficiently and effectively without the fear of legal claims.

The vision, mission, objectives and plans of the organization should create behaviours and attitudes that will result in achieving excellence.

#### **4.9.2 INPUT AND OUTPUT**

This is rooted in the psychological contract related to job satisfaction, as stated in Mullins (2002:648). An organization needs a certain level of skills and knowledge from its employees if it is to function efficiently. On the other hand an employee expects that the skills and knowledge he or she brings with him or her be used and developed. The organization also needs to estimate the generalized output, set quality standards and rewards systems and in turn the employee expects personal, equitable effort-rewards and controls, including supervisory ones, which are perceived as acceptable.

#### **4.9.3 NEEDS AND MOTIVATORS**

Schultz *et al* (2003:53) point out that effective managers know that they must understand their employees and what motivates them. In order to understand what motivates an employee, a manager must find out what employee's needs are. Also, an effective manager must understand that each individual employee is different. In order to motivate individual employees the manager must understand the needs of each employee and his or her particular goals. For the purpose of enhancing satisfaction and attachment

to the goals of the organization the needs of the employees and motivators must be identified and improved.

#### **4.9.4 FUNCTIONING OF THE MUNICIPALITY AS A UNITARY SYSTEM INTEGRATED WITH ITS ENVIRONMENT.**

The municipality should play an active role in determining why its workforce is not representative of the nation in terms of gender, race and disabilities.

#### **4.9.5 ATTITUDE CHANGE, IMPROVING COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.**

Making diversity a strategic measure requires fundamental change in the attitudes and behaviours of an organization. Leaders should develop suitable competencies that will enable them to develop an innovative culture that appreciates diversity. This is done for the purpose of encouraging tolerance among different cultures in the workplace. To be most effective everyone needs to fully understand the importance of having a diverse workforce; as a result the "diversity management" efforts should be aimed at everyone.

#### 4.9.6 TRAINING ON STRATEGIC, FUNCTIONAL AND PSYCHO ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS

Diversity conscious organizations are not just working towards promoting diversity today but also ensuring that they will have a diverse workforce tomorrow. Organizations that support the need to link diversity management to the institution's strategic vision monitor recruitment, promotions, development trends and reinforce the value of diversity in hiring. As a result they are committed to technical re-education and pay attention to the reinforcement of a homogeneous ideal.

#### 4.10 A MODEL DIVERSITY PLAN FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Rosemary Wentling proposes this model in her article entitled "*Diversity training at the workplace*". In her article she argues that an organization with a model diversity plan, will have initiated the following activities:

- ❖ Creating employment policies and practices that support the organization's commitment to diversity, training and development strategies and diverse career tracks with appropriate resources.

- ❖ Integrating workforce diversity goals with all organizational design activities.
- ❖ Creating an organizational structure to support the organization's commitment to diversity.
- ❖ Establishing a link between diversity goals and performance review and reward systems.
- ❖ Establishing shared values throughout the organization to support the company's vision of diversity.
- ❖ Developing a diverse mix of qualified candidates to ensure that the workforce of the organization reflects the community which it serves.
- ❖ Providing employees with skills needed to perform in a culturally diverse environment.
- ❖ Empowering employees to create an organizational culture in which people are made responsible for the achievement of organizational goals.
- ❖ Creating an atmosphere in which all employees take ownership of the diversity problems and recognize they are part of the problem as well as of the solution.
- ❖ Creating an organizational culture where racist, ethnocentric and sexist language is totally absent.

According to Van der Wal & Ramotsehoa in Schultz et al (2003:31) diversity can be appreciated if:

- ❖ Everybody is given the opportunity to develop their skills and reach their potential.
- ❖ People are empowered with knowledge.
- ❖ People are given opportunities to utilize their knowledge and skills.

#### **4.11 PROMOTE CRITICAL SYSTEMS THINKING AND MULTI-DIMENSIONAL READING OF THE MUNICIPALITY**

The following can be used to promote critical systems thinking of the municipality:

##### **4.11.1 STRATEGIC DIMENSION**

"Strategic dimension" describes an organization's sense of purpose, plans and actions. Mullins (2002:138) points out that there is a need for people to achieve the benefits of mutual reinforcement and there are effects of changing environmental conditions.

It also deals with juridical (i.e. meaning that Human Resources processes such as recruitment and training

should be aligned with legislative requirements.), political and economic aspects of the task environment, goals that need to be pursued and technologies to be utilized to achieve results. (Technology is also a potential source of tension and stress and affects motivation and the level of satisfaction. Technology is also a major influence on the general climate of the organization and control over the behaviour of people at work).

#### **4.11.2 FUNCTIONAL DIMENSION**

Whatever the nature of an organization, the effectiveness of its operation and functions are dependent upon the staff it employs. From an organizational analysis point of view functional dimensions are closely related to the operational achievement of the organizational objectives. This dimension involves the functions of resource requisition (human), transformation and training and development of personnel.

#### **4.11.3 PSYCHO-ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION**

An essential part of management is coordinating the activities of people and guiding their efforts towards goals and objectives of the organization. This dimension

includes leadership styles, communication styles and motivation. Management also promotes group discussions and measures various cultural characteristics.

#### **4.12 CONCLUSION**

We are witnessing an important change in business trends with organizations and municipalities converging and merging to form global enterprises in global sectors. In each sector there are alliances between global enterprises, and multinational, national and local business forming networks for specific purposes. The main characteristic of these new conglomerates is that ideas and decisions are discussed in various places and by people who are different from those who produce and consume. The fact that each theoretical paradigm uses only a portion of the truth, is in part, a result of the historical period in which it arose and the kind of questions it was trying to address. It is also reflective of the ideological, political and professional preferences or even sectors, gender and race. They come from those whose interest they try to defend.

Industrial society offers the possibility of selling one's work on the market, allowing individual

emancipation from the clan and encouraging the purchase of objects as aspects of one's own identity. Establishing a culture that appreciates diversity is perceived as a competitive advantage and a strategic necessity to surviving in a global environment.

## CHAPTER 5

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Clearly the research study had its strength and weaknesses. The sample was not large enough to be representative nor was it generalized enough to include other settings. The researcher took cognisance of the motivational effect which has played an important role in the behaviour of participants. Indeed research findings of this sort trigger more questions than those for which answers have been found. There is a need for further research on the topic to add to the research findings.

#### 5.2 QUALITATIVE MEASURES FOR DIVERSITY EFFECTIVENESS

Some outcomes derived from diversity initiatives are not easily quantifiable or measured, but they clearly demonstrate the benefits that can be realized by an organization. Benefits such as:

- ❖ Improved organizational image stemming from a more positive reputation, and the presence of diverse employees in key positions.
- ❖ More upward communication to provide new perspective to senior management for the organization's operations and treatment of employees.
- ❖ Improved co-operation and communication within diverse work teams, few as they are.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

These include the following:

- ❖ Ensure that the municipality has a diversity policy: The policy should state the municipality's commitment to cultural diversity and highlight particular groups which are more likely to be discriminated against. This policy should be disseminated to all employees.
- ❖ Devise a structure to oversee the implementation of its policies: A structure appropriate for this municipality needs to be set up so that the policies are adequately supported. This could be in the form of a working committee headed by senior officials.
- ❖ Review current policies/practices: Carry out a review of current practices in order to ensure that there is

no direct or indirect discrimination in the areas of recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment and access to training opportunities.

- ❖ Recruit a workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation: The objective is to improve diversity through outreach groups. Here, the municipality needs to develop and use a specified targeted recruitment plan for occupations which reflect under-representation. This target recruitment must be undertaken to address areas of under-representation.
- ❖ Ensure equitable representation: Positions should also be advertised in the national newspapers so that everyone can have an opportunity to apply.
- ❖ Ensure the advancement of women into senior management position: Stereotypes and prejudices should be eliminated through the development of the policies that deal with these issues (i.e. Awareness Programmes).
- ❖ Targeted recruitment must have the support of top management: Initiative and goals must be incorporated into the municipality's strategic plan.
- ❖ Improve diversity through outreach to persons with disabilities: The municipality needs to develop a policy on the appointment and utilization of persons with disabilities.

- ❖ Ensure that all those who conduct selection interviews are well trained: To avoid questions that might imply selection on the basis of race, creed, gender, disability, age and sexual orientation, this is necessary.
- ❖ Retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation: The municipality needs to provide opportunities for the development and full use of employee potential so that all employees advance fairly and equitably. Management needs to examine selection processes and career plans and should bridge positions in occupations with under-represented groups. They also need to eliminate any barriers to fair and equal entry by and promotion of under-represented groups in those occupations.
- ❖ Educate managers and employees regarding the value of diversity: It is recommended that the municipality conducts mandatory training for all managers and employees on the legal implementation of Employment Equity and on the management of a diverse workforce in areas such as conflict resolution, team management, effective listening, personality types and cultural differences.
- ❖ Encourage staff to contribute their ideas and provide opportunities for them to do so: Management should be productive in this regard.

- ❖ Display a genuine commitment to workplace diversity: Accepting differences and seeking a diverse range of views on issues is important.
- ❖ Support staff in balancing their work and personal lives.
- ❖ Demonstrate commitment to non-discrimination in the workplace: Ensure that individuals are not denied employment or career advancement opportunities because of their sex, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age and disability.
- ❖ Extend Affirmative Action: it should not end when the employment process has resulted in appointment; The major thrust of Affirmative Action ought to be the identification and elimination of barriers that preclude the initial hiring of women, persons with disabilities and other previously disadvantaged groups. Its subsequent and logical efforts must be directed toward fair and equitable treatment of all employees, the application of consistent human resources management practices and the provision of equal opportunities for promotion and advancement.
- ❖ In-service training or internship: This should ensure that there is a larger pool from which the municipality can draw talent.

## 5.4 CONCLUSION

The cultural diversity of South African society has implications for all aspects of Human Resources Management. South Africa has always been diverse. There has been a strong undercurrent of multiculturalism throughout its history. In reality workers and citizens have never been homogeneous and the enactment of apartheid laws by the previous government reinforced divisions.

Workforce diversity has become an essential business concern. In the so-called information age, the greatest assets of most institutions are in fact its people or employees. Undeniably, there is a talent war raging. No organization can afford to unnecessarily restrict its ability to attract and retain the very best employees available.

A diverse workforce is a reflection of a changing world and marketplace. Diverse work teams bring high value to organizations. Respecting individual differences benefits the workplace by creating a competitive edge and increasing work productivity. In addition, diversity management benefits its associates by creating a fair and

safe environment where everyone has access to opportunities and challenges. Management tools in a diverse workforce should be used to educate everyone about diversity and its issues including laws and regulations. Most organizations are made up of diverse cultures, so organizations need to learn how to adapt in order to be successful.

Managing diversity differs from traditional Equal Employment Opportunities and Affirmative Action in its more comprehensive approach and its emphasis on providing a supportive environment. Traditional Equal Employment Opportunities and Affirmative Action approaches focus on bringing under-represented groups into the workforce. Managing diversity seeks to create an environment where all differences are valued and each unique employee can naturally develop to his or her full potential.

It is not enough to simply hire employees from under-represented groups; an environment where all employees are valued and supported ought to be provided. Managing diversity also strives to ensure that when an individual is hired he or she should be able to trust that he or she has been chosen because of his or her unique qualifications not because of gender or ethnicity.

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Enquiries: Dr VJ Mthembu

23 June 2006

Attention: B. I. Dlamini  
University of Zululand  
Dept. of Industrial Psychology  
Private Bag X1001  
**KWADLANGEZWA**  
3886

**APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Your letter dated on the above subject refers.

Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct interviews and administer a questionnaire to employees of this municipality

Thank you



DR VJ MTHEMBU  
SENIOR MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

June 21, 2006

University of Zululand  
Dept of Industrial Psychology  
Private Bag x 1001  
Kwa-Dlangezwa  
3886

The Director  
Corporate Services  
uMkhanyakude District Municipality  
Mkhuze

Dear Sir

**APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I am registered for a Phd degree in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zululand under the supervision of Dr H.S.B Ngcobo. I am conducting a research titled a "Qualitative investigation into the Management of Cultural Diversity in Human Resources Provisioning at uMkhanyakude District Municipality".

I request your permission to administer a questionnaire to employees of the municipality and to conduct an interview with the managerial staff.

I would like to assure you that the findings will not be published without your permission.

Sincerely Yours,



Bongani Innocent Dlamini  
Student Number: 951854

## BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

- Instructions:**
- Respond to the questions by writing your answers on this feedback form. (Indicate with an X in the space provided)
  - There are no right or wrong answers. This exercise intends to obtain information about diversity management.
  - Do not share answers

### PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION

**Department / Section :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position Held :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year of Employment**

#### Nature of the Position

Permanent  Temporary  Part-Time  Casual  Contract

#### Gender

Male  Female  Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Race

African  White  Coloured  Indian

#### Marital Status

Married  Single  Divorced  Full-Time Partner

#### Ethnic Origin

Zulu  Xhosa  Ndebele  Sotho  Setswana  Afrikaans

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Age**

18-25  21-25  26-30  31-36  36+years

**Citizenship**

South African Yes  No

If "No" what is your Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Language**

IsiZulu  isXhosa  English  Afrikaans  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Physical Attributes**

Disability Yes  No

If "Yes" please describe the nature of disability \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Level**

Primary  Secondary

**Post-Matric Qualifications**

University  Technikon  Technical

**Length of Service**

0-5  5-10  10-15  15+years

How did you know about the position you are currently occupying?

Newspaper  Referral  Government circular  Walk in

Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B**

1. How do you feel about working with people from different cultural backgrounds?

Comfortable  Not Comfortable  I do not care

2. What do you understand by cultural diversity in this municipality?

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3. Does this municipality have a strategy to manage diversity?

Yes  No

If "yes" please explain

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4. What are the areas of cultural diversity that need to be improved within this Municipality?

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5. Is Employment Equity a problem or an opportunity?

Problem  Opportunity

If EE is viewed as a problem, please explain why?

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**END OF QUESTIONNAIRE**