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Middle managers response to implementing the Employment Equity Act 55/1998

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The study explores the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 and the response of the middle management in the banking sector to this process. The Employment Equity Act 55/98 was formulated to facilitate transformation towards equity in the workplace. Adams (1993:87) noted prior to 1994 that if nothing was done to change social relations in South Africa and to provide Black individuals with access to resources and the means to overcome the economic marginalization of the past, patterns of economic control and ownership would remain unchanged even in a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa.

The study briefly covers historical background to discrimination in the South African workplace prior to the formulation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98. The focus of the study then turns to the process of the implementation of the Act as required by law. The researcher was especially interested in exploring how middle management is implementing the said Act and the challenges they are facing in doing so.

1.2 MOTIVATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The researcher became interested in the topic under study when she was working for a leading organization in1998. “Transformation” was the buzzword at the time and pressure was being put on management to effect change by implementing affirmative action policies that were regarded as the central to the change process. The researcher noted the challenges the organization was facing when Government called for the inclusion of black individuals, women and people with disabilities Employment Equity Act was passed to facilitate this process. The present study was particularly interested in

the implementation process used by middle management in the banking sector and the challenges they faced in this transformation. The urgency to transform was increased by the Department of Labour putting pressure on organizations through the use of the inspection process to ensure that change was indeed happening in the workplace.

A second factor, which motivated the researcher, was the extent to which the process of transformation in reality provides for the inclusion of the previously excluded groups, for example, women, blacks and disabled people. Prior to 1994, South Africa was governed by the apartheid system, which was characterized, amongst others by inequality in the workplace in terms of race and gender. Initiatives during 1990's by the newly elected Democratic Government, started to address discrimination in the workplace by promulgating the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

Tinarelli (2000:2) states two reasons for the need for employment equity in South Africa. First, to eradicate unfair discrimination and second, to introduce measures encouraging employers to undertake organizational transformation in order to remove barriers to employment for all South Africans. The focus of the study was considered relevant to South African situation as the Employment Equity Act was formulated in 1998, put into effect 1999, and is currently playing a central role in re-dressing inequality in the workplace.

The present study explored how middle management is responding to the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98. This organizational level was targeted for the study at hand as the responsibility of the implementation of policies tends to be with this organizational level, although members of the middle management are usually not involved in the development and formulation of such policies. Smit and Cronje (2002:11) note that one of the primary responsibilities of middle management is to implement policies, plans and strategies formulated by top management.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The broad aim of the study was to explore how middle management in the banking sector is implementing and responding to the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the present study were:

- To identify how middle management in the banking sector is implementing the Employment Equity Act 55/98 in their specific organizations.

- To gauge the perception of the middle management in the banking sector of specific challenges with which they are confronted as a result of the introduction of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

- To describe how middle management in the banking sector is addressing challenges in the workplace that have arisen from the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

- To explore perception of middle management in the banking sector of the transformation process set in motion by the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

- Based on the findings from the above-mentioned objectives, to make recommendations as to how Occupational Social Workers might be of assistance to organizations in the banking sector in the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study sought to answer the following questions:

- How middle management in the banking sector is responding to the demands of the transformation process in the workplace as required by the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

- What aspects of the workplace make it difficult/easy for middle management in the banking sector to address obstacles presented by the Employment Equity Act 55/98?

- What tools does middle management in the banking sector utilize to facilitate the employment equity process in the workplace?

- To what extent does the middle management in the banking sector experience transformation, with respect to employment equity in the workplace, as stressful and how do they cope with such stress?

- What is the perception of middle management in the banking sector of how the global economy is influencing transformation in the workplace in South Africa?

1.6 VALUE OF THE STUDY

From the outset, the potential value of the present study rested with the following:

- The study attempted to identify problems experienced by middle management with regards to the process of transformation. It was hoped that this would contribute to finding solutions to ease the process of transformation in terms of employment equity in the workplace;

- The study sought to identify copying mechanisms and strategies which middle management need in order to address the challenges of the Employment Equity Act 55/98. Such coping mechanisms and strategies would inform the recommendation(s) of the present study;

- For the profession of social work, it was hoped that the study would identify the unique contribution of the Occupational Social Worker, in organizations in the banking sector, with respect to the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

1.7 SETTING OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in two organizations within the banking sector, both of which are situated in Johannesburg. The banking sector was chosen as it is regarded as having a dual challenge. First, to align itself with international laws, and second, to conform to the South African constitution and newly formulated labour legislations. The two banks selected have been rendering services to the public under the apartheid system and as such, were assumed to be facing very unique transformation demands.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.8.1 Research design

Broadly, the present study may be described as falling within the quantitative paradigm of research. The present study employed a sub type of the quantitative research design, i.e. an exploratory descriptive research design. Bailey (1987:16) explains that an exploratory descriptive research design aims to describe phenomena in detail and report what is happening.

1.8.2 Research methodology

Sampling procedure – sampling is concerned with accessing and selecting respondents for a research study. In the present study, purposive sampling was used for the selection of the respondents. Bailey (1987:85) explains that in purposive sampling; the researcher uses her own judgment about which respondents to choose, and picks only who best meet the required criteria. A sample of 28 members of middle management was drawn from two organizations within the banking sector.

Research instrument – data was collected by means of semi-structured interview schedules that were individually administered to respondents by the researcher. The interview schedules consisted of open-ended and closed-ended questions.

Analysis of data – the data collected was analyzed quantitatively and descriptively. Data was presented in tables and in discussions.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.9.1 The researcher aimed at interviewing 40 respondents, 20 from each organization. Due to unforeseen circumstances including restructuring of the organizations, the researcher could only access 28 respondents, 18 from Org A and 10 from Org B.

1.9.2 The study focused only on middle management and neglected other organizational levels that could be more involved in the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

1.9.3 The study took long to report the findings which probably, there may be vast difference in the studied organizations in terms of the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS

"African people" – previously known as blacks according to The Population Registration Act.

"Affirmative Action measures" – measures designed to ensure that suitably qualified people designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer (Employment Equity Act 55/98, Section 15(1)).

"Black people" – as referred to in the Employment Equity Act 55/98 means Africans, Coloureds and Indians.

"Designated employer" – refers to an employer who employs 50 or more employees, or an employer who employs fewer than 50 employees, but has a total annual turnover that is equal to or above the applicable annual turnover of a small business in terms of schedule 4 of Employment Equity Act 55/98.

"Designated groups" - refers to previously disadvantaged groups, that is, black people, women and peopl with disabilities (Employment Equity Act 55/98, Chapter 1).

CHAPTER 2

IMPLEMENTATION OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY LEGISLATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher provides an overview of employment in South Africa at a time when the workplace is being transformed through the implementation of Employment Equity Act 55/98. The Act is discussed with reference to unfair discrimination and affirmative action. The role of middle management is explored and the changing workplace is discussed. The last section of the chapter explores the relevance of Occupational Social Work for the workplace and in regard to Employment Equity Act 55/98, during this time of transformation.

2.2 EMPLOYMENT

This section outlines how formalized employment emerged in South Africa, employer-employee relations and the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

2.2.1 Historical phases of employment revolution in South Africa

Swanepoel (1999:153-154) describes the development of the present employment revolution in South Africa as having emerged through seven phases as follows:

- ***Phase one (1652-1866): the pre-industrial phase.***

  Prior to formalized employment in South Africa, people survived by hunting and farming. With the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in South Africa in 1652, things started to change. The Cape of Good Hope was chosen as

a “resting” place for Europeans on their way from Europe to India. They stopped to refresh and re-stock. Gardening was established to make food for the journey and African people were employed to do manual work. The Cape Colony joined the East African slave trade and Africans were imported into the Cape as slaves. This slavery continued with Boer farmers and it flourished in the Cape. Africans who rendered their services to the farmer in return for squatting rights undertook manual work. However working conditions were poor and they did not enjoy any real form of security nor do any guarantee that their livelihoods or well being would be protected.

- ***Phase two (1867-1920): the industrial phase.***

This phase was transferred by the discovery of gold and diamonds causing the dramatic effect on local lifestyles. According to Oakes (1988:164) during the second half of 19th century, Southern Africa experienced shortage of labourers. To overcome this, the farmers and mine owners implemented the strategy to strip Africans of their livelihood and the land on which they farmed, leaving them with no alternative but to become employees. Rattansi (1989:3) states that Africans worked in mines digging for diamonds and gold but they derived no pleasure from such an alien industry.

Oakes (1988:164) notes that the farmers and mine owners developed a further strategy forcing Africans to look for employment. This involved the payment of levies for the land they forced to quit. They also allowed African families to squat on white owned farms in return for their labour.

In 1910, the African leaders began working to establish an organization that could “peacefully” articulate their political aspirations. This initiative was given further impetus by the “white union” which had shattered African hopes of equal rights (Oakes, 1988:288). They established the

South African Native National Congress, now referred to as the African National Congress (ANC). From March 1912, the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) started protesting against the Squatter's Bill, which was passed to force African people to move from their land. In 1913 it was reviewed but did not take the rights of the African peoples into account. Within two months, Oakes (1988:291) notes that, the Land Act passed and established territorial segregation under which Africans and whites were to acquire and occupy land in separate, designated areas.

- ***Phase three (1921-1947): the development of the African labour movement and its struggle for social, political and economic rights.***

During this period, Finnemore (1992:21) notes that, the foundation of South African Trade Union Congress in 1924. The union formed the umbrella, which encouraged the development of industrial unionism. At the same time several African industrial unions were developed; initiated by the members of the Communist Party (Finnemore, 1992:21). According to O'meara (1996:25), by 1945, close to 40% of Africans employed in commerce and industry were at the very least nominal members of an independent trade union.

- ***Phase four (1948-1976): the legal entrenchment of the apartheid.***

The apartheid system, which classed individuals according to their racial heritage, was introduced. Similarly, legislation was implemented to ensure segregation. The first piece of legislation was the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act formulated in 1949. Followed in 1950 by an amendment of the Immorality Act of 1927 to ban extramarital sexual relations between Africans and whites. The Population Registration Act was promulgated in 1950. This Act was designed to provide definitions of "race" based on physical appearance and association, and once these were established, it made provision for the carrying of identity cards in which the "race" of a

person would be clearly defined. In 1953, the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act was promulgated. This Act covered access to public premises and transport and permitted owners or operators to establish separate facilities for whites and non-whites. The Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 extended government control over the movement of Africans to all urban areas (Oakes 1988:375-377).

Hugo (1992:146) mentions that this discriminatory laws and labour practices determining access to jobs increased the inequality of opportunity. Swanepoel (1999:153) adds that Africans held lower positions and received fewer benefits. Coloureds and Asians were better off than Africans but neither had the same opportunities as Whites who held the highest positions in the workplace. Swanepoel (1999:153) notes that during this phase, African unions intensified their struggle for social, political and economic rights.

- ***Phase five and six (1977-1993): the start of the abolition of capitalist system.***

Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:1) state that social reform started to emerge in South Africa in 1977 with the introduction of the Statement of Principles, proposed by American Baptist Minister, Reverend Leon H. Sullivan. The Sullivan Code put emphasis on de-segregating the workplace, recognizing the right of employees to form unions and promoting equality for employees of all races. The Sullivan code was a form of affirmative action as its focus was on social justice and social responsibility. According to Charlton and Van Niekerk (1994:52) by law, all US companies with vested interests in South Africa had to be signatories of the Statement of Principles or bound to the similar State Department report. Only those companies demonstrating a wholehearted financial and "effort" commitment to social responsibility achieve "Category 1" rating. Those that do not, face a barrage of penalties and pressures back home

in the USA, from restricted tender and trading opportunities to picket lines (Charlton and Van Niekerk, 1994:52).

Charlton and Van Niekerk (1994:52) summarize the criteria of the Sullivan code as:-

- Non-segregation of the races in all eating, comfort, locker room and work facilities.
- Equal and fair employment practices for all employees.
- Equal pay for all employees doing equal or comparable work for the same period of time.
- Initiation and development of training programmes that would prepare Africans, Coloureds and Asians in substantial numbers for supervisory, administrative, clerical and technical jobs.
- Increasing the numbers of Africans, Coloureds and Asians in management and supervisory positions.
- Improving the quality of employees' lives outside the work environment in such areas as housing, transportation, schooling and recreation and health facilities.
- Working to eliminate laws and customs that impede social, economic and political justice.

Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:2) argue that the Sullivan Code did not end discrimination but played a role in highlighting the gross injustices that were prevalent during the formal apartheid era. The life of the Sullivan Code ended in 1993.

According to Bond (2000:23), in the late 1980's more opportunistic firms initially reacted to stagnation and tightening sanctions by relocating operations to deconcentration points and turning their products inward to the domestic market. The fixed manufacturing investments of the major cities came under even more

acute pressure, leading to four decisive responses by urban capital's representatives, a dramatic new commitment to shifting capital into township housing, through newly legal, individualized housing bonds, energetic and ultimately successful lobbying against state decentralization subsidies, the establishment of a broad corporate consensus favoring export-led growth policies, and belated and rather grudging acknowledgement that one person, one voted democracy in a unitary state that previously forbidden formula would be acceptable in exchange for the lifting of sanctions pliant and post apartheid economic policy making.

- ***Phase seven (1994 to date): African workers received full political rights with the African National Congress (ANC) winning the 1994 national elections.***

  This was the end of apartheid and the birth of the Government of National Unity. A lot had to be done to rectify the imbalances caused by the apartheid legislation. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was put into place and emphasized the alleviation of poverty and the reconstruction of the economy. Lodge (1999:27) notes that RDP was to involve and empower ordinary people and deepen democracy. He further mentions that the RDP proposed five ways to combine growth with development as meeting basic needs, upgrading human resources, strengthening the economy, democratizing the state and society and reorganizing the state and the public sector. The RDP was alleged to be false and completely without foundation and these allegations were denied by the ANC's deputy president then Thabo Mbeki reportig Government to have achieved a lot in short period of 4 years through the RDP (Bond 2000:113). The South African Communist Party (SACP) drafted Growth Employment And Redistribution (GEAR) and was presented to ANC's National Executive in mid 1996 (O'meara 1996:6). Bond (2000:115) notes that Thabo Mbeki announced at the SACP gathering in 1998 that GEAR

replaces RDP because it identified a high deficit, a high level of borrowing and the general taxation level as “part of our macro-economic problem”.

A microeconomic strategy written on the 14 June 1996 revealed the long run vision for the next century as:

- A competitive fast growing economy which creates sufficient jobs for all work seekers,
- A redistribution of income and opportunities in favour of the poor,
- A society which sound health, education and other services available to all, and
- An environment in which homes are secure and places of work are productive.

(www.policy.org.za)

The Government of National Unity started to rule the New South Africa based on a non-racial democracy. Affirmative action programmes were put into place to put right what was previously done wrong. This brought to the formation of new laws and amending some of the old laws from apartheid era.

2.2.2 Affirmative Action

Affirmative Action is described by Wingrove (199?:5) as an anti-discrimination measure that is reinforced by legislation and judicial intervention. It aims to address the disadvantages caused by poor education, prejudice, segregation, job reservation, racism, lack of political power and inequal distribution of wealth (Wingrove,199?:5). He further mentions that it solely concentrates on the employment, development and promotion of disadvantaged groups. It identifies positions that have previously been inaccessible to the disadvantaged groups and launches special recruitment drives for these groups as well as engaging in

training and development (Wingrove,199?:6). Unfortunately opponents see it as a reverse discrimination. Wingrove (199?:6) notes that the critic is to award jobs and benefits according to group statistics rather than on individual merit is unjust and lowers standard and organisational effectiveness.

Charlton and Van Niekerk (1994:13) view the following as the negatives of affirmative action:

Economic based argument - putting less qualified people into positions will damage already ailing economy.

Based on principle – Affirmative Action is felt like apartheid, perpetuates racial discrimination and exacerbates tensions.

Finetune a system – Affirmative Action promote a few women and blacks when it should overhaul the system itself.

According to Charlton and Van Niekerk (1994:13-14) the positive of affirmative action is as follows:-

- Progress of the country depends on development and utilization of human competencies, which in South Africa is the upliftment of black people, people with disabilities and women. Tinarelli (2000:3) mentions that investing in and developing all of South Africa's people will contribute to sustainability of business and future returns.
- The upgrading of people skills.
- According to the Employment Equity User Guide, (1999), having a workforce that reflects the demographics of the country can improve market share, the understanding of markets and thus the ability to service all currents and prospective clients.

For a successful affirmative action, South Africa has to learn from the other countries. The following lesson is discussed by Charlton and Van Niekerk (1994:37-41):

USA

Affirmative Action is one whole range of intervention to remedy inequality. USA has shown that affirmative action by itself cannot make the difference in societies with deep versions, but when it is used in conjuction with other programmes that deal with broad social problems it can be effective.

Affirmative action was though criticised that it focused on the select few rather than utilising a “broad brush” approach.

India

Affirmative Action is been successful as it focused on the elements of the most disadvantaged groups. Upgrading skills of people were taken into consideration.

It was criticised for leaving everything in the hands of the government. The quality of education suffered and little additional help was given to all the really disadvantaged groups to use the opportunity.

2.2.3 The introduction of employment equity in the workplace.

As part of affirmative action, the New South Africa saw the importance of transforming the workplace to eliminate the discrimination of the apartheid era. The Employment Equity Act 55/98 was formulated to address the imbalances caused by the previous segregation laws in the workplace.

According to Tinarelli (2000:2), the rationale for the employment equity in South Africa is as follows:

- The eradication of unfair discrimination of any kind in living, promoting, training, pay, benefits and retrenchment.
- Measures to encourage employees to undertake organizational transformation to remove unjustified barriers of employment of all South Africans, and to accelerate training and promoting individuals from historically disadvantaged groups.

The Employment Equity Act 55/98 was passed in 1998 and announced in 1999 with the dates on which the different chapters of the Act will come into effect.

This Act has two central purposes:-

(a) Promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and

(b) Implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace. (Employment Equity Act 55/98:12)

With regards to unfair discrimination, Section 5 of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 states “every employer must take steps to promote equal opportunity in the workplace by eliminating unfair discrimination in any employment policy or practice”. It goes on to prohibit unfair discrimination by stating that “no persons may unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly, against any employee, in any employment policy or practice, or one or more grounds, including race, gender, age, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethics or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, disability, religion, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language and birth”.

Affirmative action helps to bring equality in the workplace and ensure equitable representation at all levels of employment. Section 15(1) of the Act states that “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 and levels in the workplace of a designated employer”.

The affirmative action is measures that companies need to undertake. According to Section 15(2) of the Employment Equity Act 55/98, these measures are as follows:-

- Measures to identify and eliminating employment barriers, including unfair discrimination, which adversely affect people from designated groups.
- Measures designed to further diversity in the workplace, based on equal dignity and respect of all people.
- Making reasonable accommodation for people from designated groups in order to ensure that they enjoy equal opportunities and are equitably represented in the workforce of the designated employer.
- Affirmative action measures, including preferential treatment, to appoint and promote suitable qualified people from designated groups to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels of the workforce.
- Measures to retain train and develop people from designated groups.

Ohmar (quoted by Nzimande and Skhosana 1996:76) notes that affirmative action in South Africa is a part of comprehensive strategy to bring about a fundamental transformation in the material inequalities (social and economic) and power relations, inherited from the past.

In contrast Nzimande and Skhosana (1996:77) argue that affirmative action cannot be equated with re-dress in the broad sense as its programmes are essentially limited to de-racialisation, the prohibition of discrimination, and the eradication of race and gender based on inequalities. They suggest that from a policy perspective, affirmative action could be seen as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme and forms part of its implementation in various institutions (Nzimande and Skhosana, 1996:77).

Nzimande and Skhosana (1996:77) further mention also that affirmative action programmes tend to benefit the more affluent classes of the beneficiary groups. Locating affirmative action within the RDP will also ensure that the implementation and control of the policy is not only bureaucratic exercise but is more people driven and transparent.

2.2.4 The implementation of Employment Equity Act 55/98 (EEA 55/98)

In terms of implementing the Employment Equity Act 55/98, section 20(2) states that an Employment Equity Plan must be developed. Employment Equity Plan is the plan that takes into account thec requirements of the Employment Equity legislation as well as the specific needs of the company (Thomas and Robertshaw,1999:50). The Employment Equity Plan must state the following:-

(a) The objectives to be achieved each year of the plan;

(b) The affirmative action measures to be implemented as required by section 15(2);

(c) Where under representation of people from designated groups has been identified by the analysis, the numerical goals to achieve the equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups within each occupational categories and level in the workforce, the timetable within which this is to be achieved, and the strategies intended to achieve those goals;

(d) The timetable each year of the plan for the achievement of goals and objectives other numerical goals;

(e) The duration of the plan, this may not be shorter than one year or longer than five years.

(f) The procedures that will be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plan whether reasonable progress is being made towards implementing employment equity;

(g) The internal procedures to resolve any dispute about the interpretation or implementation of the plan;

(h) The persons in the workforce, including senior managers, responsible for monitoring and implementing the plan; and

(i) Any other prescribed matter.

On the preparation, implementation and monitoring of Employment Equity Plan, the Department of Labour suggests 10 steps as a guideline. (Ten steps to Employment Equity Plan).

***Preparation**

Step 1 – Assigning responsibilities

Employment Equity Managers should be permanent employees, report directly to the CEO and have key employment equity outcomes. Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:41) note that the Employment Equity Managers plays a pivotal role in the implementation of employment equity initiatives and therefore needs to have a comprehensive understanding of the legislation and how related interventions should be implemented. They need necessary authority and mandate, an appropriate budget, time off from other duties and commitments and access to required resources in order to fulfill their responsibilities.

Bringing about change in the organization is the responsibility of the CEO and as noted previously the implementation of the employment equity Act requires appointment of the employment equity officers. In this way managers are appointed with the responsibility of being change agents. In order to fulfill this role they need to understanding of the need for change and of their organization.

Step 2 – Communication, awareness and training

<u>All employees should</u>:

- Be made aware and informed of the content and application of the Act.
- Be sensitized with regard to employment equity and anti-discrimination issues.

- Be informed regarding the process to be followed.
- Understand the importance of their participation in the process.
- Be made aware of the need for participation of all stakeholders.

Managers should:
- Be informed of their obligations in terms of the Act.
- Be offered training in diversity management and related skills.
- Understand that discrimination can be direct, indirect or as a result of inaction or victimization.

Step 3 – Consultation
A process of consultation amongst employees should be started as early as possible.

A consultative forum should be established or an existing forum used if this is appropriate. All stakeholders should be included for example, representation of trade unions, employee representatives, senior management as well as those assigned specific employment equity responsibilities.

Step 4 – Analysis
All employment policies, practices procedures and the working environment should be addressed and a workplace profile should be conducted in order to determine the extent of under representation of employees from designated groups, in different occupational categories and at different levels of the workplace.

***Implementation**

Step 5 – Affirmative Action measures and objectives
These are measures that need to be taken into consideration to address the employment policies, practices and working conditions identified in step 4.

Step 6 – Time Frames

The duration of this plan should be between one and five years. Employment should decide on the duration of their specific plans given their particular circumstances and time frame in which they can make meaningful progress.

Step 7 – Resources

There should be adequate resources including budget, time, infrastructure, training and any other resources that may be appropriate in individual circumstances.

Step 8 – Communicate the plan

Communication should inform stakeholders of who is responsible for what, where information can be obtained, the specific objectives, dispute procedures and roles and responsibilities.

Step 9 – Monitoring and evaluating the plan

Employers should keep records of the plan, evaluate progress, report on progress and review and revise the plan through a process of consultation.

Step 10 – Reporting

Two reports should be completed, i.e. and Employment Equity Report and an Income Differential Statement. The latter should include a progress report.

2.3 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

In South Africa in 1994, “change” became a buzzword and indeed, in the socio political sphere the country underwent a breath-taking change (Bendix, 2001:677). Swanepoel (1999:154) notes that after the 1994 democratic elections, the Government of National Unity set out to transform the South African society in all spheres and on all levels. This brought forth the formulation

of various labour laws, among them the Employment Equity Act 55/98. The formulation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 created a need for the workplace to change in order to address the imbalances caused by past legislation. This section focuses on organizational change and change management.

The South African Department of Labour has the power to ensure that every designated employer (organization) align itself with the Act. This is the major driving force for an organization to rectify any kind of unfair discrimination and to bring about equality among this workforce. Swanepoel (2000:753) describes "change" as tweaking the organization's strategies and operation and notes that it involves going back to basics or searching for new tools and techniques that will propel the organization forward. Organizational change can be influenced by external and/or internal forces (2000:753).

External forces – In South Africa, organizational changes have developed from various external factors since the democratic dispersion. These changes include political, economic, social and technological changes. Although South Africa is now recognized internationally as an economically functional nation, there is still much to be done in order to compete with other countries. Globalization has resulted in organizations having to acknowledge the effects of external forces.

The economic system of a country has a definite impact upon profitability of an organization and whether or not it will attract international interest (Nel et al, 2001:595). To achieve this there is a need for economic growth. Tinarelli (2000:6) states that there is a need to redress inequalities in order to achieve maximum productivity and efficiency by upgrading skills, improving access to jobs and to training, and promoting opportunities and advancement of all people in the workplace. The Employment Equity Act 55/98 emphasizes equal opportunities. Sub section 15(2)(d)(ii) stipulates that the employer is required to develop people and to implement appropriate training measures. Tinarelli (2000:3) notes that investing in and developing South Africa's people will

contribute to sustainability of business and future returns. Having a workforce that reflects the demographics of the country can improve market share, the understanding of markets and thus the ability to service all current and prospective clients (Employment Equity User Guide, 1999). Thus, employment equity not only helps the country to deal with past discrimination and the resultant inequalities, but also to improve the economic strength of the country.

Internal forces – Swanepoel (2000:754) states that changes in the workforce demographics towards a more culturally diverse population, as promoted by employment equity programme, creates a major impetus for the way organizations need to continue to change. According to the Employment Equity Act 55/98, the demographics of the workforce should mirror those of the country and as a result emphasize better opportunities for designated groups. But a diverse population in the workplace means that different cultures are put together. Nel et al (2001:595) notes that different cultures cultivate different beliefs and thus there is a need for the ability to understand and balance cultural values and practices. Each organization needs to review its vision, mission statement, unique procedures and culture to see if these still fit its diverse workforce.

2.3.1 System Approach

The system approach is one of the ways in which management can view an organization in order to understand and implement change. A system approach can view an organization as either an open or closed system. Smith and Cronje (2002:46) note that with systems approach, management views an organization as a group of interrelated points which constantly balance. A closed system is self sustaining and independent of neither external input nor stimuli. In the present South African workplace, this approach would not be beneficial since Employment Equity Act 55/98 is an external input. Should an organization choose not to comply with the Act, legal consequences are to be faced. Section

45 of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 stipulates that an employer who does not comply may be referred to the Labour Court. An open system recognizes the dynamic interaction of the system with its environment (Robbins, 1990:13). According to Smit and Cronje (2002:46), the action of one part of the system influences the other parts and so causes an imbalance. They note that managers should view their organization as a whole and should anticipate the effect of their decisions on the other parts of the organization. The open system allows influences from the external environment. Such a system would be "open" to the changes required by the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

2.3.2 Exploratory model

The explanatory model of Human and Horwitz (1992:32-43) note that change cannot be realistic without taking the environment into consideration. Whatever occurs in the environment will directly or indirectly affect the organization, which will result in change. Given that, the Department of Labour has the power to enforce the Employment Equity Act, it is imperative for the organization to carefully assess the effect of their decision on whether or not to comply with the Act. Both the benefits and consequences should be communicated to the management who are going to be the driving forces of change. If management is empowered by a thorough understanding of the need for change, the process of implementation may be easier. Armstrong in (Kotter, 1995:233) describes steps required to implement the organizational change process. He speaks of **establishing a sense of understanding of the need and urgency of change**. Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:19) explain that in order to establish commitment to employment equity, employees need to understand what it entails and how it will benefit them and their organization. To achieve success it is vital to ensure that full support for the achievement of Employment Equity exists. Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:19) identify an intensive communication programme as a tool

to ensure that all employees at every level are fully *au fait* with the employment equity legislation and the plan of action to be adopted.

The second step of Armstrong's organizational change process is **forming a powerful guiding coalition**. It is vital to elect the Employment Equity Committee who will drive the employment equity strategy and monitor the entire process. This is the forum where all issues are debated and extensive consultation occurs (Thomas and Robertshaw 1999:39).

The third step of Armstrong's organizational change process involves **articulating a vision for the organization**, by communicating this vision, using various vehicles and strategies to others and empowering the workforce to act on furthering it. According to the Employment Equity Act 55/98 section 20C(1) a designated employer must prepare and implement an employment equity plan, which will achieve reasonable progress towards employment equity in the entire workforce. This is the strategy whereby the objectives in achieving equity are set and how affirmative action measures are to be implemented. Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:50) mention that a vision must be described and must encapsulates what it will mean to the organization to have a fully diverse representative workforce at all levels.

The fourth step of Armstrong's organizational change process (in Kotter, 1995:233) entails **planning for and creating short-term gains**. Hence it is crucial for each department in the organization to determine their numerical targets in achieving equity.

After continuously evaluating the success of the Employment Equity Plan the next step would be to **consolidate improvements and fine-tune the change process using increased credibility to change system and restructure policies that do not fit the vision**. The next step aims at **institutionalizing new approaches**. This final step is about **adopting new approaches if the**

first one had not been successful. Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:69) note that it is important to identify barriers and address these at early stages. They mention further that audit to conditions of employment which includes employment policy, recruitment and advertising, training and development, promotion, performance management, job evaluation should be undertaken. In addition facilities audit should be carried out to ensure that all traces of racial discrimination have been removed from the workplace, i.e. ablution facilities must show no form of segregation as they did in the previous era.

It shows that organizational change is mostly the management's task. This study focuses on middle management as change agents in the Employment Equity Act 55/98 implementation.

2.3.3 Middle Management

According to Smit and Cronje (2002:11), the middle management of an organization is responsible for specific departments of the organization and is primarily concerned with implementing policies, plans and strategies formulated by top management. Middle management is concerned with outlooks for the near future and is therefore responsible for medium and short-term planning, and they monitor environmental influences that may affect individual departments. In the present South African workplace managers are the greatest driving force in implementing change. According to the Employment Equity Act the first step to its implementation is to assign responsibilities to Employment Equity Managers. Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:21) note that management commitment, leadership and accountability are the central keys to effectively promote employment equity.

For the task of implementation of policies, managers on middle management level need to acquire specific skills and fulfill certain roles. Smit and Cronje (2002:17) identify skills that middle management needs to acquire. These

include conceptual skills and the mental ability to view the operation of the organization and its parts holistically. In terms of the Employment Equity Act, managers need to have a comprehensive understanding of the legislation. They need to familiarize themselves with and understand the vision and mission of the organization, as well as with other policies that may have an influence in achieving success in the implementation of Employment Equity Act.

Members of middle management need to have interpersonal skills, the ability to work with people. They should be able to communicate effectively, understand people's behavior, resolve conflict and motivate groups as well as individuals. Since employment equity results in creating a diverse workforce, this may be a great challenge to management as it requires those employees in management positions to equip themselves with people management skills. A further important set of skills are technical skills. Technical skills refer to the ability to use knowledge or techniques of a specific discipline to attain goals. Managers in the Employment Equity Act implementation need to be able to effectively facilitate communication workshops with the aim to achieve equity by setting departmental targets with regards to this goal and to prepare a profile of workforce in terms of the group trends. Lastly, the managers are required to report on the outcome. Section 21 of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 stipulates that a designated member of the management team should submit a report of this plan. This report clearly defines the organizations vision in terms of equity and also the achievement in the last period of evaluation.

In addition to the above skills middle managers need to fulfill specific roles in the change process. As discussed by Smit and Cronje (2002:15-16), middle management plays an interpersonal role which entails appointing, training, promoting, dismissing and motivating subordinates. In addition it is their responsibility to maintain good relations with and outside the organization. Employment Equity Act involves all aspects mentioned. In order to bring equity among the workforce, middle management needs to know who to appoint and

what training subordinates need. When vacancies become available they must identify who should be promoted or what strategic posts in the workplace should be restructured to achieve equity. Another role of middle management is to ensure optimal flow of information. In terms of decision-making, a manager needs to process information obtained from colleagues, subordinates and departmental heads and outside sources. Implementing the Employment Equity Act 55/98 requires knowledge of the legislation itself, of its most recent amendments and, as these influences internal change, and what the perception and interpretations of subordinates are. Middle management also plays an important decision-making role whereby they negotiate goals or set targets assess standards of performance for promotions and what kind of training and development is needed.

2.3.4 Challenges of organizational change

Challenges may arise out of this taxing change process, especially to those involved in its implementation. However Smit and Cronje (2002:25) note that an organization that fails to align itself with its environment and adapt to change is bound for failure. An organization needs to be receptive to the external forces that influence change. Managers are required to anticipate the effect of their decisions and the resulting benefits to the organization.

The purpose of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 (Section 2(a)) is to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment. In addition to this purpose Subsection 15(2)(d)(ii) maintains a need to develop people from designated groups and to implement appropriate training measures. This entails equipping people with necessary skills that will open up opprtunities for them. According to Smit and Cronje (2002:25) there is a need to bring about managerial and economic empowerment of previously disadvantaged people. Intense management training and development, combined with internship and

mentorship programmes are needed to empower South Africa's previously disadvantaged people and to redress inequalities of the past.

Step 2 of the Employment Equity Plan issued by the Department of Labour suggests that managers need to receive training in diversity management and learn to understand discrimination. Managing people from different cultures may be a challenge. Smit and Cronje (2002:25) note that diversity in the workplace is significant as the majority of people who enter the labour market represent the diverse cultures in respect of gender, language and background.

Resistance to change can be another obstacle to organizational change. Swanepoel (2000:756) describes how people may become fearful and anxious about the impact of change. Nel et al (2001:401) add that fear is the underlying cause of resistance to change and describes it as fear of the unknown, fear of loss, fear of failure, fear of relationships, fear of conflict and fear of loss of power or influence. Misinterpretation and lack of knowledge regarding Employment Equity Act 55/98 may lead to a range of fears. Robbins (1990:395) outlines how to deal with resistance. Resistance may be reduced by education and communication to help employees see the logic of change, and by allowing employees/individuals to participate in change decisions (Robbins,1990:395).

Should resistance occur, the skilled manager needs to find ways of re-framing situations, facts and perceptions to make them more acceptable to employees. In addition, exchange strategies may be explored whereby decreasing resistance of an employee could result in a reward of some kind. It is most helpful if the entire management team "buys" into the organizational change. According to Thomas and Robertshaw (1999:20) the Managing Director or CEO can achieve management team commitment through a strategy of managerial discussion groups. These discussion groups tend to uncover a vast array of divergent ideas, personal fears and conflicting interests that can be debated and re-directed into common understanding, commitment and direction. Nel (2001:304)

emphasizes that unless management supports and guides change, it is likely to be fragmented. Lastly strategic leadership is required to achieve systemic, planned and controlled change.

2.4 OCCUPATIONAL SOCIAL WORK AS A PROFESSION

Occupational Social Work is a specialized field of the profession of social work. It is defined by Googins and Godfrey (1987:5) as a field of practice in which the social worker attends to human and social needs of the work community by designing and executing appropriate interventions to insure healthier individuals and environments. It is a specialized field and as such requires specific skills and knowledge over and above that associated with generic social work.

This section will present how relevant the occupational social worker is in the implementation and execution of Employment Equity Act 55/98. It will explore the role that the occupational social worker plays in the implementation of change, with specific emphasis on the introduction of the Employment Equity Act to the workplace. The section will also discuss how interventions are used from a micro to a macro level.

Du Plessis in McKendrick (1990:218) present the Frank and Streeter model. This model identifies two dimensions that outline the professional role and fields of activity for the occupational social worker. The first dimension is that of the level of intervention. Frank and Streeter model (Du Plessis in McKendrick, 1990:218) explain that on this level the professional acknowledges that a problem may be viewed from a multitude of perspectives and may impact on several levels of the organizational structure. This means that a problem may begin as an issue of an individual employee, but which may affect or be identified by a group of employees at a later stage. That same issue may develop into a problem affecting the entire organization.

The second dimension noted by the Frank and Streeter model (Du Plessis in McKendrick, 1990:219) concerns the nature of employment, and the type of employment agreement with respect to the occupational social worker. This refers to an occupational social worker being employed on a full time basis by an organization or through contracted work in an advisory capacity.

Googins and Godfrey (1987:5-9) note the following major activities and roles of an occupational social worker in the workplace. These include:

*Multiservice programmes which include services such as counseling, programme development, consultation to management and research as well as training and education. The Employment Equity Act 55/98 brings with it lots of change in the workplace. Some employees may need to be prepared for this change to work on its acceptance or whatever requirements arise from the implementation of the Employment Equity Act. This change creates great need for programs to be developed, and the occupational social worker may be required to assist in developing those programs. Here, profound understanding of other programs and policies in the workplace is necessary.

*A central role of the occupational social worker is that of mediator. The occupational social worker can consult with management and/or unions on employees' concerns and/or needs and give input on the Employment Equity policy. This means that the occupational social worker needs to be a member of the Employment Equity forum or committee.

*Other activities of the occupational social worker are to conduct research and offer training on issues surrounding employment equity. Trainings may include awareness campaigns and educational workshops. Googins and Godfrey (1987:6) mention the development and implementation of social and community change programs. They note that occupational social workers are involved in affirmative action procedures. They are involved in implementing affirmative

action policies from monitoring and analyzing recruitment and hiring practices to involving the corporation in the legislative process around appropriate issues at state and national levels. It is this evident that the occupational social worker plays a significant role in implementing, analyzing and executing the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

Googins and Godfrey (1987:9) illustrate the job titles that the occupational social worker can occupy such as organizational development specialist, benefits and compensation administrator, project manager, educational specialist, trainer, communications specialist, personnel administrator, and relocation specialist. To support these roles, Googins and Godfrey (1987:10) discuss how occupational social worker can fulfill these funtions. They mention that motivation, interpersonal relations, process and a healthy and productive workforce and environments are the concern of human resource management. The occupational social worker brings to his/her position core social work concepts and skills, including:

- A psychological understanding of individuals in relation to the environment
- Relationship building and contract establishment
- Use of the self as a tool utilizing different skills playing different roles
- An ability to listen with well developed diagnostic and assessment skills
- Skill in the use of the problem solving processes

McInnis-Dittrich (1994:26) refers to social work as an electic profession in that knowledge is borrowed from a wide range of disciplines including political science. Morales and Sheafor (1992:22) describe social work as a profession of many faces. They view sociak work as being characterized by diversity of knowledge and skills, and diversity of services provided.

2.4.1 Occupational Social Work and work policy

Subsection 20(1) of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 states that an employer must prepare and implement an employment equity plan, which will achieve reasonable progress towards employment equity in the workforce. This sub-section suggests that an organization implement its own Employment Equity policy in line with legislation.

McInnis-Dittrich (1994:3) mentions that the social work service on the macro-level practice is social welfare policy. She points out that social work in its nature is a political activity as it strives to improve the current social welfare of people. McInnis-Dittrich (1994:10) defines political activity as working to maintain or change the allocation and distribution of resources. This is relevant to the profession of social work as it has a powerful role in changing the allocation and distribution of resources. The social worker has the responsibility to devote his/her professional knowledge and skills scientifically for the benefit of each individual, group community and mankind.

According to the code of ethics by The National Association of Social Workers, social worker's responsibility is to promote the general welfare of the society. According to McInnis-Dittrich (1994:12) this code of ethics confirms the political nature of the profession of social work. It refers to the social worker promoting the general welfare of people in the following sense:

- The social worker should act to prevent and eliminate unfair discrimination against any person or group on the basis of race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origins, marital status, political belief, mental or physical conditions or status.
- The social worker should act to ensure that all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities which they require.

- ♦ The social worker should act to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, with special regard for disadvantaged groups and persons.
- ♦ The social worker should promote conditions that encourage respect for the diversity of cultures.
- ♦ The social worker should advocate changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions and to promote social justice.
  (Morales and Sheafor, 1992:239-240)

The above cited code of ethics fits the two purposes of the Employment Equity Act 55/98, which is to promote equal opportunity and eliminate unfair discrimination, and to implement affirmative action measures to redress disadvantages experienced by designated groups. It is therefore relevant for the social worker to utilize his/her professional skills whilst applying the code of ethics when working with the Act.

2.4.2 The Analysis Model

McInnis-Drittrich (1994:127) has developed a model that may help the social work profession to evaluate a policy and assess the policy once implemented.

A (Approach) – the social worker firstly understand the basic approach of the policy evaluated. They assess if the policy is designed to meet an immediate human need or whether it is an investment policy. They evaluate attitudes and values reflected in the policy as they may continue to shape the policy. It is also important to assess the policy in terms of the attitudes and values of the profession of social work. By doing so the social worker will be working to improve the employing agency's policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of its services as guided by the ethical principle of being committed to employing organizations. (Morales and Sheafor, 1992:238)

N (Need) – the social worker should assess what social problem prompted the development of the policy and if it is clearly documented. In assessing this need, the social worker should ask whether the policy is rationally connected to meeting that need.

A (Assessment) – the social worker begins to assess the effectiveness of the policy by identifying the policy's strengths and weaknesses. In order to identifying strengths, the social worker needs to know if there is empirical evidence that the policy has accomplished its original goals. This can be achieved by policy's records. When assessing weaknesses, the social worker needs to identify elements of a policy that must change to serve employees better. Indicators that the policy has not accomplished its goals or has had dangerous unintended consequences need to be identified.

L (Logic) – the social worker assesses the logic of the policy's goals and if it is connected to the programme designed to meet these goals. There is a need to assess whether the intervention intended follows the logic of how people behave. In addition the policy needs to be explored, if the programme is a logical expression of what is known about effective delivery of services.

Y (Your reaction as a practitioner) – this refers to the professional evaluation of the policy by the social worker. This includes whether the policy makes sense and what concerns or impressions the social worker has about this policy. The social worker uses his/her individual opinion independent from anyone else's comments or insights. Unintended consequences of the policy that have been unintentionally detrimental rather than beneficial to the client population are determined.

S (Support) – this refers to what kind of support needed for the policy i.e. financial input. Cost –effectiveness of the policy's intended outcomes as well as

whether the policy has the general support of those paying for it, should be explored.

I (Innovation) – deals with what changes can be achieved, what point the program needs to improve on, and how effectiveness can be increased. The social worker needs to assess if these changes can be made on a particular organizational level or not.

S (Social Justice) – the social worker explores whether the policy is consistent with the social work profession's commitment to social justice. He/she must assess if it addresses and resolves inequities in opportunities for those who have been disadvantaged. The policy must be sensitive to issues of social justice. (McInnis-Dittrich, 1994:127-131)

Going through this model, the social worker should be able to analyze if there is a need for improvement, changes, recommendations. The Employment Equity Act 55/98 subsections 21(1)(a) and (b), and 21 (2)(a) and (b) stipulate that the employer needs to submit a report to the Director-General on a yearly basis after the first report. This means that there is a need for continuous valuation and revision of the policy or program.

It is vital for the social worker to also identify the resistance to change and work on them. Kettner et al (1985:78) states that individuals or systems may be benefiting from the status quo and therefore may raise objections to change. As a result, factors supporting the continuation of the present change process need to be identified for intervention. The cost and consequences of non-intervention should be considered. The organizational change process, Kettner et al (1985:29) explains that the need for adoption and adjustment must be recognized. The change effort includes addressing resistance to change, promoting conflict resolution through problem solving, and ensuring compliances with the plan.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter looked at the historical background of employment in South Africa starting from its conception to development of labour legislations. Employment Equity Act 55/98 as one of the labour legislations is the core focus in this chapter. The introduction of Employment Equity Act 55/98 influenced organisational change that brought with it challenges. This chapter explores on the challenges faced in the implementation of the said Act and Occupational Social Work profession as one of the methods to be used to cope with these challenges.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is described by De Vos (1998:99) as the road map or blueprint according to which the researcher intends to achieve research goals and objectives. On a practical level Punch (2000:52) explains that the research design refers to connecting research questions to the data gathering process and identifying what tools and procedures are to be used to gather the data. The present study utilizes quantitative research design. Fouche and De Vos (in De Vos, 2002:138) note that there are various quantitative research designs one of which is exploratory-descriptive design which this study employed. In this regard Rubin (1989) note that the purposes of an exploratory research design are:

- The examination of a new area of research.
- The subject of the study is relatively unresearched.

Bailey (1987:16) explains that an exploratory-descriptive research design aims to describe phenomenon in detail in order to describe what is happening. The results may lead to identification of trends, the inter-relations which arise, can lead to new research questions which may be worth answering through further research (Polansky, 1960:51).

The Employment Equity Act 55/98 is a new subject matter as the Act has been implemented only recently and since then it has impacted on both employers and employees. To date, little research on the impact of the Act has been conducted. Thus the Employment Equity Act 55/98 may be regarded as new material. De Vos (1992:126) emphasizes that an exploratory-descriptive research design is used to

explore problems that have not been thoroughly studied before. This was the primary motivation for choosing the research design for the present study.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

De Vos and Fouche (in De Vos, 1998:99) note that research methodology concerns:

- a description of the population to which study findings will be generalized
- the study sample and sampling strategy
- the potential generalisability of the study findings.

3.2.1 The study population

The present study examines responses of the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98. The study population was drawn from the organizational level of middle management. The researcher approached 4 large banks in South Africa and the studied organizations respondent positively and quickly. The two banks studied were operational in South Africa prior to 1994.

3.2.2 The sampling procedure

Sampling refers to the strategy used by the researcher to access and select the participants in research study. Punch (2000:54) notes that it is not possible to study everyone everywhere doing everything. In selecting the sample for the present study, the researcher employed purposive sampling. According to Marlow (1993:113) purposive sampling deliberately includes those elements of interest to the researcher, and interested in ensuring that the sample includes elements that are directly relevant to the problem being studied. Purposive sampling is appropriate when the researcher uses it to select unique sample that are informative (Neuman, 1994:198).

While potentially the Employment Equity Act 55/98 affects everyone in the working environment, for the purpose of the present study the researcher is specifically interested in those responsible for its implementation. A sample of 28 members of

middle management was drawn from two organizations from within the banking sector. The researcher contacted the senior managers in both organizations in order to obtain their permission to conduct the study. Once permission has been obtained, the researcher contacted the prospective respondents to discuss the details of the research and to obtain their informed and voluntary consent to participate in the study. The middle management was selected as they are directly involved in the implementation of the said Act. The disadvantage of purposive sampling is the lack of ability to generalize from the sample (Marlow, 1993:114).

3.2.3 Research procedure

In accessing the respondents, the researcher contacted the senior managers of middle management in order to obtain permission to conduct the study. They, in turn contacted the prospective respondents to explain the study and ask their permission for the researcher to contact them directly. A list of names of prospective respondents was forwarded to the researcher. The researcher then contacted the prospective respondents telephonically to enquire whether or not they agreed to participate in the study. Appointments were set, the respondents were given a subject information sheet and a consent form to sign in agreeing to participate.

3.2.4 Data collection method

Punch (2000:57) notes that the method of data collection method refers to the tools used to access and to collect data. In this study, data will be collected through the use of semi-structured interview schedule that will be individually administered by the researcher. Rubin and Babbie (1993:375) describe how structured strategies attempt to ensure that all respondents are asked the same question, in the same sequence to maximize comparability of responses and to ensure that complete data is gathered from each person on all relevant questions.

According to Neuman (19994:245) one on one interview has the highest rate, and permit longest questionnaires. He further notes its disadvantage being that is high on costs and that the appearance, tone of voice and so forth of the researcher may affect the respondent.

The interview schedule consisted of open-ended and close ended questions.

Open-ended questions are advantageous when a variable is relatively unexplored. In such an instance it enables the researcher to explore the variable better and to obtain some idea of spectrum of possible responses (Delport in De Vos, 2002:179). Marlow (1993:75) notes that open-ended questions are particularly useful when the researcher does not know a great deal about the subject under investigation. According to Marlow (1993:75) open-ended questions give the respondents opportunity to answer in ways that reflect their views, i.e. they are not forced to respond within the researcher's categories.

The disadvantage of open-ended questions is that they lengthen the time for administration of the research tool, and respondents who are completing the tool on their own may be tempted to skip questions and provide incomplete answers (Delport in De Vos, 2002:179). Lastly, the responses to open-ended questions are less amenable to quantification.

Closed-ended gives the respondent a choice of answers (Marlow, 1993:75). She further mentioned that there are easy for the researcher to understand once the questionnaire is completed. The responses to such questions are frequently factual and readily quantifiable. However they do not capture the same depth of data as open-ended questions. The researcher used open-ended questions to give respondents the opportunity to elaborate on their answers.

3.2.5 Pilot study

Pilot study is defined as the pre-testing of a measuring instrument consists of "trying it out on a small number of persons having characteristics similar to those of the

target group of respondents" by Singleton et al quoted by Strydom (in De Vos 1998:78). The researcher tested the suitability of the research schedule/tool with two persons holding middle management positions and directly involved with the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98. The advantage of the pilot study is that the respondents can be asked to comment on the wording of the questions, the sequence of the questions, possible redundant questions, missing and confusing questions (Strydom in De Vos, 1998:183). He further notes that the outcome of the pilot study is that the questionnaire is almost improved. This exercise assisted the researcher to measure time required for completion of the research tool.

3.2.6 Analysis of data

Analysis of data is the process used by the researcher to find meaning in the data collected. Data gathered in the study was analyzed, quantitavely and descriptively. Thereafter the findings were summarized in tables and discussion formats. Neuman (2000:313) explains that analysis of data provides a condensed picture of all data gathered. He notes further that the use of tables clearly facilitates the display of evidence collected by the researcher.

3.2.7 Limitations of the research methodology

(i) Some respondents were reluctant to elaborate on some of the open-ended questions, and as a result, the data was not complete and it can affect generalized findings.

(ii) As the numbers of respondents from the studied organizations were unequal, the results cannot claim to compare the competency in terms of the implementation.

(iii) There were fewer respondents from Org B than intended and not all are involved in the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98. This can affect the results accordingly.

(iv) The research instrument does not have questions on Occupational Social Work therefore the perception of middle management in this regard is not known.

3.3 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethics are defined by Strydom (in DeVos, 1998:24) as a set of moral principles to which an individual or group subscribes, and which are widely accepted.

3.3.1 Informed consent

De Vos et al (1998:25) note that informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the procedures which will be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages, dangers to which the respondent may be exposed, and the credibility of the researcher be rendered to potential subjects. The researcher first approached the senior members of middle management, who asked for their subordinate's permission to participate in the study. The researcher was provided with a list of prospective respondents who had given permission for the researcher to contact them. The researcher then personally contacted the selected individuals and gave each a copy of the subject information sheet which aimed at assisting the respondents to make a voluntary, but thorough decision about their possible participation. Those who agreed to participate were asked to sign the consent form. Also, the researcher explained the scheduling of the appointments for interviews, the confidentiality issues and the right to withdraw from the interview at any given time.

3.3.2 Privacy and confidentiality

De Vos (1998:28) explains that respondents have a right to privacy (information that is normally not intended for others to observe or analyze) and confidentiality. Privacy is the ability to control access to known information about oneself and confidentiality promotes privacy by preventing the spread of privileged information that would violate privacy (Discovery Institute). Singleton quoted by De Vos et al (1998:28) explains that the right to privacy is the individuals right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs, and behavior will be revealed. Protecting this right is a way of respect given to the respondent. In this study, only the researcher had access to data gathered from individual respondents.

After the completion of the study, all raw data will be destroyed. The dissemination of findings will be given to the participating organizations to report the findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is to present data that was obtained from the respondents. Data will be presented descriptively using grouped data and frequency distribution tables and discussions. According to Marlow (1993:189) the use of discriptive statistics summarizes the characteristics of the sample. This process helps to get the full picture as possible. She notes further that frequency distribution is used to describe the number of time the values of a variable occur in a sample. Marlow (1993:208) mentions that descriptive statistics can be easily generated in agency settings for needs assessment. This can be helpful for the studied organisations to assess the need for adjustments in the implementation of employment equity.

This study aimed to cover 40 respondents and only 28 respondents were accessed.

This chapter is divided into five sections. Section A is the demographics of the respondents, Section B is about the respondents understanding of Employment Equity Act 55/98, Section C the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98, Section D the organizational support and Section E is the broader impact of Employment Equity Act 55/98.

The findings of this study are based on the respondent's perception of the implementation of employment equity in February 2005.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Table: 1- Age of respondents

Age	Org A	Org B
20-34	44%(8)	-
35-44	39%(7)	60%(6)
45-54	11%(2)	30%(3)
55-64	6%(1)	10%(1)
TOTAL	N18(100%)	N10(100%)

Table 1 shows that 75% (21) of respondents were between the ages of 20 and 44 years, 18% (5) were between the ages of 45-54 years and 7% (2) were between 55-64 years. Org B did not have respondent between the ages of 20-34 years.

In both Org A and Org B, there were more female respondents than male. Org A had 11 (61%) females and Org B had 8 (80%) females.

Table: 2- Race of respondents

Race	Org A	Org B
White	50%(9)	50%(5)
Asian	33%(6)	10%(1)
Black	17%(3)	20%(2)
Coloured	-	20%(2)
TOTAL	N18(100%)	N10(100%)

In terms of the above table, Org A and B have more Whites (50%). Org A did not have coloureds people on their respondents.

Regarding the working experience in their organisations, the following is presented. Majority (56%) of respondents in Org A have less than 5 years experience in the organisation whereas Org B only 10%. In both organisations (Org A – 17% and Org B – 30%) have more than 20 years experience.

On their central focus, Org A 33% is human resources and 67% in various departments on management level. In Org B, 30% is human resources, 10% on employment equity and 60% on other various departments.

Table: 3- Qualifications of the respondents

Qualifications	**Org A**	**Org B**
Post-graduate	83%(15)	60%(6)
Under-graduate	11%(2)	10%(1)
High school	6%(1)	20%(2)
Tertiary certificate	-	10%(1)
	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

Regarding the respondent's qualifications, in both organisations respondents seemed to be well educated with majority having post graduate qualifications.

Length of stay in the position, Org A 22% (6-10), 78% (1-5); Org B 40% (6-10) 50% (1-5) and 10% (+10 years)

4.3 UNDERSTANDING OF THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT 55/98

*Respondents were asked about the need for implementation of Employment Equity Act 55/98. All the respondents in both companies presented the need for the banking sector to transform in terms of the broader changes going on in South Africa. Table 4 presents the reasons for the implementation of the said Act according to the respondents.

Table: 4 - Reasons for implementing the Act

Reasons	ORG A	ORG B
Law enforcement	22% (4)	50% (5)
Reflect demographics of the country	17% (3)	-
To bring equity	44% (8)	30% (3)
To promote Blacks	6% (1)	20% (2)
No respond (other)	11% (2)	-
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents in Org A, view the importance of Employment Equity Act as to bring equity in the workplace whereas in Org B, respondents viewed Employment Equity Act implementation as alignment with the law. Three (30%) respondents from Org B gave other reasons not listed on the table.

*Respondents were asked if they think their organizations are meeting the purpose of the Act. In Org A, 89% (16) respondents reported that their organisation is meeting the purpose of the Act. They stated that their organisation has more Blacks; they are addressing the group trends and that the financial charter requires them to align with the Act. Out of the 16, 25% mentioned also that their organisation is still at the starting point. Two (11%)

respondents saw it differently. They do not think their organisation is meeting the purpose of the said Act.

On the other hand, all the respondents in Org B reported their organization meeting the purpose of the Act.

*Respondents were asked to give the definition of discrimination according to their own understanding and the table below reports their response.

Table: 5– Definition of discrimination.

Discrimination	ORG A	ORG B
Unfair treatment	78% (14)	50% (5)
Unequal opportunities	11 (2)	30% (3)
Previously disadvantaged	6% (1)	20% (2)
Favoritism of no value	5% (1)	-
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

Table 5 above shows generally that respondents have an understanding of discrimination.

*Respondents were asked to specify who the designated groups are and they gave the following as shown on table 6.

Table: 6 – Definition of designated groups.

Designated group	ORG A	ORG B
Previously disadvantaged	56% (10)	80% (8)
Specific groups	22% (4)	10% (1)
Race groups	17% (3)	10% (1)
Singled out groups	5% (1)	
TOTOAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

According to table 6, majority of respondents (56% from Org A and 80% from Org B) understand designated group in terms of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

*Respondents were asked to list the designated groups according to the Employment Equity Act. In response to this questions, respondents were allowed to give more than one response.

Table: 7 – Designated group categories

Categories	ORG A	ORG B
AIC – African, Indian Cloloured	100% (18)	4 (40%)
Disabled people	44% (8)	4 (40%)
Females	50% (9)	5 (50%)
Blacks		5 (50%)
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

The aged and sexual preference was also noted. According to 60 % (6) of respondents from Org B, they do not know which are designated groups according to the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

*Respondents were asked to give the definition of affirmative action according to their understanding and the following table presents the definitions.

Table: 8– Definition of affirmative action.

Affirmative Action	**ORG A**	**ORG B**
Measures to address inequality	6% (1)	2 (20%)
Promotion of equity	11% (2)	4 (40%)
Readdress imbalance of the past	50% (9)	4 (40%)
AIC promotions	33% (6)	-
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

Table 8 shows that all the respondents understand affirmative action as their definitions is part of affirmative action as defined in the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

Respondents were asked to list the affirmative action measures that their organisation has implemented. Table 9 presents the responses.

Table: 9 – Affirmative action measures.

AA Measures	ORG A	ORG B
Setting of targets	39% (7)	10% (1)
African,Indian,Coloured recruitment	39% (7)	-
Skills Development	11% (2)	50% (5)
Employment Equity Plan	-	30% (3)
Other	11% (2)	10% (1)
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

Table 9 presents the difference in the two organizations studied in terms of affirmative action. Org A focuses on recruitment and reaching of targets whereas Org B's focus is on skills development of their workforce.

In Org B, all the respondents reported that their organization have an employment equity plan. 17% (3) respondents from Org A mentioned that their organisation do not have employment equity plan and one(6%) is not sure. All the respondents from both organizations reported that their organizations are presently implementing the 10 steps to Employment Equity Plan as suggested by the Department of Labour.

In relation to the 10 steps to Employment Equity Plan, respondents were asked to rank the steps in order of importance according to them. The table below shows how the respondents ranked in order of importance.

Table: 10 – Order of employment equity steps

The 10 Steps	ORG A	ORG B
Assigning responsibility	10(56%)	7 (70%)
Communication, awareness & training	9 (50%)	5 (50%)
Consultation	7 (39%)	7 (70%)
Analysis	5 (28%)	4 (40%)
Affirmative action measures & objectives	10 (56%)	8 (80%)
Time frames	6 (33%)	6 (60%)
Resources	2 (11%)	3 (30%)
Communication	6 (33%)	5 (50%)
Monitoring & evaluating the plan	13 (72%)	6 (60%)
Reporting	5 (28%)	2 (20%)
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

4.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT 55/98

*The respondents were asked to list the main challenges in implementing the Employment Equity Act 55/98. In Org A, lack of skills on the part of black employees and lack of commitment from management were reported. The challenges reported in Org B were the retention of skilled black employees and the quality of skills among the black employees.

In relation to the above mentioned responses, the respondents were asked to mention the methods they use in their managerial posts to address these challenges. The following table present the methods used to address the challenges. Respondents were allowed to give more than one response.

Table: 11 – Methods to address these challenges.

	ORG A		**ORG B**
Methods	**No. of responses**	**Responses**	**No. of responses**
Recruitment	17% (3)	Recruitment	10% (1)
Open communication	28% (5)	Consultation	10% (1)
Target setting	11% (2)	Involve interested people	20% (2)
Mentorship	11% (2)	Mentorship	20% (2)
Team building	6% (1)	Learnership	20% (2)
Transformational forums	6% (1)	Education and consultation	20% (2)
Education, training and development	44% (8)	Integrating of Employment Equity into business	10% (1)
Restructuring for recruitment	6% (1)	Constantly changing plan	10% (1)
Total	N18 (100%)	**Total**	N10 (100%

Two (11%) respondents from Org A, did not respond and three(17%) mentioned that these challenges are not faced to them but to their superiors.

In Org A, 33% (6) respondents said that they are involved in identifying targets and 67% (12) are not. Whereas in Org B, 90% (9) respondents are involved in identification of targets and 10% (1) are not.

In relation to the above results, the respondents were asked how or when they are involved. Table 12 presents how respondents are involved in setting of the target.

Table: 12 – Respondents involvement

Org A	**No. of responses**	**Org B**	**No. of responses**
Execution of the Act	3 (17%)	Own personal Employment Equity plan	5 (50%)
Recruitment process	2 (11%)	Member of Employment Equity forum	3 (30%)
Trend analysis	1 (6%)		
Not involved	12 (66%)	Lead the process	1(10%)
		Not involved	1 (10%)
TOTAL	18 (100%)		N10 (100%)

The respondents were asked if their different departments achieved the numerical targets sets. In Org A, 22% (4) respondents said that their department did not achieve the numerical target for the year 2004, and 72% (13) reported that they have not achieved the target and 6% (1) was unsure. Among those who reported that they have reached the target, 85% (11) gave reasons for achievement and 15% (2) did not give reasons. The following reasons were given as to have made the reaching of the target possible:-

-Employing people from the AIC group (3)
-Realistic targets (2)
-People given opportunities (1)
-Managers receiving incentives (1)
-Organic growth (4)

In Org B, 6(60%) reported their department to have achieved the numerical targets for 2004 and reported reasons for achieving those targets:-

-Training in place (1)
-Identify skills source (1)
-Recruitment of AIC (2)

-Realistic targets (2)

The other 30% (3) reported to have not achieved 2004 numerical targets and gave the following reasons:-
-Low staff turnover (1)
-Constant organisational change (2)

The remaining 10% (1) of the respondents said that their departments have achieved the targets but find it difficult to retain some of the people employed to attain the target.

The respondents were asked to list the designated groups that are considered by their organisation in the implementation of Employment Equity Act. Respondents were allowed to give more than one answer.

Table: 13 – Designated groups considered by these organizations.

Designated groups	**Org A**	**Org B**
African	2 (11%)	5 (50%)
Females	-	3 (30%)
Disabled	4 (44%)	4 (40%)
AIC	14 (78%)	3 (30%)
Other	2 (11%)	-
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

According to table 13, Org A, is focused on Black people as defined by the Employment Equity Act 55/98 which is African, Indian and Coloured whereas Org B, is focused on African and disabled people.

In terms of the Employment Equity Plan, respondents were asked how these process is monitored. Table 14 presents the procedure used to monitor this process.

Table: 14 – Procedure to monitor the Employment Equity Plan.

Procedure	**Org A**	**Responses**	**Org B**
Score cards	2(11%)		
Reporting	9(50%)		
Appraisal bonuses	2(11%)	EEforum meeting	2(20%)
Not knowing	2(11%)	Reporting	6(60%)
Transformation committee+ feedback	3(17%)		

In Org B, all the respondents reported that the responsibility to educate subordinates about the Employment Equity Plan is that of the middle management, whereas in Org A, only 14 respondents reported the same and four differ.

Respondents reported that they educate their subordinates regarding employment equity plan in different ways. The table below shows the type of education offered.

Table :15 –How respondents educate subordinates.

Type of education	**Org A**	**Org B**
Training	5(28%)	6(60%)
Awareness campaigns	7(39%)	5(50%)
Meetings	6(33%)	8(80%)
One to one information giving	8(44%)	4(40%)
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10(100%)

*Respondents were asked which questions their subordinates normally ask. Org A reported that their subordinates asked questions regarding targets, access and achievement, job security of white employees, salaries and grades, appointments, if this is not reverse discrimination and about the progress. According to them, those questions were answered by showing records, open communication, explaining how salaries are determined, refer them to the chatter and also by conducting monthly meetings were most things are explained.

Org B reported that the most common questions were about appointment of black employees on managerial positions, general recruitment and availability of the employment equity plan, the progress and to get more information. These questions are answered by conducting of forums were most things are discussed such as career discussion, succession intervention, training and also through open communication.

*Respondents were asked about their perception of their subordinates' attitude towards employment equity. The table below shows the results to this question. 4(22%) respondents from Org A did not respond.

Table: 16 - Attitude towards employment equity

Subordinates attitude	**Org A**	**Org B**
Resistance	3(17%)	1(10%)
Anxious	6(33%)	2(20%)
Anger	3(17%)	3(30%)
Excitement	9(50%)	4(40%)
	N18(100%)	N10 (100%)

*Respondents from Org A, gave more than one answer. Four (22%) respondents who chose excitement and anxiety explained that excitement is experienced by blacks and anxiety by whites. One(6%) said that all responses vary to a certain degree. One (6%) respondent explained that it started with

resistance and anxiety and later people accepted change in respect to employment equity.

4.5 ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

This section explored on the support the respondents receive from their respective organisation. In relation to this, respondents were asked about clear job description and lines of communication. All the respondents reported that their job description is clear. In Org A, 2(11%) respondents were not clear about the lines of communication within the organisation.

*Respondents were asked to describe their working relationship with their superiors.

Table: 17- Working relationship

Relationship	**Org A**	**Org B**
Supportive	13 (72%)	8 (80%)
Demanding	2 (11%)	3 (30%)
Pressurizing	4 (22%)	3 (30%)
Lack of commitment		1 (10%)
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

One (6%) respondent from Org A, gave three answers and the other one(6%) mentioned that they are between roles, as a result no relationship with supervisor. The table below shows satisfaction.

The following reasons were given to elaborate on superiors being supportive.

ORG A	ORG B
Clear description	Task master
Given space	Approachable
Resources	Helpful
Availability of senior	Trusting relationship
Open management style	Viewed with caution
Good coach and mentor	Open communication
Constant communication	Constantly learning
Can back up	Constructive relationship

The 15(83%) respondents from Org A, reported that their organization has given them enough support in their present position and 3(17%) reported that they are not getting enough support. In Org B, 5(50%) reported positive support and 5(50%) mentioned not enough support. Those who reported that they do not get enough support gave reasons that there is lack of understanding of their role, white management fear, constant change in restructuring and not seeing the importance of affirmative action. Whereas others feel that they are empowered by given ownership of business units, open system in the recruitment department, the relationship and that there is specialist division to refer to.

In respect to their knowledge about the implementation of Employment Equity Act 55/98, the respondents were asked about training they received. Table 18 presents the type of training received.

Table: 18 – Training re- Employment Equity Act 55/98.

Training	Org A	Org B
In-service training	4 (22%)	4 (10%)
Workshop	11(61%)	8 (80%)
Formal education	3 (17%)	2 (20%)
Presentation	9 (50%)	5 (50%)
Individual mentor	-	2 (20%)
Conferences	2 (11%)	8 (80%)
TOTAL	N18 (100%)	N10 (100%)

One (10%) respondent from Org B, mentioned that he learned through his own research and e-mail was also mentioned by one(10%) respondent from Org A.

4.6 BROADER IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT 55/98

This section focused on the impact of the implementation of Employment Equity Act 55/98 on the organisation. Respondents were asked how they perceived the impact of the said Act impact on the entire staff. Table 16 below presents the results.

Table: 19 – The effects of Employment Equity Act 55/98

Effects of staff	Org A	Org B
Assisted in retaining staff		5(50%)
Resulted in loosing staff		7(70%)
Staff more satisfied		3(30%)
Staff less satisfied		2(20%)

Four (22%) respondents from Org A, reported that the policies of the World Bank has an impact on the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98

whereas the other 4(22%) differ. Supporting their responses, they mentioned economy upliftment and skills upliftment for global competition.

CHAPTER 5

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the main findings of the study, conclusions and the recommendations. Marlow (1993:261) notes that discussion of the findings provides an explanation of the results. Only few findings are presented comparing the two studied organisation.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS

5.2.1 Demographics

- The findings are reported in relation to the objectives of the study. The majority of the responses were females and most of the respondents were whites. As women are part of the designated group according to the Employment Equity Act 55/98, it seemed the studied organisation has responded well to put women in the managerial positions.

5.2.2 Understanding of Employment Equity

- According to the findings, it seems that generally both organisations understand the purpose of the Employment Equity. All the respondents from Org A (100%) agree that their organisation is meeting the purpose of the Act, whereas only 16 (89%) from Org B agree.

5.2.3 Implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98

- The first objective of the study was to identify how middle management in the banking sector is implementing the Employment Equity Act 55/98 in their organisation. The findings revealed that all the respondents are positive towards the implementation of the said Act.

- The study reveals that regular reporting in different time frames was found by the respondents (61% in Org A and 80% in Org B) to be the best strategy in monitoring the implementation process of employment equity. Interestingly, in both organiasation, reporting was not mentioned as the important aspects of the Employment Equity Plan. The important aspects listed were monitoring and evaluating, affirmative action measures and objectives, assigning responsibility and consultation.

- All the respondents from Org B are involved in the setting of the numerical targets towards achieving employment equity whereas in Org A, only 33% are involved. This implies that 67% of the respondents from Org A are holding managerial positions but not involved in the implementation process. In answering this question, the researcher probed that there are different methods used to motivate the middle management to reach their numerical targets. The study reveals that in Org A, middle managers receive incentives to encourage them to speedup the implementation process.

  In Org B, each member of the middle management is given a business unit to manage and is therefore actively involved in the implementation Employment Equity Act 55/98. As a result they take ownership of the responsibility to implement and achieve the set target.

- The second objective was to gauge the perceptions of the middle management of specific challenges with which they are confronted as a result of the introduction of the employment equity in the banking sector. Lack of skills from the black

people was identified by the respondents (Org A 44% and Org B 60%) as a main challenge in achieving equity among the workforce, especially in higher positions. It is revealed that among the black employees with better qualifications, is a challenge retaining them as they are head hunted. This result in staff turnover and having to struggle to replace them which continuously affect the numerical targets and bringing about equity among the workforce.

- It was found that the best strategy to deal with the obstacle of lack of skills on the black employees is through learner ship, mentorship, education and training.

- The study reveals that the implementation of the employment equity has different impact on the staff retention. Some employees are satisfied with the process while others are less satisfied.

5.2.4 Organisational support

- Respondents received training in different strategies. The study reveals that in Org B middle management received training as organised by their employer and in Org A they arrange training at their own and own expenses.

5.2.5 Broader Impact

- Respondents seemed to be lacking information about the World Bank policies and its impact on the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

It is therefore concluded that:-

- Reporting on the process of monitoring the implementation of the Employment Equity Plan keeps the momentum of change and the process flowing.

- Involving all the managers in the implementation process gives them responsibility and pride in facilitating change.

- It will take a longer period in achieving equity among the workforce, as there is a need to upgrade skills of black individuals and also facing a challenge to retain those who are holding higher positions.

- Due to organisations struggling to get qualifying black employees on especially senior positions, smaller organisations may face a problem retaining black individuals as they are in demand and larger organisations can attract them with good salaries and more benefits.

- Training as means of support to those implementing the Act is crucial in delivering better service.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Research report consists of recommendations for further study and explicitly states the questions that have arisen from the research itself (Marlow, 1993:261).

5.4.1 Recommendations on the implementation of Employment Equity Act

- More support and training on the implementation of Employment Equity Act 55/98 be offered to those who are directly implementing the said Act.

- The individual organisations develop a workforce culture on how to develop and empower staff on different levels of hierarchy and how to retain them.

- Occupational social workers be utilised to conduct workshops that deal with misconception and fear in implementing the Employment Equity Act 55/98. A

hotline may also be made available to impart knowledge, give counselling and advice if needed.

- The managers who are the driving force of the said implementation be involved in the whole process of the implementation.

- The organisation undertakes internal research on the impact of the implementation of the Employment Equity Act on the staff turnover.

5.4.2 For future research

- Assess the best working strategy for involving the workforce positively in the implementation of the Employment Equity Act 55/98 in different organisations or sectors within South Africa.

- Explore the relationships between the effect of affirmative action on the staff turnover and productivity.

- Identify and explore how affirmative action and its implementation have an effect on smaller organisations in terms of financial costs, staff turnover and employees satisfaction.

- The best way to retain the employment equity candidates with the aim of achieving the numerical goals and aligning with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act 55/98.

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