

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PARADIGMS AND THE SUB-VARIABLES OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 deals with the first phase of the literature review, namely the historical and sociological roots of the constructs of discrimination and inequality. The first part of the chapter gives an overview of the paradigms that have shaped our history and influenced employment practices in our country. The paradigms are:

- the paternalistic paradigm (1948 to approximately 1977)
- the employment equity paradigm (late 1970s and early 1980s)
- the Black advancement paradigm (early 1980s to late 1980s)
- the affirmative action paradigm (early 1990 to 1994)
- the diversity paradigm (emerging from 1994)

The second part of the chapter focuses on the sub-variables of employment equity, namely racism, discrimination and affirmative action.

These paradigmatic perspectives will highlight the context in which South African society has been shaped over the decades and thus provide more insight into the “problems surrounding the development of historically disadvantaged employees in South African organisations” (Van Rooyen, 2000, p. 14). This will also encapsulate the position of women, as employment equity practice embodies gender issues, as women are now under the ambit of the Act regarded as previously disadvantaged.

2.2 THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL ROOTS OF THE CONSTRUCTS OF RACISM, DISCRIMINATION AND INEQUALITY

Racism and discrimination [were not created in a void. The development of these concepts can be traced to their historical roots in colonialisation: “The conquest and domination may have been prevalent in human history, but Western imperialism differs from other episodes of domination. It involved a different mode of production (capitalism) and technology (industrialism), that took on global proportion” (Pieterse & Parekh, 1995, p. 1). Together with these concepts is the parallel process of power: “The effect of power has been built into the notions race, progress, evolution,

modernity and development as hierarchies extending in time and space” (Pieterse & Parekh, 1995, p. 1).

Pieterse and Parekh (1995, p. 1) point out that there are two paradigm perspectives which fall on opposite sides of the spectrum. The first paradigm is Eurocentric, focussing on a core component of ethnocentrism and relying on its exceptional internal characteristics of self-sufficiency for sustenance and growth. The second paradigm encompasses modernity as the centre of the (first) world system, which would incorporate Amerinda. Thus in their eyes, European modernity is not an independent, self-reliant system, but is instead incorporated into the world system. Europe, being central in the universe, does not assume superiority over other cultures, but is fundamental to the discovery, conquest, colonisation and integration/subsumption of Amerinda.

How can one apply this paradigm to modern, simplistic thinking? When Europe, being more developed than the countries which they incorporated into their realm, embarked upon colonisation, a behaviour pattern of domination came about. “The expansion of Europe triggered off in some areas the beginnings of modern-state formation, the transformation of proto-states, changes in the nature of commerce, and facilitated the rise or continued hegemony of the specific dominant groups within Third World countries ... Dominance was more profoundly and structurally linked than has been supposed or admitted” (Pieterse & Parekh, 1995, p. 23). This was certainly the case in South Africa. For many years after the Nationalist Government came into power in 1948, separate development of the Black, Coloured and Asian population groupings was imposed by legislation. It was, however, a mere continuation from a premise of superiority during colonialist days, when White supremacy pervaded non-White ethnic groupings. It must also be remembered that “colonialisation occurs as a phase within capitalism” (Pieters & Parekh, 1995, p. 24), and students and individuals who live in capitalistic economies are very well aware of the power and class struggle of the subservient versus the powerful, dominant supremacy. Thus one can state the premise that with colonisation came an underlying position of power and need for European countries to claim, retain and enhance their country’s economy. The downfall of the colonised was their lack of sophistication, and in many cases Europeans found the ethnic tribes barbaric and illiterate. The process evolved with the slave trade to slowly become a process of supremacy over then minority ethnic groupings.

2.3 OVERVIEW OF PARADIGMS RELATING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISADVANTAGED EMPLOYEES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Kreitner and Kinicki (1998) “define paradigms as a generally accepted way of viewing the world”. De Beer (1998, p. 1) “defines a paradigm as a mindset about a specific subject. A paradigm is thus similar to a person’s frame of reference that determines how that person interprets what happens to him/her and how he/she perceives others and their behaviour”. “The link to organisational culture seems obvious. The values, beliefs and norms that underpin an organisational culture play a formative part in the employees’ frame of reference or paradigm” (Barnard, Martins & Manetjie, 2001, p. 69). The following sections will be giving an overview of the paradigms related to the development of disadvantaged employees.

2.3.1 Paternalistic paradigm (1948 to circa 1977)

“The paternalistic paradigm was institutionalised by the Nationalist Government, which came into power in 1948 and adopted the apartheid policy aimed at developing whites and blacks in different geographical areas. The development of employees was seriously hampered, because the apartheid policy created a microenvironment which determined how employees and their development was viewed in organisations. The financial benefits of cheap labour caused even organisations which did not support the government’s views, to conform to the labour law of the day” (De Beer, 1998).

“Black workers were legally and informally prohibited from advancing to the skilled managerial levels in ‘white’ organisations in ‘white’ group areas. It was only in organisations operating in the ‘black’ group areas that black employees could advance to skilled and managerial positions” (De Beer, 1998). “High potential, black workers had to move to ‘black’ areas if they wanted promotion and career advancement,

“Separate educational systems were also introduced for blacks and whites based on the argument that the disparities between the two cultures were too large for one education system to support.” (De Beer, 1998).

2.3.2 Employment Equity Paradigm (late 1970's and early 1980's)

Van Rooyen (2000, p. 16) points out that “during the late 1970's, apartheid legislation was gradually relaxed. The implementation of recommendations of the Wiehahn Report formalised the principle that all employees should be represented and should have access to senior positions in organisations, and that there should be equal opportunities for blacks to compete with whites for high-level positions. However, black employees should themselves take responsibility for catching up on their education and developmental backlog”.

2.3.3 Black Advancement Paradigm (early 1980's to late 1980's)

During this period, “ legislation inhibiting the career advancement of black employees was almost removed, yet black employees still did not sufficiently progress to high level positions. In theory the playing ground had been leveled, but in practice black employees still did not compete for skilled and managerial positions on an equal footing with whites” (De Beer 1998).

The change from the equal opportunities mindset to the black advancement mindset was brought about by the following factors:

- Politicians and managers accepted that the political and economic future of all people in South Africa was inseparably interwoven.
- The international community exerted enormous economic pressure through extensive economic sanctions.
- Managers realised that the formal education system for blacks was inadequate and accepted responsibility for implementing remedial and developmental programmes traditionally seen as the government's responsibility (De Beer 1998).

During this period, extended support systems were introduced to support black employees in their adjustment to skilled and managerial positions. A mentorship programme was introduced in which a senior employee would act as mentor for a Black employee on a development programme.

Organisations also introduced participative management processes, but many failed dismally. According to De Beer (1998) failure in many cases was due to managers not being receptive to new ideas and processes. In other instances failure could be attributed to inflexibility.

2.3.4 Affirmative action paradigm

Barnard et al. (2001, p.79) state that “in South Africa, affirmative action has been mainly driven by black liberation movements, political organisations and business considerations”.

Van Rooyen (2000) cites the following objectives of affirmative action:

- To rectify inequality regarding the racial structure of the workplace.
- To rectify inequality regarding policies, practices and facilities.
- To ensure that employees are broadly representative of South African’s race groups at all levels and in all disciplines.
- To ensure that all work practices, policies and facilities are equitable.
- To ensure that the culture in organisations is conducive to affirmative action.
- To ensure that business spending is directed to businesses owned by disadvantaged communities.

Two subparadigms are distinguished within the affirmative action paradigm, namely the bottom-up and top-down subparadigms. These are presented below.

2.3.4.1 Bottom-up affirmative action paradigm (circa 1990 to mid 1990s)

Barnard et al. (2001, p.79) set this scenario: “Affirmative action, it was believed, should be enforced from within the organisation before being enforced through legislation. The organisation could implement the necessary changes according to its own organisation culture and structure, which should minimise productivity and efficiency losses.”

Many organisations saw affirmative action as a strategic business issue (Barnard et al., 2001, p.80). Other reasons cited by De Beer (1998, p. 40) include the following:

- Social and economic pressures could be turned into a long-term strategic, competitive objective.
- With the introduction of legislation, the impetus of the natural introduction of affirmative action would be lost and organisations would respond reactively.
- It would make greater economic sense to develop employees from previously disadvantaged groups at that stage, because putting it off to a later stage would become even more costly. As the process of affirmative action gained momentum, the demand for qualified persons from the previously disadvantaged ranks would increase automatically.

Managerial development in South Africa: A paradigm for change in South Africa

“Management, as a distinct occupational group with specific tasks to perform and specific responsibilities to meet, is becoming an increasingly important force in the South African society” (Human & Human 1998, p.13).

Harbison (1997, p.3) “argues human resources — not capital nor income, nor material resources — constitute the ultimate basis for wealth for nations ... clearly a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilise them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else”.

A model of domination

a What is the model of domination?

Since the Industrial Revolution, the collectives in most societies of the world have been ruled by the minority.

Social or organisational life is characterised by the division of labour. Human and Human (1998, p.14) state that “it is in the interest (which may be defined as opportunities, privileges, rewards and status currently experienced or expected in future) of the dominant few to retain and even extend their position of dominance vis-

a-vis the dominated. The maintenance of their interests involves the protection of the boundaries between themselves and those who may threaten such interests. This process is called social closure ... Domination can thus be described as a process whereby one group consistently and successfully monopolises advantages by closing off opportunities to the subordinate group below them.” Dominant groups are able to maintain their positions mainly by reason of material wealth, that is money, type of like styles and positions wielded in society.

b The legitimacy crisis in South Africa

Adam (1986, p.129) state “South Africa practices the textbook case of legal violations of legitimacy by denying the majority population equal political rights”. “Both Apartheid and exclusionary positions held by Whites in the Country were and are rejected by the majority of the population. As perceptions of legitimacy are limited to members of the dominant groups, and as the subordinate groups do not comply out of a sense of belief in the system, order is maintained primarily through a process of coercion. Put simply, compliance is based on fear” (Human & Human 1998, p.16).

“It is not enough to state that the overt form of domination changed with the elections of 1994. Social practices within organisations have to a large degree continued to perpetuate social domination — where the white male occupies positions of strength and power. The dominant white group will still try to find new ways of perpetuating domination” (Human & Human 1998, p.17).

c The paradigm shift

Thomas Kuhn was a proponent of the concept paradigm. A paradigm is a set of values, beliefs, norms held by a certain community and displayed by overt behaviour.

Scott (1986, p.495) states that a “paradigm comes into being as individuals take action, interpret that action, and share with others their interpretations. These interpretations, or ‘typifications’ are attempts to classify behaviour into categories that will enable the others to respond to it in similar fashion. How this plays itself out in society is that the dominant groups give the subservient groups orders. The acceptance of typifications is called institutionalization” (Human & Human 1998, p.16). In the South African work context White males’ supremacy in jobs became institutionalised. For this process to change, there had to be a paradigm shift, that is

a change in thinking, a change in business operations. One wonders if organisations in South Africa would have taken up this challenge without coercion?

2.3.4.2 *Top-down affirmative action paradigm (emerging from 1994)*

Barnard et al. (2001, p.81) explain that “the top-down affirmative action mindset emerged when the black majority ANC Government came into power. Affirmative action is now enforced by the government through legislation.”

“Quotas and time limits for organisations are also now set by government and are ensured through some form of financial reward. The government is striving towards a totally nonracial society in which everyone will be equal, after the economic and career backlogs created by past injustices are rectified. Reverse discrimination against formally privileged whites is seen as justifiable discrimination” (Barnard et al., 2001, p.81).

A very concerning process with regard to this paradigm is that “the displacement model becomes relevant as whites will have to be displaced to make positions available for blacks. Productivity losses are predicted as a result of displacement procedures such as early retirement and retrenchment” (Barnard et al., 2001, p.82).

Differences between top-down and bottom-up affirmative action

Top-down affirmative action	-	Bottom-up affirmative action
• Enforcement by legislation		• Enforcement by consent
• Power primarily obtained through positional advancement		• Power primarily obtained through personal growth and work skills development
• Productivity and work standards often not considered in the of empowerment of the disadvantaged		• Productivity and work standards considered in the empowerment of the disadvantaged
• Government driven		• Senior management/ organisation driven

- Positional empowerment more important than work skills empowerment
- Reactive intervention
- Output policies slightly favoured over input policies
- Work skills empowerment and personality growth is as important as positional empowerment
- Proactive intervention
- Both input and output policies equally important

2.3.5 Management of diversity paradigm (emerging from circa 1994)

2.3.5.1 Reasons for managing diversity

De Beer (1998) points out that there are numerous reasons for the emergence of the management of diversity paradigm. The most important are noted below:

A need to broaden the focus of affirmative action to include dimensions other than race and gender, as well as going beyond narrow descriptions of enforced vocational advancement of disadvantaged employees to include broader dimensions such as extended employee participation, economic empowerment, social investment, education and the general welfare of the disadvantaged. This also includes the need to create a corporate environment that would be inclusive of the different groups.

- The acceptance of the unique characteristics of employees from different cultures in order to build trust and tolerance among the diverse employees as a sensitivity to the specific needs of employees from other culture groups.
- The need to accommodate and manage the psychological processing of deep emotional changes that result from transformation brought about by affirmative action. The management of diversity paradigm provides a suitable climate for working through expectations, uncertainty, fears, hatred, rage, conflict and other manifestations of a society in transformation.

2.4 BENEFITS OF THE PARADIGMATIC APPROACH FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEES IN ORGANISATIONS

The benefits of the paradigmatic approach can be encapsulated as follows: The evolution of the paradigmatic approach provides a historical framework for the transition of discriminatory practices in the South African context to a movement in this society that is now embracing all cultures, people of colour and women.

De Beer (1998) outlines the outstanding characteristics of the paradigmatic approach as follows:

- It contextualises the historical overview of the developments leading to an explanation of why there have been disadvantaged employees.
- The paradigmatic overview presents managers and HR practitioners with a backdrop of historical facts to take into account when planning and implementing affirmative action and managing diversity strategies.
- The range of paradigms can be used as a diagnostic tool to determine where the organisation is in terms of its paradigm about people development before embarking on a transformation process through affirmative action and managing diversity strategies.

The rest of this chapter discusses the sub-components of employment equity, namely racism, discrimination and affirmative action.

2.5 SUB-VARIABLES OF THE CONCEPT OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

2.5.1 Background

Three sub-variables will be discussed in the second half of this chapter. These are:

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Affirmative action

These components will be discussed in detail since they have a direct impact on the concept of employment equity. In the Employment Equity Act No 55 (1998), direct reference is made to these core components, and employment equity principles cannot be understood and/or without a proper understanding of these components.

Explaining these components will make it easier to understand chapter 3, which deals with the foundations of employment equity.

2.5.2 Racism

2.5.2.1 Definition of racism

Shabi (2000, p. 34) defines three types of racial discrimination as based on the British Race Relations Act 1976 and the Commission for Racial Equality:

- **DIRECT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION:** This occurs when someone is able to show that they have been treated less favourably on racial grounds than others in similar circumstances. Racist abuse and harassment are forms of direct discrimination. ...
- **INDIRECT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION:** This occurs when people from a racial group are less likely to be able to comply with a requirement or condition, and the requirement cannot be justified other than on racial grounds.
- **VICTIMISATION:** It occurs if someone is treated less favourably because they have complained about racial discrimination or supported someone else who has.

Another definition of racism is that propounded by Pincus and Ehrlich (1994, pp. 20-21), who state that “in the 1940’s racism referred to an ideology, an explicit system of beliefs postulating the superiority of whites based on the inherent, biological inferiority of the coloured races”. They go on to say that “ideological racism became discredited, and the focus shifted to a more discrete approach to racially invidious attitudes and behaviour expressed in the model of prejudice and discrimination. ‘Prejudice’ referred (and still does) to hostile feelings and beliefs about racial minorities and the web of stereotypes justifying such negative attitudes. ‘Discrimination’ referred to actions meant to harm the members of a racial minority group. The logic of this model was that racism implied a double standard, and this, treating a person of colour differently — in mind or action — than one would a member of the majority group” (Pincus & Ehrlich 1994, p. 21). This is backed up by a very profound statement by Kovel (1984, p. 10) that “racism itself is a tendency of a society to degrade and do violence to people on the basis of race, and by whatever mediations may exist for this purpose”. These statements apply to South Africa in

that the Whites have believed that they have supremacy over the non-White people of South Africa and from that premise have flowed all the discriminatory practices that have shaped our history.

2.5.2.2 *Mandela's standpoint on racism*

Wilhelm and Mabotja (1999, p. 39), quoting Mandela's words after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), show that Mandela inextricably links the concepts of affirmative action and employment equity with that of racism:

"The TRC issues a call, which we strongly endorse, for a recommitment in both public and private sectors, with renewed vigour, to the transformation of our structures and corporations through a combination of affirmative action and employment equity together with the strengthening of a culture of hard work, efficiency and honesty. ... But these measures imply further legislation against 'racism'"

2.5.2.3 *Mbeki's position on Racism*

In an article entitled "Mbeki's address indicates increased focus on racism", Chothia (2000) writes: "to avoid this Mbeki has assumed the mantle of an Africanist who is determined to continue the struggle against racism ... In this way he appeals to the constituency closest to his heart — blacks waging boardroom battles — and also those who are being retrenched on mines and evicted from farms ... most blacks work under white managers. They often experience racism, be it of a crude or subtle nature". This standpoint ties up with the model of domination, as propounded in 2.3.4.

Research done by Baker (1995, p. 186) of John Hopkins University indicates "that even the best efforts to diversify the workforce of an organisation often perpetuate racial inequality because members of various ethnic groups are still under-represented in the top management positions". Bell (1992, p. 12) feels that racism will never be eradicated from American society, and the small successes are merely peaks and troughs which are short-lived and slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance. "In professional office settings, racism does not take on the virulent form of racist slurs, violent acts, or even discrimination, yet racial as well as gender inequality persists" (Baker 1995, p. 187). Baker's and Mbeki's stances are similar in that they both point to the difficulties that Black people

have in society and the working world where they are continuously overshadowed by White supremacy.

Racism cannot be seen in isolation against the backdrop of sociological and anthropological ascendancy. Baker (1995, p. 189) makes an interesting statement: "Certain sociolinguistic rules that are unquestioningly observed within the workplace correspond with the cultural rules of the racial group that holds the top positions within an organisation." The sociological context of ethnic groups' cultures are complex. Baker quotes "Rydell's loose interpretation of Gramsci's notion of hegemony. Hegemony denotes the exercise of economic and political power in cultural terms by the established leaders of American society and the ... 'consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and subsequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world production" (Gramsci, 1971). Hegemony, moreover, is the normal means of state control in a pluralistic society (Rydell, 1984, p. 4.). Baker (1995, p. 197-198) goes on to state that the "ethnic group that has the power dominates the cultural milieu of the setting" and "when the African American workers do not challenge and simply consent to the dominant culture of an organisation, even if they are the majority, then chances are they still do not hold, or have easy access to structural power". How does this apply to the South African context? There is an analogy to the model of domination presented by Human and Human (1998) that is very prevalent in the South African context. The working organisation has been dominated by White supremacy, specifically White male supremacy. Now women and minority groupings, who are starting to take the power and leadership roles within organisations, are fighting for supremacy, and new cultural rules are rising within the organisation parallel to the new racial groupings that hold the power. (Baker 1995, p. 189), affirms Bell's (1992) "pessimistic thesis in his writings: *Faces at the bottom of the well: The Permanence of Racism* that racism is an integral, permanent and indestructible component of U.S. Society. ... Structural power relations are often signified through subtle cultural rules within specific organisations. These cultural rules within specific organisations are only emblematic of larger social relations within society. Programs and efforts to manage diversity cannot change historically contingent patterns of oppression. However, they can confront these patterns by recognising that members of underrepresented minority groups and women must have access to the very top leadership positions within any organisation." Applying this to the South African context, one can make the analogy

that white supremacy within organisations will not change unless minority groupings and females have the opportunity to occupy leadership positions within the organisation. This concept will be touched on in this thesis.

2.5.2.4 The term “new racism”

McConahay, Bardee and Batts (1981) put forward a new term “new racism”: “New racists believe that discrimination is a thing of the past; blacks are pushing too hard and moving too fast; public officials and other elites, through such policies as affirmative action, have ensured that the gains blacks have made are excessive and, therefore, unfair; racism is bad.” Brief, Buttram, Reizenstein, Pugh and Douglas (1997, p. 61) describe new racism as follows: “New racists define racism in terms of its blatant old-fashioned version and see open bigotry as socially unacceptable. ... People subscribing to these new racial attitudes will refrain from engaging in discriminatory actions unless those actions can be somehow justified ... Those harbouring anti-black feelings will not act against blacks unless their actions can be interpreted as non-racist.”. Thus new racists explain discriminatory behaviour by justifying their actions socially. This is a very important concept in employment equity processes. Many decisions in today’s working environment that overtly favour one racial grouping above the other are very often justified in terms of peripheral circumstances leading to the decision. For example, in the organisation in which the survey for this study was conducted, area managers, who in most cases come from marginalised groupings, do not have technical expertise, as opposed to White incumbents who are very technically knowledgeable. The appointment of affirmative action candidates was justified by pointing out that the position was a managerial position, and that the new appointees would therefore not be required to solve overly complex technical problems. It is thus “easy to translate stereotypical differences between blacks and whites into the modern language of person-organisational fit” Brief et al. (1997, p. 62). It is also very easy in the theory of “new racism” for people to blame their “expression of anti-black sentiment” on “merely following orders ... This can have a devastating impact on promoting equality in organisations”. Brief et al. (1997, p. 62).

2.5.2.5 Comparative correlation with European countries with regard to racism

The article “Racial discrimination and trade union policy” (1997, p. 26) clearly states the concerns of European countries with regard to racism. The year 1997 was set

aside for fighting and combating racism, and the project was launched on 30 January 1997. A budget of approximately 3.4 million pounds was set aside for action and involvement within the framework of the European Year Against Racism.

Interestingly, the following countries' commitment to eradicating racism is as follows:
BELGIUM: Law of 30 July 1981 provides penal sanctions against acts of racism.

- FRANCE: French Constitution states that France shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law. ... The Labour Code prohibits race discrimination on the grounds of origin, ethnicity, nationality and race." ...
- GERMANY: Protected by the " Constitution ", and "The Works Constitution Act ".
- GREAT BRITAIN: "The Race Relations Act deals specifically with racial discrimination ... especially with employment. ... The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) has the power to enforce this legislation." ...
- ITALY: Protected by the Constitution.
- NETHERLANDS: Protected by the Constitution. "The Criminal Code prohibits discrimination in a number of areas including employment."
- PORTUGAL: Protected under the Constitution.
- SPAIN: Protected under the Constitution.
- SWEDEN: Protection provided " Under the Anti-Ethnic Discrimination Act.

The social partners to the fight against racial discrimination on the European continent are the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the Employers' Representative Body (UNICE) and the Public Sector Employers' Body (CEEP). These partners adopted a declaration on measures to combat racism and xenophobia. The declaration focuses on the following areas:

- POLICY AND PLANNING: In order to be successful in preventing racial discrimination, it is often very useful for companies to make an initial open commitment to this objective;
- RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION: The social partners should analyse selection and recruitment procedures and companies should ultimately aim to find the most suitable candidates to fill the posts in question by widening the sources of recruitment, focusing on the qualifications and capacities, and making tests and interviews consistent;

- **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:** Organisations may wish to offer under-represented groups special training programmes or opportunities to acquire work experience;
- **IMPLEMENTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICIES:** Those responsible for recruitment, work allocation and disciplinary procedures should, wherever necessary, receive appropriate training in applying a policy of equal opportunity and equal treatment;
- **DEALING WITH DISCRIMINATION:** In order to combat racial discrimination effectively, complainants should be protected, discrimination must be regarded as a serious infringement of disciplinary rules, and complaints should be dealt with quickly; and
- **DISMISSALS AND REDUNDANCIES:** It should be ensured that membership of an ethnic group is not a criteria for dismissal and redundancy. “Racial discrimination and trade union policy” (1997, p. 26)

2.6 DISCRIMINATION

2.6.1 Background

Discrimination will only be discussed briefly. Two authors, Campanella (1989, p. 24) and Smollan (1991, p. 54) point out that discrimination essentially is when people are excluded from benefits and processes, merely because of their skin colour, thereby stifling development and opportunity.

“Discrimination in the workplace has been outlawed for many years, but subtle and — some unsubtle — forms remain. Indeed, prejudice (biased attitudes) and discrimination (biased behaviours) are the major obstacles to women and people of colour” (Carnevale & Stone 1994, p. 25).

Lie (1999, p. 13) states that discrimination in the workplace is a common problem and points out why it is so important to deal with discrimination. The Equal Opportunity Commission (U.S.A) handles between 75 000 and 80 000 employment discrimination claims each year. Discrimination is not only damaging, but also costly and time consuming and affects organisations' reputation and business relationships.

2.6.2 Definition of discrimination

Sproat (1995, p.12-2) gives the following definition: “Discrimination means practices or attitudes that have, whether by design or impact, the effect of limiting an individual’s or a group’s right to the opportunities generally available because of attributed rather than actual characteristics. It is not question of whether this discrimination is motivated by an intentional desire to obstruct someone’s potential, or whether it is the accidental by-product of innocently motivated practice or systems. If the barrier is affecting certain groups in a disproportionately negative way, it is a signal that the practices that lead to this adverse impact may be discriminatory.”

2.6.3 An issue of law

There are three aspects to the concept of discrimination that are important in determining the degree/component of discrimination. These are as follows:

In the case of Leonard Dingler Employee Representative Council v Leonard Dingler (Pty) Ltd & others, the Judge, Seady AJ, stated that “there is no fixed formula to be applied mechanically. ... Whether or not society will tolerate discrimination depends on the object of the discrimination and the means used to achieve it. The object must be legitimate and the means proportionate and rational” (Cohen, 2000, p. 258).

2.6.3.1 Direct race discrimination

“Direct race discrimination occurs where a person is treated differently because of their race or on the basis of some characteristic specific to members of that race. It is incorrect to equate discrimination with actual prejudice. Discrimination occurs when people are not treated as individuals. To discriminate is to assign to them characteristics which are generalised assumptions about groups of people ...” (Van Wyk, 1998b, p. 25).

2.6.3.2 Indirect race discrimination

Indirect race discrimination occurs when criteria, conditions or policies are applied which appear to be neutral, but which adversely affect a disproportionate number of a certain race group in circumstances where they are not justifiable. As with direct discrimination, intention or motive is irrelevant. In the Dingler case mentioned above,

the Court's pronouncements on 'direct' and 'indirect' discrimination, the court put forward the following proposition: "In the case of direct discrimination as well as indirect discrimination intention or motive is not determinative but in the case of indirect discrimination an 'adverse affect' is required whereas in the case of direct discrimination 'actual prejudice' is not required" (Van Wyk, 1998, p. 26). There are also different types of discrimination. Discrimination on the "listed ground" (Cohen, 2000, p. 258) means that the discrimination is thought through and there is a rational decision/reason behind the discrimination. Rulings from legal precedent, namely by Landman in the case of *Kadiaka v Amalgamated Beverage Industries*, hold that "unfair discrimination on an arbitrary ground takes place where the discrimination is for no reason or is purposeless. But even if there is a reason, the discrimination may be arbitrary if the reason is not a commercial reason of sufficient magnitude that it outweighs the rights of the job-seeker and is not morally offensive ..." (Cohen, 2000, p. 258).

2.6.4 Unconscious and conscious discrimination

Stallworth, Lamont, Mc Pherson, and Rute (2001, p. 37-43) state that there are two types of discrimination:

- "Unconscious discrimination as a barrier to equality.
- Conscious discrimination."

2.6.4.1 Unconscious discrimination as a barrier to equality

"The existence of this phenomenon is generally not known and thus not appreciated by the majority, including human resource professionals, employment lawyers and mediators. It is better said that the effects of unconscious discrimination are very well-known by racial minorities and in many instances women. As is the case with subtle discrimination, the often profound consequences of unconscious discrimination are just as damaging to the victim as is overt discrimination. ... The argument can be made that because unconscious and subtle discrimination are by definition essentially unintentional, it is worse than overt discrimination which is definitely actionable. A victim of unconscious and/or subtle discrimination often has very little, if any, redress except where employers have implemented internal conflict management systems to deal with claims of unfairness" (Stallworth et al. 2001, p. 35).

McGinley (1998), in her article “Viva La Evolucion! Recognising Unconscious Motive in Title VII”, describes unconscious discrimination as follows: “persons whose acts result from bias and prejudice are often unaware of their subconscious motivations. Thus, it is likely that differential treatment of female or minority employee in the workplace is because of his/her race or her gender, even though the employer is unaware that race and gender motivated the differential treatment. ... The importance is to understand the concept of unconscious discrimination, so as to avoid filing of discriminatory claims”.

2.6.4.2 *Conscious discrimination*

Dovidio and Gaertner (1986) state that this “form of racism, identified as ‘aversive racism’, results from whites’ assimilation of an egalitarian value system with ‘impressions derived from human cognitive mechanisms that contribute to the development of stereotypes and prejudice, and ... feelings and beliefs from historical and contemporary cultural racist contexts”. In brief, whites demonstrate an ambivalence towards blacks. While consciously holding egalitarian values, whites simultaneously harbor unconscious negative feelings toward blacks as well as a result of cognitive and motivational biases combined with socialization into a racist culture. In another study, Dovidio and Gaertner found that there was a difference between whites’ conscious and unconscious attitudes: Even unconsciously, positive characteristics were associated more with whites than with blacks. For negative traits, however, there was a discrepancy between unconscious and conscious responding. Specifically, negative characteristics were responded to significantly faster following a black prime than following a white prime. Thus, even though at a conscious level, whites reject negative attributions of blacks, at an unconscious level they do have negative associations. This study therefore provides direct support for the assumption that people who consciously and genuinely embrace egalitarian ideals may, out of their awareness, still harbour negative feelings towards blacks. The research of Dovidio and Gaertner strongly suggests that whites act only on these unconscious negative feelings when they are able to justify their actions.

2.6.5 The personal/group discrimination discrepancy (PGDD)

Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam and Lalonde (1990) describe the personal/ group discrimination discrepancy (PGDD) as “the tendency of disadvantaged group members to report higher levels of discrimination directed at their group in general than at themselves personally as members of that group”. “For example, when asked about gender discrimination, a woman might respond, ‘Yes, women are discriminated against, but I have not personally experienced much discrimination’.” This phenomenon was first “demonstrated with a wide variety of disadvantaged groups, by Crosby (1982 and 1984), single mothers receiving government assistance (Olson, Roese, Meen, & Robertson, 1995), anglophone Quebecers (Taylor, Wong-Reiger, McKirnan, & Bercusson, 1982), middle-class and inner city African Americans in Miami (Taylor, Wright, & Porter, 1993), South Asian and Haitian immigrant women in Montreal (Taylor et al., 1990), Blacks, Chinese, East Indians and Pakistanis in Toronto (Dion & Kawakami, 1996), and the Inuit of Artic Quebec (Taylor et al., 1993)”. “This, thus is a robust phenomenon that crosses gender, racial, economic, and educational boundaries.”

Many researchers have tried to explain this phenomenon. The earliest explanation is presented by Crosby (1984), who noted that the working women who participated in her studies reported virtually no personal experience with discrimination.

Crosby speculated that the reason for this could be that they wanted to avoid having to take action against those who have discriminated against them. This view has been upheld more recently by Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997), who suggest that the denial of personal discrimination is motivated by disadvantaged group members’ desire to believe that they control their own outcomes rather than acknowledge that their outcomes are controlled by powerful others.

Quinn and Olson (2001, p. 39) wanted to challenge the latest thoughts on the (PGDD) phenomenon on the assertion by Moghaddam et al. (1997) that “events having an impact on an entire gender group would more easily be reported than would events having an impact on an individual”. An interesting concept with regard to this research is the “availability heuristic” (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973): “The availability heuristic, refers to evaluating the frequency or probability of a given event on the basis of how quickly or easily relevant examples come to mind. ... Moghaddam et al. speculated that such examples ‘could become more readily

available as the target size increases'. ... That is, they suggested that events having an impact on the entire gender group would be more easily reported than would events having an impact on an individual." The process they describe is based on Cognitive Psychology, in the sense that what recall is activated from memory is contextually determined and influenced. It thus is dependant on perceived notions of discrimination.

Quinn and Carlson (2001, p. 39) conducted two studies "in which they included multiple versions of questions assessing perceptions of discrimination. In both studies, they questioned participants about discrimination in career-related contexts, and they gathered the usual estimates of both personal and group discrimination. In the first study, they sought only to establish evidence that target and contextual cues serve to narrow the range of relevant knowledge available for judgments of deprivation. In the second study, they examined how context and experience interact to influence both those judgments."

Their findings revealed the following: "that membership in a disadvantaged group is not necessary for the emergence of the PGDD ... it was also demonstrated that, for men, estimates of discrimination were reliably lower when questions about discrimination included a contextual cue (a career related domain), relative to when questions about discrimination provided no such cue. For women, however, the addition of a contextual cue led to decreased estimates of personal discrimination but to increased estimates of group discrimination. Group differences emerged such that, for women, the magnitude of the PGDD varied as a function of context whereas, for men, the magnitude of the PGDD was unresponsive to contextual cues." Quinn and Carlson (2001, p. 39). Results from their first study "demonstrated that participants reported that they were able to imagine more examples of discrimination against the group than discrimination against themselves personally, and that they were able to imagine more examples of discrimination in general than discrimination in career related contexts. ... The results of the second experiment showed that women's and men's understanding of their gender group's experience, however, led to a divergence in group discrimination ratings, such that the career-specific cue served to lower the ratings of men, whose knowledge presumably suggests that discrimination against men in the workplace is rare, but to raise the ratings of women, whose knowledge presumably suggests that the clearest acts of discrimination against women occur in the workplace" (Quinn & Olson, 2001, p. 44).

2.6.6 State of the Labour Court rulings on discrimination

2.6.6.1 State of the Labour Court rulings

“The LAC (Labour Appeal Court) has come under the spotlight recently following landmark decisions on unprotected strikers and employers’ right to discriminate against pregnant job applicants. In both cases the court handed down dissenting judgements, leaving labour lawyers and industrial relations practitioners uncertain about important policy issues” (Msomi, 2000, p. 2). This comment is made in relation to the two court cases mentioned below citing discriminatory practices.

2.6.6.2 Woolworths vs. Whitehead

The Labour Court ordered Woolworths to pay Ms B Whitehead R200 000.00 in delictual damages for withdrawing a job offer to her, after they ascertained that she was pregnant. On appeal “in a majority decision, Judge Nigel Willis and Judge Raymond Zondo of the Labour Appeal Court, ruled in favour of the retail giant” (Msomi, 2000, p. 2).

This case touches on and is a blow to gender equality as propounded in the Employment Equity Act and the Constitution. “Since equality is guaranteed by the constitution of our country, we would argue that the decision allowing employers to discriminate against pregnant women is indeed unconstitutional” (Msomi, 2000, p. 2). It was also ascertained in the appeal hearing that Whitehead had not been offered the job.

Irrespective of the above case, Cosatu and the SA Clothing and Textile Workers’ Union have given their support to the LAC.

2.6.6.3 Coca Cola — South Africa

An ex-Coca-Cola employee, Subrumuny, decided to go for independent arbitration after he felt that a Labour Court Judge had interfered with proceedings. The case concerned Subrumuny’s position that Coca-Cola had discriminated against him for a senior managerial position in favour of a white applicant, and that he then faced dismissal after he questioned Coca-Cola’s judgement.

This case ties in with the Employment Equity Act, No 55 (1998), and clearly details the effect of discriminatory practices in the South African context. These two court cases indicate that companies in South Africa will clearly have to be vigilant in their recruitment practices and guard against discrimination against female employees. They will have to formulate policies that are in keeping with employment equity principles.

2.6.7 Final comments on concept of discrimination

Discriminatory practices need to be eradicated from the working environment. “It would appear that for management development activities to be successful, a paradigm shift has to take place amongst the majority of white managers; in other words these managers have to be ‘converted’ to a social conscious orientation” (Human & Human 1998, p.17).

A prime example of this was quoted in a media report “White Managers stymie transformation”: “Active White resistance by white middle managers was frustrating efforts to transform the South African Broadcasting Corporation, the Human Rights Commissions hearings into media racism was told yesterday. Molefe said there was a lack of skills among black employees of the SABC ... It is said that racism remained an institutional problem, and very few institutions were willing to acknowledge the existence of racism” (“White managers”, 2000, p. 1).

At the Racism Indaba, held at the end of August 2000 at the Sandton Convention Centre, two statements were made that speak of the core of the problem: “There are two types of whites — white skins in Africa and Africans in white skins. The whites who are African in white skins need to acknowledge they were deeply advantaged and how it affected society” and “‘If white South Africans are fearful of the future because of what they might lose, black South African looks forward to the future for what it will be again!’ President Thabo Mbeki said ...” (Warby, 2000, p. 1).

2.7 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

2.7.1 What is affirmative action?

Sachs (1992) states that: “Affirmative Action in the South African context has extremely broad connotations, touching, as apartheid did and still does, on every area of life ... affirmative action covers all purposive activity designed to eliminate the effects of apartheid and to create a society where everyone has the same chance to get on in life. In terms of the ANC ... Bill of rights, all anti-discrimination measures, as well as all anti-poverty ones, may be regarded as constituting a form of affirmative action.”

Thomas (1992) believes that affirmative action can be viewed as a process whereby underutilised resources can be mobilised and developed for the benefit of the wider community. Thomas mentions the following core components of affirmative action:

- “education and culture; ...
- housing and residential infrastructure; ...
- black business advancement; ...
- job/employee advancement and training ...”

Human (1993, p. 2) states that “creating employment equity in organisations dominated by white males is thus only one aspect of affirmative action. Moreover the advancement of blacks and women to higher positions within white male dominated organisations constitutes no more than one aspect of the ANC’s proposals in relation to ‘business targets’ ... Another general characteristic which most affirmative action programme guidelines appear to share is that they seek to increase the opportunities of formerly excluded groups without recourse to tokenism (in the sense of bringing in ‘unqualified’ persons), and without ‘unnecessarily trammeling’ the expectations of white males. Affirmative action programmes are also generally viewed as temporary interventions which will cease as soon as equal employment opportunity has been achieved” (Human 1993, pp. 2-3). The concept of white male domination must be linked to the theme of the model of domination propounded by Human and Human (1998, p.14), earlier in this study. In relation to the promotion of women, Human (1993, p. 4) makes an interesting observation: “Remarks are often heard in business circles to the effect that affirmative action constitutes another form of racism and

sexism and that a truly non-racist and non-sexist company wants to forget about labels altogether and 'just practise equal opportunity'."

Another definition of affirmative action, propounded by Mc Donald (1993, p. 7), is as follows: "Affirmative action means exactly what it says — positive moves by major actors within a society to address the problems encountered by those who have suffered discrimination through any means including race, gender, poverty, education, disability, age or health." An interesting metaphor suggested by Thompson (1992), is that of a scale and equilibrium: "opponents of affirmative action argue that it is reverse discrimination, because some citizens will be favoured above others. Because of this affirmative action will elicit great resistance. ... Further, it is argued that it would exact great sacrifices from the 'haves' because they would have to give up disproportionately to advance those who have lagged behind. ... The answer to this is usually that affirmative action may indeed be discriminatory, but in a healthy sense. It should therefore be accepted in that light, since the elimination of inequalities brings social peace. It is contended that if affirmative action demands great sacrifices to begin with, then such fair sacrifices are a fair price to pay."

Thus to encapsulate the authors' thoughts, affirmative action seeks to redress imbalances of past discriminatory practices, to advance, develop and promote previously disadvantaged groups, including females. Many people believe that this is discrimination in reverse, linking in with the term "new racism". However, the status quo cannot be changed without accelerating previously disadvantaged groups.

2.7.2 Major elements of employment equity under the umbrella of affirmative action

The "affirmative action statute ... requires employers in both the private and public sectors to take affirmative action as a means of creating greater employment equity" Human (1993, p. 11). Major elements (Human, 1993, p. 11) of implementing would include the following:

- statistical analysis of representation of the workforce with regards to numbers of blacks and women;
- evaluation of the organisation's policies and procedures, identifying discriminatory practices;

- involving the union in participatory frameworks in developing affirmative action guidelines and processes;
- the formulation and implementation of policies to amend discriminatory and exclusionary human resources and people development policies, practices, and procedures. These might include changes to recruitment and promotion policies to ensure that blacks and women enter, and progress in, various job categories to increase the development and training opportunities available to them. These plans would be brought together into a detailed strategy which would elaborate on both quantitative goals and general objectives, and would provide a timetable for the attainment of these goals and objectives.
- setting up some type of monitoring procedures to assess progress on an interim basis.

2.7.3 What is Business South Africa's belief on affirmative action?

Business South Africa monitors fiscal, monetary, micro and macro economic policy in South Africa. They firstly believe that affirmative action “means promoting organisational cultures which are inclusive and affirming of the diversity and background of all employees”. Business South Africa (BSA) goes on to state that:

- Affirmative action is merely one component to achieve equity in the workplace, it is not an all encompassing end in itself.
- Appointees within the realm of affirmative action are being affirmed for something other than the intervention itself; the process takes place under the ambit of equity.
- Affirmative action processes can only be aligned to the notions of merit and excellence, if it embraces broader components such as:
 - increase the labour pool
 - redefine the concept of merit
 - continuous support and career development for previously disadvantaged groupings
 - ensure that organisational culture enhances the environment for these individuals, so that it fosters learning in a protected environment (Carter, 1995, p. 20).

2.7.4 A psychological perspective on perceptions of workplace plans

Little, Murray and Wimbush did a study in 1998 on perceptions of workplace affirmative action plans. "Affirmative Action Programmes (AAP's) in work settings are often established to increase the representation of racial and ethnic minorities and women. By establishing these programs, organisations redress past discrimination and, through diversity, create a workplace that may be more responsive to the needs of both employees and customers" (Little et al., 1998, p. 27). The effects of Affirmative Action Programmes will be discussed in 2.7.5.

Thompson (1992), in the Interim Report on Group and Human Rights, August 1991, reflects: "Individuals opposed to affirmative action do so on the ground that it is reverse discrimination, and that some racial groupings are now favoured above others." This point of view is upheld by Kinder and Sanders (1990) and Heilman (1994) stating that it is no secret that affirmative action in any form, or for any purpose is sometimes perceived as unfair treatment and as reverse discrimination. Kluegal and Smith (1983) mention that the process of affirmative action has been debated in the political arena, and has become a controversial topic in society. Affirmative action policies affect numerous role players, some in a positive way, some negatively. For some groupings the negative effect would be that they would lose out on opportunities. Another effect is described by Heilman, Block and Lucas (1992): AAPs could lead to marginal groups feeling "stigmatised as incompetent because of the perception that the selection was based on an AAP rather than on individual merit".

2.7.5 Studies done on attitudes towards affirmative action

A study done by Kravitz and Platania (1993) encapsulates some of the precursors of attitudes to and perceptions of AAPs. They included gender, race and respondents' knowledge about AAPs and target (race, gender or handicap) of an AAP in their study on attitudes. The study found that misconceptions exist about the legal status of AAPs (e.g. beliefs that quotas are required), which is related to negative attitudes to AAPs. They found no difference in attitudes to AAPs with women or racial minorities as the targets. The study also revealed that women have significantly more favourable attitudes to AAPs than do men. Kravitz and Platania's study was backed up by other studies by Tougas, Beaton and Veilleux (1991), Tougas and Veilleux (1989), and Graves and Powell (1994), women to have more favourable attitudes

toward AAPs than did men". Dietz-Uhler and Murrell (1993) found female college students to have more positive attitudes toward AAPs than did men but only when women were the target group of the plan. On the other hand, Tougas and Beaton (1993) and Murrell, Dietz-Uhler, Dovidio, Gaertner, and Drout (1994) found women to have more negative views of AAPs than did men. Still other researchers (Eberhardt & Fiske, 1994; Northcraft & Martin, 1982) report no difference between men and women in their views of AAPs.

In the study mentioned under section 2.7.4, Little et al. (1998, p. 29) believed that the constructs:

- "Self-esteem and
- Symbolic prejudice would affect one of the predictors of attitudes toward AAP's , and this would have implications for one's self-interest in the working environment."

2.7.5.1 Self-esteem

Little et al. (1998, p,27) define "self-esteem" as "one's evaluation of one's self worth in society". (Brook, 1991; Shahani, Dipboye, and Phillips 1990) give a definition of self esteem: "Self-esteem has been widely reported in the literature as having an effect on an individual's vulnerability to rejection and has been shown to be related to work and nonwork attitudes. Research has shown that individuals with low self esteem have lower expectations for successful job search, believe they may be inadequately suited for success on their jobs, receive fewer job offers than persons with high self-esteem, and are more susceptible to external attributions. (Brokner, 1998; Ellis and Taylor, 1983; Turban and Keon, 1993), Crosby and Clayton (1990) suggest that people with positive self-esteem are less likely to be affected by the comments and will of others, as such people believe in their own competencies and abilities. Because individuals with low self-esteem have less success in their job searches and probably judge that lack of success in relation to other's expectancies, they are likely to have negative perceptions of AAPs.

2.7.5.2 Symbolic prejudice

Little et al. (1998, p. 30) also assessed a second construct, namely symbolic prejudice. (Mc Conahay, 1982; Mc Cohahay and Hough 1976) state that "the fundamental premise behind the construct of symbolic racism is that whereas

negative views of minorities still exist, the overt forms of racism have fallen out of favour. Symbolic racism has been defined theoretically as an expression of abstract, symbolic beliefs based on perceptions that minorities are violating cherished values and making greater gains over the majority". (Kravits and Platania, 1993): "symbolic prejudice is used to capture latent prejudices toward target groups that typically benefit from AAPs, both women and non-Whites".

Little et al. (1998, pp. 30, 32) tested two hypotheses in their study, namely:

HYPOTHESIS 1: Low perceptions of self-esteem will be related to more negative perceptions of workplace AAPs.

HYPOTHESIS 2: Higher levels of symbolic prejudice will be related to more negative perceptions of workplace AAPs.

In the related research done by Little et al. (1998, p. 33), the study size was as follows:

- Respondents were students at two large public comprehensive universities in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Of the 738 respondents, 60% were female, and 21% were non-White.
- Measures: Self-esteem used in the research was Rosenberg's (1965) 10-item scale, ... and Symbolic prejudice was measured by adapting McConahay's (1982), and Kinder and Sears's (1981) four item scales.

The results were as follows:

MEANS BY RACE AND GENDER			
	Self-esteem	Symbolic Prejudice	Affirmative Action Attitudes
Male	4.54	2.88**	3.27**
Female	4.52	2.39	3.27
White	4.48	2.63**	3.12**
Non-White	4.72**	2.42	2.83

**p < 0.001.

Little et al. (1998) found the following:

- The results support the supposition that there are psychological variables that are more important than demographic variables in predicting perceptions of the self-interest implications of affirmative action. The study clearly indicated that women and minorities were being given advantageous positioning due to the acceleration of affirmative action programmes. This also added to a negative perception of affirmative action programmes in society.
- Respondents with lower levels of self-esteem felt that their futures would be harmed by affirmative action programmes. Little et al. (1998, p. 40) point out that both these variables explained more variance than did gender and race: "These results can be interpreted as a mediating relationship because the direct relationship between race or gender, and affirmative action in the workplace virtually disappears in the presence of psychological variables."
- Due to the accelerated development of women and non-whites, it is prejudicially believed that this discounts the "norm of individual merit" (Little et al., 1998, p. 40).

2.7.6 Affirmative action and diversity: Are they mutually exclusive or independent processes?

Are affirmative action and diversity two different terms? Are they mutually exclusive or independent processes? Lowery (1995, p. 154) quotes Walter C. Vertreace, president of the New York State Advisory Council on Employment Law: “diversity must supplement — not supplant — affirmative action. ... Most often, diversity translates into a workplace that welcomes people from different backgrounds, whether the differences are based on race, sexual orientation or physical disability. It is rarely accompanied by employment goals or timetables”. Thus in South Africa the mere fact that one submits reports to the Department of Labour and identifies barriers to employment equity and affirmative action practices means that our processes are seen to run in tandem and are not mutually exclusive.

Affirmative action is a set of procedures aimed at proactively addressing the disadvantages experienced by sections of the community in the past. It is important to emphasise from the start that affirmative action is not necessarily a single policy or strategy; rather there can be a number of different ways of implementing affirmative action. De Villiers (1996, p. 15) quotes Mpho Makwana, ex-president Ex-President of the IPM, who makes a clear distinction between affirmative action and employment equity: “Affirmative action is a means to an end, whereas employment equity is about dealing with current discrimination and preventing future discrimination in the broader sense. Stand-alone affirmative action legislation nurtures a climate of number-crunching, which is not conducive to sustainable growth and development and the long-term credibility of the process. It is not just a question of numbers, but rather a question of changing the environment in which people have to operate as well as making it meaningful to people at the very bottom of the organisation.” This represents a very profound concept and a core understanding of employment equity. Affirmative action, as a component of employment equity, is the entry level to the process and has to do with analysing numbers and identifying the gender and racial gaps. Ensuring diversity and equity is a long-term process, whereby the whole company's procedures are analysed and meaningful steps are taken to redress areas not conducive to cultural sensitivity, and to cover all aspects of the organisation so as to integrate all levels of employees, Black, White, Coloured and Asian.

2.7.7 Conditions for the successful implementation of affirmative action with specific reference to Blacks and gender

In order for affirmative action to be successfully implemented, the following conditions must be met:

Affirmative action must be seen to add to the bottom line, and increase the labour pool. The process can start at inception, that is during the recruitment phase, but must continue along a continuum, so as to develop the employees within the organisation.

- Affirmative action policies are not stand-alone policies, on the side line of the organisational functioning. It is a “total organisational development intervention” (Human 1993, p. 12), which in many cases changes the way in which prospective and current employees are recruited, developed, trained and promoted.
- The development of blacks and women should be an integrative part of the organisation’s functioning. Blacks and women should not be developed in isolation and preferentially, nor should they be trained at the expense of others in the organisation. What should happen is that their progress is monitored more closely, so as to ensure that the planned interventions do take place.
- Affirmative action should take place at the selection and recruitment stage; thereafter, all employees should be developed and promoted according to workforce, succession and career plans which take backlogs into account. A close check should be kept on the number of Black and woman entrants into the working environment. The principle of promotion from within and not from without should apply, so as to accelerate career advancement and development. It is recommended that women and Blacks should be promoted to positions formerly occupied by White men.
- Negative racial and gender stereotypes and expectations should be managed and monitored through both training and performance objectives.
- A committee composed of employer, employee and union representatives should continuously monitor, evaluate and refine the people development/ affirmative action strategy (Human 1993, pp. 12-14).

2.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter sets the historical framework of different development paradigms that have affected the economically active labour pool and development of employees in this country.

The development paradigms provide a build-up to the implementation of affirmative action measures and cultural diversity processes, so as to evolve this society into one that is more balanced and normal. To understand the concept of employment equity, it is important to grasp the concepts underlying employment equity. These are racism, discrimination and affirmative action. These concepts are contained in the Employment Equity Act No 55 (1998). Implementing affirmative action measures and embracing cultural diversity in organisations is the start of the paradigm shift. It is this paradigm shift that, with the implementation of a structured employment equity process, will hopefully lead to gender equity being addressed in South African organisations.

Chapter 3 will deal with employment equity legislation and requirements for employers. Interesting gender statistics will be presented, and the encapsulating outcome of employment equity, namely cultural diversity, will be discussed.