

Diversified Mentoring Relationships in The South African Context:

An Exploratory Framework

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degree of Masters in Commerce

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DECLARATION

I, Yusuf Smith declare that Diversified Mentoring Relationships in the South African Context: An Exploratory Framework is my own work that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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All thanks and praise be to Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. It is He that I give thanks to, above all.

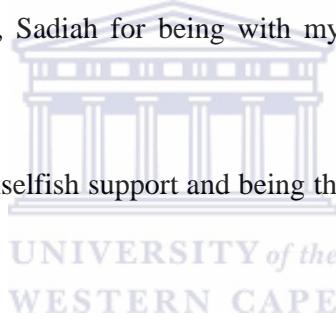
I want to thank the following people for their invaluable contribution and assistance in making this work possible.

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My children, Zayaan, Yusri' and Uzayr, for demonstrating patience and understanding while I was writing this report.

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ABSTRACT

The role that mentor and protégé play in transforming South African society in general and the business environment in particular, is important and lends new meaning to “leveling of the playing fields”. Fundamental to the success of any mentorship programme is the relationship between the mentor and the protégé. Since mentors play a key role in shaping the protégé they have to employ strategies that offer practical and emotional support to the protégé while understanding the implications of mentoring in a particular social and political context.

The mentor is also an intermediary between the protégé and the organization.

Diversified mentoring relationships, involving experienced ‘white’ mentors and protégés from historically disadvantaged backgrounds, pose particular challenges in the South African context. Despite the importance of mentoring there is a dearth of local literature on diversified mentoring relationships in the South African context. Drawing on the international literature, this research report develops an exploratory analytical framework to understand mentoring relationships, with particular reference to the South African regulatory context and the internal organizational factors that impact mentoring relationships, and the effect on affirmative action in South African organizations.

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KEYWORDS

Affirmative Action

Developmental needs

Diversified Mentoring relationships

Homogenous Mentoring relationships

Mentor

Mentoring support

Power dynamics

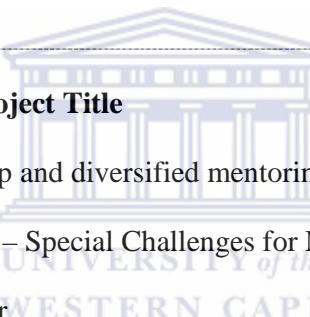
Protégé

Role definition

Trust



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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Post-apartheid South Africa, at every sphere of society, can be a fascinating and exciting place in its current transformative years. Paradoxically, it is also a country faced with many social, political and economic challenges, despite all the good intentions and rights espoused by the new democratic state and entrenched in the constitution and bill of rights.

Originating in the constitution is a new labour law regime which has its focus on redressing past injustices by transforming the workplace through the promotion of tri-partite collaboration between government, business and labour. Of particular legal importance is the Employment Equity Act (1998) which promotes affirmative action and accords previously disadvantaged individuals opportunities to advance at all occupational levels in both public and private sectors. While the Act is progressive and ambitious in nature, it doesn't provide mechanisms or tools to ensure the sustainability of this advancement.

Statistics indicate that an increasing proportion of people entering the job market at middle and senior levels in South African organizations are black, often affirmative action (AA) appointees. They may possess academic qualifications but often lack appropriate experience in the world of work. It is here that the role of a more senior experienced person is required. Someone who will guide the junior, show him the ropes and impart knowledge that is not outlined in any job description.

Mentoring is one tool that, if applied appropriately as part of AA programmes, may play an invaluable role in the success of such programmes. In this way, the recipients of AA can become meaningful industrial citizens, effective and illustrious examples for the next generation and bring about a platform to effectively embrace and deal with workplace challenges of the 21st century.

This study analyses mentoring and diversified mentoring relationships and the implications for AA in South African companies. There is limited empirical research and theoretical literature conducted on diversified mentoring relationships in the South African context. For this reason, the international literature will be probed with specific focus on the issues the literature has identified as shaping and influencing mentoring relationships in general, as well as diversified mentoring relationships. Based on this analysis of the literature, the paper develops a number of hypotheses on diversified mentoring relationships.

1.2 Defining mentorship and diversified mentoring relationships

The concept of mentoring finds its roots in ancient Greek mythology. Mentor was the teacher of Telemachus, son of Odysseus (Meyer and Fourie, 2004). According to the authors, Odysseus sought the wisest teacher in his kingdom to train Telemachus who would one day exercise leadership over his empire. In her comprehensive study, *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life*, Kram (1985) also makes reference to the same mythology and summarizes the relationship between mentor and protégé as “the relationship between a young adult and an older, more experienced adult that helps the younger individual learn to navigate the adult world and the world of work”.

Kram (1985) also makes reference to a number of studies which describe the nature of relationships between a less experienced and a more experienced adult in the work context from varying perspectives. Earlier authors cited in Kram (1985) refer to mentoring relationships as “sponsor relationships”, “patron relationships”, “godfather relationships” and a “relationship between good friends” respectively.

For the purpose of this study we will use Amos and Pearse's (2002) definition of a mentor as “an experienced manager who provides guidance and direction to a junior manager or professional (mentee) to facilitate the mentee's personal and career development”.

Mentoring relationships in the work environment can thus be defined as relationships between experienced and less experienced people. Typically the former assumes the role of mentor while the latter is usually known as the mentee or protégé'. Although different in picture and practice, there is consensus that mentoring relationships have potential value because they contribute to individual growth and career advancement.

A large number of companies are entering the global market resulting in an ever-changing work environment. This is a reality prominent in many organizations which introduces another dimension to mentoring diversity. Diversified mentoring relationships can be defined as “relationships comprising mentors and protégés who differ on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, disability or other group memberships associated with power in organizations” (Ragins, 2002). These types of mentoring relationships could encompass any scenario such as “a male mentor, female protégé, a Latino mentor and Caucasian protégé, a lesbian mentor and heterosexual protégé, or any

combination of these various group memberships” (Ragins, 2002). In the South African context diversified mentoring relationships would typically involve a white male mentor and a black and/or female protégé (Amos and Pearse, 2002). This is largely due to the country’s political history and the congruent power base of white males in South African corporations.

1.3 Mentoring

Internationally, mentoring is a relatively new concept in organizational settings. In South African companies, mentoring only became prominent since the mid-1980’s (Amos and Pearse, 2002).

Mentoring is an intense, one-on-one relationship in which an experienced, senior person provides assistance to a less experienced, more junior colleague with the objective to enhance the junior’s professional and personal development (Hezlett and Gibson, 2005).

Mentoring relationships are therefore distinctly different from other work relationships and comprise unique elements, aspects and functions. Since the traditional mentor is the more senior, experienced person in the mentoring relationship, there are greater responsibilities and obligations on him. It is also important to observe when and how the navigation takes place during the evolution of the relationship.

Valuable insight into the mentoring relationship is drawn from Kram’s (1985) seminal study which notes that mentoring functions are part of a developmental relationship that enhances the growth and advancement of both individuals. Kram (1985) summarized the functions of mentoring into two broad categories – career functions and psychosocial

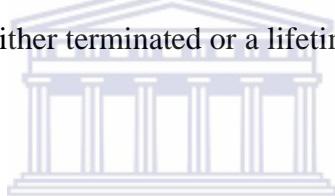
functions. The career development role typically involves coaching, furthering visibility, sponsoring advancement while the psychosocial role focuses on role modeling, counseling and friendship. Together, these functions prepare and equip the protégé to address challenges throughout his career. The author further argues that the range of career functions and psychosocial functions may vary and it is not always that both sets of functions are prevalent in every developmental relationship.

Kram (1985) found that career functions have three common characteristics – position, experience and influence. The first one is possible because of the seniority of the mentor's position, his wealth of experience and his (or her) organizational clout. It also serves career enhancement for the junior by aiding him to learn about organizational life, gain exposure, and obtain promotions. Finally, it is reciprocal in that the senior person gains respect from superiors and peers by developing younger talent.

Whereas career functions enhance advancement in the organization, psychosocial functions boost the protégé's sense of competence, identity and effectiveness in a professional role. Psychosocial functions deal with intimate aspects and therefore depend more on the quality of the interpersonal relationship. To this extent, psychosocial functions affect the individual's relationship with self and with important others both within and outside the organization (Kram, 1985).

Kram's (1985) study suggests that mentor relationship progresses through four predictable phases, namely initiation, cultivation, separation and finally redefinition. In the initiation

phase, which is the first six to twelve months, the relationship is started and becomes significant for both parties with each individual gaining valuable experience through interaction. The next two to five years is known as the cultivation phase. The career functions and psychosocial functions usually peak during this phase as both mentor and protégé discover the real value of relating to each other. Phase three is referred to as the separation stage and it usually occurs after five years. It is summed up as a period of loss on the one hand yet it can be a period of excitement. This phase is critical to development as it allows the protégé to demonstrate job skills without the support of the mentor, or due to the operational dictates within the organizational context. During the final phase called redefinition, the relationship is either terminated or a lifetime peer relationship or friendship may evolve.



1.4 South African Case – special challenges for mentors

Amos and Pearse (2002) assert that in South Africa it is evident that a great number of mentors will be white males mentoring protégés who are black and/or female. They are of the opinion that this will impact the mentor in two broad areas: “the commitment to mentoring” and “the functions fulfilled by the mentor”. They claim that because he will be mentoring an individual who may be a threat to his own position, he must learn to deal with his own fears as a white male in the new dispensation where he is “no longer the dominant holder of organizational power, or the primary beneficiary of job opportunities, upward mobility and higher incomes”.

It is thus imperative to recognize that the white male mentor's role will require him to focus on new functions rather than those that were traditionally applied. To this end they suggest that mentors need to "assess the developmental needs of the protégé, develop the potential of the protégé as a critical thinking contributor to the organization, and be aware of the barriers within the organization to both their own development and advancement, and that of the protégé". To achieve any success with the new functions, the authors propose that the mentor should play the role of a facilitator. This role would involve facilitating "the socialization of the protégé as well as bridging the gap between the two worlds of mentor and protégé".



Organizations, being a microcosm of the greater society, will reflect *inter alia*, the political context of that society. In South Africa most companies have a predominantly "white culture" and reflect the values of the communities from which top management is sourced. Since role-model functions will be affected by the prevalent culture and values of the organization, the white mentor must be aware of what role he will choose. If the mentor chooses to merely mediate, then he will be mediating a white world to a black protégé, thereby developing the black protégé to fit into a white world. It becomes imperative for the mentor to adopt a moderating role between the protégé, human resources management and the organization's culture and values (Amos and Pearse, 2002).

1.5 Research Questions

In South Africa there is limited literature and research on mentoring and in particular, diversified mentoring relationships. Mentoring relationships in the context of AA

strategies are also a relatively new area of study in the South African context and therefore a limited number of case studies are available to draw lessons from for research purposes.

Given these contextual parameters, this paper reviews the literature and is primarily based on integrating and adapting the existing international literature to the South African context. The research approach entails a review of relevant South African legislation and literature but to a larger extent, international literature.

A hypothesized model is developed guided by the following questions and hypotheses will be developed based on them:

- What impact does South African legislation have on the incidence of mentoring programmes?
- How do organizational and psychosocial factors influence homogeneous and diversified mentoring relationships?
- What implications do mentoring relationships have for employment equity and AA?

1.6 Outline of this report

Chapter Two examines macro influences on the mentoring relationship. Chapter Three focuses on the impact of organizational life, such as the organizational culture and climate, on mentoring relationships. This Chapter will also discuss the general description of the hypothesised model and provide definitions of all terms used in the model.

Chapter three will then cite reasons for the three different types of mentoring relationships found in South Africa. Organizational influences and inter-personal factors will be probed and certain hypotheses will follow. Chapter Four considers the more intimate and personal/interpersonal factors that influence and shape the developmental relationship. The report concludes with a discussion on the implications of mentoring for employment equity and AA.

1.7 Conclusion

The word “mentor” means different things to different people. While mentoring relationships take many forms, they are in essence, relationships where one senior, more experienced person guides and supports a junior, less experienced person in the organization. The relationship is usually a long-term arrangement with both parties making personal, inter-personal and organizational investments. It is also reciprocal in nature and beneficial to both parties. Due to the intimacy of this relationship in the work context, it will affect both parties personally, emotionally and psychologically.

It is therefore no surprise that when people talk about their career histories, they often reflect on their defining moments, their personal milestones and achievements, the significant relationships with the seniors who have contributed to their development, and in particular, those who have taken a personal interest in them.

In the South African context, careful attention should be given to mentoring programmes and the functions of both mentors and protégés. The mentoring relationship takes place in a particular socio-political and socio-economic environment and as such the mentor and

protégé will often be from different racial or cultural backgrounds. It will therefore be necessary to take into account these elements when designing diversified mentoring programmes for these types of relationships.



DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

“**Affirmative Action**” means the preferential treatment of people from designated groups;

“**Basic Conditions of Employment Act**” means the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act No 75 of 1997);

“**Black people**” is a generic term for Africans, Coloureds and Indians;

“**Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act**” (BBBEE) is the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (Act No 53 of 2003);

“**Designated groups**” are defined in the Employment Equity Act to mean black people, women and people with disabilities

“**Diversified mentoring relationships**” are defined as relationships comprising mentors and protégés who differ on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, disability or other group memberships associated with power in organizations

(Clutterbuck and Ragins, 2002)

“**Employment Equity Act**” is the Employment Equity Act (Act No 55 of 1998);

“**Homogenous mentoring relationship**” means that both mentor and protégé share the same race. For example white mentor, white protégé, or black mentor and black protégé.

“**Labour Relations Act**” is the Labour Relations Act (Act No 66 of 1995);

“**Power**” is defined as “the influence of one person over others, stemming from an individual characteristic, an interpersonal relationship, a position in an organization or from membership in a social group” (Ragins, 1997).

“**SETA**” means Sectoral and Educational Training Authority

“**Skills Development Act**” is the Skills Development Act (Act No 97 of 1998)

CHAPTER 2

MENTORING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REGULATORY CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

In South Africa careful consideration needs to be given to the macro, social, economic and political factors that influence mentoring relationships. Mentoring programmes first came into prominence in this country during the 1980's to address concerns about the skills shortage, especially at managerial level, and to facilitate black advancement (Amos and Pearse, 2002). With the introduction of black political enfranchisement in South Africa, priority has been given to AA and black economic empowerment. As a consequence, previously excluded groups, particularly blacks and women, are now included in managerial ranks, often at senior levels in organizations. In this Chapter special focus will be given to the particular socio-political and legal context in which mentoring takes place in South Africa in order to better understand the factors shaping diversified mentoring relationships. The chapter concludes by developing a number of hypotheses relating to the distinctive context within which mentoring relationships in South African organizations are shaped, and the impact that legislation has on the incidence of mentoring programmes.

2.2 Socio-political context in which laws are located

Labour legislation implemented during the height of the Apartheid era was designed to benefit the white sector of the South African workforce. Whites were given preferential treatment both in terms of jobs and the type of jobs and skills they could acquire to perform those jobs. Jobs at the lowest levels of organizations were usually given to Africans,

Coloureds and Indians. In addition, a very small number of black people (if any) occupied managerial positions as these were reserved for whites. The notion of job reservation was only to change through one of the recommendations made by the Wiehahn Commission in 1979. The Wiehahn Commission also made recommendations with regard to the participation of black trade unions in collective bargaining and the creation of an industrial court for the referral of labour disputes (Barron, 2006).

Almost two decades after the Wiehahn-era South Africa's new political dispensation ushered in a new labour regime which is underpinned by four core pieces of legislation. These are the Labour Relations Act (LRA) of 1995, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) of 1997, the Employment Equity Act (EEA) of 1998 and the Skills Development Act (SDA) of 1998. These acts are indeed ambitious in nature and are intended to bring about the much needed transformation in the workplace congruent with other spheres of South African society. In short, the ultimate twin purpose of this new labour regime is to regulate the relations between government, business and organized labour, and to transform the workplace with a particular view to redress past injustices and ensure the development of a labour force with the skills required to support economic growth.

While the three main stakeholders – organized labour, organized business and government – agree that transformation is a necessity, they are also acutely aware of workplace constraints such as the skills shortage, shortage of business leaders and a dire need for skilled managers, especially black ones. As transformation cannot be effected without the

inclusion of black people at every level in organizations, companies have started with a range of transformation initiatives aimed at redressing past imbalances. These initiatives included promoting union shop stewards and selecting shop floor workers for management positions. While these initiatives were positive steps in addressing some of the organizational challenges, they have had limited success at senior management level. The arguments advanced for the failure of these initiatives include the lack of systematic and consistent guiding, coaching and mentoring of the recipients of these AA programmes (Amos and Pearse, 2002).

The Malaysian experience is perhaps the best example for South Africa to draw valuable lessons from as parallels exist in terms of a majority benefiting from AA programmes. One such similarity, according to Thomas (2002), is that the religious differences in Malaysia broadly coincide with ethnic differences experienced in South Africa. Another comparison between South Africa and Malaysia is that economic power is largely situated in the hands of an ethnic minority who, according to popular perception, share their colonial and exploitative role (Adam, 2000).

While South Africa's Employment Equity Act was intended to redress past inequalities in the workplace, the Malaysian New Economic Policy (NEP) of 1971 was introduced to favour indigenous Malaysians. This comprehensive policy was implemented to reduce and eradicate poverty and restructure society to eliminate the association of race with economic standing. The ultimate objective of the NEP was to promote national unity and social integration by implementing quotas at universities, in government institutions and in the

ownership of enterprises and new businesses. It is evident that the intended objectives of the NEP were realized as Malaysians now constitute about 67 to 75 per cent of university students, own 66 per cent of corporate assets and have migrated from agriculture into manufacturing, trade and the civil service (Thomas, 2002).

Unlike the success of the Malaysian model, South African companies have a long way to go before such impressive results can be achieved. Considering the statistics shown in Table 1, there is still a long road ahead for before the noble objectives of the Employment Equity Act can be realized.



2.3 The Employment Equity Act of 1998

Following the passage of the LRA, further fundamental changes in labour legislation were introduced by the Green Paper on Employment and Occupation. The Employment Equity Bill was tabled before parliament in 1997 and promulgated in 1998. The preface by the then minister of labour, Tito Mboweni, explained the rationale for these changes:

“Apartheid has left behind a legacy of inequality reflected in disparities in the distribution of jobs, occupations and income. The government is of the view that it is necessary to redress these imbalances and to inculcate within every workplace a culture of non-discrimination and diversity. When it comes to jobs, training and promotion, we want a fair deal for all workers. Let this bill be the subject of debate in every workplace and by all workers and employers” (cited in Adam, 2000: 96).

South African companies that employ 50 or more employees or those with a specified annual financial turnover (Schedule 4 of the Act) are required to comply with the provisions of the Employment Equity Act and implement initiatives to employ blacks at every occupational level, including senior management. The chief aim of the Act is to redress the legacies of apartheid in the South African workplace. In this regard, it is envisaged that employment equity will be achieved through the promotion of equal opportunity and fair treatment through the elimination of unfair discrimination. The other tool to achieve employment equity is through AA measures as a means to advance designated groups - black people, women and people with disabilities. To this end, the Act promotes equitable representation of people from designated groups in all occupational categories and levels in South African companies.

Thomas (2002) notes that prior to the passage of the Employment Equity Act, large companies in South Africa had already introduced strategies since the early 1990's to advance blacks through programmes of AA. These black advancement programmes, equal opportunity programmes and corrective action programmes primarily aimed at including historically disadvantaged people in management structures (Thomas, 2002).

Mentoring and Employment Equity

Despite the corrective and progressive efforts by certain large South African companies prior to the Act, and the promulgation of Employment Equity legislation, the objectives of the Employment Equity Act are not being realized at the pace in which it was envisaged.

While some progress has been made, Thomas (2002) argues that the process is not

occurring rapidly enough and observes that management structures are still the domain of white males, although Table 2 highlights that white males no longer constitute the majority of managers. The Breakwater Monitor, a study by the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business (GSB) in 1997, reported the breakdown by race in management positions; Africans 6.15%, Coloureds 0.36%, Indians 0.9% and Whites 92.59% (See Table 1).

Table 1: Racial Breakdown of Managers (1997-2003)

Year	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
1997	6.1%	0.3%	0.9%	92.7%
1999	9%	5%	5%	81%
2003	23.8%	7.6%	6.1%	62.5%

Source (1997 and 1999: Breakwater Monitor; 2003: Commission for Employment Equity)

In a follow-up study by the same institute in September, 1999 it showed significant progress with Africans 6.87%, Coloureds 4.39%, Indians 4.32% and Whites declining to 84.42% of managerial positions. According to the same report, gender representivity was 83% male and 17% female. This study conducted across 17 sectors of the South African economy, indicated that only five sectors had more than 20% black managers namely, communication (27%), financial services field staff (26%), fast moving consumer goods (26%), oil (30%) and retail (29%). These statistics clearly indicate that much more needed

to be done if we were to give effect to the letter of the Employment Equity Act in so far as AA is concerned, even more so at managerial levels (Adam, 2000).

The management by race profile in the first report of the Commission for Employment Equity (1999-2001) revealed a similar picture in that white males still dominate this occupational category of the South African workforce with a representation of 81%.

The fourth report of the Commission for Employment Equity (2003-2004), used data from the 2003 Labour Force Survey and employment equity reports received in 2003. Significant progress was evident. The management profile by race was; Africans 23.9%, Coloureds 7.6%, Indians 6.1% and Whites 62.5%. The report also showed that females now represented 27% of the management category. The gender breakdown by race is shown in Table 2. For the first time white males represented less than 50% of South African managers.

Table 2: Gender and Racial Breakdown of Managers (2004)

	African	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Males	16.%	4.6%	4.5%	47.1%
Females	7.3%	3.0%	1.6%	15.4%
Total	23.9%	7.6%	6.1%	62.5%

Source (1997 and 1999: Breakwater Monitor, 2001 and 2004: Commission for Employment Equity)

Mentoring first came into prominence in South Africa from the mid 1980's with the main objective being to address the skills shortage and to act as a catalyst for black advancement because it was more motivated by social responsibility rather than the development of human capital, it failed the intended beneficiaries (Amos and Pearse 2002). It is noteworthy that while South African legislation speaks volumes of "training", "development" and "redressing past injustices", it is silent on "mentoring". The reason why South African companies do not place a major focus on mentoring could be because it is not enforced through legislation. Meyer and Fourie (2004) however note that organizations have introduced mentoring relationships "as a tool that gives substance to its commitment to people development" and started to use mentors as "change agents and facilitators to accelerate employee development into higher positions".

A key factor influencing mentoring is the obligation on firms to meet the objectives of the Employment Equity Act. Chapter 1, Section 2 of the Act outlines the chief purpose - to achieve equity in the workplace by:

- (a) "promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and
- (b) implementing AA 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".

In addition, Chapter 3, Section 13 states that "every designated employer must, in order to achieve employment equity, implement affirmative action measures for people from

designated groups in terms of this Act”. Affirmative action measures are defined as “measures designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer”. In the same Chapter, Section 2(d) refers to the retention and development of people from designated groups and the implementation of appropriate training as AA measures that a designated employer must implement. Although not explicitly discussed in the legislation, mentoring can be regarded as another appropriate AA measure that may be adopted to advance the Act’s purpose.



Hypothesis 1

As the need to comply with legislation promoting affirmative action should encourage the adoption of mentoring,

- a) *Organizations that are required to comply directly with the EEA requirements are more likely to implement mentoring programs than those who do not comply or do not need to comply.*
- b) *organizations that have developed AA programs that are full-compliant with the EEA are more likely to have effective mentoring programs to ensure effective advancement of junior and inexperienced employees.*
- c) *Organizations that have recognized the need to actively adopt the EEA philosophy of redressing past injustices, are more likely to commit resources to support mentoring programmes.*

2.4 The Skills Development Act of 1998

The development of skills, especially directed at employees from disadvantaged groups, is further supported by the Skills Development Act (SDA). The purposes of the SDA are to “develop the skills of the South African workforce, improve the quality of life of workers, their prospects of work and labour mobility and improve productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of employers”. The Act further encourages employers to “use the workplace as an active learning environment” and to “provide employees opportunities to acquire new skills”. Chapter 1 Section 2(d) not only encapsulates the essence of the SDA but also links it to the EEA. To this end it states that the purpose of the SDA is to “improve the employment prospects of persons previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination and to redress those disadvantages through training and education”.

Even if both the letter and spirit of the new legislation are instituted by South African companies, real success will only be obtained by giving meaningful consideration to certain implications. First, racial AA policies can be viewed as a form of “state-sponsored social mobility in post-apartheid South Africa” (Adam, 2000). The current legislation is underpinned by a philosophy of national reconciliation and redressing past injustices. Adam (2000) notes however that “affirmative action is most resented by whites, the beneficiaries of previously legislated advantage” who now consider it as “reverse racial discrimination” particularly when beneficiaries of AA lack the requisite skills for the job. Second, state-sponsored Sector Educational Training Authorities (SETA’s) aim to transform the workplace by regulating training at all levels in organizations. This should

complement business' imperatives which seem to be primarily focused on black advancement in management and racial and gender diversity on company boards.

Hypothesis 2

As the need to comply with legislation promoting skills development should encourage the adoption of mentoring, organizations that face the greatest labour market skill shortages, particularly among designated groups, are most likely to implement mentoring programs to ensure they retain and nurture these valuable employees.

- a) *Organizations that are required to employ people in scarce and critical positions are more likely to implement mentoring programs to ensure the ongoing development of those employees.*
- b) *Organizations that are committed to the upskilling and development of their employees are more likely to ensure that mentoring programs are in place to give effect to such programs.*

Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment and Sectoral Codes

The latest policy of government to include the majority of people into the mainstream of economic activity is the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (2003) (BBBEE). This act has four key objectives:

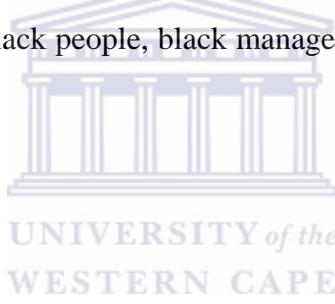
- a) the achievement of substantial change in the racial and gender composition of business ownership,
- b) the achievement of substantial change in the racial and gender composition of management, professionals and skilled occupations,

- c) increase the extent to which black persons have access to skills training, and
- d) the development of black entrepreneurs through preferential procurement and Small, Medium and Micro enterprises (SMME) development.

The BBBEE Act has a direct link with the Skills Development Act in that it envisages a significant increase in the number of black people that would manage, control and own the country's economy. The BBBEE Act does not compel business to transform through the transfer of shareholding to black persons. Rather, it is a voluntary process whereby the stakeholders will jointly develop and become signatories of "Transformation Charters". However, government will use the BBBEE Act and its Codes to bring about certain pressures such as exclusion from access to licenses, state tenders, and preferential procurement policies. This will limit the allocation of work to those businesses who are not acting in terms of the intent and spirit of the Act. Private sector companies, who are participating in BBBEE frameworks within their industries, will in turn, apply the empowerment criteria to their service providers. Thus through peer, customer and supplier pressures, the purpose and objectives of the Act are expected to be achieved (Kruger, 2005).

Although BBBEE companies and partnerships provide a good platform for homogeneous mentoring relationships (black/black) where the owners, partners and senior managers will be black, the Act is conspicuously silent on mentoring. Small, Medium and Micro enterprises could potentially be sites of this type of mentoring relationships. However this discussion is beyond the scope of this paper.

We are reminded that the Skills Development Act was introduced to determine the skills needs in all industrial sectors of the economy, to increase investment in education and training and to promote active and applied learning in the workplace. SETA's are thus an important vehicle for raising the skills level, creating productive citizens and increasing the economic growth rate. In the same vein, Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment policies are also intended, within a legal framework, to promote black economic empowerment. Despite all these noble aims and objectives of the legislation, its Codes of Good Practices and Institutions, they fall short of providing mechanisms to ensure its sustainability. Moreover, there is a deafening silence in respect of mentoring of the intended beneficiaries namely black people, black managers, black entrepreneurs and black owners.



Hypothesis 3

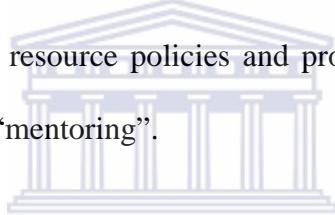
Organizations who plan to take advantage of business opportunities arising through Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment legislation are more likely to “empower” blacks and impart business skills to individuals or groups through diverse initiatives, including mentoring programs.

2.5 Conclusion

Notwithstanding the positive and significant impact the new set of labour laws have on organizational transformation and in particular people development, the absence of specific reference to mentoring is a cause of concern. In reality this means that many organizations will employ, train, develop and promote previously disadvantaged people solely as a

business imperative or, in the least, to comply with legislation. The decision whether or not to implement mentoring programmes as an integral part of their affirmative action programmes thus lies with organizational leaders as company-based policies and procedures go beyond the scope of the legislation.

Law makers, particularly the Technical Advisory Group of the Commission for Employment Equity, should consider “mentoring” as an integral part of affirmative action legislation. In its fourth report, the Commission for Employment Equity stated that they were in the process of developing a Code of Good Practice on the integration of employment equity into human resource policies and procedures. However not a single Code is giving consideration to “mentoring”.



It could be argued that the intended transformation and redress of historical inequalities due to the legacies of apartheid would be accelerated if mentoring is linked to affirmative action programmes. As such there should be greater commitment to the spirit rather than the letter of the legislation, in particular the Employment Equity and Skills Development Acts.

Legislation could therefore compel organizations - like it does with employment equity and skills development - to make mentoring part of any employment equity initiatives and skills development as far as designated groups are concerned.

The following Chapter deals with mentoring in the organizational context. Greater focus will be given to the relationship between mentor and protégé. In addition, the Chapter will

look at the various organizational factors and dynamics that help shape the mentoring relationship.

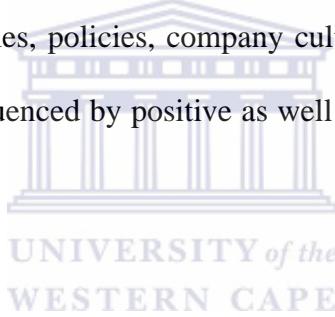


CHAPTER 3

MENTORING IN THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

In the world of work normal relations are at times fraught with complexities and intricacies due to personality differences between colleagues as well as the ever-changing work environment. Mentoring relationships are not free from these normal challenges and sometimes are characterized by even more complex issues than normal workplace relations. Because both mentor and protégé are usually employees of the same organization they are governed by the same set of rules, policies, company culture and climate. Put differently, mentoring relationships are influenced by positive as well as negative elements and factors of organizational life.



As stated in previous chapters, a mentor is a senior, more experienced person who provides support to a junior person in both his professional and personal life. Many authors hold similar views on the roles mentors. Ragins (1997), and Kram (1985), defines mentors as “individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to their protégés’ careers”. Hezlett and Gibson citing a number of earlier interpretations of mentors echo a similar view. They see a mentor as an “experienced, senior person who provides assistance to a less experienced, more junior colleague in order to enhance the latter’s professional and personal development”. Keeping in the same vein, Hansman (2002) adds another dimension to the work of a mentor.

Hansman (2002) is of the view that mentors act as “interpreters of the environment” and as such “help protégés understand the culture in which they find themselves”.

Notwithstanding all the literature on the classic form of mentoring between mentor and protégé, more attention in recent research is focused on alternative forms of mentoring such as peer mentoring or lateral mentoring. For example, Hansman (2002) argues that a single personal mentor may not always meet all the protégé’s requirements for “proper political connections and developmental support”. To this end peer mentoring according to Ellinger (2002) is particularly appropriate in organizations that are “flatter and more participative”. This type of mentoring relationship is however outside the scope of this paper.

In her seminal paper Kram (1985), suggests that mentors provide two primary types of functions or serve two roles. First, they provide career development behaviours which involve coaching, upward mobility, challenging assignments and protection from negative forces. Second, mentors serve psychosocial roles, which include personal support, friendship, counseling and role modeling. Consequently, this paper adopts the definition of a mentor provided by Amos and Pearse (2002), who define a mentor as “an experienced manager who provides guidance and direction to a junior manager or professional to facilitate the protégé’s personal and career development”.

Although a great deal has been written internationally about the relationship between mentor and protégé and the nature of mentorship (Kram, 1985 and Ragins, 1997), these studies tend to focus primarily on the relationship that emerges between the two individuals

and the individual impact on the participants. In additional studies there is evidence which points to a wide range of benefits for mentors, protégés and organizations (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002). There is however limited available research, especially in South Africa, on what support systems organizations offer to mentors and protégés in both homogeneous and diversified mentoring relationships. Even less research is available which associates mentoring and support systems with an organization's AA success.

The model developed in this study aims to conceptualize the factors that shape mentoring relationships in the South African context, and hypothesize how those factors differentially influence homogeneous and diversified mentoring relationships. The efficacy of the mentoring relationship, in turn, is expected to impact the organizations' employment equity and AA policies. The model proposes that a number of interdependent organizational and inter-personal variables impact and shape any mentoring relationship. The organizational factors are organizational culture/diversity, power dynamics, support system and training. The inter-personal factors are the hierarchical relationship between the mentor and protégé, their race/cultural backgrounds and the trust factor. This model also reflects that these factors in turn, will influence the company's employment equity and AA successes. Finally, it suggests how the success of AA in terms of employment equity relates to transformation in an organizational context.

The model is guided by the following questions and hypotheses will be developed based on them:

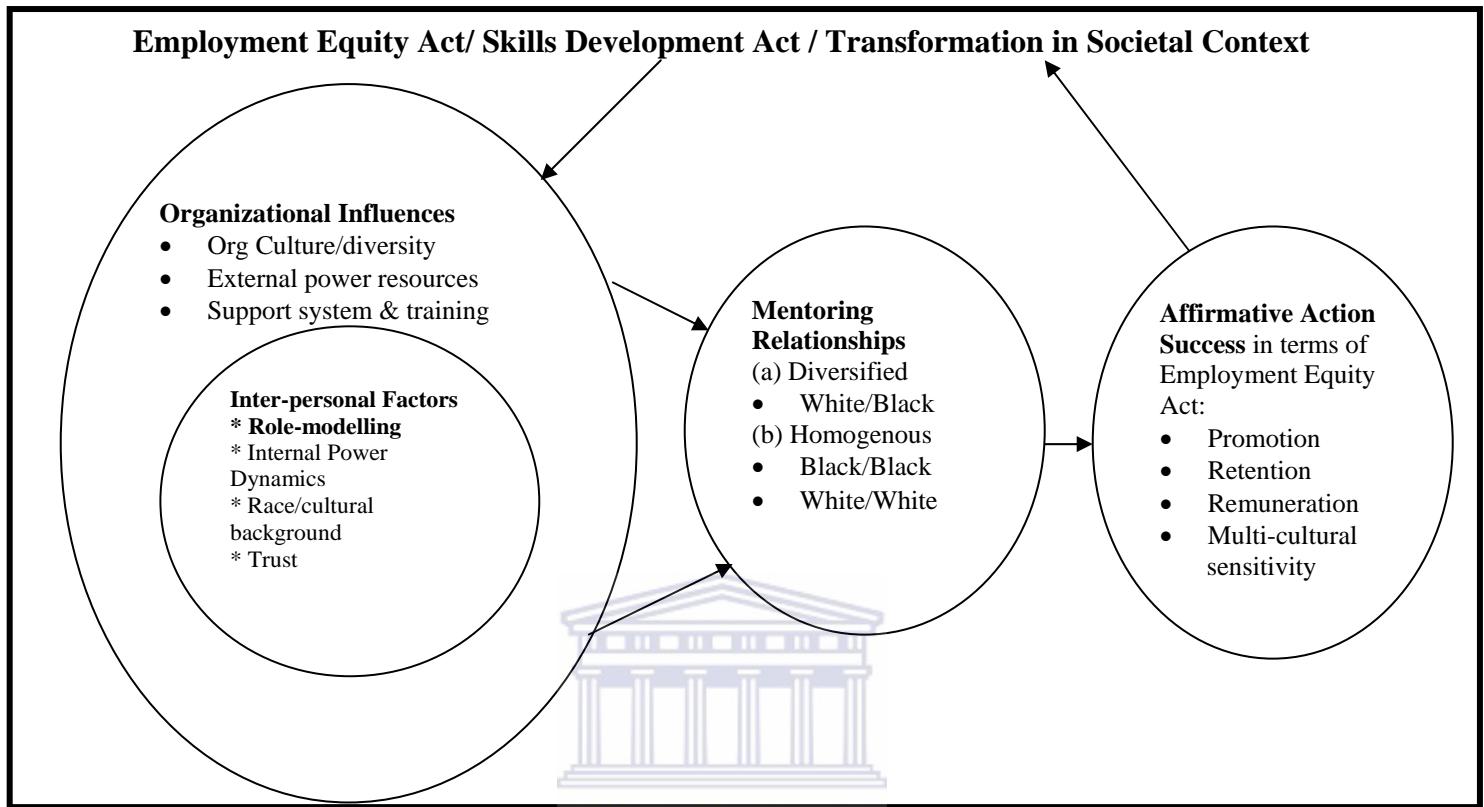
- What impact does South African legislation have on the incidence of mentoring programmes?
- How do organizational and psychosocial factors influence homogeneous and diversified mentoring relationships?
- What implications does mentoring have for employment equity and affirmative action?

3.2 Model, definition of all terms and general description of hypothesized model

Based on the extensive literature survey by Ragins (1997), seven interdependent variables, namely diverse organizational culture, power dynamics, support systems and training, role modeling, racial/cultural background congruence and trust have been found to shape the mentoring relationship and, in turn, influence the success of the firm's AA programme/s.

The model, which is depicted in Figure 1, focuses exclusively on those factors which are hypothesized to differentially impact on homogeneous and diversified mentoring relationships.

Figure 1: Hypothesized Model



The Hypothesized Model

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As discussed in the previous chapter, the premise of the model is that mentoring in South Africa is contextualized by the Employment Equity Act, affirmative action, the Skills Development Act, the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act and broader transformation within the organizational and societal context. Within this context the seven identified interdependent variables, which can be separated into two broad categories - organizational influences and inter-personal differences – can either influence mentoring relationships positively or negatively.

In the model, organizational influences include organizational culture/diversity/ values, external power dynamics and support systems and training. On an inter-personal level,

differences such as role-modeling, internal power dynamics, racial/cultural background and trust are taken into account.

The key distinction that this model focuses on is that between homogeneous and diversified relationships. Homogeneous mentoring relationships refer to black/black and white/white relationships, while diversified mentoring relationships can be attributed to differences in a range of criteria such as abled/disabled, race, gender and language. Given the current South African context, the discussion in this paper will be limited to a racially diversified mentoring relationship, which normally comprises a white male mentor and a black male protégé, and racially homogenous mentoring relationships where there is a white/white or black/black composition.

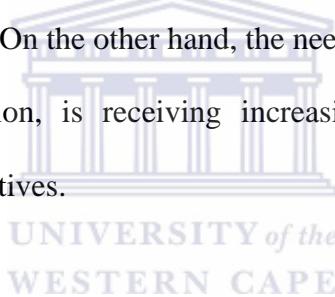


Homogeneous and Diverse Mentoring Relationships

Transformation can be referred to as not quite out of the old and not quite into the new. This holds true in the organizational context of South African companies. Mentoring relationships in South Africa's transformative years can thus be placed, for the purposes of this discussion, into three broad categories; white/white, black/black and white/black. As a large number of companies are still dominated by white males in top management (Commission for Employment Equity, Report 2003-2004), they will most likely mentor black and/or female protégés. In addition, but to a lesser degree, senior white male managers will mentor white juniors. On the other side of the equation, black mentors and black protégés are more likely to be found in black-owned businesses and public-sector enterprises. Although these types of businesses are on the increase due to the Broad-Based

Black Economic Empowerment legislation and strategies, they are still at present in the minority.

While authors like Amos and Pearse (2002) highlight the fact that a great number of “mentors will be white males mentoring black and/or females”, there is a case to be made for distinguishing this category from homogeneous white/white and black/black mentoring relationships. Despite the transformative processes in many South African companies, there is still a dichotomy that needs to be considered. On the one hand, many organizations are still predominantly white at the top with people of colour assuming roles at the middle and lower end of the hierarchy. On the other hand, the need to bring black people on board, at all levels in the organization, is receiving increasing attention, because of legal compliance and business imperatives.



Homogeneous mentoring relationships – where mentor and protégé share the same race classification or cultural group - will differ from diversified mentoring relationships in a number of significant ways in South African organizations. Due to Apartheid and the historical marginalization of people on the basis of colour, black and white people remain largely isolated from each other socially and have different perceptions of each other as individuals and of their group membership. In a mentoring relationship these cultural differences will also be manifested in various ways. Although the Employment Equity Act defines “black” generically as people who are African, Indian and Coloured, diversity is also found between these groups. To this end, a Coloured mentor and an African protégé may also constitute a diversified mentoring relationship. Similarly, a mentoring

relationship comprising of an African mentor and an Indian protégé also constitutes a degree of diversity.

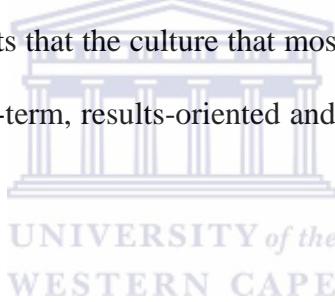
Both homogeneous and diversified mentoring relationships influence the organization's AA success in terms of the Employment Equity Act. Indicators such as meeting its employment equity targets, retention of AA appointees and promotion of previously disadvantaged individuals, specifically black people, are typically used to define a firm's AA success in terms of the Employment Equity Act.

3.3 Organizational Culture / Organizational Diversity / Management Values

Organizational culture and management values are often referred to as the intangibles of an organization. Broadly speaking, organizational culture rests on two pillars that are inextricably linked. One is the norms regarding behaviour – how things are done, and how people are treated in an organization. The other concerns values – what people care about, and what they regard as important. Furthermore, an organization's culture is also influenced by the broader socio-political context.

Since democratic South Africa is still in its transformative years, it is not surprising that predominantly western and Anglo-Saxon values and organizational culture are still prevalent in many of its companies. In any case of transformational change or intervention, culture impacts on whether individuals will invest time in developing relationships that support personal and professional growth. Shared values, policies and practices, and the informal networks all define the culture of the organization.

Mentoring is best integrated into a broader initiative to align the organizational culture with the societal and legal transformation described in the previous chapter. An organization whose leaders provide mentoring functions, reward mentors who develop their subordinates, both modeling and reinforcing mentoring behaviours, are better positioned to establish a culture that encourages mentoring. Equally important are values such as open communication and the creation of a climate where individuals feel that they can trust each other. Thus when a culture does not encourage open and honest communication or when a lack of trust for those in authority prevails, it is difficult to provide mentoring functions (Kram, 1985). The author asserts that the culture that most severely discourages mentoring activities is the one that is short-term, results-oriented and pays little attention to employee development.



South African companies face serious challenges as they compete in a fast-paced, ever changing global market while at the same time being compelled to bring about the transformation necessitated by legal requirements. One of the biggest challenges facing South African organizations that intend to implement mentoring programs is to find the correct balance between operational requirements and legal requirements. Amos and Pearse, 2002) attribute the limited success of mentorship programmes to a paternalistic and ethnocentric work environment, which pervades the organizational culture, climate, values and management style.

When structuring mentoring programmes, it will be necessary to be cognizant of the pitfalls described above. Mentoring in South Africa should be aligned to the AA initiatives of the organization if the affirmative action appointees are to make meaningful contributions to the organization and enhance their self-development.

Hypothesis 4

- a) *Diversified mentoring relationships are more likely to succeed in organizations characterized by a culture that embraces multicultural sensitivity, values diversity and promotes open communication, than organizations that are paternalistic and ethnocentric.*
- b) *Homogeneous mentoring relationships between white mentors and protégés are more likely to succeed in an environment where there is not much focus on diversity.*



3.4 External Power Resources

With specific regards to power in mentoring relationships, Ragins (1997) defines power as “the influence of one person over others, stemming from an individual characteristic, an interpersonal relationship, a position in an organization, or from membership in a societal group”.

There are different perspectives on power dynamics but for the purpose of this study only two broad areas will be discussed; personal/inter-personal (internal) level and organizational (external) level. Ragins (1997) further asserts that mentoring is influenced by two kinds of power; the first one is internal to the relationship and exists between

mentor and protégé, whereas the second one is external to the relationship and reflects the power dynamics of the organization. At the organizational level power involves “control over persons, information and resources” (Ragins, 1997). Barling, Fullagar and Blum (1986) present a three dimensional view of power and argue that power is not restricted to the individual’s conscious and chosen acts but is also found in socially structured practices of groups, organizations and institutions.

Ragins (1997) argues that the most useful perspective of power is the sociological perspective as it bridges the areas of diversity and mentoring in organizations. She further observes that whereas (internal) psychological approaches to power are beneficial for understanding interpersonal influence in one-on-one relationships, sociological perspectives provide important insights into how inter-group power relations (external) influence individual relationships in diversified mentoring relationships.

Ragins (1997) claims that the presence of a mentor is associated with power resources and that a protégé will gain more positional power, and will receive more promotions and compensation than their counterparts who are not mentored. Further, mentors may increase the internal and external visibility of protégés by providing them challenging assignments and placing them in “visible” positions. Also, by providing protégés political skills and influence strategies, mentors may facilitate the importance of accessing power resources within the organization. Given the mentor’s power, they can also act as a buffer and protect protégés against negative organizational forces (Ragins, 1997).

Amos and Pearse (2002) suggest that protégés would, as a political consideration, often prefer to be in mentoring relationships with mentors who have greater organizational influence. Protégés tend to seek out mentors whom they perceive as having power and organizational influence. Mentors who are acutely aware of the political considerations of selecting protégés can be expected to carefully seek out ones that would ultimately enhance their position amongst their peers, and in the organization.

Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004) highlight another obstacle faced by minority protégés and white mentors – “the paternalistic and political nature” inherent in the mentoring process. Johnson-Bailey is the “minority group member” in their relationship and her presence at a white-dominated institution is described as “incongruent with the racial distribution of power both in the institution and in the larger society within which the institution is embedded”. In South Africa it is often said that the worse thing after white racism is white paternalism. In this country with its racist legacy, whites may often be viewed as the “authoritative superiors” and blacks the “subordinate inferiors” in corporations. Again, homogeneous mentoring relationships appear not to be at risk from this superior/subordinate phenomenon as both individuals see each other as equals in terms of “race”.

The importance of power in mentoring relationships cannot be underestimated. It is often this single element that could determine the continuous growth of the relationship, or could very well be the cause if its demise. Mentors, protégés and the human resources management in particular need to pay careful attention to this element of the relationship to

ensure the continued success of mentoring relationships. Ragins (1997) argues that power is determined by (a) position and (b) membership of a societal group. The external power of the mentor is based on his/her position proportional to the career development and power of the protégé. This is the case in both diversified as well as homogeneous mentoring relationships. However, the external power (also stems from membership in a societal group) can be expected to have differential outcomes for homogeneous mentoring relationships and diversified mentoring relationships.

Hypothesis 5

The external power of the mentor based on membership of the same societal group depends on the composition of the top management team;

- (a) *Mentors in homogeneous mentoring relationships in a top management team from the same (inside) societal group will have significantly more power than mentors in a similar position from a different (outside) societal group.*
- (b) *Mentors in diversified mentoring relationships in a top management team from an (outside) societal group will have less power than mentors in a similar position from the same (inside) societal group.*
- (c) *Mentors in diversified mentoring relationships from an inside group will only have moderately more power than mentors from an outside group.*

3.5 Organizational Support Systems and Training

In short, support systems are elements and factors that assist the mentoring relationship in a positive way. While it is widely accepted that mentors have certain functions and roles in

the mentoring relationship, very little is said about the support that organizations offer to mentors, protégés and the relationship itself.

Organizations are microcosms of the greater society as they do not exist independently of the outside world. Hansman (2002) claims that organizations mirror the changing culture and uncertainty of our times. South Africa organizations are transforming, congruent with other spheres of societal life, and are thus becoming sites of contestation in so far as changing the colour of business and making the workplace more equitable and representative of the country's demographic diversity. Due to the racially skewed distribution of the South African managerial profile, mentoring can be particularly useful if integrated with employment equity, AA and skills development. Mentors of affirmative action appointees will enhance their self-development and help them play a more meaningful role in organizations if the mentor's job description has explicit and measurable outputs which are communicated and proper training is provided. In addition, protégés will show greater organizational commitment and personal growth if a more senior, experienced person takes their hand and shows them the ropes within the organization.

Because mentoring cannot be viewed as an isolated activity within the organization, it is imperative for human resources management to make a meaningful contribution if it is to fulfill its role. Mentoring should also be aligned to the broader human resources strategy of the organization. This implies that the human resources department will need to adopt a more interventionist role to initiate and affect change and ensure that human capital is maximized in line with the company's business strategy. Part of this role is to create a

platform for frequent and open interaction between managers at different hierarchical levels. In this way individuals can initiate and cultivate the types of relationships that respond to developmental needs of protégés (Kram, 1985). Support systems can range from communicating clear objectives of the role and functions of mentor and protégé, regular assessment of the relationship, training in mentoring for both individuals, selection process of mentors and protégés to appropriate rewards for mentors.

A further role for human resources management is to guide and assist senior management to achieve business success with a shared responsibility between the department and other line managers. In order to give meaning and commitment to the company's employment equity and affirmative action strategies, human resources managers need to accept a shared responsibility with mentors. Human resources managers must therefore work with the mentor and utilize their strategic position and associated power as a catalyst to affect changes in the organizational context. Finally, human resources management must address barriers to equity and barriers to the career and development of both mentor and protégé (Amos and Pearse, 2002). Central to any support system is the training of both mentor and protégé in respect of their roles, functions, fears and expectations. Clearly, a lack of support systems in an organizational context will limit the potential success of mentoring relationships and decrease its meaningfulness to the individuals.

Hypothesis 6

Both diversified and homogeneous mentoring relationships have a greater chance of succeeding if there are clearly targeted organizational support systems in place.

Diversified mentoring relationships are more likely to succeed if:

- (a) Mentoring is an integral part of human resource strategy to achieve Employment Equity targets.*
- (b) Focus of support and training addresses issues such as culture, race, and historical background.*
- (c) Counseling is available to mentors and protégés through human resources to address problems arising during the initiation and cultivation stages of the relationship.*



3.6 Conclusion

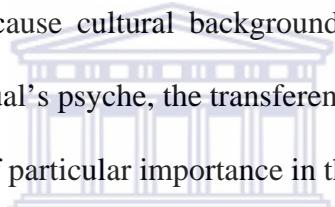
This chapter identified organizational factors that influence mentoring relationships which in turn impact the interpersonal differences between mentor and protégé. Hypotheses have been developed on the three variables the hypothesized model identified as organizational influences. Chapter 4 will explore in greater detail the interpersonal differences between mentor and protégé.

CHAPTER 4

INTER-PERSONAL INFLUENCES ON MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

4.1 Introduction

Due to the intimate nature of the mentoring relationship, the most immediate level where differences occur is between the primary parties of the mentoring relationship, namely mentor and protégé. At this professional but interpersonal level, the parties become aware of each other's personality traits, personal characteristics and, to some extent, personal likes and dislikes. Furthermore, because cultural backgrounds and race classification are so deeply embedded in the individual's psyche, the transference thereof into the organizational context is no surprise. This is of particular importance in the South African context.



For the purpose of this study, focus will only be given to inter-personal differences which are expected to differentially impact homogeneous mentoring relationships and diversified mentoring relationships namely, role-modeling, internal power dynamics, racial/cultural background and the trust factor in the relationship. This Chapter will also look at how these factors affect life/career stages of the relationship. While critically important to the success of individual mentoring relationships and programs, individual differences between mentor and protégé that are not attributable to these factors are beyond the scope of this study.

4.2 Role-modeling

Kram (1985) claims that a mentor's attitudes, values and behaviour provide a model for the protégé to emulate while the protégé finds in the mentor a particular image of whom he can become. Because the protégé aspires to positions of greater authority and responsibility, he imagines himself in these roles by identifying with the senior manager. The senior colleague is thus seen as an object of admiration, emulation and respect.

Role modeling also involves the example set by the mentor and the protégé identifying with it. Kram (1985) cautions that because role modeling is both a conscious and unconscious process, the mentor may not be aware of the example he is providing nor is the protégé aware that he is actually copying that example. However, what consciously occurs is interaction around work assignments, common organizational concerns, and broader career issues. Through such dialogue the junior person learns certain approaches, attitudes, and values held by the role model. At the same time the senior person has the opportunity to express central parts of his self-image in the work role.

The complexity of the identification process cannot be underestimated for the junior person may only copy certain aspects of the mentor's individual style and may reject others. To this end, the protégé may find that using his personal words, projecting a particular body language and asserting his unique personality may yield better results in a work scenario rather than adopting the exact same style of his mentor. As the protégé differentiates himself over time, he develops his own personal style, adopts his own personal values and forms his own professional identity.

Ragins (1997) supports the broad views expressed by Kram (1985) and notes that mentors will view protégés as a younger version of themselves and as such, will identify with their protégés and view them as a representative of their own past. In this way, the mentor experiences a sense of contribution to future generations. The protégé is likely to identify with the mentor for his professional identity and view the mentor as representative of his own future.

Kram (1985) claims that role modeling succeeds because of the emotional attachment between mentor and protégé. According to the author, a junior person may liken a senior manager to his father by using the same words and feelings to describe both figures. The senior manager may liken the junior manager to his children while watching the junior develop an identity that incorporates parts of the senior's self-image. Consequently, feelings like attachment, protection, ambivalence and rebellion, experienced in paternal relationship are often transferred to the mentoring relationship.

Kram (1985) cautions that the identification and transference that underly the role modeling function are more complex in cross-gender relationships. To this end, junior female managers are more ambivalent and confused about whether to, and how to, emulate senior male managers. Similarly, identification and transference issues are more likely to exist in racially diversified mentoring relationships than homogeneous mentoring relationships.

Ragins (1997) also found that protégés in same-gender mentoring relationships were more likely than protégés in cross-gender relationships to engage in social activities with their mentors. While gender-diversified mentoring relationships are beyond the scope of this paper, Ragins (1997) found less psychosocial support in same-race relationships than in cross-race relationships. Overall, Ragins (1997) noted that due to the intimacy and identity issues, diversified relationships provide less psychosocial and role modeling functions than homogeneous relationships.

Hypothesis 7

The greater the degree of diversity in the mentoring relationship, the lesser the extent of role modeling.

- a) *Psychosocial functions and role modeling will be stronger in homogeneous mentoring relationships than in diversified mentoring relationships.*
- b) *There is significantly more identification in homogeneous mentoring relationships than in diversified mentoring relationships.*

4.3 Internal Power Dynamics

Power dynamics reflect the power imbalances between the two individuals in the mentoring relationship. The individual perspective defines power as “the individual’s ability, or perceived ability, to influence another person, or to change others’ behaviour”. According to the inter-personal perspective, power is “a reciprocal process in interpersonal relationships” (Ragins, 1997).

An insight that is of particular importance to the power aspect of mentoring relationship is the view that power-holders may be understood to exercise power without necessarily being intentional and conscious of consequences. A further argument is that as the power-holder has an opportunity to present knowledge and skills he will expose the less powerful individual to influence (Barling, Fullagar and Blum, 1986).

The disparity in power between mentor and protégé is largely due to the knowledge and years of experience the senior has over the junior person.

Despite the power imbalance there is a reciprocal element in the mentoring relationship. To this end mentors also gain power from the relationship. For instance, a protégé's performance may be a direct reflection of the mentor's competency in selection and training and thus may enhance the mentor's status and credibility among peers and supervisors. In addition, a mentor's power resources may also be increased by the protégé's provision of updated job-related information and loyal base of support. Finally, a protégé's performance may have a positive or negative impact on the mentor's reputation, which may in turn, relate to the mentor's career satisfaction and success (Ragins, 1997).

Hypothesis 8

The extent of individual power or influence of the mentor over the protégé, will have a direct effect on the success of the protégé. The protégé's perception of the mentor's organizational power, whether negative or positive, will determine the level of freedom for self-expression.

- a) Protégés in diversified mentoring relationships will be less inclined to become “clones” of their mentors than protégés in homogeneous mentoring relationships.*
- b) Mentors in homogeneous mentoring relationships have a greater chance to develop protégés to become their mirror-images than those in diversified mentoring relationships.*
- c) Real or perceived power will have a greater effect on protégés in diversified mentoring relationships than protégés in homogeneous mentoring relationships.*

4.4 Race and Cultural Differences

Diversity in contemporary organizations is becoming increasingly important for managers. Diversified mentoring relationships are composed of mentors and protégés who differ in group membership for example, race, ethnicity, gender, class, and disability. Given South Africa's political history, the area where the greatest difference exists is in terms of race and culture. Black and white people have distinct histories resulting in significant differences between those who enjoyed many privileges including political freedom and economic power. These differences permeated every sphere of South African society including the workplace and began to be reversed only with the inception of the country's democracy in 1994. Furthermore, white people occupied, and to a large degree still occupy, the most senior positions in companies' hierarchy which can be attributed to the large racial imbalances and demographic inequities in South African organizations. This situation has implications for the white mentor and black protégé in the organizational

context and also on an inter-personal level because this legacy includes value assumptions of cultural superiority and inferiority.

Ragins (1997) notes that individuals who are members of similar race and cultural groups are more likely to identify with each other because of shared experiences and resulting social identities. She further argues that because identification and inter-personal similarity makes communication easier in relationships, members of diversified mentoring relationships may experience less inter-personal comfort than members in homogeneous mentoring relationships. In homogeneous mentoring relationships, individuals will rely on readily available group membership as a basis for identification and perceived similarities. Individuals in diversified mentoring relationships may have to look beyond group membership for similarities such as interests and hobbies. However, from personal experience the author has found that while this may be the case during the initiation stage of the relationship as the relationship progresses to the cultivation stage similarities could very well emerge.

Amos and Pearse (2002) note that racial diversity will impact the white male mentor in two broad areas: the commitment to mentoring and the functions fulfilled by the mentor. In the first instance, the white mentor will have a black protégé who could ultimately be a threat to his own position. Simultaneously, the mentor must deal with his own fears as a white male in a new South African context, where he is no longer the exclusive holder of organizational power, or the primary beneficiary of job opportunities and upward mobility. If the mentor successfully deals with these fears and still demonstrates a commitment to the

relationship, his role would require him to adopt different functions to those traditionally applied.

Many lessons for South African organizations can be drawn from a case study by Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004), a black woman associate professor and a white male professor at the University of Georgia, Athens, USA. They offer a personal account of the intricacies, complexities and successes of their 13-year mentoring relationship. They highlight the importance of a number of issues in cross-cultural mentoring relationships; (1) acknowledged and unacknowledged racism, (2) visibility and (3) risks pertinent to minority faculty.



Hypothesis 9

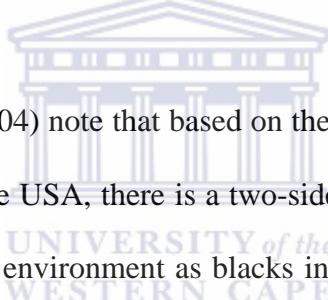
Building on membership of different race and cultural groups is associated with lower levels of identification and interpersonal similarities. If unacknowledged or acknowledged racial and cultural differences are not addressed by mentors and protégés, diversified mentoring relationships will not advance from the initiation to the cultivation stage.

4.5 Trust

Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004) assert that trust is an essential element in a diversified mentoring relationship. They relied on the immense trust developed in their relationship to look past the hierarchical situation described above. They caution however that the establishment of trust is more important in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship as compared to a homogeneous one. According to the authors, trust in the latter type of

relationships, appears to be simplistic as it needs to be “reciprocal in nature and it is a matter between mentor and protégé”. In diversified mentoring relationships however, trust is one of the issues that is not a simple matter of negotiations but rather becomes arbitrary “between historical legacies, contemporary racial tensions and societal protocols”.

This is indeed a lesson for mentoring relationships that are composed of white mentor and black protégé who are separated by many cleavages in South African society. Only once trust is established, the individuals may be able to look past issues like race, colour, historical differences and socio-political backgrounds.



Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004) note that based on the historical legacy of relationships between blacks and whites in the USA, there is a two-sided scenario of mistrust. This can be applied to the South African environment as blacks in this country suffered decades of oppression at the hands of white-dominated governments and organizations. Another similarity is what Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004) call “the myth of the violent angry black”. Despite this myth, South African blacks perceive that it was the whites, from government officials to policemen to farm owners who acted against blacks through legislated apartheid, segregation, discriminatory customs and sheer brutality.

The success of an organization’s employment equity and AA strategies hinges on the success of their mentoring relationships, whether homogeneous or diversified ones. Based on the well-documented lessons offered by Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004), the personal/interpersonal difference in terms of race and culture between mentor and protégé

is not insurmountable and therefore can be overcome if both individuals are willing to address their trepidations and genuinely commit to the relationship.

Hypothesis 10

Trust is critically important for the success of mentoring relationships especially in diversified relationships due to historical, cultural and hierarchical elements.

- a) *Establishing trust in diversified mentoring relationships requires the mentor and protégé to overcome historical legacies not faced in homogeneous mentoring relationships.*
- b) *Mentors and protégés in diversified mentoring relationships will have to acquire more skills in terms of each others' cultural background, assumptions and perceptions than individuals in homogeneous mentoring relationships.*



4.6 Conclusion

Having developed an understanding of inter-personal factors shaping mentoring relationships as well as formulating certain hypotheses, we discuss implications for employment equity and affirmative action in the final chapter.

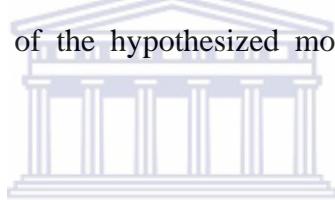
CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

5.1 Introduction

The twin objectives of the Employment Equity Act are to redress past injustices and transform the workplace by eradicating discrimination and formalizing affirmative action.

Mentoring, if applied correctly, can significantly contribute to the success of AA in terms of employment equity. In this concluding chapter we discuss the implications of homogeneous and diversified mentoring relationships for the success of employment equity and AA which is the last part of the hypothesized model. The chapter also looks at prospects for future research.



Meyer and Fourie (2004) caution that since the implementation of mentoring is not a natural process in most organizations, certain obstacles within the work environment will impede this phenomenon. A second implication for mentoring is that white males still dominate the upper echelons of South African organizations and thus will be expected to mentor black protégés. This scenario will impact the mentor in two broad areas namely, the commitment to mentoring and the functions fulfilled by the mentor (Amos and Pearse, 2002). Kram (1985) also notes the value of mentoring especially in organizations where AA is an important objective. Mentoring can counteract the disadvantages of not being a member of the dominant group by providing AA appointees important coaching, modeling and career counseling opportunities.

5.2 Implications for mentors, protégés and the organization

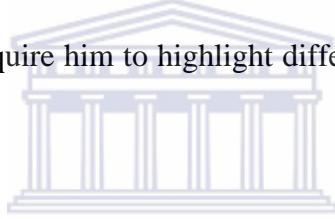
Implications for mentors

Given the current demographics in South Africa, it is evident that if companies intend to implement mentorship programmes as part of their AA programmes, a great number of mentors will be white males mentoring black males (Amos and Pearse, 2002). This situation will necessitate some form of integration. According to Morley (1980), a process of integration happens when people attempt to become members of groups composed of others who differ from them. She argues that the approach of a stranger to a group of different others would evoke certain predictable responses. “The behaviours that tend to occur in such a situation have more to do with dominance and subordinacy, with high power and low power, with being highly valued and being little valued, with being an insider and being an outsider, than they have to do with biological skin color or gender”

Morley (1980). Based on Morley’s (1980) explanation, there will be certain implications for mentors in homogeneous as well as diversified mentoring relationships. This section will largely focus on implications in diversified mentoring relationships.

Meyer and Fourie (2004) cite the lack of commitment on the part of the mentor as a serious implication for mentoring. This can occur when mentors do not have the objectives of the mentoring programme at heart, or when they become involved in the programme for personal reasons. It can also happen when they do it solely to protect their jobs and not because they are committed to diversity and transformation. According to Morley (1980), the superior position of American white males changed during the 1960’s after they were informed that people of colour and women were no longer inferior. This situation imposed

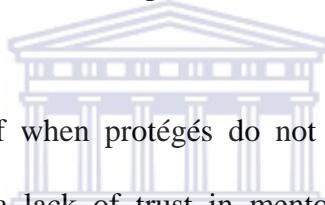
a variety of stresses on white men which includes a fear of loss of power. These stresses are reported to be more intense in the work setting and, as a reaction, white males are likely to experience anxiety or anger. South African white males face a number of additional tensions that may impact their commitment to the mentoring relationship. One implication according to Amos and Pearse (2002) is that mentors will be mentoring a protégé who could ultimately be a threat to their own position. The mentor also has to deal with the realization that he is no longer the dominant holder of organizational power, or the primary beneficiary of job opportunities, upward mobility and higher incomes. Even if the white male deals with these fears and still demonstrates commitment to mentoring, his role will be more demanding and will require him to highlight different functions to those that were traditionally adopted.



The mentor needs to facilitate the socialization of the protégé and bridge the gap between the two worlds of protégé and mentor. The role modeling function is also affected by the political context. Amos and Pearse (2002) caution that the white mentor may promote the “white world” to the black protégé thereby developing the protégé to fit into a world that is foreign to him. They recommended that the mentor plays a moderating role between the organization, protégé and human resources management. In this regard the mentor relays the organizational realities such as culture, context and barriers with respect to employment equity to human resources management while at the same time reflecting back to the protégé the requisite learning and developmental processes (Amos and Pearse, 2002).

Implications for protégés

Amos and Pearse (2002) advise that protégés need to be aware of the issues facing mentors and how those may affect the mentoring relationship. For this reason protégés may want a greater say in choosing their mentors. The protégé's need for cognitive development should also be considered. If protégés are not capable of meeting the demands of management and organizational life, it must be assumed that they are not adequately prepared and not because of their lack of intellectual capacity. Mentors on the other hand need to create opportunities to mobilize the thought processes of protégés especially in the light of the political nature of the relationship.



Another problem presents itself when protégés do not demonstrate commitment to the mentoring programme due to a lack of trust in mentors and the organization. Some protégés may even view mentoring to be their right without accepting responsibility to make it the relationship work. To this extent they expect the mentor to do almost everything for them but tend to blame the mentor and the organization for their lack of performance (Amos and Pearse, 2002).

If the protégés have committed to the mentoring relationship, it is their responsibility to become abstract thinkers to enable them to deal with socializing or fitting in to management and organizational life. In addition, they must learn to deal effectively with conflicting assumptions and opinions that are found in the organization.

Implications for the organization

Mentoring relationships do not exist in an organizational vacuum. In order for mentoring to fulfill its role, it must be supported by an interventionist human resources management strategy. This role would include initiating and driving transformation to create an organizational context whereby human potential is utilized in line with the organization's stated function. Human resources managers need to work with, challenge, guide and help senior management to achieve business success. Line managers, human resources managers and mentors should share the responsibility with respect to the protégé's development. In addition, line managers and human resources managers need to cooperate with the mentor and use their strategic role and associated power as a catalyst for initiating and implementing change in the organization and address barriers to equity. All organizational stakeholders especially managers ultimately have to contribute to the firm's success in terms employment equity and affirmative action (Amos and Pearse, 2002).

Assessment of Affirmative Action success

It may be argued that an organization has achieved success in terms of its employment equity and AA once it has a fair representation of affirmative action appointees. From a statistical point of view, this may hold true. However, a more prudent way to measure a firm's affirmative action success is an assessment of the following indicators:

- Promotion in industry
- Retention in industry
- Remuneration packages

- Sensitivity to cultural diversity

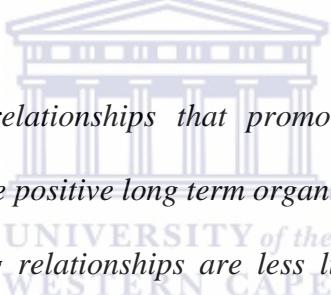
Companies' employment equity and AA success can thus be measured by their degree of investment in terms of the above factors.

Hypothesis 11

Critical to the success of mentoring relationships is the commitment of mentor and protégé.

Diversified mentoring relationships that aim to develop the protégé to fit into a “white world” will not advance employment equity or affirmative action. However, in the short term EE and AA may be advanced by helping protégés fit into a “white world”.

We would hypothesize that:

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- Diversified mentoring relationships that promote mutual respect for cultural diversity will have a more positive long term organizational impact on EE and AA.*
 - Homogeneous mentoring relationships are less likely than diversified mentoring relationships to promote respect for cultural diversity. Black/black homogeneous may be most effective in advancing EE and AA goals if protégés learn how to advance in a predominantly white corporate context.*
 - Diversified mentoring relationships that develop black protégés to fit into the “white world” may have more positive short term impact on EE and AA than homogeneous mentoring relationships.*

5.3 Conclusion

It is mentioned throughout this paper that not much South African literature is available on mentoring relationships let alone diversified mentoring relationships. A further limitation

is the absence of practical case studies of diversified mentoring relationships in South African organizations. Finally, no documented evidence could be found on the influence or impact of diversified mentoring relationships on the success of organizations' AA strategies in terms of employment equity or their transformation strategies.

As a result, international literature was consulted during the writing of this paper. In her seminal work, *Mentoring at Work, Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life* (1985), Kathy E. Kram provided some pioneering insights into mentoring relationships, mentoring functions and phases of a mentoring relationship. It appears that the next five to twelve years there was a flood of international research conducted into the various types of mentoring relationships, its constructs, definitions and boundaries. In addition, the literature started to speak of behavioural and perceptual processes in and outcomes associated with diversified mentoring relationships (Ragins, 1997). The same author also provided meaningful perspectives into the power dynamics between the mentor and protégé.

Clutterbuck and Ragins' (2002), comprehensive study, *Mentoring and Diversity. An International Perspective*, sheds new light on diversified mentoring relationships from an international perspective by imparting personal experiences between mentors and protégés - their complexities, their acknowledged differences and provided useful techniques how to deal with them.

In South Africa mentoring emerged during the 1980's. It is likely that those were homogeneous mentoring relationships (white/white) as the triggers for diversified mentoring relationships – employment equity and AA – were not yet in effect. As such diversified mentoring in South African organizations can only be discussed in the context and as a consequence of the Employment Equity Act (1998) and the Skills Development Act (1998) for at the heart of both pieces of legislation is the need to “redress past injustices”. Diversified mentoring is thus a relatively new area of research in the South African context and it is therefore hoped that this paper may be used as a basis for future research on an issue that will receive increased focus in contemporary and future South Africa. Further, as the country is starting to gain more influence as a contributing force in the international economic arena, diversified mentoring will be an integral part of employee relations in South African organizations. Mentoring will be of particular benefit to organizations which aim to link career development and transformation to their employment equity and affirmative action strategies.

Further, as South African companies increasingly employ individuals from more diverse cultural backgrounds, and specifically black people in managerial positions, these organizations will become ideal locations for researching diversified mentoring relationships. Homogeneous mentoring relationships on the other hand have a greater chance of being cultivated in especially black-owned and black-managed organizations that will be established as a result of the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act.

It must be noted that organizations do not operate in a socio-economic or socio-political vacuum. Organizations are thus undoubtedly influenced by social, economic and political factors. In a similar vein are mentoring relationships unquestionably influenced by organizational dynamics and inter-personal differences. For these reasons, it would be prudent to test the applicability of the hypothesized model in South African organizations (figure, 1). The model has identified seven interdependent variables which can be separated into two broad areas namely; organizational influences and inter-personal differences. The model focused exclusively on those factors which are hypothesized to differentially impact on homogeneous and racially diversified mentoring relationships. The literature shows that organizational influences such as power, support systems as well as its culture, values and norms will impact the mentoring relationship in a number of ways. The literature also illustrates how inter-personal differences like personality traits, personal characteristics, individual attitudes and values affect the relationship between mentor and protégé. The model finally demonstrates that both types of mentoring relationships influence the organization's AA success in terms of the Employment Equity Act as well as transformation in a societal context.

As diversified mentoring relationships are a relatively new area of study in the South African context, it is hoped that future research prospects will investigate the relevance and applicability of Hypothesis 11.

For example, future research may produce conclusive findings that black protégés in diversified mentoring relationships who fit into a “white world” have more positive short-term impact on EE and AA than those in homogeneous mentoring relationships. Another

area of study is to test the veracity of our hypothesis: homogeneous mentoring relationships are less likely than diversified mentoring relationships to promote respect for cultural diversity. A third area of research is whether or not black protégés have negative experiences trying to fit into a “white world” during the initiation phase of the mentoring relationship and what outcomes would it yield.

Despite the entry of black people into organizations whether compelled by employment equity legislation or as a sheer business imperative, there will still be a case for both diversified and homogeneous mentoring relationships. Over time there may be a case for a different construct of diversified mentoring relationships. One where the mentor will be black and or female and the protégé white. For the foreseeable future however, diversified mentoring relationships will be comprised of white male mentor and black and or female protégé. Homogeneous mentoring relationships will, in the main be comprised of black mentor, black protégé and white mentor, white protégé.

Finally, it is hoped that the literature review, hypothesized model and formulated hypotheses will provide better insight to the concept of mentoring relationships, and through its application, South African organizations may view AA not just as a mere business imperative but give it more meaning.

Effective application of this model suggests that AA appointments are not just made for sheer compliance reasons but because organizations demonstrate real commitment to this

important legislative requirement in order to transform themselves, and contribute to transformation in the broader societal context.

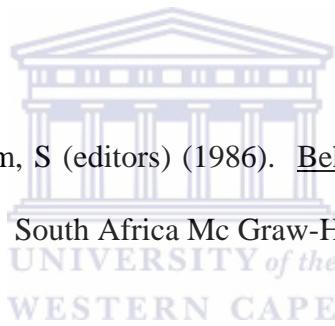


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