

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICIES
AND STRATEGIES IMPACTING ON
MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN THE
PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION :
WESTERN CAPE - 1995 TO 1999 : A
CRITICAL ASSESSMENT**



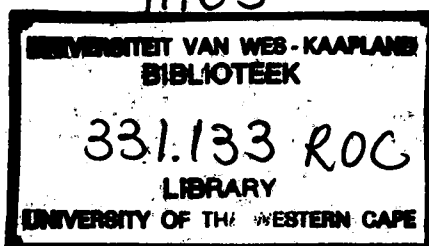
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THES



DEDICATION

To my darling wife, Natasha, who as I write is pregnant with our first child. Her love and boundless compassion has been an invaluable source of inspiration.

To my mother and father, Donise and Ronald, whose enduring love, support and encouragement has made it possible for me to attain all that I have in life. I am forever grateful for their sacrifices.



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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is entirely my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Public Administration at the University of the Western Cape.

I further testify that it has not been submitted for any other degree or at any other university or institution of higher learning.

Signature : 

Date:..... *22.06.2000*



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, my continued gratitude to God, without whom nothing will be crowned with success.

I would also like to thank the following people who have played a part in the completion of this thesis:

My sister, Ronda, who was a great help in typing this thesis and who displayed much patience and perseverance whilst doing so.

My supervisor, Professor Chisepo Mphaisha, whose valuable insights have immensely contributed to my own self-development and critical thinking.

Mr Garth Morkel, Special Programmes Officer at the Provincial Administration : Western Cape, for his magnanimity with regards to open debate and analysis of the issues.

My close friend, Clarence Cookson, for serving as a springboard for my ideas and contributing to my eventual synthesis of its complexities.

Dylan Arendse, my brother in law, for his immeasurable assistance with typing during the masters programme.

ABSTRACT

The South African society is in a period of transformation that constantly challenges economic, social, and even psychological paradigms. Affirmative Action forms an integral part of the process of redistribution and has, for the longest time, attempted to make inroads into the mainstream of economic life in South Africa. The public service, being a government employer, generates a certain expectation with regards to substantive transformation amongst its ranks. For this reason, this study focuses on the Provincial Administration: Western Cape and the impact that affirmative action policies and strategies have had on management positions between the period 1995 and 1999.

Government Affirmative Action policies and legislation have more than placed this issue in the forefront of social change and transformation, yet this investigation leads one to conclude that there is a lack of commitment from the provincial administration in terms of realizing national goals and objectives. This study critically assesses the dynamics at work in the transformation process in the administration and establishes the strengths and weaknesses of particular policies and strategies. Data relating to management positions, and the implementation of affirmative action policies and strategies during this period, suggest that little or nothing has been transformed.

More importantly, the study identifies the obstacles to transformation and proposes appropriate strategies to overcome these problem areas. These measures, if envisaged, will translate into the more effective implementation of affirmative action policies and strategies, and its impact on management positions within the Provincial Administration: Western Cape.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The democratic dispensation of 1994 brought about the prospect of a new era of reconciliation, empowerment of the disenfranchised, restoration of one's dignity and political rights, constitutionally guaranteed freedoms, and a host of personal and public aspirations which all South Africans, in their own or collective capacity, wished to realize. Of course, government would take the lead in transforming the South African society and in developing democratic values and beliefs in every sphere of our society. Consequently, Affirmative Action emerged as one of the most vital vehicles of transformation that would adequately service the goals and objectives associated with socio-economic upliftment and empowerment.

Not only was affirmative action intended to increase the employment of blacks, women and the disabled in our economy, but it was also most imperative to the transformation process that the policy effected a change at management level in both the private and public sectors. Most notably, government policy reflected an urgency to 'lead the way' by developing policy frameworks for such change to take place in the public service [The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) 1995; White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995); White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public service (1998); Employment Equity Act (1998)].

This dissertation will render a critical assessment of affirmative action policies and strategies impacting on management positions within the Provincial Administration: Western Cape – with a specific focus on the period 1995 to 1999. It will study the management make-up during this period – thereby assessing the extent to which transformation has taken place. Coupled with this, the dissertation evaluates affirmative action against the backdrop of national goals and objectives.

Statement of the Problem

An integral thrust of affirmative action is the impact it has on transforming management positions. Management within the South African public service is dominated by white male incumbents – a situation that needs to be altered. This research seeks to identify the level of implementation of affirmative action policies/strategies as it affects management posts in one of the many branches of the public service- The Provincial Administration: Western Cape.

The Western Cape has a particular demographic make-up which is not complemented by the management make-up within the provincial administration. A clear target has been set by both the national and provincial governments- they find convergence on the ideal that all levels of employment should broadly reflect the demographics of the region. While one understands that this is a process over a period of time, the litmus test would be the extent to which this has progressed in the Western Cape Provincial Administration.

Related Research

The field of affirmative action has a vast body of literature expounding on all its different aspects. However, this does not detract from the enormous amount of new insights which one derives from continually exploring its possibilities in organizations. Keeping in mind that the societal, cultural, organizational and workplace contexts may differ with each particular focus, it is always informative to learn how affirmative action is applied in different environments.

To this end, Charlton and Van Niekerk (1994), Adams (1993), Levy (1995) and Peron (1992) are a few authors who have attempted to sketch the intricacies involved in applying such a policy in the New South Africa. They all acknowledge the difficult road ahead for the successful implementation of affirmative action in the South African workplace. The public service is more specifically targeted as a field of contestation where dramatic changes need to occur (Tapscott, 1994 and Bardill and Thompson, 1996). Marais (1998) indicates that the old-guard factor remains an

obstacle to change. Sowell (1990) shows that similar challenges have faced other societies where public service transformation was forged through affirmative action policies. Combs and Gruhl (1986) include material which reflect the actual progress of affirmative action programmes in workplace conditions. Sigelman and Coyer (1986) illustrate the employment mobility of minorities and women in the American public service by means of status reports, thereby evidencing their continued need for advancement.

In the South African public service, Mdintsi (1998) has researched the status of management positions in the national departments between the years 1994 and 1996. Smith (1998) investigated the affirmative action programmes in the department of Foreign Affairs; also citing that not enough change is taking place at management level. In another case, Kgopa (1996) assessed the affirmative action policies and practices in the Cape Town City Council- also concluding that it has not been successfully implemented. These case studies demonstrate the inabilities of some public sector organizations to institute effective change at management level. It raises questions surrounding the effective implementation of change strategies and whether these organizations are intent enough to reach their objectives.

Objectives of the study

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The study aims to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of affirmative action policies and strategies adopted by the Provincial Administration: Western Cape. These policies/strategies are evaluated in terms of criteria measuring the process of formulation and actual implementation as evidenced by outcomes highlighted in the relevant data. This study will, inter alia, purport to:

- 1) Establish a theoretical framework for understanding the concepts of representative bureaucracy and affirmative action;
- 2) Examine national government policy guidelines on affirmative action;
- 3) Examine the management staff composition of PAWC between 1995 and 1999;
- 4) Critique relevant policy outlines and strategies associated with affirmative action emanating from PAWC; and
- 5) Make policy recommendations and provide intervention strategies.

It is envisaged that these measurements would serve to inform stakeholders in the process of the degree of success achieved thus far, and the areas of concentration needed to further enhance the drive towards representativeness.

Methodology

The research was based on three methodologies, namely: archival research, interviews and questionnaires. This method of triangulation is more effective in attempting to access the relevant data, gain the necessary insight of, and develop an understanding of the dynamics involved in such a complex process.

The questionnaire ensures that responses are more open and frank, given the sensitive nature of the topic. Questions were structured in a clear and concise way, covering all the important issues.

The use of the interviews gave the research a qualitative dimension that was crucial in making informed deductions. Interviews with managers and relevant role-players were essential in unearthing the dynamics at work in a social construct such as affirmative action. This also presented one with certain difficulties as these managers appeared not to be completely open and frank. In fact, one predicted that their responses would be less than completely honest and open. Notwithstanding this impediment, the interviews did provide one with the platform to explore the views and opinions of managers and role-players in the transformation process.

With regards to the use of interviews, confidentiality was fundamental in engaging interviewees as they were still in the employ of the Provincial Administration. Therefore, this author wishes not to divulge any further details pertaining to the number or make-up of interviewees.

Archival research formed an integral part of the study. It was only through this medium that one could powerfully assert the critique levelled at different aspects of the transformation process. Another important factor at work is the fact that the data is rendered indisputable. All the figures and totals emanate from official reports from

departments and institutions within the Provincial Administration: Western Cape. Because this research has a focus on policy/strategy evaluation, documents which support these aspects are also included under archival research.

The use of triangulation sufficiently serviced this study with the qualitative and quantitative information which is vital in making an informed assessment of transformation amongst management positions within PAWC.

Significance of the study

The study clearly shows the degree to which PAWC has progressed in terms of the transformation of its management. This is both valuable and informative to PAWC, as the institution, and to the stakeholders involved in the process. Indeed, even the citizens in the Western Cape have the right to know the state of affairs in the administration responsible for service delivery in their province.

Through this particular focus on policies and strategies, and the level of success it has on effecting a desired outcome, it is discovered that 'critical areas' are highlighted. These 'critical areas' indicate a number of factors presenting itself as either stifling the change process or being obstructive to the objective of transforming management. Exposing these difficulties is helpful in structuring counter measures to speed along this transformation. Ultimately, the study seeks to give a fair and constructive account of management transformation in the provincial administration.

Definition of Major Terms

| | |
|--|---|
| Affirmative Action | - A strategy aimed at advancing certain groups through targeted employment. |
| Policy | - A guideline or directive which informs related programmes/ strategies. |
| Provincial Administration/ Bureaucracy | - The administrative arm of the provincial government responsible for policy implementation and service delivery. |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Strategy | - A programme utilized to create certain conditions or effect desired outcomes. |
| Transformation | - changing the racial and gender make-up of certain categories of employment [includes advancement of the disabled] Also refers to changes in practices, beliefs, culture, etc. |

Organization of the study

The study is divided into five chapters.

- Chapter 1: Introduces the focus of the research and how it fits into the developmental context of South Africa.
- Chapter 2: Argues in favour of a representative and democratic bureaucracy and the need for Affirmative Action as a policy to redress the imbalances of the past.
- Chapter 3: Offers an overview of the apartheid system as an Affirmative Action Strategy. It furthermore looks at the main policy frameworks emerging from a post-apartheid dispensation – thereby establishing the context within which every government department is to initiate and implement a programme of redress.
- Chapter 4: Presents data and associated breakdowns of management posts within the Provincial Administration : Western Cape. It levels a critique of policy frameworks, strategies, directives, transformational structures, training programmes and other initiatives aimed at advancing designated groups into management positions. It presents an assessment of affirmative action policies/strategies in PAWC.

Chapter 5: Provides the recommendation and conclusions emanating from an objective assessment undertaken in Chapter 4. It conveys a helpful approach in suggesting possible measures which should be taken in order to eradicate obstacles and improve present mechanisms and processes. It aims to constructively contribute to the discourse surrounding the effective implementation of affirmative action within the Provincial Administration: Western Cape.



CHAPTER 2

A Representative and Democratic Bureaucracy – The argument for these characteristics manifesting itself in the bureaucracy

The South African public service has continuously come under the spotlight since the onset of multi-party negotiations in the Congress for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), and later at Kempton Park. David Beetham (1987, p.34) explains that “the concept of the public (administration) suggests a form of administration which is carried out ‘for the public’, according to a norm or ethos of public service.” Given the merit of this assertion and the fact that the bureaucracy is an instrument of government, it is most apparent that the South African scenario is extremely disjointed. We have a fully democratic government with an old-guard and unrepresentative bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is responsible for delivering services to the majority of South Africans – something which did not take place in the past [The same situation prevailed in the Western Cape]. Hence, it is important to take cognizance of the relationship between democracy and bureaucracy; and use this as an argument for the transformation of the public service – especially at management level.

This section will identify some of the discrepancies between democracy and bureaucracy. It will also highlight aspects of the South African public service which renders it undemocratic. However, it will show that democracy and bureaucracy have convergence on critical issues, and that this is essential to attaining effective service delivery. The extension of these arguments establishes the validity of a representative bureaucracy as being fundamental to a democratic dispensation.

Discrepancies between Democracy and Bureaucracy

The nature and very essence of the concept bureaucracy is often conflicting with the ideals of democracy. The two concepts presuppose particular conditions which do not always complement each other.

As a starting point, bureaucracy is rigidly structured into a hierarchy. This gives it a particular character which conveys uniformity and discipline. Democracies, on the other hand, stresses the principles of equality and individuality. Beetham (1987, p98) explains that the issue of autonomy has different meanings when one super-imposes this over each of these two conditions. For instance, the individual would have a more extended sense of freedom in a democracy than in a bureaucracy where the social structures are more rigid. Beetham (1987,p.98) observes:

“Liberals define autonomy as freedom of individual choice, which bureaucracy restricts; to bureaucracy they counterpose the market, as the sphere of individual choice and voluntary exchange, whose scope they seek to protect and expand. Democrats define autonomy as taking part in determining the rules and policies of the collective life; to them bureaucracy appears as an imposed or alien authority which they have had no share in, and in relation to which they seek to expand the sphere of democratic decision and control”.

Democracy lends itself to personal freedom whereas bureaucracy is seen to inhibit this. A major part of the reason is the procedures, rules and regulations that are the fabric of a bureaucratic environment. Democracies are ill-defined and the procedures are often vague and ambiguous.

People are more psycho-dramatic in democracies where their needs and requirements come first and they become more emotional. Bureaucracies are underpinned by a sense of pragmatism, where people consider procedure and the feasibility of their particular needs – they are more techno-dramatic.

Officials in democracies are elected by popular vote and are responsible to their electorate. In bureaucracies the officials are appointed and are responsible to their superiors. In this regard, the criteria for the positions held by officials may differ. Bureaucracies emphasize expertise, experience and performance. The official has to satisfy these minimum requirements in order to shoulder the responsibility of his/her job. Dissimilarly, democracy does not prescribe such criteria for the election of

officials. This is not to say that the officials are not competent, but that there is no minimum requirement or standard set for their position – except the popular vote. These factors, amongst others, reflect the dichotomy which exists between the bureaucratic and democratic environments.

The contradictory nature of Democracy's need for Bureaucracy

Inasmuch as bureaucracy and democracy are fundamentally estranged, they are intertwined and the one even “grows out” of the other. For example, democracy mandates elected officials to provide good and strong government. In order to implement the mandate of the electorate, it almost always results in the augmentation of the administration and expansion of services. However, the public service is criticized by democrats for being over-sized even when service delivery requires greater capacity. Democracy imposes timeframes and demands efficiency, yet requires standards and effective responses from bureaucrats. Beetham (1987, p. 103) states that “democracy itself contributes to bureaucratic imposition” by the demands which it makes. The 1994 elections is a case in point whereby the bureaucracy was augmented in a way which ensured that procedures were followed and that everything ran smoothly. In effect, democrats cannot do without a bureaucracy which strengthens and gives credit to their elected position.

A strong bureaucracy is able to combat corruption and mismanagement. Government policies can be more effectively implemented if the administration is adequately resourced. The administrative arm of government provides the necessary expertise, research, feasibility studies and other analyses so that programmes and policies can be properly implemented. Elected officials cannot do without these services and, in fact, have to invest in them so as to extract the best possible solutions to social problems and other areas of concern. In reality, the credibility of any democratic government lies, to a great extent, with its ability to meet the demands of the electorate. This ability is vested in the size, shape and effectiveness of its bureaucracy.

The democratized bureaucracy - shortcomings of the South African public service

Notwithstanding the discrepancies and the somewhat symbiotic relationship between democracy and bureaucracy (as outlined), it is illuminating to note the fundamental deficiencies evident in the South African public service as they relate to democracy.

Representativeness

Whilst the House of Assembly and other political structures were representative of the country's population, the bureaucracy serving these political structures were not. In a sense, the public service did not achieve full democracy yet as former old-guard bureaucrats still dominate and control government departments (albeit in an administrative capacity). Thus far, steps have been taken to rectify this situation (the government's Employment Equity Act and other affirmative action programmes have been directed towards achieving representativeness). However, the process seems slow and longwinded, and needs to be hurried along so as to have a real impact on the bureaucracy. Also, ministers should guard against a skewed representation from within their department. Lungu (1993,p.12) points out that " the focus of representativeness is not just on the bureaucracy generally, but on senior and strategic posts." This is a criticism expressed by many political observers who see the importance of representativeness on every level of employment. Every department must be affirmed on every level in order to reflect a truly democratized bureaucracy.

Legitimacy

Achieving representativeness in the public service reaffirms the governments commitment to equity, justice and redress. The bureaucracy must reflect the demographics of the democratic state. When this is achieved, it gives the administration legitimacy . The South African Public Service cannot, in the light of this, lay claim to being legitimate. Although it is given its authority from the elected political leadership, there is a growing discontent amongst the masses that they are still being dominated and "ruled" by whites. Beetham (1987, pp.103-104) highlights

the importance of a sense of ownership amongst the electorate. The citizenry must feel that they are a part of government; and this gives the government its legitimacy. A more representative bureaucracy means that it will be more acceptable to the majority of South Africans. This brings one to the issue of neutrality.

Neutrality

Neutrality within the public service in this country is absolutely minimal, if at all. The bureaucracy has a long history of bias within its ranks – something which still exists today. A democratic bureaucracy is one which is neutral and serves the elected government of the day. The fact that our public service is still dominated by the old-guard bureaucrats renders it biased, and dangerously so. Government policy is threatened with possible sabotage (at worst) or a subtle form of stifling with regard to its implementation. The role of the administrator is to serve his/her political master and not to get personally involved in political agendas (Presthus, 1975, p.65).

At national level the ANC government has, however, seen it fit to make appointments along political lines. Here, one can assume that it is an attempt to neutralize the opposing forces within the administration. Almost all the director-generals in the different departments have been political appointments; which, in terms of democratic bureaucracy, should be frowned upon. However, with greater representativeness it is envisaged that the bureaucracy will be fully supportive of national goals and ideals as articulated by the elected ministers. In this way, bureaucrats become true public servants of the people.

A note on the Provincial Government: Western Cape

The Western Cape's political make-up is such that it differs ideologically from the national government. In terms of the arguments put forward above, this situation presents one with a complicated set of circumstances wherein which bureaucrats have to function. To who should the public servant in the Western Cape pledge allegiance – to the national government or to the provincial government?

Our national constitution gives us some insight into this potentially confusing issue. It outlines the jurisdiction of provincial governments as being subjugate to the goals and objectives of the national government. Consequently, provincial governments and

public servants in their employ are obliged to acknowledge national goals and objectives, and subscribe to the implementation thereof.

A culture of democratic principles within the Public Service

There are many aspects of the public service which one can change in a more tangible way so that it is more democratic – for example, the replacing of personnel. This alone, however, does not meet the definition of what constitutes a democratized bureaucracy. In states where the administration is fully representative, there exists other problems such as corruption and gross mismanagement of resources. A bureaucracy which is based on a democratic ethos should uphold principles such as accountability, responsibility, openness, and other values and behaviour amongst its staff. The public sector is in need of a new culture of service with values, beliefs, codes of conduct and a professionalism which is orientated towards our new democracy.

Transparency and openness

The administration arm of government must, as far as possible, be transparent and open to public scrutiny. Bureaucracies that have a “closed door” policy and which are secretive about their operations, often breed corruption and mismanagement. The public also becomes sceptical about the functions and intentions of the administration. Openness will lead to fostering greater confidence in the officialdom. Lungu (1993,p.12) asserts that “the true basis of democracy requires access to vital information on the critical decisions, actions and inaction of the bureaucracy”. This situation will alleviate the frustration which people experience when dealing with the different departments. When people are properly informed and aware of problems and other impediments, they might more willingly understand and cooperate.

Accountability

The strength of any democracy is the ability of the electorate to impact on government by way of voting. In other words, if the electorate is dissatisfied with government performance, it may very well vote it out of power. For this reason, ministers should ensure that their departments are accountable to the public in the same way that they are (Presthus, 1975:411-412). This accountability should be extended to include being answerable to one’s conscience (Lungu, 1993: 8). Lungu (1993, p.8) sees the

need for administrators to be self-responsible in their actions. In addition, the appropriate monitoring committees should be set up to ensure that administrators act in a responsible manner. In the same way that there exists parliamentary committees to monitor the actions of the ministry (including the minister), there should also be committees to monitor the actions or inaction of personnel.

Responsiveness

A popular criticism of public administration is that it does not adequately address the needs of the people. This includes not knowing what their needs are, and not satisfying it in the quickest possible time. Katz et al (1975, pp.188-189) suggest that administrators should regularly be made aware of public concerns by being involved in community forums/discussion, planning committees and other grassroots programmes. A case in point is the Reconstruction and Development Programme forums which was established in most communities. Project managers were invited to attend such meetings in order to identify the needs and aspirations of ordinary citizens. This kind of mechanism allows for administrators to fully comprehend the scope of people's needs.

Competence

During this period of transformation in the public service, and the possibility that some procedures and rules will be revised or even totally replaced, it will be expected of administrators to utilize their discretionary skills when dealing with complicated issues. The changing nature of the South African society coupled with the complexities surrounding our everyday conditions necessitates greater personal judgement from sensitive administrators.

Developing a set of core values and norms in a multi-cultural organization

The South African population is characterised by diversity and the lack of common core values and norms. Developing a sense of respect for this diversity and giving it institutional value is a positive move towards democratization of the workplace. The bureaucracy must strive towards concretizing this and giving it meaning to all South Africans. It also underlines the importance of having a culturally diverse staff complement.

Affirmative Action – the key to a Representative and Democratic Bureaucracy

The characteristics/values outlined above are integral to the notion of a representative bureaucracy. As its starting point, a representative bureaucracy presupposes a bureaucracy which reflects the demographics of its constituency. Herein lies the conviction of adopting an affirmative action policy in order to effect a representative bureaucracy in the Western Cape.

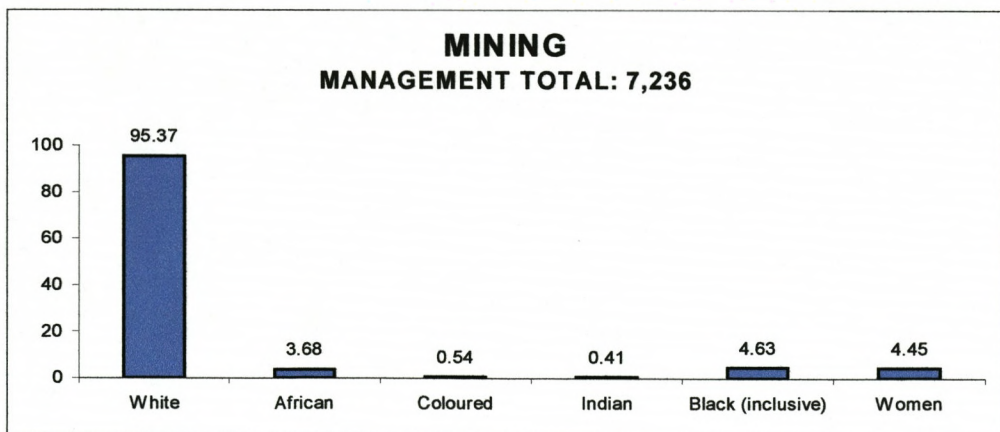
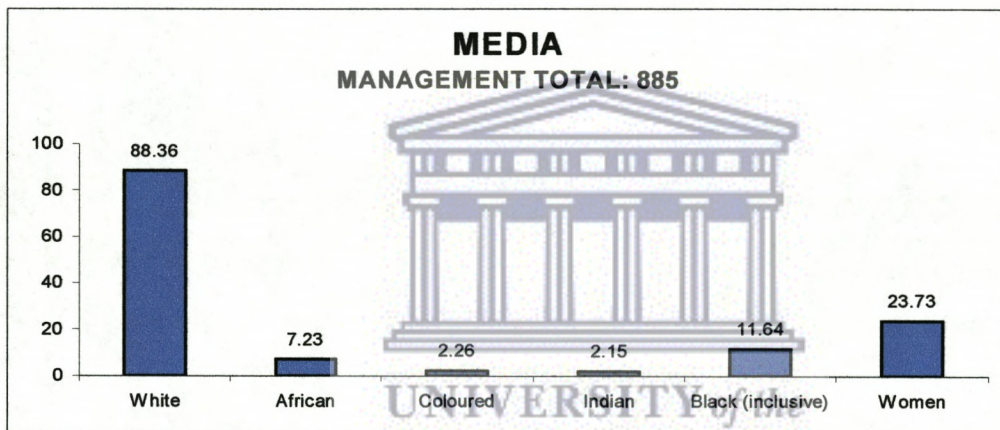
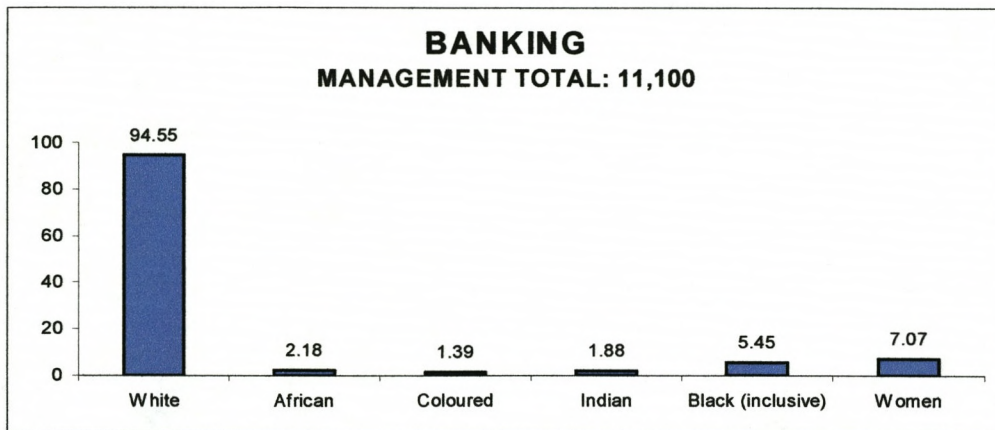
The Merits of Affirmative Action as a Policy for Redress

Given the particular employment circumstances prevalent in the South African society, and in particular the public service, it would be logical to concede that to effect substantive change an effective mechanism needs to be in force. This mechanism is Affirmative Action. Affirmative Action is a vital and necessary transformation vehicle that aims to bring about employment equity in the workplace. Dr Mamphela Ramphele, the University of Cape Town's Vice-Chancellor, remarks that South Africa has already experienced "one of the most expensive and prolonged affirmative action programmes in world history, starting from the time of colonial conquest and intensified under apartheid" (in Charlton and Van Niekerk, 1994:51). This was focused at advancing the white minority and placing them in a position of dominance. Democratic South Africa, on the other hand, has the task of advancing the black majority in the country – and only to the degree that it mirrors the demographics of the country. This economic counter-balancing should manifest itself in the proliferation of employment amongst blacks, woman and the disabled. Moreover, it should impact on all levels of employment, including management.

Management in South Africa

White males are still over-represented in the skilled, managerial and senior positions in both the private and public sectors. Karthy Govender (1998, p.79) points to the following graphs and asserts that affirmative action is most vital at management level across most industries in South Africa, where the race distribution is overwhelmingly skewed in favour of whites.

RACE DISTRIBUTION OF MANAGERS BY INDUSTRY



(Source: The Breakwater Monitor, UCT)

The Provincial Administration: Western Cape also evidences a wide gap in the racial and gender distribution amongst management positions (as will be discussed in Chapter 4). Brimlow (1981) “argues that it is possible for certain groups to numerically dominate the civil service (and private sector) as a whole, yet be excluded from senior positions” (in Lungu, 1993:12). This situation holds true for the state of employment in South Africa where blacks and women dominate the employment figures, but are woefully under-represented amongst management.

Competency and merit

The government proposal stipulates that certain targets would have to be met within certain timeframes (White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995). Charlton and van Niekerk (1994,p.55) suggest that targets can be realised by implementing one of two strategies, namely:

- increasing the number of blacks and female managers fairly quickly, or
- promoting only on merit.

The first option invites a lot of criticism from many sectors in society. There is a fear that the standard of service delivery will drop if this is implemented in the public service. People from disadvantaged backgrounds who have not received the opportunities to develop the necessary competencies for more skilled and senior positions are immediately in an unequal position relative to those who have been fortunate and possess these competencies. When candidates are not deemed as being entirely qualified and competent for their tasks they are regarded as being token appointments. Unfortunately any affirmative action appointment will bear the stigma of “tokenism”. This, however, detracts from the fact that such a candidate has the ability and potential to become a competent manager. Let us keep in mind that the Employment Equity Act (1998) states that “a person may be suitably qualified for a job as a result of any one of, or any combination of that person’s –

- (a) formal qualifications;
- (b) prior learning;

- (c) relevant experience; or
- (d) capacity to acquire, within a reasonable time, the ability to do the job.” (p.22)

The second option, given the under-development of the majority of South Africans, will result in too few disadvantaged candidates being promoted. Competence and qualifications cannot be the main criteria for promotion – the result will be unacceptable to government and the electorate. Hence, the public service will have to underpin its policy with an effective programme which enhances people’s skills and, in so doing, equips them for the challenges of meritocracy. Herein lies the strength of any affirmative action programme. Saltzstein (1986), in challenging the constraints placed by merit, quotes the Chair of the United States Civil Service Commission as stating:

“Affirmative action is not an exception to merit.....it is wrong to assume that merit principles must be compromised to accomplish affirmative action. What sometimes happens is confusion of the word merit with some of the trappings of merit... certain current practices, regulations, and laws, which in fact are not essential to a merit system are sometimes the very ones which simultaneously inhibit the accomplishment of affirmative action goals.” (in Combs and Gruhl, 1986: 131)



Training and Development

The overriding advantage that affirmative action policies have is that it focuses attention on competency training and skills development (Wolfgang Thomas in Adams, 1993:59-75). The following is an outlay as to how the focus and scope of the organization can be affected by affirmative action training and development.

| <u>Area</u> | <u>Scope for training</u> |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Management experience | -formal training, in-service experience, mentorship programmes, ongoing “handholding”, scope for self-development. |

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 2. Trained staff | -access to trained/experienced staff, help from experienced staff, help with respect to own self-development. |
| 3. Technology | -access to technology and know-how, development of technology with regard to sector. |
| 4. Networking and lobbying | -access to networking systems (informal/formal), access to decision-making processes. |

(Wolfgang Thomas, 1993: 62-63)

Exposure to this sort of environment will have a positive impact on the individuals own development within the organisation (Carrel et al, 1998: 338 – 340). The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service (1995, p.25) emphasizes the need for appropriate training and development programmes as “forming an integral part of the process of increasing the representativeness of the public service”. Norman Levy (1995) also underscore the value of such programmes in supporting the aims and objectives of an affirmative action policy (in Cloete and Mokgoro, 1995: 71-84). Adele Thomas (1998, p.90) explains that socio-economic disparities (and therefore employment status) “are due to the uneven distribution of skill, however, which will take some time to remedy. “

Challenges of Diversity

The induction of new personnel will bring about diversity and different viewpoints. This might present a problem amongst managers who have become used to a certain *modus operandi* in the workplace. Management will now have to deal with their peers whom they basically do not know in terms of culture, beliefs, habits, etc.

On the other hand, new personnel presents a new challenge to the public service. More valuable will be the fact that blacks will be responsible for service delivery to

largely black communities in South Africa. They would bring aboard their experiences of these communities and this can only help the department to become more responsive and sensitive to the needs of these communities. The public sector as a whole would benefit from such a scenario where people are being served by their own.

Organizational Culture

The diversification of the public service through Affirmative Action would mean that the culture which exists within departments would change. This can be regarded as a positive change which, hopefully, could permeate from the top management through to the lower level employees. In the past, the public service of South Africa (national and provincial) served the interest of a minority whilst neglecting the needs of the majority. Old guard attitudes and beliefs need to be changed in order to service the needs of a new clientele. The higher level employment of blacks and women would create the necessary impetus in forging a new culture of service (Carrel et al, 1998:46-47).

Affirmative Action – legitimate or reverse discrimination?

Any attempt at addressing the need for affirmative action in the workplace cannot proceed uninterrupted without a mention of its legitimacy. This section will deal briefly with this question – thereby reinforcing the right of such a programme in our society.

A popular criticism of affirmative action is that it amounts to reverse discrimination against whites. This policy could, of course, have the effect of alienating the white male from the mainstream and the country could suffer a loss of skill and expertise. Also, the policy does not accommodate their aspirations and this could have a negative effect on their work performance/output. These are realities which has to be taken cognizance of, but which has to be dealt with in the appropriate way.

However painful and uncomfortable the policy might sit with white males, the larger picture has to take precedence – the majority of South Africans are blacks and women

and , therefore, they have to assume their rightful positions in all spheres of society. Deanne Collins (1994, p.44) quotes unionist such as Chris Bonner and Jan Mahlangu as saying: “(We)... believe that all our demands and struggles.... are by their very nature, designed to bring about affirmative action.”

In arguing in favour of the legality of affirmative action in South Africa, Karthy Govender (1998, p.83) states:

“The apartheid society had a distinct hierarchy of races. Whites were at the top and Africans firmly rooted at the bottom. The coloured and Indian communities were situated in between. It is perfectly legitimate, therefore, if we are seeking to achieve genuine equality, to apply the affirmative action programme in proportion to the measure of disadvantage suffered under apartheid.”

Besides these powerful insights, the constitution, more than anything, reaffirms the legitimacy of affirmative action programmes. It reads:

“Public administration must be broadly representative of the South Africa people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.” [Constitution, 1996]

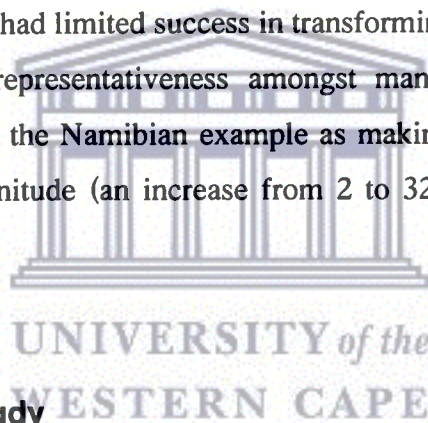
An International perspective

Although affirmative action became more prominent in the United States with the black minority asserting their position in that society, there is a fundamental difference which amplifies the case for affirmative action in South Africa. This very simply is the fact that the affirming group makes up the majority. The South African scenario reflects a situation where the majority of the workforce comprises of blacks and women, and where the majority of management is made up of white males.

This dynamic between management and staff complement also prevails in the public sector. It is also not unique to South Africa – Osafo (1987) observes “that women in

Sweden and Germany constitute over 70% in the lowest or clerical divisions, but less than 2% in the highest division” (in Lungu, 1993:12). Thomas Sowell (1990,pp.52-68) cites the Indian experience of preferential treatment for ‘local’ employees (who made up the majority in a region) to advance to higher level government jobs. The same author also points to countries such as Malaysia, Nigeria and Sri Lanka as examples of “majority preferences in minority economies” (Sowell, 1990: ch. 3).

Closer to home, Tapscot (1994, P.8-12) illustrates the political and administrative fabric of Namibia at independence as being incongruent. He explains that ‘the indigenous population were systematically excluded from all positions of influence in the state and civil society’, and that “ the majority of senior posts in government were held by whites at independence “ (p.8). He goes further to argue that because affirmative action was not systematically driven by the Namibian government after independence; that this has had limited success in transforming management positions (pp. 9-10). On gender representativeness amongst management post, however, Tapscott (1994, p:12) cites the Namibian example as making “an improvement of a considerable order of magnitude (an increase from 2 to 32 posts, or growth of the order of 1500%).”



Implications for this study

The examples cited above reinforce the legitimacy of applying affirmative action in the South African public sector. The South African context is in line with experiences in other countries where they have adopted a policy of majority preferences in minority economies.

The significance of these experiences underscore the responsibility which society has in addressing imbalances in the socio-economic status amongst the citizens. Government, as the largest single employer in South Africa, has to lead the way in instituting change at every level of employment.

This study should, therefore, effectively illustrate the extent to which a particular government employer (The Provincial Administration : Western Cape) has

endeavoured to change its management-makeup (since this is the area of focus of the study). Also, the study is charged with the responsibility of assessing relevant policies and strategies, and commenting on the effective implementation thereof.



CHAPTER 3

Historical Context of Affirmative Action policies and National Affirmative Action policies in South Africa – 1995 to 1999

As pointed out in chapter 2, South African history is well-acquainted with the practice of affirming certain groups in society. This chapter will offer a brief account of these policies and practices, and then proceed to outline national affirmative action policies post 1994.

Historical Context of Affirmative Action in South Africa – an overview

Jim Peron (1992, p.2) asserts that “apartheid was the most ambitious affirmative action programme that the world has ever witnessed”. Preferential policies ensured that whites gained advancement in the economy. In fact, the preferential policies of the apartheid state entrenched white dominance in all sectors of the economy – private and public. The Afrikaner whites had biased access to resources and opportunities which translated into them occupying more powerful positions in society. They, furthermore, benefited from job preservation policies which secured them higher level employment across all industries (Franklin Sonn, 1993:5-8).

The Public Service

In order to consolidate their support base the apartheid government (National Party after 1948) strategically employed more Afrikaners in the public service. Besides strengthening the ideology of the state in this way, it also meant that few Afrikaners were without a job since ‘their government’ would provide employment. Peron (1992, p.3) highlights the fact that the Afrikaners “used the power of government to keep blacks out of the competition market to secure jobs and higher wages for themselves.” In effect, “apartheid was a massive programme of wealth redistribution.”

Affirmative Action in the apartheid era can best be described as a robust programme of empowering the white minority. More specific to the public service, it meant that

the administration was wholly controlled by whites and that senior positions were their exclusive domain.

Bardill (1997, p.2) views the apartheid public service as having been “bloated, fragmented, wasteful and inequitable (in) nature.” Suffice it to say that this included the administration in the Western Cape [formerly known as Cape Provincial Administration].

National Affirmative Action Policies in South Africa – 1995 to 1999

Whilst this study focuses exclusively on affirmative action in PAWC, it is necessary to gain an understanding of national affirmative action /transformation policies since this should inform similar policies and strategies at provincial level. Leading from Bardill’s (1997) comment about an oversized public service at 1994, one can clearly see that appropriate measures needed to be implemented to right this situation.

The African National Congress was at the head of government [when it was the Government of National Unity] from 1994 and so it would be appropriate, for the purposes of this study, to concentrate on policy frameworks emerging for the post democratic dispensation. This author acknowledges the fact that prior to 1994 there were moves towards advancing affirmative action in both the private and public sectors. However, the period associated with democracy, by consequence, establishes an undeniable platform for change to be implemented.

The ‘Sunset clause’

As exciting and very interesting as the post-democratic period might have seemed at first, it soon became obvious that change in the public service would be fraught with obstacles. To exacerbate this problem even further, the ‘sunset clause’ had already been negotiated and accepted. The ‘sunset clause’ ensured that old-guard bureaucrats could still keep their jobs in the new democratic dispensation [the general election of 1999 would be the expiry date for this arrangement]. This meant that any radical programme addressing staff changes would be ineffective since the old-guard were still by and large assured of their positions. Evidenced today is the fact that this old-

guard still dominates most public sector departments and that change is taking very long to be realized. In the Western Cape it seems that the 'sunset clause' has established an eternal home for old-guard bureaucrats where the likelihood of this sun actually setting seems far off and very distant.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) 1994

Marais (1998, p: 177) remarks that the RDP "was promoted as a unifying national endeavour that allegedly transcended practical interest; the RDP 'belonged to everybody'." This is true in that almost all interest groups (including the sceptics), in some way or another, viewed it as a vehicle for social change. This spectrum of support included political parties, trade unions, business and other important social partners. Most of all, the RDP had the overwhelming support of the oppressed masses.

With this kind of mandate it was incumbent upon government [national and provincial] to implement this programme of change. Regarding the public service, the RDP states:

"All levels of government will be expected to implement a policy that will ensure that the Public Service is representative of all people of South Africa, in racial, gender and geographical terms." (p.40)

The RDP also specifically points out:

"Special programmes will be designed to address the under-representation of specific categories of persons at different levels of the Public Service." (p.41)

Further on it elaborates :

"There are at present very many capable women in the Public Service. Very few are in senior positions. Their promotion histories must be reviewed and measures implemented to correct discrimination based on gender." (p. 42)

In terms of its effectiveness as a policy framework for social change, the example of the RDP highlights the fact that one has to identify who the real power-brokers are in

the political economy of South Africa. Likewise, the public service is also inherent of forces retarding the transformation process. It is not enough to have a widely consultative policy without the political, social and economic will to implement its programme. Marais (1998, p.183) asserts that “as a government programme, the RDP seemed to accommodate the divergent interests of contesting social and economic forces.” It is now clear that this was the case and that the transformation envisaged was vulnerable to the exploits of individuals and groups subscribing to a different agenda. This assertion is indicative of the level of transformation in the Public Service.

White Paper on Transformation in the Public Service (1995)

The White Paper on Transformation in the Public Service (1995) presented national and provincial departments with a well-formulated and well-structured policy framework within which to exercise their own initiatives towards change. On the issue of representativeness the policy reads:

“With the new dispensation in South Africa, this situation cannot be allowed to continue. To meet the new and challenging tasks with which it is faced, and in particular to improve the quality and equity of service delivery, it is absolutely imperative that the public service draws upon the skills and talents of all South Africans, and derives the benefits of the broader perspectives that a more representative service will bring.” (p.19)

The policy emphasized the need for affirmative action by stating:

“Given the priority assigned by the government to increasing representativeness, a proactive approach will clearly be vital, and this will predominantly take the form of affirmative or corrective action.” (p.19)

With regard to targets and timeframes, the document forwards the following:

“More specifically, the Government proposes that within four years all departmental establishments must be at least 50 percent black. During the same period at least 30 percent of new recruits to the middle and senior

management echelon should be women. Within ten years, people with disabilities should comprise 2 percent of public service personnel.” (p.20)

These guidelines, whilst not accessing vigilant monitoring structures to ensure its implementation, did, however, require all departments of government to act responsibly and with integrity towards the achievement of its stated objectives.

The Constitution of South Africa

While the constitution may not, strictly speaking, be regarded as an affirmative action policy per se, it does contain provisions relevant to this discussion, and which is legitimized through an act of parliament. Chapter 10, for instance, covers the “basic values and principles governing public administration” (pp.107 – 111). The need for representativeness, and actions articulating this ideal is enshrined in this chapter of the constitution.

The Employment Equity Act (1998)

The Department of Labour, being insightful enough to realise that most employers are not highly motivated towards implementing affirmative action measures in the workplace, promulgated the Employment Equity policy document to, in effect, ‘arrest’ their procrastination on these issues. This Act serves as a concretized mechanism which would compel designated employers to draw up and implement equity plans in the workplace. In a critique levelled at the Act, Adele Thomas (1998,p.91) asks if this presents a “leadership challenge or necessary evil?” Either way, the act certainly attempts to allay the frustrations of the masses who are dismayed with the slow pace of transformation in the workplace.

The Employment Equity Act (1998) requires of designated employers [all Public Service departments fall under this term] to implement affirmative action strategies for people from the designated groups [i.e. blacks, women and the disabled]. It outlines the various duties and responsibilities of designated employers in this regard. Relevant to this study, the Act explicitly says:

“(Designated employers should) *ensure the equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce.*” (p.18)

White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service (1998)

This policy document has as one of its express objectives to “speed up the achievement and progressive improvement of the numeric targets set out in the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service” (2.2: 1.1). In order to achieve this ideal the policy argues that “implementing affirmative action will be the responsibility of every manager, rather than solely of specially designated staff ” [2.4].

In summary, this White Paper clearly sets out the procedures and strategies which departments should enforce in the workplace. It emphasizes the role of managers, and associated responsibilities involving strategic planning, as the key to a successful affirmative action programme. As a working document, the White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service (1998), in this author’s view, surpasses all other related policies in terms of its concentration on implementation strategies.

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Chapter 4

THE CASE OF THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION: WESTERN CAPE (PAWC)

Structure of the Provincial Administration : Western Cape

The Provincial Administration : Western Cape is an amalgam of a number of departments, each one comprising of any number of components. Over the past five years these departments have totalled between 9 and 15. As at 1999 these departments were :

1. Office of the Premier
2. Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Tourism
3. Environmental and Cultural Affairs and Sport
4. Community Safety
5. Education
6. Planning, Local Government and Housing
7. Health and Social Services
8. Corporate Services
9. Finance



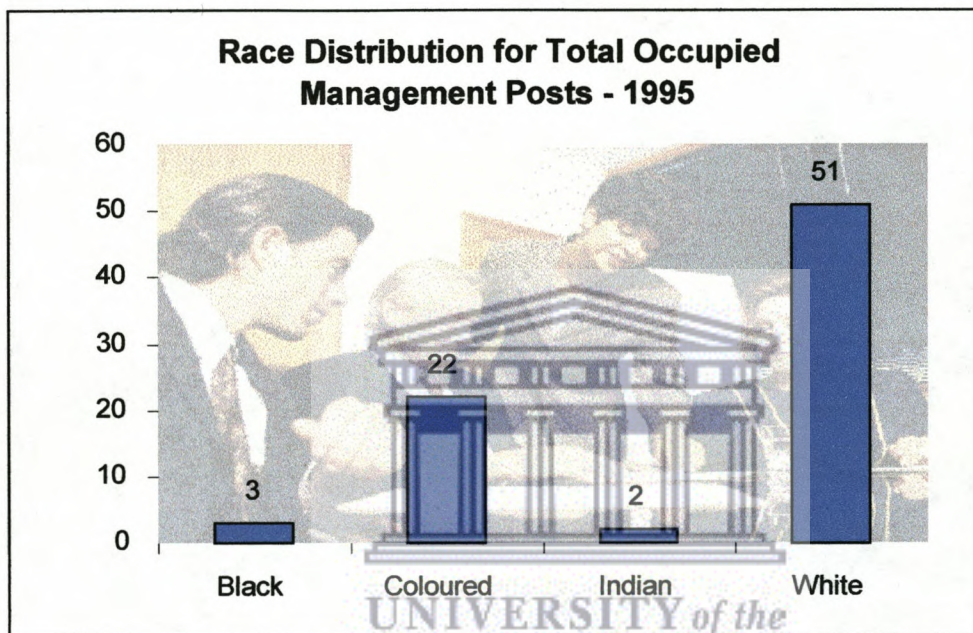
According to the statistics, management positions which were occupied in PAWC over the past five years have ranged between a total of 78 and 109. Thus, for the most part what existed in PAWC between 1995 and 1999 was 78 – 109 managers spread over 20 plus components averaging 3 – 4 managers per component.

The management echelon posts within the Provincial Administration : Western Cape is composed of the post levels 13,14,15 and 16 (i.e Director, Chief Director, Deputy Director-General and Superintendent General or Director-General). The racial composition of these posts between 1995 – 1999 reveals a somewhat stagnant approach to transformation and reluctance towards achieving greater representativeness. The data reflecting the make-up of management posts over this period shows that either no strategy exists to effect representativeness, or the strategies, which do exist, are not producing appropriate outcomes. The origins of

these strategies are, of course, the policies which should define the level of its impact. In this regard, the data clearly shows that affirmative action policies are failing at the level of implementation.

Race distribution for management posts : 1995 – 1999

The following graph indicates the number of posts occupied by the different race groups during 1995.

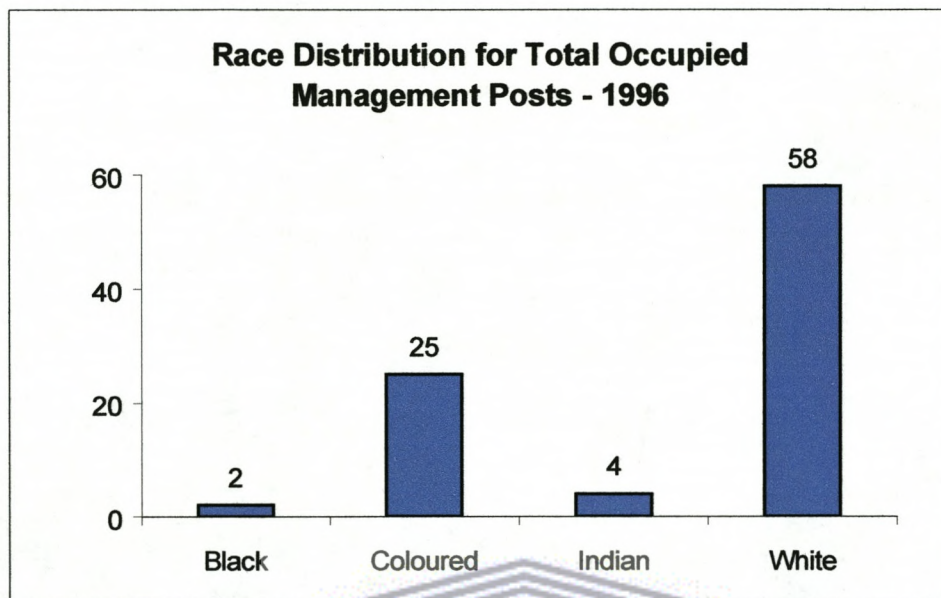


[Source: Western Cape Provincial Service Commission, 1995]

Out of a total of 104 posts, 26 vacancies existed. Thus, 78 posts were occupied of which 51 were occupied by whites. This represents 65% of all occupied posts being filled by white men and women. As indicated by the graph, only 3 posts were filled by Africans. This makes up 4% of all occupied positions in the Provincial Administration : Western Cape. Coloured and Indian managers made up 28% and 3% respectively.

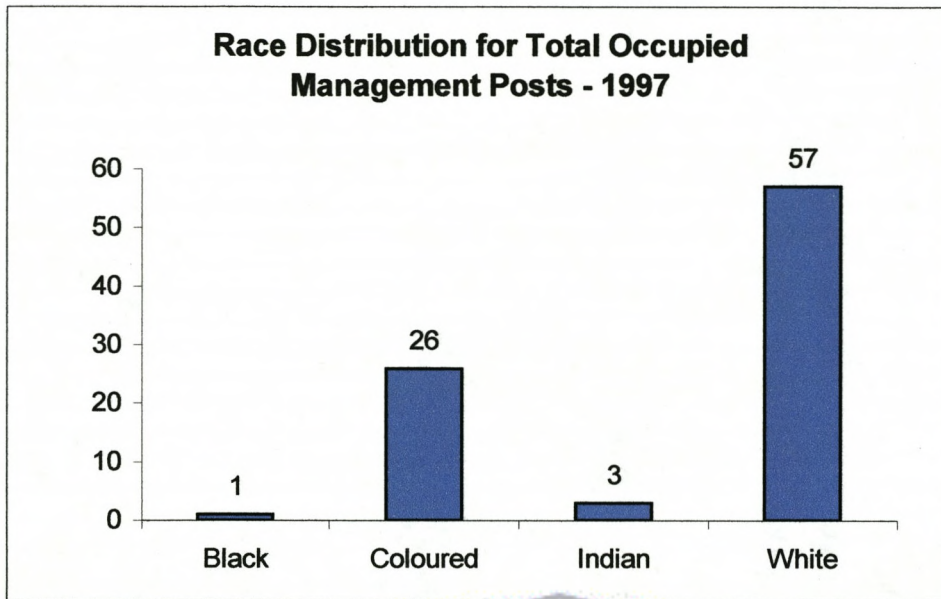
In the year 1996 more managers were appointed as reflected in the graph below.

[Source: WCPSC, 1996/1997]



The vacancies totalled 15, whilst the total amount of posts remained at 104. The amount of African managers decreased by one. Seven more whites were appointed during this period which kept their representation at 65% of all filled posts. Coloured representation remained at 28% and Indians increased to 4%. However, when one compares the white representation with the total amount of posts (i.e. 104) we see that this had been augmented from 51/104 (or 49%) to 58/104 (or 56%). Furthermore, out of the 11 posts that were filled, Whites took up 7 positions, Coloureds 3 and Indians 1. The representation for these vacant posts reads: Whites – 64%, Coloured – 27%, Indians – 9% and Africans - 0%. These figures, as compared with 1995, shows no progress towards greater representation in the management echelon posts.

The following is the graph for 1997.

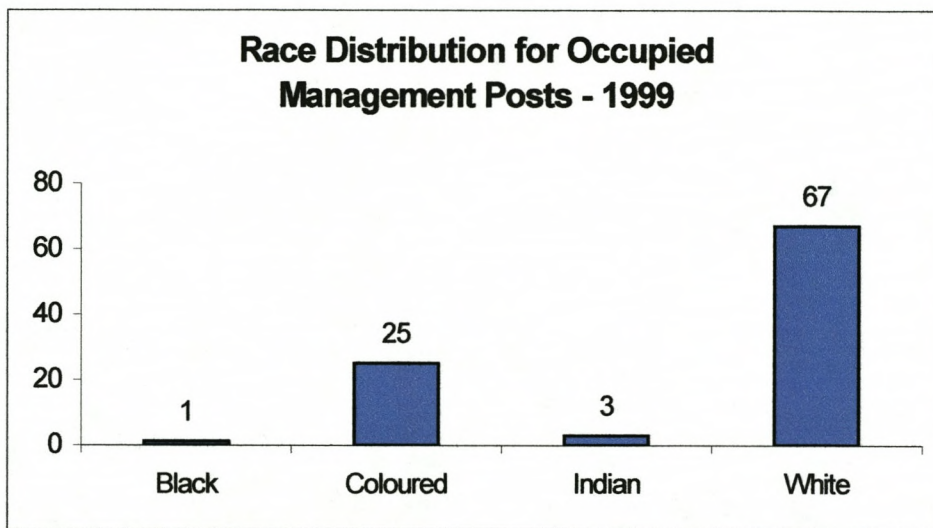


[Source: Transformation Unit]

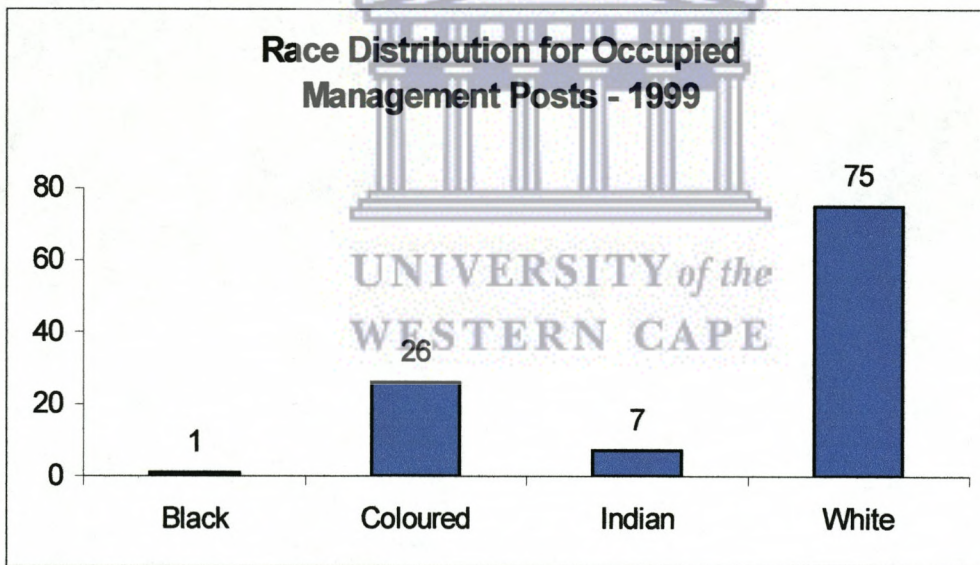
Again, the amount of posts remained constant at 104[inclusive of vacancies]. There existed only 1 post, occupied by an African (i.e. 0.9%). The other proportion of filled posts were : Whites – 66%, Coloured – 30%, and Indians – 3%.

The data for 1998 shows no substantive change in the distribution of post (i.e 1997 and 1998 has a similar distribution). Clearly, this period indicates a standstill in the movement towards representativeness. Even if no movement took place amongst occupied posts (no posts being vacated), there still existed the vacant posts which could have been focused on in order to facilitate the objective of greater representation.

The figures for 1999 are shown by the two graphs below (Persal and Cape Argus).



[Source: Persal, instansie70]



[Source: Cape Argus, 16 August 1999]

The race distribution for the year 1999 shows differing totals according to the sources available. Persal figures reflect a total of 96 occupied post. Of this 67 are White, 25 Coloured, 3 Indian and 1 Black. The Cape Argus, 16 August 1999 cites a total of 109 management posts after doing their own research (telephonic) into the race distribution in the Provincial Administration: Western Cape. Notwithstanding these differences the distribution still highlights the following:

68.8% White, 23.8% Coloured, 6.4% Indian and 1% Black – (Cape Argus, 16 August 1999)

OR

69.8% White, 26.04% Coloured, 3.12% Indians and 1.04% Black – (Persal – Instansie 70, June 1999).

Comparative Assessment – Race Distribution Between 1995 and 1999

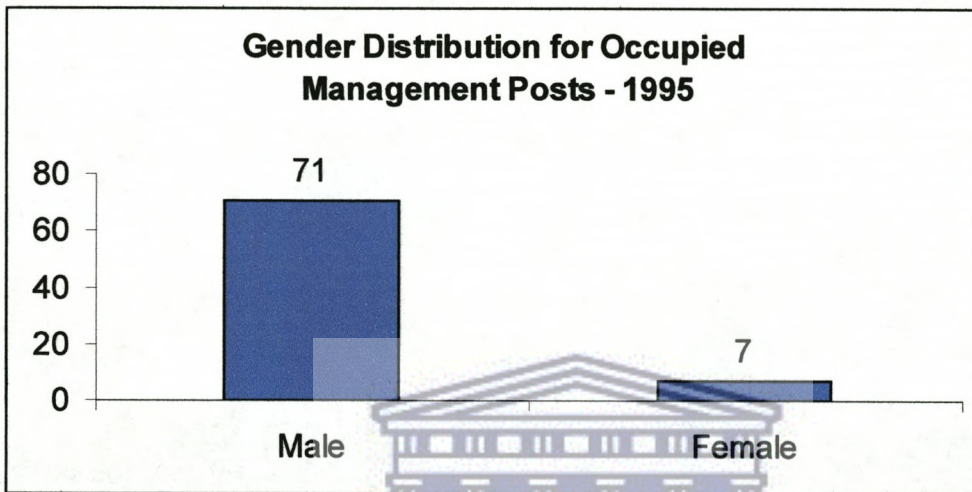
| | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Whites | 65 | 65 | 66 | 66 | 69.8 |
| Coloureds | 28 | 28 | 30 | 30 | 26.04 |
| Indians | 3 | 4 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.12 |
| Blacks | 4 | 3 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.04 |

AS PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL OCCUPIED MANAGEMENT POSTS

These comparative percentages illuminate a consistency which cannot be denied. The move towards representativeness has not only stagnated, but has for the most part had a regressive trend. The advancement of non-whites to senior positions has not taken place and the data reflects a systematic control over the status quo – therefore, the proportionalities are more or less in balance over the past five years. If anything, whites have been reaffirmed over this period – moving from 65% to nearly 70%. On the other hand, black representation has declined from a meagre 4% in 1995 to an abysmal 1.04% in 1999.

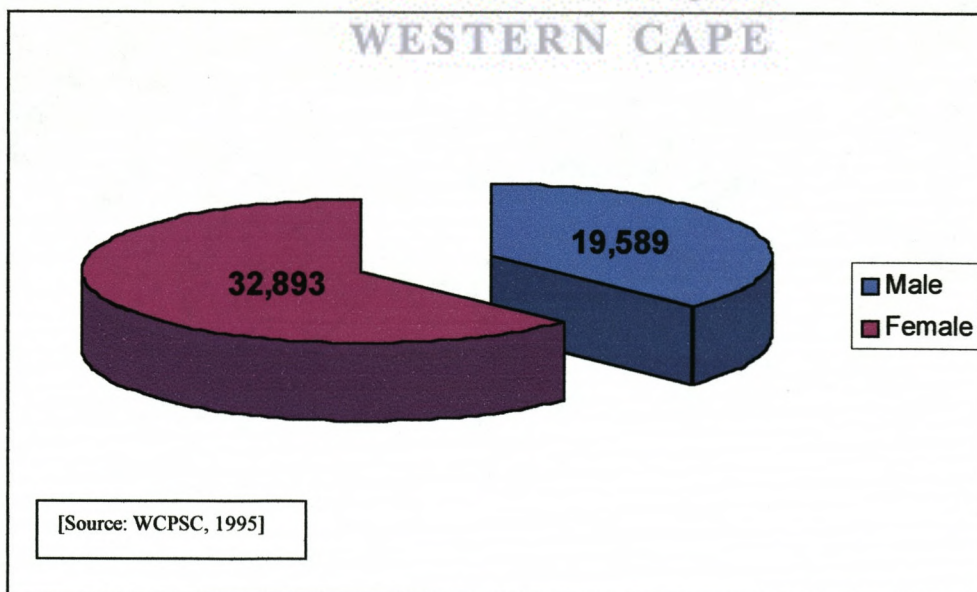
GENDER DISTRIBUTION FOR MANAGEMENT POSTS OVER THE PERIOD 1995 – 1999

The diagram below indicates that females made up only 9% of management positions in Provincial Administration : Western Cape.



[Source: WCPSC, 1995]

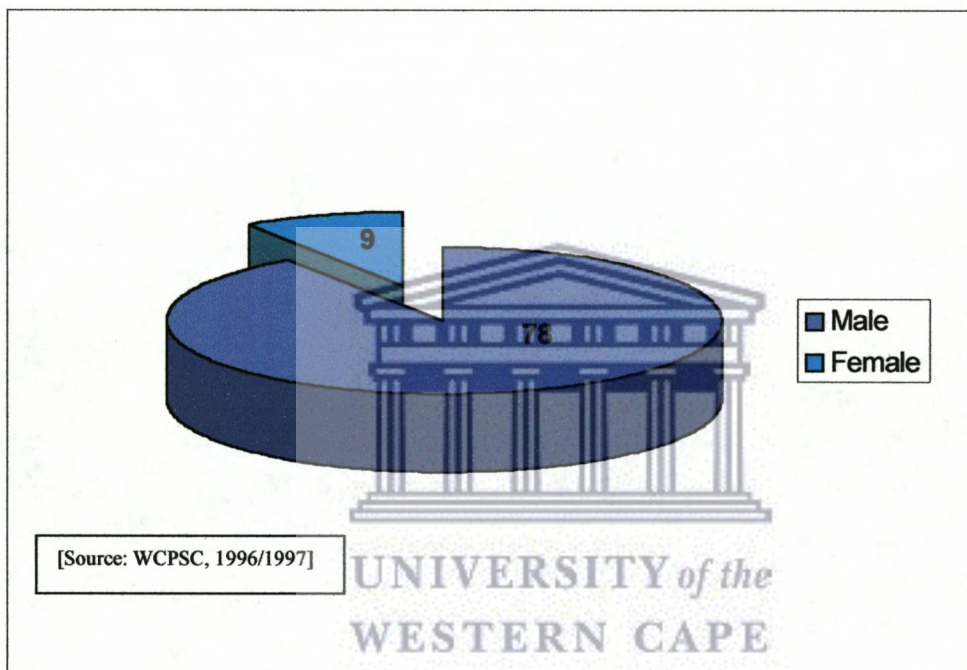
Interestingly, females made up nearly two thirds of the total workforce (62.67% to be exact) as seen below.



[Source: WCPSC, 1995]

The data for 1996 indicate no substantive increase in the upward mobility of women (11%). This amounted to 10 women out of a total of 89 occupied management positions. Female employees accounted for 30 620 posts out of an overall complement of 49 116 posts within the Provincial Administration: Western Cape.

In 1997 women filled 9 posts out of a sum of 87. This situation prevailed for the years 1997 and 1998. It represented 10% of all filled management positions.



In 1999 (according to data highlighted within Persal, June 1999), women managers occupied 12 out of 96 positions. This makes up 12.5% of senior managers in Provincial Administration: Western Cape. Women, however, still accounted for over 60% of the total workforce within the Provincial Administration : Western Cape.

Comparative Assessment – Gender Distribution Between 1995 and 1999

| | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| MEN | 91 | 89 | 90 | 90 | 87.5 |
| WOMAN | 9 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 12.5 |

AS PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL OCCUPIED MANAGEMENT POSTS

The gender distribution for the period 1995 – 1999 shows only a marginal improvement from an initial 9% to 12.05%. In real terms this meant from 7 posts to 12 posts in five years.

The Disabled

No disabled persons occupied a senior management position within the Provincial Administration: Western Cape between 1995 and 1999.

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES WITHIN THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION: WESTERN CAPE - 1995 TO 1999

No record could be found of any comprehensive focus on Affirmative Action (whether it be as a policy paper or management strategy) most notably between the years 1995 – 1997. This is not to say that no reference on Affirmative Action exists within the many policies/strategies in an amalgam such as the Provincial Administration: Western Cape. Indeed, there are countless examples of literature which do include a discussion on Affirmative Action. However, they remain too broad-based and too vague to suggest that adequate and appropriate concentration was given to this subject. Only towards the latter part of 1997 did the Provincial Administration : Western Cape introduce its affirmative action policy, entitled :

“ WESTERN CAPE : POLICY DOCUMENT FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION “

[PAWC, 1997]

This policy document provided the overall framework within which all other related directives/ strategies would be shaped and informed. Here, key elements such as 'comprehensive' and 'substantive' provides the criteria whereby important aspects can be evaluated. These are (a) Policy Formulation; (b) Commitment to National Goals and Objectives; and (c) Strategic Planning and Implementation.

(a) Policy Formulation

The Provincial Administration : Western Cape as a corporate body now had a detailed policy giving clear directives and advice with regard to advancing representativeness. The emergence of such an important policy outlay suggested that the process of formulation was broad-based and inclusive. Indeed, the initiative to engage all role-players and structure a comprehensive framework addressing the state of representativeness in the province was now realized and culminated into this policy document. The important voices and opinions of stakeholders were channelled into a process that had the potential to give clear direction and guidelines to all employees within the Provincial Administration : Western Cape and other interested parties{ This Policy Document was accepted by the Provincial Bargaining Chamber on 27 August 1997 }.

(b) Commitment to National Goals and Objectives

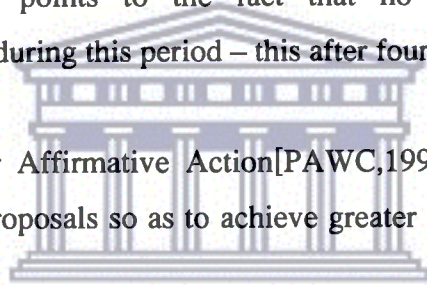
Leading from the critique raised above, it is quite evident that role-players in the Provincial Administration : Western Cape was now committed to transformation. When one considers that since 1994, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) clearly stated the objectives of the national government; and that all tiers of government and government departments were obliged to subscribe to these objectives, then it is apparent that the Provincial Administration : Western Cape demonstrated their commitment to national goals and objectives[albeit four years later!].

(c) Strategic Planning and Implementation

The RDP[1994] and the White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service[1995] emphasize the objective of making government more representative of the people whom it serves.

These two documents, however, do not prescribe a specific time-frame which departments should have adhered to in their attempt to transform their staff complement. Nonetheless, the two policies served as the benchmark by which departmental initiatives and strategies should have been drawn up and subsequently implemented. This would have enabled departments to monitor progress made in terms of representivity at management level, and if the situation called for it, speed up the implementation of these strategies. The inertia as marked by the data collated between 1995 and 1997 points to the fact that no effective planning and implementation took place during this period – this after four years of democratization and the RDP!

The Policy Document For Affirmative Action[PAWC,1997], however, makes the attempt to structure such proposals so as to achieve greater representativeness within PAWC.



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MAIN PROPOSALS IN WESTERN CAPE: POLICY DOCUMENT FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION [1997]

The policy document covers many aspects relating to affirmative action within PAWC. With regard to the policy's impact on management positions it is only necessary to elaborate on the main proposals. These are:

- (a) The establishment of a Special Programmes Officer post.
- (b) The development of departmental action plans and programmes.
- (c) The establishment of a Transformation Unit.

The proposals (b) and (c) are discussed later in this chapter. The post of Special Programmes Officer, (a) above, is of importance since it gives effect to an interventionist strategy within the transformation process. The function of the Special Programmes Officer is:

- To evaluate “the human resource composition in the various departments in the Administration.”
- To facilitate “the development of departmental action plans and programmes aimed at promoting a broadly representative staff composition.”
- To monitor these “action plans and programmes to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency.”
- To render “support services to participants in special programmes.”

[Western Cape: Policy Document For Affirmative Action, 1997]

Departmental Strategies within the Provincial Administration

From interviews with managers in the various department it was revealed that the Provincial Administration : Western Cape to a large extent relied on departments to draw up their own individual affirmative action policy/guidelines specific to their circumstances. However, many managers conceded that these policies were not much different from the usual rhetoric evident in any other briefing and that it did not contain specific mechanisms to bring about effective change. What is even more apparent was the lack of concentration of a strategy which focuses specifically on affirmative action impacting on management echelon positions during the period 1995 to 1997.



The Provincial Executive Programme (PEP) – A PAWC strategy introduced in 1998.

The Provincial Executive Programme (PEP) was designed as a training and development strategy that would groom and nurture potential candidates for management positions. This programme would be the over-arching strategy for all departments in the Provincial Administration : Western Cape. The purposes and functions of this programme was :

- * To address the need for an Affirmative Action programme.
- * To fast-track candidates to achieve management potential.
- * To select appropriate candidates from designated groups.
- * To enhance the skills and capacity of both the candidate and the institution.

The programme consists of six phases spread over a period of time. These are set out below.

PHASE ONE:

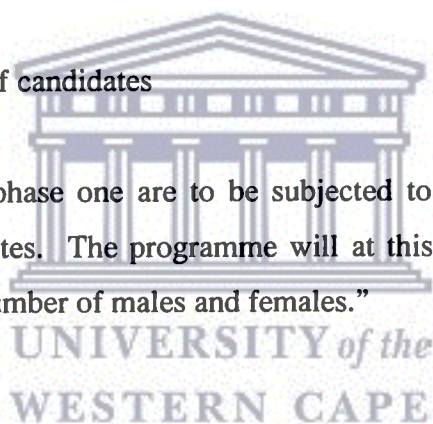
Deputy Director and Assistant Director incumbents are to be identified. The following criteria serve as recommendations:

- incumbents who obtained either a second/third notch over the last two years or a preferential out of turn assessment.
- deputy/assistant director nominated by their supervisors.
- Any deputy/assistant director who applies for entry to the programme.

PHASE TWO – selection of candidates

The strategy proposes:

“Candidates identified in phase one are to be subjected to psychometric testing to determine the best candidates. The programme will at this stage be trimmed to 20 candidates with an equal number of males and females.” (PEP, 1998)



PHASE THREE – final selection of candidates

The 20 candidates emerging from phase two are to be interviewed by a panel. Resulting from this process should be a final total of 13 candidates. PAWC is entitled to make intervention should the final 13 not be representative enough. According to the document, the ideal make-up of the group should be 5 Black females, 3 White females, 4 Black males and 1 White male. The racial and gender distribution are as follows : 70% Black, 30% White, 61% female and 39% male.

(The term “Black” being inclusive of African, Coloured and Indian.)

PHASE FOUR

The candidates are released from their normal duties in order to fully participate in the programme. The itinerary for the training is outlined below.

- A. week 1-6 - Attendance of Senior Management course.
- B. week 7-10 - Assigned as personal assistant to a Head of Department.
- C. week 11 - Financial Management Course.
- D. week 12-15 - Assigned as personal assistant to a Head of Department.
- E. week 16 - Personnel Management Course.
- F. week 17-20 - Assigned to lead a Provincial Project.
- G. week 21 - Singapore Civil Service College.

Evaluations are done at the end of each module.

PHASE FIVE:

Candidates return to their original designation.

PHASE SIX:

Candidates apply for management positions wherever such advertised vacancies exist. The normal procedures for filling of posts apply.

Advantages and Disadvantages according to the programme:

The programme points out that there are many advantages which flow from the way in which it is structured.

This being:

1. The screening process allows for only the 'best of the best' to be selected and the integrity of appointments is enhanced.
2. It should counter a developing problem of there not being sufficiently representative applications.

3. The participants's stints as personal assistants to Heads of Departments will enhance the Head of Department's work for that period.
4. The emphasis is to create Managers and not to create any specific line specialists.
5. The period 17-20 week allows for candidates to do those projects/research that we just never have the time to get around to. Heads of Departments are invited to submit projects that they would like to have listed.

The one disadvantage according to PEP is that "candidates must be rebased from their normal duties and alternative arrangements will have to be made at their permanent station for 5 months." (PEP, 1998)

Critical Assessment of the Provincial Executive Programme

Structured mechanism for change

The strategy identifies the need for substantive change to take place at management level. It states that "the Management Echelon is always considered to be the grouping that is a reasonable barometer of progress in the field of Affirmative Action, (and that) a fast tracking programme for the Management Echelon is critical" (PEP, 1998).

The existence of such a programme should be applauded (albeit only because none was introduced before). Furthermore, the "across department" nature of the programme ensures that the process is controlled centrally and that it is given the necessary support and sanction from PAWC.

Selection

The selection criteria is not open-ended and somewhat limiting. It targets assistant-directors and deputy- directors for candidature to the programme. This perpetuates the longstanding tradition of promoting through the ranks. It ignores the talent and potential of employees at the lower levels. In this case, the pool could have been extended to include Senior Administration Officers who display exceptional talent and commitment in fulfilling their function.

Added to this, a more circumspectful and insightful identification of candidates allows one to take a number of factors into account, namely;

- That potential candidates are accustomed to being “chosen” and would, therefore, not willingly make application to the programme.
- The murky history attached to evaluation – that supervisors are very often not objective about these reports and in many instances forward subordinates whom they “like”. This renders evaluations questionable at the very least.
- That supervisors, themselves, might not have the ability to identify talent amongst their subordinates.
- That supervisors might feel threatened by promoting certain candidates for the programme and therefore choose not to do so.

Despite these weaknesses, the selection process aims to ensure that the best candidates for the designated groups enter the programme. In this regard, innovative sifting mechanisms should have been explored in order to circumvent the inherent problems prevalent in issues dealing with evaluation and selection criteria.

Psychometric testing – an adequate indicator?

The selection process utilizes psychometric testing as a means to sift through candidates and extract the “best” amongst them. This can hardly prove to be the most adequate means of evaluating the suitability of candidates. The test cannot accurately account for characteristics such as nervousness, shyness, assertiveness, initiative, hardworking, diligent, etc. These characteristics are, of course, covered by phase 1, but may also be overlooked in many instances as explained before. Instead, a process of interviewing at this stage in conjunction with testing may prove to be of more value.

Composition of final group

The Provincial Executive Programme prescribes a final composition that they deem to be “ideal”. On the contrary, this composition is totally unacceptable, short-sighted, and does not take into account the brevity of the task at hand. It is obviously a

composition that attempts to allay the frustration of white ambition. It also does not lend itself to the effective fast-tracking of non-whites but, instead, derails the very intention and purpose of its agenda. Here, the following must be borne in mind:

- As at 1998, the status quo amongst management posts had more or less remained the same for the past four years.
- The number of African managers in PAWC was cause for acute embarrassment.
- If anything, white representation amongst managers was actually increasing.
- Historical inequalities pertaining to education and training, socio-economic circumstances and experiential opportunities should have made it quite obvious to any programme designer that most whites do not have to be fast-tracked. Why, then, were they included in the programme?

The main objective of PEP was to make an affirming impact on the management echelon. The programme's success would be based on its ability to produce candidates who could challenge for higher management level employment within PAWC. For this reason, excluding the white male from candidature to the programme underlines the very objective of the strategy. It renders the composition effective, results-orientated and rational in attempting to meet its initial objective.

Also, the proportion of white females in the group should be reduced to 1. The Provincial Executive Programme suggested total of 3 is totally misdirected as this represents almost a quarter of the group. Their right to be affirmed is not denied by levelling this criticism, however, the weight of their representation in the group is not justifiable in the light of the profound disparities evident in the racial distribution amongst managers. A more appropriate composition, taking into account the factors mentioned above, would read: 7 Black females, 5 Black males and 1 White female (considering that one wants to achieve redress). Race distribution – Black 92%, White 8%. Gender distribution – female 62%, male 38%.

Another important consideration would be to further identify designated groups within the term “black”. This would ensure that African, Coloured and Indian representation is articulated within the make-up of the groupings.

Consultation

The document states that “the Cape Administrative Academy and Personnel Management have been consulted on this initiative” (PEP, 1998). If one considers the nature of such an initiative in that it affects people and their further training and development, as well as constituting a tangible shift from Affirmative Action “rhetoric” to real strategizing and actioning, then the following should have been pertinent to the process:

- consultation with the relevant human resources department (in this case, Personnel Management).
- consultation with the relevant training and development department (in this case Cape Administrative Academy),
- consultation with affected unions (in this case, Public Servants Association, Public and Allied workers Union, Hospital Workers Union, DENOSA, HOSPERSA, National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union),
- consultation with relevant Heads of Departments (therefore, all departments in PAWC),
- consultation with political parties (therefore in Provincial Parliament; the African National Congress, Democratic Party, New National Party, etc),
- consultation with other interested parties (therefore Non-Governmental Organizations, and other institutions focusing on transformation).

The term “consulting” could vary from having a comprehensive meeting with a particular body, to just inviting their comment on a particular issue. In some cases it is in-depth, and in other instances it calls for an opinion. Nonetheless, it does recognize the fact that a particular party has a stake in the issue at hand. Therefore, the inclusion of these voices cannot be denied, and, in fact, the voices could contribute to the strength of the programme.

The programme designers had not seen it necessary to engage other stakeholders in the formulation of PEP. This oversight diminishes, somewhat, the boldness and progressiveness of the initiative. Including participation from interested parties would

have rendered the formulation process more broad-based and informative, as well as enhancing the programme's implementation and effectiveness.

Programme Evaluation

This seems to be absent from the relevant documentation with regard to PEP. Although the candidates are evaluated at regular intervals during the programme, the programme itself also needs to be evaluated and refined. This should comprise of critical inputs from inter-alia:

1. The candidates themselves,
2. The course co-ordinators,
3. Heads of Departments,
4. Human Resource Department,
5. External Management Consultancy.

Problem areas could be alleviated through this kind of reflection and key performance aspects could be improved. Programme evaluation is most vital to the success and sustainability of this kind of programme.

Position of other Stakeholders/Institutions

The views and position of the different stakeholders are sometimes clear and focused, whilst others are vague, confusing and even thoroughly bewildering. This quite profoundly suggests that the stakeholders are not seeing identical realities, and in one or the other case even prefer to be contented about their own illusions concerning the state of transformation.

Th most notable "voices" amongst stakeholders are the National Education , Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU); the Western Cape Provincial Service Commission; and the Transformation Unit within the Provincial Administration : Western Cape.

The National Education, Health and Allied workers Union (NEHAWU)

NEHAWU expressed its stance with regard to Affirmative Action at its fourth annual Congress (the date could not be confirmed by officials but it is believed to have taken place in April 1998). Its Resolution 21 articulates the views and position of its members and it unequivocally advances the right of the previously disadvantaged to be affirmed in the workplace. The resolution states :

- " 1. The system of Apartheid was founded on racial and sexual discrimination based on unequal access to health , education , training and employment. That this has created both a Public Service and a Private Sector which systematically disadvantaged Blacks and Women , the working class and the disabled in finding employment , retaining employment and in being promoted , and , as a result , Blacks and Women are under-represented in most areas of employment.
2. Affirmative Action (AA) is a constitutional requirement, and that measures shall have to be introduced to advance persons or groups who have previously been disadvantaged. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) stipulates that the Public Service will be transformed into a representative institution, with a high level of service delivery;
3. Affirmative Action is (a) set of guidelines and procedures aimed at productively redressing the disadvantages suffered by the majority of our people in the past, and to ensure that these groups are fairly represented in the various levels of employment with the employer; and
4. The aim of this aspect of Affirmative Action is simply to eliminate the obstacles to the advancement of Blacks and Women. It does not, in itself, provide any preferential treatment for Blacks and Women; it simply clears away the racial and gender obstacles in their path so that they may use their own skill and initiative to advance."

(NEHAWU, 1998)

Point 3 above highlights the need for every level of employment to be representative – this will include management. NEHAWU elaborates further in its Resolution 21 that:

- “Recruitment and selection shall be done in accordance with Affirmative Action policy”
- “The Public Service Commission shall encourage participation from various ministries, Government departments, trade unions and other stakeholders in the Affirmative Action policy process:
- While Affirmative Action shall be regulated, monitored, evaluated and structured according to a set of rules , its successful implementation depends on trust. This is manifested by openness, transparency, non-authoritarian and people-centred management, with unimpeded access by all personnel to information on which substantive decisions are based.”

(NEHAWU, 1998)

NEHAWU’s position on Affirmative Action acknowledges the inputs from other stakeholders and stresses the importance of inclusivity at all stages of the process. Very importantly, it emphasizes that policies/strategies should be tempered by democratic ideals such as openness and transparency.

The overwhelming view from NEHAWU is that Affirmative Action is a necessary strategy in order to effect transformation in the public service, and across all levels of employment. The document does not, however, make any specific reference to the situation in the Provincial Administration : Western Cape.

The Western Cape Provincial Service Commission

As part of its mandate, the Western Cape Provincial Service Commission is to report on matters relating to Affirmative Action. In its annual report of 1995 the commission, inter alia, points out that:

1. The commission has ‘formulated its own policy and strategies on affirmative action programmes and that this had been “submitted to the Cabinet for approval” and

then to the “National Public Service Commission for approval to implement these programmes.”

2. That there should be broad consultation,

3. “The process must be transparent and participative in nature.”

(WCPSC,1995:11)

Point 2 and 3 concurs with what was forwarded by other stakeholders. However, on the question of management representivity very little is mentioned and even less is known. For instance, Affirmative Action strategies/programmes focusing on management echelon posts was not implemented in 1995. In its annual report of 1996, the Commission mentions:

“The Provincial Cabinet has approved a policy document on the promotion of a Provincial Administration which is broadly representative of the Western Cape community.” (WCPSC, 1996:35)

It proposed the creation of a special programmes component to basically monitor and evaluate affirmative action plans and strategies in the various departments. The commission goes on to say that “the affirmative action policy, as approved by Cabinet can only be effectively implemented if all role-players are consulted on the implementation thereof. To ensure the implementation, the said Policy Document for Corrective Action was forwarded to the Director-General with the request to submit it to the Provincial Bargaining Chamber in an effort to get organised labour’s input and co-operation in this regard. The Commission is concerned that the process has unfortunately not been completed as yet ” (WCPSC,1996/1997:35).

This confirms the fact that no strategy was tangibly in force with regard to transforming the management echelon. Whatever document was formulated, was kept in “limbo” due to the considerations pointed out by the Commission.

Even more disheartening and absolutely amazing is the Commission's view of the state of affairs with regard to management echelon transformation. After comparing the data of 1995 with 1996 its report (1996/1997) reads :

“From the percentages above it can be concluded that progress has been made since 1995 in appointing a more representative management as far as race is concerned.” (WCPSC, 1996/1997,36)

What progress were they referring to? White managers “progressed” from a total of 51 in 1995, to 58 in 1996. Black (African) managers “progressed” from 3 in 1995 to 2 in 1996. This does not represent “progress” by any manner of defining this term. The Commission quite simply refused to comment boldly and frankly about the state of transformation in the management echelon. Here, it had failed its mission of providing guidance and advice on these matters.

On the question of gender representation it asserts that “the progress with regard to gender is still below the set progress criterion.” (WCPSC, 1996/1997:36)

Disabled persons numbered 129 according to the 1996/1997 report of the Commission. However, none of these persons occupied management posts.

The 1998 Annual Report of the Commission does not reflect heavily on actual Affirmative Action objectives except to say that the Commission was involved in “registering affirmative action programmes” (WCPSC, 1998:9). The Commission could not produce this “register” when requested to do so.

The role of the Commission had changed by 1999 and no report was compiled in this year. No other documents relating to transformation issues could be extracted from their office.

The Transformation Unit within the Provincial Administration : Western Cape

The primary functions of the transformation unit are to initiate, monitor and evaluate transformation processes within PAWC. Its mandate covers all departments in the provincial administration. Hence, as part of its structure, it has established departmental transformation units – thereby ensuring a wider network of its mandate.

The Transformation Unit was formed in 1997 as an integral part of PAWC's transformation process. This unit has since expressed its position on transformation as reshaping "the public service into a coherent, representative, competent and democratic instrument for implementing government policies for a new environment" (Transformation Unit – Framework for Managing Transformation in THE WESTERN CAPE, 1997). More specifically, it underlines the need for "representivity in staff composition at all levels in every component" (Transformation Unit, 1997). To further this ideal, the Transformation Unit requested from all departments an "operational plan" which would set out the department's transformation objectives.

Operational plans as prescribed by the Transformation Unit

The Transformation Unit, being fully aware of the implications of the Employment Equity Act (1998) for designated employers, impressed upon all the departments within PAWC to submit an operational plan for the implementation of affirmative action. As at the end of 1999 all departments had submitted an operational plan to the transformation unit (as confirmed by the special programmes officer). For the purposes of this study it is not necessary to examine every one of the operational plans, but more pertinent to extrapolate the main features and objectives forwarded therein.

Main features/objectives of operational plans

Having scrutinized the various operational plans from different departments one discovers that it has common features, namely;

- It emphasizes the move towards representivity based on the Central Statistical Service's demographic layout for the region.
- That the process should be transparent, consultative and inclusive.
- That the document contains a summary of the existing posts in the department and its race and gender distribution (Data for disabled persons is also included).
- It outlines the procedure for the filling of vacant posts.
- It includes a brief on training and development initiatives.
- It sets targets and time-frames for representivity to be achieved.

Some of the objectives are :

- Achieving representivity across all levels of employment
- That this should be reached within a five year period.
- To develop a fast-track training programme for candidates whose potential appointment would promote representivity.

Critical assessment of the operational plans

A critical assessment of these operational plans and its intended impact on management posts varies from satisfactory (and even good) in some instances, to 'too little too late' in other instances.

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Focus

Operational plans drawn up by the various departments focused on the important issues dealt with in the Employment Equity Act (1998). It engaged the issues on a departmental level and made it specific to departmental circumstances by including the relevant information concerning post establishments.

Effectiveness

The level of implementation will ultimately measure the effectiveness of these plans. Notwithstanding this, the documents clearly explain the different departments'

intention and the process which would be undertaken. As policy documents, the operational plans unequivocally defined its rationale, its stated objectives, and the mechanisms which would drive the process. As a starting point, this alone suggested that the operational plans would be rendered effective.

Mechanisms

The mechanisms involved in the process would be training and development programmes, mentorship programmes, strategic advertising of post, and strategic filling of vacancies. Again, these mechanisms should lead to the effectiveness of the process.

Interviewing and selection panel

The operational plans state that “all interviewing panels will consist of at least three (3) persons and will as far as possible be representative of the composition that the department is striving for “ (Transformation Unit, 1998). This guideline has obvious weaknesses when one considers the scenario at management level. A more vigorous approach would propose that all interviewing panels should be representative, and that departments should ‘borrow’ interviewers [at management level] from amongst themselves in order to ensure representivity.

Targets and Time-frames

Since each department was left to structure its own operational plan it meant that some were effective earlier than others. Therefore, the targets and time-frames are not uniform amongst departments. For instance the Department of Environmental and Cultural Affairs and Sport has a time-frame between the year 2000 to 2004. Whilst the Office of the Premier has it as 1997 to 2001.

The targets for every year in between reflect a 20% movement amongst the race/gender distribution scale, with the final target being congruent with the demographics of the province. These targets/time-frames would apply to

management positions as well. The Employment Equity Act (1998, section 17) requires designated employers to draw up such plans, yet it does not excuse departments from not having made progress before this legislation. The targets and time-frames from the departments characterize a reactive approach to achieving redress across all levels of employment. Another consideration should be whether the initial demographical figures still apply.

Conclusion

The Transformation Unit, since its inception in 1997, has a vital role to play in the transformation process within PAWC. Indeed, the Transformation Unit represents a well-positioned vehicle which could drive the change process. For one reason, it is an internal structure with a network across all departments.

This being the case, one would have predicted that more substantive change would have taken place at management level between 1997 and 1999. Against the backdrop of the relevant data, however, the Transformation Unit has not transformed anything. It appears to be a 'toothless hound' in its endeavour to forge the change so desperately lacking at management level.

Individual and Popular Perceptions within PAWC

This question is of importance since it reveals the extent to which Affirmative Action (i) is discussed with staff; (ii) how informed employees are of the process; (iii) whether they "buy-in" to the process ; (iv) the level of resistance against it: and (v) whether or not they perceive it to create opportunities for upward mobility.

(i) Discussed with staff ?

Affirmative Action was discussed at staff level but that no concrete strategy was defined as a result thereof. In other cases, the topic was skimmed over as one of the points on the agenda. Again, nothing was established beyond the popular rhetoric.

(ii) Informed of Process?

This question failed to extract enough detail that would suggest that everyone knows what PAWC is doing concerning this issue, legislation passed concerning this issue, and what this meant for their departments. It appears that not all employees are exposed to any detailed programme of action from their various departments.

(iii) “Buy-in” to the process?

A very interesting reaction to this question was that all the interviewees said they supported affirmative action. Even white male interviewees said they supported affirmative action. These statements were qualified with the concern that responsible selection should be made when making appointments – that departments should shy away from tokenism.

(iv) Perceived level of resistance?

Interviewees did not cite any resistance from themselves to the process. Thus, the question was altered to read: “What resistance, if any, do you think there would be against affirmative action?” One central theme emerged in their explanation – that because management were white, that this would be a direct threat to their positions.

(v) Upward Mobility?

The question of opportunities and upward mobility which affirmative action holds for the individual was split along racial lines. White males intimated that their chances were naught in this process, whilst white females were more hopeful. Interestingly, Coloureds and Indians were not convinced that the process heartily embraces them. They were more sceptical about what they perceived as its focus on creating opportunities for Africans only. Africans expressed their frustration with the slow pace of transformation and were not entirely convinced that they would be the beneficiaries. The comment from Albie Sachs poignantly identifies the situation in the workplace: “One person’s dream of advancement is another person’s nightmare ” [in Charlton and Van Niekerk,1994:48].

The Relationship between PAWC, Management and Policy

(i) The Role of the Provincial Administration : Western Cape- An Overview

PAWC is responsible for administering policies and related legislation from both the provincial and national governments. In most cases, however, it takes its directive from the provincial government. In essence, PAWC is a static body which functions as the executive of the provincial government. It therefore 'runs' the province from an administrative point of view.

(ii) The Minister and the Department

Almost all departments fall under the jurisdiction of a minister assigned to be responsible for its functioning. The corollary suggests then that the department administers policies/programmes flowing from the Minister's office. In almost all cases, though, an opposite flow of information manifests itself in the eventual policy directive arrived at. When it comes down to the "nuts and bolts" of a policy/programme, the department determines the degree of implementation.

(iii) The crucial role of management

The administrative role of a department plays an integral part in the level of success of any policy or programme, or mandate issued by the Minister. For this reason, the managers of a department are critical to the successful implementation of policies/programmes. More than just implementing policy, managers have undeniable access in terms of influencing the outcome of the policy formulation process. In fact, management is expected to support the minister with their expertise and competencies in such a way that they are often the actual architects of most policy frameworks and objectives (Prethus, 1975:37-38). Van Der Waldt and Du Toit (1997, p.159) explain that in the public sector the "top management is responsible for the management of the institution in totality, including strategic management. This entails, among other things, a mission, strategy and aims, the compiling of strategic plans and organizational structures, control and decision-making." In the Western

Cape this situation holds a particular significance for Affirmative Action policy/strategies, taking the following into account:

- (a) Historical quagmire amongst managers
- (b) Redirecting one's thinking
- (c) Establishing a new mindset

- (a) Historical quagmire amongst managers

Given our particular history of institutionalized discrimination and prejudice, it is necessary to concede that most managers might still function in the way that they have become accustomed to. This would mean that prejudice in the workplace still exists and that the relationship between management and staff is still defined along racial lines – the obvious example being that the speedier upward mobility of whites perpetuates itself. White managers would sooner choose a white candidate than a non – white candidate for higher level employment.

Historical patterns also play out in the work situation where one witnesses that the different groupings are inclined to forge a certain unity amongst themselves. For example, blacks would 'caucus' with blacks, and whites would be more trusting with whites. This serves only to exacerbate the gap which exists between these groupings. On management level, it translates into a unity of purpose which in this particular context proves to be an obstacle to transformation. How does one counter the merits of a white candidate being appointed when management is unanimous in their decision? Does it help you to realize that the majority of management is white?

- (b) Redirecting one's thinking

The well-known African writer, Ngugi Wa Thionga, entitles one of his books "Decolonizing the Mind". Ngugi elaborates about the persistent prejudices which prevail in African societies. The white European still has the position of power in terms of material resources and especially in terms of self-perception and perception of others. Moreover, Ngugi asserts that African, themselves, feel that they belong in a position inferior to their white counterparts.

Ngugi's view of the power relations between Africans and Whites holds true in South African society – including the workplace. To deny that prejudices inculcated over many years can be swept away with the sudden dawn of democracy is to live in a fool's paradise. The argument is overwhelming: a dominant white management ensures that past prejudices are alive within the workplace, and maintains the power differential between non-white and white. Interestingly, as espoused by Ngugi, this situation leads to non-whites increasingly accepting that this societal structure is 'normal'. Transformation within PAWC will rely on the extent to which management and staff redirect their thinking so that both entities are reasonably empowered to shape their future. What has prevailed over the past few years will not further the cause of transformation.

(c) Establishing a new mindset

However much one wants to applaud the efforts of those forwarding the ideals of the new South Africa in the workplace, this only bears limited success. The reason is simple : Management needs to lead this process, and forward the values and ideals associated with our democracy.

A representative and democratic bureaucracy is one of these ideals and Affirmative Action is the vehicle by which this objective will be achieved. This begs the question: Is this ideal shared by the management of PAWC? On the surface management does lay claim to supporting this ideal, however, is this really the case? During discussions with a relevant stakeholder it was revealed that some managers are of the opinion that Affirmative Action is unconstitutional. This clearly evidences the bottleneck found amongst management in attempting to forward the ideal of a representative and democratic bureaucracy- and this in 1999! Lovell (1994, p.1) confirms people's resistance to a changing environment. He humourously points out that "the only person who appears to like change is a wet baby!"

Establishing a new mindset amongst management does not only mean changing the values and beliefs of incumbents, but necessitates changing the very incumbents. This will facilitate the widening of perspectives which is important for growth and

development. Paramount to the success of the transformation process is the fact that management should be made up of individuals who actually believe in its validity and, therefore, seek its speedy implementation. In the case of PAWC it can be argued that a change in management directly translates into an effective change in their attitude towards affirmative action.

Lest these changes take place the management of PAWC will take a very long time to transform itself. At present PAWC aptly portrays the image that Ncholo (1996) describes:

“(The) public service resembles an Irish coffee- the top is white, and there is a sprinkling of chocolate on the surface; the bottom is black.”

[in Mdintsi,1998:30]



CHAPTER 5

Recommendations and Conclusion

This research has shown that PAWC has not embraced the ideals of a representative bureaucracy within its management echelon by virtue of this category of employment actually regressing between 1995 and 1999. Initiatives aimed at achieving representivity at this level have failed dismally.

Recommendations

To further facilitate the transformation process within PAWC, a more vigorous approach to systems and processes needs to be introduced. In some cases, such processes already exist and only needs rejuvenation and re-focus. In other instances, effective structures and systems are necessary in order to make transformation at management level workable and real.

1. Management – a paradigm shift

The incapacity of PAWC to systematically have evolved into a broadly representative management structure since the democratic elections of 1994 reflects a reality which all stakeholders must face up to – the management echelon of PAWC is not fully committed to transformation objectives. For this reason, the following measures are recommended:

(a) Re-orientation Workshops for all senior managers

Obstacles associated with prejudice, beliefs, values, culture and class need to be removed if we are to move closer to the democratic ideals of objectivity and fairness in the workplace. Management practice in PAWC can benefit from re-orientation programmes/workshops which inculcate a belief in transformation objectives and a representative bureaucracy.

(b) Mandatory performance contract agreements for all senior managers.

This kind of arrangement is becoming common-place in the public service. Performance outputs from managers must be evaluated at regular intervals to ensure a high level of productivity and efficiency.

(c) Attainment of Affirmative Action goals and objectives linked to performance output.

An integral part of the contract agreements between PAWC and senior managers should be the attainment of progressive transformation targets. Inasmuch as managers are assessed in terms of their operational outputs, the same criteria must be utilized in measuring their performance regarding transformation issues. The implementation of affirmative action strategies must be assigned to senior managers. They would thus be directly responsible for the success or failure of such strategies. Ultimately, it is envisaged that such an arrangement, in itself, is a most effective strategy to motivate managers to action transformation initiatives.

2. Training and Development – a more vigorous approach

One can hardly imagine investing time and resources in the training and development of potential senior managers and not having this reap a reasonable measure of success. The Provincial Executive Programme, although being an excellent in-service training programme, did not quite propel candidates to higher positions – as was the initial rationale behind the programme. Instead, very few candidates involved with the first intake progressed to senior management positions [reportedly only 2 or 3 out of 13]. This necessitates a more vigorous approach which centres around the following:

- i) Affirming the credibility of the programme; and
- ii) Ensuring a minimum success rate through targeting.

i) Affirming the Credibility of the Programme.

The Provincial Executive programme identifies 13 candidates for training in the whole of PAWC [the Human Resource Department received a few hundred applications for the first programme]. Arriving at the 13 successful candidates involved a complex and time-consuming sifting process. The programme itself is time-consuming and involves considerable resource expenditure from PAWC. These factors alone should give the programme added credence amongst PAWC; besides the fact that the value and standard of the curriculum is one which they have sanctioned as being competency and skills based. The fact that only a small percentage of these candidates gain senior management positions is an indictment on the credibility of the programme. Counter to this, a positive success ratio is the strongest affirmation of the credibility of such a programme.

ii) Ensuring a minimum success rate through targeting.

If the above is to be taken seriously, then targets will have to be enforced so as to give meaning to the underlying rationale. Affected stakeholders will have to decide on targets which reasonably define the programme as being 'successful'. This will also ensure that PAWC is rewarded with 'dividends from their initial investment'.

3. Transformation Unit – increasing capacity

The current structure of the Transformation Unit reflects an adequate representation of stakeholders on all levels, and in all departments. This wide network of forums renders the Transformation Unit with the kind of capacity to properly fulfil its function. However, capacity is not only about having enough people in critical areas of contestation. It is also about having the **right people** in these critical areas of contestation. Again, one only needs to be reminded of the intransigence of the present management on transformation issues to quickly conclude that effective capacity-building is still very much lacking in PAWC.

4. The designation of Special Programmes Officer

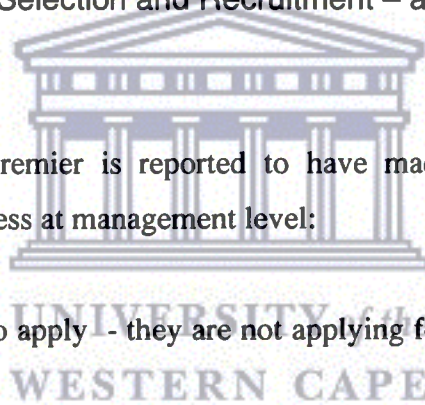
Taking the above into account, it is obvious that the Transformation Unit needs to bolster its mandate with similar functionaries within PAWC. The obstacles to change are too overwhelming for any one person to deal with. A more effective structure would read:

- 1 x Special Programmes Officer [Deputy – Director level], and
- 2 x Special Programmes Officer [Assistant- Director level]

This scenario is proposed on the basis that adequate monitoring is vital across all departments, and that this represents the absolute minimum manpower requirements for such a task.

5. Post Advertisements, Selection and Recruitment – a more dynamic approach

The spokesman for the premier is reported to have made the following remark concerning representativeness at management level:



“We are dying for blacks to apply - they are not applying for jobs.” (Cape Argus, 16 August 1999)

He was referring to the fact that not enough suitably qualified black professionals apply for senior positions in PAWC. In this regard, PAWC should adopt a more dynamic advertising strategy. This will include:

- advertising in all the major newspapers, national and provincial.
- engaging marketing agencies to establish which print media most black professionals access, and then advertise therein.
- Advertise on the internet.

The antiquated practice of mostly advertising in the Sunday Times, Cape Argus and Die Burger should be replaced with a wider network of post advertisements both nationally and locally.

Selection and recruitment procedures could also be overhauled in the following manner:

1. outsourcing these functions to reputable selection and recruitment agencies who regularly attract black professionals in the market.
2. 'head-hunt' suitably qualified black professionals in the market.

The shallow excuse that suitably qualified black professionals do not apply is unacceptable, and PAWC needs to be proactive about improving this situation.

Conclusion

Having investigated and assessed the level of implementation of affirmative action policies/strategies; and how this impacts on management positions within PAWC, the following conclusion is most overt: PAWC is dragging its feet with regard to the effective implementation of affirmative action policies and strategies.

The collective contribution of government affirmative action policies since 1994 has not shaped the management make-up within PAWC – in fact, a strong argument exists that exactly the reverse has happened. As at 1999 the proportion of white managers is greater than at any other time in the last 5 years! Moreover, the likelihood that this situation will be perpetuated is very real, and this is cause for alarm.

Stakeholders in the transformation process must increase their vigilance if they hope to gain a substantive foothold in the management echelon. For real change to manifest itself it must be established at the top. Here, it is of little consequence for stakeholders to agitate for change without channelling the most influential positions within an organization. As is evidenced over the past 5 years, agitators for transformation are knocking their heads against a brick wall. The key to effective transformation is at senior management level – after all, they are the decision-makers.

To concede that all is lost is to grossly misinterpret the thrust of this study. On the contrary, the study aims to create an awareness of the dangers of allowing things to trot along without making substantive interventions. The success of affirmative

action, and in particular the desired impact that it should have on management echelon posts in the Provincial Administration: Western Cape, lies in role-players maintaining a high level of vigilance and the effective implementation of strategic interventions in the transformation process.



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WESTERN CAPE

Questionnaire - for academic purposes

Kindly write down your responses to the following questions. Be assured that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained during this exercise.

A Affirmative Action within PAWC/Department

1. Do you have a clear understanding of Affirmative Action and how it is implemented within PAWC or your Department?

[tick the appropriate block]

| | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------|
| Very clear | Not too clear | Not clear |
|------------|---------------|-----------|

2. Is there regular feedback/discussions about policies/procedures concerning Affirmative Action?

| | | |
|---------|-----------------|------|
| Regular | Not too regular | None |
|---------|-----------------|------|

3. In your opinion, who should drive the transformation process?

| | | | | |
|------------|--------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Management | Unions | Staff associations | Management and staff | All stakeholders |
|------------|--------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|

Elaborate:

.....
.....
.....

4. How do you perceive the progress that has been made thus far with regard to AA within your (1) department and (2) PAWC?

(1) - excellent good fair poor dismal

(2) - excellent good fair poor dismal

5. Legislation obliges all government departments to move towards representivity at all levels of employment . In your opinion, is this programme being effectively advanced at management level?

YES

NO

If no, why not?.....
.....

B. It is important for the purposes of this study, that one extracts frank and uninhibited opinions/insights from respondents. Kindly comment on the following:

6. How would you measure the level of commitment amongst senior managers towards AA?

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Very committed | Fairly committed | Not committed |
|----------------|------------------|---------------|

7. What do you think should be done in order to transform the management in PAWC and make it more representative of the Western Cape?

.....
.....
.....
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