

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**Managing Diversity in the Transformation of Public Further Education  
and Training Colleges in KwaZulu-Natal**

**By  
Doctor Mbukeni Ntshangase  
205524924**

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of  
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**Promoter : Prof. D. Sing**

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## DECLARATION

I Doctor Mbukeni Ntshangase declare that

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I am grateful for the inspiration and wisdom humankind has taught me. To me, a legacy of motivation to learn and develop and grow and become was given. I owe special thanks to God, the Almighty, the Creator of humankind, for strengthening and lifting me up in the face of despair and frustration as I toiled to put my ideas on paper.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to :

- My precious and loving wife, Thuli, and our children, Malusi, Lwazi, Ndabenhle and Khanyisile, for their patience, support and understanding goodwill when I was absent when and where they needed me most;
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- Every public manager whose heart is touched by insensitive, unjustly and unfairly treatment of diverse individuals and groups.

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS**

AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DET	-	Department of Education and training
DIS	-	Developing Intercultural Sensitivity
DoE	-	Department of Education
DoL	-	Department of Labour
EC	-	European Commission
FET	-	Further Education and Training
HR	-	Human Resources
HRM	-	Human Resource Management
ILO	-	International Labour Organisation
ITBs	-	Industrial Training Boards
KZN	-	KwaZulu-Natal
MEC	-	Member of the Executive Council
NCFE	-	National Committee of Further Education
NCV	-	National Certificate Vocational
NGOs	-	Non-governmental organisations
NQF	-	National Qualifications Authority
RSA	-	Republic of South Africa
RTCs	-	Regional Training Centres
SAIRR	-	South African Institute of Race Relations
SETA	-	Sector Education and Training Authority
SIT	-	Social Identity Theory
SRC	-	Student Representative Council
TNCs	-	Transnational Companies

## **ABSTRACT**

The restructuring of the technical colleges brought with it some challenges which the college managers, supervisors and administrators have to address on their day-to-day administration of these institutions. The merging of technical colleges had seen campuses with diverse historical, educational and cultural backgrounds being clustered together to form one mega FET College. Statistics compiled by the Statistics South Africa (see table 3.1) suggest that much needs to be done in terms of ensuring that diverse employees are provided with equal opportunities. The increasing racial and ethnic diversity of the workforce in the FET colleges underscores the importance of effectively managing diversity. There should be steps managers can take to become sensitive to the ongoing effects of diversity in their colleges, take advantage of all the contributions diverse employees can make, and prevent diverse employees from being unfairly treated. However, the residual impact of the apartheid years have shown some resilience, and therefore it is probable that transformation of the embedded inequalities might not have occurred as rapidly as desired.

The rationale behind this study was to reveal college managers' understanding of the effective management of diversity as well as to correct the misconceptions that may exist about why and how different kinds of employee groups are different from one another and to find the most effective ways to utilise the skills and talents of diverse employees. The writer of this study is an administrator, employed by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, responsible for the administration of public FET colleges and with significant first-hand administration experience in rural, semi-rural, urban and semi-urban campuses in the province. This experience has made him keenly aware that the old paradigms of discipline, suspension, and discharge as only means to handle employees' problems are inappropriate in the new institutional landscape because they are seldom the most expeditious way to

handle conflicts centering on diversity issues. The researcher realised that it was important for FET college managers to include diversity as an aspect of career progression. From this perspective, diversity would be an integral aspect of career planning that traditionally has been a deliberate process to marginalise other employee groups.

This study includes a literature review as well as a qualitative investigation to reveal college managers' understanding of diversity. A literature study provided the basis for analysis and clarification of the recent changes in thinking on diversity issues and the shift towards conceptualising workforce as composed of diverse social groups which share many employment experiences, but which might not be treated the same. The highlighting of heterogeneity and diversity of social groups assisted in the task of recognising and understanding that discrimination and disadvantage are multifaceted and that it is important to draw on the experiences of, and reflect the needs of, all social groups within the workforce when developing or analysing diversity management policies.

The qualitative investigation's overall focus was on the college managers' appreciation and response to the needs, attitudes, beliefs, and values that diverse employees bring to FET colleges. The qualitative approach explored why differential treatment occurs and the steps managers have taken to ensure that diversity, in all respects, is effectively managed for the good of all stakeholders. The study highlighted the need for managers and supervisors to become aware of the values, motivations, communication styles, attitudes, and needs of their employees.

The findings led to the conclusion that diverse individuals continue to experience unfair treatment in the workplace as a result of biases, stereotypes, and overt discrimination. Sometimes well-intentioned managers inadvertently treat one group of employees differently from another group,

even though there are no performance-based differences between the two groups. The findings also revealed that rural campuses appear to find it very difficult to attract and retain the best employees from all the different racial groups. This raises critical diversity issues for these campuses because if that is not handled well it can bring the whole college to its knees, especially in the increasing global environment.

These conclusions enabled the researcher to make specific recommendations for assisting college managers to treat diverse members of FET colleges fairly and justly, as well as to realise that diversity is an important organisational resource that can help the college gain a competitive advantage. Recommendations were made for improving the role of the State, the Provincial Department of Education, the College Council, the College Management Team, as well as the trade union leaders to ensure that neither large nor small disparities in treatment and outcomes due to irrelevant distinctions such as race or ethnicity occur in public FET colleges. This was seen as a priority in order to promote democratic college governance, management and administration and in so doing to attract and retain the best employees and compete effectively in a diverse global environment.



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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **GENERAL ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

South Africa has the most developed and well-resourced system of further education and training institutions and programmes which compare with the best in the world (Mda & Mothata 2000:3). This view suggests the need for managers and administrators in the further education and training band to support and preserve these strengths. Although the legacy of apartheid has led to fragmentation of further education and training, to discriminatory policies and practices, inequitable allocation of resources and undemocratic governance structures, it remains the responsibility of managers to bring about innovation and change by recognising employees' needs and concerns. Young and Gamble (2006:21) maintain that the consequences of apartheid legacy had been restricted participation of black people, an unplanned and uncoordinated system with no clear articulated national goals, and an inability to respond to the economic needs of the majority.

South Africa faces the task of social transformation as a newly democratised state. The social fragmentation and oppression of apartheid must be combated by education and training programmes that promote acceptance of cultural diversity and democratic rights and responsibilities. Government, industry, communities, public institutions and individuals must all take responsibility for education and training which is responsive to their needs. Young and Gamble (2006:21) suggest that identification with and ownership of the social transformation will only come about if individuals and groups are empowered to participate fully in the processes of society.

Transformation of the further education and training sector will be achieved by restructuring the fragmented arrangements into a coordinated system, with common goals and coherent planning through representative structures. Institutional transformation and human resources development in the context of this study refer to institutional arrangements in respect of organisational, infrastructural and human resourcing of Further Education and Training Colleges, in relation to the dimensions of culture, management and leadership, as well as knowledge and skills. While the human resource aspect of this study relates to knowledge, skills and culture, the organisational aspect entails identity and form, structures, management and leadership and systems. These must relate to the transformation of all those who are involved in the effort of change. This view is supported by Enslin and Pendlebury (1998:261) who maintain that transformation is not only about changing structures and physical properties, but also about changing those who are its proponents.

Crucial to transformation is the need to determine what forces drive current provision and what it would take to create better-suited institutional forms which are based on a structured re-organisation and development of staff and facilities (Sedibe 1998:312). This perspective of development will be used to refer to people-centred principles, policies, strategies and processes which are required to advance a coherent and sustainable further education and training system. In this study, institutions and staff are regarded as similar phenomena, one being a corporate person and the other an individual person. Both are subject to a sense of identity, mission, values and energy. Both have feelings, beliefs and a sense of organisation. Depending on the environment they operate in, they can be built into agents of excellence and development or can be reduced to enemies of change and development.

Pendlebury (1998:180) maintains that transformation does not happen in a vacuum, however innovative and enabling policies and processes need to be developed to give momentum to the process of transformation. This implies that

the success of transforming further education and training into an effective system is dependent on the nature and quality of institutional management and leadership. It is thus every manager's responsibility to ensure that the new, merged FET colleges provide an important infrastructure and an opportunity for South Africa to harness the talents, energies and full potential of all its people in order to ensure success of all diverse communities in the country. In order to achieve this, it is imperative for the management of FET colleges to understand the meaning of the concept of diversity, and to be genuinely convinced that valuing diversity does make sound business sense (Human 2005:5). The researcher is of the opinion that the goals of transformation cannot be achieved without proper and effective diversity management of FET colleges.

If the FET sector is to meet the needs of a new society and the challenges of the twenty-first century, it needs to be transformed. It is for this reason that administrative and management structures in FET colleges should assume a new importance, as an instrument not only of effective management and administration, but of systematic and institutional change. Change must be focussed on the building of new administrative pathways, and new, more meaningful linkages and relationships between central offices, campuses, community and private life. The development of an increasingly integrated approach to further education and training, while not a simple or unproblematic matter, should be a particular concern for management of diversity in FET colleges.

Accordingly, as an instrument of change, governance needs to give concrete expression to the concepts of diversity management, democracy, participation, responsiveness, cooperation and partnership. Governance needs, moreover, to bring together the education and the training elements of a national human resource development strategy. Whitehead (1999:55) maintains that management is the process of working with other people to identify and achieve common goals in a meaningful way. Whitehead (1999:55) argues that the one

element that is absolutely necessary to any programme involving people is leadership, therefore, without the ability to lead, a manager cannot be effective even though he or she may be an extremely erudite person. From this viewpoint, leadership in a management context may be seen as that human quality or factor which guides an organisation towards achieving its goals by means of the voluntary collaboration of members of that organisation, in other words, with the cooperation of the people of that organisation.

Bhindi and Duignan (1997:117) maintain that in a decade or so managers were in a position to control and manipulate organisations more readily than they can today because organisations were seen as less complicated, environments were more stable, and power and wisdom were perceived to flow from their heroic figures. Murphy (1995:92) states that environmental complexities and turbulence have brought to the forefront fundamental issues and tensions relating to leadership, organisational structures, culture and management practices. The new challenges to leadership and management relate to the inappropriate nature of the previous administration and governance systems, processes and structures. These new challenges require managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery. This requires the eradication of discriminatory practices which are based on race, gender, disability and sexual preferences.

These challenges have placed the basis and function of management in general, and merged FET colleges in particular, under critique. There is, especially, re-examination of the concepts of power and authority and how they are exercised and legitimised. Pirsig (1992:357) states that leadership and management are being redefined and there are increasing calls for a clear shift away from traditional hierarchical control mechanisms and processes as a basis for influence to notions of management as service and stewardship.

Hartshorne (1988:3) maintains that the kind of policy, climate and environment in which South African managers had been conditioned to operate had the characteristics of being inflexible, indoctrinating and authoritarian. In the wake of the current educational and political reform, the change of attitude towards diversity and participation in decision-making in the college situation is indispensable. In this research project, an investigation to establish the preparedness of managers to transform FET institutions, as well as to manage diversity is conducted. This work is an attempt to disclose managers' real perceptions, feelings and aspirations about transformation and diversity management of the merged FET institutions. This is done by determining the extent to which historical background, media coverage and political ideology influence the managers' attitudes towards transformation and diversity management.

The aim of this study is to concentrate on the things that can be put in place to ensure that effective transformation and the management of diversity in the merged FET colleges does indeed occur. The evaluation of diversity management and transformation process in the FET colleges is necessary because in South Africa, and particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, the restructuring process had seen technical colleges with diverse historical and administrative backgrounds being clustered together to form one FET college. As the role of FET college managers expands and as their position as legal representatives of diverse communities' interests becomes further legitimised, it becomes clear that they have to manage diversity in the transformation process. This study therefore concentrates, among other things, on the managers' preparedness to cooperate with diverse groups of employees and other role-players in the management of FET colleges in order to promote effective service delivery that will benefit diverse communities.

For effective service delivery to take place there should be proper administration and greater participation in the management of FET colleges. The importance of

participation in the management of colleges is highlighted by Poltrock and Goss (1993:181), when they suggest that the managers' willingness to cede traditional decision-making authority would help to alleviate the distrustful, adversarial and conflictual relationships that have characterised the labour relations between employees and management. This study examines how diverse groups and college management function in cohesion as a combination of social units to improve service delivery in FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

The emphasis of this study is on diversity management during the process of transformation of FET colleges to assess whether managers place the emphasis on the representativeness of cohesion or on the interwovenness of different social structures, with historically, culturally and educationally diverse colleges featuring greatly in that interconnectedness. The researcher is of the opinion that the goals of transformation cannot be achieved without proper and effective diversity management in FET colleges. This investigation therefore locates itself within the goals of transformation, and it seeks to confront the question of how effective diversity management of FET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal, as well as in the whole country, can assist in achieving the aims of access, equity, redress and equality in the public further education and training institutions.

## **1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The FET band in South Africa has had a long history of neglect and has been characterised by a range of legislated prejudices, which had resulted in technical colleges fraught with discrimination and inequality. Mda and Mothata (2000:2) maintain that in the pre-1979 period, many of the African technical colleges were deliberately located in the Bantustans often unconnected to a viable local economy and unlinked to an effective social development strategy. The 1980-1983 period represented a new phase for colleges because it was during this time that the Wiehahn, Riekert, and De Lange Commissions recommended the permanent urbanisation, unionisation and apprenticeship of black workers in the

formerly white urban industrial centres of South Africa. Hartshorne (1992:156) indicates that a number of new technical and vocational colleges sprang up, and changes began to occur after this period. The emergence of new technical colleges after this period can therefore be closely linked to the findings and recommendations of these Commissions, particularly the De Lange Commission.

In the new democratic society, the apartheid legacy of fragmentation and unequal provision of technical and vocational education necessitated a different vision to create a coordinated, accessible and responsive system. The Education White Paper 4 on Further Education and Training sets out a broad and long-term national framework for the transformation of the FET sector (White Paper on Further Education and Training 1998:1). The democratic government maintains that the racial fragmentation had to be combated by an education and training system that would promote acceptance of cultural diversity and democratic rights and responsibilities.

In September 2001, the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, launched the merger process that was to reduce 152 technical colleges into 50 merged FET Institutions. The launch set in place a process the purpose of which was to ensure that 50 institutions became established as viable FET colleges that would be able to fulfil the FET mandate as spelt out in the Education White Paper 4, which is a programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training system in South Africa.

In KwaZulu-Natal, the national strategy for the restructuring of the technical colleges required that the previous twenty-four institutions be clustered into nine FET colleges. The twenty-five skills centres established under the previous government had also been incorporated into the restructuring exercise, currently under the management of the nine merged FET colleges. Before the establishment of FET colleges, the technical colleges in KwaZulu-Natal followed

the pattern of the historical legacy of the apartheid education system. Colleges were established along racial lines to provide technical and vocational education for different racial groups. The resource and funding investment in these institutions reflected the legacy of disparate and iniquitous funding levels (Angelis et al. 2001:23). Their histories and resource levels correlated, therefore, with the racially determined policies. The technical colleges were, to a significant extent, unaligned with the education and training needs of the province.

The restructuring process in KwaZulu-Natal pursued the achievement of a changed institutional landscape in which all colleges would be equally resourced and where all traces of apartheid provision and practice would be removed (White Paper on Further Education and Training 1998:1). The design of the new institutional landscape for FET colleges had been a consultative process with full support of both National and Provincial governments. There was a strong political commitment to see the transformation of technical colleges succeed (Angelis et al. 2001:23). There was a risk, however, that institutional stakeholders might see the transformation process as a threat, rather than as a window of opportunity for colleges to play a more strategic role in attracting the previously disadvantaged communities into the FET sector (Angelis et al. 2001:40). It will be established, through this study, whether the stakeholders and particularly college management, were fully prepared to support the transformation of these FET colleges.

The merging of technical colleges presented new challenges for managers and the whole administrative personnel. They had to unlearn the undemocratic, bureaucratic management style of the past and attempt to create strategies that would inspire the best in employees coming from diverse historical, educational and cultural backgrounds. Since 1994, major achievements had been made in instilling basic democratic principles and granting of equal rights to all groups of the population (McFarlin, Coster & Mogale-Pretorius 1999:51). Moreover, South Africa has been reintegrated into the international community and a set of new



policies directed towards correction of the previous social imbalances had been initiated. However, as Maseko (1994:5) states, the systematic problems inherited from the apartheid regime are deep rooted and structural in nature. Maseko (1994:6) continues to maintain that it has proved a complicated and cumbersome process to rectify the unjust of the past and to build up a new civil service. Thus, there might still be some weaknesses in the areas of governance and management which could seriously undermine the development of diversity management initiatives and policies in FET colleges.

Many technical colleges had a prolonged tradition for government dependence and neglect of community interests (Mda & Mothata 2000:2). Besides, the technical colleges often had a connotation of inferiority and low status. It is therefore nothing less than a small revolution to have the colleges establishing links with diverse groups and redirecting their policies to meet local needs. It can be foreseen that giving priority to diversity management will require substantial mental orientation among the managers of the clustered FET colleges.

The cluster model itself, as a model for development, is being questioned by some authors. Bellis (2001:9), for example, maintains that the cluster model offers the potential for resentment, leading to damaging divisiveness and that such possible resistance might also arise from a self-perceived lack of capacity among college staff to undertake the transformation process, which could cause them to resist the proposed changes. Bellis (2001:9) continues that it is not easy to bring together major parts of a society's life that have for so long been separate – not only separate but also different in status, different in funding, and unequal in so many tragic and iniquitous ways.

Bhindi and Duignan (1997:117) point out that traditionally managers could control and manipulate organisations more readily than they can today because organisations were seen as less complicated, environments were stable, and power and wisdom were perceived to flow from their heroic figures. However, in

Wolin's view (2001:13), the ascent of western civilisation, including advancements in science and technology, in economic organisation, and in world exploration, along with the growth of populations, energised by new social, economic and political ideas, brought a shift in perspective "from the acquisition of power to its production". In South Africa, since the advent of democracy in 1994, legislative frameworks and policies have been put in place to deal with many challenges facing the managers in public institutions. These legislative frameworks have initiated the creation and implementation of new policies and legislation to achieve equity, redress, democracy, equality, empowerment and development. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 encapsulated changes which made provision for fundamental rights and equality of all South African citizens, irrespective of race, colour or gender. The Constitution signalled the right of all individuals to participate in and contribute to change that would bring about the meaningful transformation of South African society.

Angelis et al. (2001:40) maintain that South Africa is a complex, multicultural and multiracial country, where traditional beliefs and socio-cultural practices live side by side. It is therefore important to acknowledge that cultural differences and tensions still exist and to work with these in the creation of a non-racial society in which unity is the result of an acceptance and understanding of cultural diversity. The individual history and the unique culturally constructed reality of managers may prevent them from recognising, tolerating and accepting culturally diverse employees. The legacy of past authority may still be prevalent, as one which promoted authoritarianism based on racial, gender and cultural domination. Bellis (2001:19) maintains that such practices limit ownership, cooperation, innovation, commitment and flexibility. The old practices, structures and a sense of protectionism may continue to stand in the way of transforming the FET colleges. A culture of dependency, in case of historically black technical colleges, may further serve to undermine staff capacity for self-worth.

Given the legacy of the apartheid ideology of exclusivity, it is necessary to investigate whether the present governance, management and administration structure of FET colleges can form a sound and lasting basis for diversity management where there can be an effective participation by a diverse range of constituencies. As FET colleges transform into a democracy, one of the challenges they face will be to determine what the common values are that join all its parts into one. This implies that FET colleges have to set out to change the cultural, racial and religious profile of their staff members in order to serve their diverse communities more effectively.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

#### **1.3.1 Significance of the study**

A cross-section of the field of public administration and management reveals that very little research has been conducted on diversity management in the recently merged FET institutions. The relative unavailability of literature with regard to diversity management in FET colleges is in itself a sign that research has to be done in order to provide more insight and improved approaches to this issue. It is important to note that managing diversity, in its present form, is a relatively new phenomenon in the merged FET colleges. The FET band, which in the past has been marginalised from the educational mainstream, is now positioned to become a central instrument for societal reconstruction in many societies. Clegg, Hardy and Nord (2003:241) maintain that this new role is driven and shaped primarily by the activities such as economy, politics, culture, technology, as well as natural resources.

The FET band, more than any other education and training sector, exists at the intersection of a wide range of government policies which are critical to the new informational economy (Allais 2006:11). This positioning of the FET band requires that the managers become transformational leaders who would be

willing to cede their traditional power in favour of the changes in the sector. It is therefore significant that the managers' attitudes towards diversity management are investigated, more especially because the managers, and particularly educational managers in South Africa were conditioned to operate in an undemocratic, bureaucratic environment (Hartshorne 1988:3). It may be taking the issue too far to claim that diversity management is the most talked about but least implemented corporative objective. However, the fact remains that, as a strategic objective, diversity management often constitutes the poor relations and ranks low on the managers' list of priorities (Human 2005:1). Human (2005:1) maintains that in times of economic downturn, poor results and restructuring, it is the strategic objective which is most likely to be dispensed with altogether. Hence, this study concentrates on the things that can be put in place to ensure that effective diversity management occurs in public FET colleges.

South Africa faces the task of social transformation as a newly democratised state. The racial fragmentation and oppression of apartheid must be combated by education and programmes that promote acceptance of cultural diversity and democratic rights and responsibilities. The increasing interest in culture as one element in college administration stems from the fact that multiple cultures exist in FET colleges. Robbins (2005:150) suggests that there are often many and competing value systems that create a mosaic of organisational realities rather than a uniform corporate culture. Robbins (2005:150) argues that the larger and more complex the organisation the greater the prospect of divergent meanings leading to the development of subcultures and the possibility of conflict between them.

O'Neil (1994:108) supports this idea when he maintains that the relationship between organisational structure and culture is of crucial importance. He argues that the increased use of such cultural descriptors in the literature of educational management and administration is significant because it reflects a need for

educational organisations to be able to articulate deeply held and shared values in more tangible ways and therefore respond more effectively to new, uncertain and potentially threatening demands on their capabilities (O'Neil 1994:116). Arber (1999:87) argues that organisations articulate values in order to provide form and meaning for the activities of organisational members in the absence of visible and certain organisational structures and relationships. In this sense, it can be maintained that the analysis and influence of organisational structure becomes essential in the pursuit of increased and effective management of diversity.

The restructuring of FET colleges brought with it some cultural and educational diversity challenges which the college managers and administrators have to address in their day-to-day administration of these institutions. The merging of technical colleges had seen institutions with diverse backgrounds and administration culture being clustered together to form one FET college. The diversity of needs which FET colleges must meet requires institutional flexibility, differentiation, and an appropriate balance between specialised forms of provision and the development of new, comprehensive institutions. Further Education and Training is seen as one of the means through which differences in culture, wealth and opportunities can be addressed by targeting existing educational inequalities associated with race, age, gender and location.

Erasmus et al. (2005:5) suggests that to understand the public sector institution is to understand the nature of multicultural societies, and to administer that institution requires that one deals with the web of conflict and tension which may exist as several cultures and subcultures try to protect their way of life. Bass and Stogdill (1990:8) further maintain that managers have the main responsibility for managing diversity, generating and sustaining culture and communicating its core values and beliefs both within the organisation and to external stakeholders. It should be the goal of the college managers to review the organisational culture towards concepts in favour of diversity,

transformation, empowerment and democratic participation. Edwards (1995:17) maintains that it is the opinion of many policy-makers, administrators and managers that current organisational practices cannot be expected to successfully carry the burden of transformation without undergoing fundamental re-alignment.

According to Angelis *et al.* (2001:24), the Further Education and Training (FET) sector has the great potential to redress the social, political and economic inequalities inherited by the democratic government of 1994. However, the residual impact of the apartheid years may show considerable resilience, and transformation of the embedded inequalities may have not occurred as rapidly as desired. Since 1994, the emphasis has been on delivery of services equitably to all the people of South Africa. This has led to a need to transform the FET band into a dynamic, flexible and responsive societal agency capable of providing the high skills needed for economic success and social stability in the twenty-first century. This change in emphasis is critical to the culture of the FET sector and is rooted in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

Transformation does not happen in a vacuum. Pendlebury (1998:336) states that innovative and enabling policies and processes need to be developed to give momentum to the process of transformation. Another important aspect of transformation is the availability of human resources that will be able to drive this process in the right direction (van der Westhuizen 1996:646). Transformation of the FET sector needs managers who would be able to manage diversity in the merged FET colleges without losing the vision of the establishment of the further education and training system. This implies that the success of diversity management, including that of successfully merging the previously diverse technical colleges into an effective further education and training system, is dependent on the nature and quality of organisational leadership. It is thus every manager's responsibility to ensure that the new, merged FET colleges provide an important infrastructure and an opportunity for

South Africa to harness the talents, energies and full potential of all its people in order to ensure success in a diverse economy of the country.

In order to achieve the above, it is imperative for managers of FET colleges to understand the meaning of the concept of diversity management, and also in their hearts to be convinced that valuing diversity does make sound business sense. The researcher is of the opinion that the goals of transformation cannot be achieved without proper and effective diversity management. This investigation therefore locates itself within the goals of transformation, and it seeks to confront the question of how effective diversity management of FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as in the whole country, can assist in achieving the aims of access, equity, redress, and equality in the further education and training system.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that its focus will be on the promotion of equal opportunity and equity which is linked to existing government structures that are being created to ensure a structured and organised approach to implementing the provisions of the national Constitution. Important aspects of this investigation into diversity management include affirmative action and equity linked to capacity coordination and dynamics around access, retention and development of hitherto excluded staff on the basis of race and culture. The study will recommend strategies for the implementation of the Government's Management and Policy Framework for the FET band as outlined in the publication *A New Institutional Landscape for Public Further Education and Training Colleges : Reform of South Africa's Technical Colleges* (DoE 2001:3). Best practices will be identified and this will assist the FET sector in general, and the FET colleges in particular, to build on the experiences gained through related activities.

The significance of this study also lies in the fact that after it has been completed, fears and feelings of inadequacy and insecurity will be eliminated

because college managers will no longer be confused about what is expected of them regarding issues of diversity management. Human (2005:1) maintains that talk of increasing diversity will fill managers with contempt, and few will rise to the challenge. The result tends to be poor implementation combined with increasing apathy and cynicism if managers do not understand the meaning of the concept of diversity. This study is therefore an attempt to discover the reasons for better diversity management to enable college managers to recognise the need to integrate diversity into people management systems as well as into corporate objectives, with clearly articulated performance management processes in tow.

### **1.3.2 Problem statement**

Transformation of FET colleges will not take place overnight. The challenges are substantial, and resources are limited. Yet the country faces immediate pressing needs, for instance in addressing the situation of the previously marginalised. Developing the human resources to meet the demands and opportunities of the future cannot be postponed. The key question, hence is not whether to begin the process of transformation, but how to begin in the right place. It is for this reason that governance in FET colleges assumes a new importance, as an instrument not only of effective management and administration, but of systematic and institutional change. Accordingly, as an instrument of change, governance needs to give concrete expression to the concepts of diversity management, participation, responsiveness, cooperation and partnership. Governance needs, moreover, to bring together the education and training elements of a national human resource development strategy.

The many varied stakeholders in the FET sector alert us to the need for effective diversity management of colleges. There are a range of human resource implications. In order for this system to be put in place and there is an urgent need for intensive capacity building for the different categories of all staff



in the FET institutions. It is necessary to devise a re-training programme for all staff involved in the management of public FET institutions, as each existing institution might have evolved its own style and tradition of management over the years. The development of effective diversity management at college level is a prerequisite for transformation. It should be a priority to improve diversity management skills, through training and personal development.

Human (2005:1) maintains that factors such as the managers' lack of understanding of the concept of diversity, non-integration of diversity into the strategic agenda and into people management systems, and the failure by top management to manage performance around diversity in the same way as other strategic issues, might militate against the implementation of diversity management policies in the public FET institutions.

Barriers to diversity management reside in the human resources available to bring about the extensive changes which are envisaged in the institutional transformation strategy plan (Daft & Marcic 2007:31). The human capacity available to spearhead the planned developments might be high but it is equally likely, however, that there might be insufficient capacity of this calibre to ensure that implementation is successful at all levels of the FET sector. The history of the sector, in particular and of the province in general, suggests that there may be residual antagonism to the restructuring process among professionals and employees working in the sector. The success of transformation, and thus diversity management in the FET sector may be threatened, however, if all the role players do not give their full support, but rather find ways to undermine the transformation process

After years of top-down relationships and practice, a sense of low trust and protectionism among staff in FET colleges may prevail until justice is seen to be done. Issues of race, gender and culture will bedevil future diversity management initiatives and programmes unless managers at all levels are convinced in their

hearts that valuing diversity makes a sound business sense. A legitimate power model, the high trust cultural model, can only be shaped through deliberate programmes designed for fostering goodwill and cooperation through diversity management initiatives.

Through the merger of technical colleges to form FET institutions, learners, lecturers, managers, administrators and stakeholders from different cultures as well as from all walks of life have been thrust together as they embark on their education and training. It therefore becomes important that the FET institutions are able to offer visible and tangible manifestations of cultural match to the environment in which they operate. In order to survive, FET colleges will have to recruit, train and promote culturally diverse employees (Erasmus *et al.* 2005:208). It is thus of primary importance for managers to understand the cultural beliefs and values of their organisation in order to manage diversity effectively. These beliefs and values coalesce to create an environment that employees perceive as supportive or not supportive of diversity. Henderson (1994:4) points out that within all organisations there are culturally supportive and non-supportive people, policies and informal structures which are sometimes referred to as the organisational culture, and influence the propensity to perpetuate particular behaviours.

Jacob (2003:15) suggests that organisational culture should support the accommodation of diversity so that in multi-cultural institutions, such as public FET colleges, new entrants could be made to interact with people from different cultures, and in the process they could learn new attitudes about those cultures. Ultimately, implementing and supporting diversity management should be the responsibility of all managers.

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

The purpose of this study is to

- Pursue theories of diversity management in the administration and management of public organisations through the ages and review their influence in the management of large, complex and multi-site public institutions. This will be done by surveying the history and theory of diversity in the past and present. Reference will be made to the past because the discipline of public administration is intimately concerned with the past, as any administrative problem is studied in its manifestation through the ages. This is done to determine what happened at a given time, and how managers and administrators of public institutions might have promoted or hampered diversity management policies, procedures and structures through the ages.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of workshops, empowerment and capacity building programmes as well as workplace intervention strategies which are aimed at helping college employees to accept, tolerate and respect other cultural groups. This will be done by surveying institutional development and human resource development in relation to the dimensions of culture, management, leadership and systems to find out whether these relate to the transformation of all those who are involved in the effort of changes. The researcher will indicate that transformation is not only about changing structures and physical properties, but is a process which must change those who are its proponents. The study will recommend diversity management strategies that will focus on how the FET colleges can increase diversity without losing the benefits of organisational homogeneity, such as consistency in organisational values and quality levels.
- Survey college managers' perceptions of labour unions with a view to determining the extent to which the labour unions and college managers cooperate in achieving their objectives and fulfil their obligations of providing employees with a conducive workplace where there is acceptance, tolerance and respect for different cultural groups. Particularly, labour unions' role in

shaping development opportunities and outcomes through various strategies and interventions will be examined. This will be done by surveying labour union involvement in the management of public institutions in foreign countries to determine the common problems encountered and how those problems were solved. The study will also examine the role and nature of trade union activity on equality, for example, on equality bargaining and cultural diversity issues. The study will outline the economic and political objectives of trade unions insofar as they relate to equality and diversity. This will be done by discussing the features of internal trade union organisation and democracy, which may give rise to constraints on the unions' ability to pursue an equality and diversity agenda. Discussing unions' failure to adequately address equality issues, Kirton and Greene (2005:173) suggest that unions need to be seen to meet the needs of diverse groups of employees in order to boost membership recruitment. Thus positive and successful union actions in the areas of discrimination and equality will be major selling points in the drive to recruit diverse members. The researcher will indicate that the potential of collective bargaining to promote equality is derived from its nature as a collective instrument, which should widen the focus from individual cases of discrimination to achieving equality for the entire workforce. The study will therefore indicate that equality and diversity issues can easily slip off the bargaining agenda in a hostile economic or organisational climate, more so particularly if union negotiations have little or no practical interest in them. The study will recommend strategies for college managers to cooperate with labour unions in realising their potential as agents of change and in promoting equality and diversity management policies successfully.

- To provide guidelines and recommendations for managing diversity in the governance, management and administration of FET colleges in the province of Kwazulu-Natal. This aim concerns itself with the organisational systems and culture necessary to allow the FET colleges to radically improve their

capacity to manage diversity. The researcher will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current situation since these constitute reality. The guidelines and recommendations will be developed around issues of diversity management, and how this is pursued by FET college managers without compromising institutional identity and mission. In making relevant guidelines more accessible to practitioners, the intention will be to promote both greater understanding of the concepts underpinning effective diversity management practice and to develop the capability of senior and middle managers in colleges. Before attempting to draw on the detailed investigative work of the study, the researcher will examine a number of policy and strategy documents from FET colleges. Such statements, when analysed, will offer insight into possible scenarios that would, if adopted, influence the characteristics, scale and direction of FET colleges. From the totality of fieldwork, access to an extensive bank of documentation, and the analyses gained from policy statements, the researcher will formulate conclusions leading to recommendations. The thrust of all guidelines and recommendations will be informed by issues of diversity management. At college level, the recommendations will aim at increasing the potential of the FET college to serve a wide range of clients by increasing articulation between stakeholders, cooperative activity in areas of common need, and joint efforts to remove and redress inequities.

This study seeks to examine the general applicability of the diversity management concept. It explores the issues confronting the management of human resource in Further Education and Training Colleges, how people management approaches had been applied to diversity issues and how FET college management and administration practice impinges on the application of the diversity management concept.

### **1.4.1 Objectives of the study**

Subsequent to the above aims, the objectives of this study are the following

- To find out if the management and administration personnel of merged FET Colleges were capacitated to address issues of redress, access, equity and equality in their attempts to manage the FET clusters as one entity.
- To determine the extent to which the diversity management concept is integrated into the strategic objectives of the FET colleges and how this fits with the mission and vision of each FET college.
- To evaluate the role of labour unions, community leaders and College Councils in assisting FET college management to promote transformation and diversity management.
- To investigate barriers to the successful implementation of diversity management policies in the FET College sector in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.
- To determine whether the historically disadvantaged campuses are benefiting from diversity management and transformation processes.
- To develop and recommend strategies for effective management of diversity in FET colleges.

This study is therefore an attempt to contribute to the development of a quality diversity management system and improvement thereof which will assist to measure performance on the basis of national standards and identify weaknesses, in order to provide support to FET college managers.

### **1.4.2 Research Questions**

The above objectives give rise to the following questions

- Is the management and administration personnel of merged FET Colleges capacitated to address issues of redress, access, equity and equality in their attempts to manage FET clusters as one entity?
- How is diversity integrated into strategic objectives of the FET Colleges and how does this fit with the mission and vision of each college?
- What role is played by labour unions, community leaders and College Councils in assisting FET College management to promote transformation and diversity management?
- What barriers can either impede or block the implementation of diversity management and transformation in the FET college sector in the province of KwaZulu-Natal?
- How are historically disadvantaged campuses benefiting from diversity management and transformation processes?
- What strategies can be recommended for effective management of diversity in FET colleges?

### **1.5 RESEARCH METHODS**

While a more detailed exposition of the methodology, the rationale for the choice of methodology and research design are presented in Chapter Four, a basic overview will be given in this chapter. The research focussed on diversity management, with particular emphasis on the things that can be put in place to ensure that effective diversity management occurs in FET colleges. In keeping with the objectives outlined in the study, the research methodology that was employed consisted of approaches that would help the researcher to describe and analyse the participants' individual and collective social actions, beliefs,

thoughts and perceptions. These research methods included a literature survey (see Chapter Two) and a semi-structured interview (see Appendix A).

### **1.5.1 Literature Survey**

A study of literature on diversity management, with particular emphasis on the role of college managers and employees, represented by labour unions, was undertaken. International literature as well as South African sources were studied. The literature study was used to gather information about diversity management, including the managers' perception of diverse cultural groups and policy interventions at the level of government and FET colleges. The literature survey was based on the longitudinal consideration of recorded data indicating what has happened in the past and what the present situation reveals.

An in-depth study of literature was applied to ascertain the traces of past events. Literature relevant to this work, for example, writing on the dynamics of managing diversity in public institutions, was selected. The process included the consultation of records of the past events that are written or printed. Documents that were consulted include journals, bulletins, periodicals, theses, official minutes of meetings, regulations, laws and every possible secondary source of information. The researcher interpreted these documents to provide explanations of the past and to clarify the collective administrative meanings that may be underlying current practices and issues.

### **1.5.2 The semi-structured interview**

To supplement the information not available from documents, a semi-structured interview schedule was used as a data-collecting tool (see Appendix A). The managers of FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal were requested to respond to the semi-structured interview schedule.



The semi-structured interview questions were used to reveal the impact of the diversity and cultural differences, and how these are managed by local college managers. They were used to determine the extent to which FET colleges are influenced by local environments, realities, circumstances and the like, in the formulation, development and implementation of transformation and diversity management policies.

Conducting an interview is a more natural form of interacting with people than making them fill out a questionnaire, do a test or perform some experimental task, and therefore fits well with the interpretive approach to research (Terre Blanche & Kelly 1999:128). This method gives the researcher an opportunity to get to know people quite intimately, so that he can really understand how they think and feel about diversity and diversity management in colleges. The researcher conducts semi-structured interview because he would expect people to talk to him in some depth about their feelings and experiences with regard to diversity management in their colleges.

The researcher therefore developed an interview schedule with a list of key topics (see Table 4.3). These topics were tried out with colleagues before they were administered to participants. When conducting the interview, the researcher ensured that there was an adequate degree of privacy. The responses were coded, tabulated and summarised numerically using a computer.

## **1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY**

This investigation covers all public FET colleges which fall under the administration of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Education Department. There are nine public FET colleges which were established in accordance with the Government's Management and Policy Framework for the FET band as outlined in *A New Institutional Landscape for Public Further Education and Training*

*Colleges Reform of South Africa's Technical Colleges* (DoE 2001:3). In KwaZulu-Natal, twenty-four technical colleges were merged into nine FET colleges, each with a number of campuses under its administration. The clustering of technical colleges in KwaZulu-Natal took place in line with the national strategy for restructuring in which the skills centres that were established under the previous government became part of the restructuring exercise.

The restructuring process that was to reduce twenty-four technical colleges and a number of skills centres into nine merged FET colleges was launched in September 2001 by Professor Kadar Asmal, who was the then Minister of Education. The launch set in place a process the purpose of which was to ensure that further education and training institutions became established as viable FET colleges that would be able to fulfil the FET mandate as spelt out in the Education White Paper Four *A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training* (1998:7).

The merging of technical colleges had seen institutions with diverse backgrounds and administration cultures being clustered together to form one FET college. The current FET colleges which were created from the previous technical colleges, and which form part of this study, are the following

- Coastal KZN FET College which covers the southern part of the Durban area. Under its administration are As-Salaam, Durban, Swinton, Ubuhlebogu, Umbumbulu, Umlazi-BB, and Umlazi-V campuses.
- Elangeni FET College which covers areas around Pinetown including Hammersdale. Under its administration, there are KwaMashu, Mpumalanga, Ndwedwe, Ntuzuma, Pinetown, Kwadabeka, Nanda and Qadi campuses.

- Esayidi FET College on the South Coast of the Province which has the following campuses under its administration: Enyenyenzi, Port Shepstone, Gamalakhe, Clysdale, Kokstad and Umzimkhulu campuses.
- Majuba FET College on the northern part of the Province. The campuses under its administration are Centre for People Development, IT & Business, Majuba Technology Centre and Newcastle Technology Centre campuses.
- Mnambithi FET College on the north western part of the Province, which covers campuses in Ladysmith, Ezakheni and Estcourt.
- Mthashana FET College which covers the north eastern part of the Province. Under its administration are Emandleni, Gqikazi, Maputa, Nquthu and Vryheid campuses.
- Thekwini FET College in the central Durban area, with the following campuses under its administration: Asherville, Centec, Melbourne, Springfield, Cato Manor and Umbilo.
- Umfolozi FET College on the North Coast of the Province. The campuses under its administration are Richtek, Mandeni, Eshowe and Esikhawini.
- Umgungundlovu FET College which is the midland of the Province. Under its administration are Edendale, KZN-Midlands, Msunduzi, Northdale and Plessislaer campuses.

Before the restructuring, these FET Institutions were non-existent. The vocational education of the people of the KwaZulu-Natal Province was previously under the authority of the different Education Departments. The following different ministries of education governed vocational education and training in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal

- Department of Education and Culture (House of Assembly) for whites.
- Department of Education and Training (DET) for Africans outside of the independent and non-independent homelands.
- Department of Education and Culture (House of Representatives) for Coloureds.
- Department of Education and Culture (House of Delegates) for Indians.
- Department of Education and Culture for the non-independent homeland of KwaZulu-Government.

In terms of the previous Constitution of the Republic of South Africa education for each population group was an own affair and hence the responsibility of the political structure established to serve that particular population group. However, the new Constitution required that a single, non-racial education system be introduced where all schools, including FET colleges, be brought together under one Education Department. The new institutional landscape transformed the previous, racially-governed technical colleges into large, multi-site and non-racial FET colleges. The bringing together of the traditionally separated technical colleges into large, non-racial FET institutions represents the achievement of a changed institutional landscape in which all colleges would be equally resourced and where all the traces of apartheid provision and practice would be removed.

In this study, the researcher chose the FET colleges in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal as his field of study because, unlike most of the provinces in the country, the province of KwaZulu-Natal has different types of colleges under its jurisdiction, which are very distinct in their diversity. The merged colleges were previously managed differently, which points to the fact that college managers,

particularly campus managers, have different managerial backgrounds and experience. During the merging of technical colleges, the managers of the newly merged colleges were recruited from all the previous, different ministries of education. The KwaZulu-Natal Province is therefore a microcosm of the country, representative of other provinces, and reflecting the FET college administrative system as functioning in the whole of South Africa. Thus, a study in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, with particular reference to diversity management, will hopefully cast more light on the problems surrounding the management and administration of FET colleges in the province as well as in the entire country.

## **1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The researcher expected to be limited in the study by a few aspects, discussed below

- The scarcity of literature on diversity management, particularly on diversity management in merged public FET institutions makes it difficult to determine exactly where relationships, differences and shortcomings exist. It is not easy to compare the findings of this research with those of other researchers in this field. It is therefore difficult to ascertain if any change of attitude in college managers with regard to diversity has taken place since the introduction of a single, non-racial further education and training system, as well as the merging of technical colleges.
- There are college managers and officers of the Education Department who want to avoid any form of cultural and racial conflict with stakeholders. Such an attitude gives the impression that there is cooperation between those college managers and the different cultural groups, whereas in reality, they succumbed to the demands of the dominant group members by compromising important issues or by carrying out departmental policies inadequately (Orlosky *et al.* 1984:32). These college managers usually do not

keep records and minutes of meetings between them and rebellious group members. This is a problem for this study because the real attitudes and perceptions of these college managers about diversity issues are hidden under these pretences. Following this case, the researcher foresees the problem of responses that could be manipulated to give the impression that diversity is managed favourably by managers in such colleges.

In order to counteract the above limitations, the researcher developed an interview schedule covering a wide range of key topics. The researcher hopes that through participative method of investigation, better understanding of the implementation of diversity management in FET colleges will be achieved. The reason for this is that people will be made to feel at ease to provide inputs regardless of their position, cultural background or origin more so because when conducting the qualitative investigation, the researcher will ensure that there is an adequate degree of privacy and confidentiality.

## **1.8 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

For better understanding of this study, it is important that certain terms and concepts are clarified. It is therefore important to define concepts such as further education and training, diversity management, cluster, stereotypes, and so on, within the context in which they will be used in this study.

### **1.8.1 Further Education and Training**

The “Further Education and Training” (FET) band is a complex component of the education and training system which comprises diverse sub-sectors and programmes. Education policy formulation since 1990 has ascribed the “FET” a distinctive character and radical definition, that being the inclusion of formal senior secondary schooling alongside colleges, enterprise training and other private providers as the key institutions of the “FET” band (Green Paper on

Further Education and Training 1997:1). This is not the case internationally, where senior secondary schooling remains located within the general education band. As such, South African “FET” is exceptionally broad and all-inclusive. Formally, “FET” is defined as that band which provides learning programmes between National Certificate Vocational (NCV) Levels 2-4 on the National Qualifications Framework (Kraak & Hall 1999:1). The NCV is awarded on completion of the requirements of National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 4. “FET” is the most complex and diverse phase of education and training, comprising four types of institutions, senior secondary schools, technical and community colleges, enterprise-based training, and a wide array of private providers (Young & Gamble 2006:3). The defining characteristics of “FET” are that it allows for more specialisation than general education, and provides more context-based skills in preparing learners for higher education and the world of work (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:1). It needs to be responsive to individual and socio-economic needs, and orientated to issues of redress and democratisation in a changing South African society. The mission of “FET” is to foster mid-level skills, lay the foundation for higher education, facilitate the transition from school to the world of work, develop well-educated, autonomous citizens, and provide opportunities for continuous learning through the articulation of education and training programmes (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:2).

In this study, the term “Further Education and Training” will be used to refer to public institutions that emerged as a result of a policy that arose from the publication of four key policy texts on “FET” in 1997 and 1998. These policy documents are the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE) entitled *A Framework for the Transformation of Further Education and Training in South Africa*, The Green Paper on Further Education and Training, entitled *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century through Education, Training and Work*, The Education White Paper 4, entitled *A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training*, and the Further Education and Training Act, 98

of 1998. The proliferation of these policy documents resulted in a new landscape for FET colleges in South Africa in which the 152 technical colleges were transformed into 50 large, multi-site FET colleges. This study will focus only on the nine public, multi-site “FET” colleges in KwaZulu-Natal. The acronym “FET” will be used frequently throughout the study.

### **1.8.2 College manager**

Administration and control are actually facets of “college management” and “college administration”, which involve matters such as policy-making, planning, organisation, coordination, decision-making, financing, control and administration (Dekker & van Schalkwyk 1990:12). Administration is a way of ensuring the effective functioning of public institutions such as schools, colleges and education systems. The management policy, principles and methods followed by a college manager are fundamentally determined by his or her personal view of life, ethical standards, principles, values and the realities of his or her situation or environment. According to Everard and Morris (1995:5), “college managers” have some responsibility for directing, planning, organising and controlling the work of others. Dekker and Lemmer (1993:361) maintain that “college managers” occupy the middle level in the levels of educational hierarchy. The middle level, also referred to as the college management level in this study, consists of persons who are responsible for the co-ordination and control of activities to allow for the effective implementation of diversity management initiatives. For the purpose of this study, the concept “college manager” has been used to refer to persons who occupy the middle level of management hierarchy in a college management system and who are responsible for matters such as policy-making, planning, organisation, coordination, decision-making, financing, control and administration. “College manager”, “college administrator”, “middle manager” and “supervisor” are terms used interchangeably in this study, and include a college structure having



specific qualities and characteristics which give it a nature and identity unique among the structures of other components within the college organisation.

### **1.8.3 Managing Diversity**

“Managing diversity” is the concept of recognising the wide variety of qualities possessed by people within an organisation (Heery & Noon 2001:215). It emphasises the individuality of people, and the importance of valuing each person for his or her unique combination of skills, competences, attributes, knowledge, personality traits, etc. Advocates of “managing diversity” often present it as an alternative to equal opportunity. The latter is condemned for being obsessed with treating people the same, when people ought to be treated differently, in order to reflect their diversity. It is considered a new approach to fair treatment which values the individual, that is, respect for difference is stressed, and policies emphasising individualism are preferred. Critics argue that the concept of “managing diversity” underestimates the extent to which people share common interests, values, and have similar needs (Clegg, Hardy & Nord 2003:88). By focusing on the individual it ignores the importance of a shared, collective identity and the reality of social groupings (Heery & Noon 2001:215). Moreover, rather than addressing fair treatment, it abandons the idea entirely and appeals to the selfish and self-serving aspects of human nature. In between the advocates and the critics are commentators who argue that “management of diversity” has an important practical application because it allows organisations with an increasing diverse workforce to address the varying needs of both individuals and groups (Heery & Noon 2001:215). Importantly, it can provide a means of putting fairness and respect for differences on the agenda in organisations with managers who previously have been resistant or even hostile to equal opportunities (Thomas 1991:10).

In this study, the concept “managing diversity” has been used to refer to the practical application of “managing diversity” which allows FET colleges with an

increasing diverse workforce to address the varying needs of both individuals and groups. “Managing diversity”, “management of diversity” and “diversity management” are terms used interchangeably in this study and include policies, procedures, programmes and processes that are developed to put fairness and respect for differences on the agenda of FET institutions in their pursuit of organisational objectives.

#### **1.8.4 Cluster**

The concept “cluster” refers to an institutional re-organisation where institutions having different historical and educational backgrounds are grouped together or merged in order to rationalise resources, grow absorption capacity and share programmes (Greer 1999:90). The various institutional models can be designed for different requirements, for example, rural to inner-city conditions, and regional demands for specific programmes, such as forestry, marine, agriculture and mining, to be within a comprehensive set of programmes (Greer 1999:90). The concept “cluster” is intended to depart from the tendency for narrow mono-purpose and mono-functional institutions, which tended to be small, too numerous and fragmented, and which had shown an unequal distribution of facilities and other resources on a racial and class basis (Mda & Mothata 2000:45). When institutions are clustered, it is envisaged that each sub-system of delivery would be linked with providers in partnership, where the creative, flexible and community-oriented features of such organisations could be harnessed (Mda & Mothata 2000:45). The FET college model should be considered to be a key new institutional form that would become a significant part or core of public colleges, incorporating technical colleges, through the creation of multi-campus delivery sites. In this study, the concept “cluster” has been used to refer to the merging of different types of technical colleges, with different administrative backgrounds to expand capacity and increase participation rates, to deepen coordination systems, maximise resource distribution and respond to local socio-economic needs.

### **1.8.5 Stereotypes**

The term “stereotype” refers to a form of generalisation which normally has a positive or a negative judgement attached (Human 2005:18). As human beings we partly depend on stereotypes in order to make sense of the world. Stereotypes tend to resist change or modification. They help people to avoid inner conflict and insecurity, help them to maintain basic values relating to their roles in society and to provide them with an interpretative framework for judging their behaviour and that of others (Falkenberg 1990:107). Stereotypes help people to judge and interpret the behaviour of other people. They tell people where they stand in relation to other people who they judge to be of inferior or superior social status in comparison to their own (Human 2005:18). A “stereotype” is thus an unduly fixed mental impression of a group, a person or an object. It is a concept that suggests unconscious assumptions or prejudgement. In turn, this implies the assignment of status or the attachment of a value judgement (Coetzee 1990:31). The assignment of status, either positive or negative, in-group or out-group, good or bad, creates divergent performance expectations of individuals of different status (Falkenberg 1990:108). In other words, the status assigned to people will tend to inform what is expected of them (Falkenberg 1990 :108). Thus, as ideological elements, “stereotypes” convey not only situational information but also evaluative information, which corresponds with broader differences in society (Howard & Hammond 1985:20).

In this study the concept “stereotypes” has been used to refer to the manner in which college managers place differences against broader perspective of diversity by managing the communication they have with other employees and themselves, as well as the manner in which they understand and act in a situation in which people come from different national cultures and backgrounds.

### **1.8.6 Affirmative action**

“Affirmative action” is the term used in the United States of America to describe initiatives designed to promote equal opportunity and redress the existing disadvantage experienced by some groups (Heery & Noon 2001:4). It is a combination of both positive action and positive discrimination, backed up by “affirmative action” laws that developed out of the civil rights movements of the 1960s (Heery & Noon 2001:4). In a democratic South Africa, “affirmative action” policies were a necessary first step to move black employees into the corporate ranks where they could be trained and developed. According to the Public Service Labour Relations Act 105 of 1994, public institutions are to give access to all race groups, and will generally become heterogeneous in character. According to the spirit of the Constitution, structural and functional discrimination in public institutions is unconstitutional. As a result of the past political paradigm in South Africa, “affirmative action” has become inevitable and is aimed at the redistribution of power in terms of race and gender. According to Adams (1993:1) “affirmative action” can mean many things. It may refer to preferential financial assistance by business to institutions of those communities which have been traditionally disadvantaged (Innes, Kentridge & Perold 1993:33). It could mean the redistribution of resources and opportunities. It may also refer to racial preferential treatment for good reasons. For the purposes of this study, the concept “affirmative action” has been used to refer to the deliberate and practical steps that have to be implemented to eliminate inequalities which were created by deliberate design of the previous apartheid government.

### **1.8.7 Employment Equity**

“Employment Equity” is the response of Canadian policy-makers to the persistence of discrimination and disadvantage in employment experienced by women, racial minorities, aboriginal people, and persons with disabilities

(Grogan 2005:280). “Employment Equity” is regarded as an organisational change strategy designed to prevent and remedy discrimination and disadvantage by identifying and removing barriers in employment policies and practices and in the culture of the organisation, as well as by improving the numerical representation and distribution of the designated groups (Grogan 2005:280). “Employment Equity” is intended to achieve equity in the workplace through the elimination of unfair discrimination and through affirmative action strategies. To do this, it is suggested that the organisational environments must be prepared to be receptive to new entrants at all levels, which requires that the “Employment Equity” initiatives and the resultant diversity in organisations must be led from the top (Thomas 1996:94). “Employment Equity” initiatives go hand-in-hand with initiatives to address the organisational environment within which such initiatives must be effected. Central to the implementation of “Employment Equity” programmes is leadership that recognises that there are sound business reasons for ensuring that organisations attract and fully utilise diverse employees for competitive advantage. Porter (1990:72) has noted that government cannot create competitive industries, as only companies can do that. While it is certain that “Employment Equity” should be enacted, what will prove to be a greater challenge is the commitment of leadership to go beyond pure legislative requirements and to manage the challenges that are presented.

#### **1.8.8 Transformation**

The verb “transform” means to make a thorough or dramatic change in the form, outward appearance, character, and so forth. In South Africa it is used to refer to the post-apartheid process of social and political change to establish democracy and social equality (Concise Oxford Dictionary 2006:1262). The concept “transformation” therefore refers to an instance of transforming or the state of being transformed. Enslin and Pendlebury (1998) assert that “transformation” is an open-textured concept, understood differently by different people. Our understanding of institutional transformation is shaped by

constitutive meanings such as the removal of inequalities in access and provision of resources, democratisation of the administration system and improvement of the quality of service delivery (Waghid 2000:81).

In South Africa there has been a movement to restructure public institutions in order to increase institutional autonomy, to decentralise decision-making regarding institutional governance and management and to promote participation and collaboration by all stakeholders at an institutional level (Waghid 2000:81). Nationally, this approach is aimed at making it possible for public institutions like FET colleges to be more flexible and better equipped in meeting the challenges facing South African societies. This attempt has basically centred on promoting the autonomy, accountability and efficiency of FET colleges in order for service delivery to improve.

The initiatives to promote institutional autonomy, to decentralise decision-making and to promote participation and collaboration are strongly linked to the democratisation and transformation of the further education and training system (Waghid 2000:81). However, this move towards institutional autonomy and self-management does not guarantee positive change. Real transformation depends largely on the nature and quality of internal management therefore self-management should be accompanied by the devolution of power within the college and a transformational and a participatory leadership approach.

This study has adopted Waghid's (2000:81) definition that institutional "transformation" refers to the role that ought to be played by administrators, managers and supervisors to remove inequalities in access and provision of resources, to democratise institutional management and governance, and to improve the quality of service delivery.

### 1.8.9 Culture

Robbins (2005:150) describes “culture” as shared meaning, shared understanding and shared sense. In talking about “culture”, people are talking about a process of reality construction that allows them to see and understand particular events in distinctive ways. Understanding “culture” enables people to understand families and other institutions in relation to their environment. People come to know and relate to their environment according to the belief system that guides their interpretations and actions.

Morgan (1986:21) suggests that people learn the characteristics of a particular culture through observing the patterns of interaction, the language used, the norms that evolve, the various rituals and the dominant values and attitudes. Workers will seek the values of what constituted for them a good workplace and, to a certain extent, expect to find those qualities they assume to be good and trusted. Likewise, the institutions have a particular culture which is partly determined by the belief system. For example, there may be a strong belief in the homogeneity of employees. The belief that organisational goals can be achieved through harmonious behaviour may influence manager and employee attitudes to any outside intervention.

“Culture” and intercultural management are concern with the management of workforces functioning in culturally different operating contexts (Jacob 2003 :9). The researcher is of the opinion that cultural differences can be particularly stark when comparison is done across FET colleges and it can be just as much in evidence on different campuses, where each campus might be imbued with a distinctive cultural heritage.

### **1.8.10 Globalisation**

The concept “globalisation” is derived from the adjective “global” which refers to something relating to the whole world or embracing the whole of something, or of a group of things (Concise Oxford Dictionary 2006:495). “Globalisation” refers to an international integration, especially with reference to world trade and financial markets (Concise Oxford Dictionary 2006:495). Baylis and Smith (2001:7) define “globalisation” as the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events in one part of the world more and more have effects on peoples and societies far away. They further state that a globalised world is one in which political, economic, cultural, and social events become more and more interconnected, and also one in which they have more impact. In other words, societies are affected more and more extensively and deeply by events of other societies, which can be divided into social, economic, and political. Clegg, Hardy and Nord (2003:234) support this definition when they state that there is a growing sense that events occurring throughout the world are converging rapidly to shape a single, integrated world where economic, social, cultural, technological, business, and other influences cross traditional borders and boundaries such as nations, national cultures, time and space, and industries with increasing ease. “Globalisation” is thus an ongoing trend whereby the world has in many respects and at a generally accelerating rate, become one relatively borderless social sphere (Baylis & Smith 2001:8).

In this study, the concept “globalisation” has been used to refer to the global factors which have expanded in public sectors like FET colleges, and also which have encompassed many norms that govern the lives of public sector employees and their human rights. It has also been used to determine whether it can be regarded as a straightforward process of cultural homogenisation by bringing an end to cultural diversity.



## **1.9 PROGRAMME OF STUDY**

Chapter One of this thesis provides an introduction, background and foundation to the study. It gives a general introduction to the historical problem of race and employment discrepancies in the workplace. This chapter maps out the historical origins of the vocational education provisions in South Africa and outlines the role played by the previous apartheid government in dividing the workforce in the technical colleges according to racial and cultural groups. It further deals with the statement of the problem, aims of the study, the research methods that are used and the demarcation of the field of the study. Key concepts are also defined.

Chapter Two surveys the history and conceptual framework of diversity management and how these have impacted on the management and administration of technical colleges. The roles of governments, college administrators and other social structures are examined with reference to the past, to reveal current generally valid theories and practices. A descriptive survey of the role of FET colleges in producing a workforce that better represents all of the citizens is given. This chapter provides a conceptual framework of diversity management, application of such a concept and the consequences of a diversity framework. It covers the influence of culture and the applicability of a human resource approach to achieve diversity in the workplace. Literature from overseas countries, particularly the United Kingdom and the United States of America, is also reviewed.

Chapter Three contextualises the study within a public administration and development management paradigm. This chapter introduces the roles and the responsibilities of the government, managers, employees, trade unions, and other stakeholders in the process of transformation. It covers critical features impacting on the study, for example, the responsibility to maintain equity, the mandate for the public sector employer and the place of the Constitution in public administration. It focuses on the application of diversity management

practices in the workplace. This chapter also identifies and describes the current diversity management practices in FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Chapter Four gives an outline on the exploration of diversity management in FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The research questions, the pilot study, sampling strategy, and the measuring tools are identified and justified. This chapter outlines the qualitative investigation into the things that are either put in place or avoided by FET college managers and administrators in their day-to-day management of diversity.

Chapter Five discusses the findings and the conclusions of the entire project, with reference to the literature study as well as the qualitative research findings on FET college managers' engagement in diversity management issues in colleges.

Chapter Six gives the summary and discusses recommendations as to possible guidelines for managing diversity in FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

## **1.10 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, a general orientation to the problem has been presented. It was indicated that technical colleges from different administrative backgrounds had been clustered together to form multi-site FET Institutions. It was also indicated that during the previous apartheid government technical colleges were deliberately established along racial lines and this had resulted in unequal levels of development. It was thus pointed out that there was a possibility that the systematic problems inherited from the apartheid regime were deep rooted and structural in nature. It could therefore prove to be difficult for the college managers to unlearn undemocratic, bureaucratic ways of the past which could,

in turn, impact negatively on their attempts to manage diversity in a democratic society.

In the problem statement it was indicated that research has to be done in order to disclose the extent to which college managers are prepared to manage diversity in the clustered FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. In this chapter the aims of the study, the research methods that were used in the investigation as well as the demarcation of the field of study and limitations of the study were also discussed. Key concepts that are found in the study were defined. It has been found that, in order to gain insight into the research problem, a review of literature is necessary.

The following chapter therefore surveys the history and conceptual framework of diversity management in public institutions, including FET colleges, and discusses assumptions about, and influences of diversity issues such as cultures, values, behavioural preferences, and so forth. Literature from foreign countries, particularly the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as South African sources, is reviewed. The chapter will also outline barriers to diversity management in technical colleges during the apartheid era, and highlight pressures for change in the administration and management of public institutions, particularly FET colleges in South Africa.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE SURVEY

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a selection of literature on diversity management is reviewed. This is done by surveying the impact of diversity, particularly cultural diversity, in the administration and management of Further Education and Training (FET) colleges with a view to determining the extent to which these colleges achieve their objectives and fulfil their obligations of providing integrative mechanisms to diverse groups of employees. Foreign literature is also reviewed so as to determine the common problems encountered and how those problems were solved. The researcher will relate those solutions to the problems as far as the management of diversity in the FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal is concerned.

In this chapter, special attention is devoted to diversity management in FET colleges and how this is perceived by those who occupy management positions within the college and wider public administration and management system. This chapter discusses, *inter alia*, the following issues

- The history and theory of diversity management and how history impacts on the administration of FET colleges. This includes an historical survey of diversity management in foreign countries, particularly in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Before attempting to draw on detailed investigative work of the study, the researcher will examine policy and strategy documents from key players in the public administration domain. Such statements, when analysed, would give insight into possible scenarios that would, if adopted, influence the characteristics, scale and

direction of diversity management in public institutions. Reference is made to the history of diversity management and how this has been perceived by FET college managers and educational authorities. From the totality of literature review, fieldwork done, access to an extensive bank of documentation and analyses gained from policy statements, the researcher will formulate conclusions leading to recommendations at the level of administration and management in FET colleges.

- The role that has been played by managers and administrators in the exhibition of the attributes that directly or indirectly contributed to issues of diversity in FET colleges. Everard and Morris (1995:5) maintain that the ultimate aim of management at all levels of education is the creation and support of conditions under which lecturers and learners are able to achieve learning. Despite the crucial role which management personnel need to play, they have in the past received little or no training on the dynamics of responding to diversity within the college population (Bell 1991:337). The researcher is of the opinion that the successful management of diversity requires fair, not preferential, treatment and thus the role of this sector of college personnel remains central to the achievement of the vision of equal opportunities for all. Their influence in contributing towards a culture of democracy for all can therefore not be under-estimated. Their attitudes and their understanding of diversity management, human rights and inclusivity can bring about direct change in the way the college population responds to diversity in the workplace.
- The role of social groups, including labour unions and the local community in conditioning the South African institutional managers, particularly FET college managers, on how to perform their tasks within a diverse college population. The importance of social groups in the construction of identity is that social group membership influences both how individuals perceive themselves and how others perceive them (Goleman 2003:90). The

composition of the college workforce determines whether the members of the public have equal access to benefits and rewards. Both the government employment practices and public policies contribute to the level of economic equality in society. The interests of social groups are based on their particular objectives, as well as on the role which they generally play in society. Depending on the attitude of the college management, these groups' rights and responsibilities with regard to equal opportunity may be fully recognised. In democratic states, such community groups would be granted their rights, while these are denied in authoritarian states (Sergiovanni 1994:223). Kirton and Greene (2005:15) maintain that managing diversity in a democratic state seeks to achieve coherence within these social groups through a programme that promotes awareness of differences and empathy for those who are different.

It will be clear from the discussion that managing diversity is a country-wide business imperative to the extent that all colleges should have included diversity management in their strategic objectives. However, the racial fragmentation and oppression of apartheid has produced huge irregularities in South African society (Young & Gamble 2006:23). Further Education and Training is one of the means through which the differences in opportunities can be addressed by targeting existing employment inequalities associated with racial and cultural diversity.

It must be noted that this chapter does not offer a historical perspective in respect of racial and cultural divisions of the apartheid era in South Africa. In the discussion, attention is given to the problem of diversity management as it occurs in the FET colleges throughout the country, and particularly in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. While the focus of this study is on diversity management in FET colleges, it is imperative to note that education is not and cannot be divorced from other sectors of society, and the factors that drive these and the broader change process.

## **2.2 HISTORY AND THEORY OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT**

Managing diversity is fast becoming the watchword of public institutions, not because institutions are becoming kinder and gentler towards culturally diverse groups but because they want to survive (George & Jones 2006:114). In order to survive a growing number of public institutions will have to recruit, train and promote culturally diverse employees. The importance of social equity in the conduct of government and the distribution of public services has been advanced by a number of contemporary scholars. For instance, Cross et al (1994:xxii) view diversity as focussing on issues of racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination at the individual, identity group, and system levels. Cox (1993:5) focuses on cultural diversity, which he defines as “the representation, in a social system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance”. Thomas (1991:10) states that diversity extends to age, personal and corporate background, education, function and personality, and it also includes lifestyle, sexual preferences, geographic origin, tenure with the organisation, exempt or non-exempt status, and management or non-management.

The composition of the public service workforce determines whether the members of the public have equal access to the benefits and rewards. Both government employment practices and public policies contribute to the level of economic equality in society. In this case both government employment practices and public policies that distribute wealth and other resources may represent compensatory strategies (Frederickson 1980:151). The relevant managerial skills for effective management of diversity are cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, and flexibility to accommodate diversity. Jacob (2003:20) maintains that within the corporate context diversity managers, regardless of their cultural background, tend to exhibit homogenous managerial values and competencies. According to Jacob (2003:21), this management practice is usually concerned with profit and

does not recognise the importance of soft skills that are required to implement diversity management initiatives.

Governments pursue compensatory policies when they attempt to provide equal opportunities for those who have been disadvantaged as a result of discrimination within the labour market or through pre-market circumstances that produce unequal investments in human capital (Crous 2004:574). Managing these new economic and political pressures is therefore precisely about balancing the responsiveness and dynamism of the market mechanism with the developmental responsibilities of the state. Indeed, the international lessons learnt from world further education and training systems have shown that economic success is premised on the blending of enterprise-based initiatives in training with effective state coordination of the larger institutional and governance environments (Kraak & Hall 1999:47). It can therefore be said that managing diversity requires a dual response. On the one hand, it entails ensuring South Africa's successful incorporation within the global economy, and on the other hand, it requires the development of marginalised sectors through conscious state intervention. In the absence of such state initiatives, some sectors like the FET college sector, will slide into even far greater social and economic impoverishment.

With respect to the intrinsic rewards obtained from public sector employment, there are also significant and often unique benefits of government employment. Rawls (1993:107) argues that the execution of responsibilities in government employment provides an individual with an opportunity for self-realisation, and for that reason he links the principle of open positions to his concept of justice. Similarly, Hall (1996:20), suggests that certain individual motives for work are primarily attached to public service opportunities and fulfilment of individual needs related to these work values is largely dependent upon access to public service employment. With respect to participation in public bureaucracy, theories of equal representation involve both passive and active methods for giving the



preferences of different social groups fair opportunities to be heard. Passive or demographic representation in the bureaucracy conveys the idea that the political systems are open and responsive to the people regardless of their social standing or personal characteristics (Frederickson 1980:152). In the consensus model of democratic representation, the membership is expected to take a passive role, relying on those in leadership positions to pursue their interests. The linkage between passive and active representation is disputed in literature but at best it appears that passive representation has a very limited capacity for assuring political responsiveness (Frederickson 1980:153).

Active or substantive representation, in contrast, posits that the members of the bureaucracy must assume responsibility for democratic outcomes. Taylor and Bain (1999:39) maintains that expanding access to leadership positions in the bureaucracy advances the opportunity for diverse preferences to be considered in efforts to determine what constitutes the public interest and how it can best be addressed. Equity is not served when others attempt to represent the interests of those who are excluded from power, regardless of how effective they might be (Rawls 1993:149). The act of participation in government in itself is the vehicle for empowerment.

Support for the idea of joint participation, involving public servants in the responsibility for government outputs, has a long history in American public administration. In advancing a public service model, Campbell (1998:389) argues that the members of both the public and career services must take active responsibility to promote the public interest. Similarly, Henry's (1985:91) model of interactive democracy places full burden on managers in an organisation to facilitate the exchange ideas and opinions between memberships of different groups in order to develop a potential for attaining public spirit. According to Frederickson (1980:154) public spirit entails a responsibility for the community and a commitment to the political system as a whole and the development of a

sense of public spirit, rather than the attainment of preference consensus, is the goal of the interactive model.

A desire to serve the public interest and a sense of loyalty to government serve as a motivational basis for public service. The values distinguish public service from other occupations. Moreover, Ramaite (2001:19), argues that the essential ingredients for responsiveness in the public bureaucracy are the attitudes and values of the people who form the public service. The principles of social equity provide public administrators with a code of conduct and an ethic for balancing conditions between the advantaged and the disadvantaged members of society (Ramaite 2001:20). Principles of social equity in the allocation of public goods are also relevant to the way governments distribute the rewards of public service. Equal access to the material and intrinsic benefits of public service is a critical linkage to democratic rule in an administrative state, not only because it fosters individual opportunities for equality, but also because it advances collective opportunities for equal representation.

A key question in assessing equity within government is the extent to which management positions are equally distributed among members of different groups. When the lower ranks of the civil service are made up of members of one race and the upper levels of the bureaucracy are dominated by another, equal opportunity to influence the outcomes of government is undermined (Lynn 2001:156). Public servants in élitist positions have a greater chance to influence policies and programme outputs and, therefore, upper-level civil servants may play a key role in the development of public policy as members of advisory committees, which are the main policy-making bodies in South African public offices (Frederickson 1980:157).

There are some theoretical areas which influence current understandings of diverse identities in organisations but there is also a lack of specificity of the concept. Clegg, Hardy and Nord (2003:88) maintain that diversity is

underdeveloped as a scientific construct, and that it has largely drawn its present meaning from the work of organisational practitioners. This might be the reason why current definitions of diversity range from narrow to very broad, expansive conceptualisations. The narrow definitions emphasise race, ethnicity and gender whereas a broadened view of diversity would include values, age, disabilities, and education. The following paragraphs review the proposed theoretical diversity frameworks.

### **2.2.1 Social Identity Theory**

One of the most prominent intergroup theories informing us about group identity effects on human behaviour has been social identity theory (SIT). Social identity theory is defined by Clegg, Hardy and Nord (2003:89) as a cognitive theory which holds that individuals tend to classify themselves and others into social categories which have a significant effect on human interactions. According to Jackson, Stone and Alvarez (1993:53), one of the most important contributions of social identity theory to the field of diversity research is the notion that people within social groups differ in the relative importance that any particular social identity has in their self-concept hence, one of the implications of SIT is that group identity should ideally be operationalised for research as a continuous scale measure. Clegg, Hardy and Nord (2003:92) are of the opinion that, to the extent that identities with sub-groups take precedence over the common organisational identity, the ability of people to work together in teams composed of members from different group identities may be hampered by the consequences of group identification.

### **2.2.2 Embedded Intergroup Relations Theory**

Alderfer and Smith (1982) have developed a theory of embedded intergroup relations specifically for organisations, which explicitly integrates identity group membership and group membership resulting from organisational categorisation.

Their theory posits that identity groups and organisation groups are two types of groups which exist within organisations. Alderfer and Smith (1982:56) defines an identity group as a group whose members share some common biological characteristics such as sex, have participated in equivalent historical experiences, are currently subjected to similar social forces, and as a result have consonant world views. Alderfer and Smith (1982:60) further describes an organisational group as one in which members share common organisational positions, participate in equivalent work experiences, and as a consequence, have consonant worldviews. Certain organisational groups tend to be populated by members of particular identity groups, for example, positions in upper management in organisations in the United States tend to be concentrated with older white males (Martin 1992:136). According to embedded intergroup theory, individuals and organisations are constantly attempting to manage potential conflicts arising from the interface between identity groups and organisational group membership (Alderfer & Smith 1982:47).

The significance of embedded intergroup theory for understanding identity is its attention to the effects of diverse identities within a larger organisational context (Alderfer & Smith 1982:48). The identity of individuals in organisations is said to be determined not only by organisational categorisation but also by identity group membership (Alderfer & Smith 1982:53). Alderfer and Smith (1982:54) further state that embedded intergroup theory recognises that individuals do not leave their racial, gender, or ethnic identities at the door when they enter an organisation. Embedded intergroup theory also suggests that identity group categorisation will always be relevant in an organisational context.

### **2.2.3 Ethnology**

Another part of the foundation of research on diversity is ethnology. Clegg, Hardy and Nord (2003:95) define ethnology as the branch of anthropology which deals with the social and cultural characteristics of different tribal groupings of people.

Ethnology, therefore, represents work which identifies cultural similarities and differences between identity groups, as well as analysis of cultural phenomena such as cultural distance and culture clash (Davidson 1993:298). Davidson (1993:298) determines that specific cultural differences can become barriers to communication and understanding between people, making it probable for those already in the in-group to exclude newcomers without overtly rejecting them. This insight may be applicable to the often cited problem of unequal accessibility across identity groups to informal networks in organisations. Finally, Tsui, Egen and Xin (1995:60) maintain that because of the possibility of culture clash, ethnology theory suggests that mixing people of different group identities in one social system may lead to a variety of dysfunctional outcomes unless steps are taken to overcome this problem.

## **2.3 TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT**

The three predominant traditional approaches to diversity management identified by Kossek, Markel and McHugh (2003:329) are diversity enlargement, diversity sensitivity and cultural audits. Clegg, Hardy and Nord (2003:97) maintain that all three of these approaches have similar architectures in that they are collections of learnings about what is important and not perspicacious theoretical statements which are easily adapted to mathematical equations for testing with linear statistics.

### **2.3.1 Diversity Enlargement**

Diversity enlargement approaches increase the representation of individuals of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds in an organisation (Kossek, Markel & McHugh 2003:329). The newly-hired employees are expected to assimilate into the existing corporate culture (Lovie 2001:96). The goal of this strategy is to create diversity by changing an organisation's demographic composition and increasing the numbers of people of colour in the organisation. Employers seem

to assume that increasing diversity and exposure to minority employees will result in improved individual and organisational performance. It is also assumed that little or no change needs to be made in organisational systems in order for minority employees to perform up to their potential. In addition, Kossek, Markel and McHugh (2003:330) maintain that diversity enlargement hiring strategies are viewed by some employers as being coerced by labour market demands and popular, 'politically correct' state of the art management sentiment, instead of being initiated voluntarily.

### **2.3.2 Diversity Sensitivity**

Diversity sensitivity approaches acknowledge the existence of cultural distance and attempt to teach individual members about cultural differences via training (Ferdman 1989:171). Often training sessions are held to help sensitise employees to stereotyped differences of various employee racio-ethnic and gender groups. The goal is to promote communication and understanding, and to build relationships among members of different backgrounds (Kossek, Markel & McHugh 2003:341). Yet accentuating dissimilarity will not necessarily enhance performance, and, when conducted in isolation, may even promote stereotyping and tokenism (Kossek, Markel & McHugh 2003:343). Zander and Zander (2000:113) are of the opinion that diversity training efforts have often failed by trying to raise consciousness without making any concomitant changes in the culture or relevant human resource systems such as reward and performance practices, and consequently, many employees are likely to be cynical when they attend training sessions that have no clear link to business objectives and are neither supported by other human resource system changes, nor by the new behavioural expectations of colleagues and managers.

### **2.3.3 Cultural Audit**

The cultural audit generally tries to determine what is blocking the progress of non-traditional employees. A consultant collects data via focus groups or surveys. These data are analysed to assess various demographic groups' identification of the major obstacles they face in the current culture (Zander & Zander 2000:115). Members of diverse group backgrounds may be asked to talk about how the current culture, which generally is viewed as favouring white males, hurts the performance of white women, blacks and other racial minorities. For example, Cox (1993:126) suggests that an increasing cadre of employees is no longer willing to suppress important cultural differences and those that do risk the potential costs of added stress and lower performance.

While it can be concurred that it is appropriate to assess the current culture's effectiveness in allowing all employees to contribute to their fullest potential, it is believed that conducting cultural assessments as an isolated strategy is likely to fail. The managers rarely focus on the redesign of human resource systems and practice, such as pay and promotion systems, which give clear messages about what behaviours in the culture are valued (Cox 1993:127). The audits may leave the impression that the white male culture in the organisation is the problem, so the change must predominantly come from white men (Kossek & Lobel 1996:117). Clearly, managing diversity is a mutual process and the new culture must be designed to be inclusive to allow all members to contribute to their fullest potential. Cultural audits not only need to focus on the differences between groups, but should also identify the similarities between groups that the culture and supportive human resource systems can reinforce to achieve organisational objectives. Finally, Dalglish (2009:61) maintains that cultural audits tend to largely rely on cross-sectional data. Even when longitudinal data are collected, rarely are pre- and post-data able to be matched to a specific respondent, and therefore it is impossible to know whether change has truly occurred, although human resource system modifications may have been made.

To summarise, there are several factors common to the three traditional diversity approaches, that is, diversity enlargement, diversity sensitivity and cultural audits, which prevent organisations from realising the potential benefits to be gained from increased diversity in the workplace. First, these methods do not reinforce culture change. Second, they have the limitation of often being introduced as isolated strategies without being linked to other relevant human resource subsystems. Third, they all assume in-group homogeneity. That is, it is presumed that all members of a minority group, be it women, racio-ethnic minorities or the differentially-abled, have the same human resource needs.

## **2.4 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS**

Organisations and their cultures are a function of the kind of people in them, who are a result of an attraction-selection-attrition cycle (Pynes 2004:9). Pynes (2004:10) maintains that human resource policies enable organisations to attract, select and retain different kinds of people, which is why various organisations act and feel as if they have different cultures. In effect, Pynes (2004:10) states that the people make the place, and the design and administration of human resource systems make the people. Individuals are generally attracted to and selected by organisations that appear to have members with values similar to their own. Pynes (2004:10) suggests that over time, employees who do not fit in well with the dominant culture eventually “turnover” from the organisation. In the long run, a workforce historically can be characterised by more homogeneity than heterogeneity in social characteristics.

Organisations have traditionally had human resource systems based on homogeneity which promoted similarity not diversity (Pynes 2004:10). Kosek and Lobel (1996:205) illustrate how traditional human resource management models foster workforce homogenisation when they state that recruiting practices emphasised hiring people from sources that have historically been reliable,



selection practices stressed choosing candidates similar to those who have been successful, training programmes fostered uniform ways of thinking, and policies were often designed to limit supervisor latitude in addressing employees' unique needs. It can therefore be maintained that traditionally, decision-makers have tended to hire, promote, and evaluate people in terms of the degree to which they were like their own image.

Such an approach has been coined "homosocial reproduction" by Nael (1998:37), referring to the tendency of selection and promotion systems to allow only those employees to pass through who fit with the characteristics of the dominant coalition. Unfortunately, too much similarity in the organisation can be detrimental to long-term growth, renewal, and the ability to respond to important environmental changes such as dynamic market conditions, new technologies and ideas, societal shifts, or the changing expectations of the workforce (Kirton & Greene 2005:84). Human resource policies supporting diversity can help the culture continually adapt in response to new environmental demands. Such systems are critical for attracting, selecting, motivating, developing, and retaining a highly skilled, diverse group of employees who possess the key success factors needed to compete in today's changing market place.

Many employer benefits of managing diversity have been noted in the literature. At the individual level, for example, performance can be enhanced when negative diversity-related barriers to productivity are removed (Thomas 1990:115). When work-group diversity is managed effectively, groups would develop processes that can enhance creativity, problem-solving, work-group cohesiveness, and communication (Kirton & Greene 2005:85). At the organisational level, performance may improve, marketing may be enhanced since organisations are hopefully able to better mirror and adapt to diverse markets, flexibility can be heightened, and improved recruitment of the best new labour force entrants can result (Thomas 1990:116).

Despite these reported benefits, their realisation has remained elusive for most organisations (Kahn 2001:9). Kahn (2001:9) suggests that this is because traditional human resource strategies to manage diversity have largely been introduced piecemeal, lacking integration with other systems, and consequently, they do not change the culture to support the management heterogeneity, and end up failing.

## **2.5 MANAGING DIVERSITY IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

As one of many interventions in the organisational development, managing diversity is primarily concerned with improving interpersonal, inter-group communications and relationships in the workplace (Kossek, Markel & McHugh 2003:347). The focus in managing diversity is on interactions between managers and the employees they supervise, and between employees and customers. Improved human relations are expected to result from promoting an increased understanding and acceptance and appreciation of those who are different from the traditional white male able-bodied employee or manager. Some of the expected benefits of diversity management programmes mentioned by Kossek, Markel and Mchugh (2003:330) include decreased conflict and stress, enhanced productivity of heterogeneous work and improvements in morale, job satisfaction and retention.

Managing diversity seeks to give coherence to these objectives primarily through a programme that promotes awareness of differences and empathy for those who are different (Kossek, Markel & McHugh 2003:351). Kossek, Markel and McHugh (2003:352) argue that attitude changes involve efforts to assist employees to identify and confront their stereotypes about persons whose characteristics differ from their own. Reece and Brandt (1994:15) concur with this argument when they state that managing diversity is concerned with changing the attitudes of individuals and perhaps to some degree with attempting to persuade individual employees to change their behaviour, but it does not

generally seek to ensure behavioural change by altering organisational structures or processes.

In deciding whether or not to invest in diversity management programmes, human resource managers, and employers, as well as participants in these programmes, need to be clear about their own goals, realistic about what diversity programmes accomplish, and honest in recognising who they would benefit. The most pressing issue in the context of growing diversity in the workplace is to ensure the removal of discriminatory barriers that interfere with the productivity, full participation, equitable rewards and job satisfaction of women, racial minorities, and persons with disabilities, all of whom are subjected to persistent discriminatory barriers into the culture and structure of organisations (Kossek, Markel & McHugh 2003:350). Until these barriers are removed and replaced with policies and practices that are fair to all, exhortations to abandon prejudiced attitudes and treat everyone with respect will have a hollow ring (Roberts 1996:57). Furthermore, if the issues of numerical representatives and access to employment and promotion are not addressed, there is a probability that disadvantaged groups will remain token and powerless minorities in the workplace for many years to come.

Nevertheless, diversity management has a place in human resource management as a response to specific issues of concern. Jamieson and O'Mara (1991:29) are of the opinion that properly designed and implemented, managing diversity can address some aspects of organisational culture as part of a broad employment equity strategy designed to bring about change in organisational culture, employment policies and practices and numerical representation of women, racial minorities, and persons with disabilities. Well planned diversity management programmes can convey information, enhance awareness, teach inter-personal and communication skills, contribute to the understanding and building acceptance for legislated equality programmes. Diversity management can also assist employees and management to effectively serve a

heterogeneous customer and client base. The benefits are most likely to be realised if the diversity programme is relevant to the culture, the legal and policy framework in which it is implemented (Jamieson & O'Mara 1991:31). Furthermore, effective diversity management would ensure that key stakeholders are involved in the planning and implementation of the diversity programme, and that senior management is committed to the programme and willing to address issues that arise from its implementation.

As is true of any important strategic decision, critical assessment of organisational objectives and the strategies for attaining them must guide human resource managers and other decision-makers who consider it an investment in diversity management programmes. Within the broader framework of change represented by employment equity and affirmative action, diversity management can be a complementary initiative towards both equality and greater productivity in organisations (Jackson 1994:23). Fairness in recruitment, selection, promotion, performance evaluation, training and development, compensation, and benefits are some of the challenges that today's strategic human resources management must face.

Managing diversity requires more than just compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action legal requirements. Green (2002:433) states that the management of diversity consists of "management processes to create a supportive work environment for employees already on board, and to develop and fully include all of them in order to make the organisation more productive". This implies that compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies may not necessarily mean that incumbent employees will respect or accept new entrants.

Gilbert and Ivancevich (2000:95) note that even when organisations have implemented policy or training initiatives to focus on diversity, the initiatives often do not translate into changes in the quality of work life for employees. It can

therefore be maintained that simply responding to laws, executive orders, or guidelines does not automatically result in greater inclusion. According to Gilbert and Ivancevich (2000:103), if blatant discrimination does not occur, often more subtle forms of discrimination, such as exclusion from informal work groups, conversations, and social gatherings outside of work happen. These exclusionary tactics may lead to reduced opportunities and isolation for minorities and a loss of valuable human capital for the organisation.

## **2.6 BARRIERS TO DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT INHERITED FROM APARTHEID GOVERNMENT**

This section briefly outlines some of the education and training inefficiencies inherited from old autocratic and discriminatory system, in order to highlight issues that require consideration for a responsive diversity management system to be put in place, with access, redress and development at its centre.

### **2.6.1 College Councils**

There were major differences in councils' management input and influence on colleges, both inter-departmentally as well as within departments. Mda and Mothata (2000:44) state that in House of Assembly, College Councils were statutory bodies, and that they had a reasonable degree of autonomy as far as the management of the colleges was concerned and financial management autonomy within minimum regulation prescription, allowing them to determine and control budgets.

In the European Commission report (European Commission 1992:43), it is indicated that administration staff and lecturer appointments were solely at the discretion of the Council, and candidates for more senior appointments were first subjected to an Education Department evaluation for promotion potential. Councils were then expected to appoint only from the candidates short-listed by

the Education Department. Councils also had a reasonable degree of autonomy in the management of their physical facilities and general administration. In the other departments where councils existed at all, they were appointed in a purely advisory capacity and had extremely limited decision-making powers. This generated dissatisfaction and frustration among council members. Colleges of the House of Delegates had no councils, some colleges of the Department of Education and Training had them and some did not (European Commission 1992:44). College management structures were not designed to meet the specific needs of colleges and were allocated purely as a function of student members. There was no coordinated system of diversity management training for technical college staff which fell into the management category, that is, Heads of Divisions and upwards (European Commission 1992:44). It was noted that the first occasion when a teaching qualification was mandatory, was when a person was considered for promotion to a management post. Some initiatives had been taken by regional committees of college principals and individual colleges to rectify the situation, but these endeavours had been very limited in scope due to financial and time constraints.

In general, it was apparent that a large measure of delegation took place, and it was common that individual members of staff were delegated specialist areas of responsibility. This delegation was not necessarily confined to management staff only and resulted from the high teaching loads which management staff had to be allocated. The posts of principal and deputy principal were occupied by white males with few exceptions (European Commission 1992:45).

It was thus clear that under-representation of racial groups other than whites had to be addressed by special programmes targeted at the under-represented groups. The under-representation of other racial groups can be illustrated as follows

Departments	No of colleges	Position	White	Distribution Indian	of posts Coloured	By race African
Assembly (White)	69	Principal Deputy Principal	69 All	0 0	0 0	0 0
Delegates (Indian)	3	Principal Deputy Principal	2 0	1 0	0 0	0 0
Representatives (Coloured)	14	Principal Deputy Principal	5 4	0 0	9 2	0 0
DET (African)	22	Principal Deputy Principal	22 *	0 *	0 *	0 *
Homelands and Self Gov States	28	Principal Deputy Principal	* *	* *	* *	* *

**Table 2.1** Racial composition of principals and deputy principals staff at technical colleges in 1991.

**Source :** European Commission Report, October 1992:45.

Note \* indicates that no data were available from the source.

Table 2.1 indicates that there was no coordination between departments with regard to strategic planning and targeting of priorities for human resource development. It became clear that inefficiencies in the management of diversity in the technical college sector might have been caused by a number of reasons, some pointed out by Smith (1984:30), confined entry in the past, on racial grounds, had limited pupil intake; colleges in general did not appear to offer a range of courses which would indicate responsiveness to local needs; job reservation legislation effective until 1976 did not allow for the training of black apprentices; the management structures of the Regional Training Centres all appeared to be similar and conventional in terms of hierarchical lines of command and function and there was an obvious racial imbalance with no blacks occupying decision-making positions.

There appeared to be reluctance on behalf of some college managements to offer courses and enrolment to larger numbers of disadvantaged students. The

colleges had formed a committee system which, although exercising considerable influence over the system, was not a statutory body. Other than this committee, there was no structured relationship between colleges. Budget allocation, curriculum administration and admission policies were determined within civil service (Lee 1987:37). While some colleges had developed committee systems, in others leadership tended to be autocratic with little regard for a committee or consultative process. This in turn affected diversity management because, in general, the college management was not participative.

## 2.6.2 Staff Supply and Development

Technical colleges generally required staff to hold an M+3 qualification and a minimum of five years' industrial or commercial experience. Criteria and norms for the allocation of posts to institutions were prescribed by the appropriate department. The relationship between the number of posts and the number of students was the basis of the allocation but the scheme for this allocation was not made available (European Commission 1992:41). Table 2.2 shows the number of personnel according to population group and gender, indicating that the staff complement was 50% white and 65% male.

Population Group	Male	Female	Total
All	3922	2138	6060
White	1846	1354	3200
Indian	139	53	192
Coloured	427	238	665
African	1510	493	2003
Nat. States	589	207	796
Rest of R.S.A.	921	286	1207

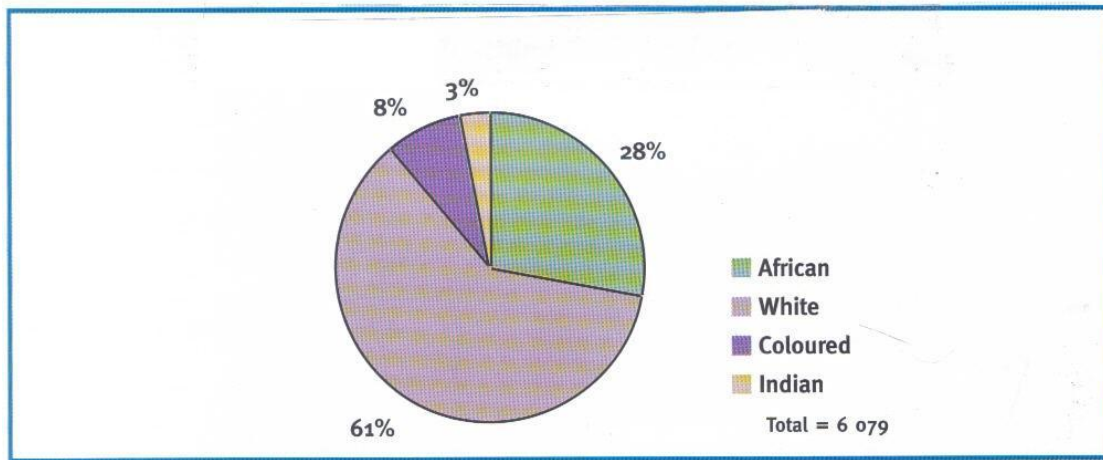
**Table 2.2** The number of personnel according to population group and gender.

**Source** European Commission Report, October 1992:41

There were no black staff members on the staff of traditionally white colleges but there were, however, many white staff employed in the traditionally black



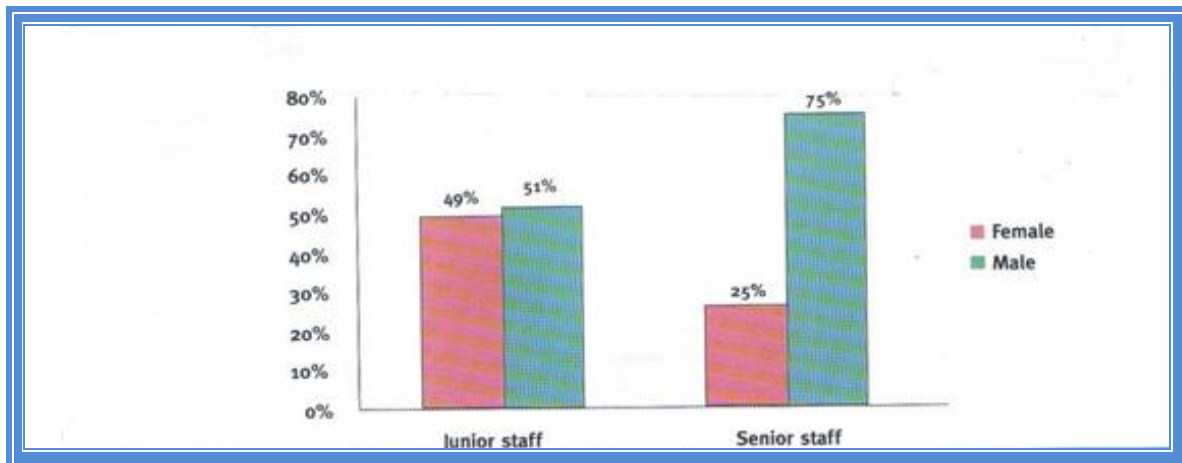
colleges (European Commission 1992:41). The following figure (Figure 2.1) indicates that the racial breakdown of Technical College staff reflected the historical legacy of apartheid, as the majority of the teaching staff were White.



**Figure 2.1** Teaching staff by race in 2000

**Source** Powell and Hall 2000 : 42

Teaching staff are appointed to posts that are assigned a particular post-level. This ranges from post-level 1 for lecturers, post-level 2 for senior lecturers, post-level 3 for Heads of Departments, while post-level 4 and 5 are assigned to Assistant Managers and Deputy Managers. The number of management staff depends on the size and complexity of the college. Technical Colleges have managed to change the racial distribution of their student population, but it is not clear whether the racial distribution of their staff has occurred. The racial disparities increased with increase in rank. Before 1994 Africans were under-represented in senior positions in the colleges and in 1998 only 18% of senior staff were Africans and a slight gender disparity existed, with 47% of the teaching staff being female. Figure 2.2 shows that this disparity in gender increased with increase in rank, with women under-represented in senior positions in colleges.



**Figure 2.2** Teaching staff by gender and post-level grouping in 2000

**Source** Powell and Hall 2000 : 43

The predominance of white male lecturers was out of proportion to the overall population structure. Lecturers for the colleges were recruited mainly from industry and the school sector. Those recruited from industry were given further teacher training. Recruitment from industry had been found to be difficult as lecturers' salaries were non-competitive. Staff development at colleges was almost non-existent. The factors which inhibited staff development were high teaching loads which limited time for such activities, the rigid structures which prevented principals from hiring replacements, and the unavailability of appropriate upgrading programmes (European Commission 1992:41). There was a clear need to create structures whereby managers could be developed for the system.

In general, it might be stated that the morale of college staff could be boosted and the fact that lecturers operated under the same set of conditions as school teachers inhibited the development of diversity management programmes which were more appropriate to a college climate. This shows that there is a need to develop managers for the further education and training system, and also to develop methods of recruiting staff from different cultural groups

## **2.6.3 Finance**

### **2.6.3.1 The previous framework for funding**

The funding of the programmes was uneven across different sites of the provision and created distorted incentives as well as disincentives. The majority of technical colleges operated on a rigid budget allocation from a department (European Commission 1992:46). It could be maintained that the House of Assembly colleges enjoyed greater autonomy than the black colleges which had no budgetary control or freedom to disburse funds raised from the private sector.

In colleges under the control of the administration the Houses of Delegates and Representatives, class fees were determined by their Departments of Education. In the Department of Education and Training, and fixed by the Department in consultation with their Committee of College Principals. The fee income derived by the colleges in the three Departments was paid over to Treasury and was not therefore disposable income for the colleges.

Technical colleges under the administration of the House of Assembly had the legal competence to determine their own fees as decided by their councils. These fees were usually composite and comprised class fees, examination fees, and registration fees. These fees were retained by the colleges and formed part of their disposable income. The final draft of the budget was submitted to the college council for approval. Once approved, the principal was responsible for the operation of the budget and was usually delegated authority to make amendments within certain prescribed parameters of authority (European Commission 1992:46).

In the case of the other education departments, colleges were required to submit their budgets to them and they would make whatever adjustments they deemed fit and necessary. The approved budget was returned to the college and it

became the principal's responsibility, in the first instance, to control the budget. However, financial control was exercised totally by the department as the college submitted requisitions for approved items to the department for purchase. All income received by way of class fees and donations, was paid over to the department and not treated as disposable income for the college. These methods of financing could therefore be regarded as one of the factors inhibiting access to technical colleges by the previously disadvantaged groups which might have resulted in colleges failing to transform into democratic institutions.

#### **2.6.3.2 Current framework for funding**

Funding for FET colleges is currently governed by the National Norms and Standards for Funding of FET colleges. The Norms and Standards were promulgated under section 23 of the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006, which requires the Minister of Education to determine norms and standards for funding of public FET colleges. The key shift in the National Norms and Standards is away from funding of educator posts to funding of programme costs. Colleges are therefore now required to plan their enrolments, for the purpose of the government subsidy, on the basis of the programme budget allocations they receive from the Department of Higher Education and Training rather than on the basis of how many students they can fit into the colleges.

In order to get approval of their budgets, colleges are required to complete yearly operational and strategic plans and to submit quarterly reports on enrolments. A funding unit cost is provided to colleges annually and is the basis against which the programme cost is budgeted. In addition, with planning now being managed on a national scale, there is scope for a more comprehensive analysis of the problems and a focus on systematic solutions. Therefore, initiatives that require funding within individual colleges can be evaluated against both provincial and national priorities.

Colleges are permitted to offer occupational and other programmes in the form of “fee for service income”. However, college should ensure that the full cost of offering these programmes is recovered, as there is no government subsidy provided. A number of colleges are offering such programmes in partnership with SETAs, private industry and local municipalities. The amount of funding received through these programmes is not clearly documented.

## **2.7 PRESSURES FOR CHANGE IN FET LANDSCAPE**

The efforts to solve the multi-racial problems by territorial separation of the population groups were unsuccessful. After the 1994 democratic elections it became common cause that drastic change should occur in the administration and management of public institutions in South Africa. The FET sector, as a public institution, was directly affected by economic and political factors that had coalesced to shape this push for change. The following paragraphs outline the factors that became imperative to undo the legacy of apartheid’s bad planning and poor resourcing, which led to a serious neglect of the FET sector by educational authorities.

### **2.7.1 The De Lange Report**

After the June 1976 school boycotts and riots, there had been a growing awareness in the commercial and industrial sectors that the education systems were failing to cope with the economic and educational needs of South Africa. This had tended to find expression in statements centred on manpower needs, skills training and the realisation that the white sector was not going to be able to supply these needs (Carr 1990:24). Hartshorne (1992:151) maintains that the commercial and industrial sectors were beginning to realise that economic growth and productivity could not be maintained if blacks did not play a greater role in commerce and industry, both as skilled workers and consumers, a

situation that was being hampered by both political constraints and educational inequalities.

The pressures on the apartheid government to transform the vocational education system continued and came from many sectors of society. The private sector, in particular, laid stress on the need to create vastly increased opportunities and facilities for vocational and technical education within the school systems (Hartshorne 1992:151). A further source of pressure on the apartheid government was the manpower issues which were brought strongly to the fore with the appointment of the De Lange Commission. The De Lange Commission was appointed in June 1980 by the apartheid government to investigate educational provisions in South Africa. Hartshorne (1992:156) enlisted a number of principles that were adopted as the basis for all the work of the De Lange Commission. Some of these principles stated that equal opportunities for education, including equal standards in education, for every inhabitant, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex, shall be the purposeful endeavour of the State; and that education shall afford positive recognition of what is common as well as what is diverse in the religious and cultural way of life and the languages of the inhabitants (Hartshorne 1992 :156).

Some of the recommendations made concerned themselves with these guiding principles for a feasible education policy in the Republic of South Africa in order to allow for the realisation of the inhabitants' potential, promote economic growth and to improve the quality of life of all the inhabitants of the country. A large part of the De Lange report placed considerable emphasis on basic education. In the case of technical and vocational education, the recommendations stressed the distortion of the system by the undue emphasis on the academic education, and on the disharmony between the school product and the demands of the work situation (Hartshorne 1992:167). There was a clear relationship between these perceptions and the terms of reference concerned with economic and manpower needs, but the report said that this did not imply any restriction on the realisation

of the possibilities open to citizens. It further stated that a wider range of career-oriented education was of absolutely vital importance to a new and more relevant educational dispensation and that considerably more learners should be involved in general formative preparatory career education at the senior secondary school level (Nasson & Samuel 1990:138). Hartshorne (1992:168) maintains that in the South African context, the concept of career education is by no means unproblematic, suffice it to say that it was the main recommendation of the De Lange Report seized upon by the apartheid government for speedy education reform.

According to Hartshorne (1992:183), the De Lange Commission, while it did not persuade the apartheid government to address the fundamental equality issues, did move the education and equality debate into a new phase, that is, the reconciliation of equality and separation was questioned. It was to become increasingly clear in the years to follow that fundamental reform towards equality of provision in vocational and technical education could not be achieved within apartheid structures, either in education systems or in society.

### **2.7.2 The political, social and economic factors**

An external reason for managing diversity more effectively is so that the customer is served better (Human 2005:5). Managing social, economic and political pressures is therefore precisely about balancing the responsiveness and dynamism of the market mechanism with the developmental responsibilities of the State (Daft 2008:39). These components must be carefully crafted together in a flexible yet effectively regulated further education and training system.

South Africa is an example of a country undergoing rapid socio-economic and political transformation, where government is taking a proactive role in improving diversity in organisations. It is clearly a priority for political, social and economic empowerment in South Africa, and for the development of a robust,

internationally competitive economy, to improve the quality and expand the provision of technical and vocational education and training, together with the quality of service delivery.

Further Education and Training cannot be regulated as the sole preserve either of the education system and its clients and stakeholders, or of the training world and its constituencies and interest groups in the workplace and economy (Daft 2008:39). The market, social, political and training worlds need to be brought together in the joint determination of policy and practice across the FET spectrum. Within the framework of a balanced FET strategy, particular attention should be given to improving and expanding education and training of vulnerable groups in the labour market, and State assistance in the formation of diversity management plans.

The State has a responsibility to ensure the political, social and economic development of the country and the welfare and advancement of all its people (Crous 2004:574). The Further Education and Training has a critical role to play in underpinning the country's macro-economic policies and development strategy. The State accordingly has a key interest in ensuring the effective linking of education and training policies with government's broader political and socio-economic objectives, at the same time as it fosters the conditions for the satisfaction of individual and community needs and the requirements of major stakeholders, including organised business and labour.

Bhindi and Duignan (1997:119) maintain that a further development in the political, social and economic transformation affecting many countries across the globe in the late twentieth century has been a shift in the understanding of the role of the State away from statist understanding of government, which assumes that the State has substantial central control over economic affairs and therefore must provide for all, to more recent interpretations which emphasise State accountability in the use of public resources. The culture of entitlement



associated with former welfare and statist societies has given way to a new emphasis on performance and equality indicators which provide evidence of State institutional efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

These changes have impacted profoundly on the FET band because it is this sector more than any other educational band which requires the joint efforts of all stakeholders for its success and effectiveness. A successful FET system is unlikely to emerge if it is dependent entirely on State patronage and funding (Cloete 1996:14). Rather, it requires the dynamic and creative efforts and the sharing of FET costs amongst all businesses, civil society organisations and participating individuals. It is these latter groups who today expect the State to make effective use of its budget allocation to further education and training (Hempel 2005:89).

The State is increasingly being made accountable for its financial transactions, and in turn, it requires of all institutions funded by the State to provide proof of their cost-effectiveness, efficiency and quality of delivery (Lawton & Rose 2001:16). Centralist understanding of the State's role have thus given way to notions of State steering through incentives and rewards to those institutions which meet strategic targets, attain performance and produce quality.

During the twentieth century South Africa's economic development has been based primarily on the growth and expansion of manufacturing as the dominant economic sector. This was achieved primarily through the application of import substitution policies which entitled deliberate government intervention in the economy to develop local manufacturing capacity (Cloete 1996:11). Given the low wages paid to black workers, this strategy was unable to translate into a mass market which incorporated the black population. In so doing, the South African manufacturing sector failed to establish a truly mass market which would have provided the necessary launching pad to enter export markets on a competitive footing (Lawton & Rose 2001:17).

Furthermore, because of the narrow local consumer market, the production sums of locally produced goods have never been of the magnitude to optimally benefit from economic scale. Shielded by import tariffs which did not expose local products to healthy competition from higher quality global goods, there was no incentive for local manufacturers to develop a higher skills base and higher quality products (Marchington & Parker 1990:71). In short, tariff protection has shielded local employers from international competition and, as a result, local employers became complacent. The dramatic changes taking place in the workplace because of political, social and economic factors have greatly influenced organisational functioning and management styles in public FET institutions.

### **2.7.3 Globalisation**

There is a growing sense that events occurring throughout the world are converging rapidly to shape a single, integrated world where economic, social, cultural, technological, business, and other influences cross traditional borders and boundaries such as nations, national cultures, time space, and industries with increasing ease (Clegg, Hardy and Nord 2003:234). The implications of such changes are potentially revolutionary, leading to significant and wide-ranging changes in every sphere of life and creating new challenges and responsibilities for organisations of all types.

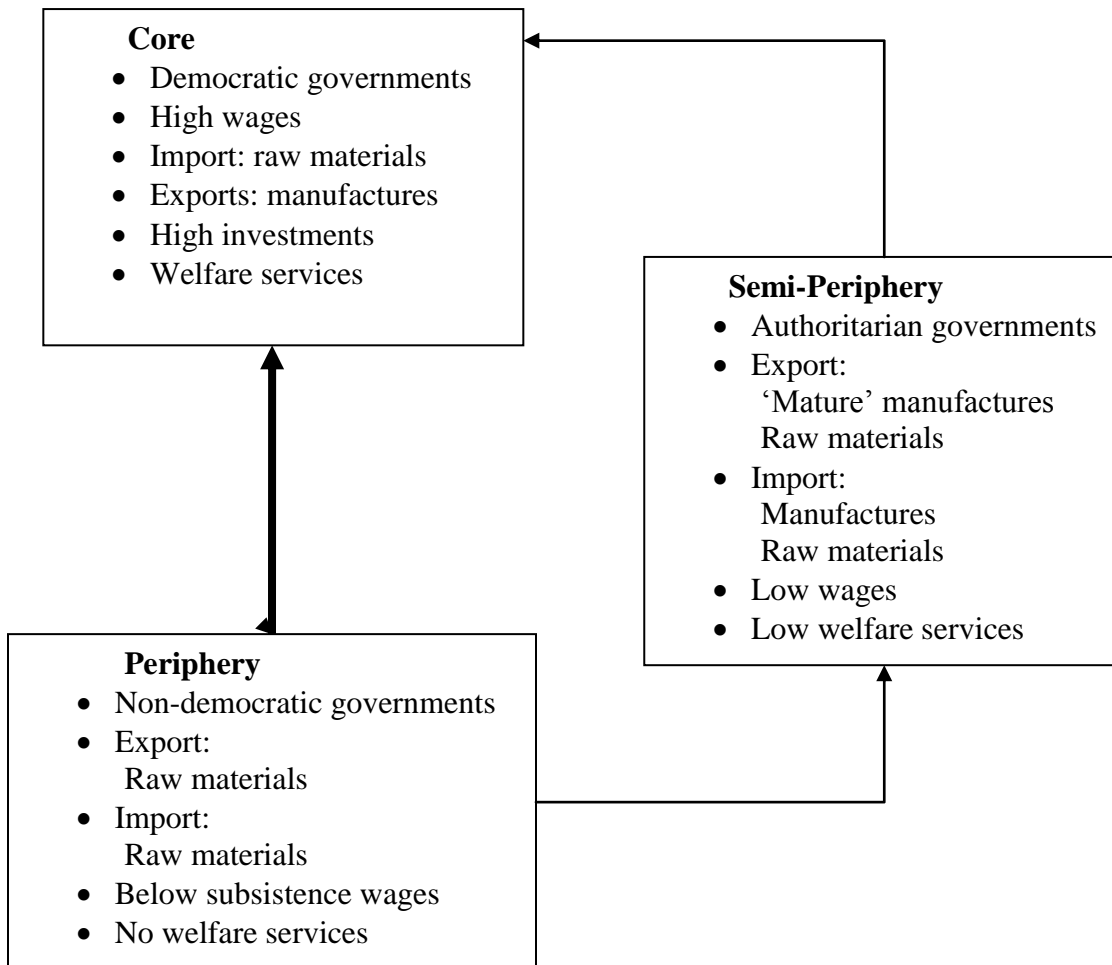
Globalisation has a double-edged impact on the developing economies such as that of South Africa. As it is often accompanied by a negative impact on the marginalised communities. The unavoidable challenge of dealing with the process of globalisation, then, has been the development of state policies which simultaneously attempt to meet the requirements for global economic competition while addressing the basic needs of the previously disadvantaged groups

(Robertson 1995:86). In South Africa, the role of FET institutions is critical in meeting these dual developmental obligations.

Rhinesmith (1993:4) argues that enterprises require entire labour forces that are sufficiently skilled to adapt to highly unpredictable and volatile global product markets and rapid technological change, and that the labour force requires broad problem-solving skills to anticipate flaws in production. Workers need to understand how the new technologies can be optimally applied, how the entire production process unfolds, how environmental context shapes the execution of tasks and how unexpected factors arise. Rhinesmith (1993:6) continues to state that it is the ability to retool and respond to rapidly changing conditions, which the further education and training system can only provide through high levels of generalised yet unspecified skills. The latter are required to create employment opportunities for thousands of impoverished people, help forge entrepreneurial infrastructure, contribute to the process of democratisation, and address global social problems.

However, South Africa is a capitalist country, and it is in the interest of capitalists to maximise profits through driving down the wages of workers. Baylis and Smith (2001:206) define capitalism as a system of production for sale in a market for profit and appropriation of this profit on the basis of individual or collective ownership. They argue that within the context of this system, specific institutions are continually being created and recreated. According to Baylis and Smith (2001:206), none of these institutions is timeless, that is, none remain the same, and to claim otherwise is to fail to understand that the characteristics of social institutions are historically specific. For Baylis and Smith (2001:207) all public institutions, large or small, are continually adapting and changing within the context of a dynamic world-systems, and the modern world-system has features which can be described in terms of space and time. According to Baylis and Smith (2001:208) there are three zones of the world-economy which are linked together in an exploitative relationship in which wealth is drained away from the

periphery to the centre. As a consequence, the relative positions of the zones become ever more deeply entrenched, that is, the rich get richer whilst the poor become poorer. The conceptualisation of globalisation as national “borderlessness” might lead some to conclude that globalisation is producing a worldwide trend towards homogeneity and uniformity. However, Parker (2003:235) has pointed out that as boundaries dissolve, as barriers are permeated, as the world compresses, as people become interdependent, they become aware of cultural differences and diversity. Thus the call to “act global, think local” and become part of the “global village” worldwide is hindered by the tendency to define, describe and envision globalisation in quite different ways. The following figure indicates the interrelationships in the world economy



**Figure 2.3** Interrelationships in the world economy

**Source** Baylis and Smith 2001 : 207.

Rhinesmith (1993:4) is of the opinion that if people are confused about what globalisation means now, they are also perplexed about what it will mean for the future. Schenk (2009:464) believes that globalisation will lead to the exploitation of foreign workers, limit choices to unappealing options, and destroy natural resources and local cultures.

In the face of increasing globalisation, with the further erosion of local community control over daily life and the further extension of the power of the market and transnational corporations, people are standing up for their rights as they define them (McGowan & Nel 2002:117). McGowan and Nel (2002:118) maintain that people are making a case for local control and local empowerment as the heart of development, and they are rejecting the dominant agenda of government-controlled spheres. In this context, development is about facilitating community's participation and lead role in deciding what sort of development is appropriate for it. This alternative conception of globalisation therefore values diversity above universality, and is based on a different conception of the rights of local citizens and workers.

Another pressure on the FET system associated with globalisation and also a response to the increasing world-wide demand for greater access to further education and training, has been the massification of the education and training system (Goerzen 2005:103). The impact of globalisation has led to a major shift in the institutional organisation and delivery of programmes in the FET sector. A key feature of this shift has been the growth of recurrent, continuing and professional education in FET institutions.

In the first instance, the expansion and diversity in programme delivery has been an economic response. The global economy has required a more educated and trained workforce, and this has been reflected in the massive expansion of technical, vocational, career and para-professional programmes offered in recurrent, continuing and distance modes. The FET institutions in South Africa

have an important role to play in ensuring that the once marginalised communities are effectively interwoven into and benefit from the dynamic growth triggered in the global economy.

#### **2.7.4 The need to redress past inequity**

The South African education system prior to 1994 was fragmented, discriminatory and uncoordinated. There were different education policies and education departments for each of the four racial groups in the country. There were also different education departments and policies for each of the homelands.

Given the legacy South Africa inherited from apartheid, which has resulted in many of the problems currently faced by the education department, it will continue to be a key challenge to achieve social stability, economic growth and development. One of the key mechanisms employed by the post-apartheid government to meet these challenges was to develop and put in place a range of enabling legislation and policies (Mathews 1998:176). In recent years, progress has been made towards establishing collective bargaining rights for all public service workers. The principle of affirmative action is also being widely accepted by unions and professional associations, irrespective of their racial base (Mathews 1998:177).

Many of the problems outlined above have served to inhibit the development of a professional work ethic and commitment amongst public servants. Some civil servants showed impressive dedication and capacity under the most unfavourable conditions. In many parts of the service, however, inefficiency, mismanagement and corruption became the norm. Adams (1993:131) is of the opinion that openness and free flow of relevant information, at all levels of governance, are key ingredients in the principle of accountability. A national, integrated system of education requires a commitment from all levels of

governance to assume collective responsibility for the transformation of colleges within an agreed governance and management framework. Each level of governance must be accountable to the other, and must ensure open communication channels and fair administrative structures in support of the principle of transparency.

The need for capacity building and transformation for different levels of management in FET colleges has been highlighted and motivated in various official and policy documents. Chief among these is the Constitution itself, and the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006. Fundamentally, transformation and equality demands change in attitude, together with the acquisition of appropriate capacity. Coupled with the above, are issues of individual and group capacity to enhance governance and management in colleges. In view of the fact that the concept and practice of diversity management are new to most employees, and also that democratic governance and management are new to all, the researcher wonders if there is any need for capacity-building in both employees and managers of FET colleges.

The researcher is of the opinion that the FET system must encompass state intervention which will help to build the necessary internal infrastructure required to meet basic needs of employment equity. At the same time, the strategy also requires the greater liberation of the economy so as to allow market forces to function optimally. In short, the real challenge for the government would be to balance the market-led strategies with supply side, capacity-building measures.

## **2.8 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN FET COLLEGES**

The current FET system is both horizontally and vertically differentiated with respect to levels of governance (White Paper on Further Education and Training 1998:46). The division of responsibilities between the public and private sectors, between different national departments of state, and between national and

provincial governments, greatly complicates the task of co-ordinating FET, and impacts on the institutional arrangements through which a policy of co-ordination may be effected.

Further Education and Training is horizontally differentiated at the national level in terms of ministerial jurisdictions. These include the responsibilities and powers of the national departments, that is, the Departments of Education, Labour, Health, Agriculture, Police Services and Defence, for various aspects of education and training policy and for particular sets of providers (White Paper on Further Education and Training 1998:48). Vertically, the governance of FET encompasses both national and provincial competencies, though not with respect to training, which is primarily a competence of the national Department of Labour. Education is subject to broad policy and to norms and standards established by the national Department of Education, but the provision of education is, in terms of the Constitution, a provincial competence (White Paper on Further Education and Training 1998: 49).

Below the national and provincial levels, at the base of the governance system, is the individual institution or provider with its governing structures. In addition to levels of governance, there are various dimensions of governance, such as allocated powers with respect to funding, decision-making powers with respect to the approval and recognition of programmes, quality assurance, accreditation, and so on. Governance and management in public FET institutions occur within the policy frameworks determined by the national and provincial departments of education. Furthermore, the requirements of legislation relating to the public service and labour relations provide parameters for both governance and management.

The National Committee on Further Education (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:84) distinguished three 'zones of competence' that are helpful in thinking through the relationship between the different levels and



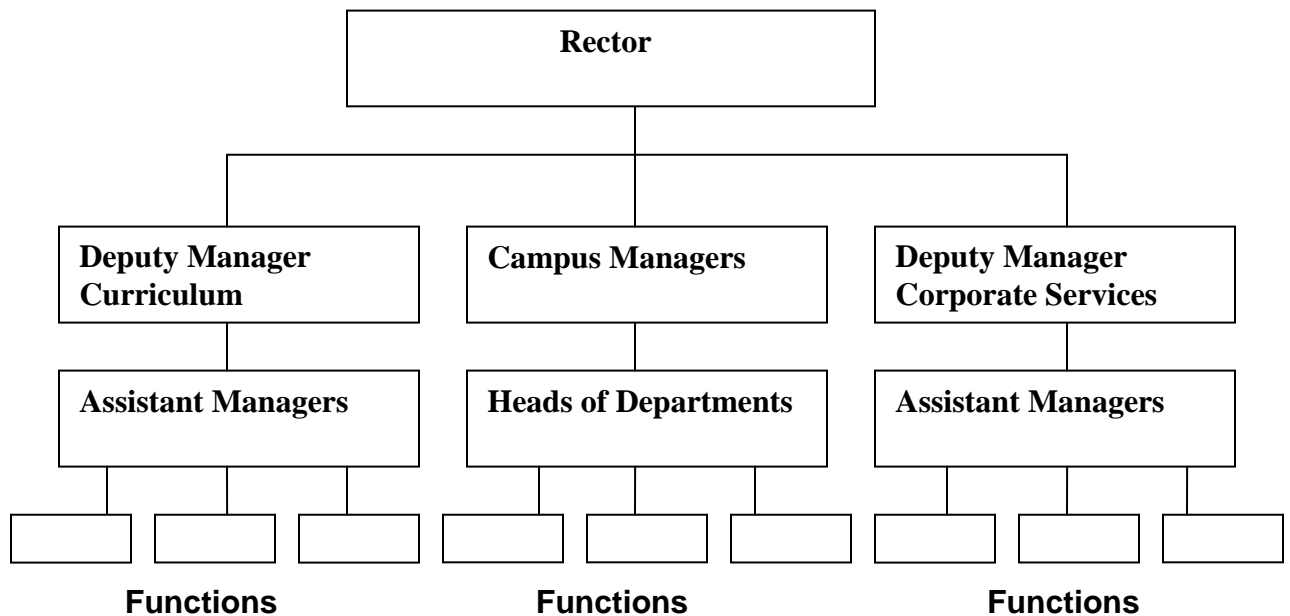
the various dimensions of governance, both with respect to the current system and a future, restructured system. According to the National Committee on Further Education (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:84), the three 'zones of competence' are zones of "defined competence", referring to specifically defined competencies attached to particular levels of governance structures, zones of "negotiated competence", meaning those aspects of governance and policy formulation requiring consultation and negotiation between levels of the system with concurrent or overlapping competencies, and zones of "autonomy" or those broad areas of policy and practice over which a structure or organisation has relatively unrestricted freedom of action.

Presently, FET colleges are administered by provincial education departments as part of the college-school system. In developing and carrying out their missions, colleges need to be able to strike a balance between promoting national and provincial objectives and serving regional and local communities (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:86). In governance terms, this means a new balance must be struck, within a reconceptualised governance and policy framework, between institutional autonomy and provincial and national co-ordination (Mhone & Edigheji 2003:35). The challenge for governors and managers in FET is to transform not only their institutions, but also the education and training that they offer so that they respond to the changing needs of society.

### **2.8.1 Organisational structure of Public FET Colleges**

Organisational structure is the formal system of task and job reporting relationships that determines how employees use resources to achieve organisational goals (George & Jones 2006:450). One of the most important factors affecting an organisation's choice of structure is the characteristics of the human resources it employs. In general, the more highly skilled an organisation's workforce is and the more people are required to work together in groups or teams to perform their tasks, the more likely an organisation is to use a flexible,

decentralised structure. Figure 2.1 is an example of an organisational structure that would enable the public further education and training college in the province of KwaZulu-Natal to achieve organisational goals



**Figure 2.4** Organisational structure of a Public FET College

**Source** Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006:54

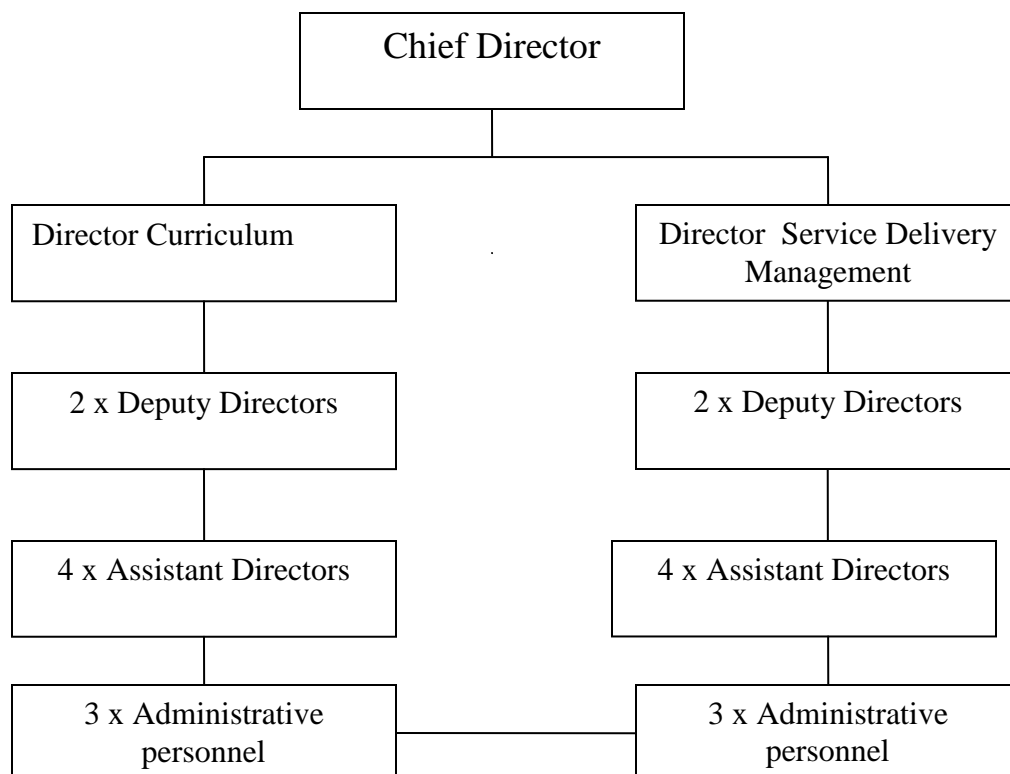
The FET Act of 2006 stipulates that the Manager is the chief executive and accounting officer of the college. Some of the functions of the Manager include the responsibility for the day-to-day management and administration of the college, being a member of all the committees of the council and academic board, as well as performing additional functions which may be assigned by the council. The Act also stipulates that when the Manager is absent or unable to carry out his or her duties, the Deputy Manager must act as Manager, or the Member of the Executive Council may appoint the acting manager.

As indicated earlier in this paragraph, the Manager of an FET college has the role of being a manager, an accounting officer, a full member of the College

Council, as well as a member of all the committees of the College Council and Academic Board. This complex role makes particular demands on the College Manager as he or she is charged with a pivotal role of achieving balance between the interests of governors, administrators, employees, learners and a wide range of stakeholders. As colleges grow and produce a wider range of services, the size and number of their functions and divisions increase. In order to co-ordinate the activities of people, functions and divisions within the colleges, and also to allow them to work together effectively, managers will have to develop a clear hierarchy of authority.

The organisational design of the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department allows for the establishment of two Directorates for Further Education and Training (FET) within the Chief Directorate FET Colleges. According to the current departmental organogram, the Chief Directorate FET Colleges is headed by a Senior Manager, supported by two Managers, and each manager is assisted by a team consisting of Chief Education Specialists, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, administrative and support staff. The responsibility to ensure smooth implementation of policies in public FET colleges rests with the Chief Directorate FET Colleges.

In order to redress the historical imbalances generated by inequalities in education provision, the Ministry of Education and the Provinces had to ensure that resources were allocated and deployed according to the principle of equity so that the same quality of learning provision was achieved for all people. Opportunities for training and advancement, especially in relation to scarce skills, should be provided by FET Colleges to reverse the current, skewed under-representation of blacks, women and the disabled. It therefore becomes important for the public FET college to develop and maintain an organisational structure that will make it possible for the Chief Directorate at a provincial level to provide specialised support in their obligations to achieve organisational goals.



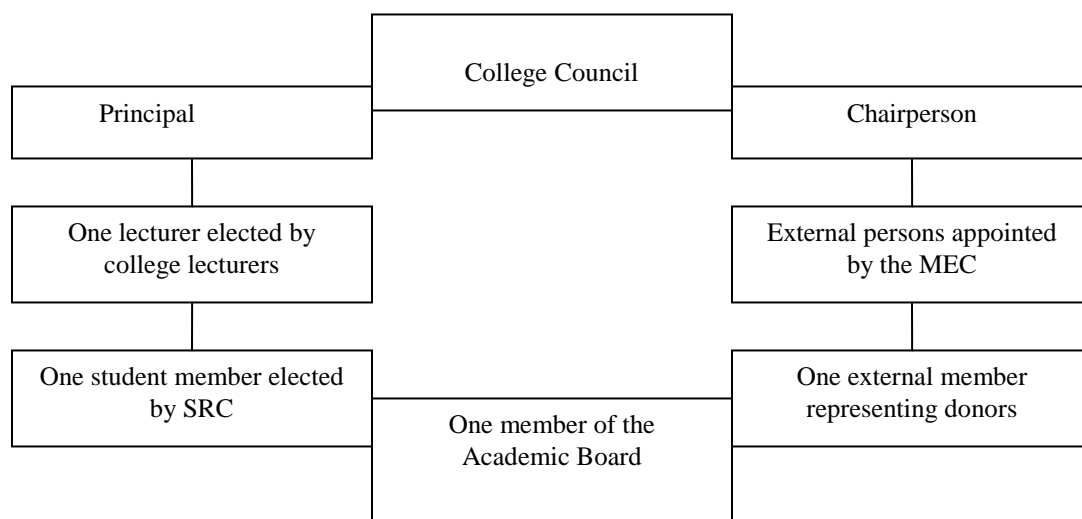
**Figure 2.5** Organogram representing the administration of FET Colleges at Provincial level

**Source** KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education FET Colleges scene 2009/2010 : 5.

Whatever the provincial arrangements, there has been a discernable trend at national level to encourage institutional autonomy. This has been prompted largely by the policy intention of making further education and training more flexible and responsive to individual and community needs and to anticipate changes in market demand. Analyses and reports on further education and training from many countries suggest that institutions too readily give way to bureaucratic inertia and that programmes are offered more because of the availability of staff and equipment than because of any clearly identified need. In response, various initiatives have been introduced to foster more market-oriented and competitive FET provision. Measures taken include the decentralisation of institutional management, the granting to public FET colleges of greater

institutional autonomy and managerial authority, and direct employment of staff by FET institutions. It should be noted that greater degree of autonomy does not mean that FET colleges have a license to do as they wish rather, they are subject to a number of disciplines, including the requirement to produce a corporate business plan, the external accreditation of programmes, and regular external inspections, organised either by Provincial or National Education Departments, Umalusi or independent co-ordinating agencies.

A key feature of the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006 has been the granting to FET colleges of substantial autonomy. College Councils are appointed by the MEC for Education in each province, on the basis of nominations by identified stakeholder groupings. In the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006, it is stipulated that external stakeholders, and not college personnel, must form a clear majority in Council that organised business, labour and community constituencies must be assured representation in Council, and that provision should be made for representation of specific constituencies and interest groups in accordance with the particular mission and role of each public FET institution.



**Figure 2.6** An example of the composition of College Council

**Source** Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006 : 54.

A key criterion for the appointment of external College Council members should be their ability to promote a responsive and entrepreneurial ethos in colleges, to bring about the transformation of colleges in accordance with the values and objectives of a democratic, non-racial South Africa to assist colleges in formulating their strategic missions and plans, and to oversee the management of the college and its financial affairs (Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006:52). The Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006 also stipulates that specific attention should be given in the appointment of College Councils to race and gender representivity.

Given both the inequalities and inequities of the past, and the inability of the previously fragmented FET band to respond in a coherent and effective manner to the social and economic needs of the country, strong emphasis should be placed on institutional as well as human resource development and capacity-building. This study will determine how the college managers use their authority to motivate diverse employees with the prospects of promotion and increased responsibility within the chain of command. This study will therefore explore how public FET colleges use organisational structures to prevent differential treatment and the steps managers take to ensure that diversity, in all respects, is effectively managed for the good of all college stakeholders.

## **2.9 THE NEED FOR CHANGE**

Notwithstanding the deficiencies that may be present in the governance, administration and management of public FET colleges, the FET sector is nonetheless a critical agency for social transformation in South Africa. This central role arises as a result of the shift world-wide towards a knowledge-based or information-based economy. The development of human resources is a critical pre-requisite for economic success in this globalising informational economy. The challenge for South Africa, then, is to develop the full human potential of all its

citizens to unleash the maximum creative energy. This will require a decisive shift away from its apartheid inheritance as a low-skill, low-quality economy to a high-skill, high-quality alternative which is competitive on global markets and which meets the basic needs of all of its citizens (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:95). This can only be attained with the development of human resources.

South Africa is a complex, multicultural, multiracial country, where traditional beliefs and socio-cultural practices live side-by-side (Cloete 1996:4). Although great strides have been made in dealing with the legacy of apartheid and the ideological differences it planted amongst the different population groups, there is still a long way to go in terms of nation-building. It is therefore important to acknowledge that cultural differences and tensions still exist and to work with these in the creation of a non-racial society in which unity is the result of an acceptance and understanding of diversity.

The FET system is well structured and positioned to deal with the challenges of building unity within diversity. For example, the new democratic FET system has ushered in participatory models of governance, promoted nation-building and introduced radical societal change. In addition, it could be ensured that a life skills programme, which fosters an understanding and acceptance of diversity as the foundation for unity and democracy, forms part of curriculum of any FET qualification (Young & Gamble 2006:13).

It is for this reason that management should assume a new importance, as an instrument not only of effective management and administration, but of systematic and institutional change. Change should be focussed on the building of new learning pathways, and new, more meaningful linkages and relationships between FET, the world of work, Higher Education, community and private life. Accordingly, as an instrument of change, management needs to give concrete expression to the concepts of participation, responsiveness, cooperation and

diversity management (Young & Gamble 2006:14). Management needs moreover to bring together the education and the training elements of a national human resource development strategy. Technical colleges have been legally changed into Further Education and Training (FET) institutions. Furthermore, the 24 colleges in KwaZulu-Natal have been merged to form nine FET Colleges with a specific mandate to provide skills in response to the Skills Development Strategy of South Africa. It was the political urgency and expediency prior to the incorporation of FET colleges, which brought colleges together to form these nine new colleges (DoE 2001:17). The Education Departments, national and provincial, considered this to be the way to go within a tertiary framework.

These merged colleges were not a consensual creation. While there was no active and organised opposition to the mergers, there was a considerable minority who was cynical about it (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:3). The creation of these new colleges was organised and imposed by the national and provincial education authorities as part of a vision of a unitary Further Education and Training System. As such it was politically defined rather than being educationally or economically led (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:5). No obvious economic or business criteria drove the mergers of the colleges. While conflicts that may arise can be approached in many ways, the colleges need to understand the processes of structural development of each college before particular solutions will be found. The colleges must draw on its cultural learning experiences and formalise these into decision-making processes. These processes in effect will become the rules of the colleges and strategic behaviour of the new culture. Formally participating in co-ordinating the rules and policies will be an important determinant for colleges to develop their own strategic agenda. The college management teams need to use their managerial capabilities to move into a new environment and this requires time. Colleges need to adopt an internal funding formula, which recognises the different starting positions of the campuses and does not try



immediately to impose further constraints. However, the supply-side model needs to give way to the demand-led model of funding.

The researcher is of the opinion that there has been no radical reform of FET institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. The merging of different technical colleges may not have considered the different starting positions of the campuses, thereby addressing accordingly the problems of redress and equity between the previously advantaged and disadvantaged campuses. The researcher has a strong suspicion that the following challenges still exist in the merged campuses

- Widely varying quality, with a number of excellent providers, and excellent departments within colleges, co-existing with some poor and much mediocre provision among the different campuses. There might have not been sufficient emphasis on standards, access rates, and the development of excellence, more particularly because too much management time has been spent chasing and accounting for funding and not enough on raising standards, relevance of teaching and learning and management of diversity.
- The negligence of the workforce's skills and careers' development within the sector. There is no clear evidence of healthy levels of actualisation, as well as sufficient emphasis on improving professional skills, on updating subject or occupational knowledge or developing leadership skills for the future.
- A legacy of under-investment in the capital infrastructure, with too much learning still taking place in unattractive and inefficient buildings in the previously disadvantaged campuses. In these campuses there has also been a lack of available capital to invest in updating vocational training facilities to match changing industry expectations and technological change.

Against this background it seems imperative for a manager to nurture and foster the social dynamics of democracy and decentralisation during the process of transforming the public FET colleges in order to remove inequalities, provide equal access, distribute resources equitably among the different campuses and thereby improve the quality of service in all campuses. The challenge would be for college administrators to extend democracy at institutional level, allocate resources in a manner that would truly redress the imbalances of the past that might still exist among the campuses, and to resolve the ideological differences that may be found among the employees who come from different historical and educational background.

## **2.10 UNIONS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE**

Trade unions are generally regarded as one of the three key industrial relations actors, that is, they play a key role in shaping employment opportunities and outcomes through various strategies and interventions in international, national and local contexts. Broadly speaking, trade unions exist to protect employees and further their interests at the workplace (Bascia 1994:4). Their existence is underpinned by the assumption of inequalities of power between employers and employees, and the consequent need for employees to have collective representation and to act collectively in order to improve pay and conditions at work as well as eradicating discrimination (Kirton & Greene 2005:99).

Trade unions play a role, therefore, in defending employees' terms and conditions at the workplace, but their broader objective is to work towards a fairer, more equal society. From equality and diversity perspectives, the researcher's interest in trade unions lies in both these objectives, which can be said to be economic and political (Bascia 1994:10). The unions are seeking to tackle both issues by active membership recruitment campaigns and by a variety of methods designed to improve the representation of a diverse profile of

members within union power structures. There is also considerable potential for unions to exert pressure on government to develop relevant public policy. It is in their economic and political roles that unions can be regarded, along with the state and employers, as one of the three key industrial relations actors.

Equal opportunities, equal treatment and the fight against unfair discrimination are the foundation of trade union activity (Phizaeklea 1994:56). In practice, trade unions have a mixed record in challenging discrimination against disadvantaged groups (Dickens, Townley & Winchester 1988:65). For example, historically some unions have sought to exclude women from certain trades, whilst others have accepted women but in segregated, low-skill, low-paid jobs (Walby 1997:55). Similarly, other writers give instances of where unions colluded with management in encouraging racist practices (Lee 1987; Phizaeklea & Miles 1987). It is arguable that these gaps in the knowledge of the characteristics of union members impact negatively on a union's ability to represent a diverse constituency.

The scope of the equality bargaining agenda varies from one organisation to another and may be determined by a number of factors. These include the history and traditions of collective bargaining in the organisation, management objectives in industrial relations and how these relate to business strategy, and the balance of bargaining power between employers and unions (Kirton & Greene 2005:121). Collective bargaining is a dynamic process, which is why the researcher discusses it largely in terms of its potential to promote equality. It should also be noted that there could also exist other avenues for trade unions to promote equality at an institutional level, in particular joint consultation with management. However, consultation does not result in mutually binding agreements, suggesting that collective bargaining is the most powerful instrument available to trade unions (Phizacklea 1994:120). Equality bargaining objectives vary from one union to another, depending upon the composition and characteristics of union membership, the type of employers they bargain with,

and those employers' own objectives and strategies in relation to equality (Desai 2002:37).

Traditionally, unions have assumed that people working within the same industry, organisation or occupation shared the same interests and therefore the same objectives in relation to their employers and their employment (Kirton & Greene 2005:122). This assumption has led to a unitary conception of union bargaining objectives. Unitary interest among the membership has traditionally been regarded by unions as essential to the building of a solidarity movement, which could effectively challenge and influence management decision-making. Unions have feared that highlighting plurality of interests might undermine solidarity and thereby union powers. However, industries, organisations and occupations are composed of diverse groups of employees, whose interests may at times converge, but at others diverge.

As democratic membership organisations, trade unions are governed by their membership by means of formal, local and national representative structures. Trade unions also employ a cadre of paid officials to carry out union business at both local and national levels. The unrepresentative nature of union leadership is thought to constrain unions' abilities to promote equality in employment (Collins 2002:67). Collins (2002:68) maintains that where a numerically dominant membership group exists, their interests are likely to prevail and be translated into a bargaining agenda and this is particularly so, when the dominant group also monopolises union positions of power. Organisational power holders are able to influence policy and practice. Conversely, those with little power also exert little influence.

The irony here is that unions need to be seen to meet the needs of diverse groups of employees in order to boost membership recruitment. Colling and Dickens (1998:23) go so far as to suggest that positive and successful union actions in the areas of discrimination and equality will be major selling points in

the drive to recruit diverse members. In addition, if collective bargaining is to be an effective tool for addressing issues of diversity management as well as the concerns of a diverse membership, those groups need to be fully integrated and represented in unions' decision-making structures.

This study is an attempt to examine the extent to which unions have accorded priority to tackling issues of diversity management, including the equality of diverse groups in FET institutions.

## **2.11 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, a brief historical survey of diversity management and how it has impacted on the management and administration of technical colleges was presented. Lessons learnt from the world's further education and training systems have shown that economic success is premised on the blending of enterprise-based initiatives in training with effective state co-ordination of institutional governance and management environments. It was therefore indicated that managing diversity requires a dual response which entails South Africa's successful incorporation within the global economy as well as the development of marginalised sectors through conscious state intervention.

Traditional approaches to diversity management were explained. It was pointed out that organisations have traditionally had human resource systems that were based on homogeneity which promoted similarity, not diversity (Clarke 1995:57). Cox (1993:126) states that traditional human resource strategies to manage diversity have largely been introduced piece-meal, lacking integration with other systems, and consequently ended up failing because they did not change the culture to support the management of heterogeneity. The three predominant traditional human resource approaches for managing diversity which were briefly described in this chapter are diversity enlargement, diversity sensitivity and cultural audits.

As one of many interventions in organisational development, managing diversity is primarily concerned with improving interpersonal and inter-group communications, and relationships in the workplace. Consequently, this chapter also highlighted the benefits of the effective management of diversity in an environment that is becoming increasingly diverse in all respects. As such, the historical survey of the administration and management of public institutions during the apartheid era was presented. It was noted that there was no co-ordinated system of diversity management training for technical college staff who fell into the management category. This was ascribed to the separatist approach to education by the apartheid government which was reluctant to hire diverse employees to serve in the racially divided public institutions.

Nevertheless, there were pressures which drove a push for change in the public institutions. This chapter gave a brief outline of these pressures which included globalisation; balancing market and state; lifelong learning and massifying of the FET system; a shift from entitlement to accountability and effective performance; the flaws of South Africa's past economic growth path and deficiencies in the FET sector. These challenges and pressures served on the one hand to inhibit the development of an effective diversity management programme and commitment amongst public servants, on the other hand, they helped to make the employees and other stakeholders realise that there was a need for a change in the organisational design of public institutions. This chapter also gave a brief outline of the De Lange Report. It was indicated that because of the pressure for change, the apartheid government appointed the De Lange Commission to investigate educational provisions in South Africa. Hartshorne (1992:173) maintains that the government failed to follow the urging of the De Lange Commission, but instead inclined to the past, something which was in grave danger of destroying many positive attitudes built up during the course of the investigation.

Other issues that were discussed in this chapter include the current governance and management structures in the FET colleges; the organisational structure of the KwaZulu-Natal FET colleges; the need for transformation of the South African public institutions and the involvement and the role of trade unions in the process of transforming public institutions.

The following chapter contextualises the study within a public administration and development management paradigm. This chapter introduces the roles and responsibilities of managers, employees, organisations, government and other stakeholders to the process of transformation. It covers critical features impacting on the study, for example, the responsibility to maintain equity, the mandate for public sector employer and the place of the Constitution in public administration. The chapter finally focuses on the implementation of diversity management policies and practices in the workplace.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Society expects its citizens to be capable of proactively dealing with change throughout life, both individually as well as collectively, within a context of dynamic, multi-cultural and global transformation (Cox 1993:88). Public Administration is the institution that potentially has the promise to fundamentally contribute to this goal. To become expert in the dynamics of change, administrators should become skilled change agents. If they do become skilled change agents with moral purpose, administrators will create a difference in the lives of people from all backgrounds, and by so doing help produce greater capacity in society to cope with change (Botes 1994:61)

In any social system there are rules governing the way people should behave towards one another, what should and what should not be done, but there are also rules about how the rules are made, who makes them and how they are negotiated (Botes 1994:64). The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 and anti-discrimination laws are examples of laws that are passed by democratic governments in many countries with the purpose of eliminating unfair discrimination. It can therefore be maintained that the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 and Affirmative Action policies seek to protect people who have been historically discriminated against in the workplace and direct employers to implement affirmative action measures to redress such discrimination.

Crous (2004:574) argues that the ultimate purpose of the state is to promote the common good. This role includes protection being offered by the accepted governing body in exchange for being governed and protected, citizens expect the governing body to maintain an orderly community and protect their interests.



Governing institutions thus deliver services because citizens are unable to satisfy all their own needs and the activities of public administration are the logical consequences of the practice of service delivery from the earliest times (Crous 2004:574).

Government and the activities it undertakes to deliver services are the result of political dynamics. It is the responsibility of the government to make laws, to ensure that there are institutions to implement its laws, and to provide the services and products that these laws prescribe. It is the implementation of laws and the actual provision of services and products that constitutes Public Administration. The programmes of government should thus contribute towards an enhanced quality of life for all. This implies that the outcomes of Public Administration are aimed at service delivery and the improvement of the general welfare of the people (Crous 2004:575).

In South Africa, the democratic government which came into existence in 1994 faced a massive task of fiscal, political, social and economic transformation. South Africa consists of different cultures and value systems, which are found in the public sector, combined with the ethos of the operation of the public sector prior to 1994. The divergent nature of South African society which is also depicted in the public service and the influence of the different cultures, values and norms on the public officials coming from this divergent society, emphasises the importance of the development of diversity management guidelines applicable throughout the entire public sector spectrum against which the action and behaviour of public officials can be measured (Bauer 2002:166).

As the government responds to the challenges posed by divergent society, and as the role of public administration shifts from being a prescriptive regulator to that of managing change, the need for human resource development has become significant. Historically, public human resources management has been regarded largely as a technical matter rather than receiving the strategic

management concern it deserves (Bartel & Saavedra 2001:189). In the past there have been rapid, turbulent and often strained developments in the public human resources management environment (Bauer 2002:167). Bauer (2002:167) states that some solutions in the previous dispensation included putting into operation rationalisation projects, productivity improvement systems, executive leadership arrangements and merit career systems. Although these projects were tackled with great enthusiasm, it was still done by means of the old-style personnel administration, which implies uniformly applied central rules and prescripts. However, post-1994 public human resources management faces a quite different set of trends and challenges. Currently it is regarded as a key activity in public administration and plays an important role in guiding future activities.

Post-1994, public human resources management face enormous challenges, both in terms of its own transformation within the broader context of change in the public sector, and in terms of the transformation of the services which it provides to its clients. Strategic human resources management is an enhancement in the effectiveness of personnel management, which has developed out of pressures for change in the way organisations manage human resource. Furthermore, it is the purposeful resolution of human resource administration and policy issues to enhance a public sector organisation's effectiveness. It requires understanding of how personnel functions interrelate in context, recognition of their importance, and commitment by personnel practitioners, employees and political leaders to work together for change (Fitzgerald 1997:44).

In the past, many decision makers have sought a culturally and ethnically homogeneous workforce. However, the effects of globalisation and the changing nature of politics made such a strategy less advantageous than in the past. Many organisations have recently begun to count the cost of managing diversity poorly as well as the benefits of managing it effectively (Human 2005:5). The espoused

commitment to transformation of many public institutions and many dominant-group members does not always reflect a sincere change of heart (Human 2005:12). Human (2005:12) maintains that most public institutions will claim that they are committed to transformation and to the eradication of prejudice. They will furthermore state that they have developed sophisticated and detailed plans to provide opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups. Such statements and strategies nevertheless tend to be accompanied by the word 'but' as a qualifier (Human 2005:12).

Like people all over the world, many managers in South Africa, particularly in public institutions, may have learned to play the game. They may have learned the basic vocabulary of a non-discriminatory or politically correct language rather than having undergone a genuine change of heart (Human 2005:13). Some managers may avoid diversity issues owing to feelings of personal inadequacy and insecurity, while others may be confused about what is expected of them. Talk of increasing diversity may fill yet others with contempt and few will rise to the challenge. The result tends to be poor implementation combined with increasing apathy and cynicism (Kahn 2001:10).

While democracy, equality and other terms associated with social justice may serve as watchwords for transformation, their deployment in apparently shared principles cannot guarantee consensus on the substance of diversity management policy, nor need they result in sound human resource development practice. Enslin and Pendlebury (1998:263), claim that appeals to democracy, justice and equality are hollow as long as college management system continues to perpetuate a cycle of disadvantage by producing managers who are themselves disadvantaged through inadequate professional grounding. This suggests that it should be the mission of the Human Resource sector in every college to support the institution in the achievement of its strategic objectives by providing a professional and effective service which will support line managers in their resourcing, management and development. The Human Resource section

thus needs to be conversant with the diversity strategy and the way in which it impacts on areas such as training, development, planning, organisational culture, industrial relations as well as other external aspects of diversity management (Marais & Kroukamp 2005:127).

It will be clear from the discussion that managing diversity effectively does not involve once-off diversity interventions but constant administration and implementation of policy and procedures to ensure that the actions of public officials remain focussed on the promotion of welfare of the population. In addition it must be noted that the South African Public Service faces the challenge of creating an environment for growth and development, and in order to live up to these expectations, it needs to transform itself into an efficient, democratic and fully representative instrument of service delivery (Sing 1999:11). This chapter, therefore, examines the role of diversity management in the transforming public administration in South Africa, within a legislative and conceptual policy framework, it also highlights the nature and scope of public administration. The role of public administration and its attempts to meet the needs of divergent society within democratic policies is examined. In addition, the impact of national and global imperatives on human resources development within public administration is discussed.

### **3.2 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Public administration developed along with society and is as old as humanity itself. There is yet no general consensus about the definition of public administration (Fox & Meyer 1995:3). Public administration exists as an activity and an academic discipline. However, it is widely accepted that public administration is virtually omnipresent and exerts a constant influence on the lives of people. Public administration is the machinery, as well as the integral process, through which the government performs its functions (Nnoli 2000:44). Although there might be many practices of businesslike efficiency universally

applicable across regimes, matters of social convenience and advancement, even the associated organisational arrangements and administrative processes, were fundamentally of a political nature and regime-specific (Cook 2007:7). Cook (2007:7) argues that the enterprise was not just a matter of insuring the democratic accountability of government bureaucracy in the rather reductionist sense that seems to dominate current political thinking and practice. Cook (2007:7) is of the opinion that political leadership would link administrative expertise, political habits and traditions, public thought, and political experience in a grand, creative synthesis that would fortify and enrich democracy.

According to Nnoli (2000:44), public administration is a network of human relationships and associated activities extending from government to the lowest paid and powerless individual charged with keeping in daily touch with all resources, natural and human, and all other aspects of the life of the society with which the government is concerned. The study adopted Nnoli's definition that :

“Public administration is a system of roles and role relationships which defines in as clear and practicable terms as possible and in as much detail as possible the intentions and programmes of government; the means available internally and externally to accomplish them; where, when and how they are to be accomplished; who is to benefit from them; and, finally, it is a system that causes these intentions and programmes to be realised in real life. It is a pattern of routinised activities, involving decision-making, planning, advising, co-ordination, negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, command and data gathering, through which the government carries out its responsibilities”.

(Nnoli 2000 : 44).

As an academic discipline, Public Administration is of fairly recent origin when compared to the practice of public administration as an activity (Nnoli 2000:45). Public Administration refers to the technical discipline as a field of study (Cloete 1998:14). Stated differently, it is a science concerned with the study of administrative processes, governmental activities and interdependent variables, while public administration as an activity refers to a practical phenomenon

(Cloete 1998:14). In practice, therefore, public administration is indicative of the rendering of public service.

Wolin (2001:13) maintains that the ascent of western civilisation, including advancements in science and technology, in economic organisation, and in world exploration, along with the growth of populations energised by new social, economic, and political ideas, brought a shift in perspective “from the acquisition of power to its production”. Kettl (2002:79) argues that “power is only one of the considerations that must be weighed in administration, but of all it is the most overlooked in theory and the most dangerous to overlook in practice”. Kettl (2002) wanted theorists and practitioners to attend to the power production problem, that is, how administrators could generate an adequate amount of power that would allow them to put public policies into effect.

In order to advance the missions of their agencies, administrators have to produce power by devising strategies, creating alliances, and neutralising opposition (Kettl 2002:81). This way of thinking about, and acting toward, public administration and management has become the principal focus of the executive management orientation in the study and practice of public administration and management (see, for example, Heymann 1987, Behn 1997:3, Rainey 1990, and Maynard-Moody & Musheno 2003). The current dominant conceptualisation of the field of public management in both study and practice thus can be said to combine the executive management focus on strategies and tactics aimed at advancing agency missions, with the mantra of performance that places the onus for the measurement and administration of results on middle managers (Brudney, O’Toole & Rainey 2000 :4).

Public administration and management consists of public executives and managers employing “judgment or discretion” in the design and deployment of organisational, fiscal, financial, budgetary, analytical, and human capital resources and techniques (Lynn 2001:145). Behn (1997:3) argues that “public” in

public management refers to public purposes or the public good, and on this basis, even individuals running purely private entities are public managers if they are engaged in pursuing a public purpose. Public managers therefore produce goods or services people enjoy and value, and the wealth they generate directly improves the lives of those associated with their enterprises and thus improves the lives of their communities and even society at large. For public managers, however, the fusion of the instrumental and the constitutive is not just inadvertent or occasional, it is central, frequent, and permanent (Behn 1997:7). Howlett and Ramesh (2003:7) states that not only must public managers wield administrative power in service to political purposes that are always in contention, they wield that power in ways that raise questions and seek answers about what administrative power is, what public purposes are and should be, and how people's lives, their individual and group interrelationships, their interactions with social and political institutions, will be altered by those purposes and the strategies and methods used to try to achieve them.

According to Cook (2007:10), public managers not only engage in the task of considering and reconsidering public purposes, they also consider "what public means, and what the relationship between public and private is and should be". Cook (2007:10) further states that the fusion of the instrumental and the constitutive most distinguishes public management, and that it is the struggle of public executives and managers, and front-line workers as well, to negotiate a careful and conscious recognition of the constitutive as they work to generate and deploy administrative power in pursuit of contested public purposes. It can therefore be maintained that the time and energy of public managers should always be devoted primarily to the strategies and tactics, as well as the demonstrations of results, that are the keys to the efficient, competent, and responsible realisation of public purposes (Cook 2007:11). According to Cook (2007:11), this is what thoughtful citizens and their elected representatives generally regard as good governance.

In South Africa, there is a probability that public managers, because of the long history of apartheid and racial segregation, may in fact ignore the constitutive effects and the meaning of what they do, for the constitution of the public and private life of the citizens, at their peril and the peril of the citizens and polity they have pledged to serve. This study will therefore concern itself, *inter alia*, with the following public administration and management in the context of the structure of power and purpose in the execution of labour laws : the observation of and interaction with, changing societal conditions, the day-to-day necessity of responding to those conditions, and ways of changing them through management and leadership action of public managers.

### 3.3 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

A significant characteristic of South African society is the heterogeneity of the population. The mid-year population estimates for South Africa by population group and sex in July 2010 estimated that there were approximately 39,6 million Africans, 1,2 million Asians/Indians, 4,4 million Coloureds, and 4,9 whites. The racial distribution of the South African population in mid-year 2010 was as follows

Population group	Male	Female	Total
African	19 314 500	20 368 100	39 682 600
Coloured	2 124 900	2 299 200	4 424 100
Indian/Asian	646 600	653 300	1 299 900
White	2 243 300	2 341 700	4 584 700
Total	24 329 000	25 662 300	49 991 300

**Table 3.1** The 2010 mid-year population estimates for South Africa by population group and sex

**Source** Molongoana 2010 : 4



None of these four groups is a homogeneous group. Each of the four groups consists, *inter alia*, of linguistic, ethnic, racial and religious subgroups. There are also vast economic and growth differences in and among the population groups. This state of affairs creates complicated social circumstances which have to be provided for when public institutions are created and governmental and administrative practices are devised to bring about accountable government and public administration.

Cloete (1996:2) maintains that a state is fundamentally a body of people united not merely by force, but also by informal habits and customs referred to as traditions. Where a state has a homogeneous, well-educated and prosperous population with a common culture, its civil society could provide solid bases for public institutions (Du Toit, van der Walt & Bayat, 2002:3). This is unfortunately not the case in South Africa where the conflicting national aspirations of the various population groups before 1994 led to public protests, mass action, and even armed struggles. In order to understand the unique state of public administration in the Republic of South Africa, it is imperative to give a brief outline of the purpose of public administration before 1994, followed by the discussion of the transformation of the country into a democratic state where public institutions are expected to be created, governed and administered in terms of constitutional and other legislation.

### **3.3.1 Public Administration in the Republic of South Africa before 1994**

In the old South Africa, public administration as a whole was characterised by its lack of representation of all the peoples of the country (Cloete 1996:2). The administration of the Government was dominated by the white minority even though the country had a majority of black population. Christie (1992:262) maintains that public officials were seen by the majority of the broader South African community as the agents of the apartheid state and where certain

officials tried honestly and diligently to implement constructive policies, they met opposition and hostility among the communities they were attempting to assist.

In the experience of the majority black population, the apartheid public service in South Africa failed to live up to what should have been its essential mission and purpose, that of serving the people of the country. The system of service provision developed prior to 1994 was both discriminatory and exclusionary, and was based largely on the assumption that communities were passive recipients rather than active participants in the limited services that were provided.

The notion that the public service could or should play an important developmental role did not enter into the apartheid lexicon. The purpose of state officials was to administer, control and hand down services, not to work closely with communities in ways that might enable them to take control of their own development and empowerment (Schwella 1990:112). The public service was used as a control mechanism against the majority population. It therefore became highly authoritarian, centralised and rule bound in its operation. It was characterised in particular by the development of vertical, top-down management structure in which lower levels were not consulted and seldom dared to question a decision. Democratic practices were discouraged and there was a hierarchy of authority roles in which command flowed downwards and obedience flowed upwards. Thus, public administration was a command structure with those at the higher level commanding and those at the lower level obeying. The higher the level of authority, the greater the degree of responsibility of the role occupant within the system (Nnoli 2000:49).

Accountability within the public service tended to be limited to administrative and budgetary accountability. Employees were held accountable for adherence to rules and procedures rather than for efficiency and productivity. The performance audits introduced later by the Auditor-General covered only a few areas and did not have much impact on improved output and increased public insight (Bhindi &

Duignan 1997:131). Wider accountability of the public service to the public was not evident. In fact, the various public services were characterised by their secretiveness and the exclusion of public scrutiny. Information was closely guarded and released only under pressure. This created space for widespread inefficiency, mismanagement, maladministration and misappropriation of funds and increased the illegitimacy of the Government in the public's eye (Karlsson, Pampallis & Skhosana 1994:15).

The Public Service inherited from the apartheid regime was characterised by, *inter alia*, an inequitable distribution of public service, inaccessible basic services, poor accountability and transparency measures, inadequate consultation on the required service standards, inaccurate information on services and standards at which they were rendered, unresponsive and insensitive attitudes towards citizens' complaints, and discourteous staff (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:12). Since the new political dispensation in 1994, there has been a need for the South African Public Service to translate the country's democracy into decisive action to fight inequality.

### **3.3.2 The Transformation of the South African Public Service**

As a country in transition, South Africa is facing the daunting challenge of fighting inequality and establishing policies and programmes to improve the well-being of the majority of its citizens. The ability of the state to accomplish its objectives is largely defined by the capability and commitment of its public service. The challenge of transforming the Public Service is thus one of the central tasks to be achieved in order to address the development challenges facing the country (Penceliah & Moodley 2002:24)

The South African Public Service faces the challenge of creating an environment for growth and development. To live up to these expectations, the Public Service needs to transform itself into an efficient, democratic and fully representative

instrument of service delivery (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:11). There are several pieces of legislative and policy measures that impact on the transformation of the Public Service. According to Cheminais et al. (1998:95), the government should intervene in the transformation of the Public Service by responding to the formal requirements articulated in the Constitution and other subordinate legislation and by creating institutions which regulate the employment of public employees, namely the Public Service Commission. They further maintain that the government should ensure that public employees are managed and utilised in such a way that society or the community receive effective and efficient services; that public employees are protected and are treated in an equitable manner as provided for in section 23 of the Bill of Rights; that employment equity and equal employment opportunities are enhanced in public organisations; and that public employees work in a safe and healthy environment (Cheminais et al. 1998:95). It is therefore important for the government to provide an environment where public employees act in an ethical and incorruptible manner in the provision of services to the community.

The new South African Government introduced these guidelines in order to facilitate the fundamental transformation of the Public Service, where the commitment is not only the delivery of public service by creating a facilitation environment but also, more importantly, to transform the attitude and manner in which public officials execute their functions.

The legislative framework that impacts on the transformation of the Public Service includes the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, the Public Service Labour Relations Act 105 of 1994, the Skills Development Act 56 of 1997, Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 and the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. These policy documents have placed emphasis on meeting the basic needs of all citizens by reducing unnecessary consumption, releasing resources for productive investment and redirecting them to areas of the greatest need (Kroukamp 1999:300). This meant that public institutions had to be reoriented to

optimise access to their services by all citizens, within the context of fiscal constraints and the fulfilment of competing needs. In the following paragraph, the provision of the Constitution with regard to service delivery as well as human resource management, and other legislation such as the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, Affirmative Action and Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, which are intended to redress past inequalities in the workplace through the elimination of unfair discrimination within the Public Service, will be discussed.

### **3.3.2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**

The Constitution and other relevant policy documents have directed the efforts of the South African Government to the systemic dismantling of apartheid and the restructuring of the Public Service to ensure efficient, effective and economical delivery of public goods and services. Schwella (1990:23) affirm that the Constitution represents the supreme law in public human resources management. Penciliah and Moodley (2002:26) state that the Constitution does not only provide for a number of issues which are important to the public personnel manager, including aspects relating to equality, labour relations, freedom of association, and just administrative action, but also makes provision for norms and principles for professional ethical conduct by public employees, and for the creation of the Public Service and the Public Service Commission.

The importance of the public service in achieving the aspirations of the country is underlined by Chapter 10 in the Constitution, which lays down values and principles to guide public administration in every sphere of government, and provides the basis for the structure and functioning of the public service. These basic values and principles place a premium on the characteristics of adaptability, transparency, responsiveness, accountability and the best administrative practice. At the top end of this relationship lies the constitutional foundation of the public administration as stated in Chapter 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

This set of basic values and principles raised in Chapter 10 of the Constitution governs public administration. Section 195(1) of the Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, states that these basic values and principles provide, *inter alia*, that public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles which promote and maintain a high standard of professional ethics, efficient, economic and effective use of resources, as well as good human-resource management and career-development practices in order to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness, and provide for freedom of information so that there can be open and accountable administration at all levels of government

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides an historic bridge between the past of a deeply divided society characterised by strife, conflict, untold suffering and injustice, and a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence, and development opportunities for all South Africans, irrespective of colour, race, class, sex or belief.

Taylor (1998:17) identifies two aspects derived from the Constitution that underpin human resources management in the public sector

**(i) Increased emphasis on basic human rights in the workplace**

In accordance with section 8(1) of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights applies to all legislation, which includes current human resources management acts and regulations, and binds the legislature, executive, and judiciary and all organs of state. In practice, this means that decisions on human resources matters such as disciplinary measures, retirements, promotions and remuneration cannot be taken in an arbitrary manner and their constitutional implications should be considered thoroughly. The basic human rights in the workplace, which should serve as guidelines for human resource management, relate *inter alia* to equality, freedom of association and freedom of expression. Freedom of expression for

public servants, for example, can be compared to the concept of whistle blowing, that is notifying higher authority of public funds wasted, fraud and abuse of authority (Taylor 1998:17).

## **(ii) Setting specific values to govern public administration**

A set of basic values and principles about the management of public administration, which is also the target of public human resource management, is raised in Chapter 10 of the Constitution. For instance, section 195 (1) of the Constituion requires human resource management in the public sector to be efficient, economic and effective, development-oriented, impartial, fair, equitable and without bias, accountable, transparent, and broadly representative of the South African people. It is evident that the Constitution requires the Public Service to implement legislation in a dynamic and objective way to meet transformational objectives. However, Ramaite (2001:1) asserts that macro policies have been developed faster than the capacity of the Public Service to implement them effectively. Given the history, where human resources were basically managed on the separate development principles of apartheid which created backlogs in representation, it can be contended that the emphasis in future will be placed mostly on the equity and representative values.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Constitution is the emphasis it places on the requirement for human resources management. More specifically, it includes human resource activities such as recruitment, appointments, promotions, transfers and dismissals of members of the public service. It brings about the shift from personnel administration to human resource management. This shift recognises the need for a more dynamic approach to human capital management. The investment in human resources within the Public Service is directly linked to the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery (Penceliah & Moodley 2002:28). The mission of the Government is that human resource management in the Public Service should become a model of excellence, in

which service to society stems from individual commitment and dedication instead of compulsion. The management of people should be regarded as a significant task for those who have been charged with that responsibility and should be conducted in a professional manner.

### **3.3.2.2 Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995**

For the first time in the history of South Africa, all employees, irrespective of their gender, colour, class or racial background, were included in the labour movement. The Labour Relations Act covers all employees. However, those who provide essential services may not resort to strike action to settle their dispute. This Act aims to advance economic development, social justice, labour peace and the democratisation of the workplace. Some of the primary objectives of the laws set out in the Act are to give effect to and regulate the fundamental rights as set out in Chapter 2, Section 23 of the Constitution. The Act also gives effect to the obligations of the Republic of South Africa as a member of state of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). It thereby aims to provide a framework within which employees, their trade unions and employers' organisations can collectively bargain, formulate industrial policy and promote orderly collective bargaining and effective resolution of labour disputes.

The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, which became law in November 1996, heralds a new era in labour relations in South Africa. The purpose of the Act is to advance economic development, social justice, labour peace and the democratisation of the workforce.

Pending the introduction of comprehensive legislation regulating employment equity, the drafters of the new Act placed the unfair discrimination provisions in the Transitional Arrangements Schedule of the Act. In part B of the Residual Unfair Labour Practices of Schedule 7, it is stated that for the purpose of this item, an unfair labour practice means an unfair act or omission that arises



between an employer and an employee, involving the unfair discrimination, either directly or indirectly, against an employee on any ground, including, but not limited to race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language, marital status or family responsibility; the unfair conduct of the employer relating to the promotion, demotion or training of an employee or relating to the provision of benefits to an employee; the unfair suspension of an employee or any other disciplinary action short of dismissal in respect of an employee; the failure of an employer to reinstate or re-employ a former employee in terms of any agreement (Section 12(3) of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995).

In the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, an employee includes an applicant for employment, and an employer is not prevented from adapting or implementing employment policies and practices that are designed to achieve the adequate protection and advancement of persons or groups or categories of persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination in order to enable their full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms; and any discrimination based on an inherent requirement of the particular job does not constitute unfair discrimination (Section 1(a) of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995).

From the above it is clear that all involved in labour relations should review and adapt their human resource management policies in order to prevent unfair discriminatory labour practices that may lead to unrest or strike actions as well as conflictual relationships in the workplace.

### **3.3.2.3 Affirmative Action**

Affirmative action is part of the legislative framework that impacts on the transformation of the South African Public Service. In a democratic South Africa, affirmative action policies were a necessary first step to move black employees quickly into the corporate ranks where they could be trained and developed

(Grogan 2005:286). Classic affirmative action policies seek to achieve demographic representation through dedicated recruitment drives, preferential treatment, and quota systems (Thomas 1996:123). Hence, statistical profiles are central to demonstrating the symbolic worth of such programmes.

The South African government had considered an aggressive affirmative action policy that would push employers with more than 50 employees to build their workforces in ways that would be more reflective of the population. Two basic arguments had been made in favour of such an aggressive affirmative action position. The first is that the positive effects of economic growth will take too long to filter down to affect corporate hiring practices. If South Africa fails to redress apartheid's inequities quickly, it risks a level of racial polarisation that could tear the country apart (Chenault 1997:58). A second argument is that aggressive affirmative action is simply good business since, as Hofmeyr (1995:39) notes, black consumers will dominate the South African economy in the future. Furthermore, black supervisors will be better able to lead a predominantly black workforce than whites (Bezuidenhout 1993:15). Likewise, Bezuidenhout (1993:16) argues that the size of the white management pool is inadequate and that affirmative action will help create a business environment with lower unemployment and crime.

However, whites may perceive affirmative action targets as a threat to their job security, especially if black employees are seen as tokens who are not permitted to do real work. Therefore, affirmative action must include the training needed to redress educational and skill imbalances, plus real opportunities to perform. Without training and opportunity, whites will likely see affirmative action as reverse discrimination (Nkomo 1998:15). Many experts (see Bezuidenhout 1993:16, Laburn 1994:14, Mafuna 1993:19) also argue that affirmative action should be viewed as a way to educate the managerial structure about how implementing affirmative action aggressively can help reduce unemployment and poverty – factors directly related to high levels of crime, violence and political

instability. These experts maintain that this could be achieved by having senior management insist on the systematic removal of all forms of discrimination in human resource practices in selection, compensation, training and promotion opportunities, as well as by having top management consult with supervisors, employees and union representatives about how to design the education process, affirmative action targets and implementation practices.

Similarly, Hofmeyr (1995:37) argues for a three-phase approach to affirmative action in South Africa. The first phase involves a campaign, led by top management, to create an awareness of the need for rapid black advancement. This awareness should be based on the idea that to succeed, organisations must be more representative of South African society. Furthermore, organisations should involve representatives from all ranks in the development of affirmative action policies. A bottom-up approach takes advantage of the consensual approach to decision-making used in many African cultures (Khoza 1994:118).

Once the campaign to support an affirmative action programme is complete, organisations must set job category targets for the advancement of blacks. Human and Hofmeyr (1985:21) found that if specific targets are not set, significant changes rarely occur. For these targets to have credibility, however, they need to be set vertically and horizontally by function. Otherwise, black recruits may end up in low-level support jobs while qualified whites receive choice line positions. One way to deal with this is to have an explicit policy in which only blacks are recruited for important positions, especially if resistance is likely lower in the ranks (Hofmeyr 1995:47). Hofmeyr (1995:47) maintains that affirmative action programmes must include measures to identify and eliminate employment barriers, including unfair discrimination; measures to further diversity in the workplace; measures to make reasonable accommodation for people from designated groups to ensure their representation in the workplace and measures to retain and develop people from designated groups.

The final phase of the affirmative action process proposed by Hofmeyr (1995:49) is the consolidation of equal opportunity. In this phase, equal opportunity becomes a reality once the work environment is normalised. This will be characterised by systems, behaviours and attitudes that do not discriminate against any group or individual. All employees will be trained and developed to their highest level of capability. According to Hofmeyr (1995:47), if diversity management is added to the affirmative action component, the strategic business advantages such as the ability to attract, motivate, develop and retain skilled and committed people from all sectors of society, the ability to create a dignified and respectful working environment which is attractive to current and potential stakeholders, and the potential to become a world-player rather than be parochial will emerge.

The business case for effective diversity management, which includes affirmative action, is thus compelling for organisations servicing a diverse customer base and competing internationally. However, Human (2005:52) maintains that while this reality is being recognised by some large organisations, for many the implementation of diversity strategies remains problematic.

#### **3.3.2.4 Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998**

Employment equity is intended to achieve equity in the workplace through the elimination of unfair discrimination and through affirmative action strategies. To do this, Thomas (2000:92) suggests that the organisational environment must be prepared to be receptive to new entrants at all levels, which requires that the employment equity initiative and the resultant diversity in organisations must be led from the top. Leading diversity requires that an environment is created within which all employees, whether existing employees or those brought into the organisation through affirmative action measures, are allowed to contribute fully to the life and objectives of the organisation.

Any employer, irrespective of the number of people employed or of its financial turnover, is required to adhere to the sections of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 that prohibit unfair discrimination. No employer may discriminate in employment practices on any of the following grounds

“race, gender, sex, pregnancy (intended pregnancy, termination of pregnancy or any medical circumstances relating to pregnancy), marital status, family responsibility (care and support of spouse, partner, dependent children or immediate family members), ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language and birth”.

(Dickman 1998:10).

In addition, medical testing, which includes any test, question, inquiry or other means designated to ascertain whether an employee has any medical condition, is prohibited (Dickman 1998:11). The Act states specific conditions under which medical testing can be conducted. Should the Labour Court deem testing for HIV status to be justified, the employer may be required to adhere to certain conditions. Psychological testing and any similar assessments are prohibited unless the test or assessment can be scientifically shown to be valid and reliable, can be applied fairly to all employees and is not biased against any employee or group (Dickman 1998:10).

Discrimination is not regarded to be unfair if affirmative action measures are taken, or if discrimination is based on the inherent requirements of the job. However, the burden of proof rests with the employer to answer allegations of unfair discrimination. The Act ensures that employees are not prejudiced should they wish to bring the attention of the Department of Labour practices that are unfair or contradictory to the Act or Employment Equity Plan. Similarly, employees cannot be promised any advantage in exchange for not reporting misdemeanours.

A recent South African study by Thomas (2000) has highlighted that, while black managers may leave companies for higher salaries and related perks, issues relating to not fitting into historically established corporate cultures seem to also have a bearing on what has become known derogatorily as 'job hopping'. Thus, while Employment equity and related strategies of affirmative action can be legislated, the organisational context within which designated groups work must be prepared to sustain Employment Equity initiatives. This is more difficult to achieve because it involves paradigm shifts, the challenging of stereotypes and the embracing of risk to create an organisational environment within which diverse groups of people can work together effectively (Thomas 2000:93). This essentially calls for leading and managing employee diversity. It is something which cannot be legislated, but without which Employment Equity initiatives will not work.

Thomas (2000:93) maintains that to effectively implement Employment Equity initiatives, an organisational environment must be created and developed in which all employees can contribute to the competitive advantage of the organisation and where no one is excluded on the basis of factors unrelated to productivity. This endeavour is not in opposition to, or in competition with programmes of Employment Equity, but targets the organisational environment to ensure that it is able to sustain such programmes.

Managing employee diversity is, ultimately, simply good people management. It is an ability that can be developed in managers at all levels through a combination of training and experience (Thomas 2000:93). However, it has to be led from the top. Leading diversity is the volition and commitment which managers, at all levels, must evidence in the process of organisational transformation. Employment Equity is an integral component of such transformation, and one which, to be effective, must be led at all levels within organisations (Mda & Mothata 2000:13). This in no way implies that problems such as lack of trust, breakdown of communication, prejudices, stereotypes, poor

teamwork, decreased productivity, inter-group conflicts, unhealthy competitions as well as high staff turnover among those previously disadvantaged workers, will simply disappear. However, if there is a will to commit to doing the right thing, the process of managing the problems will be creatively addressed.

Central to the effective leadership of diversity created by Employment Equity programmes is the establishment of sound business reasons that tie the achievement of organisational objectives to diversity. The objective is to ensure a change in organisational culture which allows people to utilise, among many other factors, their different insights and methods, their creativity and different perspectives, borne out of the diversity which they bring to the organisation, be it by virtue of race, gender, ethnicity, disability or other life experiences (Mda & Mothata 2000:14).

One of the sound business reasons for embracing diversity is the negative effect on the organisation if its diverse employees are not fully utilised. These business reasons must be specific to the organisation, taking into account the industry within which it operates and its particular products and services. However, some general business reasons that have been advanced by some writers such as Morrison (1993), Thomas (1991), Cox (1993) and Thomas and Ely (1996), include tapping into skills not previously available in a company characterised by an homogeneous workforce; enhancing company creativity and problem-solving; responding quickly and effectively to diverse markets and managing productive relationships with diverse customers, suppliers and distributors; promoting a culture of inclusivity, critical to a commitment to total quality; utilising all employees fully and effectively; promoting company flexibility and adaptability; enhancing team performance and developing a reputation as an employer of choice thereby attracting and retaining the best talent especially among those representing new customer markets.

In summary, Employment Equity initiatives should go hand-in-hand with initiatives to address the organisational environment within which such initiatives must be effected. Central to the implementation of Employment Equity programmes is leadership that recognises that there are sound business reasons for ensuring that organisations attract and fully utilise diverse employees for competitive advantage. Porter (1990:72) has noted that government cannot create competitive industries, only companies can do that. While it is certain that employment equity has to be implemented, what will prove of greater challenge is the commitment of leadership to go beyond pure legislative requirements and to manage the challenges that are presented.

### **3.4 TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

The underlying philosophy for the transformation of public service and administration in South Africa stems from the imperative to dismantle and eradicate separatist ideologies which formed the foundation on which differentiated human resource development, inequalities of service delivery, sexism and racism evolved. Arjun (1998:21) states that the aftermath of implementing a lopsided epistemology, based on apartheid ideologies, destroyed the culture of putting fairness and respect for differences, thus leading to conditions of power and domination in relations between communities.

The new national Constitution of 1996 is indeed a source of pride to all South Africans intent on changing among others, the culture of human relations in workplace. The various discussion documents such as the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997, and the White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service of 1997, bear testimony to the new democratic government's determination to have wide-scale participation of interest groups in policy decisions about administration and management of public institutions. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery



(Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:15) urges public institutions to make relevant and functional changes.

In September 1997, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery published values and principles as a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service delivery. These values and principles are consistent with the Bill of Rights of the new Constitution, and place particular emphasis on the transformation of national and provincial departments as well as the processes of management and governance in public institutions. Improving the delivery of public services means redressing the imbalances of the past and while maintaining continuity of service to all levels of society, focusing on meeting the needs of the previously disadvantaged groups (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:4). Improving service delivery also calls for a shift away from inward-looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, and a search for new ways of working which are more responsive to the needs of the citizens.

The introduction of a service delivery improvement programme cannot be achieved in isolation from other fundamental management changes within the public service. It must be part of a fundamental shift of culture whereby public servants see themselves first and foremost as servants of the citizens of South Africa, and where the public institution is managed with service to the public as its primary goal. Improved service delivery should be a dynamic process out of which a completely new relationship is developed between workers, managers and individual clients (Kantor, Schomer & Louw 1997:19). To implement a service delivery programme successfully, public service managers require new management tools. These tools, which are broadly the tools of the new public service management as mentioned by the National Committee on Further Education (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:5), are assignment to individual managers of responsibility for delivering specific results for a specified level of resources and for obtaining value for money in the use of

those resources; individual responsibility for results matched with managerial authority for decisions about how resources should be used; delegation of managerial responsibility and authority to the lowest possible level; the principle of democratic governance increasingly reflected in every level of the system, by the involvement in consultation and appropriate forms of decision-making of representatives of the stakeholders, interest groups and role-players and transparency about the results achieved and resources consumed.

Against the above tools, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service sets out a practical agenda for transforming the delivery of public service and it indicates that the public service needed to be transformed into a coherent, representative, competent and democratic instrument for implementing government policies and meeting the needs of people in accordance with the process of reconciliation, reconstruction and development (Devenish 1998:263). This White Paper is directly applicable to those parts of the public sector, both national and provincial, which are regulated by the Public Service Labour Relations Act 105 of 1994. However, it is relevant to all areas and employees of the public sector regulated by other legislation, such as local government and parastatals, teachers and lecturers in education departments, as well as all other departments. In line with the Constitutional principle of co-operative government, particularly as regards promoting a coherent government, it is expected, therefore, that all sectors of public administration will agree to follow the values and principles for the transformation of public institutions.

Aside from the material and supportive structures required for the successful implementation of transformative policies, managers need to understand the values and principles underpinning such policies so that they do not violate the constitutional rights of stakeholders in the process of implementing policy directives. While all of the values and principles of transformation are important to inform and facilitate the legitimate participation of employees, managers, administrators and governors, key emphasis will be placed on those that have

maximum value for managers and administrators in the process of public institutional transformation.

#### **3.4.1 Accountability and transparency**

The principles of accountability and transparency are also important, and speak to the way in which FET colleges should be managed. The White Paper on Education and Training states that the restoration of the culture of management involves the creation of a culture of accountability. This means the development of a common purpose or mission among lecturers, managers and college councils, with clear, mutually agreed and understood responsibilities, and lines of co-operation and accountability (White Paper on Further Education and Training 1998:22).

Adams (1993:131) is of the opinion that openness and free flow of relevant information, at all levels of governance, are key ingredients in the principle of accountability. A national, integrated system of education requires a commitment from national, provincial and institutional levels of governance to assume collective responsibility for the transformation of FET colleges within an agreed governance and management framework. Each level of governance is accountable to the other, and must ensure open communication channels and fair administrative structures in support of the principle of transparency. Although each level of management and governance has a degree of power to perform certain functions and duties autonomously, they are collectively accountable to ensure that their actions are co-ordinated and synchronised in order to reach national education goals.

It is the government's constitutional obligation to protect the rights of every individual. Since education is a basic right, the government is accountable to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the protection and advancement of this right. Thus, government's commitment to upholding these rights has been

translated into policies. The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 protects the rights of employees in education and training institutions from unfair labour policies and practices. The FET college management and governance is thus accountable for policy implementation in colleges. In the current climate of transformation, FET colleges are accountable to their college councils and through their college councils, to their communities. Successful outcomes of organisational goals, however, are no longer the sole responsibility of college management *per se*, but became the joint responsibility of every individual who has an interest in the educational objectives, processes and outcomes of the college, as implied in current transformation policy directives.

### **3.4.2 Representivity and inclusivity**

The principle of representivity stems from the need to move away from the asymmetrical relations of power and domination which were prevalent in the management of public institutions during the apartheid era (Hargreaves & Hopkins 1993:136). This principle is consistent with the principles of transparency and accountability, and serves as the interlocking variable that unites and consolidates the bond among partners in the educational institution. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1993:137) state that representative symbols or tokenism, that involve stakeholders for merely show-casing a physical presence of stakeholders, are contrary to the principle of representivity and serve as a smokescreen for autocratic participation, and that involvement by means of collective bargaining, negotiations, dialogue and decision-making to support and promote interest of the community represented, is what underpins this principle.

Representivity and inclusivity are principles of fundamental value to reconciling the respective responsibilities of government and the community. They are the basis for reconstructing the system of public education in a way that creates a partnership between government and the community, between the community and the college, and between the college and its stakeholders. They further

promote a partnership among various members within each level of management and governance. According to Hargreaves and Hopkins (1993:137), educational reforms are doomed to failure unless there is a significant shift in power relationships.

Hence, policies in South Africa that provide public institutions with increased autonomy for the purpose of bottom-up and site-based management and governance have been influenced by principles of representivity and inclusivity. Furthermore, each category of stakeholder has been given legitimate authority to organise representative councils. These councils are afforded the opportunity to represent their respective interests and to protect their rights in terms of the Constitution. The organisation such as College Council is an example of a representative council that has evolved for the purpose of inclusive decision-making and democratic participation in education. In its endeavour to build a democratic education and training system, the state provides that all stakeholders and interest groups should have the opportunity to participate in policy formulation, monitoring and development in a way consistent with efficient educational management and administration (Karlsson, Pampallis & Skhosana 1994:23).

The positive unification of the past fragmented college structures alludes to an ideological transformation, from an educational system of dictatorship and domination to one of democracy and participation. Although FET colleges have transformed in the sense that representivity in the staff composition of institutions have been established, it is still necessary to determine whether the principles of representivity and inclusivity are observed.

### **3.4.3 Empowerment and capacity-building**

Empowerment and capacity-building are two important principles that have informed policies related to the management and governance of colleges such as

the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006, the National Qualifications Framework of 1996, and the Education Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995. While these documents make provision for incidental empowerment and capacity-building, strategic and planned programmes in support of these principles need to be implemented at institutional levels of management and governance.

The principles of empowerment and capacity-building seek to affirm the democratic values of human dignity, respect, equality and freedom for all, by making self-actualisation possible through educational endeavours (Ashkanasy, Zerbe & Hartel 2000:35). Transformative policies aimed at, for example, human resource development, have been influenced by the principles of empowerment and capacity-building. While these policies support the principles in theory, the realisation of the principles in practice depends on the quality of policy implementation.

Capacity-building and empowerment are essential principles to support programmes for the development of an enabling management team in education systems. They add value and quality to the practices of institutional management and governance. The possibility of participating on the education board of management contributes to a greater sense of mastery and self-esteem. Keith and Girling (1991:38) believe that when employees at the lower levels of the organisational hierarchy have a chance to share in power from above, they feel greater team identity, and are more co-operative.

Community participation in educational affairs engenders psychological and social satisfaction among its individuals because, as Ashkanasy, Zerbe and Hartel (2000:37) say human beings are fulfilled only to the extent that they create their world, and create it with their transforming labour. Such fulfilment is an empowering necessity to develop a liberatory pedagogy of which the community at large is the beneficiary. Ashkanasy, Zerbe and Hartel (2000:37) maintain that once individuals are sufficiently empowered, they will be capable of

making sound judgments about the development, utilisation and management of resources.

### **3.5 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

The human aspect of management became so important that industrial psychology and organisational behaviour became fully-fledged disciplines in the fifties and sixties to provide answers to questions about the behaviour of people in organisations and what management should do to develop that behaviour to the advantage of the organisation (Smit & Cronjé 1999:353). Smit and Cronjé (1999:353) continue to state that interest in the success of Japanese managers in the seventies reinforced the realisation that organisational success depends on people.

People are important because they are the only living resource in an organisation and because they are creative. It is people who ensure that the organisational system is designed in such a way that it can adapt to a changing environment (Pynes 2004:22). In other words, people determine the potential of the organisation as a system by choosing an appropriate strategy for survival in a turbulent environment, by deploying resources in such a way that the organisation can survive and by ensuring that plans are properly implemented. Human resources include all members of an organisation, ranging from top managers to entry-level employees. Effective managers realise how valuable human resources are and take active steps to gain a competitive advantage.

Pynes (2004:5) states that many external and internal environmental factors, such as economic factors, social and cultural changes, technological changes, and legal changes, present human resources management (HRM) challenges. The demographic composition of the workforce, in particular, is rapidly changing. Not only is there a continued increase in a diverse workforce, but there is also a continued increase in the number of women along with an increase in disabled

employees and foreign-born or immigrant workers. This implies that employers must offer flexible work schedules to accommodate training, education, and family needs. Employers must also provide greater opportunities for work-based learning to prepare future workers and to continually upgrade the skills of current workers. Pynes (2004:10) maintains that the increased diversity of the workplace poses new challenges for the systems that educate and train workers, and these systems must accommodate ethnic and cultural differences, provide for the needs of working families and individuals with disabilities, and address gaps in literacy and job skills among the previously disadvantaged populations.

Avery (2000:333) suggests that public managers should be flexible and attuned to the needs of society, and they must seek to improve the quality of their services by engaging in strategic human resource management in order to meet the new human resources management challenges. This implies that recruitment and selection strategies must be innovative, that career development opportunities must be provided, work assignments must be flexible, policies must reward superior performers and hold marginal employees accountable, and performance standards must be designed to promote the goals and values of the organisations.

### **3.5.1 The importance of the human dimension in management**

When managers are questioned about their problems at work, one theme that crops up time and again is people (Smit & Cronjé 1999:354). Managers often mention how unmotivated some of their subordinates are, the conflict that exists in certain departments or the poor communication abilities of a top manager. Since it is the task of managers to deal with people and have them get on with the job, they must learn more about people in the organisation. Smit and Cronjé (1999:355) suggest that people should be considered from the following angles



### **3.5.1.1 People as people**

People spend a large part of their day at work and they work to satisfy their needs (Smit & Cronjé 1999 :354). Thus one can say that the work a person does is a reflection of his or her needs and objectives. The organisation is one of the instruments an employee can use to realise his or her objectives. However, if for some reason the organisation blocks the attainment of the needs and objectives of an employee, he or she may become unmotivated and unproductive. It is essential, therefore, that managers understand the people working with and under them. No two people are the same. The differences between people are easily discernible when it comes to age, sex, marital status or number of dependents, but differences in intellectual capacity, personality, learning experiences, perceptions, values, attitudes, motivation and so on are far more difficult to ascertain. Managers cannot do their jobs properly if they do not have a sound knowledge of the complex nature of people. According to Kelner, Rivers and O'Connell (1996:15), a manager is supposed to be a psychologist, anthropologist, sociologist and political scientist, all in one.

### **3.5.1.2 People as resources**

Management is the process in which the organisation's resources are directed towards attaining objectives as productively as possible (Smit & Cronjé 1999:355). People, finance, physical resources and information are the organisation's resources. Just as managers have a knowledge of financial resources, different types of physical resources and available information resources, they must also have an understanding of human resources. An organisation's human resources are crucial to success for the simple reason that an organisation cannot exist without people. People are the lifeblood of an organisation, and this is the resource that gets other resources going. However, people are the most complex of all resources (Lavalette & Kennedy 1996:15). They are also the only resource with personal objectives, they strive for higher

status, have preferences and dislikes, come from different backgrounds have different levels and types of experience, and insist on training and development.

#### **3.5.1.3 People as social systems**

An organisation comes into being when two or more people come together to realise an objective that is too complex for one person alone to attain. An organisation cannot exist without people. Jenkins (1996:99) suggests that if managers wish to understand the organisations in which they work, they must have a knowledge of how people function as individuals, in groups and in teams. Organisations comprise both formal and informal groups. The former develop as a result of organisational structure. Therefore, the employees form a group with its own identity which pursues a common objective or objectives, functions interdependently and interacts continuously. Informal groups also develop in the organisation on the basis of employees' individual needs, not those of the organisation, which they need to satisfy. It is just as important for a manager to understand the influence of informal groups in the organisation as it is for him or her to have a knowledge of formal groups. People as a social system play a prominent role in the functioning of an organisation (Smit & Cronjé 1999:355).

#### **3.5.2 Leadership in the context of institutional administration**

If organisations consisted of machines that could execute management's orders promptly, predictably and with mechanical precision, only the planning and organisational tasks of management would be necessary for its objectives to be attained (Smit & Cronjé 1999:361). Organisations are made up of machines and people. It is people who give life to the organisation, hence they are one of its most important resources. People are probably also the most complex resource in the organisation, because they are unpredictable and different. Each individual in an organisation has a different combination of interests, capabilities, habits, skills and objectives and is differently motivated (Collins & Porras 1994:97). Thus

each person has a personal agenda that does not necessarily put the interests of the business organisation first. An organisation's human resources are therefore extremely complex.

Directing this complex resource of the organisation, guiding the behaviour of or leading the employees of an organisation requires a complicated management activity, namely leadership. If an organisation is to attain its objectives, someone must set certain activities in motion and keep them going. Thus the management activities that are set in motion must also be *kept* in motion for the objectives to be attained. In leading, management gives direction to the organisation's activities so that all its resources are deployed as effectively as possible to realise its objectives. Leadership is the process of directing the behaviour of others towards the accomplishment of certain objectives (McKee & Pittari 2001:116). It involves taking the lead to bridge the gap between formulating plans and reaching objectives, in other words, translating plans into reality. Leadership involves elements such as influencing people, giving orders, motivating people either as individuals or in groups, managing conflict and communicating with subordinates (Gardner 1995:109). Leadership is, therefore, the activity that infuses energy into the organisation to activate its members and resources to get things moving and keep them in motion (Gardner 1995:109).

The performance of any organisation, public or private, is directly related to the quality of its leadership. However, it is important to note that good managers are not necessarily good leaders (Kotter 1996:84). To increase the performance of the organisation, it is obviously desirable that all managers should also be good leaders, which is why organisations should seek and train people who are good managers and leaders. Because of the critical role that managers play in the successful management of organisations, leadership is one of the most important functions of the management process. The interdependence between management and leadership should be apparent if leadership is seen as follows

“The process of working with other people to identify and achieve common goals in a meaningful way. The one element that is absolutely necessary to any program involving people is leadership. Without the ability to lead, a manager cannot be effective even though he or she may be extremely erudite person”.

(Whitehead 1999 :54).

It is important that leaders do not just adopt the style and habits that have proved successful for traditional leaders but they should draw on the skills and attitudes they developed from their shared experience as democratic managers. Locke and Latham (1990:47) state that in Australia, there have been convulsions in established organisations such as the churches, police forces, public services, universities, health services and businesses. These organisations are being challenged as never before. Their management and leadership are no longer regarded as ‘sacrosanct’ and are subject to increasing criticism. Included among the forces that have contributed to the complexity and turbulence of modern organisational environments are the expanding information society, discontinuous changes, a marked resurgence in probity and social justice issues of gender, access and equity as well as the increasing stranglehold of economic rationalism (Nevis, Lancourt & Vassallo 1996:91). Environmental complexities and turbulence have brought to the forefront fundamental issues and tensions relating to leadership, organisational structures, culture and management practices.

These challenges, which appear to be worldwide phenomena, have placed leadership, its basis and function, under critique. There is, especially, re-examination of the concepts of power and authority and how they are exercised and legitimised (Young & Dixon 1996:113). Bhindi and Duignan (1997:120) maintain that leadership and management are being redefined and there are increasing calls for a clear shift away from traditional hierarchical control mechanisms and processes as a basis for influence to notions of leadership as service and stewardship.

A major paradigm shift is occurring in the way we construe our world, work, relationships and leadership (Gunn 1995:36). According to Kets de Vries (1993:19), the current emphasis on corporate managerialism, the excesses of leadership expediency and obsession with self-interest and narcissistic behaviour, personal advantage and lust for power and privilege have contributed to a persistent feeling among the followers of being used, cheated and even demeaned. Murphy (1995:92) maintains that this disquiet about excessive managerialism has led to the call for the transformation of managers and administrators into leaders. Murphy (1995:92) argues that no matter whether in educational, religious, public service or business organisations, leaders encourage and support ways of thinking and doing that are ethical and people-centred. Murphy (1995:97) proposes that leaders in the new century will need to be more sensitive and caring in their attitudes and relationships and more adaptable and flexible in their practices if they are to release the potential, and tap the diversity of talents of those who work with them.

### **3.5.3 Afrocentric approach to leadership**

Given the need to change and the limitations of Western leadership development models, South Africa needs to develop its own unique approaches. This requires a clear understanding of the South African context, including historical, legal, educational, and competitive factors influencing organisational operations. The indigenous philosophies and values that underlie the South African context must also be identified. Once this is done, conceptual models that will help guide leadership development efforts in South Africa can be developed and tested.

Khoza (1994:56) describes Afrocentricity as encompassing African history, traditions, culture, mythology, and value systems. The resulting leadership philosophy views the organisation as a community and can be summed up in one word – “ubuntu”. Mbigi and Maree (1995:12) describe ubuntu as a metaphor that embodies the significance of group solidarity in many African cultures. Ubuntu

stresses supportiveness, sharing and co-operation. Such solidarity was central to the survival of African communities that, as a consequence of their isolation, deprivation, and poverty, could only survive through brotherly concern, co-operation and care.

Van Zyl (2009:31) suggest that ubuntu needs to be aligned with leadership concepts from the West since it is a fundamental collective experience pervasive among Africans. Mbigi and Maree (1995:15) maintain that ubuntu transcends the narrow confines of the nuclear family to include the extended kinship network present in many African communities. As a philosophy, ubuntu is an orientation to life opposed to rampant individualism, insensitive competitiveness, and unilateral decision-making. Clearly, ubuntu has significant practical implications for both corporate culture and leadership training. For example, one African proverb says that although the thumb is strong, it cannot kill aphids on its own. In fact, Mbigi and Maree (1995:43) describe the African approach to training and development as “the collective fingers theory”. Mbigi and Maree (1995:43) maintain that this theory posits that if training and development are to lead to collective action in a community environment, they will have to be collective in their approach and practice. In short, if an organisation wants to embrace communal African values, it must tap into the collective energy and support of all employees at the start. To achieve this, open discussion forums must be created that allow for the participation of all employees.

After an Africanised leadership and cultural orientation is established, organizations can design and implement an affirmative action programme that includes clear targets and fair recruitment procedures. Developing new employees from disfranchised groups should include training and mentoring programmes as well as efforts to engage while employees become more aware of cross-cultural differences (Booyesen 2009:304). Again, both recruitment and development must take place in a context where ubuntu is embraced.

Finally, Africanising leadership allows for impact of individual differences at every step in the management development process. Individual differences in both employees and the managers charged with developing them may affect the speed at which an ubuntu-based concept will be accepted and implemented (Booyesen 2009:307). Booyesen (2009:307) maintains that changing corporate culture and attitudes is often a slow and expensive process full of potential pitfalls and hurdles. Nevertheless, it is in corporations' best interests to move beyond the window-dressing and empty rhetoric of the past towards an approach to leadership development that reflects South Africa's unique context.

### **3.6 MANAGING DIVERSITY IN AN ORGANISATION**

Managing diversity is a management orientation which is not limited to one department or a specific management level of the organisation but it is an overall approach which seeks the commitment of the whole organisation if any success is to be achieved (Kirton & Greene 2005:67). There is also no one specific policy which necessarily guarantees the required results. Organisations differ in the ways in which they implement a policy of diversity management. Smit and Cronjé (1999:436) maintain that there is a range of diversity management policies which organisations implement. The top of the range represents those organisations which are directing very little attention towards managing diversity. In their description of top of the range organisations, Smit and Cronjé (1999:435) point out to the following

“These organisations make no effort to promote diversity and do not comply with affirmative action and empowerment standards. The lack of attention to diversity needs within such organisations sends a strange message to their employees that the dynamics of difference are not important. Even more detrimental to the organisation is the outcome of maintaining exclusionary practices”.

(Smit & Cronjé 1999 : 435).

Smit and Cronjé (1999:435) again classify those organisations that have committed resources, planning and time to shaping and sustaining a diversity as

the base of the range. In these organisations, the most effective diversity efforts are developed in conjunction with an organisation-wide assessment to determine if diversity goals and objectives have been reached. Assessment interventions are also necessary to create an organisational climate which is supportive of diverse groups (Kidder 1994:10).

Successful diversity management depends on the commitment of the whole organisation. Thompson and McHugh (2002:117) suggest that management need a concerted effort in order to reap the benefits of diversity and to create an organisational culture which is inclusive of diverse groups. Once a vision for a diverse workplace has been formulated, management can analyse and assess the current culture, that is, prevailing value system, cultural inclusion or differences, and systems including recruitment, training and promotion within the organisation. This assessment is followed by a willingness by the leadership cadre of management to change whatever systems and ways of thinking need to be modified. Throughout this process people need top management's support in dealing with the many challenges and conflicts they will face. Training and support in the form of delegated power and rewards are important for the people in pioneering roles (Smit & Cronjé 1999:437). Smit and Cronjé (1999:438) suggest that once management accepts the need for a strategy to develop a truly diverse workplace, three major steps involved in the implementation of such a major change are building a corporate culture that values diversity changing structures, policies and systems to support diversity, and providing diversity awareness and cultural competency training. The implementation of these steps to bring about the necessary change which will make diversity in the organisation inclusive, is anchored within the four basic management functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling. For each of these efforts to succeed, top management's support is critical, as well as holding all management ranks accountable for increasing diversity.



### **3.6.1 Forms of diversity**

George and Jones (2006:115) define diversity as dissimilarities or differences that are used to distinguish between people. While race, ethnicity and gender are the most recognised forms of diversity, there are other types with important implications for Human Resource systems. These forms of diversity, potentially overlapping identity group memberships, can affect an employee's attitudes and behaviours in the workplace, as well as influence his or her ability to work well with other organisational members. George and Jones (2006:116) identify the following eight types of diversity

- **Age**

In the workplace, both older and younger workers present management with challenges. Older workers are more cautious, less likely to take risks and less open to change, but their experience makes them high performers. The aging of the population suggests that managers need to be vigilant that employees are not discriminated against because of age. Moreover, managers need to ensure that the policies and procedures they have in place treat all workers fairly, regardless of their age (George & Jones 2006:116).

- **Gender**

Smit and Cronjé (1999:427) maintain that in South Africa women make up nearly 40% of the labour force. These changes mean that organisations must deal with issues such as work-family conflicts, child care, dual-career couples and sexual harassment. Most women in the labour force have children which means that organisations should take some responsibility for child care. One issue surrounding gender as a dimension of diversity is the glass ceiling syndrome which refers to the difficulty women have in advancing.

- **Race and Ethnicity**

The increasing racial and ethnic diversity of the workplace and the population as a whole underscores the importance of effectively managing diversity (George & Jones 2006:116). This suggests that much needs to be done in terms of ensuring that diverse employees are provided with equal opportunities. At a general level, managers and organisations are increasingly being reminded that stakeholders in the environment are diverse and expect organisational decisions and actions to reflect this diversity (George & Jones 2006:116).

- **Religion**

A key issue for managers when it comes to religious diversity is recognising and being aware of different religions and their beliefs with particular attention being paid when religious holidays fall (George & Jones 2006:120). For example, critical meetings should not be scheduled during a holy day for members of a certain faith, and managers should be flexible in allowing people to have time off for religious observances. George and Jones (2006:120) maintain that when managers acknowledge, respect, and make even small accommodations for religious diversity, employee loyalty is often enhanced.

- **Capabilities/ Disabilities**

A key challenge for managers regarding this form of diversity is to promote an environment in which employees needing accommodation feel comfortable disclosing their need and, at the same time, to ensuring that such accommodation not only enable those with disabilities to effectively perform their jobs but are also perceived to be fair by those not disabled (Roberts 1996:63). In addressing this challenge, often managers must educate both themselves and their employees about the disabilities, as well as the very real capabilities, of those who are disabled (George & Jones 2006:122).

- **Socio-economic background**

The term “socio-economic background” typically refers to a combination of social class and income-related factors (George & Jones 2006:122). From a management perspective, socio-economic diversity, and in particular diversity in income levels, requires that managers be sensitive and responsive to the needs and concerns of individuals who may be less fortunate than themselves in terms of income and financial resources, child care and elder care options, housing opportunities, and existence of sources of social and family support (Salamon 1998:103). Moreover, managers should try to provide such individuals with opportunities to learn, advance, and make meaningful contributions to their organisations while improving their economic well-being.

- **Sexual orientation**

Generally, the presence of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender employees in the workplace is steadily increasing and it is probable that many highly qualified potential and current employees might happen to be gay or lesbian. An organisation that does not welcome and support such employees not only is unfairly discriminating against this group but also is losing the contributions of valued potential employees (George & Jones 2006:123). Additionally, an organisation that discriminates against this group risks alienating customers.

- **Other kinds of diversity**

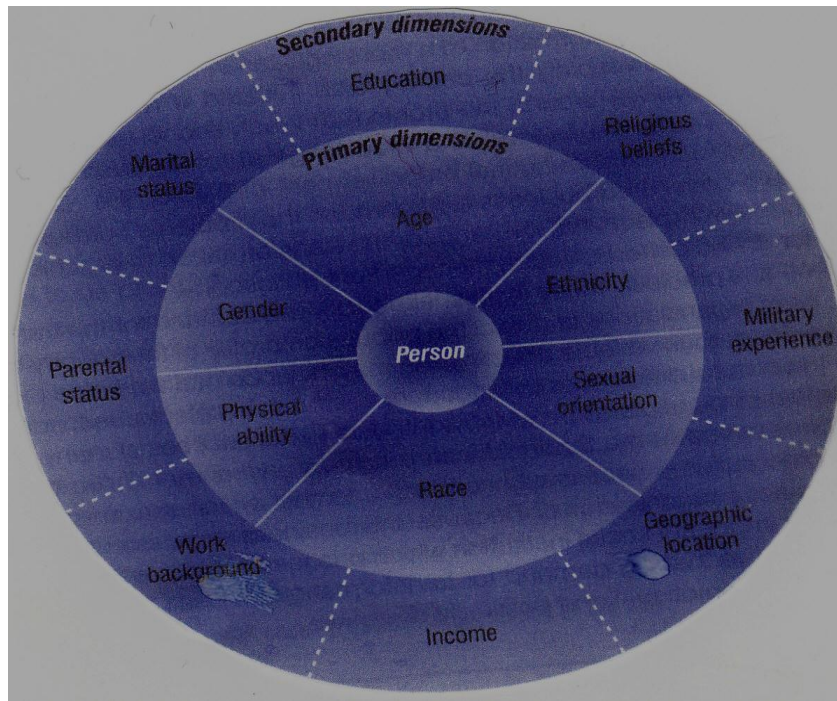
There are other kinds of diversity that are important in organisations, critical for managers to deal with effectively, and also potential sources of unfair treatment. These types of diversity can also affect how employees are treated in the workplace. For example, employees differ from each other in how attractive they are, and in terms of body weight. Whether individuals are attractive or thin or

unattractive or overweight, in most cases, has no bearing on their job performance, yet sometimes these physical sources of diversity end up influencing advancement rates and salaries (Fredman 2002:125). Clearly, managers need to ensure that all employees are treated fairly, regardless of their physical appearance.

In each of their managerial roles, managers can either promote the effective management of diversity or derail such efforts. Thus, managers are critical to this process. For example, in their interpersonal roles, managers can convey that the effective management of diversity is a valued goal and objective, can serve as a role model and institute policies and procedures to ensure that diverse organisational members are treated fairly, and can enable diverse individuals and groups to co-ordinate their efforts and co-operate with each other both inside the organisation and at the organisation's boundaries (George & Jones 2006:114). Managers play a crucial role in ensuring that neither large nor small disparities in treatment and outcomes due to irrelevant distinctions such as race or ethnicity occur in organisations. Moreover, managers have the obligation, both an ethical and a business perspective, to ensure that such disparities do not occur and are not tolerated in organisations.

### **3.6.2 Dimensions of diversity**

Workplace diversity means the inclusion of people who belong to various cultural groups or people with different human qualities (Chawla & Renesch 1995:67). There are primary and secondary dimensions of diversity which are characteristics that describe people. Figure 3.1 illustrates dimensions of diversity.



**Figure 3.1** Important dimensions of diversity which are characteristics that describe people.

**Source** Daft 2008 : 418

### 3.6.2.1 Primary dimensions

The primary dimensions are those core elements about each individual that cannot be changed (Daft 2008:418). These include age, race, gender, physical and mental abilities, and sexual orientation. Together they form an individual's self-image and the filters through which he or she views the rest of the world. These inborn elements are interdependent. In fact, no one dimension stands alone. Each element exerts an important influence throughout life. Smit and Cronjé (1999:426) describe primary dimensions as core elements through which people shape their view of the world and are closely related to culture. The greater the number of primary differences between people, the more difficult it is to establish trust and mutual respect. Culture clash represents the conflicts that

occur between groups of people with different core identities, and can have a devastating effect on human relations in an organisation. Few organisations are immune to the problems that result from the interaction between the genders and among the races and the generations (Daft 2008:418). When adding the secondary dimensions of diversity to the mix, effective human relations become even more difficult.

### **3.6.2.2 Secondary dimensions**

The secondary dimensions of diversity are those elements that can be acquired, changed or at least modified throughout one's lifetime (Daft 2008:418). They include a person's education, marital status, parental status, work background, income, geographic location, military experience as well as religious beliefs. These factors all add a layer of complexity to the way people see themselves and others and in some instances can exert a powerful impact on core identities (Rosenfeld 1991:61). Daft (2008:418) illustrates this by stating that a single mother who loses her job may be severely affected by her loss of income, whereas a married women with no children may not be affected by a similar loss or a vocational-technical school graduate may have far different expectation from a four-year-university graduate or an accountant with ten years of work experience might adjust to a new position far differently from an accountant with much less experience.

Even though situations like these intensify the impact of particular secondary dimensions, they do not diminish the primary impact of core dimensions, but instead add depth to the individual (Schneider 1987:441). This interaction between primary and secondary dimensions shapes a person's values, priorities and perceptions throughout life. Each person enters the workforce with a unique perspective shaped by these dimensions and own past experiences. Building effective human relationships is possible only when people learn to accept and value the differences in others. According to Schneider (1987 :451), without this

acceptance, both primary and secondary dimensions of diversity can serve as roadblocks to further co-operation and understanding.

### **3.6.3 Conceptualising diversity**

Diversity can be defined as a mixture of people with different group identities within the same social system (Robbins 2005:98). These social systems are characterised by majority groups and minority groups. Majority groups are groups whose members historically got advantage in terms of economic resources and power in comparison to other groups. According to George and Jones (2006:114), the management of diversity implies a holistic focus in order to create an organisational environment which allows all the employees to reach their full potential when pursuing the company's goals. It is not a package with ready solutions for a programme to solve the discrimination issue.

Cox (1993:133) maintains that differences in group identities among individuals, both physical and cultural, interact with a complex set of individual, inter-group and organisational factors to determine the impact of diversity in both individual and organisational outcomes. The individual outcomes which are predicted by Cox (1993:147) are divided into affective response variables which include satisfaction, organisational identification and job involvement, and achievement variables which include performance, job mobility and compensation. Cox (1993:147) maintains that organisational outcomes are divided on the basis of the expected directness of impact into first level, that is, attendance, turnover and work quality, and second level, which is profit.

Central to Cox' model (1993:147) is the notion that the presence of diversity in organisations will impact on measures of effectiveness at both the individual and organisation's levels and that the organisational context for diversity is pivotal in determining whether the overall impact of group identity differences on effectiveness will be positive or negative. Other outstanding features of Cox's

(1993:147) model are that it is structured around social and psychological phenomena which have clear applicability across many dimensions of group identity, that is, not only gender and race but nationality, job description, religion, class, and so on, and it is applicable to the experience of both majority and minority group members of the organisation. For example, the tendency for unmanaged diversity to lead to heightened inter-group conflict between majority and minority group members will potentially lower the effective outcomes of work for both groups.

According to Cox (1993:149), management of diversity means to plan and implement organisational systems and practices to manage people to their potential. The effective management of diversity means much more than hiring diverse employees. It means learning to appreciate and respond appropriately to the needs, attitudes, beliefs and values that diverse people bring to an organisation (George & Jones 2006:114). It also means correcting misconceptions about why and how different kinds of employee groups are different from one another and finding the most effective way to utilise the skills and talents of diverse employees.

This study focuses on the effective management of diversity in an environment that is becoming increasingly diverse in all aspects. Not only is the diversity of the global workforce increasing, but suppliers and customers are also becoming increasingly diverse. Managers need to proactively manage diversity to be able to attract and retain the best employees and effectively compete in a diverse global environment. George and Jones (2006:116) maintain that sometimes well-intentioned managers inadvertently treat one group of employees differently from another group, even though there are no performance-based differences between the two groups. In the case in the previous apartheid government women and blacks were traditionally excluded from top management positions in law enforcement for reasons that were irrelevant to performance in leadership roles. This study explores whether differential treatment still occurs in public



institutions and the steps managers and organisations can take to ensure that diversity, in all aspects, is effectively managed for the good of all organisational stakeholders.

#### **3.6.4 Theoretical bases of diversity management**

The current knowledge base for diversity work includes many models to guide efforts at the individual, group, and organisational levels. A few of these models are well-developed and sufficient to provide more than nominal guidance. The models are powerful in part because they present specific states or stages through which individuals, groups and organisations move as they grow and become more effective. Russel and Hayles (1997:21) maintain that the concept of developmental stages, fundamental to the study of human growth, is inherent in these models, and embodies three basic principles.

First, human beings all develop by moving through predictable stages that can be reliably described. Second, if the work required at a given stage is not completed, further development will be hindered and regression to an earlier stage is likely. Third, the stage of behaviour visible to the outside world varies across, but the progression of development regarding each issue remains predictable (Russel & Hayles 1997:21). It is this consistency and predictability that allows diversity professionals to design work and tasks that efficiently stimulate advancement from one stage to the next. This paragraph cites and highlights two of the excellent and available individual and group development models.

##### **3.6.4.1 Individual development model**

Bennet (1993:22) introduced a development model known as ‘Developing Intercultural Sensitivity’. This model is widely recognised for individual development, as shown in Figure 3.2 below

Denial	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Integration
Ethnocentric Stages			Ethnorelative Stages		

**Figure 3.2** Development model known as “Developing Intercultural Sensitivity”

**Source** Bennet 1993:22.

Even though the label for this model says ‘Intercultural Sensitivity’, the basic concepts are applicable to many other ways in which people differ. Its application to a wide range of differences is described in the following paragraphs by Russel and Hayles (1997:22) using the ethnocentric and ethnorelative states.

### **(i) Ethnocentric States**

#### **Stage 1 Denial of Difference**

Russel and Hayles (1997:22) maintain that in the ethnocentric state, there is no recognition of cultural or other differences. They state that primarily because of isolation or intentional separation, the individual does not have sufficient categories to notice differences but he or she attributes intelligence or personality to deficiency or culturally deviant behaviour and there is a tendency to show extreme prejudice and to dehumanise people seen as outsiders.

#### **Stage 2 Defense against Difference**

Russel and Hayles (1997:23) state that people at this level recognise differences and evaluate them negatively, and the greater the differences, the more negative the evaluation. They also state that people at this level often behave as if threatened and differences are denigrated, and negative stereotyping occurs.

Reversal also occurs at this level and this is a tendency to see another culture as superior while negatively evaluating one's own.

### **Stage 3 Minimization of Difference**

Russel and Hayles (1997:26) indicate that people at this level recognise and accept superficial differences, such as physical appearance or eating customs, while holding that all human beings are essentially the same and the emphasis at this level is on the similarity of people and the commonality of basic values, that is, "Everyone is essentially like us". The person at this stage is unable to accept someone as being different and simultaneously "equal" or at least as good as oneself.

#### **(ii) Ethnorelative States**

### **Stage 4 Acceptance of Difference**

Russel and Hayles (1997:26) indicate that this level is characterised by recognition and appreciation of differences in behaviour and values and these differences are accepted as viable alternative ways to organise human existence and function successfully in the world.

### **Stage 5 Adaptation of Difference**

Russel and Hayles (1997:28) state that at this level, individuals are developing communication skills that enable effective communication among people who are different and adaptations include the effective use of empathy and shifting one's frame of reference in order to understand and be understood.

## **Stage 6 Integration of Difference**

Russel and Hayles (1997:30) maintain that this level is characterised by the internalisation of bicultural or multicultural frames of reference. Individuals at this level maintain a definition of identity that is marginal to any particular culture or group.

Russel and Hayles (1997:31) are of the opinion that, while the Bennet Model was designed for thinking about intercultural issues, it is generally applicable to the broader diversity initiatives. It is useful in helping individuals to develop their human interaction abilities as it has used examples that go beyond cultural differences.

### **3.6.4.2 Group Development Model**

There are a few basic strategies for group level work, but this paragraph focuses on the best known model which is often called the Contact Hypothesis. This approach involves the completion of a thorough needs analysis, identifying specific issues and determining goals with respect to each developmental level. If the goal is the reduction of prejudice, there is a small and cogent body of literature to guide the work. Wheelan (1994:29) states that group development model aims to reduce prejudice by creating ideal contacts among individuals within the group. Most of these conditions can be created in education and training settings. Many can also be created in work and social environments. According to Russel and Hayles (1997:27), ideal contact conditions for reducing prejudice include

- Equal status within the group.
- The group has or is experiencing a positive perception of another group.
- Other majority group members are involved.

- The group is or will be engaging in an activity requiring inter-group co-operation.
- The situation entails interdependence or superordinate goals.
- Contact is more intimate than casual.
- Authority and/ or the social climate promote inter-group contact.
- Contact is pleasant and rewarding.

While Russel and Hayles's (1997) hypothesis was developed within the context of work on race and ethnicity, it is clearly applicable to other differences. Groups, teams, and work units play a vital role in furthering an organisation's diversity initiative. Honamura (1996:39) argues that by presenting positive models, testing new ideas, and formulating strategies that include rather than exclude, groups, teams and work units move the organisation forward in a way that is often impossible for individuals working independently.

### **3.7 THE NEED FOR DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa is described as a radically pluralist society where race and ethnicity are the most visible dimensions of diversity (Smit & Cronjé 1999:432). Many cultural differences exist between ethnic groups such as Euro-Africans, Coloureds, Asian-Africans and blacks. Each of these groups shares a common history, while at the same time maintaining a certain uniqueness. The imbalances between the different ethnic groups in South Africa result in managerial and economic imbalances, and according to Smit and Cronjé (1999:433), the following three categories of management problems can be identified in the South African workplace

- The first issue surrounding the imbalances in South African organisations and which forms an integral part of any policy or strategy on diversity management is the question of affirmative action. This is an employment

policy which aims to ensure that South African institutions reflect the character of the country as a whole. Many business organisations are developing policies to correct this imbalance.

- The second management issue with some political undertones is the question of economic empowerment. Pressure for the transfer of economic power is evident. The government is being blamed for not doing enough to make black economic empowerment.
- The third management issue which surrounds the debate on managerial and economic transformation in South Africa is the quest for a new management philosophy. Activated by the affirmative and empowerment movements and supported by a rich diversity of articles, books and conference papers, this issue is challenging the theoretical foundations of South Africa's Euro-American-Asian management themes, approaches and practices. Based on the premise that the environment of organisations in developing countries is different from that of Western and Asian industrialised countries, management theories and practices developed in the developed-country context may have only limited applicability in the context of a developing country such as South Africa and for all purposes, a developing continent such as Africa.

Smit and Cronjé (1999:440) maintain that organisations in South Africa have generally not been highly successful in managing women and cultural diversity in the workplace. Proof of this is the fact that women and blacks in South Africa are clustered at the lower management levels. This indicates that they are not progressing and that their full potential is not utilised. Managing the issues of diversity and multiculturalism is crucial to organisational success. Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (1995:198) identified the following six arguments which support the belief that managing diversity can improve organisational performance

- **Cost argument**

As organisations become more diverse, the cost of a poor job integrating workers will increase. Those who handle this well will create cost advantages over those who do not.

- **Resource-acquisition argument**

Companies develop reputations of favourability as prospective employers for women and ethnic minorities. Those with the best reputations for managing diversity will win the competition for the best personnel. As the labour pool shrinks and changes composition, this edge will become increasingly important.

- **Marketing argument**

For multinational organisations, the insight and cultural sensitivity that members with roots in other countries bring to the marketing effort should improve those efforts in important ways. The same rationale applies to marketing to sub-populations within domestic operations.

- **Creativity argument**

Diversity of perspectives and less emphasis on conformity to norms of the past should improve the level of creativity.

- **Problem-solving argument**

Heterogeneity in decision-making and problem-solving groups potentially produces better decisions through a wider range of perspectives and more thorough critical analysis of issues.

- **System flexibility argument**

An implication of the multinational model for managing diversity is that the system will become less determinant, less standardised, and therefore more

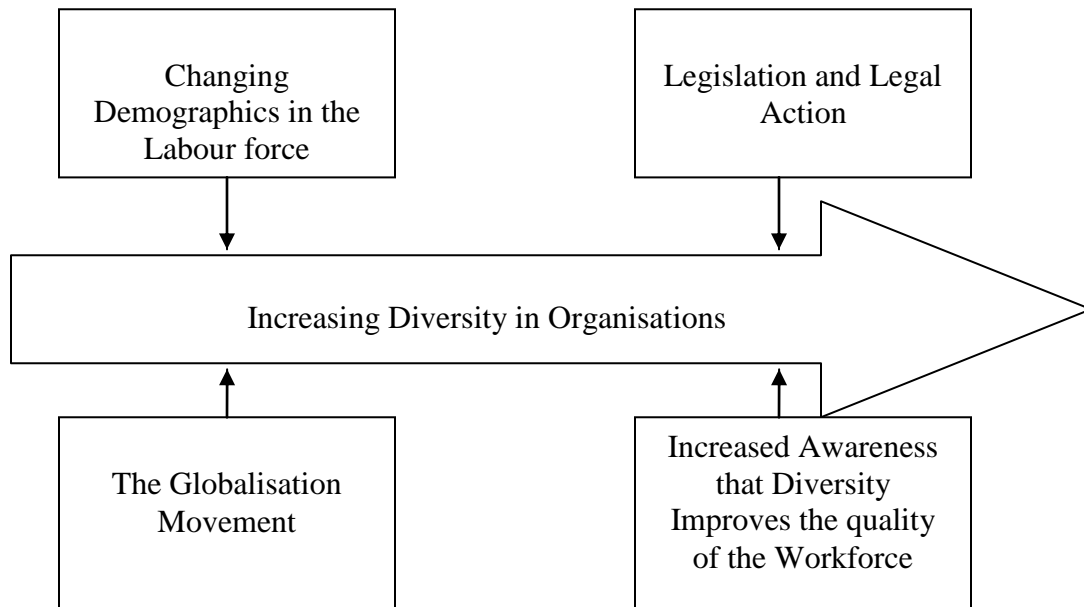
fluid. The increased fluidity should create greater flexibility to react to environmental changes, that is, reactions should be faster and cost less.

Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (1995:198) maintain that organisations who manage diversity and multiculturalism will have a competitive edge in the market, because it means higher morale and better relationships in the workplace. The presence of cultural and gender diversity in a group reduces the risk of 'groupthink', when people contribute freely to a discussion and moreover, the simple act of learning about other cultural practices enables organisations to expand their thinking about other things as well (Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert 1995:199). South African organisations can benefit from broadening their thinking on the advantages of diversity management by adhering to and enforcing practices and policies to ensure a healthy climate for diversity. Management may create a climate where feedback on appropriate and inappropriate behaviour is the norm. Management must lead by example. Most diversity work would fail or stagnate because the organisation's leaders do not visibly support the work. Robbins (2005:170) maintains that leaders must adapt their style to different national cultures, as well as to the unique cultural aspects of the country. Robbins (2005:170) further states that leadership plays a central part in understanding group behaviour, because it is the leader who usually provides direction towards goal attainment and therefore, a more accurate predictive capability should be valuable in improving group performance. Van Zyl (2009:115) states that the diversity change process would produce results when the goals and efforts of the teams and individuals in the organisation are in alignment and when there is strong leadership and supportive system that will be able to move the entire organisation forward.

While many of the issues surrounding diversity have been around for some time, many organisations adopt a renewed concern as new trends in the workplace are surfacing. Organisations in South Africa are becoming increasingly diverse along many different dimensions. Figure 3.3 illustrates some of the



trends and changes that are influencing thinking about diversity management in South African organisations



**Figure 3.3** Trends and changes that influence thinking about diversity management in organisations

**Source** Griffin 1993 : 577.

The single biggest challenge surrounding the issue of diversity and multicultural management is the changing composition of the labour force. Griffin (1993:578) maintains that changing demographics in the labour force, together with legislation on affirmative action, are major forces contributing to increased diversity. Griffin (1993:578) further states that another factor contributing to increased diversity in organisations is the globalisation of business. More and more organisations are entering the international marketplace, including South African organisations moving into Africa. This means that managers must develop new skills and awareness to handle the unique challenges of diversity.

### **3.8 CHALLENGES FACING DIVERSITY MANAGERS**

A challenge for managers is to recognise the need to treat human resources in a fair and equitable manner. Today, the age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual preference, and socio-economic makeup of the workforce present new challenges for managers. Managers must establish employment procedures and practices that are legal, are fair, and do not discriminate against any organisational members. Tayeb (1996:54) identifies the following four diversity challenges that are faced by South African public administration

- Adapting government services to a society in which patterns of daily life and social roles are undergoing dramatic change and in which consumers' expectations are more focused on consistently high quality service. People are more demanding and expect more, and government must respond;
- Making the most effective use of the skills and knowledge available within South Africa and internationally, identifying and making accessible the best thinking and the most productive policy ideas from both domestic and international sources, and utilising the diverse expertise which the societies generate;
- Ensuring best practice provision of governmental services and regulatory frameworks which will make South Africa competitive in the striving for global capital and markets and
- Providing the level of accountability demanded by an increasingly well-informed populace.

No one underestimates the economic, social and political complexity of governing a liberal democracy. A central role of the public sector in a democracy is to consider ideas, understand and interpret the future, and give expert advice to governments about strategies that will best deliver the outcomes of democratically elected governments. In providing strategic leadership, the intellectual capital which is held by the public sector is critical. In successfully

directing and managing change the quality of the analysis and the ideas to which leaders, governments and others have access is crucial (Tayeb 1996:59).

Government and ministers that do not seek quality advice are condemned to failure. However, the public service is more than an instrument to implement government policy. The public service must have a corporate commitment to the betterment of the society in which it exists in addition to its obligation to the democratic government of the day. Such commitment manifests itself through the consideration of policy within a framework that recognises the worth and rights of citizens and responsibility of the public service to the community (Black, Calitz & Steenkamp 1999:64).

Governments must respond to challenges prompted by the shifts in the role of public administration from service provider and prescriptive regulator to that of managing change, providing frameworks and overseeing the protection of the public interest. It is for this reason that the South African government will find it increasingly necessary to bring closer its philosophy to the nature of public administration.

The maintenance of an apolitical public service should not, however, be interpreted as providing to governments a “value-free” public service. Indeed, the new legislation aims to enshrine for the first time a coherent and explicit statement of the values which must underpin a professional public service in a democracy. It is true that the community service obligation of the public service is continually to test how the development and implementation of government policy will actually improve the lives of people. This obligation exists regardless of the political persuasion of the government.

While many of the institutions of society are being questioned, and while many feel they are working harder and longer, or while others are underemployed or unemployed, South Africa is changing for better. There has been more racial integration which has occurred peacefully and with goodwill. South Africa is now a highly diverse society of many cultures (Maseko 1994:6).

The challenges of reform are not only to develop high-performance organisations. The challenges of reform are also policy challenges. An egalitarian society such as South Africa is facing the wide gap between rich and poor, unacceptably high unemployment, persistent social and individual disadvantages which undermine the life opportunities of individuals. The challenge for public service administrators is to design the policy architecture which will successfully address these affronts in a democratic spirit and which will do so in a way that will make optimal use of the intellectual and skill resources available to governments of today.

Khoza (1994:120) maintains that the pre-eminent demand within an effective career service in the new millennium is quality leadership that identifies the rationale for, and sets the directions to achieve the great public purposes of governments. At the most strategic level, governments themselves must provide that leadership. They must communicate with clarity the objectives of government. When government has determined its outcomes the leaders of the public service must then be able to set the purpose and direction of their organisations in a way which will best achieve those objectives.

The increasing diversity of the environment, which in turn increases the diversity of an organisation's workforce, increases the challenges managers face in effectively managing diversity. Each of the eight forms of diversity discussed in paragraph 3.6 presents managers with a particular set of issues they need to appreciate before they can respond to them effectively. Research on how different groups are currently treated and the unconscious biases that might adversely affect them is critical because it will help managers become aware of the many subtle and unobtrusive ways in which diverse employee groups can come to be treated unfairly over time.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter a brief analysis of the concept of public administration was given. It was indicated that public administration is a network of human relationships

and is associated with activities extending from government to individuals charged with keeping in daily touch with all resources and all other aspects of the life of society with which the government is concerned (Nnoli 2000:44). In fact, the action of public administration has to do mainly with government institutions providing certain services to society. A brief historical survey of public administration during the apartheid era was presented. It was noted that public service inherited from the apartheid regime failed to serve the people of South Africa in a fair and equitable manner. The purpose of state officials was to administer, control and hand down services, not to work with communities in ways that might enable them to take control of their own development and empowerment.

The chapter revealed that after 1994, the challenge of transforming public service became one of the central tasks to be achieved by a democratic government. Unlike the apartheid regime, the new South African democratic government wants to transform the public service into an effective, democratic and fully representative instrument of service delivery. This chapter also indicated how is the public service guided by the Constitution and other subordinate legislation. Chapter 10 of the Constitution begins by raising a set of basic values and principles governing public administration. Other legislation such as affirmative action and employment equity, were discussed. The values and principles of transformation, which are important to inform and facilitate the legitimate participation of employees, were also explored. These values and principles are accountability and transparency, representivity and inclusivity, as well as empowerment and capacity-building.

With reference to human resource management, it was discovered that people are the only living resource in the organisation who determine the potential of the organisation as a system (Smit & Cronjé 1999:355). People are probably the most complex resource of the organisation needing guidance and leadership. The role of leadership in directing the behaviour of people towards the accomplishment of objectives was therefore examined.

The increasing diversity of the environment, which in turn increases the diversity of an organisation's workforce, increases the challenges managers face in effectively managing diversity. Thus, the last three paragraphs in this chapter examine the management of diversity in South African public institutions, the need for diversity management in South African organisations, as well as the challenges faces managers of diversity in South Africa. Other issues that were discussed under these headings include benefits of diversity management, dimensions of diversity, conceptualisation of diversity, forms of diversity as well as theoretical bases of diversity management.

The following chapter provides an outline of the exploration of diversity management in the FET Colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. It describes the qualitative investigation into things that are either put in place or avoided by FET college managers and administrators for diversity management to occur. The research questions, the pilot study, research strategy, and the measuring instruments are identified, justified and utilised.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter One it was stated that the current interest in diversity management in the workplace stems from the fact that most of today's South African organisations, including FET colleges, are in a campaign to apply conscious efforts to shift from a monoculture perspective to one of pluralism (see paragraph 1.3). This implies that public managers are faced with the challenge of enhancing workforce diversity by incorporating employees who belong to various cultural groups. Daft (2008:418) maintains that workforce diversity means a workforce made up of people with different human qualities. From the perspective of individual public managers, diversity would mean including employees different from themselves along dimensions such as race, age, ethnicity, gender, or social background. It is important to note that diversity includes everyone, not just racial and ethnic minorities.

The current focus on diversity management also reflects a perception that people are the most important element in organisations and the realisation that social factors need to be taken into account by frameworks for understanding organisational performance (Smit & Cronjé:347). It should, however, be recalled that organisational cultures are complex and dynamic entities. In order to avoid confusion a distinction therefore needs to be drawn between an organisation's espoused culture and its culture-in-practice. Organisational culture is important because it is through the medium of culture that employees make sense of their workplaces and work activities and attribute meaning to organisational experiences (Kossek & Lobel 1996:87). Qualitative approaches offer interesting and empathetic interpretations of cultures which are hard to quantify or to use as the basis for interventions aimed at solving problems.

An important research question for this study is to determine the extent to which middle managers in an FET college expose their officially pronounced value of diversity. Kossek and Lobel (1996:10) maintain that to develop and implement successful diversity management programmes, it is important to systematically identify and document key considerations that must be taken into account by organisations attempting to enhance their diversity management efforts. Critically to this investigation was the examination of several theoretical propositions regarding factors that influence employee receptivity to diversity and to diversity management initiatives of the organisation (see Chapter Three).

In this chapter the qualitative methodological procedures adopted to acquire the data needed on the current state of diversity management in public FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal will be described. An investigation will be made on how effective diversity management in this province can be brought about by expanding employee participation in the functioning of FET colleges (see Chapter One). The selection and design of the research instruments are discussed, followed by a presentation and analysis of the data.

## **4.2 AIM OF THE QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY**

The aim of the study is to determine the extent to which the concepts of diversity management, affirmative action and employment equity, are integrated into the strategic objectives of the FET colleges and how they fit with the mission and vision of these colleges. In order to find answers to this research problem, the qualitative approach was chosen because of its characteristics which allow the researcher to interact with the subjects, enabling him to listen to what they tell, and thus assuring that people's subjective experiences are real and taken seriously. The qualitative approach is aligned with the interpretive paradigm by allowing the researcher access to a natural context. Furthermore, this will help the researcher ascertain what people do, how they do it and why they do that in their workplace. Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2008:10) assert that qualitative researchers prefer to investigate behaviour as it unfolds naturally in a



natural setting. Qualitative methodology was selected because the researcher was of the opinion that it was the only efficient method to assess the experiences, feelings, perceptions, attitudes and opinions towards individuals, groups, events or procedures. This approach has, as a starting point, the belief that we cannot apprehend human experience without understanding the social, linguistic and historical features which give it shape (Webb & Auriacombe 2006:598). Auriacombe and Mouton (2007:454) state that qualitative research may also include primarily noninteractive styles of inquiry, drawing from such diverse disciplines as philosophy, history and biography, literature, and curriculum criticism. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:373), qualitative research is concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the participants' perspective, and understanding is required by analysing the many contexts of the participants' meanings for these situations and events, therefore participants' meanings include their feelings, beliefs, ideals, thoughts and actions.

This study involved assessing the experiences, perceptions, beliefs, opinions, actions and attitudes of middle managers with regard to diversity management in FET colleges. Using the organogram in Figure 2.1, the researcher identified middle managers in FET colleges as being in a good position to influence the implementation of diversity management initiatives because they are responsible for matters such as policy-making, planning, organisation, co-ordination, decision-making, financing, control and administration. The researcher attempted to make sense of the feelings, experiences, and social situations or phenomena as they occur in colleges, by visiting these middle managers in their working environment in order to study them in their natural setting. To achieve this, use was made of semi-structured interviews. As a technique, this is justifiable and suitable for my research because it gives the researcher the opportunity to get to know participants quite intimately so that he could really understand how they think and feel (see Schumacher & McMillan 1993:373). The researcher was therefore of the opinion that there was no other more appropriate and valid

technique that could be used to disclose the feelings, experiences and attitudes of college managers towards diversity issues.

#### **4.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE POPULATION**

The population relevant to this study comprised nine public FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (see paragraph 1.6). The establishment of technical colleges in KwaZulu-Natal followed the pattern of the historical legacy of the apartheid education system. Technical colleges were established along racial lines to provide technical and vocational education for different racial groups. The national strategy for the restructuring of the technical colleges required that the previous twenty-four institutions be clustered to form nine FET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal (see paragraph 1.6).

The restructuring process in KwaZulu-Natal pursued the achievement of a changed institutional landscape in which all colleges were equally resourced, a healthy culture of teaching and learning prevails, and where all traces of apartheid provision and practice have been removed. Transformation had to be achieved by restructuring the FET system into a co-ordinated system with common goals and coherent planning through partnerships and representative structures. This process involved change from hierarchical and authoritarian cultures to more participative and co-operative governance, management and administration. The FET band is fundamentally altered by the shift in economic paradigm from a closed, inward-looking and protected form of industrialisation to an export-led, open and globally competitive economy. The FET band plays the most critical role in this new dynamic between education and work, and hence, it is this band which requires the greatest upgrading and transformation if the province, and thus the country, is to meet the new economic and social challenges.

The researcher chose the nine public FET colleges in KwaZulu-Natal province because it has the population which represents all the relevant groups that comprise the National Education Department. Before the restructuring of

technical colleges through the Further Education and Training Act of 1998, the present single, non-racial further education and training system was non-existent. The vocational education and training of the people of KwaZulu-Natal was previously under the authority of the different education departments. There was the Department of Education and Culture-House of Assembly, responsible for white students; the Department of Education and Culture-House of Delegates, responsible for Indian students; the Department of Education and Culture-House of Representatives, responsible for Coloured students and two Education Departments, that is, the Department of Education and Culture (Self-governing KwaZulu-Government) and the Department of Education and Training (DET), which were both responsible for the provision of education to black learners.

With the introduction of a single, non-racial further education and training system, all the twenty-four technical colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal were brought together under the administration and management of one chief director. The merging of the traditionally separated technical colleges into nine, non-racial institutions is referred to as the restructuring process. Before restructuring, management of these technical colleges was underpinned by many statutes providing for separate racially-based administrative systems. By the 1991 parliamentary session most of the racially discriminatory laws had been repealed, thus allowing people access to social amenities, which means that learners could access vocational education in any technical colleges in the country.

In this research project, the researcher chose KwaZulu-Natal as his field of study because it has all the previously racialised technical colleges, which were very distinct in their diversity. These technical colleges were managed differently, which points to the fact that the FET college managers have different managerial backgrounds and experiences. The current FET college management structure consists of the Rector as Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus Managers and Deputy Campus Managers who are all referred to as middle managers. The subjects of this study are all the personnel occupying middle management positions in the KwaZulu-Natal public FET

colleges. The subjects of this study therefore comprise eighteen Deputy Managers, thirty-six Assistant Managers, forty-four Campus Managers and forty-four Deputy Campus Managers which makes a total of one hundred and forty-two subjects. The researcher used all the one hundred and forty-two subjects occupying middle management positions in FET colleges as his sample. This is supported by Schumacher and McMillan (1993:159) when they maintain that in some studies, the sample and the population are the same if there is no larger group from which subjects have been selected.

#### **4.4 HOW THE RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED**

In Chapter Three it was suggested that the current interest in organisational culture stemmed from research into national cultures and organisational climate. The current focus on diversity management therefore also reflects a perception that people are the most important elements in organisations and the realisation that social factors need to be taken into account by frameworks for understanding organisational performance. The researcher realised that diversity and diversity issues were social factors it was therefore imperative to identify a non-interfering data collection strategy in order to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them.

The qualitative approach was deliberately chosen as it was felt that the topic of this research was behavioural and therefore was not easily quantifiable or reducible to scientific measuring instruments. Leedy (1993:139) confirms the axiom that the nature of the data and the problem for research dictate the research methodology. He continues to state that one of the academic areas for which the qualitative approach is the most logical methodology is that of race and gender studies (Leedy 1993:142), because this area of research is concerned with human beings, their personal values, beliefs, feelings and experiences. Having identified college managers as potential respondents of the study, and having studied the relevant literature, the researcher started to develop the semi-structured interview schedule.

#### **4.4.1 Development of a semi-structured interview schedule**

Since the population was widely and thinly spread, the researcher had to travel to nine central offices of FET colleges to meet with participants. This is supported by Fox and Bayat (2007:86) when they state that for researchers opting to do interpretive research, interacting with people in their naturalistic, everyday settings is required. Many researchers such as Borg and Gall (1989), Leedy (1993), Schumacher and McMillan (1993), and Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) concur that interpretive researchers want to make sense of feelings, experiences, attitudes, opinions, perceptions, and social situations or phenomena as they occur in the real world, and therefore want to study them in their natural setting.

A semi-structured interview schedule intended for middle managers in FET colleges was developed in advance. This interview schedule was developed because the gist of this study comprises experiences, feelings, attitudes and understandings of FET college middle managers with regard to diversity management in their colleges. The middle managers in FET colleges occupy a major position which allows them to interact easily and naturally with senior managers, other employees as well as stakeholders. The college middle managers are in the forefront of any operational activity in colleges. They perform a functional activity and cannot be left out of a research project that concerns them directly. Above all, they are in a position to answer many questions with regard to diversity and diversity management in their workplace.

A standard set of questions were prepared in advance, guided by the general principles suggested by Borg and Gall (1989), Schumacher and McMillan (1993), Fox and Bayat (2007), Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2008) and Boeije (2010). These authors suggest that semi-structured questions should be phrased to allow unique responses for each subject, and that regardless of the type of question, the responses should be coded, tabulated, and summarised numerically. The semi-structured interview schedule used in this research has

two sections (see Appendix A). The questions/statements used in the first section were to determine the demographic variables within the middle management personnel in the FET colleges. The questions therefore requested the respondents to indicate, using a cross (x), their gender, race, home language, age group, academic qualifications, position held, as well as years of experience in the position. The second section of the semi-structured interview schedule was aimed at revealing the actual experiences, feelings, understanding and implementation of diversity management policy in FET colleges.

A personal request was made to the Superintendent-General of the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department for permission to collect data from FET colleges in the province (see Appendix B). After permission was granted (see Appendix C), the researcher wrote a similar letter for permission to the rectors of the nine public FET colleges to conduct the research in their colleges.

#### **4.4.2 Administration of the semi-structured interview schedule**

##### **4.4.2.1 Pilot study**

Pre-testing was done with twelve school managers around Dundee District during the first week of May 2010. This was done in accordance with Leedy's (1993:143) observation

“All questions should be pre-tested on a small population...Every researcher should give the questions to at least half a dozen friends or neighbours to test whether there are any items that they have difficulty in understanding or that may not ask exactly what the writer of the question is seeking to determine”.

Leedy (1993:143) maintains that pilot studies are important to identify problems with proposed research, using small sample of respondents before the main study is conducted. The pilot study assisted the researcher to ensure that no offensive language was contained in the questions, check the clarity of instructions and questions, administration time, layout, and data input, and conduct preliminary data analysis.

Through the use of pre-testing the researcher was satisfied that the questions asked were meaningful because clear responses were received from the respondents and hence, on the basis of the feedback received, no adjustments were made. A final semi-structured interview schedule was prepared for distribution to nine public FET colleges (see paragraph 4.4.2.2).

#### **4.4.2.2 Final administration of the semi-structured interviews**

During the first week of June 2010, the researcher travelled to the nine public FET colleges to conduct interviews (see Appendix D). After requesting and receiving permission from the rectors to start with interviews, the researcher welcomed and thanked the participants who made themselves available for interviews. The researcher assured the participants of anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses to questions. Permission was sought from the participants to use the audio tape but the participants refused, stating that discussion of racial and cultural differences at your own workplace was a sensitive issue and tape recordings might severely compromise the racial and cultural relationships in their working environments. It was therefore agreed that the researcher had to go through all the interview questions as well as follow-up questions and the participants had to give written responses in confidentiality. Table 4.1 is the schedule of visits to the central offices of the different FET colleges by the researcher

Date	Name of FET College	No. of participants
25 May 2010	Thekwini FET College	18 middle managers
25 May 2010	Coastal KZN FET College	14 middle managers
26 May 2010	Elangeni FET College	16 middle managers
27 May 2010	Esayidi FET College	14 middle managers

Date	Name of College	No. of participants
28 May 2010	Umfolozzi FET College	15 middle managers
31 May 2010	Mthashana FET College	16 middle managers
01 June 2010	Majuba FET College	18 middle managers
02 June 2010	Mnambithi FET College	14 middle managers
03 June 2010	Umgungundlovu FET College	17 middle managers

**Table 4.1** Schedule of visits to FET Colleges by the researcher.

The researcher discussed the interview questions as well as follow-up questions and the respondents were accordingly given a period of fifteen days to respond and return the interview instruments. The researcher employed Deputy Managers to collect the interview instruments in their respective colleges. After the participants had responded to the questions, they had to return them to Deputy Managers, who in turn returned them to the researcher. The participants whose colleges are near the Provincial Education Department Office where the researcher is employed, were asked to return the completed interview instruments to the researcher.

The completed interview instruments began to arrive before the end of June , and the responses received by the 30 June 2010 were 46 (a response rate of 32%). On 12 July 2010, the researcher used a follow-up method in the form of a postcard reminder (see Appendix E). This was done because the responses were anonymous and the researcher did not know from which participants the received responses had come. The follow-up was reasonably effective and finally increased the response rate by 51%. The responses received thereafter were as follows



F E T College participants	No. of instruments delivered	No. of instruments received	% of instruments received
Middle managers	142	118	83

**Table 4.2** Final responses received from participants

This represented a satisfying response. Concerning the non-response, the researcher gained the impression that since it was the end of the semester, some participants might have been pre-occupied with examination administration and therefore forgot to respond to interview questions, it is possible that they ignored the appeal to respond because of lack of interest. This is evidence that “...response is correlated with interest in the subject of survey” (Borg & Gall, 1989:331).

Having outlined the methodological procedures adopted in the interpretive investigation, the following section is directed at an analysis of the data obtained in connection with the formulated questions.

## **4.5 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

### **4.5.1 Introduction**

The semi-structured interview schedule is divided into Section A and Section B (see Appendix A). Section A has seven items intended to determine the demographic variables in the management structures of the nine public FET colleges. The questions/statements therefore requested the respondents to indicate, using a cross (x), their gender, race, home language, age group, academic qualifications, position held as well as years of experience in that position.

The first step the researcher took was to give each response an identification number. The second step was the development of a distribution table. After the distribution table was formulated, it was completed by hand and an extra check was done by a colleague. Rechecking is recommended by Babbie and Mouton (2005:418) when they state that it is advisable to have at least one other person as a reliability check. After the responses were entered into the distribution table, the results were systematically transferred to a summary data sheet. This was done without the aid of a computer because there were a limited number of subjects. This method is also supported by Babbie and Mouton (2005:414), if the population size is not large, if a limited number of variables are involved, and if relatively simple statistical analyses are to be performed, the use of a calculator may be the most efficient approach.

Presented below is the statistical table drawn up from the replies to Section A of the semi-structured interview instruments. It should be noted that before 1994, there was no co-ordination between the previous apartheid education departments with regard to strategic planning and targeting of priorities for human and economic resource development. This resulted in under-representation of racial groups other than whites in management positions in technical colleges (see Table 2.1). The fact that the new further education and training system inherited racial and gender inequality makes it important to determine whether the issue of under-representation has been addressed. The researcher is of the opinion that methods of recruiting and developing previously disadvantaged groups will need to be examined if managing diversity is to be effective in FET colleges.

A brief overview is given of the analysis and interpretation of the racial and gender composition of deputy managers, assistant managers, campus managers and deputy campus managers at public FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Race	Gender		Age Group				Home Language				Highest Qualification				
African	M	F	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Afri	Eng	Zul	Other	Dip	BA	Hons	M.Dig	D.Dig
	36	-	10	15	11	-	-	-	36	-	3	19	10	2	2
	-	19	5	12	2	-	-	-	19	-	3	8	2	6	-
Coloured	4	-	-	1	3	-	1	3	-	-	1	3	-	-	-
	-	6	2	3	1	-	1	5	-	-	4	2	-	-	-
Indian	11	-	-	2	7	2	-	11	-	-	-	3	6	2	-
	-	16	3	7	6	-	-	16	-	-	5	5	3	3	-
White	14	-	-	1	7	6	8	6	-	-	2	3	4	4	1
	-	12	-	5	6	7	5	7	-	-	5	3	3	1	-

**Table 4.3 (a)** Composition of KZN FET college middle managers according to age group, home language and qualifications.

Race	Position				Years of experience			
African	CM	DCM	AM	DM	0-5	6-10	11-15	16&above
	15	9	10	2	25	7	3	1
	4	8	4	3	14	1	4	-
Coloured	2	1	1	-	2	2	-	-
	3	2	1	-	3	3	-	-
Indian	6	1	3	1	-	6	3	2
	1	8	6	1	8	5	1	2
White	3	5	4	2	6	5	1	2
	4	2	4	2	5	6	-	1

**Table 4.3 (b)** Composition of KZN FET College middle managers according to positions and years of experience

**Key** CM=Campus Manager; DCM=Deputy Campus Manager; AM=Assistant

Manager and DM=Deputy Manager

**Source** Extracted from questionnaire

#### **4.5.2 Demographic composition of middle managers**

Table 4.3(a) reveals that 55% of college middle managers are male, while African female managers form 16% of the total allocation. It is appropriate to relate the promotion of female staff to the previous scheme of posts allocation. The earlier findings (see paragraph 2.5.2) indicated that during the apartheid era there were no black staff managers on the traditionally white technical colleges there were, however, many white managers employed in the traditionally black technical colleges. This might have negatively hindered any attempts by the technical colleges to promote African females into management positions as they might lack the necessary skills and experience. This indicates a clear need to create structures through which managers could be developed for the system.

#### **4.5.3 Racial composition of middle managers**

Table 4.3(a) reveals the following percentages of racial composition of middle managers in public FET colleges African = 47%; Coloured = 8%; Indian = 23%; and whites = 22%. These percentages indicate that after 1994 (see Table 4.3(b)) there has been an increase in the number of previously disadvantaged groups who had been promoted to management positions. The earlier findings (see paragraph 2.5.2) made it clear that under-representation of racial groups other than whites was predominant in all technical colleges. The increase in the representation of racial groups, particularly African female managers, is an indication that there is a move on the part of FET colleges to seek demographic representation through recruitment drives, preferential treatment, and quota systems. Hence, the above statistical profiles are central to demonstrating the symbolic worth of affirmative action policy.

#### **4.5.4 Representation according to language group**

Table 4.3(a) reveals the following percentages according to home languages Afrikaans = 13%; English = 41%; and IsiZulu = 46%. Kraak and Hall (1999 : 72) indicate that language and language usage are important manifestations of

corporate culture. One of the components here is that certain language groups have certain values and customs. Linguistic difficulties meant that the managers had to be careful and self-conscious about what they said. Table 4.3(a) indicates that IsiZulu language speakers are fast becoming a majority group in the management structures of colleges. This might be attributed to the implementation of affirmative action policy in FET colleges.

#### **4.5.5 Representation according to age group**

Table 4.3(a) does not reveal huge differences in the age range amongst middle managers. The youngest managers form 17% and the oldest managers represent 8%. The majority of middle managers (75%) fall between the age range of 36 and 55 years, which is acceptable considering the fact that occupying a management position requires that the incumbent should have acquired experience after training. It is also an indication that colleges might be able to identify and develop employees who still have some years to contribute to the sector. It nevertheless needs to be noted that out of the 8% aging managers, 6% of these are white male managers. This might be a cause for concern around the implementation of diversity management, particularly because Table 4.3(b) reveals that only 0,8% of young white males have entered the ranks of management.

#### **4.5.6 Qualifications of middle managers**

Table 4.3(a) reveals that the majority of college middle managers (40%) hold bachelors degrees. The other remaining managers are distributed as follows diploma = 19%; honours degree = 24%; masters degree = 15%; and doctoral degree = %. Given the fact that M+3 is the minimum requirement for college employees to be promoted to management positions, it is highly likely that most college managers might not be motivated to acquire further qualifications as long as they meet the minimum requirement. Only 2% of the college middle managers had pursued their studies to a doctoral level.

#### **4.5.7 Positions held**

Table 4.3(b) reveals the distribution of managers from different racial groups across the different categories of the college management hierarchy. This distribution indicates that there is an attempt by most colleges to adjust their recruitment and selection procedures to meet legal requirements as well as to promote equal opportunities for all employees, as a means of redress and development, through a strategy of planned recruitment policy. If that is correct, it can be maintained that the FET colleges have started to implement HR policies and recruitment strategies that will enable them to attract, motivate and retain skilled and committed people from all sectors of society. This will also assist to promote nation-building and democratisation by enabling people to contribute to society as autonomous, responsible and tolerant citizens. This is a requirement if the diversity management component is to be added to the affirmative action component (see paragraph 3.3.2.3).

#### **4.5.8 Years of experience**

Table 4.3(b) reveals that the majority of middle managers (53%) fall within the bracket of 1 and 5 years of experience in the positions they hold, which means that their age range is between twenty-five and forty-five. This can be attributed to the fact that most of the management posts in colleges are new, and there is a probability that colleges might have recruited and selected younger managers. This implies that the newly promoted managers might be in a position to develop effective diversity management skills. It is thus important for colleges to support these managers so that they are developed and have the opportunity to grow in their new jobs.

#### **4.5.9 The interview schedule**

The second section of the semi-structured interview was aimed at revealing the actual beliefs, feelings, attitudes, experiences and understandings of diversity management in FET college middle managers. In keeping with the objectives

outlined in this study, the researcher marked different sections of the data as being of one or more of the study objectives. Each objective was assigned to its own category. A body of data was broken down into labelled, meaningful pieces, with a view to later clustering the bits of coded material together under the code heading and further analysing them both as a cluster and in relation to other clusters. A brief overview is given of the analysis and interpretation of data from those responses that were received from the FET college middle managers. The findings are presented with sufficient interpretation to clarify meaning.

#### **4.5.9.1 Approach to data analysis**

The researcher was committed to understanding human phenomena in context, as they are lived, using context-driven categories. The researcher therefore tried to understand the respondents' experiences of diversity in the workplace through the phenomenological perspective. In supporting the phenomenological perspective, Boeije (2010:76) maintains that this approach enables the researcher to understand why something is happening rather than being able to describe what is happening. In trying to achieve this, the researcher categorised data according to the objectives of the study (see Table 4.4).

The study has six objectives (see paragraph 1.4) arranged according to their significance to the study. The researcher developed a semi-structured interview schedule comprising of twenty-six main questions (see Appendix A), as well as a number of follow-up questions to give more clarity to the main questions. Each question was intended to assist the researcher to describe and analyse participants' social actions, beliefs, feelings, experiences, thoughts, and perceptions about differences and diversity issues in their workplaces. It should be noted that when the semi-structured interviews were conducted, questions were not asked in a rigid manner as they appear in the schedule, but the discussions determined the sequence that had to be followed. It was for this reason that the researcher had to mark different sections of the collected data as being of one or more of the responses to the study objectives. Each objective

was thereafter assigned to its own category and a body of collected data was broken down into labelled pieces with a view to clustering the bits of coded material together under the code heading and further analysing the clustered data in relation to other clusters. Table 4.4 presents the six objectives of the study together with the main questions that were used by the researcher to reveal the actual beliefs, feelings, attitudes, and experiences of the participants regarding the research problem.

<b>Objectives of the study</b>	<b>Main Questions</b>
<b>Objective 1</b> To find out if the management and administration personnel of merged FET colleges were capacitated to address issues of diversity.	<b>Questions</b> What are the goals of diversity training? Who provides funding for diversity training? How is the diversity training perceived by the employees? Did the college capacitate the managers to deal with aspects of diversity management? How many diversity workshops have you attended? How do you deal with racial and cultural conflicts?
<b>Objective 2</b> To determine the extent to which the diversity management concept is integrated into strategic objectives of FET colleges.	<b>Questions</b> What do you understand by the term “Diversity Management”? What do you understand by the term “Affirmative action”? What types of diversity training programmes are there for the college? Does the college have an action plan for the role of management? Does the college management distinguish between



	“managing people” and “managing diversity”? How do you deal with racial and cultural conflicts?
<b>Objective 3</b> To evaluate the role of unions, community leaders and college councils in assisting FET college management to promote transformation and diversity management.	<b>Questions</b> Does your college have a diversity management policy, and if so who was involved in its formulation? Does your college communicate the policy and programme to employees and their representatives? How do labour unions respond to diversity management plans? To what extent do College Councils support diversity initiatives?
<b>Objective 4</b> To investigate barriers to the successful implementation of diversity management policies.	<b>Questions</b> Do you think the college management is doing everything they should to ensure that workers are treated equally? What form of resistance has the college experienced regarding diversity management policy implementation? What factors do you think might impair a labour union’s ability to deal with diversity issues? How does the college respond when employees criticise its diversity management plan? What factors can be regarded as barriers to the implementation of diversity management policy in your college?
<b>Objective 5</b> To determine whether the	<b>Questions</b> Do you think that the

historically disadvantaged campuses were benefiting from diversity management and transformation processes.	college management represents the interests of diverse cultural groups? How do employees of different backgrounds get accommodated into the college HR developmental plan? What are the implications of the merger on your college? What are your feelings about affirmative action policy within your college?
<b>Objective 6</b> To develop and recommend strategies for effective management of diversity in FET colleges.	<b>Question</b> What would you recommend for proper and effective management of diversity in your college?

**Table 4.4** The six objectives and twenty-six main questions used in the semi-structured interviews

### ***Question 1***

#### ***What do you understand by the term “Diversity Management”?***

In this question the interviewees were expected to show their understanding of the concept “diversity management” and to indicate the extent to which this concept is applied in their day-to-day management of colleges. Only four respondents (4%) were not sure about the meaning of diversity management. They stated that it was their first time of serving in a college management structure. It was therefore probable that they might not have been capacitated in diversity management, particularly if this is not prioritised by the colleges. One hundred and thirteen (96%) respondents showed that they had an understanding of the concept of diversity management and that they also value diversity for a

number of reasons, such as to give the college access to a broader range of opinions and viewpoints. Out of the one hundred and thirteen respondents who attempted to define the concept, eighty-two of them based their definitions on the differences associated with race, culture, gender, age, religion and physical disabilities and sexual orientation which need to be managed in the workplace. Generally, the interviewees were of the opinion that the goals of diversity management could be achieved in the workplace when all the employees, irrespective of these differences, feel that they belong, and are neither marginalised nor isolated in the workplace. The remaining thirty-one participants showed a deeper understanding of the concept. They all indicated that managing diversity was a process. They stated that diversity management focuses on creating an environment that maximises the potential and appreciates the diversity of every employee, not just women, blacks or people with disabilities. This is an indication that there are some college managers who had come to grips with the broader meaning of the concept of diversity management, and this makes it probable that diversity management could be effectively implemented in FET colleges.

## ***Question 2***

### ***What do you understand by the term “Affirmative Action”?***

All the participants (100%) were in a position to give their definitions of affirmative action. The definitions of this concept that were given by the respondents were grouped as follows

- Ninety-eight respondents (83%) considered affirmative action as a positive step by the government to move historically disadvantaged groups, such as Africans, women and physically disabled employees, into corporate ranks where they can be trained and developed. This group of respondents maintained that the affirmative action policy was necessary to achieve representation through dedicated recruitment drives, preferential treatment and quota systems, more particularly because in South Africa the apartheid

policies discriminated employees according to race, gender and physical disabilities. They also maintained that in a democratic South Africa, affirmative action should be part of the legislative framework that would impact on the transformation of public institutions.

- Sixteen respondents (14%) defined affirmative action as reverse discrimination, and they viewed members of the historically disadvantaged groups as tokens who did not have the skills to do real work. They maintained that putting unqualified blacks, women and disabled employees in high positions because of affirmative action policies was the cause of the low moral among the competent, hard working personnel as it undermined the merit-based reward systems. They stated that affirmative action programmes in FET colleges did not include targets and recruitment procedures that were clear and fair to every employee, and they indicated that this situation could lead to low levels of commitment and satisfaction, particularly among the white male employees. They also stated that some colleges would distort the meaning of affirmative action to suit their own ends.
- Four respondents (3%) defined affirmative action as a programme of action aimed at developing new employees from all racial groups irrespective of race, gender or colour. They stated that affirmative action programmes had to be used by the public FET colleges to train and mentor employees as well as to make all employees more aware of their potential, capabilities, and opportunities. They also maintained that affirmative action initiatives and programmes could be used to build trust and interdependence among employees of different cultures which would in turn produce feelings of belonging and fairness.

### **Question 3**

***Does your college have a diversity management policy, and if so, who was involved in its formulation?***

One hundred and ten respondents (93%) stated that there were no diversity management policies in their colleges. This can be attributed to the fact that in most public institutions the exact inclusion of diversity management in their strategic objectives and how it is measured, as well as how performance is managed, are often unclear (see paragraph 3.1). The findings revealed that no diversity managers were appointed to implement diversity strategy in colleges. While the final responsibility for the formulation, communication, monitoring and evaluation of a diversity management policy should rest with a senior manager practical considerations often dictate that the senior manager should be supported by someone who can take charge of issues on a day-to-day basis.

The 93% non response therefore implies that in times of economic downturn, poor results and restructuring, it is the diversity management objectives which are most likely to be dispensed with by FET colleges. Only eight (7%) interviewees agreed that their colleges have a diversity management policy. They stated that the policy was formulated by the rector and the Education Department officials and that they were not involved. The non-involvement of college managers in the formulation of diversity management policy make it probable that even the members of the different cultural groups might not have been involved. If that was the case, the representivity of those policies is doubtful, and therefore ownership of the policy is questionable. This situation would thus make it difficult for the college to begin a conversation with employees in order to create a more inclusive and supportive culture.

#### **Question 4**

##### ***What types of diversity training programmes are there for your college?***

One hundred and ten respondents (93%) stated that there were no diversity training programmes in their colleges. This may be attributed to the above response where the same respondents indicated that there were no diversity management policies in their colleges. This is contrary to the statement by George and Jones (2006 : 115), that the diversity of the global workforce is increasing, and thus, managers are proactively managing diversity to be able to attract and retain the best employees. Failure to plan diversity training programmes by the college is an indication that most FET colleges have up to now ignored the multidimensionality of personnel employed in colleges. This might tend to involve a selective filtering process where the senior managers filter out aspects of college management that do not fit their framework. Unless efforts to develop training programmes are supported by organisational interventions, which in turn support managing diversity as a critical strategic issue, it is highly unlikely that those most resistant to change will change. The eight (7%) respondents who said that their colleges have developed diversity training programmes mentioned the following types of workshops they have attended

- Leadership and management.
- Project management.
- Human Resource Development Strategy.
- MBA Skills Training.
- Employment Equity.

Although the interviewees provided evidence that they attended these workshops, the researcher could not find a link between these workshops and

diversity training because a content analysis of workshop materials was not done. Such data could provide a fairly comprehensive picture of progress and issues for discussion by attendants in the diversity workshops.

### ***Question 5***

#### ***Does your college communicate the policy and programme to employees and their representatives?***

One hundred and ten respondents (93%) stated that this question was not applicable to them as they had already indicated in the previous question that their colleges do not have a diversity training programme. In general, the participants stated that their colleges have established procedures for communicating policies to employees and their representatives. This is a strength which will have to be utilised by the managers of these colleges once diversity management policies were in place. Eight respondents (7%) agreed that their colleges communicate the policy and programmes to employees and their representatives. They mentioned the following communication procedures

- Managers provide annual feedback on performance.
- Time off for employee representatives to attend meetings.
- Managers initiate personal contact with individual employees.

These communication procedures were generally acceptable, but not enough to ensure that there was an ongoing consultation and communication. The interviewees agreed that there was a need for managers to develop and manage an effective consultation and communication strategy, as these aspects were integral to the achievement and success of diversity training programmes. This is supported by Human (2005 : 85), when she states that employees tend to become annoyed and demotivated when they do not receive regular and useful information.

## **Question 6**

### ***What are the goals for the diversity training? Are they realistic?***

One hundred and thirteen respondents (96%) were not sure of the goals of diversity training. This type of response made it clear to the researcher that the goals of diversity management might not have been discussed with the respondents because under normal circumstances the goal-setting would involve manager-employee pairs and teams throughout the organisation. The goal is systematic job performance improvement through target-setting with mutual commitment and review (Human 2005 : 51). The goals for diversity training cannot be realistic if there was no mutual commitment and involvement of employees of the college. Five respondents (4%) who stated that the goals for diversity management in their colleges were realistic, mentioned that these goals sought to achieve

- a better strategic position in terms of the broader socio-political environment
- a better opportunity of becoming a world-class college with which a diverse group of employees will be accommodated.
- an ability to attract, motivate, develop and retain skilled and committed people from all sectors of society.
- an ability to create a dignified and respectful working environment which is attractive to current and potential stakeholders.

These respondents maintained that the above goals were well-structured, but the problem was that none of them was involved in their formulation. This was a real cause for concern, according to them, because there is a probability that employees might not take ownership of these diversity goals, that they were not part of their formulation.



### ***Question 7***

#### ***Who provides funding for diversity training?***

One hundred and ten respondents (93%) stated that this question was not applicable to their colleges. This can be attributed to their earlier responses in previous questions where they stated that no formal diversity activities were taking place in their colleges. It was therefore understandable that there could be no talk of funding for diversity training that was non-existent. Eight respondents indicated that the funding for diversity training in their colleges was provided by the College Councils as well as by the Department of Education. Although it is acceptable for the diversity training programmes to be funded by the employer, in this case the interviewees felt that funding by the College Councils and the Department of Education was not enough. They suggested the following funding mechanisms for diversity training

- Government through grants and subsidies.
- The Department of Labour.
- Business through the Industrial Training Boards (ITBs).
- Donors through grant-making.

The interviewees, nevertheless, pointed out that if the funding was external, there should be clear guidelines so that the outside funders might not negatively influence diversity training programmes to suit their own needs.

### ***Question 8***

#### ***How is the diversity training perceived by the employees?***

Eight respondents (7%) stated that diversity training was appreciated and positively received by the employees. Nevertheless, they stated the following

challenges which they maintained were the result of poor communication on the part of senior management

- The purpose of the diversity training was not made clear, which usually caused suspense and anxiety.
- There was poor communication regarding the change, and personnel expect, need and want to be informed about changes before they occur.
- Sometimes senior management do not plan training activities far enough in advance and this places excessive work pressure on employees.
- Senior management fails to relieve anxiety over job security and therefore aggrieved employees, as well as those who are not, need to know what is going to happen to them.

These challenges indicate to the fact that there is a need to capacitate senior managers and diversity trainers so that they can be more sensitive to diversity issues. The one hundred and ten respondents stated that diversity training was taking place in their colleges, stating the same reasons as indicated in previous questions.

### **Question 9**

#### ***Did the college capacitate the managers to deal with aspects of diversity management?***

Eight respondents (7%) agreed that their employers had capacitated them to deal with issues of diversity management. They stated that in their capacity building workshops, the facilitators would emphasise that effective diversity managers had to behave in the following manner

- They regard each employee as a vital part of the college.

- They view all personnel positively, because whatever diminishes anyone's self, for example, humiliation, discrimination, degradation, or failure, has no place in a culturally sensitive workplace.
- They allow and provide for individual and cultural differences.
- They learn how employees see things.

The interviewer is of the opinion that training received by these respondents was relevant to diversity issues since sensitivity to their own feelings is a prerequisite to effective leadership, and thus it is beneficial for administrators to have maximum self-insight. This is supported by Kossek and Lobel (1996 : 83) when they state that the more effective diversity manager is a mature person who functions with compassionate efficiency, and who is able to assist his or her subordinates to solve their problems without resorting to pity, panic or resignation. They argue that this type of diversity manager maintains professional balance and keeps his or her perspective through the use of self-insight and humour. The one hundred and ten no responses can be attributed to the same reasons as stated above.

### ***Question 10***

#### ***How many diversity awareness training workshops have you attended?***

Seventy-two respondents (81%) stated that they had attended diversity awareness campaigns. The number of awareness campaigns attended varied. Some attended two or three campaigns per year and there were those who had attended a once-off campaign in a year. These respondents stated that they would attend diversity awareness campaigns and workshops during the September month, which is the heritage month in the South African calendar. It is during this month that they get an opportunity to attend cultural conferences, meetings, workshops, and so on, which are aimed at making the citizens of the country aware of diversity and cultural differences that exist in South African societies. They also stated that in these campaigns they are made aware of their

tendency to hold certain stereotypes and they then determine not to let them influence their attitudes towards culturally different individuals or groups. They also mentioned that they are taught to treat other people in a dignified and respectful manner, and to show the other person that they are interested in him or her as an individual rather than as a member of a certain group. Forty-six respondents (39%) stated that they had not yet attended any diversity awareness training workshop. This can be attributed to the fact that most of these cultural awareness campaigns are not organised by their institutions, and therefore attendance is voluntary.

### **Question 11**

#### ***Does your college have an action plan covering the role of management?***

All respondents confirmed that their colleges have developed action plans covering the role of management. The respondents stated that the real issue should not be about the senior management's concern with maintenance of action plans or adjusting the controls of the management cycle, while the employees get on with their daily activities with a minimum interaction with other management or each other. They maintained that a more creative and dynamic role was required, preferably in a collaborative framework, which includes involvement in defining the concept of diversity, facilitating change, motivating staff and external representation. In general, the respondents were of the opinion that roles and responsibilities with regard to diversity management should vary according to the position of the employee. Human (2005 : 64) acknowledges that the existence of diversity department independent of other departments within an organisation may be problematic. She further maintains that diversity is part of a holistic and integrated process, and is thus an aspect of the responsibilities of all employees at all levels and in all specialisations.

### **Question 12**

***Do you think your college management is doing everything they should to ensure that workers are treated equally?***

All respondents agreed that their college management was doing everything they should to ensure that workers were treated equally. This is understandable because public FET colleges are state institutions and they are therefore subject to the Constitution and the laws of the land, to professional regulation, labour law and various policy and legislative controls. College Councils and management are thus expected to execute their functions within defined parameters, which are clearly stipulated in legislation and are further developed in terms of institutional policies and guidelines and institutional practice. However, some respondents indicated that there was a need to improve consultation. They maintain that some senior managers find consultation about issues relating to diversity cumbersome, particularly when it involves a critique of cherished practices and established routines.

### **Question 13**

***Do you think that the college management represents the interests of diverse cultural groups?***

Seventy-one participants (60%) agreed that their college management represents the interests of diverse cultural groups. They maintained that since the merger of technical colleges in 1998, much has been done by college management in their attempts to be democratic, representative and participatory, in line with the democratic principles of the country. The respondents stated that the pressures for change in South African FET institutions arise from socio-political demands that have to do with redressing the destruction of apartheid as well as the socio-economic pressures which are concerned with the re-entry of the country into a global competition. The respondents were of the opinion that these pressures were central to the establishment of representivity in the staff

composition in FET colleges. Forty-seven respondents (40%) denied that the college management represented the interests of diverse cultural groups. These respondents maintained that cultural differences are a problem. They stated that the main cultural problems encountered at institutional level were misunderstandings, mutual suspicion, a conflict of values and interests as well as worry about career progression which they believe were associated with cultural differences in college management.

#### ***Question 14***

##### ***How do employees of different cultures get accommodated into the college HR developmental plan?***

Eighty-four respondents (71%) referred to the Employment Equity Act of 1998 as a legislation that ensures that employees of different cultures are accommodated in the college HR developmental plan. They maintained that the Act seeks to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination. It protects people who have been historically discriminated against in the workplace from unfair discrimination, and directs employers to implement affirmative action measures to redress such discrimination. These respondents stated that in their colleges the mission of the HR department was to support the college in the achievement of its strategic objectives by providing a professional and effective service which would support line managers in their management and development of a diverse group of people to ensure the effective and efficient staffing of the college. Thirty-four respondents (29%) stated that the college HR developmental plan did not accommodate employees of different cultures. They argued that recruitment, selection and promotion policies were not fair to all employees and they were open to nepotism. They maintained that these policies are not properly monitored by external bodies to determine objectivity, which makes it probable for some employees of different cultures to receive poor appraisal and training which is not based on their individual needs.

### **Question 15**

#### ***Does the college management distinguish between “managing people” and “managing diversity”?***

Eight respondents (7%) maintained that the college management did not distinguish between managing people and managing diversity. They stated that college managers apply the same managerial skills in managing people and in managing diversity and it was difficult, therefore, to separate the management of diversity from the management of people. They further stated that college managers' performance is appraised on

- external recruitment targets.
- internal career development
- the diversity climate.
- external diversity objectives.

One hundred and ten respondents (93%) maintained that college managers are still unable manage diversity effectively because they tend to perpetuate preconceived notions about employees based on irrelevant criteria such as race, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability, and so on, and they sometimes recruit, manage and develop employees based on these preconceived notions and negative expectations. They further maintained that this orientation does not lead to a situation in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect, nor does it lead to the creation of an inclusive, supportive and developmental working climate.

### **Question 16**

#### ***What form of resistance has the college experienced regarding diversity management policy implementation?***

Seven respondents (6%) mentioned the following forms of resistance regarding the implementation of diversity management policy in colleges

- Avoidance

The respondents stated that some employees refuse to recognise the existence of a problem. They stated that many employees do not tell what is actually troubling them until they are certain that a manager or supervisor is really going to listen to them, and this is often indicative that the employees do not trust supervisors, or they do not understand or acknowledge the real diversity issues.

- Hostility

The respondents stated that it is common for supervisors to be confronted with hostility from employees during efforts to resolve conflict. They stated that in colleges, much needed interventions seldom happen before major altercations erupt because few administrators possess the counselling skills to serve as effective diversity counsellors. They claimed that most managers and supervisors are culturally reactive, which often leads to conflict and hostility among employees who experience diversity problems.

- Denial

The respondents stated that sometimes conflicted employees would invariably deny that they have a problem, at least until the symptoms can no longer be denied. The respondents were of the opinion that many employees do not report conflict because they fear that such disclosure would cost them their jobs.

Eight respondents (7%) maintained that no form of resistance had been experienced by the college regarding diversity management policy



implementation because managers and supervisors were honest and sincere in attempting to help troubled persons to become more effective employees. Ninety-three respondents (87%) respondents stated that they were not sure whether any form of resistance had ever occurred because they had not been part of any implementation of diversity management policy in their colleges.

### ***Question 17***

#### ***How do you deal with racial and cultural conflicts in your college?***

Twenty-four respondents (20%) stated that they, as managers and supervisors, dealt with racial and cultural conflicts by adopting operations, procedures and policies that accommodate a heterogeneous labour force. They indicated that as managers and supervisors they have learned to counsel victims and perpetrators of diversity-related problems by doing the following things

- Clearly defining and specifying acceptable behaviours.
- Focusing on behaviours, not personalities.
- Using a problem-solving approach, with mutual goal-setting.
- Ending each counselling session with a concrete plan for further action.
- Following through and monitoring agreements and directives.

These respondents stated that they seldom use discipline, suspension or discharge as the means to handle employees' racial and cultural conflicts because they regard these actions as much more time-consuming, expensive and disruptive than one-on-one or small group counselling. Ninety-four respondents (80%) stated that they do not deal with racial and cultural conflicts because they regard them as sensitive issue which must be handled by the senior management together with the employer. These respondents indicated that they are seldom taught to be competent counsellors in the diversity

workplace, hence they do not want to be embarrassed by displaying their lack of training.

### **Question 18**

#### ***How do labour unions respond to diversity management plans of the college?***

Eight respondents (7%) stated that individual unions are actively promoting equality at an institutional and political level. The Congress of South African Trade Unions, for example, represents the trade union movement's principal conduit for influencing the government, thereby influencing social and economic policies of concern to affiliates and by extension to trade union members. The respondents claimed that union's roles in colleges include giving advice when members have a problem at work, representing members in discussion with College Councils, making sure that members' legal rights are enforced at work, helping members take cases to employment tribunals, fighting discrimination and helping to promote equality at work. The respondents pointed out that generally, labour unions had failed to respond unitary to diversity issues because they feared that highlighting plurality of interests might undermine solidarity and thereby union power. However, FET colleges are composed of diverse groups of employees, whose interests may at times converge, but at others diverge. The one hundred and ten (93%) interviewees could not respond to this question, stating the same reason as indicated in Question One.

### **Question 19**

#### ***What factors do you think might impair a labour union's ability to deal effectively with diversity issues?***

All respondents pointed out that labour unions in FET colleges are still facing a challenge to represent effectively the interests of diverse social groups. They stated that labour unions represent sites in which a plurality of interests exists. Ginn and Arber (2000:73) maintain that traditionally labour unions have assumed

that people working within the same industry, organisation or occupation shared the same interests and therefore the same objectives in relation to their employers and their employment. This assumption has led to a unitary conception of union bargaining objectives. Unity of interest among the membership has traditionally been regarded by labour unions as essential to the building of a solidarity movement, which could effectively challenge and influence management decision-making. The respondents claimed that the discovery by labour unions that FET colleges are composed of diverse groups of employees might impair their ability to deal effectively with diversity issues. The second factor mentioned by the respondents is the fact that union leaders themselves are not an homogeneous group and may be very divided across functional or spatial lines. They maintained that this would have implications in terms of equal opportunities where union leaders would appear to show commitment to the needs of members from their own social groups. Other factors mentioned by the respondents include labour union leaders' lack of training on diversity issues, lack of information, misinformation, inadequate human relations, skills and decisions that do not resolve the diversity problems.

### ***Question 20***

#### ***How does the college respond when the employees criticise its diversity management plan?***

Eight respondents (7%) stated that at certain times employees would criticise the diversity management plan, no matter how good it was. These respondents maintained that in their colleges the diversity managers had been trained to react positively to criticism by behaving in the following manner

- To regard each employee as a vital part of the college.
- To view all personnel positively, because whatever diminishes anyone's self has no place in a culturally sensitive college.
- To allow and provide for individual and cultural differences.

- To learn how employees see things.

These respondents maintained that a growing number of managers and supervisors in their colleges were participating in some type of sensitivity training. They claimed that their colleges would benefit from this training because they believed that the more effective diversity manager would be a mature person who would function with compassionate efficiency, who would be able to assist his or her subordinates to solve their problems without resorting to pity, panic or resignation.

### ***Question 21***

#### ***To what extent do College Councils support diversity initiative ?***

Eight respondents (7%) indicated that the College Councils were fully involved in diversity initiatives. They mentioned the following forms of support given by College Councils to diversity initiatives

- Funding

The respondents stated that College Councils would fund diversity training workshops by hiring out facilities, encouraging staff to participate, and linking training to commercial activities such as providing transport and meals.

- Recruitment and selection

The respondents indicated that College Councils were involved in the development of formalised procedures which were both transparent and justifiable, to guide the processes of recruitment and selection. The idea behind the formalisation of recruitment procedures was that it would enable the objective requirements of the job to be more easily identified and thus a selection decision based on a person's suitability, rather than nepotism, would be made.

- Monitoring policy implementation

The respondents pointed out that the adoption and communication of diversity management policy would not itself translate that policy into practice. They stated that one of the roles of College Councils was to determine whether or not the objectives of the policy were being achieved. They maintained that monitoring was useful to provide the evidence required to justify and plan any further action and initiatives.

- Enforcement of labour laws

The respondents stated that the College Councils, as employers, play a crucial role in the implementation and enforcement of labour laws. They maintained that this was important in order to avoid complaints of unlawful discrimination and also to adopt employment policies and practices that promote and support equality and diversity within their workforce.

One hundred and ten respondents stated that they were not sure of the role of College Councils in diversity matters. This can be attributed to earlier responses where the same respondents indicated that there were no diversity management programmes in their colleges.

## ***Question 22***

### ***How does the diversity management strategy fit with the mission and vision of the college?***

Eight respondents (7%) indicated that diversity management strategy fits with the mission and vision of the college in that it is fully integrated into the human resources dimension by ensuring that the human resources policies form a coherent entity. They stated that an attempt to make effective management of human resources a concern throughout the college appears to offer potential benefits to the pursuit of equality and recognition of employees as an important asset of the college, which should be nurtured. The respondents mentioned the following success factors relating to strategic alignment in their colleges

- Diversity becomes a key strategic issue and is managed in such a way that it does not clash with other important objectives.
- The senior managers are actively committed to diversity and regularly monitor progress.
- All employees have objectives relating to diversity included in their performance appraisals and are rewarded for good performance.
- Employees are regularly consulted via diversity committees about the diversity strategy, communication on the strategy is effective, and there is a clear understanding of what the policy is about.

One hundred and ten interviewees stated that this question was not applicable to their colleges because a diversity management strategy had not yet been formulated.

### ***Question 23***

#### ***What factors can be regarded as barriers to the implementation of diversity management policy in your college?***

All participants agreed that there were barriers to the implementation of diversity programmes in FET colleges. They identified the following barriers

- Intercultural communication

The respondents maintained that unless, through communication, managers and supervisors were able to establish rapport with employees, much of the diversity initiatives would fail or would be inappropriately carried out.

- Cultural differences

The respondents stated that managers and supervisors would tend to react to culturally different people in the same manner as their significant others because they are themselves creatures of culture. They maintained that prejudices found

in the community are often acted out in the workplace and there was prejudice against women, older workers, individuals with disabilities, foreign workers, as well as all the people who comprise the workforce.

- Symbolic racism

The respondents indicated that symbolic racism allows for subtlety, indirectness and implication, even more pervasive practices than overt racism. They maintained that most of today's racism is more sophisticated and less obvious but still impute negative behaviours or characteristics to the target group. The respondents stated that more often than not these factors were barriers to the implementation of diversity management policy in FET colleges.

#### ***Question 24***

##### ***What are the implications of the merger in your college?***

Fifty-four respondents (46%) were not in a position to answer this question. They stated that they joined the FET sector after the merger was completed. It was therefore understandable why they could not compare the situation in previous technical colleges with the present formation of FET colleges. Sixty-four respondents (54%) stated that much had changed since the merging of colleges. They mentioned that there had been positive as well as negative developments. They indicated the following positive developments

- Responsiveness

The merging of technical colleges had enabled the sector to develop the ability to respond more rapidly to emerging market demands and social needs at local, national and global levels.

- Cost-effectiveness

The merger ensured that the new FET institutions operate as well-functioning institutions and in that way meet all their educational and training goals in a cost-effective manner.

- Participation

The merger had enhanced social equity through increased participation by all social groups at all levels as well as economic prosperity, through the development of a highly participative education and training system.

- Democracy

Democratisation requires that governance of the education and training system as well as of individual institutions should be democratic, representative and participatory. It also requires that the system should be characterised by mutual respect, tolerance and the maintenance of a well-ordered and peaceful community life.

- Diversity

Within the regulatory framework of a single FET college, education and training has been flexible enough to allow differentiation of campus missions so that differing campuses can meet differing community and economic needs.

The negative implications of the merger that were mentioned by the respondents included frustration and low staff morale because the new employer, which is now the College Council, had been unable to formulate a clear and transparent recruitment and selection policy. They also stated that campuses were not treated equally, most of the previously disadvantaged campuses claimed that their situation had not improved much since the merger. The respondents also maintained that employees were now exposed to cultural differences and new forms of conflict for which they were not adequately prepared. They stated that



work environments in which the majority of employees are from the same ethnic group, often create the illusion that all employees are alike, thereby distorting individual uniqueness and causing workplace identity conflict.

### ***Question 25***

#### ***What are your feelings about affirmative action policy within your college?***

All interviewees agreed that an affirmative action policy was necessary to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination. They stated that if properly implemented, it would protect people who have been historically discriminated against in the workplace from unfair discrimination, and direct employers to implement affirmative action measures to redress such discrimination. However, the respondents stated that the reality in most FET colleges was that affirmative action policy was not administered, monitored and enforced properly, which makes it open to misuse by the employers. The following concerns had been expressed

- That race classification could be heightened and reverse discrimination could lead to a decrease in employee loyalty and the lack of retention of skilled employees, particularly if other groups feel that the preferred groups receive preferential treatment without merit and hard work.
- That those people from designated groups who still require training and development would have unrealistic short-term expectations which would further increase racial and social tensions within the college.
- That those from designated groups, expecting secured positions, might adopt a culture of entitlement that would undermine initiative, self-confidence and self-reliance.

Nevertheless, all the respondents maintained that affirmative action initiatives were necessary in the South African FET colleges in order to redress past injustices in the workplace. However, they stated that these initiatives should be

given a concerted effort to ensure that they are implemented in an holistic manner which would benefit both employees and the college as a whole.

### **Question 26**

#### ***What would you recommend for proper and effective management of diversity in your college?***

The interviewees recommended the following measures for proper and effective management of diversity management in their colleges

- Diversity management policy

The respondents recommended the formulation of a policy that would serve as a guideline for the behaviour of the employees in various situations. They mentioned that all the employees and social groups should be represented when the policy was formulated so that they can all take ownership of the policy. They also stated that the policy should clearly reflect the objectives and aims of diversity management and be explained to all employees.

- Training of diversity managers

The respondents stated that there was a need to identify and train diversity managers. They stated that most colleges were lacking in this regard which was the reason for the managers' failure to gain better understanding of their own cultural conditioning, including negative stereotypes of and prejudicial attitudes about other cultural groups.

- Diversity committee

The respondents pointed to the need of establishing representative diversity committees which would enable diversity initiatives to focus on creating a genuine representation where there could be a strong sense of belonging and a genuine desire to work towards a common goal.

- Diversity management plan

The respondents recommended that the colleges, in conjunction with employees, should draw up a diversity management plan which would set objectives and timetables with realistic targets, set out measures to address employment barriers, plan for the reasonable accommodation of people from designated groups, and create an action plan to retain, train and develop people from designated groups.

- Monitoring and evaluating procedures

The respondents maintained that regular surveying of employee opinions and tracking of results over time was essential, and thus colleges should monitor and evaluate progress regarding the implementation of the diversity management policy. They stated that without monitoring and evaluation, implementation and performance would deteriorate over time to a point where, if left unchecked, diversity management would seize up.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter dealt with an interpretive investigation into the college managers' experiences of diversity issues in the Further Education and Training (FET) institutions in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The researcher concurred with Boeije (2010:6) in assuming that people's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously that we can understand others' experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us, and that qualitative research techniques are best suited to this task. Boeije (2010:6) further states that rather than translating the stuff of everyday experiences into a language of variables and mathematical formulae, the interpretive approach tries to harness and extend the power of ordinary language and expression to help us better understand the social world we live in.

The research technique used in this investigation consisted of a semi-structured interview schedule intended for personnel occupying management positions in

FET colleges. This semi-structured interview schedule was designed to assess the experiences, feelings and opinions of the college managers with regard to the implementation of a diversity management policy in the workplace. The methodological procedures adopted in acquiring the data in connection with the research problem were discussed and data were analysed. Once the data had been analysed, the researcher brought in supplementary information from a literature study and his own experience, in order to assess the validity of the responses. This means that where responses revealed a tendency in one direction or another, the searching question “Why is it like that?” was posed. The approach of probing the causative factor, rather than being satisfied with only the bits of discrete answers, permeates this investigation for it is only by identifying the causative factors that the problems surrounding the implementation of diversity management policy in FET colleges can be exposed and solved. Among the most important findings, this investigation revealed that

- There are college managers who act as though implementing the diversity management policy was an option. Many colleges, even those that have a good job of including diversity management in their strategic objectives, seem to have trouble getting every employee to realise the significance of workforce diversity for the HR domain and the workforce in general. It was discovered that most college middle managers were not quite sure what, if anything, was required of them personally (see Question 12).
- There is a need for training of diversity managers in order to enhance performance, creativity, workgroup cohesiveness, and communication. When diversity managers are trained, they develop processes that could enhance problem-solving and productivity because negative diversity-related barriers will be removed.
- In FET colleges where HR strategies to manage diversity had been developed, it appeared that these strategies had largely been introduced piecemeal, lacking integration with other systems. Consequently, they do not

change the culture to support the management heterogeneity, and they therefore end up failing.

- There appears to be a tendency to hire and promote people in terms of the degree to which they fit with the characteristics of the dominant culture (see Question 14). This tendency is particularly observed in campuses that are located in rural areas where the workforce is characterised by more homogeneity than heterogeneity in social characteristics. Unfortunately, too much similarity in the organisation can be detrimental to long-term growth, renewal, and the ability to respond to important environmental changes such as dynamic market conditions, new technologies and ideas, societal shifts, or the changing expectations of the workforce.
- There is a feeling that culturally different employees often approach managers and supervisors in ways that are outright defensive, and they use profanity and behave indiscreetly (see Question 17). A disproportionate use of defenses indicates a lack of security. Culturally different employees seek to maintain their psychological balance during times of stress in several ways, such as by rationalisation, reaction formation, overcompensation, or protection. People who believe they are members of an out-group would often develop rigid, persistent, and chronic ego-protection devices (Kossek & Lobel 1996:110).

The following chapter discusses the findings and the conclusions of the whole study, according to the literature study as well as the interpretive investigation into the experiences, feelings and opinions of FET college middle managers in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings emanating from the study and to describe which conclusions were drawn. This chapter presents the findings in order to increase understanding of the notion of diversity management and to improve its implementation in FET institutions. After surveying the middle managers' experiences and opinions on diversity management, this chapter focuses on the findings regarding the topic. Attempts were made to collate responses on individual aspects, so as to arrive at specific conclusions. The findings were presented in two phases according to the purpose of the research, namely, findings with regard to middle managers' experiences, feelings and opinions on diversity management, followed by the factors which were found to be prominent in shaping the middle managers' behaviours and attitudes towards diversity matters.

#### **5.2 FINDINGS**

The study revealed that the diversity of the FET college workforce is increasing however, the commitment to diversity of many colleges and many college managers does not always reflect a sincere change of heart (see Question 3). Human (2005:12) maintains that most managers will claim that they are committed to diversity and to the eradication of prejudice, and they will furthermore state that they have developed sophisticated and detailed plans to provide opportunities for under-represented groups. She maintains that such statements and strategies nevertheless tend to be accompanied by the word "but" and a qualifier. The researcher concluded that if these opinions are not correct, genuine diversity management will have to await drastic changes to the further education and training system.

A deeply rooted and growing discontent with the implementation of employment equity and affirmative action policies is evident among public FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The interviewees claimed that senior managers and College Councils would sometimes distort the meaning of these terms to suit their own ends (see Question2). They also claim that there was no transparency in the application of these policies and this had sometimes opened them to misinterpretation and abuse by the senior managers and College Councils. As it is true of any important strategic decision, critical assessment of organisational objectives and the strategies for attaining them must guide human resource managers and other decision-makers who consider it an investment in diversity management programmes. Within the broader framework of change represented by employment equity and affirmative action, diversity management was found to be a complementary initiative towards both equality and greater productivity in FET colleges (Jackson 1994:76).

Some of the respondents argued that diversity in the workplace has been defined by senior managers and employers as a problem to overcome the prevalence of the homogeneity model which had been regarded as the strength of some colleges. This definition predetermines the structures of responses and precludes effective utilisation and maximisation of the advantages of diversity. Gentile (1994:205) suggests that reframing diversity as a resource and a process, and not as a problem, is needed. He maintains that this perspective reveals new motivation for responding to differences in the workplace, moving beyond moral and competitive drivers to the creative energy born of learning, personal and organisational growth, and innovation (Gentile 1994:147).

The study also revealed that the respondents, as middle managers, constitute the group caught in the middle of this organisational change. As middle managers, they are often squeezed between the competing cultures of two paradigms. The first culture calls for them to “have control” while the second culture requests them to be more democratic and “relinquish control” (see Question 16). In the midst of conflicts between these counter values, remains the

constant demand for performance from senior management. The implementation of organisational change in the form of diversity management had sometimes brought on increased confusion requiring greater communication, decreased competencies necessitating more training, and reduced productivity, calling for an extended season of patience. All of these changes require the time, attention, and energy of the colleges' middle managers.

The following are the findings emanating from the interpretive investigation as well as from the literature study with regard to the current opinions, experiences, feelings and attitudes of FET college middle managers concerning the implementation and management of diversity issues in their colleges.

### **5.2.1 Diversity management policy**

The way in which the further education and training system is structured, managed and organised impacts on the process of transformation and democratisation of South African society. Further education and training governance during the apartheid years was a complex mixture of centralised and decentralised forms of administration and control (see paragraph 2.5.1). The centralisation of this system has left a legacy of restrictive centralised control which inhibits change and initiative. The findings (see Question 3) revealed that there has been a limited or total lack of attempts to involve middle managers in the formulation of a diversity management policy. From the earlier findings (see paragraph 3.5), it is evident that the focus of management remained oriented towards homogeneity as well as towards employees complying with rules rather than on ensuring quality service delivery. This has been a major factor inhibiting effective participation of employees in policy formulation.

Non-involvement of middle managers, including all key stakeholders in the formulation of policy is counter-productive. This may have negative consequences which may manifest in a variety of forms particularly during the implementation phase. Thompson and Strickland (1989:107) maintain that there is a symbiotic relationship between a policy and its stakeholders, and they



emphasise the importance of actively involving stakeholders whose interests will be affected by the policy. Wilson (2000:250) states that a policy cannot exist without its stakeholders and, conversely, stakeholders rely, to some extent, on the policy for their existence. Policy deliberations should be open to and influenced by stakeholders concerns. The process leading to the formulation and implementation of policy should involve advocacy, information gathering, agenda setting and contestation. This could delay the policy, and worse, completely derail it. Although this sounds dangerous, especially on a fast-track policy such as that of managing diversity, it is much better to face such problems earlier rather than later.

The lack of an adequate involvement of stakeholders in the formulation of diversity management policy in FET colleges has been one factor contributing to the problems related to mistrust between college management and employees (see Question 16). Kossek and Lobel (1996:211) maintain that when persons affected by the change are not involved in the planning and policy formulation, they tend to resist what is imposed by others. Setting agendas unilaterally and expecting that earlier decisions will simply be rubber-stamped is patronising and will inevitably be counter productive (Kossek & Lobel 1996:212). On the other hand, engaging stakeholders in the diversity management policy formulation process will allow them to become part of it. If the stakeholders participate in the formulation of diversity management policy, it is very likely that they will take ownership of the policy, and thereby minimise problems that may occur during the implementation stage.

Policy and legislation in the pre-1994 period, before the establishment of a single, non-racial further education and training system, was rooted in a fundamental divide among the diverse workforce, reflected in the separate mandates of the former Departments of Education, and in policy development and legislation that proceeded on separate tracks. The college managers' perceptions, feelings and attitudes with regard to the involvement of employees in decision-making, including diversity management policy formulation, can be

attributed to their past experiences which have sometimes made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to incorporate their subordinates into their college decision-making structures. This is supported by Hartshorne (1988:3) when he states that the kind of policy, climate and environment in which South African bureaucrats have been conditioned to operate have characteristics of being inflexible, doctrinating, uncritical, authoritarian and a short step away from being arrogant. This type of conditioning might have an influence on the managers' perceptions and attitudes towards the involvement of diverse workforce in the planning and formulation of diversity management policy in their colleges.

A further reason for the difficulties experienced in the involvement of employees in the formulation of diversity management policy relates to the products of intentional strategies employed by college management to maintain or to advance their own prerogatives and self-interests (see Question 3). The prerogatives and self-interests are likely to be grounded not only in the assumptions and aspirations that college managers hold about employee participation in decision-making but in the perceptions, beliefs and behaviours associated with previous experiences and working relationships between college managers and their subordinates (Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers 1992:160). These frameworks incorporate perceptions, beliefs and assumptions regarding self-interests, the interests of others, goals and rewards as well as perceptions, beliefs and assumptions regarding roles, representations, and rights and obligations in relationships. As held by individuals, and as grounded in collective contexts, such frameworks suggest what types of social relationships are in individuals' best interests, which are most legitimate, and which are most costly (Jones 1993:36). Smylie and Brownlee-Conyers (1992:161) suggest how individuals are to interact with one another and how and in what directions they are to shape their relationships. In this study, it was revealed that the failure to incorporate employees in the formulation of a diversity management policy was the product of intentional strategies employed by college managers to maintain or advance their own prerogatives and self-interests, and also that this behaviour

could be associated with previous work roles and relationships that existed between the college managers and the people they supervised.

### **5.2.2 Implementation of affirmative action policy**

The Constitution is the highest law in the country and all other laws and policies must be in accordance with its stipulations. The Constitution therefore provides not only for the provision of human basic rights, but more importantly, for the right to equal treatment of all workers. In Section 9 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, it is stated that

“Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken”.

This means that all employees, whatever their needs or differences are, have a right to equal treatment. The Constitution, in noting previous disadvantage, also recognises that in order to create equal opportunities for all citizens to enjoy these rights, particular mechanisms or measures may need to be in place to redress past inequalities.

In the literature study (see paragraph 3.3.2.4) it was revealed that the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 seeks to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination, to protect people who have been historically discriminated against in the workplace from unfair discrimination, and to direct employers to implement affirmative action measures to redress such discrimination. However, Human (2005:49) maintains that this Act does not require the employer to establish an absolute barrier to the appointment and promotion of white males. Moreover, all job incumbents are required to be suitably qualified for the position for which they apply. Erasmus et al. (2005:67) maintain that many employers accept the need to manage diversity and to create a fair and equitable working environment, but they would balk at the idea of affirmative action, arguing that such a practice is no more than reverse discrimination. Erasmus et al. (2005:67) continue to state that although the result of a diversity programme should be the removal of any

form of consideration of culture, race, gender, and so on, in hiring and promotion decisions, the consequence of doing this in the short term would be the entrenchment of the status quo, unless they can be shown to be job-related criteria. The study therefore revealed that the mere acceptance of the principles of diversity management and equal opportunity without taking account of affirmative action measures will bring little change because patterns of privilege and economic power have become entrenched in all societies.

In a democratic South Africa, affirmative action policies were a first step to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination, and through implementation of 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. The qualitative investigation indicated that the majority of college managers views affirmative action policy as a necessary mechanism to give direction and support to college managers who are expected to implement this policy. The study revealed that the management of FET colleges was using affirmative action policy to redress imbalances with respect to race, gender and geographical context. Despite the college managers' response (see Question 2) that affirmative action was an essential part of the legislative framework that would impact on the transformation of FET colleges, some respondents expressed their doubts about the manner in which affirmative action policy was implemented (see Question 2). The study revealed the following concerns

- that those employees from designated groups who still require training and development may have unrealistic short-term expectations which may further increase racial and social conflict within colleges.
- that those from designated groups, expecting secured positions, may adopt a culture of entitlement that undermines initiative, self-confidence and self-reliance.

- that race classification may be heightened and reverse discrimination may lead to a decrease in loyalty and the lack of retention of skilled employees, which may also reinforce negative stereotypes, racial tension and a stigmatisation that thwarts the efforts of members of the preferred groups to pursue their goals on merit and hard work rather than preferential treatment.

The qualitative investigation also revealed the following problems related to the above concerns regarding the implementation of affirmative action programmes

- lack of trust and confidence between sub-groups.
- breakdown in communication between sub-groups.
- prejudices, stereotypes and poor teamwork.
- high staff turnover especially among those previously disadvantaged people recruited to colleges, and
- unhealthy competition.

The earlier findings (see paragraphs 3.3.2.3 and 3.3.2.4) revealed that while employment equity and related strategies of affirmative action are legislated, there is no evidence to indicate that the organisational context within which designated groups work was prepared to sustain Employment Equity initiatives. This is more difficult to achieve because it involves paradigm shifts, the challenging of stereotypes and the embracing of risk to create an organisational environment within which diverse groups of people can work together effectively.

### **5.2.3 Training and capacity-building**

The study revealed that the majority of respondents (93%) were of the opinion that little or no training and capacity-building opportunities exist for middle managers regarding diversity management (see Question 4). The absence of training to equip middle managers to deal with diversity not only affects employees but it also leaves managers feeling inadequate and demoralised. The

study revealed that many diversity-related problems proceed from lack of training, job misinformation, inadequate human relation skills of managers, and decisions that do not resolve the problem.

The research findings (see paragraph 2.8) confirmed that managers must possess a degree of sophistication in understanding their beliefs and values in order to be effective in relating to culturally diverse workers. The challenge to managers and supervisors is to demonstrate that competence and empathy are not unique to members of a particular group. Harrow (2001:213) argues that in the absence of proper training and capacity-building, managers and supervisors may have more difficulty communicating empathy, congruence, respect, and acceptance to culturally different workers. Kossek and Lobel (1996:110) maintain that the more effective administrator is a mature person who functions with compassionate efficiency, who is able to assist his or her subordinates to solve their problems without resorting to pity, panic or resignation. This type of administrator maintains professional balance and keeps his or her perspective through the use of self-insight and humour. In order to be more effective, the well trained and capacitated diversity managers would behave in the following manner

- They would regard each employee as a vital part of the college.
- They would view all personnel positively, because whatever diminishes anyone's self has no place in a culturally sensitive college.
- They would allow and provide for individual and cultural differences.
- They would learn how employees see things.

Many employer benefits of managing diversity have been noted in the literature (see paragraph 3.5). At the individual level, for example, performance can be enhanced when negative diversity-related barriers to productivity are removed. When workgroup diversity is managed effectively, groups would develop processes that would enhance creativity, problem-solving, workgroup

cohesiveness, and communication. At the college level, performance may improve, and improved recruitment of best new labour force entrants could result.

Despite the positive responses by eight (7%) interviewees that training programmes were developed in their colleges, the study revealed that generally, training had tended to be fragmented, uncoordinated, inadequate, and often inappropriate to the needs of diversity managers. This can be attributed to a long history of discriminatory provision with respect to race, geographic location, funding, gender and disability. Diversity management training is also marred by a lack of collaboration between sectors including between government and the departments, between the departments and the colleges, and between colleges and private providers. Once again approaches in training have reflected the general trend of conceptualising diversity matters with a predominant focus on poor performance. Within this conceptualisation, training and capacity-building on diversity issues has been separated from the people management training programmes (see Question 15). The content of diversity management training has tended to be informed by a model which focuses on employee deficits rather than on the causes of poor performance and the meeting of a diversity of needs (Mosoge 1993:21). The findings revealed that middle managers within the FET college sector have not been adequately trained to respond to the many diversity-related problems of employees.

Among existing middle managers there appears to be a disturbing lack of awareness and skills for dealing with diversity among employees, for identifying needs in workers and within the college system, and for evaluating the effectiveness of diversity programmes. This can be attributed to the fact that their tertiary training did not equip them to respond to other dynamics of diversity within the workforce. In general, the capacity of pre- and in-service training courses to equip middle managers with the skills and knowledge they need to accommodate diversity in their colleges is very weak (see Questions 4, 6 and 7). There is very little monitoring of the conceptual framework or models which inform course content. Owing to the separate systems of the past, most of the

present middle managers were often excluded from diversity management programmes because historically, a technical college workforce was characterised by more homogeneity than heterogeneity in social characteristics (see paragraph 3.5). The study therefore discovered that, despite the benefits of diversity management, their realisation has remained elusive for most FET colleges in the province because there is no coordinated and adequate training for personnel dealing with diversity issues.

#### **5.2.4 Strategic integration of diversity**

The study revealed that there were very few managers (7%) who maintain that there is no distinction between managing people and managing diversity. They stated that all employees in their colleges have objectives relating to diversity included in their performance appraisals and were rewarded for good performance. This implies that employees in these colleges are regularly consulted via diversity committees about the diversity strategy, communication on the strategy is effective and there is a clear understanding of what the policy is about. This would also mean that employees have clear job objectives and performance standards, they receive open and honest feedback on their performance, they have their targets and potential and contribution properly appraised, and lastly that their training is based on their individual needs.

Human (2005:58) maintains that at the basis of an effective people management culture is the belief in the equality and dignity of all people as people, irrespective of their position in the company, their race, gender, physical or mental ability, financial status, sexual orientation, and so on. The belief is underscored by a respect for the individual and an understanding of the negative consequences of stereotyping individuals using generally irrelevant criteria. Such beliefs translate into the matching of employees to jobs on the basis of job-related criteria rather than irrelevant stereotypes. They also lead to a respect for the way in which individuals express their cultural backgrounds and religious beliefs, and to an attempt to accommodate these as far as possible. The differences in culture,



interests, hobbies, dress, religion, gender, levels of physical ability and so on, are seen as enriching the organisation rather than detracting from it, and they change organisational culture in a way that cannot be predetermined (Human 2005 :58). These findings (see Question15) suggest that these colleges are in a better strategic position in terms of the broader socio-political environment, and that they also have a better opportunity of becoming the kind of colleges in which a diverse group of employees would be willing to remain.

However, the majority of the interviewees (93%) indicated that the modern FET colleges are managed like profit-making organisations. The senior management of these colleges endeavours to achieve the highest possible satisfaction of needs with scarce resources. The task of management in FET colleges is to manage in such a way that the college earns the highest possible income with the lowest possible costs, with profit as the favourable difference between the two. The respondents highlighted a number of constraints that inhibit managers and supervisors from being supportive of diversity initiatives. A major constraint inherent in most colleges is the senior managements' expectation of financial prudence by his or her managers and supervisors. The ultimate responsibility of managers is, therefore, to achieve high productivity, which is the attainment of organisational goals by reaching the highest possible output with the lowest possible input of resources.

It became clear from the above findings that diversity management is limited to a specific management level of the college. These colleges are directing very little or no attention towards managing diversity. They make no effort to promote diversity and they thus do not comply with affirmative action, equal opportunity and empowerment standards. The lack of attention to diversity needs within such colleges sends a strong message to their employees that the dynamics of difference are not important. Even more detrimental to the college is the outcome of maintaining exclusionary practices. The emphasis on profit, increased learner enrolments and high productivity makes it difficult for these colleges to performance manage diversity in the same way as are other strategic issues.

Failure to fully integrate diversity into the strategic agenda and into people management systems would probably influence not only stakeholders and employees' perceptions of the colleges, but also impact negatively on their internal diversity.

### **5.2.5 Funding**

The respondents highlighted a number of constraints which act on managers and supervisors during the course of their jobs that inhibit them from being supportive of diversity initiatives. A major constraint inherent in most colleges is funding. The Further Education and Training financing involves two main players, that is, the state and business. Although the two state departments, that is, education and labour, are principally involved, other departments also fund training programmes in FET colleges. The current funding mechanisms for further training involve government through grants and subsidies, business directly or indirectly through the Industrial Training Boards (ITBs), and donors through grant-making.

- Department of Labour

Funds for training are disbursed from the national office and from provincial offices. The Department

- makes a grant to Section 21 companies which are requested to provide accredited training primarily for disadvantaged people and communities.
- administers the Employee Training Programme, which is used by Regional Training Centres (RTCs) on application. The RTCs are autonomous bodies, with independent boards of directors. The money is disbursed by the centres on a cost sharing basis with employers.
- supports apprenticeship training, and makes small sums of money available for this purpose.

- provides training for its staff as well as external training through training providers.

- Business

Business funds training through direct initiatives and indirectly through the Industrial Training Boards. The Industrial Training Boards are accredited by the Department of Labour and have statutory powers to collect levies from employers.

- Donors

Funding agencies like the Independent Development Trust and the Joint Education Trust fund further training and companies spend considerable amounts through corporate social responsibility budgets.

The above exposition indicates that funding for the training of college staff comes primarily from the Department of Education. It should be noted that the Department of Education had issued cost-cutting measures which left the colleges with the discretion of cutting down the training programmes that they view as non-essential. There is a probability that initiatives like diversity management training could be cut out in favour of other strategic programmes like financial management, project management, quality assurance, MBA skills training, and so on, which are considered to be contributing to higher productivity. The financial constraints, coupled with the senior managements' expectation of financial prudence by managers and supervisors might prevent diversity managers from moving with great care when implementing diversity management initiatives. It is probable that anything that disrupts the existing flow of work activities can cause additional complaints and stress from senior management. It is therefore clear that many minorities and women would not get help they need because college resources are not attuned to diversity needs.

### **5.2.6 Attitudes of managers**

It was asserted in Chapter Two that negative attitudes of managers towards diversity in the workplace manifest as a serious barrier to human resource development (see paragraph 2.5). It was argued that this not only led to the exclusion of performance measurement systems on the basis of non-job criteria, but also to the disagreements regarding the role of employees within the diversity management initiatives. In the following paragraphs, college managers' attitudes which might have had an influence on their working relationships with diverse groups of employees will be discussed.

#### **5.2.6.1 The need to exclude culturally different people**

The qualitative investigation revealed that sixty percent of college managers would allow for individual and cultural differences (see Question 13), despite the earlier findings that the relationship between culturally different employees has often been characterised by conflict and mistrust (see paragraph 2.9). The principle of involving employees in the diversity initiatives was considered to be important, and this is in line with the democratic ethos of public policy development that has emerged in South Africa.

#### **5.2.6.2 Sensitivity to their own feelings**

This study asserted that it was beneficial for administrators to have maximum self-insight, since sensitivity to their own feelings is a prerequisite to effective leadership (see paragraph 3.5.2). This is supported by earlier findings (see paragraph 3.1) that a growing number of administrators are participating in some type of sensitivity training. For some administrators, this is an integral part of their personality, and for others it has to be learned. If it is true that helping across cultures can be accomplished only with the assistance of a healthier person, then it is imperative that administrators should develop sensitivity towards culturally different employees, more particularly because an ethnic minority worker does not need guidance from an administrator who is a racist.

#### **5.2.6.3 Lack of security**

The study revealed that sometimes culturally different employees would approach managers and supervisors in ways that are outright defensive and they would use profanity and behave indiscreetly. If a manager or supervisor is worried about being verbally or physically attacked or sued, it will show. The managers may wonder about the employees' hidden agenda. For some managers, regardless of their race, or ethnicity, conferences with employees produce feelings of great discomfort. Kossek and Lobel (1996:67) maintain that it is typical for people to bring their community-related anxieties with them to the workplace. Effective administrators know when to slow the pace and talk about non-threatening subjects. However, Kossek and Lobel (1996:73) maintain that not even the most tactful administrators always succeed in establishing trust.

#### **5.2.6.4 Establishing rapport**

The challenge to managers and supervisors is to demonstrate that competence and empathy are not unique to members of a particular group. The earlier findings (see paragraph 3.5.1) revealed that managers and supervisors who are most different from majority-group workers in terms of culture generally have more difficulty communicating empathy, congruence, respect, and acceptance than individuals who share or understand the workers' cultural perspectives. To be more specific, managers and supervisors who understand the psychological and sociological backgrounds of majority-group employees are better able to counsel them than their colleagues who lack this knowledge. It can therefore be asserted that the first step in establishing rapport would be to develop a meaningful relationship with employees, and this could do much to reduce employees' negative attitudes.

#### **5.2.7 Cross-cultural communication**

The findings revealed that some managers and supervisors deal with hundreds of cross-cultural employee problems (see paragraph 3.5.1). Conflict resolution of

employee diversity-related problems almost always affects job performance. Kirton and Greene (2005:207) suggest that in order to be optimally effective, managers and supervisors must be culturally proactive rather than reactive. In a multicultural society such as South Africa, the workplace becomes an arena where people are exposed to cultural diversity and conflict. It is where attitudes are shaped, reinforced, or changed. Even though each employee is shaped by his or her ethnic and racial group, managers should not forget that each person is unique.

When confronted by employees who are culturally different, effective managers become aware of the nuances of individuality (Hoffman 2006:548). Work environments in which the majority of employees are from the same ethnic group often create the illusion that all employees are alike, thereby distorting individual uniqueness and causing workplace identity conflicts (Goldstein & Robert 1993:41). Cross-cultural differences and multicultural conflicts are convoluted because of the multiple identities found within cultures. Miller (1996:206) explored the complexities of multiple identities such as when an individual belongs to more than one minority group. Miller (1996:212) concludes that little attention tends to be given to differences within multiple identity groups. It is important to be aware of the diversity within ethnic groups as well as between them.

There are many causes of cross-cultural conflict, including, but not limited to, language and communication barriers, racism, sexism and ageism. Language is the basic form of communication and it is also the primary cause of cross-cultural conflict. Because language is representative of culture, conflict is precipitated. When an employee's language is ignored or devalued, an intrinsic part of his or her identity is also ignored or devalued (Campbell 1998:387). According to Henderson (1994:19), the following barriers to cross-cultural communication should be bridged

- language differences.

- differences in emotional and articulate forms of nonverbal communication.
- cultural stereotypes that distort meanings.
- evaluating the content of speech as either good or bad, and
- high levels of anxiety that distort meanings.

The ability to exchange ideas is a primary vehicle for managing negotiations, expediting decision-making, and evaluating employees' performances. Language differences are communicated in sentence structure, word meanings, and tense. Inadvertent workplace conflict can arise when job-related materials are incorrectly translated from one language to another (Hersey & Blanchard 1993:144). Language can also lead to group stereotyping, non-acceptance of certain employees, and individual alienation.

Sometimes the communication process will break down between managers and employees. This is especially true when there are conflicts and confrontations. If racial, gender, and disability issues are also involved in the communication break-down, the conflict is even more heated. According to Kossek and Lobel (1996:44), all conflict has the following characteristics

- Two or more individuals must interact.
- The interaction centres on imagined or real mutually exclusive goals or values, and
- In the interaction, one party will win by defeating, suppressing, or reducing the power or ability of the other party to achieve the desired goals or values.

According to Robbins (2005:153) managers and supervisors can effectively communicate with culturally diverse employees by trying to understand each individual, his or her personality, his or her cultural background, and the workplace situation. Thus, the relationship between language and culture forms the basis for the language paradigm of cross-cultural communication. The study

revealed that in societies such as South African, with many different sub-cultures, cross-cultural communication creates special problems for managers committed to workplace assimilation (Sachs 1990:59). This, therefore, accounts for the college managers' negative attitude towards the involvement of diversity-related issues in the workplace.

### **5.2.8 Trade union involvement**

The qualitative investigation revealed that few college managers accept the idea of involving trade unions in the management of diversity issues. These managers claim that trade unions are essential in promoting equality at an institutional level. This is supported by Kirton and Greene (2005:109), who suggest that trade unions' roles in the workplace include giving advice when members have a problem at work, representing members in discussion with employers, making sure that members' legal rights are enforced at work, helping members take cases to employment tribunals, fighting discrimination and helping promote equality at work. Trade unions seek to promote equality at work by supporting, representing and negotiating on behalf of employees in the workplace, and by influencing politicians and government. Kirton and Greene (2005:85) further state that equal opportunities, equal treatment and the fight against unfair discrimination are the foundations of trade union activity. Trade unions play a key role in shaping employment opportunities and outcomes through various strategies and interventions in national and local contexts. They exist to protect employees and further their interests at the workplace (Grogan 2005:322). Their existence is underpinned by the assumption of inequalities of power between employers and employees and consequent need for employees to have collective representation and to act collectively in order to improve pay and conditions at work, and to eradicate discrimination.

The study, however, has also revealed that trade unions sometimes failed to respond unitary to diversity issues because of fear of highlighting plurality of interests which might undermine solidarity and thereby union power (see



Question 18). The earlier findings (see paragraph 3.6) indicated that where a numerically dominant membership group exists, their interests are likely to prevail and be translated into a bargaining agenda. Kirton and Greene (2005:33) indicate that most unions can only produce reliable break-downs of the composition of union membership by gender, with monitoring by race, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation being the exception rather than the norm. It is arguable that these gaps in the knowledge of the characteristics of union members impact negatively on a union's ability to represent a diverse constituency.

The earlier findings also revealed that traditionally unions have assumed that people working within the same industry, organisation or occupation shared the same interests and therefore the same objectives, in relation to their employers and their employment (see paragraph 2.9). This assumption has led to a unitary conception of union bargaining objectives. Unity of interests among the membership has traditionally been regarded by trade unions as essential to the building of a solidarity movement, which could effectively challenge and influence management decision-making. It was asserted in this study that the above assumption might prevent trade unions from objectively representing the interests of diverse social groups. This is particularly true because FET colleges are composed of diverse groups of employees, whose interests might at times converge, but at others diverge.

#### **5.2.9 Support by College Council**

The findings revealed that the college councils from the apartheid era were replaced by the democratically elected college councils established in terms of the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006 (see paragraph 2.5.1). The democratically elected College Council is the governing structure of the public FET college consisting of the following members

- The principal.

- Five external persons appointed by the MEC.
- One member of the academic board elected by the academic board.
- One lecturer elected by the lecturers at the college.
- Two students of the college elected by the SRC, and
- One member of the support staff elected by the support staff of the college.

The college council performs a number of governance functions which includes determining conditions of service, code of conduct, and privileges and functions of its employees and may, in the manner set out in the code of conduct, suspend or dismiss employees of the college, and may order an employee of the college who has been suspended to refrain from being on any premises under the control of the college and to refrain from participating in any of the activities of the college, or issue such other conditions as it may consider necessary.

It was indicated in the study (see Question 21) that the college council supports the development of diversity initiatives by providing the following :

- Funding

The college council would fund diversity training workshops by hiring out facilities, encouraging staff to participate, and linking training to commercial activities such as providing transport and meals.

- Recruitment and selection

The college councils would be involved in the development of formalised procedures which are both transparent and justifiable, to guide the process of recruitment and selection. The idea behind formalisation of recruitment procedures was that it would enable the objective requirements of the job to be more easily identified and therewith a selection decision based on a person's suitability, rather than nepotism, would be made.

- Monitoring policy implementation

One of the roles of College Council was to determine whether or not the objectives of policies were being achieved. Monitoring was used by College Council to provide the evidence required to justify and plan any further action and initiative.

- Enforcement of labour laws

The College Council, as an employer, plays a crucial role in the implementation and enforcement of labour laws. This was important in order to avoid complaints of unlawful discrimination and also to adopt employment policies and practices that promote and support equality within the workforce.

#### **5.2.10 HR policies**

Organisations and their cultures are a function of the kind of people in them, who are a result of an attraction-selection-attrition cycle (Erasmus et al. 2005:34). HR policies enable colleges to attract, select, and retain different kinds of people, which is why they act and feel as if they have a different organisational culture. Individuals are generally attracted to and selected by organisations that appear to have members with values similar to their own. Over time, employees who do not fit in well with the dominant culture eventually turn-over from the organisation (Schneider 1987:77). In the long run, a workforce historically can be characterised by more homogeneity in social characteristics.

The study revealed that during the apartheid era technical colleges had HR systems based on models of homogeneity, that is, they promoted similarity not diversity (see paragraph 2.5.2). They fostered workforce homogenisation by

- recruiting practices that emphasised hiring people from sources that had historically been reliable.

- selection practice that stressed choosing candidates similar to those who had been successful.
- training programmes that fostered uniform ways of thinking, and
- policies that were often designed to limit supervisor latitude in addressing employees' unique needs.

With the introduction of a democratic government, the discriminatory HR systems changed because many employers acknowledged the importance of hiring a diverse workforce. The study revealed that in South Africa, as a democratic country, managers need to proactively manage diversity to be able to attract and retain the best employees and effectively compete in a diverse global environment. The findings indicated that the government is constantly reminding the colleges, and their administrators, using policy and legislation, that stakeholders in the environment are diverse and expect organisational decisions and actions to reflect this diversity (see paragraph 3.3.2.4). This implies that FET colleges are expected to base their HR systems and policies on models that are in line with democratic principles.

#### **5.2.11 Commitment**

The qualitative investigation revealed a lack of genuine commitment by college management to manage diversity programmes throughout the institution (see Chapter Four). It was asserted in this study that the effective management of diversity needs managers who are committed to creating a community where there is a strong sense of belonging and a genuine desire to work towards a common goal. This is particularly true of middle management which can deliberately or inadvertently thwart any attempt at implementation of diversity management initiatives by just doing nothing.

O'Driscoll (1998:39) maintains that the lack of commitment among middle managers to implement diversity management initiatives could be because they are typically the main casualties of change as organisations delay and push

decision-making down, increasingly threatening their existing roles. O'Driscoll (1998:39) continues to state that the implementation of diversity management initiatives would bring on increased confusion requiring greater communication and decreased competencies necessitating more training, as well as reduced productivity, calling for an extended season of patience. All of these changes require the time, attention, and energy of the colleges' middle managers. Not only are they being asked to load the bullets, they are also being asked to coach the firing squad that may eventually shoot them (O'Driscoll 1998:40).

According to O'Driscoll (1998:40) a lack of trust and commitment is common with individuals suspecting a lack of openness and honesty, and the presence of hidden agendas from the top management. This probability is evident from the responses where the interviewees claimed that there was no transparency in the implementation of policies in their colleges (see Question 3). When the views of middle managers were analysed, therefore, they revealed that the success of any attempt to implement diversity management policy will be determined at the middle management level of the college. Middle managers should know their own level of commitment and the capabilities of the employees, they should demand appropriate training, and should be willing to share their experiences. Without widespread commitment any attempt to implement diversity management policy is doomed to failure as it would get strangled by the existing systems, structures and procedures, supported by people who are committed to keeping their heads down and doing everything to maintain the status quo.

Most college managers realise that in each of their managerial roles they can either promote the effective management of diversity or derail such efforts thus, they are critical to this process (see paragraph 3.6). For example, in their interpersonal roles, managers can convey that the effective management of diversity is a valued goal and objective they can serve as a role model and institute policies and procedures to ensure that diverse organisational members are treated fairly, and they can enable diverse individuals and groups to

coordinate their efforts and cooperate with each other both inside the college and at the college's boundaries.

### **5.3 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS**

In a nutshell, the conclusion the researcher draws from the study is that most middle managers in the FET colleges of the province of KwaZulu-Natal are not convinced that valuing diversity does make sound business sense. Despite the benefits of diversity management (see paragraph 3.6), their realisation remains elusive for most colleges. This can be attributed to the fact that traditional human resource strategies to manage diversity have largely been introduced piecemeal, lacking integration with other systems. Consequently, they do not change the culture to support the management of heterogeneity, and they end up failing.

The college managers' lack of commitment to diversity management manifests itself in the absence of policy to guide implementation (see Question 3), poor involvement of employees and other stakeholders in the formulation of policy (see Question 3), lack of budgeting for provision of training and development (see Question 7), and poor monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of training and development programmes (see Question 6). As one of many interventions in the organisational development, managing diversity is primarily concerned with improving interpersonal and inter-group communication, as well as relationships in the workplace. The focus is on interactions between managers and employees they supervise, peers and between employees and customers or clients.

The introduction of employment equity, affirmative action and skills development in the workplace makes training and development in diversity imperative. Training in diversity implies that a diverse body of employees will be created in FET institutions. It should be noted, however, that some resistance from employees and top management can be expected in this regard and tokenism could become the order of the day, because training represents costs from managements' point of view (see paragraph 3.6). Thus, the objective of this

study was to evaluate if the environment in FET colleges had been created within which all employees, whether existing employees or those brought into colleges through affirmative action measures, are allowed to contribute fully to the life and objectives of the college.

The following section deals with the conclusions according to the factors that impact on internal diversity and diversity management in colleges.

### **5.3.1 The legacy of apartheid**

The most limiting, even debilitating, factor in integrated employment in South African public institutions is the legacy of apartheid. Apartheid was a well-thought out, thorough, and long-term political ideology to keep races separate and unequal. Its laws made it difficult for people of different races and ethnicities to know one another and to get along, since each group was separated and isolated from others legally and physically.

Formal and legal segregation of technical colleges according to race and ethnic groups started in 1948 when the National Party came to power. The racial and geographic divisions in the technical and vocational education and training sector led to the establishment of fifteen departments of education (see paragraph 2.5.1). These divisions in vocational education and training were supported and sustained by apartheid laws.

Managing diversity in the South African FET colleges should be seen against this background of the educational history of the country. The divisions in technical colleges were not only racial but also geographic and socio-economic. The recruitment, selection and appointment policies of the past are still being exploited by some colleges as a gate-keeping mechanism to sift and select employees. The lack of racial and cultural mix observed in campuses, particularly in rural campuses, point to the fact that race had not ceased to operate as a classificatory principle for employees. Predictably, many former Department of

Education and Training, rural as well as homeland campuses experience no diversity because of their geographical location.

College Councils also tend to be drawn from a certain class of citizens, that is, usually from the literate, higher socio-economic groups. There might be some members in the college council who come from different races, cultures, or lower socio-economic groups, but they are usually too few to make a difference to the college policies. In the case of community members from lower socio-economic groups, there is often no interest in being a member of the college council because of ignorance, illiteracy and fear of an unfamiliar situation (Mda & Mothata 2000:52). Again, the dominant race and the dominant class would probably dictate terms, and policies would thus favour and reflect the interests of the dominant group.

Despite the desegregation and merging of FET colleges, the research findings revealed that this has not led to true diversity management in colleges. the different racial groups do not get enough time to integrate meaningfully since college desegregation does not, in fact, involve residential desegregation, and therefore employees often remain geographically far from urban, central offices and may not find it easy to interact with colleagues, managers and college council members from the urban areas. This has been found to be limiting factor in the development of effective diversity management initiatives in FET colleges.

### **5.3.2 Management and governance in FET colleges**

On closer examination of technical college management and governance prior to 1994, it becomes evident that there was a lack of opportunity for meaningful stakeholder participation in institutional management and governance of technical colleges (see paragraph 2.7). Christie (1985:128) argues that the strategy of national, regional and local levels of management suggests a top-down, prescriptive mode of control, thereby enabling the government to keep tight control over the entire further education and training system. Thus, power



and control of further education and training were firmly in the hands of government bureaucrats.

Given the anomalies in management and governance in South Africa, it was no coincidence that the new democratic government which came into power after the 1994 elections, introduced radical transformation into the management and governance of FET colleges (see paragraph 2.7). Hence, post-apartheid policy documents such as the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006, Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, Affirmative Action Policy and Skills Development Act 56 of 1997 have announced various systematic transformation plans for the organisation as well as governance, funding and human resource development in FET colleges. Policy directives aimed at restructuring governance and management structures are based on the principles of transparency, representivity and accountability. However, policy directives which need to be implemented by governance and management structures are aimed at transforming the type of interaction between management and governance structures and other sectors in the college. Transformative policies are influenced by the principles of empowerment and capacity-building, including redress and equity (Rose 2001:128). The available policy documents focus primarily on dismantling discriminatory policies such as those which deny people the right of employment in certain colleges, equal access to employment, and opportunities for career growth and economic development. These policy documents provide an open, democratic and equitable framework to restructure further education and training system.

With the inception of the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006, the College Council assumed the role of an employer. This implies that, unlike before 2006, FET colleges are now the competence of the Ministry of Education, and the college council, which is composed of the principal, external members, lecturers, student representatives, and support staff representatives (see paragraph 2.7.1), is the highest decision-making body of the college and responsible for making rules, and determining conditions of service, code of

conduct and privileges and functions of its employees. The transition from the old system of education department as employer to the one where the College Council is an employer seems complex. From 2006 to present, the Education Department continues to operate on an agency basis for the FET colleges. Another factor which contributes towards this complexity is that the boundaries between the Education Department and college council autonomy are not clear, especially with regard to human resource management.

The qualitative investigation revealed that many college councils fear that while government is designing policies to transform colleges, it is failing to deliver promptly on the material support to implement policy directives. This imbalance leaves the colleges, especially the previously disadvantaged campuses, destitute in their eagerness to match policies with practice. The role confusion, together with the lack of clear boundaries between the education department and the college council as employer, is the factor that might threaten the implementation of a diversity management strategy in FET colleges.

### **5.3.3 Globalisation**

The research findings revealed that most middle managers say their colleges value diversity for a number of reasons, such as to give the college access to a broader range of opinions and viewpoints, to spur greater creativity and innovation, to reflect on increasing diverse stakeholder base, to obtain the best talent in a competitive environment, and to more effectively compete in a global marketplace (Handy 1997:73). The investigation, however, revealed that many managers are ill-prepared to handle diversity issues (see Questions 4 and 7). This can be attributed to the fact that many South Africans grew up in racially unmixed neighbourhoods and had little exposure to people substantially different from themselves. The challenge is particularly great when working with people from other countries and cultures.

There were also some managers who were of the opinion that the main risks that face them are global and that the government was unable to deal with particularly

the economic and labour problems posed by globalisation. However, just as the literature study suggests (see paragraph 2.6.3), globalisation improves the lives of employees, but there were arguments from the middle managers that suggested the opposite. They argued that one effect of the globalisation was that it makes it appear as if the national government was powerless in the face of global trends, and this ends up paralysing governmental attempts to subject global economic forces to control and regulation.

The impact of declining government control and regulation of global economy alongside increasing intermediate and high-skill jobs are critical factors in the labour market transformation. Generally, it is assumed that the previously marginalised workers are the least qualified and skilled workers. Engardio (2005:57) suggests that the insistence of profit and cost-effectiveness, which are pressures associated with globalisation, might lead to a situation where the unskilled and semi-skilled, previously marginalised workers are the last to hire and the first to fire in times of economic crisis. This might have a negative impact on the implementation of diversity management initiatives, particularly if the managers and supervisors deliberately exclude diversity as an aspect of career progression in a working environment where there is global competition.

The research findings revealed that the middle managers might oppose diversity initiatives due to fear (see paragraph 3.7). According to the findings, the fears of middle managers would arise from their loss of control, their loss of power, and possibly even the loss of their job positions. The interviewees pointed out that most colleges which seek to implement diversity management initiatives ignore the middle management level as workers and miss its potential leadership role in leading these initiatives. They indicated that during times of economic crisis they face increased threat of extinction through downsizing, and that those who survive downsizing soon face the ongoing challenges of increased communication, changed responsibilities, and reduced decision-making authority.

#### **5.3.4 Social systems**

Colleges are part of the community in addition to being part of the larger public management and administration system. Smit and Cronjé (1999:367) suggest that the location of the college in the larger system has implications for the effectiveness of governance and management because it is at this level that policies are actually implemented for the college to achieve goals that are sound, and which governance and management should aid, communities should have a suitable governance and management culture and capacity.

Problems of crime, vandalism, gangsterism, community apathy, inadequate finances in the department of education, employee militancy, violence, ethnic division, decline in economic resources, unemployment and others, not only affect the immediate community in which they occur, but also have a bearing on effective college governance and management (Smit & Cronjé 1999:368). For the social system to be facilitative of college governance and management, many considerations need to be addressed. It should be noted that while colleges attend to their unique business, they are not insulated from what happens around. An apt illustration of this relates to policy issues at national level, that is, the transformation of the political system at national level influenced the merging of technical colleges into merged FET institutions at local level.

The South African government has been able to enact policies that uphold legitimate governance of colleges, but the question remains whether support for diversity, especially with regard to rural and formerly disadvantaged campuses, has been achieved. Some interviewees felt that funding of the formerly disadvantaged campuses has not yet been managed in the way that fosters equity. The failure by the state to create balance between the meeting of its policy requirements and the delivery of changes on an equitable basis might have a negative impact on diversity managers' attempts to implement diversity management initiatives in colleges. This is probable because employees who feel that they are excluded will not see themselves as important people, and they

would tend to reject authority (see paragraph 3.5.1.1). The study indicated that unless employees know that they are significant, they will not perform to their maximum abilities.

As indicated above, community-related issues affect the governance and management of colleges. It is typical for people to bring their community-related anxieties with them to the workplace. As an example, fear of crime and violence in the community is not easily left in the community outside the workplace. The spread effect can cause some employees to fear meetings and conferences. This might have a negative influence on the implementation of diversity management initiatives, particularly if these community-related anxieties produce feelings of great discomfort in the workplace.

Another factor that might impact negatively on issues of diversity would be when the managers and supervisors create an illusion that the employees are like the environment or community they come from, thereby distorting individual uniqueness and causing workplace identity conflicts (Schneider & Helen 1993:340). This might have a negative influence when managers forget that each person is unique even though each employee is shaped by his or her ethnic and racial group, and also when managers do not become aware of the nuances of individuality when confronted by employees who are culturally different.

The qualitative investigation also revealed that there were no formal structures to prepare community leaders for the implementation of diversity programmes in colleges. Community leaders often lead in change processes in their communities. Their influence in contributing towards a culture of tolerance and acceptance for all can therefore not be under-estimated. The exclusion of the community leaders from the formulation of diversity management policy might have a negative influence on its implementation because the community members, including the employees, might reject diversity initiatives in which their leaders were not involved.

### **5.3.5 Cross-cultural differences**

There are many causes of cross-cultural conflict, including, but not limited to, language and communication barriers, racism, sexism, and ageism. Language is the basic form of communication and it is also the primary cause of cross-cultural conflict, which is precipitated because language is the representative of culture. Campbell (1998:393) maintains that when an employee's language is ignored or devalued, an intrinsic part of his or her identity is also ignored or devalued.

According to Robbins (2005:148), the following barriers to cross-cultural communication should be bridged

- language differences.
- differences in emotional and articulate forms of nonverbal communication.
- cultural stereotypes that distort meanings.
- evaluating the content of speech as either good or bad, and
- high levels of anxiety that distort meanings.

The ability to exchange ideas is a primary vehicle for managing business negotiations, expediting decision-making, and evaluating employees' performances. Language differences are communicated in sentence structure, word meanings, and tense. Inadvertent workplace conflict can arise when job related materials are incorrectly translated from one language to another (Hersey & Blanchard 1993:208). Language can also lead to group stereotyping, non-acceptance of certain employees, and individual alienation. Vocabulary, syntax, idioms, slang, and dialects cause difficulty in cross-cultural communication. Employees struggling to understand co-workers who use a different language experience firsthand the difficulty in cross-cultural barriers. The situation is exacerbated when an employee learning a new language clings to his or her own meaning of a word or phrase, regardless of the cultural connotation or context.

Cross-cultural differences and multicultural conflicts are convoluted because of the multiple identities found within cultures. Miller (1996:203) maintain that little attention tends to be given to differences within multiple identity groups, and they further state that it is important to be aware of the diversity within ethnic groups as well as between them. Understanding the history of an ethnic group, the current stage of its national and social identities, and its relationship with other groups is critical to recognising and resolving cross-cultural conflict.

In a multicultural country such as South Africa, workplace models based on homogeneity and assimilation have been unsuccessful, since they try to enervate the culture of minority groups, create a new cultural unity for all or isolate sub-communities from each other. Any attempt by managers and supervisors to homogenise multicultural employees in the workplace might impact negatively on the implementation of diversity management initiatives because such attempts have previously led to conflict, unfair discrimination, dehumanisation and estrangement in the workplace.

#### **5.3.6 Diversity-related attitudes**

A diversity-related attitude is a degree of readiness to behave in a given manner toward culturally different people (Kossek & Lobel 1996:54). According to Kossek and Lobel (1996:54), there are three major implications of diversity-related attitudes

- A diversity related attitude is a degree of readiness

This statement refers to the managers' ability to perceive certain employees, his or her quickness to respond to them, motivation to respond to them, and experience in responding to them, as well as the degree of readiness to stand the test of further scrutiny.

- A diversity-related attitude is a degree of readiness to behave in a given manner.

This statement means that an attitude is not an overt response, therefore it is a readiness to act, not an act itself. Overt behaviour is likely when there is sufficient degree of readiness. Some employees act out their anti-diversity attitudes no matter how negatively management reacts to them.

- A negative diversity-related attitude is a degree of readiness to behave in a given manner toward culturally different people.

This refers to any individuals or groups considered by the actors to be inferior to them or a threat to the status quo.

Attitudes are learned, they are not innate. The most insidious prejudices are negative attitudes directed towards groups of people. They take the form of assumptions or generalisations about all or most members of a particular group. This kind of in-group versus out-group hostility disrupts work unit interactions and subverts organisation effectiveness. Employee attitudes of acceptance of culturally different co-workers are learned in much the same manner rejection is inculcated (Kossek & Lobel 1996:91). Kossek and Lobel (1996:92) continue to state that employees most often learn as children to reject culturally different people thus, difference becomes a synonym for 'inferior'. People learn most of their attitudes from other people. Most employees who bring their racial hatred to work with them are shaped by other people. These diversity-related attitudes are usually learned mainly from people who have high prestige. Once attitudes have been learned, they are reinforced. After they are formed, attitudes serve various motives such as economic or nationalistic ones. The economic motives that reinforce anti-diversity attitudes are obvious. In the short run, it is economically advantageous for one group to keep another group out of certain kinds of jobs or out of an organisation entirely. This is the age-old process of reducing the competition. This becomes a negative factor if managers seem willing to discount or waste human resource even if this negatively affects the functioning of the college.



Attitudes are seldom changed by logic. Kossek and Lobel (1996:93) suggest that it is difficult to find circumstances in which anti-diversity attitude change has come as a result of logical argument or additional information. When employees who hold anti-diversity attitudes are confronted by supervisors with logic or with new information, they usually do not change their beliefs, instead they tend to hide their attitudes and pretend to have been converted, particularly if their supervisors are monitoring the training (Kossek & Lobel 1996:103). Kossek and Lobel (1996:103) argue that most attitudes such as those supporting racism, sexism and ageism are seldom initially formed by logic, nor are they frequently altered by logic. It can be maintained, therefore, that not simply what is said but also who said it is an important variable influencing whether an argument or information will change attitudes. It might have a negative impact on the implementation of diversity management initiatives when the managers' attitude towards culturally different employees is tolerant during diversity training, but shows very little carryover into the workplace.

### **5.3.7 Stereotypes**

One of the dangers in managing diversity is the assumption that all individuals within an ethnic or nationality group are the same (Nelson & Zoe 1999:1049). A major problem with these generalised perspectives is that they tend to create a sense of determinacy and immutability. Most managers tend to generalise and to classify employees into groups based on direct or indirect experience. Several factors affect the attributions or judgments managers and supervisors make about the employees, including stereotypes and ethnocentrism.

Stereotypes are a form of generalisation and it is important to note that not all stereotypes are negative. Human beings partly depend on stereotypes in order to make sense of the world. Stereotypes tend to resist change or modification. They help people to avoid inner conflict and insecurity and also to maintain basic values relating to their roles in society and provide them with an interpretive

framework for judging their behaviour and that of others (Falkenberg 1990 :107). Stereotypes help people to judge and interpret the behaviour of other people.

When perpetuated in the workplace, negative stereotypes can destroy employee unity, greatly diminish productivity, and ultimately disintegrate an organisation's viability. It is not so much the belief in the veracity of stereotypes that perpetuates them but the need of oppressors to convince denigrated people of their inferiority in order to legitimate their own superiority. The conflicts that centre on diversity are mainly about power. Smylie and Brownlee-Conyers (1992:153) maintain that managers and subordinates act to enhance their own position, regardless of the cost to the organisation or to others, and the acquisition of power is the central aim. The qualitative investigation revealed that most college managers are afraid of losing authority (see paragraph 3.5). This is supported by Kossek and Lobel (1996:76) when they state that the kind of conflict which centres on diversity is a zero-sum game of survival, where someone must win and someone must lose.

Oppressed employees are almost always expected to communicate to their managers or supervisor their condition, but most oppressed employees are hesitant to admit that they need help (Kossek & Lobel 1996:77). Only after being told by significant other co-workers that they need help do they comfortably adopt the role of help seekers. The study revealed that administrators have power over employees (see paragraph 3.5.1). Managers and supervisors who are authoritarian and dominating are the most difficult persons to tell about grievances and this might impact negatively on diversity management, particularly if it prevents employees from filing formal complaints.

### **5.3.8 Employee resistance**

The literature study revealed that efforts to bring about attitudinal and behavioural changes can and often do result in strong resistance from employees. Kossek and Lobel (1996:78) outline the following reasons for this resistance

- Resistance to diversity initiatives can be expected if the changes are not clear to the employees.

Most people want to know exactly what they must do. It is not enough for managers to tell the employees that the change is necessary because of new laws and policies.

- Different people will see different meanings in the proposed changes.

There is a tendency for employees to see in the proposed changes the things they want to see. Minorities and women may see job opportunities, while white males may see reverse discrimination. Complete information can be distorted just as easily as incomplete information, especially if employees feel insecure.

- Resistance can be expected when employees in supervisory positions are caught between strong forces pushing them to make changes and strong opposing forces pulling them to maintain the status quo.

Administrative coups must be thwarted. Senior management must make the pay-off to implement diversity greater than the pay-off to oppose it. However, opponents must not be made to lose face during the change process.

- Resistance can be expected to increase the degree that employees influenced by the changes have pressure put on them to change and it will decrease to the degree they are actually involved in planning the diversity initiatives.

Employee behaviour can be mandated, but it is also true that forcing people to embrace diversity leads to recalcitrant behaviours such as sabotage, character assassinations, and others. It is therefore important that decision-making should be shared.

- Resistance can be expected if the changes are made on personal grounds rather than impersonal requirements or sanctions.

After employees have had a chance to discuss the changes, if they still resist the programme, then it is not prudent for the managers to plead, but a better approach is for the manager to point out the consistency of the plan with the organisation's diversity objectives.

- Resistance can be expected if the changes ignore the organisation culture.

There are informal as well as formal norms within every organisation. An effective change will neither ignore old customs nor disrupt the creation new ones. Training is important however, this does not mean that plans to implement diversity should drag on for months or years.

It is common for supervisors and managers to be confronted with resistance and hostility from employees during efforts to resolve conflict. Rein and Rabinovitz (1998:36) maintain that employees would refuse to recognise the existence of a problem no matter how excellent an organisation's prevention programme. This study revealed that employees sometimes protest against policies which college managers must implement (see paragraph 3.5.2). Some of the severe conflicts between employees and managers resulted from these disputes on policy. In question one it was indicated that 7% of middle managers would not compromise important professional issues as well as college policies in order to satisfy the demands of the resistant employee. These college managers might resolve the conflict over policy implementation by dominating their subordinates. Significant also is the fact that some of the college managers would apply avoidance tactics while others would apply compromising strategies in resolving the conflicts associated with diversity management policies. The pressure which has compelled some college managers to compromise diversity issues as well as diversity management policies might have had a negative impact on the development of new working relationship between managers and employees in FET colleges.

## **5.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter dealt with the findings of the study and described the conclusions that were drawn. The findings indicated that college managers are in the first-order position to facilitate, support, block or shape diversity management initiatives and programmes in their colleges. It was noted that a diversity programme is not likely to succeed without support from the Rector and his or her management team. The Rectors have the power not only to influence what goes on throughout their colleges but they can also set up functional diversity structures and appropriate reward systems that will determine such matters as who communicates with whom, who will cooperate and who will compete, how motivated subordinates will be, and so on. It was also discovered that college managers' perceptions of culturally different employees might play a role in either inclusion or exclusion of such employees. Moreover, it was shown that the success of a diversity initiative is not something which happens by chance but should be purposeful, well-planned and managed from the top.

This chapter also presented the opinions, experiences, feelings and attitudes of FET college managers concerning the implementation and management of diversity issues in their colleges. It was pointed out that in spite of the wide support diversity initiatives enjoy within the middle management personnel in colleges, it was likely that most managers would play a cynic's roles on the basis that diversity activities were naturally conflictual and competitive. It has become clear from this qualitative survey that resistance to diversity activities can be expected and has been witnessed in most colleges due to the lack of diversity management policies. To this end, a number of essential factors which have a negative impact on the implementation of diversity initiatives and programmes were discussed. The next and last chapter discusses the summary of these findings in detail, including the summary of the entire study project. Attempts will be made to collate responses to individual aspects, so as to arrive at specific conclusions, followed by a set of recommendations

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The primary objective of this study was to determine the commitment of public Further Education and Training colleges to diversity, and whether this is managed to the detriment or benefit of these institutions. This research was based upon objective insights of individuals concerning experiences, feelings, knowledge and understanding of diversity as a social phenomenon, by studying it as it occurs in its natural setting. This course of action was deliberately chosen as the researcher felt that the topic of this research was behavioural and therefore not easily quantifiable or reducible to scientific instruments.

The purpose of this chapter is to give a summary of the study and to make certain recommendations. Attempts were made to collate responses to individual aspects, so as to arrive at specific conclusions, followed by a set of recommendations, which, it is hoped, may alleviate the problems identified.

#### **6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

Throughout the study, the emphasis was on the management of diversity in FET colleges. The interest in this study arose from the fact that the political, social, economic and education landscape in South Africa has been characterised by a changing mosaic of policy amendment and policy contexts. As South Africa entered a new political dispensation, efforts had been made by the new democratic government to promote policies that are in line with the stipulations of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.

In terms of the Constitution of South Africa, public organisations are subjected to all governmental scrutiny. The public FET colleges therefore, as organs of state,

are required to adhere to the basic human rights and human resource management in the workplace, which should relate, inter alia, to equality, freedom of association and freedom of expression. In this study, the researcher focused on the effective management of diversity in an environment that is becoming increasingly diverse in all aspects. Not only is the diversity of the college workforce increasing, but suppliers and customers are also becoming increasingly diverse. Managers need to proactively manage diversity to be able to attract and retain the best employees and effectively compete in a diverse environment.

The researcher believes that in the public service arena, the effective management of diversity is important in all aspects of service delivery and that a proactive approach to managing diversity is a necessity. The effective management of diversity means much more than hiring diverse employees (see Chapter Three). It means learning to appreciate and respond appropriately to the needs, attitudes, beliefs and values that diverse people bring to an organisation. It also means correcting misconceptions about why and how different kinds of employee groups are different from one another and finding the most effective way to utilise the skills and talents of diverse employees (George & Jones 2006:114).

Historically, in South Africa under the apartheid government, it was very unlikely that women and black employees would ever rise to the top and assume a leadership position. These employees were excluded from top-management positions for reasons that were irrelevant to performance in leadership roles. Sometimes well-intentioned managers inadvertently treat one group of employees differently from another, even though there are no performance-based differences between the two groups. The purpose of this study has not been to place blame but, rather to explore why differential treatment occurs and the steps managers and colleges can take to ensure that diversity, in all respects, is effectively managed for the good of all stakeholders in public FET colleges.

Chapter One revealed that the new political dispensation brought about changes in the institutional landscape for public Further Education and Training colleges in South Africa (see paragraph 1.1). The new institutional landscape was the key feature in the creation of FET college sector, which should be responsive to the human resource development needs. The new FET colleges should provide an opportunity for South Africa to harness the talents, energies and full potential of all its people in order to ensure success in a diverse and rapidly changing global economy (see paragraph 1.1).

Chapter One also discussed the historical background of the establishment of technical colleges in South Africa. It was indicated that the establishment of technical colleges followed the pattern of the historical legacy of the apartheid education system, where vocational colleges were established along racial lines to provide technical and vocational training for different racial groups (see paragraph 1.2). The literature study revealed that the kind of policy, climate and environment in which the South African managers were conditioned to operate had the characteristics of being inflexible, tending to indoctrinate and authoritarian. In the wake of the current educational and political reform, the change of attitude towards diversity in the college situation is indispensable and there are increasing calls for a clear shift away from traditional hierarchical control mechanisms and processes as a basis for influence over notions of management as service and stewardship (see paragraph 1.2). The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which college managers were prepared and capacitated to deal with issues of diversity in an environment that is becoming increasingly diverse, and how that capacity could be expanded for the sake of appreciating and responding appropriately to the needs, attitudes, beliefs and values that diverse employees bring to colleges.

The researcher concluded that there was a strong ethical imperative in FET colleges that diverse employees receive equal opportunities and be treated fairly and just, that unfair treatment was illegal, that effectively managing diversity can improve organisational effectiveness, and that when managers effectively



manage diversity they not only encourage other managers to treat diverse members of the college fairly and justly, but also to realise that diversity is an important organisational resource that can help the college gain a competitive advantage (see paragraph 1.1).

In Chapter Two the researcher examined the broader historic-theoretical framework of diversity management and how this had impacted on the management and administration of public technical colleges (see paragraph 2.2). This chapter outlined some of the human resource development inefficiencies inherited from the old autocratic and discriminatory system (see paragraph 2.6.2). The role of the College Councils, the State, and the labour unions was also examined, so as to realise administration objectives with all the stakeholders fully participating in the college management process within the further education and training system.

The researcher then discussed the role and task of the education department with regard to human resource development (see paragraph 2.2), and the participation of employees in decision-making. Examples from the past technical and vocational education eras were cited, to highlight the fact that education problems of the past, in a way, still persist in the current educational era (see paragraph 2.2). In addition, a descriptive survey of managing diversity in the two First World countries, that is, the United States of America and the United Kingdom, was presented (see paragraph 2.2). These two countries were chosen first and foremost because they are democratic countries which have advocated the doctrine of equal educational, political, economic and legal rights for all citizens. Secondly, they are capitalist countries where the relationships between the employer and the employee are mostly directed by the labour laws and legislations. Thirdly, these countries have a long history of democracy and capitalism which acts as a shining example for South Africa with its newly acquired democracy and equal economic rights for all citizens. A descriptive survey was, therefore, meaningful and fair, because South Africa is striving to reach the level of these countries. Lastly, in both these countries diversity

management has emerged as one of the most important management issues in administration policy and practice.

This study revealed that State intervention during the apartheid era had developed and promoted policies which derailed the effective management of diversity in South Africa. The consequence of these policies was the failure of the technical and vocational education system to cope with the economic and developmental needs of the country (see paragraph 2.3). In this chapter, a brief exposition of the De Lange Commission, which was appointed by the previous apartheid government to investigate educational provisions in the country, was given (see paragraph 2.6.1). The researcher was of the opinion that the appointment of the De Lange Commission was a realisation by the apartheid government that the economic growth and productivity could not be maintained if diversity was not included as a business imperative in commerce and industry. The study indicated that the international lessons learnt from the world's further education and training systems have shown that economic success is premised on the blending of enterprise-based initiatives in training with effective State coordination of institutional governance and management environments. It was therefore indicated that managing diversity requires a dual response which entails South Africa's successful incorporation within the global economy as well as the development of the marginalised FET sector through conscious State intervention.

Traditional approaches to diversity management were explained. It was pointed out that organisations have traditionally had human resource systems that were based on homogeneity which promoted similarity, not diversity (Schneider 1987:77). Organisations would attract, select and retain members with values similar to their own, and it was discovered that over time, employees who did not fit in well with the dominant culture eventually turnover from the organisation (see paragraph 2.7). The conclusion reached was that too much similarity in the organisation can be detrimental to long-term growth, renewal, and the ability to respond to important environmental changes such as dynamic market conditions,

new technologies and ideas, societal shifts, or the changing expectations of the workforce.

The study revealed that the funding of programmes in technical colleges was uneven across different sites of provision and this created distorted incentives as well as disincentives. The majority of technical colleges operated on a rigid budget allocation. The previously disadvantaged colleges had no budgetary control or freedom to disburse funds raised from the private sector. All income received by way of class fees and donations was paid over to the department and not treated as disposable income for these colleges. These methods of financing were regarded by the researcher as one of the main factors inhibiting access to technical colleges by the majority of the previously disadvantaged groups.

The study also identified globalisation as a factor which drove push for change in the previous technical college landscape. A phenomenal growth in recurrent education and lifelong learning symptomatic of a larger global shift away from closed and élite education and training systems to more massified systems opened up opportunity to a diverse range of people many of whom were previously excluded from gaining access to further education and training. These included workers from rural areas and other marginalised communities. The impact of globalisation has raised the general skills levels and the education and training required by the workforce in the formal economy. Managers of FET colleges are today expected to adapt to highly unpredictable and volatile global product markets and rapid technological change. They therefore require broad problem-solving skills to anticipate flaws in the college system. Workers also need to understand how the new technologies can be optimally applied, how environmental context shapes the execution of tasks and how unexpected factors arise. It was concluded that in order to meet the requirements for global competition, the FET colleges need multi-skilling and teamwork, which can be achieved through effective management of diversity.

As one of the many interventions in organisational development, managing diversity is primarily concerned with improving interpersonal and inter-group communications and relationships in the workplace (see paragraph 2.8). As such, the historical survey on the staff supply and development during the apartheid era was presented (see paragraph 2.2). The study revealed that staff development in technical colleges was almost non-existent. It was also indicated that there were no black staff members on traditionally white technical colleges, but there were, however, many white staff employed in the traditionally black technical colleges. The predominance of white male managers was out of proportion to the overall population structure (see Table 2.1). The factors which inhibited staff development were the rigid structures which prevented principals from hiring replacements, the unavailability of appropriate upgrading programmes, and the segregationist policies of the apartheid government. The study revealed that racial tensions, conflict and mistrust characterised the relationships among racial groups of employees in technical colleges. This is a challenge to today's college managers as they are increasingly being called upon to manage employees who might be still suspicious and sceptical about their decisions and actions particularly if their race differ from that of the dominant group.

The conclusion reached was that in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the process of transformation has introduced some changes in the composition of workforce in FET colleges. The increasing diversity of the environment is resulting into increased diversity of the colleges' workforce. The recognition and acceptance of diversity in the workplace has set new challenges for college managers as they have to facilitate the involvement of diverse groups of employees in the strategic objectives of the college. The researcher concluded that there should be meaningful and mutual cooperation and collaboration among all the structures with an interest in human resource development for effective management of diversity to exist.

Chapter Three was an attempt to locate the concept of diversity management within the broader conceptual and theoretical framework of Public Administration. The study revealed that it was through public administration that the government was able to carry out its responsibilities to meet the needs of the divergent society. As the government responds to the challenges posed by divergent society, and as the role of public administration shifts from being a prescriptive regulator to that of managing change, the need for human resource development has become significant. The diversity movement signals increasingly complex challenges for public administration. It has stimulated a need for debating and rethinking the very mission and purpose of public agencies as they try to position themselves to meet the demands of the global society.

Chapter Three conceptualised diversity and the concept of diversity was defined as a mixture of people with different group identities within the same social setting (see paragraph 3.5). It was indicated that these social settings are characterised by majority groups and minority groups. Majority groups are groups whose members historically got advantages in terms of economic resources and power in comparison to other groups. According to George and Jones (2006:114), the management of diversity implies a holistic focus in order to create an organisational environment which allows employees from all the diverse groups, whether from majority or minority, to reach their full potential when pursuing the company's goals. Thomas (1996:171) states that diversity management is not a package with ready solutions for a programme to solve the discrimination issue. Cox (1993:88) maintains that society expects its citizens to be capable of proactively dealing with change throughout life, both individually as well as collectively in a context of dynamic, multi-cultural and global transformation.

The theoretical model discussed in Chapter Three focused on independent variables that are assumed to have an influence on receptivity to diversity and diversity management initiatives (see Figure 3.2). Receptivity to diversity was measured by employee perceptions of salience of diversity and their attitudes

towards diversity whether it had a positive or negative effect on their work experiences. Receptivity to diversity management was also measured by the extent of understanding the purpose of diversity programmes and the level of organisational member support for the employer's policies and programmes to effectively utilise and manage diversity.

The model presented in chapter 3 assumes several relationships between the independent variables. First, it is expected that increased presence of diversity is likely to make it a salient issue for the organisational members. However, it is also possible that diversity may not be viewed as salient if members have a tendency to minimise or ignore cultural differences (Cox 1993:7). Even when diversity is viewed as salient, it may not necessarily be viewed as a positive factor in organisational life. Second, if diversity is seen as a highly salient issue, demands will be placed on the employer to take initiatives to manage it effectively. Third, a relationship between demographic characteristics of the employees and managers and their level of support for diversity is likely to exist, as different employee groups are affected differently by diversity initiatives. Fourth, perceptions about equitable and fair treatment in the workplace, job satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships are likely to vary by racial, ethnic and gender groups based on their experiences in the workplace. Finally, the impetus for implementing organisational diversity initiatives may come from internal factors, such as complaints by women and black employees, who may feel marginalised, or from external factors such as the need to respond to the changing political or economic environment.

The study revealed that the diversity model presented was in sharp contrast to the traditional model of managing public bureaucracies, which emphasises homogeneity as a primary value. Classical organisation theory is characterised by the importance of well-defined organisational structures, the need for strict management control, and the significance of a disciplined adherence to prevailing standards and norms (Hofstede 1991:57). The researcher concluded that the traditional paradigm of focusing almost exclusively on internal operations

geared towards economic efficiency is inadequate for contemporary FET colleges. Public FET colleges today face the challenge of finding new solutions to the problems arising from an increasingly diverse environment, backgrounds and experiences of employees.

The researcher is of the opinion that past studies that refute the impact of race and gender on policy preferences need to be revisited. While the mere presence of greater number of women and minorities in an organisation's workforce does not guarantee changes in the organisation's decisions, new research (see Smit & Cronjé 1999; Goerzen 2005; George & Jones 2006; Daft 2008) shows that individual values and belief systems are likely to have a major influence on public policy. Caiden (1982:57) concluded from his study that new employee values resulting from workforce diversification, both cultural and professional, could dramatically impact on future human resource development decisions. The researcher, therefore, maintained that Public Administration might have an important challenge to examine the incentives for public sector organisations to promote diversity where the profit motive does not exist.

The literature study revealed that management of diversity means to plan and implement organisational systems and practices to manage people to their potential (Thomas 1996; Cox 1993). In general, diversity management means to add value to the organisation. In other words, the main objective of diversity management is to manage relations, employment practices and the structure of the organisation workforce, to attract the best competencies among the minority groups. The conclusion reached was that the presence of diversity in FET colleges impacts on measures of effectiveness at both the individual and institutional levels and that the organisational context for diversity is pivotal in determining whether the overall impact of group identity differences on effectiveness will either be positive or negative.

Chapter Three discussed the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity. It was explained that these dimensions are characteristics that describe people

(see paragraph 3.6.1). It was indicated that the primary dimensions were those core elements about each individual that cannot be changed. They include age, race, gender, physical and mental abilities, and sexual orientation, and together they form an individual's self-image. It was noted that culture clash represents the conflicts that occur between groups of people with different core identities, and can have a devastating effect on human relations in an organisation. The second dimension discussed was the secondary dimensions of diversity which include those elements that can be changed or modified. They include a person's health habits, religious beliefs, education and training, general appearance, relationship, status, ethnic customs, communication style, and income (see Figure 3.1). These factors all constitute an additional layer of complexity to the way people see themselves and others, and in some instances can exert a powerful impact on core identities.

The study indicated that when adding the secondary dimensions of diversity to the mix of primary dimensions, effective human relations become even more difficult. Even though situations like this intensify the impact of particular secondary dimension, they do not diminish the primary impact of core dimensions. Instead, they add depth to the individual. This interaction between primary and secondary dimensions shapes a person's values, priorities, and perceptions throughout life. The finding of the study was, therefore, that each person enters the workplace with a unique perspective shaped by these dimensions and own past experiences, and that building effective human relationships is possible only when people learn to accept and value the differences in others. Without this acceptance, both the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity can serve as roadblocks to further cooperation and understanding.

It was argued earlier in the study that the fragmented and inadequate nature of legislation governing the further education and training system in the past led to the exclusion of large sectors of employee population and perpetuation of inequalities in the workplace (see paragraph 3.7). In Chapter Three it was made



evident that the new democratic government, through the Constitution, recognises basic human rights for all citizens, including key socio-economic rights. This means that all employees, whatever their needs or differences are, have a right to equal treatment. The Constitution, in noting previous disadvantage, also recognises that in order to create equal opportunities for all citizens to enjoy these rights, particular mechanisms or measures may need to be in place to redress past inequalities. Chapter Three therefore also discussed affirmative action and employment equity policies which are part of a comprehensive legislative framework impacting on the transformation process which is needed to change the workplace into one which will meet the needs of all employees (see paragraph 3.7). These policies clearly integrate the notions education and training and it was argued that both these policies are key to human resource development in a country and essential to the development of skills to sustain effective economic development.

In Chapter Three it was also indicated that there are other forms of diversity with important implications for human resources systems (see paragraph 3.7). These forms of diversity, with potentially overlapping identity group membership, can affect an employee's attitude and behaviour in the workplace, as well as influence his or her ability to work well with other organisational members. The researcher concluded that it was the responsibility of the college management to promote effective consultation and prevent relationship breakdown. It is imperative that proper structures for diversity management are developed by all stakeholders. Such structures have to develop the capacity of the college management system to overcome barriers which may arise, prevent barriers from occurring and promote the development of a conducive working environment.

In Chapter Four, a description was given of the qualitative investigation (see paragraph 4.3). The qualitative methodological procedures adopted to acquire the data needed on the current state of diversity management in the public FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal were described. A semi-structured

interview schedule for college middle managers was designed to assess the feelings, experiences, impressions and beliefs college middle managers have of diversity issues and diversity management in the public FET colleges (see paragraph 4.4.1). This semi-structured interview schedule was administered to one hundred and forty-two college middle managers. One hundred and eighteen college managers agreed to participate (see Table 4.2). The results were analysed by the researcher guided by Schumacher and McMillan's (1993:373) suggestion that understanding is acquired by analysing the many contexts of the participants and by narrating participants' meanings for these situations and events. Participants' meanings include their feelings, beliefs, ideals, thoughts and actions.

The researcher concluded that many college middle managers are positively inclined towards diversity management in colleges (see Question 1), which implied a strong need for the establishment of statutory and non-statutory structures for employee involvement at college level. The qualitative survey revealed that college managers want employees to assist in the establishment of a culture of tolerance and acceptance. This indicates that there is a strong ethical imperative among college middle managers that diverse people receive equal opportunities and be treated fairly and justly. It implies that college managers not only have a legal obligation to treat every employee justly and fairly, but also an ethical obligation and social responsibility to strive to achieve distributive justice in their colleges.

The qualitative survey revealed that trust and respect are the essential characteristics of effective management of diversity, despite the responses by the majority of college middle managers that there was still a lack of trust and understanding among the employees from different cultural and racial groups (see Question 16). This would manifest in the workplace in the form of avoidance, hostility and denial. The qualitative survey revealed that most often, if the employees belong to different racial groups, they would not reveal what was actually troubling them until they were certain a manager was really going to

listen to them. This indicates the need for appropriate policies, procedures, and managerial interventions to operationalise a culturally diverse workplace after under-represented people are hired and employee consciousness raised.

The survey revealed that most middle managers in FET colleges were not trained and capacitated to handle diversity issues (see paragraph 4.5.3.1). This was regarded as a serious deficiency and the researcher is of the opinion that unless efforts to develop training programmes are supported by organisational intervention, which in turn supports managing diversity as a critical strategic issue, it is highly unlikely that the college middle managers as well as employees who are most resistant to change will change. The study revealed that middle managers are seldom taught to be competent counsellors in the diversity workplace, and is a major reason most managers and supervisors shun the role of counsellor because they do not want to be embarrassed by displaying their lack of training. This implies that managers who lack training and corresponding intervention skills would tend to disregard diversity problems when they occur.

The survey revealed that many FET colleges had not yet formulated clear diversity management policies (see Question 3). The absence of a diversity management policy in most FET colleges is an indication that diversity might constitute the poor relations and ranks low on the colleges' list of priorities. While the final responsibility for the formulation, communication, monitoring and evaluation of a diversity management policy should rest with a senior manager, ideally with the Rector, practical considerations often dictate that he or she is supported by someone who can take charge of diversity issues on a day-to-day basis. The absence of policy implies that where such policy fails to guide college managers on the implementation of diversity management, college managers would appear to compromise important diversity issues or carry out diversity management programmes ineffectively. Such failure might inhibit the creation and maintenance of sound relationships among diverse employee groups and therefore, directly or indirectly, contribute to the formation of negative attitudes and stereotypes.

The findings revealed that the FET colleges were failing to access funding for diversity management training programmes (see Question 7). Particular enabling programmes and training are needed to support diversity and enable the college administration system, including managers and employees, to minimise, remove and prevent barriers which may exist or arise. Where no funding exists for such training programmes, barriers cannot be overcome and diversity needs cannot be met. Funding for the training of FET college staff has traditionally been provided by the Department of Education. There are no clear guidelines on how these funds are channelled, which is the reason why the researcher could not determine if there are funds that are specifically ring-fenced for diversity training. The researcher is of the opinion that the lack of funds for diversity training results from non-existent or unclear diversity management policies and practices which are not continuously designed or transformed to address the needs of the diversity workforce.

The qualitative investigation revealed that most college middle managers are against the involvement of trade unions on the issues of diversity in colleges (see Question 18). Erickson (1985:290) maintains that when trade unions are involved in diversity issues, it precipitates the spiralling of conflict with more demands being added and more people becoming involved. This, according to Erickson (1985:290), has resulted in power-play where subordinates challenge the authority of the manager. The involvement of trade unions has influenced individuals to enhance their own position, regardless of the cost to the organisation or others, and the acquisition of power has been the central aim (see Question 18). Sometimes the trade unions would place demands which are in conflict with those of diversity initiatives. These conflicting demands would converge sharply on the college middle manager who operates in a boundary-spanning role between the employees and the employer. The study indicated that this often results in a role conflict whereby the focal person, that is, the middle manager, would receive incompatible demands or expectations from persons in his or her role set, the employer and the employees. This, therefore,

accounts for the college middle managers' negative perceptions towards the involvement of trade unions in diversity initiatives of FET colleges.

The findings (see paragraph 3.6) confirmed that the old paradigms of discipline, suspension, and discharge as the only means to handle employees' problems are inappropriate. Although these actions are still viable and, in some instances, necessary, they are seldom the most expeditious way to handle conflicts which centre on diversity issues. The effective administrators are able to elicit trust and respect from their employees during conflict resolution. It is important for colleges to include diversity as an aspect of career progression. That is, employees should be told that they cannot be promoted out of diversity. The study revealed that in FET colleges diversity is often not fully integrated into strategic agenda and into people management systems (see paragraph 3.5.1). The researcher concluded that the failure to fully integrate diversity into the strategic agenda might account for the creation of an environment in which employees feel uncomfortable and marginalised instead of secure and included. This is contrary to the organisation where diversity is integrated into strategic objectives. In such organisations, the recruitment, selection and career planning are based on a clear and transparent business plan that creates an environment in which people feel secure and included rather than uncomfortable and marginalised.

The research findings revealed a number of constraints that act on managers and supervisors during the course of their jobs that inhibit them from being supportive of diversity management initiatives. A major constraint inherent in most colleges is the rector's and college council members' expectations of financial prudence by college middle managers. This accounts for the avoidance of the issues of diversity. The study indicated that valuing diversity represents a major change in the management of human resources, and therefore cannot succeed without commitment at all levels. It was also noted that within leading-edge organisations, this realisation has mobilised senior executives to become visibly and philosophically identified with diversity efforts. The lack of support by College Councils and rectors in most colleges accounts for the difficulties in the

implementation of diversity policies. It was therefore maintained that the management of diversity will succeed only if the College Council and the Rectors are not shadow supporters but rather seek additional knowledge about diversity issues, speak the language of diversity, and attempt to practise what they mandate as they set policy and provide guidance.

In Chapter Four, the qualitative survey revealed other factors which acted as barriers to the implementation of a diversity management policy in FET colleges (see Question 23). These factors include, *inter alia*, intercultural miscommunication, cultural differences, and symbolic racism. It was asserted that these barriers can be located within the employee, within the cultural or racial group, within the college management system and within the broader social, economic and political context. The researcher concluded that if the further education and training system is to promote effective diversity management and prevent differences from causing breakdown, it is imperative that these factors are addressed within the system as a whole.

Chapter Five discussed the findings of the study and described which conclusions were drawn. After surveying the college middle managers' experiences, feelings and beliefs regarding diversity management, this chapter focussed on the findings regarding the topic. Attempts were made to collate responses to individual aspects, so as to arrive at specific conclusions.

The qualitative survey indicated that after the merger of the previous technical colleges into mega FET institutions, the diversity of the workforce has increased however, the commitment to diversity of many FET colleges and many college managers does not always reflect a sincere change of heart (see paragraph 5.2). This is evident in the lack of diversity management policy, training programmes and other structures related to the implementation of diversity management. The increasing racial and ethnic diversity of the workforce and the population as a whole underscores the importance of effectively managing diversity. The researcher suggests that much needs to be done in terms of ensuring that

diverse employees are provided with equal opportunities in FET colleges. At a general level, middle managers in FET colleges are increasingly being reminded that stakeholders in the environment are diverse and expect the college management decisions and actions to reflect such diversity. The findings of the study emphasise that the need for such increased diversity is more than apparent (see Question 26).

The findings revealed that there was a tendency by some senior managers and College Councils to distort the meaning of affirmative action and employment equity to suit their own ends (see Questions 2 and 11). It was indicated that the negative and harmful attitudes towards the implementation of human resource as well as diversity management policies in FET colleges remain a crucial barrier to the development of a fair and transparent recruitment system. For example, the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities and also requires that employers make reasonable accommodation to enable these people to effectively perform their jobs. On the surface, few would argue with the intent of this legislation. However, as managers attempt to implement policies and procedures to comply with the Employment Equity Act of 1998, they face a number of interpretation and fairness challenges. Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that the findings revealed no significant increase in the employment rates for managers with disabilities.

In Chapter Five it was also indicated that in each of their managerial roles, middle managers can either promote the effective management of diversity or derail such efforts (see paragraph 5.2.1). Thus, middle managers are critical to this process. For example, in their interpersonal role, middle managers can convey that the effective management of diversity is a valued goal and objective it can serve as a role model and institute policies and procedures to ensure that diverse organisational members are treated fairly, and can enable diverse individuals and groups to co-ordinate their efforts and cooperate with each other both inside and outside the college. Given the formal authority that managers have in colleges, they typically have more influence than other employees at

lower levels. When middle managers commit to supporting diversity, their authority and positions of power and status influence other members of the college to make a similar commitment. George and Jones (2006:125) support this link when they state that people are more likely to be influenced and persuaded by others who have high status.

Chapter Five showed that FET colleges are part of the community, in addition to being part of the larger public management and administration system (see paragraph 5.3.4). The location of the college in the larger community system has implications for the effectiveness of governance and management because it is at this level that policies are actually implemented. Problems of crime, vandalism, gangsterism, community apathy, employee militancy, violence, ethnic divisions, decline in economic resources, unemployment and others, not only affect the immediate community in which they occur, but they also have a bearing on effective college governance and management. Kossek and Lobel (1996:126) maintain that it is typical for people to bring their community-related anxieties with them to the workplace. This might make it difficult for diversity managers to talk about community problems because conversations about community experiences might exacerbate other employees' feelings.

In Chapter Five it was indicated that there are other factors that influence the implementation of diversity management policy in the workplace (see paragraph 5.2.1). These factors include, *inter alia*, language and communication barriers, racism, sexism, and ageism. Language is the basic form of communication and it is also the primary cause of cross-cultural conflicts (see paragraph 5.2.1). Language can also lead to group stereotyping, non-acceptance of certain employees, and individual alienation. The findings revealed that managers struggling to understand employees who use a different language, experience firsthand difficulty in crossing cultural barriers. This might have a negative impact on the implementation of diversity management policy because, according to the findings (see paragraph 5.2.1), managers who are most different from workers in terms of culture and language, generally have more difficulty communicating



empathy, congruence, respect, and acceptance than individuals who share or understand the workers' cultural perspectives.

Chapter Six offers a review of the entire study project. It gives a summary of the study, to highlight the major findings of the study project. Attempts were made to collate responses to individual aspects, and to arrive at specific conclusions as well as to devise possible guidelines for managing diversity in FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. This chapter also provides a set of recommendations, which, it is hoped, may alleviate the problems of diversity issues in the workplace as they were identified in the study project.

## **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.3.1 The State**

Government and the activities it undertakes to deliver services are the result of political dynamics (Crous 2004:575). Governance is the maintenance of law and order, the defence of society against external enemies and the advancement of what is thought to be the welfare of the group, community, society or state itself (Crous 2004:575). Government is thus responsible for making laws, ensuring that there are institutions to implement its laws, and providing the services and products that these laws prescribe.

The acts, regulations and legislation which are promulgated by the political party in power have major implications for the manager and the way public institutions are managed. In South Africa, the government has acknowledged that public institutions are central to building a just and equitable administration system which would provide good quality services to all citizens. Since the State has a central responsibility in the provision of further education and training, it has direct implications for the structure of the public FET colleges system. The State affects the control and administration of the public FET colleges at all levels, and exerts a direct influence on the contents of education and training and its objectives, methods and character.

All institutions are subject to the Constitution and laws of the land, to professional regulation, labour law, and various policy, legislative, quality assurance and financial controls. College Councils and management execute their functions within defined parameters, which are clearly stipulated in legislation and are further developed in terms of institutional policies and guidelines and institutional practice.

#### **6.3.1.1 What ought to be done by the State?**

Firstly, it should be mentioned that the Labour Relations System does not operate in a vacuum, but there are factors which influence it directly. In South Africa, the workers' desire for democratic participation in labour activities should have influenced the State to fulfil its role as a third party. The recognition and acceptance of College Councils as employers indicate that the State can no longer be responsible for FET college employee working conditions at a centralised level (see paragraph 5.2.4). The State should now stay in the background and only provide the necessary framework for the parties concerned to solve workplace problems themselves. It should continually re-evaluate its *raison d'être* for intervening to ensure that it remains a neutral party. As such, the State would be prevented from being subjective and to favour one party over the other.

Although the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 provides for the involvement of employees in decision-making, it is still important for the government to create and amend labour rules that would ensure an orderly pattern of interaction within the college management system. The State should create rules which would be responsible for the regulation of interaction between college managers and employees and they should exist in order to balance the needs of these parties in such a way that optimal diversity management is achieved.

It should be the responsibility of the education management and administration at the national and provincial education departments to make a concerted joint effort to communicate the implications, challenges, benefits and opportunities of

effective diversity management to College Councils, college management as well as trade union leaders. At national level, guidelines for the provision of training of diversity managers in provinces should be developed. The guidelines should support and facilitate the participatory diversity management principle in all respects. All sections of the national and provincial education departments should become aware of the diverse needs which have to be catered for in their diversity management plans and programmes. An understanding of what constitutes barriers to diversity management in the workplace and how these barriers may be overcome or addressed would need to be developed.

It should be the responsibility of the State to find balance between the college management discretion and the flexibility and responsiveness that a College Council requires in order to deliver on its mandate, as well as the role of the State in planning and overseeing the development and the performance of the public FET college system. The State should provide clear guidelines on the distribution of powers and functions across different levels of the public FET college system, particularly in ensuring that the needs of disadvantaged groups and communities are met. The role of the State should not be one of detailed centralised planning and management, but should be aimed at building, developing, steering, monitoring and supporting the evolution of a democratic workplace capable of responding to the needs of diverse workforce. This does not mean that the State should prescribe in detail the role and functions of every college, but should determine developmental practices that support diversity management through funding and through diversity management programme approval.

Since the State has committed itself to the protection of interests and the rights of employees, it has to give prominence to the cultivation of good human resource management and career development practices, to maximise human potential, both as a fundamental human right and as the main prerequisite for the country's democratic development. The programmes of State should thus contribute towards an enhanced quality of life for all.

### **6.3.1.2 Aspects to be considered by the State with regard to diversity management**

#### **(i) Transformation Developing an integrated system**

The State initiatives at national, provincial and institutional level that are spearheading transformation in the administration, management and governance of FET colleges should include issues pertaining to diversity and addressing barriers to diversity management. The foundation for equal employment opportunities, affirmative action and diversity management should be formed at college level. Particular attention needs to be given to integrated settings and participatory management where all employees in a college can work together and where adequate diversity training and development can start. Closer links need to be maintained between the trade union leadership and College Council members. Trade union leadership should be supported to develop capacity in these leaders so that they are sensitive to diversity issues, which would enable them to develop and maintain sound working relationships between college managers and the diverse union membership in the workplace. This means that the national education department should include “dedicated” competencies that would enable the State to address diverse needs and barriers to diversity management at all levels.

#### **(ii) Barrier-free physical and psycho-social environment**

Safe environments in which college managers and employees can perform their duties and activities are particularly important, especially in the light of the current problems of crime, vandalism, gangsterism and violence in the province (see paragraph 5.2.9). Any form of discrimination, intimidation or unfair treatment, from either party, should be discouraged. This means that rules and regulations related to intimidation-free environments should be enforced. According to the findings, policy and legislation governing the workplace and regulating the institution often directly or indirectly facilitate the existence or non-existence of diversity management barriers. For example, legislation which fails to protect

disabled employees from discrimination and to provide for minimum standards to accommodate diversity, allows for individual discretion and practices which may inhibit disabled employee development or lead to provision that is inadequate and inappropriate for their needs. Furthermore, colleges should be well secured in order to prevent intruders from interfering with their management and functioning. This can be done by fencing the colleges and placing security guards at the gates to control entrance into the college premises. In order to do this and ensure barrier-free physical and psycho-social environments, the State should make provision for a safe and supportive environment where college management and employees are motivated and supported in their work where they feel a sense of belonging, where they are able to engage in their daily activities without fear of outside interference, and where all the stakeholders appreciate and value diversity in colleges as well as in communities.

### **(iii) Employment Equity Laws**

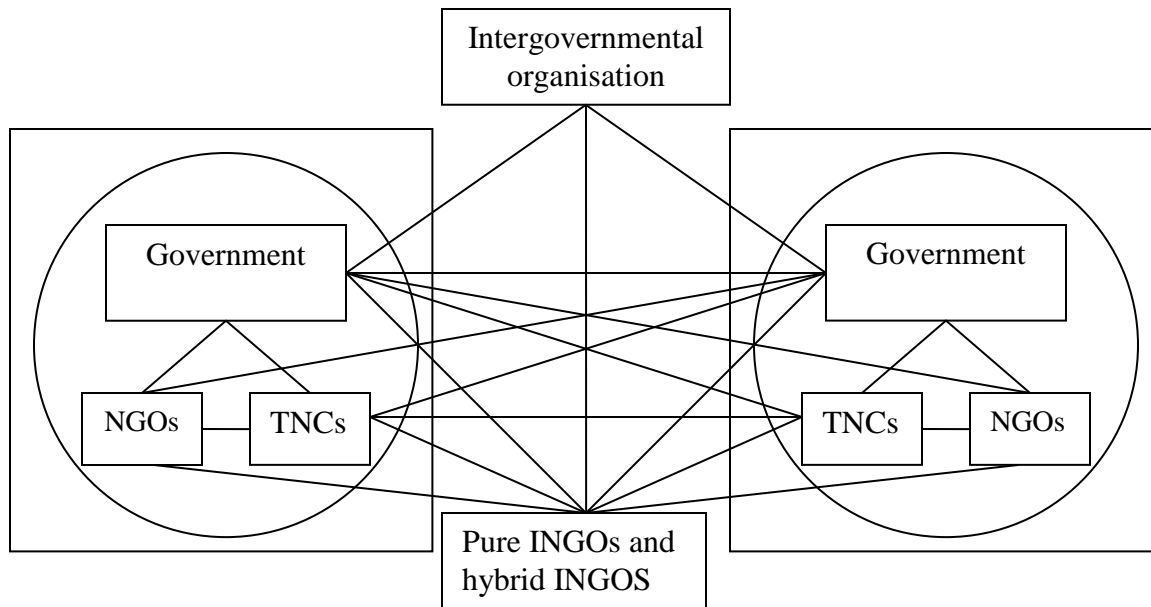
It was argued earlier (see paragraph 5.2.10) that the fragmented and inadequate nature of legislation governing the workplace in the past has led to the exclusion of large sectors of the worker population and the perpetuation of inequalities in provision of employment. The recent adoption of a new Constitution of South Africa, together with the introduction of new employment legislation and policy based on the principles of democracy, are important in providing a framework for recognising diversity and providing access to employment for all citizens, including those employees excluded by the previous system. A clear commitment to the principles of redressing past inequalities and creating equal opportunities for all employees has been made by the State through the new legislation and policy on employment equity. These principles have been developed into particular strategies aimed at specifically alleviating poverty, creating access to basic services and achieving a more equitable distribution of existing and future resources. New initiatives in the area of diversity management in the workplace have brought South African legislation and employment policy in line with international trends and standards, particularly towards overcoming barriers to

diversity and human resource development. Nevertheless, it is crucial for these strengths to be monitored, supported and preserved. The State, therefore, should still continue to develop, monitor and enforce equal employment opportunity laws that

- prohibit discrimination in employment decisions on the basis of race, religion, sex, colour, or national origin, and which cover a wide range of employment decisions, including hiring, firing, pay, promotion, and working conditions
- prohibit discrimination against women in employment decisions on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical decisions
- prohibit discrimination against disabled individuals in employment decisions and require that employers accommodate disabled workers to enable them to perform their jobs
- Prohibit discrimination in employment decisions on the basis of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and fund AIDS awareness training to help people overcome their fears and provide managers with a tool to prevent illegal discrimination against HIV-infected employees.

#### **(iv) Intergovernmental connections**

The types of authority, status, resources, information, and skills that are relevant to political success vary from one issue to another. Thus the government, the non-governmental organisations, the intergovernmental organisations, and the international non-governmental organisations that have the ability to exercise influence on labour issues will vary according to the issues invoked by a policy problem. The State should identify and establish links with the different actors that can assist in enhancing democracy in the workplace. Figure 6.1 illustrates a range of international connections that the State and other actors can establish



**Figure 6.1** The full range of international connections to be established at intergovernmental level.

**Source** Baylis and Smith 2001 : 379.

In this figure it is indicated that if the State becomes a member of the intergovernmental organisation, it will be in a better position to gain influence over transnational companies (TNCs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that have been the main source of economic and political change in global politics. Haupt (2008:63) maintains that the transnational actors and international organisations generally are more specialist and involved in a range of policy debates. It is therefore important for the State to play a special role in linking the different actors in support of values for diversity in FET colleges. Keohane and Nye (2000:106) suggest that most real-world situations will see a mix of different capabilities being brought to bear upon the policy debate. In the process of political debate, the State should communicate in a manner that would command the attention and respect of these national and international actors.

The State should refrain from seeking to impose the language and customs of a dominant culture on subordinate groups. Minority groups throughout the country and the indigenous people in societies should be respected by the wider polity. The State should create opportunities, through partnerships with international governments, for minority groups to participate in major international conferences and in transnational alliances which are struggling to advance the new global political culture that supports group rights.

On the one hand, Baylis and Smith (2001:625) assert that traditional conceptions of citizenship have to be adapted to fit the increasing multicultural nature of modern societies. On the other hand, Held and McGrew (1999: 327) argue that national democracies have little control over global markets and a limited ability to influence levels of employment. They maintain that the task is to democratise organisations such as the World Trade Organisation and to make sure that transnational corporations are held accountable for decisions that harm vulnerable individuals and groups. This can only be achieved if the State is willing to establish a range of intergovernmental connections with other democratic governments.

#### **(v) Capacity-building**

There is a need to ensure true participatory democracy, which would lead to sensitivity to diversity, in the development and transformation of the workplace. Enabling mechanisms need to be developed to ensure that the college system and the college managers are continuously transformed to address the needs of diverse employees. It is imperative to build organs of people's power and civil society to ensure that community members have the capacity to interact democratically and interface government on matters of diversity and transformation in the workplace.

It was indicated earlier in the study (see paragraph 5.2.10) that public administration was characterised by an approach which led to a rule-driven, secretive and hierarchical management structure, infused with authoritarian and



non-consultative management styles and culture. It was also evident that the old paradigms of discipline, suspension, and discharge as the only means to handle employees' problems are inappropriate. The researcher maintains that these actions might still be viable and in some instances, necessary, but the financial cost alone of discipline and cases adjudicated in courts, arbitration, and compliance agencies are much more time-consuming, expensive, and organisationally disruptive than behaviour modification interventions. It is for this reason that State intervention is recommended, particularly because the study indicated that some managers in public institutions still avoid diversity issues owing to feelings of personal inadequacy and insecurity, and that there are those who espouse commitment to diversity without reflecting a sincere change of heart (see paragraph 5.2.11). Leaving capacity to "unconverted" managers can be construed as indirectly perpetuating racism, sexism, ageism, or handicappism by the State.

The study identified the need for building the capacity of all the stakeholders, including provincial education department officials, college council members, trade union leaders, and college senior managers in order to equip them with the basic information, knowledge, skills and training that would heighten their awareness of diversity issues in the workplace. This can also assist them officials to be able to make employment decisions on the basis of job performance. Problems which centre around misunderstanding, misinterpretation and misconception of diversity in the workplace are worsened by managers who tend to tolerate racism and sexism. Intervention strategy by the State would therefore assist in building capacity of all stakeholders involved in the management, governance and administration of public FET colleges, which would in turn help these stakeholders to become sensitive to the ongoing effects of diversity in their FET institutions, to take advantage of all the contributions diverse employees make, and prevent diverse employees from being unfairly treated.

With these considerations in mind, the following further recommendations are proposed

- The South African Institute of Race Relations should commission research to develop guidelines for developing diversity management initiatives, policy and training programmes, as well as addressing barriers to effective management of diversity in the workplace. This Institute should also be responsible for developing strategy intended to change the beliefs, attributes, values and structure of FET colleges so that they can better adapt to the increasing cultural, religious, racial and ethnic diversity of the workforce and the population as a whole.
- Partnership programmes should be used as a mechanism that can strengthen specific competencies in college employees and build capacity in the FET colleges as a whole. Partnership programmes can be between the national government and FET colleges, between FET colleges and other organisations such as public sector, private sector or other countries such as an exchange programme to familiarise college employees with the working environments in other democratic countries. Effective partnerships should reflect workplace diversity and its benefits to the college as well as career development of individual employees.
- The State should borrow selectively from business within the context of serving a democratically elected government. The State may borrow ideas, practices, and skills from business, but it should adapt them to fit the values, needs and culture of public administration and public management. Business understands the importance of increasing diversity in the workforce because of the impact the effective diversity management or poor management thereof on the business community.
- A Performance Management Process is crucial to ensure that core HR processes assist in supporting the development and retention of staff. The implementation of an enhanced performance process would provide FET colleges with the ability to track individual performance against certain agreements. Individual rates of compensation should be directly linked to

performance. This process would also allow for the identification of individual training needs, which would guide the learning and development process. The actions, programmes and processes introduced would ensure that FET colleges have the HR capabilities and best talent required for building successful South African public Further Education and Training Institutions.

### **6.3.2 The Provincial Education Department**

Changing South Africa's further education and training system is only possible if there is harmony between the vision for transformation and the day-to-day realities of those working in the system. However, the situation at present is that, while the vision for the transformed further education and training system has been set out in the policy framework and the new legislation, the system is still shaped by ethos, processes and procedures inherited from the apartheid past. Consequently, the harmony required for transformation is not evident. Past administration, governance and management development practices are hampering the desired diversity management and transformation processes.

There are certain aspects of the provincial education department that would need to be changed if it is to respond to the diverse needs of all employees. Strategies and programmes traditionally aimed at meeting the needs of employees should move away from an isolated focus on "changing the person" to a systems-change approach (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:88). This means that the Department of Education should not see the system as fixed and unchanging, where individual employees need to fit in. Rather, it should regard the system as being able to be transformed so that it can accommodate individual differences among employees.

In every section of the Education Department at provincial level, there should be persons who have the competency to deal with issues of diversity as well as issues relating to addressing barriers to diversity management. They could be occupying full posts or combining this function with others, depending on the size of the staff complement (Green Paper on Further Education and Training

1997:90). Eventually, the competency to deal with diversity in the employee population should become “infused” throughout the department, with everyone possessing an awareness of diversity issues. A co-ordinating structure, directly accountable to the Head of Department, made up of those in “dedicated” posts or with “dedicated” responsibilities, together with representations from public institutions and trade unions, should be tasked with ensuring that barriers to diversity management and human resource development are addressed and that enabling mechanisms are developed through appropriate support. The co-ordinators at provincial level should have a post level and status commensurate with the required roles and responsibilities. Responsibility for the co-ordination and management of diversity training should rest with the provincial education department.

A multi-disciplinary and multi-skilled approach should be developed within the education and training system and such an approach should include intersectoral and interdepartmental structures, agreements and services (Green Paper on Further Education and Training 1997:91). There needs to be some recognition of the value of this approach to intervention and support. Amongst the potential benefits of an intersectoral collaborative approach, are that it can maintain a holistic approach to effective diversity management, prevent unnecessary cross-cultural conflict, encourage efficient use of human resources, strengthen service delivery, enable the community to readily gain access to all the resources available, bring together people from different backgrounds, help in cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences, and keep the community informed and involved.

The principles which apply to the administration, management and governance of public institutions at national level should also apply to administration, management and governance at provincial level. It is critical that all structures involved in the administration, governance and management of all components of the further education and training system have the capacity to respond to diversity, provide a supportive working environment for all employees, as well as

minimise, remove and prevent unfair treatment of diverse employees. It is recognised that such capacity will need to be developed within all levels of the existing system of administration, management and governance at provincial level. Each section of the provincial education department should develop the capacity to meet a diverse range of employees and identify their different needs. Such capacity will involve the development of diversity management policy and mechanisms to facilitate and address barriers to human resource development and the prevention of discrimination in the workplace.

The following are regarded as the key competencies required by the provincial department of education officials to meet the above imperatives

- Knowledge of the full range of diversity needs likely to be found in any workplace as well as the nature and extent of the barriers which presently exist or may arise which would lead to unfair treatment of diverse employees.
- Knowledge of and expertise on how to facilitate the formulation of effective diversity management policy, including the examination of organisational goals, resources, climate for training, and evaluation of both the internal and external environments to combat threats and weaknesses in the implementation of diversity management policy.
- Knowledge of how to develop the capacity of the system at all levels, from the provincial to the institutional level, to address diversity and overcome barriers to human resource development.
- The ability to facilitate intersectoral collaboration with other government departments and the establishment of constructive partnerships and working relationships with other stakeholders such as non-governmental organisations, private providers and consumer organisations. This should lead to the facilitation of community ownership of FET institutions and the provision of community-based support.

- Vigilance to monitor and ensure that employees are not marginalised or excluded on the basis of disability, sexual preference, race, gender, religion, culture, language or any other particular circumstance that is not related to job performance.

The competencies described above may be developed and reflected in a number of ways according to the particular circumstances and structure of the provincial education department. While the need for such flexibility is recognised, it is imperative that section of the provincial education department ensures that within their ranks they have the capacity to fulfil these competencies.

### **6.3.3 The College Council**

It was indicated in the study (see paragraph 5.2.9) that the College Council performs a number of governance functions which includes determining conditions of service, code of conduct and privileges and functions of its employees. It may, in the manner set out in the code of conduct, suspend or dismiss employees of the college and may order an employee of the college who has been suspended to refrain from being on the premises under the control of the college and to refrain from participating in any of the activities of the college, or issue such other conditions as it may consider necessary.

This necessitates the development of capacity in College Council members to have a good understanding of labour issues. The College Council members can, at their level, develop partnerships with employee representatives. These partnerships would include recognition of the critical role played by College Councils and their involvement in the planning, development, implementation and monitoring of diversity management programmes, and should be facilitated through processes such as training to empower both College Council members and employee representatives. These partnerships would also assist in developing their capacity to identify, prevent and solve diversity-related problems in the workplace. The College Councils should be involved in assessment processes aimed at identifying particular diversity needs and support

programmes for employees experiencing barriers to career development and performance.

College Councils, as structures responsible for the governance of FET colleges, should facilitate the implementation of a diversity management policy. In so doing, College Councils should enhance employee and other stakeholder ownership of diversity management policy and ensure that diversity managers remain accountable to college governance. Such accountability should involve transparency in the running and management of diversity training programmes as well as in the provision of timely, accessible and accurate information. All the stakeholders, particularly local communities and trade union leaders, should be encouraged and supported to participate in policy-making, especially in the area of needs assessment and planning to overcome barriers to human resource development.

Good human management and career development practices should be supported to maximise human potential with the aim of effective management of diversity. Employment and personnel management practices should be based on ability, non-discrimination and the need to redress the imbalances of the past in order to achieve broad representation. With regard to human resources, College councils should play an enabling rather than a controlling function. In this way, College Council practices should be goal-oriented rather than rule bound, within a framework where necessary control mechanisms are in place to ensure effective organisational management and accountability.

It has been indicated in this study project (see paragraph 5.2.2) that the issue of redress and creating equal opportunities are priorities if the needs of all public employees in the country are to be adequately met and their right to employment realised. Government policy makes it clear that funding and the allocation of resources remains a key mechanism for addressing previous disadvantage and achieving equity. The College Councils, in collaboration with the Department of Education and the State, should therefore design a funding model to facilitate

redress, particularly to overcome urban-rural disparities among college campuses and also to facilitate the equal integration of employees previously excluded from or marginalised in the further education and training system. Moreover, the funding model should lead to the transformation of the further education and training system into one which accommodates the diversity needs of all employees and ensures barrier-free access to job opportunities available in the FET sector.

As a result of unfair discrimination in employment, certain categories of the people in South African workplaces were never classified as employees until recently. The diverse workforce so characteristic of South African society was denied its rightful place in workplaces and so too was its contribution, to the detriment of the country's competitive advantage both internally and externally (see paragraph 5.2.1). It is thus appropriate to propose that the College Council, as employer representative at institutional level, should take the responsibility of setting the tone for the achievement of employment equity objectives. The introduction of employment equity, affirmative action and skills development in the workplace makes training intervention imperative. Training in diversity implies that a diverse body of employees will be developed in FET institutions. Thus, College Councils should assess diversity training programmes to ensure that they address issues such as conservative mind-sets and fears of employment equity and affirmative action. They should also encourage teamwork among a diversified workforce with different cultures, qualifications and backgrounds, and accommodate women in posts hitherto the preserves of men.

#### **6.3.4 The College Management Team**

The way in which an FET college management system is structured and organised impacts directly on the process of human resource development and HR policies. The general opinion overseas and in South Africa is that the work of a college manager has moved away from a pedagogic-didactic task towards one of management (Bush 1995:5). This implies that the increasing diversity of the



environment, which, in turn, increases the diversity of the college's workforce, increases the challenges managers face in effectively managing diversity. In order to accomplish this, they need the co-operation of a wide range of persons who are involved in the functioning of the college. The effective organisation of all the people with an interest in the democratic functioning of the college to meet the diverse needs of the employees will make the college management team "advocates" for workers (Kruger & Dunning 1999:1121). It is important to note that the needs of the employees or the needs of the college management should not prevent their giving priority to creating equal opportunities, and fair and just treatment of diverse employees.

In order to insure "advocacy" for all employees it is important that the college managers develop a college management system that is consultative, non-adversary and supportive of the growth and development of staff members. It should nurture an optimistic, self-respecting attitude. The secret of success lies in a college managers' ability to understand the diversity needs of the people and to adjust the level of support accordingly. College managers should handle diversity issues with great care if they are going to maintain the active participation of a diverse workforce. They need to appreciate before they can respond to a particular set of diversity issues effectively. They should demonstrate an understanding and sensitivity to the diversity needs of their employees and offer an appropriate level of support.

In developing diversity management programmes, college managers should ensure that no one group is perceived to have the overriding prerogative of being the "dominant" group. They should develop diversity management programmes that meet the diversity needs of all stakeholders. These programmes or structures should aim to ensure that the needs of employees are not marginalised, underplayed or overlooked, and that barriers to career development and equal opportunities are addressed. The college managers should be concerned with all major employment decisions at an institutional level they should ensure that recruitment, selection, appointment and promotion

procedures are transparent, and also that employees' opinions and suggestions are considered. It should be the responsibility of the college management team to constantly keep in mind their obligation to the principle of distributive justice which dictates that the distribution of pay raises, promotions, job titles, interesting job assignments, office space, and other organisational resources among members of an organisation should be fair.

#### **6.3.4.1 What can be done by college managers to effectively manage diversity?**

The findings confirmed that managers can either promote the effective management of diversity or derail such efforts, and are thus critical to this process (see paragraph 2.5). The following section suggests the roles that can be played by an effective college manager of diversity in order to improve his or her skills

##### **(i) The college manager should be the developer of an emotional climate for growth**

Individuals function best when they have a good self-concept and rapport with those around them. In a college, employees need to have a satisfying feeling about themselves and about the college situation. They would perform their jobs most successfully when they have a feeling of ease, of belonging, and of acceptance by their seniors and fellow staff members. A college manager can do a great deal to develop this kind of emotional climate by talking to employees and by showing an interest in what they do, what they think, and how they feel. Such a college manager would help to create a friendly, accepting emotional climate in the workplace, which has a profound effect upon a diverse workforce, and thus the formation of positive attitudes, perceptions and feelings about diversity issues in the workplace.

## **(ii) The college manager should be a stimulator of employees**

The findings indicated that one of the most important roles of the college manager is that of stimulator and supporter of employees. Outstanding results can be achieved when a college manager is active in building specific skills and creating policies that get the best from every employee, in showing them ways and procedures to improve their contribution to good job performance. This implies that administrators should take care of their employees, who in turn want supervisors to reward them for good job performance, to stand up for them, to be approachable, and to assist them in the solution of personal problems. Above all else, employees want their supervisor to protect their jobs. They need encouragement and support, especially when they make mistakes. These qualities give employees a feeling of worth when the college manager reinforces their behaviour by letting them know they can do a good job.

The college manager should define a mission, organise the tasks to be accomplished, and devise methods to perform them. This includes such specifics as establishing organisational patterns, developing two-way channels of communication, and assigning specific tasks to individuals. One common error managers make when initiating diversity programmes is the belief that concern for mission achievement and concern for cultural diversity are mutually contradictory (see paragraph 5.2.6). There is no plausible yardstick for organisational effectiveness that has productivity goals at the one end and the accomplishment of diversity at the other, and thus, the effective organisation will satisfy them both. If managers are to be stimulators of employees in their colleges, this function should be recognised at all levels of the hierarchical structure, and should be translated into general policy guidelines.

## **(iii) The college manager should be a communicator**

Another role that the college manager, as a diversity manager, should perform is that of a communicator. As diversity managers, college administrators should not only be able to communicate successfully with employees, but also with trade

union leaders, employers, parents and local community. They need to be knowledgeable about human relations and adept at public relations. Today the FET college sector is criticised for failing to maintain close contact with the world outside the college (see paragraph 5.2.1). On many occasions, negative perceptions have developed because FET colleges have not kept the public informed about the significant things being done to create equal opportunities for diverse employees. It is therefore imperative that FET colleges keep stakeholders informed about the developments that are taking place within the FET sector. This will help to alleviate distrust that might exist between college management and other stakeholders.

In order to lay the foundation for the kind of diversity management system that would accommodate all employee groups, college managers will need to be focused more immediately on addressing the weaknesses and deficiencies of the current system. The reorganisation should be viewed as an ongoing process in order to attain the desired landscape depicting democratic participation and sustainability. A high level of adaptability and performance is required on the part of college managers in order to provide for increased employee diversity and to cater for diversified personal needs.

The college managers will need to provide evidence in terms of

- the development of administration and management systems for personnel administration, logistic and procurement administration, and in-house communication systems
- the development of diversity management policy, managerial knowledge and skills to perform new roles in public relations, marketing, communication, multi-campus management and partnerships
- the establishment of the management and administration structures in a manner consistent with national democratic principles

- documented processes for undertaking self-assessment, evaluation, action planning and obtaining and responding to views of employees and other stakeholders about opportunities and services offered
- target-setting using benchmarking based on relevant and consistent performance indicators.

As indicated by the earlier findings (see paragraph 5.2.1), a diversity programme is not likely to succeed without support from the Rector. The success of a diversity initiative will depend upon being well planned, institution-wide, and managed from the top. Rectors have the power not only to influence what goes on throughout their colleges but they can also set up functional diversity structures and appropriate reward systems that will determine such matters as who communicate with whom, who will cooperate and who will compete, how motivated employees will be, and so on. Structures should be devised to provide opportunities for continual feedback and evaluation in the change process. Without open channels of communication, college managers cannot know the outcome of their efforts they are neither confronted with failure nor rewarded for success. Criteria that measure success in achieving diversity should be part of the annual evaluation of all college managers, administrators and supervisors. Furthermore, cultural diversity topics should be incorporated into all diversity training programmes.

### **6.3.5 The role of trade union leaders**

The findings indicated that very little in the South African employees' background or training prepares them for the kind of democratic labour politics where they have to engage with the management, take stands, resolve conflict and negotiate differences. The literature survey indicated that colleges, like schools, are to some extent stuck with their past, with their reputation, the kinds of people or staff they hired years ago, their site and traditions (see Hartshorne 1992:290 and Bascia 1990:302). These patterns take years if not decades to change. For example, staff members who are accustomed to a power culture with a strong

control figure will find it very difficult to adjust to the more participative task culture even if they claim this is what they want. This kind of ambivalence undermines the sense of empowerment that seems to be essential for effective employee participation. Confusion prevails even within the trade union involvement in the management of FET colleges.

It should be the duty and responsibility of trade union leaders to orientate their followers on the value and benefits of effective management of diversity for their colleges. Since the trade unions have a responsibility to pursue the values of freedom, justice, equality and democracy (see paragraph 5.2.8), they have to give prominence to consultative college management, both as a fundamental human right and as one of the prerequisites for the country's democratic development. A number of improvements and changes should be implemented within the organisational structures of the trade unions in order to raise the quality of their involvement in diversity issues of the FET colleges.

These improvements and changes should include the following

- Trade unions should keep themselves free from political controversy and interference. This is especially true in KwaZulu-Natal, where political violence had engulfed the areas. Negative perceptions and barriers resulting from political controversy and interference would be minimised. Furthermore, trade unions would be able to operate freely without fear of being labelled and perceived as agents of political parties. It should therefore be the responsibility of trade union leaders to raise awareness, among their members, of the many subtle yet obstructive ways in which diverse employee groups can come to be treated over time.
- Trade unions should move away from the adversarial stance that has characterised the traditional relationship between labour unions and management. It is only in the spirit of cooperation that trade union involvement can work. Trade union leaders should ensure that the development of consultative management in FET colleges is not hampered by

the adversarial relationships which may occur at any level of college management. Trade unions at college level should move towards a more cooperative approach that would better serve the interests of all stakeholders. Such a move would lead to the formation of positive perceptions towards diversity management.

- Equal opportunities for all employees should be the goal of trade union leaders and college management. To that end, trade union involvement in colleges should continue to be an integral part of that process, but should not be viewed as a quick fix to the problems in the college management systems. Trade unions should view their involvement as one of many steps to improvement of the country's employment system. Their actions should not hinder or present barriers to equal opportunities. Trade unions should give priority to equal opportunities, fair treatment and effective management of diversity in the workplace.
- Trade unions should ensure that all stakeholders enjoy equal rights and the protection of human dignity. In planning their activities they should ensure that no party (employees, managers, parents, learners, and so on) becomes the victim of their members' militant actions. Trade unions should work towards a culture of tolerance, which would be exemplary to the younger generation. They should contribute to the development of a college management system that would promote joint action planning based on cooperation. Trade unions should also foster the development of consultative management that would enable all employees to participate actively in the implementation process. It is thus imperative that trade unions, in their attempt to further employees' rights and interests, guard against infringing upon the college managers' rights and jurisdiction as administrators of institutions. This implies that trade unions should ensure that their members' actions do not destroy the possibility of a strong administrative practice in FET colleges.

- For trade union involvement to be meaningful, it must occur between people who view themselves as equals. Trade union leaders should in no way allow a situation where their members approach college management with a patronising aim and communicate a view of themselves as superiors. Trade unions should not limit themselves to structures whose sole purpose is to protect the rights and interests of fee-paying members. Trade unions leaders should also develop strategies that will ensure the equal treatment of all employees based on job-related performance. Over and above this, trade unions should instil in their members a sense of acceptance and tolerance, as well as an awareness of the benefits and rewards for the support of diversity management initiatives.
- Trade union involvement in the management of colleges should not be a sporadic event, but should be carefully planned, organised and co-ordinated by college managers together with trade union leaders, who should take it upon themselves to manage trade union participation. Trade union involvement should be an on-going process, included in the college policy. The college policy should therefore reflect procedures in which trade unions would be made to contribute to the smooth functioning of the college. Consequently, college managers and trade union leaders have to know that employees should become actively involved and have a say in the management of their colleges, and in this way the college management system will demonstrate acceptance of the principle of democratic equality in all of its practices.

Although it is important for college managers and trade unions to find common grounds to liberate employees to do their work in open, democratic institutions, it is equally important for these parties to realise that the management of public institutions somehow differs from the management of other profit-making organisations. This implies that even the experienced trade union leaders may lack the relevant skills and knowledge to settle the cross-cultural conflicts that may occur within the college management situation. It is therefore imperative that



the college managers and trade union leaders develop structures which would allow them to share their skills, knowledge, experience and expertise in a relaxed, conducive atmosphere which would allow them to function as free people in a truly democratic society.

It is therefore recommended that trade unions should make changes in the ways in which they have traditionally conducted their business, in order to facilitate participation by diverse groups. These especially relate to removing the barriers to women's participation and addressing childcare needs, arranging transport to and from meetings, and adjusting the timing and location of union meetings. Efforts should be made by many unions to facilitate the participation of disabled members including disabled access at meetings and conferences, communication aids for members with hearing impairments and documents in accessible formats. Trade union education contributes to the development of union representatives, negotiators and leaders. Thus, trade unions should provide courses aimed both directly and indirectly at improving participation in union affairs by diverse groups. This would provide and encourage training on equality issues to members and non-members from under-represented groups.

#### **6.3.6 Community-based support system**

The research findings (see paragraph 5.3.4) indicated that colleges are part of the community in addition to being part of the larger public management and administration system. Problems of crime, vandalism, community apathy, inadequate finances in the department of education, employee militancy, violence, ethnic division, decline in economic resources, unemployment and others, not only affect the immediate community in which they occur, but they also have a bearing on the effective college administration, governance and management. The location of the college in the larger system has implications for the effectiveness of diversity management initiatives.

According to Kirton and Greene (2005:47), community and social groups play an important role in the construction of identity because it is the social group

membership that influence both how individuals perceive themselves and how others perceive them. It should also be noted that issues of public policy play a significant role in the development of employment law. Legislation is informed by the economic and political climate of the day and by the views of society, and is therefore quite fluid and, at times, responsive to the organisational actors and pressure groups involved. Although community pressure in South Africa, particularly in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, does not appear to have been a factor in the introduction of diversity management policy, there is nevertheless potential for social groups and communities to mount pressure on employers to establish clear policy guidelines on this and other forms of diversity in the workplace.

It was also noted in the study that social group membership is salient in the sense that a group's relationship with public institutions influences the individual members' interaction with, and experiences and perceptions of, those institutions, which in turn impact upon the choices and opportunities which individuals faced. The belief that ethnic people, who are economically active, are refused a job for racial, cultural or religious reasons would be much more damaging to the nature of relationships between the social group members and the institution.

It should be the duty and responsibility of the FET college management to adopt a progressive approach to combating the disabling factors to community participation in the workplace. The senior management's approach should be to mainstream diversity issues by placing day-to-day operation of the social and ethnic group diversity policy firmly in the hands of college middle managers. The policy should provide detailed guidance for middle managers on monitoring and support for diversity initiatives in the local community. Each middle manager should be required to prepare an annual report for submission to the College Council, to ensure the effectiveness of diversity management policy.

Another initiative should be the establishment of a community forum to enable the parties to consult effectively with each other and to provide the opportunity for the college middle managers to meet local community members, and to work together on policies, procedures, initiatives and concerns. The forum should be run by community members and meet on a quarterly basis. The community members should elect their representatives, who should be given administrative support by middle managers. The forum should provide feedback on how policies and procedures are affecting diverse social groups in their community, as well as acting as a source of new ideas.

Having outlined the importance of community involvement in the diversity issues affecting the FET colleges' workplace, the following approach to community participation is recommended

#### **6.3.6.1 Direct community services preventive education**

Community-wide educational programmes that provide direct experiences, benefits and value of diversity and diversity management initiatives should be made available to the population as a whole.

#### **6.3.6.2 Direct client services outreach**

Specific programmes that provide direct assistance and provide some redress for victims of discrimination should be devised. These programmes have to play a role in establishing and shaping acceptable behaviour in society, for example, by outlawing blatant acts of discrimination against particular groups.

#### **6.3.6.3 Indirect community services Influencing public policy**

Efforts to make the social environment more responsive to the diversity needs of the population as a whole are required. Understanding the history of an ethnic group, the current stage of its national and social identities, and its relationships with other groups is critical to recognising and resolving cross-cultural conflicts.

#### **6.3.6.4 Indirect client services advocacy**

Programmes that intervene in the environment of specific individuals or groups, allowing their special needs to be met, should be planned. For example, AIDS awareness training programmes that focus on educating community members about HIV and AIDS, dispelling myths, communicating relevant information, and emphasising the rights of HIV-positive individuals to privacy and environment that allows them to be productive are needed.

In addition to helping individuals, the diversity managers working with community should intervene in the environment. This happens when conditions in the community are seen as limiting instead of facilitating the growth and acceptance of community members. As diversity managers and other FET college professionals endeavour to respond to the diversity needs of their communities, the desirability of change becomes apparent. Their work brings them face to face with the victims of poverty, racism, sexism, and stigmatisation of political, economic and social systems that leave individuals feeling powerless, of community leaders who deny the need for responsiveness and of social norms that encourage isolation.

#### **6.4 CONCLUSION**

This study presented the FET college middle managers' views of the implementation of diversity management policy in public FET institutions in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. What has emerged is a picture of the further education and training system which is sadly still shaped by the ethos, systems and procedures inherited from the apartheid past. Past public administration, governance and management development practices are hampering the desired transformation process. The vision for the transformed further education and training system has been set out in the policy frameworks and new legislation. All these policy and legislative initiatives are, and have been, a significantly positive influence on the equality agenda, equal opportunities, fair and just treatment as well as the eradication of discrimination in the workplace. However, the

monitoring function has also been a serious consideration, and this is raising a variety of questions regarding the impact of these policy and legislative initiatives. It is for this reason that this study recommends State intervention in combating any form of discrimination, racism, or sexism in the public FET institutions.

The effective management of diversity means much more than hiring diverse employees. It means learning to appreciate and respond appropriately to the needs, attitudes, beliefs, and values that diverse people bring to an organisation. It also means correcting misconceptions about why and how different kinds of employee groups are different from one another and finding the most effective way to utilise the skills and talents of diverse employees. Managers in FET colleges need to proactively manage diversity to be able to attract and retain the best employees and effectively compete in a diverse global environment. The lack of a diversity management policy, funding for diversity training programmes, and senior management support for diversity initiatives in most colleges, is an indication that the implementation of diversity management programmes is poor or non-existent, although it must be pointed out that there are examples of positive practice in a few colleges. The failure to implement diversity management policy by most colleges is a weakness which might perpetuate negative stereotypes in the workplace, and thus destroy employee unity and greatly diminish productivity. It will ultimately disintegrate in the diminishing viability of the FET college.

The study revealed that it is not attitudes but behaviours, which create the major problems in managing diversity. There are many laws against discriminatory behaviours, but there are none against prejudicial attitudes. It is not what managers, administrators and supervisors think about diversity that hurts or helps employees, but how they act those thoughts. Unchecked discriminatory behaviours usually lead to conflict, and conflict raises the barrier to cultural differences between groups or individuals. Because managers and supervisors are creatures of culture, they tend to react to culturally different people in the same manner as their significant others. One of the dangers observed in

managing cross-cultural differences was the assumption that all individuals within an ethnic group are the same. This is an error that needs to be corrected if effective diversity management is to be implemented in FET colleges.

The increasing diversity of the environment, which in turn, increases the diversity of an FET college's workforce, increases the challenges managers face in effectively managing diversity. There are many more steps college managers can take to become sensitive to the ongoing effects of diversity in their colleges, to take advantage of all the contributions diverse employees can make, and prevent diverse employees from being unfairly treated. They can serve as role models and must institute policies and procedures to ensure that diverse members are treated fairly. They should enable diverse individuals to co-ordinate their efforts to cooperate with one another evaluate the extent to which diverse employees are treated fairly; inform employees about diversity policies and initiatives and the intolerance of discrimination; support diversity initiatives in the wider community and speak to diverse groups to interest them in career opportunities; commit resources to develop new ways to effectively manage diversity and eliminate biases and discrimination; take quick action to correct inequalities and curtail discriminatory behaviour and allocate resources to support and encourage effective management of diversity.

The FET college management system should allow for active participation of employees, while at the same time providing for the needs of all interested parties. The college management system should be based on respect for human dignity, freedom, equality and justice for all. It should be truly democratised. Trade unions and administrators must learn to work together in a new professionalism, free from the adversarial relationships being promulgated through mistrust and disrespect. The college managers should be willing to cede their traditional decision-making authority. They should not feel threatened by the increased diversity of the workforce in their colleges. In fact, college managers should be the facilitators of employee involvement in the management of diversity. Eventually, the diversity management initiatives will be determined by

all the social structures with an interest in the further education and training sector. This also means that the diversity management practices will be in line with the democratic principles of the country.

The college managers' concern must be for all the employees in their charge, whatever the racial, religious or cultural group of the employee. This does not mean that college managers should be neutral or lack commitment to their cultural values and practices. It implies that college managers should have the capacity to achieve a unity of common purpose and commitment, a unity that is far more fundamental than the question of whether they and their subordinates belong to the same cultural, religious or racial group. Both the college manager and the employees should be willing to implement and experiment with new ideas that may or may not work. Participative college management should be the goal of the college managers and their employees. To that end, effective management of diversity should begin to be an integral part of transformation process in FET colleges in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Given the formal authority that college managers have in FET institutions, they typically have more influence than other employees. They can either promote the effective management of diversity or derail such efforts, and thus, they are critical to this process. For example, in their interpersonal roles, managers can convey that effective management of diversity is a valued goal and objective they can serve as role models and institute policies and procedures to ensure that diverse members are treated fairly, and can enable diverse individuals and groups to co-ordinate their efforts and cooperate with each other both inside and outside the college.

When college managers commit to supporting diversity, their authority and positions of power and status would influence other members of the college to make a similar commitment. George and Jones (2006:125) support such a link when they state that people are more likely to be influenced and persuaded by others who have high status. Moreover, when managers commit to diversity, their

commitment would minimise the diversity management efforts of others. In addition, resources that are devoted to such diversity-related efforts would be supported and valued. Consistent with this reasoning, senior management commitment and rewards for the support of diversity initiatives are often a critical ingredient for the success of diversity management programmes. Finally, seeing FET college managers express confidence in the abilities and talents of diverse employees would cause other college members to be similarly confident and help to reduce any misconceptions and misgivings they might have as a result of ignorance or stereotypes.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

One of the shortcomings of this study is the fact that it was confined to middle managers in public Further Education and Training colleges in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal only. In general, a study of the diversity management system in FET colleges in the entire Republic of South Africa, or at least representative of numerous provinces, would prove more reliable. While the scope of this study had to be limited, it is possible that the results could provide important pointers for diversity management programmes in the whole country.

In particular, future research should investigate the framework for integrating diversity strategy management with HR policy areas and other strategic choices. Such an investigation would help decision-makers and scholars understand the linkages between environmental changes, managing diversity and other organisational strategic choices, HR policy areas, and individual, group, and organisational outcomes.



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## APPENDIX A

For Office Use


### SECTION A : PERSONAL INFORMATION

The information obtained in this survey will be treated as private and confidential. Please complete Section A by making a cross (x) on the appropriate block.

#### EXAMPLE

<b>1. Your Gender?</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
------------------------	-------------	---------------

1. Your Gender?

Male	Female
------	--------

2. Your Race?

African	Coloured	Indian	White
---------	----------	--------	-------

3. Your Home Language?

Afrikaans	English	IsiZulu	Other Specify...
-----------	---------	---------	------------------

4. Your Age Range?

26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65
-------	-------	-------	-------

5. Your Highest Educational Qualification?

Education Diploma	Bachelors Degree	Honours Degree	Masters Degree	Doctoral Degree	Other Specify
----------------------	---------------------	-------------------	-------------------	--------------------	------------------

6. Your position in the college?

Campus Manager	Deputy C. Manager	Assistant Manager	Deputy Manager	Other specify
-------------------	----------------------	----------------------	-------------------	---------------

7. Years of experience in the above position?

0-5	6-10	11-15	16 and above
-----	------	-------	--------------

## SECTION B : INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Please answer Section B by writing down your opinion in the space provided. Remember this is not a test of your performance.

1. What do you understand by the term “Diversity Management?”

.....

.....

.....

2. What do you understand by the term “Affirmative Action?”

.....

.....

.....

3. Does your College have a diversity management policy, and if so, who was involved in its formulation?

.....

.....

.....

4. What types of diversity training programmes are there for your College?

.....

.....

.....

5. Does your College communicate the policy and programme to employees and their representatives?

.....

.....

.....

6. What are the goals for the diversity training? Are they realistic?

.....

.....

.....

7. Who provides funding for diversity training?

.....  
.....  
.....  
8. How is the diversity training perceived by the employees?

.....  
.....  
.....  
9. Did the College capacitate the managers to deal with aspects of diversity management?

.....  
.....  
.....  
10. How many diversity awareness training workshops have you attended?

.....  
.....  
.....  
11. Does your College have an action plan covering the role of management?

.....  
.....  
.....  
12. Do you think your College Management is doing everything they should to ensure that workers are treated equally?

.....  
.....  
.....  
13. Do you think that the College Management represents the interests of diverse cultural groups?

14. How do employees of different cultures get accommodated into the college HR developmental plan?

.....

.....

.....

15. Does the College Management distinguish between “managing people” and “managing diversity”?

.....

.....

.....

16. What form of resistance has the College experienced regarding diversity management policy implementation?

.....

.....

.....

17. How do you deal with racial and cultural conflicts in your college?

.....

.....

.....

18. How do labour unions respond to diversity management plans of the college?

.....

.....

.....

19. What factors do you think might impair a labour union’s ability to deal effectively with diversity issues?

.....

.....

.....

20. How does the College respond when the employees criticise its diversity management plan?

.....  
.....  
.....  
21. To what extent do College Councils support diversity initiatives?

.....  
.....  
.....  
22. How does the diversity management strategy fit with the mission and vision of the college?

.....  
.....  
.....  
23. What factors can be regarded as barriers to the implementation of diversity management policy in your College?

.....  
.....  
.....  
24. What are the implications of the merger on your College?

.....  
.....  
.....  
25. What are your feelings about affirmative action policy in your College?

.....  
.....  
.....  
26. What would you recommend for proper and effective management of diversity in your College?

## **APPENDIX B**

2 Blesbok Street  
Vryheid  
3100  
10 November 2008

The Superintendent-General  
KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education  
P/Bag X9137  
Pietermaritzburg  
3200

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA**

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding middle management positions (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus managers and Deputy Campus Managers) in FET Colleges.

The research project is performed as a fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Administration Degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (see the attached document).

Your co-operation and support is always appreciated.

Sincerely

.....

Researcher

Mr D.M. Ntshangase

.....

Date



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI  
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO  
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Telephone: (033) 341 8611  
Facsimile: (033) 341 8612

## APPENDIX C

Private Bag X9137  
Pietermaritzburg, 3200  
228 Pietermaritz Street  
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

### RESOURCE PLANNING

INHLOKHOHOVISI

Enquiries: Mrs M Francis  
Imibuzo:  
Navrae:

HEAD OFFICE

Reference: 0049/2007  
Inkomba:  
Verwysing:

PIETERMARITZBURG

Date:  
Usuku:  
Datum:

Mr Dm Ntshangase  
2 Blesbok Street  
Vryheid  
3100

### PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS

The above matter refers.


Permission is hereby granted to interview learners and educators in selected schools of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal subject to the following conditions:

1. You make all the arrangements concerning your interviews.
2. Educators' programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, educators and schools are not identifiable in any way from the results of the interviews.
5. Your interviews are limited only to targeted schools.
6. A brief summary of the interview content, findings and recommendations is provided to my office.
7. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers and principals of schools where the intended interviews are to be conducted.

The KZN Department of education fully supports your commitment to research: Managing diversity in the transformation of public further education and training colleges in KwaZulu-Natal.

It is hoped that you will find the above in order.

Best Wishes

  
R Cassius Lubisi, (PhD)  
Superintendent-General



P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritzburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

**APPENDIX D**

The Rector  
Coastal KZN FET College  
Kwa- Makhutha


**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA**

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).


Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely



Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-2010  
Date

Approved: 



## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Elangeni FET College  
Pinetown


### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

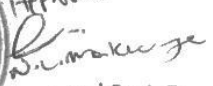
Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-2010  
.....  
Date



Approved  
  
26/05/2010

## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Mnambithi FET College  
Ladysmith


### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-10  
Date





## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Majuba FET College  
Newcastle


### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-10  
.....  
Date



Bobbie

## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Esayidi FET College  
Portshepstone


### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-2010  
.....  
Date

APPROVED  






## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Mthashana FET College  
Vryheid


### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-10  
.....  
Date





## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritzburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Thekwini FET College  
Durban

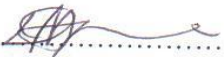
### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

*24-05-2010*  
.....  
Date

**THEKWINI FET COLLEGE**  
CENTRAL OFFICE  
PRIVATE BAG X06 262 D'AINTRÉE AVENUE  
DORMERTON, 4015 ASHERVILLE, 4091  
DATE: *25/05/2010*  
RECTOR: *R. CADIA*

## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Umfolozi FET College  
Richards Bay


### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.

The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

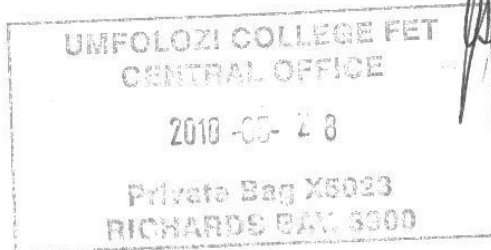
Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-2010  
.....  
Date

Approved





## APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 3258  
Pietermaritzburg  
3200  
24 May 2010

The Rector  
Umgungundlovu FET College  
Pietermaritzburg


### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby kindly request for your permission to collect data from personnel holding positions of management (Deputy Managers, Assistant Managers, Campus and Deputy Campus Managers) under your area of jurisdiction.


The research project is performed as a fulfillment of the requirement for my D Public Administration Degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This project has been approved by the Ethics Clearance Committee at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Superintendent-General of Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education ( see the attached documents).

Your co-operation is always appreciated.

Sincerely

  
.....  
Researcher  
Mr. D.M. Ntshangase

24-05-2010  
.....  
Date

Approved  


**UMGUNGUNDLOVU F.E.T. COLLEGE**  
**CENTRAL OFFICE**  
44 BURGER STREET TEL: 033 341 2100  
PRIVATE BAG X9060 FAX: 033 345 9827  
PIETERMARITZBURG 3200

**APPENDIX E**

2 BLESBOK STREET  
VRYHEID  
3100  
12 JULY 2010

DEAR SIR / MADAM

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

DURING THE LAST WEEK OF MAY 2010 YOU RECEIVED AN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE CONCERNING MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGES. YOU ARE KINDLY REQUESTED TO RETURN THAT SCHEDULE TO THE RESEARCHER BEFORE 31 JULY 2010.

IF YOU HAVE ALREADY RESPONDED AND RETURNED THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE, LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

.....  
MR DM NTSHANGASE - RESEARCHER

## APPENDIX F



RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)  
WESTVILLE CAMPUS  
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587  
EMAIL: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

---

29 AUGUST 2008

MR. DM NTSHANGASE (205524924)  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Dear Mr. Ntshangase

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0441/08D**

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been approved for the following project:

**"Managing diversity in the transformation of Public Further Education and Training Colleges in KwaZulu-Natal"**

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Yours faithfully

*Phumbelele Ximba*

MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA

→ cc. Supervisor (Prof. D Singh)  
cc. Ms. J Mazibuko