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Organisational culture as perceived by employment equity candidates.

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Abstract

To address the somewhat perplexing issue of the reported unacceptably slow pace of transformation in the private sector, the present research report explored organisational culture as perceived by Employment Equity candidates in a South African organisation. The study was conducted in the Head Office of one of the largest Banks in South Africa. The sample in the current research was comprised of 15 employees working in professional jobs from designated groups (females, Black Africans, Coloureds, Asians) as stipulated by the Employment Equity Act of 1998. All fifteen participants were interviewed individually and the recorded interviews were transcribed. Thematic analysis methodology was employed and themes were extracted using the theoretically-driven thematic analysis approach. Literature on organisational culture theory and employment equity practices was used as a guide for coding data and extracting themes.

The outcomes of the study indicated that employment equity beneficiaries working within a bank feel that there is an effort on the Bank's part to accommodate them. This is apparent in how they try to integrate their family and cultural values in their operations. The findings also indicate that Whites, especially males, are perceived as receiving preferential treatment over Blacks and females. They are perceived as having more opportunities to advance to senior levels. The bank was also seen as being committed to transformation and employment equity on paper, however, there is still a great deal of resistance embedded in aspects of the culture and from those who are responsible for the implementation of employment equity policies.