ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE FOCUSSING ON THE CENTRAL DISTRICT, NORTH-WEST PROVINCE DURING 2000 TO 2005

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In accordance with Rule G4.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise/dissertation/thesis is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

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I wish to thank Dr Gavin Bradshaw in guiding me through the challenge of bringing my research project to this stage. Without his assistance I would not have come this far. My gratitude goes to my fellow student and friend, Ntime Mokhine who stood by me even when everything seemed to be falling apart. Special thanks to my mother Sebitse, my late sister Nkele Mmamothudi for her relentless support. I wish to thank my cousin Dr Thabo Phale and my friend Mziwakhe Mthembu who supported me all the way. My gratitude goes to my life partner Moretlo and my daughters, Masego, Onalenna and Oletilwe for being an inspiration in my life.
Abstract

The dawn of democracy in South Africa in 1994 placed an imperative on the government to make provision for transformation of the public service from the one that was base on race and gender to the one based on respect and dignity of people irrespective of race, gender or religion. The point of departure was to initiate change in legislation in order to create conducive environment for the public service to establish forums and commissions that would inform the approach that transformation had to take.

One of the major challenges was to deal with the reality of a public service that was dominated by white males in order to implement the Constitutional imperative of equal opportunities to all and to enable black people in general and women in particular to occupy positions where their full potential and capabilities would be recognised. Affirmative Action became a tool that the new government adopted to inform the employment equity targets that every government department had to set for itself and annual reports had to be submitted to parliament for oversight to ensure that no government entity deviated from the realisation of the objective to fully transform the public service.

The fact that there were some quarters within the broader society that perceived this is a threat and that within the targeted groups such as blacks and women there were people who felt that the concept “affirmative action” was degrading as it suggested that, despite their potential and education, black people and women still had to be affirmed was indicative of the conflict that resulted from the good intention by government to diversify the public service. To date, there are still institutions of government where males still dominate senior positions in the public service and women are still confined to lower level occupational bands which do not afford them an opportunity to rise to senior levels. The only recognisable change, one may argue, is that black males benefitted a lot more from transformation in the public service than females and people with disabilities. For all people to benefit from transformation in the public service there must be a vigilant approach to the implementation of policy and severe penalties for non compliance. Oversight bodies must be empowered to do a lot more than pep talk on transformation.
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CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

The research focuses on the management of conflict and transformation in the public service in a specific district in the North-West Province during the period 2000 to 2005. Further to this, the study seeks to determine whether any causal relationship exists between transformation and conflict in the public service. The primary assumption of the study is that despite policies and legislation that were aimed at directing transformation in the public service, this was not without challenges. It resulted into conflict between employee representatives and managers. The research study therefore seeks to analyze the government of South Africa's transformation agenda and how it relates to conflict at both interpersonal and inter-organizational levels.

The research study is in no way suggesting that transformation is the cause of conflict in the public service. It recognizes that every human interaction is arguably permeated by some level of conflict. However, the study seeks to highlight the challenges related to the implementation of transformation and the resultant tensions that could be attributed to transformation policies, management and implementation. The research study and the findings will determine whether conflict as experienced in the public service is the result of transformation initiatives or not. In South Africa, government passed legislation on transformation of the public service as early as immediately after the new democratic dispensation in 1994.

Government's commitment to transformation is demonstrated by the fact that it has identified institutional transformation and reform as one of the key medium and long-term programmes to drive the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as early as after the 1994 general elections.

The Government took a first step in this direction through the introduction of the Public Service Act of 1994 (Proclamation 103/1994). This act created the basis for integrating the fragmented system of state administrations inherited from the apartheid era into a unified national public service.
According to the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995 transformation of the public service would inevitably be a complex and controversial process. The new Constitution that was adopted in 1996, in particular, influenced the structure and function of a number of key sectors within the public service.

In view of this, further elaboration of policy was considered necessary in the forthcoming years. The White Paper provides a clear distinction between three types of agencies for the purpose of clear mandate and implementation. We mention these below:

1.1.1 Administrative agencies

The Department of Public Service and Administration is the administrative arm of government which provides services to other departments rather than providing a service directly to the public.

1.1.2 Service Delivery Agencies

The departments such as the Health, Agriculture and Education departments are service delivery agencies of government which deliver services directly to the public.

1.1.3 Statutory agencies

Agencies such as the Public Service Commission and the Auditor-General, which are established by the Constitution or other legislation as bodies independent from the executive play an important regulatory and monitoring function with respect to the public service.

The White Paper on Transformation of the public service outlines a number of challenges and constraints that had to be addressed and overcome for transformation to be realized. Some of these emanate from the legacy of the apartheid past, others from the current situation.
“What is needed in South Africa is a more proactive, coherent and visionary approach which recognizes and addresses problems, but also exploits opportunities and builds upon strengths” (White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995).

The public service that was inherited by the new Government in many ways promoted and defended the social and economic system of apartheid. As such, it was characterized by a number of problematic policies and practices which could seriously compromise the ability of the new Government to achieve its major goals of reconstruction and development, nation building and national reconciliation, and community empowerment and democratic participation. According to the White Paper, to a large number of South Africans these problematic areas of the public service included:

- Lack of Representativeness
- Lack of Popular Legitimacy
- Lack of Service Delivery
- Centralized Control and Top-Down Management
- Lack of Accountability and Transparency
- Absence of Effective Management Information
- Poorly Paid and Demotivated Staff
- Conflicting Labour Relations
- Professional Ethos and Work Ethic

Further constraints were fear of change, resistance to change, the danger of a brain drain, popular impatience at the pace of change, a lack of clear and well-communicated vision of change, lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities, a lack of co-ordination and a lack of skills and capacity and financial constraints.
While it was important to consider the constraints and problems in transformation of the public service, the White Paper identified the merits which created a conducive environment for such transformation to take place such as the creation of a new Department within the Ministry of the Public Service and Administration, international support, both moral and material, that was pledged for the processes of reconciliation, reconstruction and development in general, and for the process of administrative transformation in particular.

1.1.4 Research

The White Paper on Transformation placed further emphasis on the need for research. High-quality research of both a quantitative and qualitative nature was identified as key to the implementation of transformation and in this case it includes:

- The impact of transformation policies and programmes.
- The effectiveness of the instruments and mechanisms established for the purposes of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation.
- Comparative studies of the administrative reform process in other countries.

1.1.5 Public Sector Transformation Forum

The need was also identified for a PSTF as an effective consultative policy instrument membership of which was to include national and provincial public service managers, public servants and public service unions, and the national and provincial Service Commissions.

Consideration would be given to providing business organisations, NGOs and other civil society stakeholders with structured opportunities for making representations at the Forum.

1.1.6 Legislation

In accordance with the Interim Constitution Section 212(1), the transformation of the public service would need to be supported by appropriate enabling legislation, to ensure that all key role-players had the necessary scope and legislative backing to carry out their functions effectively.
To give full effect to the policies and proposals in this White Paper there was a need to amend existing legislation (notably the Public Service Act of 1994) and to introduce new legislation, particularly in the areas of affirmative action and freedom of information. The Public Service Labour Relations Act (Proclamation 105/1994) was replaced by the new Labour Relations Act covering both private and public sector workers with the exception of the Defence Force and Intelligence Services.

Sections 78 to 80 of the Labour Relations Act cover the rights of employees with regard to trade union representatives, trade union official or labour inspector, protection of rights and procedure for disputes. The latter can be referred to as the mechanism by means of which conflict relating to employee-employer relations can be addressed by referring it to either the CCMA or the Labour Court.

1.1.7 Restructuring of senior management

The restructuring of the senior management echelon within the public service, at both national and provincial levels, was also accorded high priority by the GNU as a necessary precondition for taking the broader transformation process forward.

By August 1995 all provincial administrations and approximately 60 per cent of national departments had completed the restructuring process. And a deadline of 31 October 1995 was set for all other outstanding public service institutions to do likewise.

Except in the case of the national departments of Defence, Intelligence, Safety and Security, and the Secret Service, which are carrying out their own restructuring, the Service Commissions played a major role in the restructuring process.

1.1.8 Targets and time frames

Within four years all departmental establishments were expected to be at least 50 percent black managers. During the same period at least 30 per cent of new recruits to the middle and senior management echelons were to be women. Within ten years, people with disabilities were to comprise 2 per cent of public service personnel (White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, November 1995).
1.1.9 Monitoring and evaluation processes

To ensure that departments and provincial administrations set up effective internal and external mechanisms and structures to promote accountability, transparency, consultation and democratic participation, appropriate performance measures and targets were set for Directors-General, for which they would be held accountable, the political heads such as (Ministers and/or Premiers) and by Parliament and provincial legislatures.

The proposed Public Sector Transformation Forum would also play an important role in monitoring and evaluating progress towards a more accountable and democratic public service (White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995).

With the clear transformation agenda set at policy level, it was for the public sector to build the necessary capacity for the implementation of the targets. However, policy formulation is one thing and the implementation thereof another. Within the South African historical tradition of racial practices and a public sector that was dominated by males with no platform for women, black people and people with disabilities to occupy management positions, it was a far fetched plan to realize transformation within a relatively short space of time and to have transformation without any conflict and tensions.

Despite clear policy guidelines and policies regarding transformation of the public service, it was not clear how the fears of those affected by change such as the privileged white population would be dealt with. Such fears were related to a male dominated public service, the expectations of black people, women and people with disabilities as well as the demands by trade unions for better salaries and wages.
1.2 LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND PERMISSION

A letter of introduction of the Research Study was written to the Chief Director responsible for Internal Security in the said department. The purpose of the letter was to:

- Introduce the research topic to senior management.
- Request for permission to use the employees as respondents in the research study.
- Make a commitment to share the research report with the organization upon completion of the study.

Permission was granted on condition that the respondents and the department remained anonymous for security purposes. Therefore, a copy of the letter cannot be attached. This is to ensure that the commitment made when permission was granted is kept and to treat the identity of the respondents and that of the department as confidentially as possible.

1.3 PURPOSE OF STUDY

The study has the following as its purpose:

- To analyse the government agenda towards transformation of the public service.
- To determine extend to which transformation has been managed in the public service.
- To determine the relationship between transformation and conflict in public service.
- To suggest new approaches to the management of conflict in the public service.
1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND HYPOTHESIS

The problem statement of the research is based on the assumption that transformation of the public service is the cause of employer-employee conflict.

According to Bailey (1987:41) just as concepts are the building blocks of propositions, propositions are the building blocks of theories. As such they have been given different names depending on their theoretical uses. Sub-types of propositions include hypotheses, empirical generalisations, axioms, postulates and theorems.

There are two basic types of propositions that are often used alone rather than in combination with other propositions. These are hypotheses and empirical generalisations.

1.4.1 Definition of hypothesis

Webster, in Bailey (1987:41) defines hypothesis as “a tentative assumption made in order to draw out and test its logical or empirical consequences. A hypothesis is a tentative explanation for which the evidence necessary for testing is at least potentially available.

Bailey further defines a hypothesis as a proposition that is stated in a testable form and predicts a particular relationship between two or more variables. In other words, if we think that a relationship exists, we first state it as a hypothesis and then test the hypothesis by means of research.

A hypothetical statement provides the basis for testing the relationship between two or more variables. According to Bailey (1987:46), variables are concepts that can take more than one value along a continuum. In a symmetrical relationship, the variable that effect change in the other variable is called the ‘independent variable’ and the variable whose value is dependent upon the other is referred to at the ‘dependent variable.’
Let us take the following statement as an example: There are two variables in the hypothetical statement and these are conflict and transformation. If the argument is that conflict in the public service is caused by transformation the latter is an independent variable while the former is the dependent variable. In this case it would therefore imply that there is a cause-effect relationship between conflict and transformation.

According to Bailey (1987:47) the discovery or assertion that there is a relationship between two or more variables does not ensure that the relationship is a causal one, that is, that changes in one variable causes change in another variable. The concept of causality has long been studied by philosophers and has, at least since the time of Hume been controversial.

Bailey further argues that the concept of causality is not strictly a logical concept but instead applies to a relationship between concrete or empirical events. However for the purpose of the study, a relationship is assumed to exist between management of transformation in the public service and the conflict at organisational level. The study is aimed at testing the hypothetical statement using data collected during research.

**Hypothesis 1:**

Public service employees in the central district area of the North-West Province are not aware of any transformation policies and strategies in their work environment

**Hypothesis 2**

The public service is not fully transformed.

**Hypothesis 3**

Senior managers in all different chief directorates have the responsibility to oversee the implementation of transformation.
Hypothesis 4

Public service employees in the central district area of the North-West have not benefited from transformation.

Hypothesis 5

Transformation has a causal relationship with conflict in the public service.

Hypothesis 6

Poor management and lack of policies are the causes for lack of transformation in the public service.

Hypothesis 7

Women and people with disabilities are negatively affected by lack of transformation in the public service.

Hypothesis 8

Conflict in the public service can only be managed and not be resolved.

Hypothesis 9

There are lessons that can be learned from conflict in the public service.

Hypothesis 10

There are conflict management strategies and approaches in the public service.
1.5 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

- To understand transformation within the public service.
- To analyse transformation policies of the public service.
- To determine the relationship between management and transformation.
- To propose new approaches in managing of transformation in the public service.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A Conceptual framework deals with various concepts that are used in the research study and the contexts in which they are applied. According to Bailey (1987:40) concepts are ‘mental images or perceptions.’

Concepts are symbols of meaning. They are symbolic constructs which we employ when we refer to phenomena. The term conceptualisation is used synonymously with ‘conceptual analysis’ and ‘conceptual explication.’ Assume that a researcher has decided to conduct a study to establish the relationship between political conservatism and racial prejudice.

Even for a person who is not trained in sociology, and particularly in South Africa, it would be quite evident that the concepts conservatism and racial prejudice have many connotations. In pre-scientific everyday life these concepts form part of individuals’ commonly held attitudes and value orientations.

In the language game of the social sciences, the concepts have become imbedded in a variety of models and theories in sociology and political science (Mouton and Marais, 1988:57-58). For the purpose of the research project, the following concepts will be presented and explained:

- Analysis
- Management
- Transformation
- Public service
1.6.1 Analysis

Critical analysis is the study of phenomena and their underlying features and within the topic it implies analysis of the ideological, political and economic factors that influence policy decisions regarding transformation in the public sector and the relationship between transformation and conflict.

1.6.2 Management

Management is a process by means of which an organisation or entity is controlled and it relates to positions in a particular establishment, level of power, policies and regulations and how they are implemented to steer the organisation in a particular direction.

1.6.3 Transformation

Transformation is change that is effected in terms of regulations and policies to ensure that all groups of people irrespective of gender, race, sex, religion or creed are afforded equal opportunities in the work environment, including management positions.

In the South African context, transformation of the public service is based on the assertion that specific groups of people such as women, black people (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) as well as people with physical disabilities have historically been isolated from the mainstream development in the public service.
Policies and legislation to support the implementation of transformation are then based on the need to diversify management in the public service, to afford designated groups opportunities as well as to take action to affirm people to management positions.

1.6.4 Public Service

In the context of South Africa, the public service refers to a government institution that is established by Act of Parliament (the Public Service and Administration Act of 1994) and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of a specific mandate as prescribed by government. An apposite example is a national government department such as the Department of Public Service and Administration the mandate of which is to oversee the overall administration of the public service.

A distinction can be made between public service and private sector in that the latter is governed by different policies and may not necessarily be mandated by parliament to perform a specific mandate. Further to this, the public service is controlled and managed by political appointees in the person of Cabinet Ministers and Accounting Officers in the person of Director Generals and Deputy Director Generals. The private sector is controlled by people who by virtue of their qualifications and financial good standing are Directors and/or Managing Directors with shareholding in the companies that they control.

1.6.5 Conflict

Rhoodie (1991: 203) defines conflict as a result of competition by people for scarce resources. This supports the widely held view that conflict is about contention over access to limited resources. Reece and Brandt (1996:340) define conflict as ‘individuals striving for their own preferred outcomes, which if attained prevent others from achieving their preferred outcome. This process often results in hostility and a breakdown in human relations’.
Janasz et. al (2006:203) argue that conflict is a situation in which there are incompatible goals, cognitions or emotions within or between individuals or groups that lead to opposition or antagonistic interaction.

Anstey (2006:5) presents conflict as defined by Coser and Himes respectively. According to Coser conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals.

Himes, on the other hand defines conflict as a purposeful struggle between collective actors who use social power to defeat or remove opponents and gain status, power resources and other scarce values.

1.6.6 Designated Groups

Designated groups means black people, women and people with disabilities. In the context of the public service in South Africa, these are grouped that were traditionally discriminated against on the basis of colour, sex and creed.

With the new legislation and policies post 1994, they were given preferential treatment in the transformation agenda of the public service in an effort to create equal opportunities for all.

1.6.7 Employment Equity

Employment equity refers to the legislative provision of equal opportunities to all people in the job market, and in the South African context it emanates from the recognition that ‘as a result of apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices, there are disparities in employment, occupation and income within the national labour market, and that those disparities create such pronounced disadvantages for certain categories of people that they cannot be redressed simply by repealing discriminatory laws.
1.6.8 Employment policy or practice

This includes but is not limited to:

(a) recruitment procedures, advertising and selection criteria;
(b) appointments and the appointment process;
(c) job classification and grading;
(d) remuneration, employment benefits and terms and conditions of employment;
(e) job assignments;
(f) the working environment and facilities;
(g) training and development;
(h) performance evaluation;
(i) promotion;
(j) transfer;
(k) demotion;
(l) disciplinary measures other than discharge; and
(m) discharge;
(Source: Employment Equity Act 55, of 1988).

1.6.9 People with disabilities

People with disabilities refers to people with physical impairments which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in employment.

1.6.10 Affirmative action measures

These are measures that include but are not limited to measures designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the Agency or Service, as the case may be.
The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service. 1995 defines Affirmative action as the laws, programmes or activities designed to redress past imbalances and to ameliorate the conditions of individuals and groups who have been disadvantaged on the grounds of race, gender and disability.

1.6.11 Black people

Black people is a generic term, which means Africans, Coloureds and Indians.

1.6.12 Consultation Forum

Consultation forum is a forum of elected members who serve as representatives of fellow members on issues that require consultation between members and management.

1.7 CONCLUSION

Concepts are key in a research study because they enable the researcher to use words in a specific context. Since some words are ambiguous in meaning, it would derail a research study if no attempt was made to explain what each implies for the purpose of the study. In the preceding chapter concepts were used in order for the researcher to operationalise them and the meanings were derived from the legislation that deals with the issue of transformation in the public service.
CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Methodology in social research refers to techniques and procedures that are used for the collection of data. The type of methodology that a researcher uses depends on the purpose of the study and how best data can be collected and analysed to reach factual conclusion. The research population, the selection of a sample, units of analysis and issues of validity and reliability form the core of the methodological approach that a researcher uses to study social phenomena.

2.2 Research Methodology

According to Bailey K.D. (1987:32) ‘the fact that the physical scientist is generally not a participant in the phenomenon he or she is studying while the social scientist is, leads many researchers to question whether social science research can ever be conducted in the same way as physical science. The controversy over the differences between the physical sciences and the social sciences concerns the methodology and not the method.

By ‘method’ we simply mean the research technique or tool used to gather data. By methodology we mean the philosophy of the research process. This includes the assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for research and the standards or criteria the researcher uses for interpreting data and reaching conclusions.’

The argument whether the social sciences should use similar methods used by physical scientists will remain a controversial debate for many years to come and this is not necessarily the basis of this research project, what is true though is that ‘there is a wide range of alternative methodologies, or approaches and criteria for understanding social phenomena, in social sciences, these range from qualitative to quantitative research methods (Bailey K.D. 1987:32).
Some researchers will first choose a research problem and then decide that one methodological perspective is superior to the other for studying it. Other researchers may be intellectually committed to a particular methodological perspective and will choose a research problem suited to that perspective.

In drawing the distinction between research design and research methodology, Babbie and Mouton (2000:74) have this to say about research methodology; “it focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used and its point of departure are specific tasks which relate to data collection or sampling at hand and pay attention to individual steps in the research process and the most objective procedures to be employed.”

2.2.1 Methodological dimension

While the epistemological dimension refers to the status of scientific statements, the methodological dimension concerns what may be called the how of social sciences research. In other words, how should research be planned, structured, and executed to comply with the criteria of sciences?

According to Mouton and Marais (1990:15), the researcher is required to make a series of decisions regarding the following:

(a) Which theory or model is likely to be most appropriate for investigating a given subject?
(b) Which research hypothesis concerning the object of study may be formulated on the basis of the selected theory or mode?
(c) Which measuring instrument and data collection can be used?
(d) How should data be analysed?
(e) What do the findings mean and how do they relate to the original formulation of the problems?
2.2.1.1 Research Design

Mouton and Marais (1990:77) argue that the distinctive nature of the research domain of the social sciences poses the greatest challenge to the methodological ingenuity of the researcher.

The fact that human beings are being investigated in the social sciences creates problems not encountered in the physical sciences. Human beings are rational, historical and normative.

2.2.1.2 Rationality

Rationality implies that human beings have the ability to reason about their existence, to make reasonable and free decisions about the future and have self awareness. This implies that human beings are not taking social reality as it appears but are able to question its existence and are aware of the implication of reality of their life world.

2.2.1.3 Historical beings

Human beings create their own history but are also the product of history and have the past, present and future. Although human beings are influenced by what have been created by others before them, they do not solely rely on the interpretation attached to the social world by others. The historical significance of the social world, one may argue carries meaning to human beings in as far as it provides them with what is considered relevant to their existence and the future.

2.2.1.4 Normative beings

Human beings reason in terms of what they regard as desirable and proper. They behave in accordance with their value orientation and norms of what is right and wrong. The right and wrong is not a spontaneous response to situations but a condition that has being incorporated into human existence over a period of time.
In designing a method for collection of data, the researcher has to consider the rational, historical and normative orientation of human beings because these determine the manner in which they will react to the research study. Factors such as historical background, culture and value orientation play a significant part in the manner in which the research participants react to the research.

### 2.3 Sources of data, reactivity and control

When they participate in research, human beings are to some extend aware of the research and depending on the nature of the particular source of data, and the manner in which data is collected they react to the research.

Reactivity occurs in various forms:

- Resistance to being interviewed or to complete a questionnaire
- Supplying inaccurate information
- Modifying behaviour or information with the aim of creating a better impression; and
- Deliberately misinforming the researcher.

Manhein in Mouton and Marais (1990: 78) provides two sub-categories of sources of data and these are human behaviour and human characteristics and products of human behaviour and of human characteristics.

Human behaviour and human characteristics are written or verbal responses to questions and may take a form of interviews and questionnaires while observable behaviour and characteristics range from social interaction, gender, number of individuals, to physical locality of the research participants.

“Reactivity becomes the largest single threat to the validity of research findings when human behaviour is the source of data or information” (Mouton and Marais, 1990:78). To some extend during the interview of the respondents, reactivity was difficult to minimise given that the research topic and the questions dealt with a subject that was considered sensitive – transformation and conflict.
Although the research was not directed at collecting data about the behaviour of the participants, the questions relating to identity and confidentiality raised by some of the respondents suggested that the questions regarding the topic of research prompted a reaction of fear or reservations.

According to Mouton and Marais (1990:79) the reliability of observations or data is influenced by four variables: the researcher, individual participants, the measuring instrument and the research context under which the research is conducted. The researcher and the participants have their own prejudices which, unless there are ethical considerations applied can lead to unreliable data or affect the privacy of the participants or even harm them.

2.4 Target Population

The target population of the research study comprises of all the people in the regional office of the chosen government department in the central district of the North-West Province. There were fifty eight (58) people in the establishment and these excluded people who have recently resigned or were transferred.

2.5 Sampling

A simple random probability method was used to eliminate some of the population by using a telephone list with names of all the employees. Each of the names appearing on the telephone list was allocated a number and a separate list with corresponding numbers was compiled. The latter list was cut into small pieces of paper each with a number from one to fifty eight (58). All the pieces were placed in a bowl and from them a total of twenty names (28) were chosen.

These names were then compared with the telephone list and the corresponding number to determine who among the population has been selected as part of the sample for the purpose of administering the questionnaires. The reason for choosing more than half of the population was to make provision for questionnaires that were likely to be withheld by respondents or be spoiled.
The total sample was considered representative in that it created an equal chance for all the population to be part of the sample irrespective of age, race, colour or sexual orientation. However this did not give an outright assurance that all races would be represented in the sample given the percentage difference between whites, blacks and people of Asian origin in the organisation.

Random sampling further eliminated any bias that could emanate from the researcher and enhance the validity and reliability of the research. Bailey K.D. (1982:95) argues that the correct sample size depends on the nature of the population and the purpose of the study. Some studies deal with small, esoteric populations and in that case a 100 per cent sample is desirable.

From the population of all the public service employees of different ages, sex and cultural backgrounds and colour, a sampling frame was compiled. The population from which the sample was selected had access to a telephone and it was easier to retrieve a telephone list from the Switchboard Operator for the purpose of sampling. A telephone list was considered a reliable method of affording every member of the population an opportunity to be selected.

The reasons for using the telephone list were that it was updated on monthly basis, it listed the telephone numbers of all the officials without any bias, was accessible and did not pose any form of unethical behaviour or gesture by the researcher. The telephone list further gave the accurate number of people in the organisation at a given time as well as their telephone extension numbers.

Despite the technique considered the best to compile a representative sample and to eliminate bias, the fact that there were fewer women than men and fewer whites than blacks created the possibility of fewer or no white respondents and fewer women or no women in the sample. In fact a deliberate attempt to try and include women and white people as respondents by giving them an advantage over other respondents would, one may argue imply bias on the part of the researcher.
Further to that, the elimination of bias could not be fully guaranteed given the presence of the researcher and the attempt to probe for more information in a situation where the respondents were not willing to give more information regarding the topic that was perceived as sensitive. This also raised the possibility of inaccurate data.

While one of the options was to get interviewers on a contract basis to approach the subjects for interviews, this option was ignored due to lack of funds and the fact that the respondents were likely to feel freer to talk about transformation to someone they knew than a stranger.

2.6 Units of analysis

Units of analysis refer to characteristics of what will be studied or observed. In the case of the research study, the units of analysis were the following:

- Officials in the government department
- Specific officials who form part of the sample
- Male and female respondents of different race, age and colour
- Managers, supervisors and subordinates
- Public service employees based in the Central District of North-West
- Public service employees who have been in the public service between 2002 and 2005

2.7 Data collection

Methods to collect data in research range from interviews, observations to questionnaires. In choosing a method for collection of data, the researcher had to consider a whole range of factors such as the cost involved, accessibility of respondents, time factor, reliability of the techniques used as well as ethical considerations.
Brewerton and Millward (2001) are of the view that Questionnaires and Surveys are the widely used research tools within the social sciences due to their low cost, minimal resource requirements and potentially large sample capturing abilities. However, the researcher had to consider multiple large sample influences on the potential quality and quantity of data obtained.

Questionnaires were used for the collection of data in the research project. And the researcher approached all the respondents to administer the questionnaires. The reasons for the use of questionnaires was the number of the sample chosen, the accessibility of the respondents, familiarity with the subjects, low cost involved and the advantage of direct interaction with the subjects in order to probe for more information during the interviews.

In this case the interviews enhanced the questionnaires as a tool for collection of data unlike if the questionnaires were self administered in which case the response rate was likely to decrease.

The latter aspect is more important in the chosen technique in that the subject of ‘transformation’ is still sensitive and relying on a self administered questionnaire was likely not going to yield enough responses to draw conclusions for the study.

Both closed and open ended questions were used in the questionnaire to be able to collect as much data as possible. Closed ended questions related to basic questions that were aimed at verifying variables such as age, gender and sex while open ended questions dealt with more detailed information relating to management and transformation in the public service and in the department in particular.

2.8 Validity and Reliability

Selltiz et al in Bailey K.D (1987:68) argues that the ‘validity’ of a measuring instrument may be defined as the extent to which differences in its scores reflect true differences among individuals on characteristics that we seek to measure rather than constant or random errors.
According to Bailey the definition of validity has two parts; one being that the measuring instrument is actually measuring the concept in question and not some other concept; and secondly that the concept is being measured accurately.

To ensure validity of the study, a definition of the concepts such as management and transformation as they apply to the public service were provided. This was to ensure that a concept used carried the same meaning to the respondents. The type of validity employed for the study was ‘construct validity’ to ensure that the respondents were able to link management and transformation.

The respondents had to indicate whether transformation had been effectively managed in the public service or not. Reliability, according to Bailey implies consistency of the measuring tool. This implies that the same measure must be applied to a particular research in order for the responses to be considered reliable.

For example, in the study of the analysis of relationship between conflict and transformation in the public service, a researcher cannot use telephone interviews in respect of one group of respondents and a questionnaire with another. The inconsistency of the measure is likely to comprise the reliability of data as opposed to use of one measure.

The respondents were approached and informed of the purpose of the research, taken through each question for clarification and further requested to allocate five (10) to twenty (20) minutes of their time to answering the questions. Direct access also assured the respondents of availability to further give clarity on the questions without scrutinizing their responses.

To ensure that responses were well captured and understood, the researcher insisted on spending time asking the questions as they appeared on the questionnaire and recording the responses as they were given. However some respondents insisted on being given time to answer the questionnaire and this meant that more time was taken before the questionnaires could be returned.
The problem with the presence of the researcher as it proved was that some respondents felt uncomfortable to respond to the questions in his presence. Therefore, the researcher allowed the respondents an opportunity to answer the questionnaires at their own time and this implied more time than was initially planned.

Ethical considerations played a major role to deal with concerns that the respondents had about the research topic and their responses. Some of the respondents demanded feedback on whether the questions were accurately answered and all attempts were made not to give any personal opinion on the responses since this would imply further bias.

**Table 1:** Data required from participants about management of Transformation in the public service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Years of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Indicators of transformation in the public service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Indicators of transformation in immediate work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Reasons for lack of transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Responsibility for implementation of transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
<td>Management style and implementation of transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6</td>
<td>People who are negatively affected by lack of transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B7</td>
<td>Experience of conflict in the immediate work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B8</td>
<td>Type of conflict that commonly features in the public service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B9</td>
<td>Causes of conflict in the public service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B10</td>
<td>Causal relationship between transformation and conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B11</td>
<td>Responsibility for resolution of conflict in the public service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B12</td>
<td>Whether conflict can be resolved or managed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B13</td>
<td>Lessons from conflict in the public service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B14</td>
<td>Conflict management strategies and approaches to conflict in the workplace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.9 Procedure for data analysis

Data analysis involves the sorting of data into broader themes and outcomes and related to the questions, literature survey outcomes and theories or models that have been projected. According to Marais (1998:101) ‘analysis includes both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It is generally accepted that empirical data can be analysed in different ways. Different approaches to such analysis can sometimes lead to different findings.

A few examples are the different ways in which large data sets can be reduced, the different methods of stratification, the statistical control of variables, bivariate and multivariate approaches. Since different approaches can often have more or less the same validity, the researcher must give reasons for specific choices.

Sarantakos (1998:314) asserts that ‘it is the task of the researcher to study dates and search for trends, patterns and relationships that are relevant to the research question. The aim of analysis and interpretation is to make sense of the information gathered through the previous stages of the research, and to identify the meaning of the data. The ticks, circles and other notations are converted into statements, propositions or conclusions, which ultimately will answer the research question’.

2.10 Qualitative analysis of data

According to Sarantakos (1998:314) qualitative research is based on theoretical and methodological principles of interpretative science. As a result, qualitative analysis contains minimum of quantitative measurements, standardisation and mathematical techniques.

In most cases, its processes bring together collection and analysis of data in such a way that identifying data leads automatically to their analysis, which in turn directs the researcher to the area in which new data should be sought and identified, in order to be analysed again.
The data collected was collapsed into a data interpretation table in order to determine how many similar responses were given to each of the questions. Data that was collected responded to the following sub-problems of the problem statement that deals with the relationship between transformation and conflict in the public service:

**Sub-problem 1**

Are there any policies for the management of transformation in the public service?

**Sub-problem 2**

Is transformation in the public service efficiently managed?

**Sub-problem 3**

Have the designated groups and previously disadvantages individuals benefited from transformation in the public service?

**Sub-problem 4**

Who is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of transformation in the public service?

**Sub-problem 5**

Is transformation the cause of conflict in the public service?

**Sub-problem 6**

Can conflict be resolved or be managed?
Sub-problem 7

What are the lessons from conflict in the public service?

Sub-problem 8

Are there any conflict management strategies in the public service?

2.11 CONCLUSION

The focus of the chapter was the procedure by which a representative sample was chosen from the population. This was followed by the methodology that was used for collection of data which took a form of a questionnaire. The responses were then collected and marked for the purpose of counting the response to each question and the addition of the responses was calculated to get the total number. In order to enhance the statistical analysis of data, the respondents were given an opportunity to qualify the questions with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response. This method helped to solicit more information from the respondents about a particular variable, which would otherwise have not been accurately analysed had the responses been only closed ended.
CHAPTER 3: ETHICAL CONSIDERATION IN RESEARCH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Social research deals with people’s feelings and perceptions and in collecting data during a study, the researcher has to ensure that there are no violations of the respondents’ rights or integrity. Ethics in research deal with how best a researcher can collect data and at the same time maintain the required standard to, where necessary protect the identity of the respondents and ensure that during the analysis of data there is no link between specific responses and individual respondents. Ethical considerations is based on standards such as voluntary participation and privacy of the respondents, ensuring that there is no physical or psychological harm to participants, maintaining anonymity and confidentiality in research, not deceiving the subjects and dealing with the analysis and reporting of data collected.

3.2 Ethical standards in research

According to Bailey K.D. (1987:406) to be ethical in research implies conforming to accepted professional practices. It is generally accepted that it is unethical for researchers to harm anyone in the course of research, especially if it is without the person’s knowledge or permission.

Babbie and Mouton (2000:520) argue that ethical issues arise out of interaction with other people, other beings such as animals, and the environment, especially where there is conflict of interests. The right thing to do is not always self evident.

In most instances what is right for one person may not be right for the other person. Researchers, for example, have the right to collect data through interviewing people but not at the expense of the interviewee's right to privacy.

In the research project it was imperative to consider the sensitivity around the issue of effective management of transformation. The perceptions of interviewees (not based on any formal research) was that management had for many years failed to consider promotion for those who deserved better ‘notches’ and ‘levels’.

- 30 -
Given the situation, transformation became an emotive issue to discuss in the organisation and any researcher that sought to conduct a study on the topic had to assure the participants that the research will be conducted in such a way that it will not result in their victimisation by managers. The identity of the respondents was kept confidential by using numbers instead of names of respondents on the questionnaires.

The researcher had to understand that the entire research study could be hampered if, in interaction with the employees, a perception was created that he was send by management to determine who was vocal about lack of transformation or poor management in the organisation. It therefore became important for the researcher to consider the following ethical considerations:

- Voluntary participation and privacy
- No physical or psychological harm to participants
- Anonymity and confidentiality
- Deceiving the subjects
- Analysis and reporting

3.2.1 Voluntary participation and privacy

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) social research often, though not always, represents an intrusion into people’s lives.

The interviewer’s knock on the door or the arrival of questionnaire in the post signals the beginning of an activity that the respondent has not requested, and one that may require a significant portion of his or her time and energy. Participation in a social experiment disrupts the subject’s regular activities. Social research also requires people to reveal personal information which they may otherwise prefer to keep to themselves.
Other professionals, such as physicians and lawyers also require such information. Their requests, however, may be justified because the information is required for them to serve the personal interests of the respondent. The same cannot be said about social researchers though. What social researchers can claim is that the research effort may ultimately help all of humanity.

In the case of the research study, respondents need to know that transformation in the public service and in the specific department in particular had been a challenging process for both employees and management at an organisational level and for government at a political level.

While there were policies and legislation such as the White Paper on Transformation in the Public Service, the Employment Equity Act, the Public Service Regulations, transformation was still a relatively new dimension within the public service in South Africa even after five years of its implementation. The question was to say at what stage it would be realistic to have all the transformation targets achieved.

The respondents had to understand that the study was firstly an opportunity for them to express their opinions on how transformation had benefited them and secondly, how best could transformation be managed so that it did not stifle the relations in the public service environment. Thirdly, it was important to also indicate that continued research would benefit the employees themselves and help to inform new policies and approaches to the management of transformation in the public service.

The respondents were assured that the interviews would be held in the privacy of their offices or even at their homes if they so wished, to ensure that no other person knew about their responses except the researcher. The responses would not be recorded by any audio device except in writing for the purpose of data analysis.
At first it was almost impossible to get the participants to voluntarily participate in this study given the sensitivity of the subject of transformation and experience of conflict, at least at interpersonal and organisational levels. However, after presentation of a written permission obtained from senior management with commitment that the respondents would not be identified, it became fairly easy for the participants to agree to fill in the questionnaires.

3.2.2 No harm to participants

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 105) argue that ‘social research should not harm the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study or not. Because subjects can be harmed psychologically in the course of the study, the researcher must look for the subtlest dangers and guard against them. Social research projects may also force participants to face aspects of themselves that they do not normally consider.

This can happen even when information is not revealed to the researcher. Subjects can also be harmed by the analysis and reporting of data. Often research subjects read the books about research studies they participated in and some of the subjects can easily locate themselves in the various indexes and tables.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:108) ‘no harm to participants is of particular concern when the study involves vulnerable groups such as children, mentally handicapped individuals, the aged, prisoners, psychiatric patients and so on.” Although the participants in the study are not part of vulnerable groups as described by Babbie and Mouton, they have been psychologically affected by the situation in their work environment in respect of natural challenges attached to their job and the long years of service in the same job level and title.

For example, between 2003 and 2005 at least five employees among a total of sixty eight were diagnosed with acute depression for work related stress. Their condition was compounded by other problems such as family problems and financial crisis.
Causing no harm to participants was therefore the most difficult part to deal with in the research study because there was no evidence that all of the affected people had healed. There were still some who informally complained about the situation and wanted to take early retirement or find work elsewhere.

One of the dangers of the study was that it could revive the emotions that at the time of administering the questionnaire had subsided. The researcher had to create a balance between the wording of the questions and the angle of presenting them. The strategy that was used was to begin the interviews with more generic questions relating to gender, race and years of service and move over to more specific questions regarding each respondent’s experience and perception of transformation and conflict.

3.2.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:114) a respondent may be considered anonymous when the researcher cannot identify a given respondent. This means that an interview survey respondent can never be considered anonymous, since an interviewer collects the information from an identified respondent. In a confidential survey, the researcher can identify a given person’s responses but essentially promised not to do so publicly.

Given the interview method of collection of data, it cannot be said that the participants would be anonymous because the researcher knew and had a direct interaction with them. Further to that, the responses would not necessarily be confidential given that when permission was requested and granted to use the employees as participants, a commitment was made to share the findings with senior management of the said organisation without any intended prejudice.

The question was how best the researcher could withhold the identity of the participants to prevent attributing responses to specific individuals. To protect the respondents, numbers were allocated to each questionnaire to replace the names of the participant.
The participants were also asked not to write their names on the questionnaire and a footnote was added to the questionnaire giving a commitment by the researcher that information collected during the interviews would be confidential.

Indeed the researcher managed to conceal the identity of the respondents by replacing their names with numbers. This also ensured the anonymity of the respondents in case information leaked to other officials who for some reason might want to check the type of the responses to questions and link the responses to individual respondents.

3.2.4 Deceiving the subjects

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:118) it is sometimes useful and even necessary for a researcher to identify himself to the respondents. “You’d have to be master con artist to get people to participate in laboratory experiment or complete a lengthy questionnaire without letting them know that you were conducting research. Sometime researchers admit that they are doing research but lie about why they are doing it or for whom the research is conducted.”

Lying about the purpose of research is common in laboratory experiments. Although it is difficult to conceal the fact that one is conducting research, it’s usually simple and sometimes necessary to conceal the purpose thereof.” For the sake of the research study in question, there was no reason to deceive the participants about the research project itself and why it was conducted.

The primary reason for this is that the subject or topic of research which was management and transformation had a direct bearing on the working conditions of the participants. Further to that it would have been difficult for the interviewer to lie to the participants during the interviews. It would therefore make sense to be honest about the purpose of the interview and draw the attention of the participants to the benefits of the study than lying to them.
Although interviews may take time, the researcher has to apply his communication and persuasion skills to build a rapport with the participants and one way of doing this is to firstly give a brief history of transformation challenges that the public sector is faced with. Secondly, to outline the responsibilities of management in the transformation of the organisation such as giving clear guidelines, implementation of policies and the use of monitoring mechanisms to transform the public service as well employees’ responsibility in upgrading themselves and raising issues regarding change management.

The sample of the research comprised of people who belonged to different job categories. The emphasis on a collective effort to transformation and change management was important to create a sense of responsibility on all, instead of a situation where employees blamed managers or the latter blamed employees for lack of enthusiasm and self motivation to perform.

### 3.2.5 Analysis and reporting

Babbie and Mouton (2001:526) argue that as much as the researchers have ethical obligations to the participants in the research study, they equally have ethical obligations to colleagues in the scientific community. A researcher has an obligation to make technical shortcomings and failures of the study known.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:526) argue that researchers should at all times strive to maintain objectivity and integrity in the conduct of scientific research. This implies the following:

- Adherence to highest possible technical standards.
- At the conclusion of the study always indicate the limits of the findings.
- Not under any circumstances change data or observation.
- Adhere to the public nature of scientific practice – disclose the methodology and techniques of analysis at all times.
3.3 CONCLUSION

The discussion focussed on the importance of ethics in research and how best a researcher could ensure that the respondents do not feel deceived and harmed by the research study. Although difficult in practise given that the researcher has own biases, the study has to reflect as close as possible the integrity and objectivity by the researcher. In this research study, the point of departure was to get permission from the authorities to use the employees as respondents. Secondly, the respondents were treated with respect by approaching them at the most convenient time to request for their time. A rapport was established with the respondents by explaining the purpose of the research, its implication for the organisation and indirect benefits to the respondents.

The respondents were given an option to answer the research questions either during their spare time and refer to the researcher for clarity or in the presence of the researcher. Adherence to confidentiality and anonymity increased the response rate and openness among the respondents.
CHAPTER 4: Literature Review

4.1 Introduction

A literature review is the reflection of the current state of knowledge regarding a particular topic. This provides the researcher with the basis to formulate the research hypothesis and research question. The chapter deals with pertinent issues pertaining to a literature review. It deals with planning the literature search and makes a distinction between primary sources and secondary sources and to indicate which between the two is considered reliable.

Further to this, it reflects on research that has already been conducted on the topic and its bearing on the study. The focus in this chapter will be the legislation relating to transformation as well as research that is related to the topic of the study. The White Paper of Transformation of the Public Service, the Public Service Regulations, the Employment Equity Act (Act 55) of 1998, the Regulations on the Transformation of the Public Service as well as the White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service and Administration, 564 of 1998, the Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service (2006 – 2015) Consultation Document will form part of the discussion.

4.2 Literature Review

According to Birley and Moreland (1999:102) a literature review should provide a roundup by being comprehensive and relevant. In some cases it becomes necessary to rework literature so that it can be related to own concerns. They further argue that a literature review should involve a critical study and investigation and provide some connections with research.

In a literature review, the researcher should not only provide what other researchers have established about a topic and its related aspects but also link their argument with his own findings and provide new perspectives and approaches to social research projects where some review of relevant literature is required, and these are when the researcher is:
(a) considering what has already been researched and written about the topic or research questions,
(b) seeking to explain and justify their research philosophy, methodologies, specific techniques and analytical approaches as well as deal with issues of reliability and validity,
(c) drawing out and stating the conclusions of their research.

Brewerton and Mill (2001) argue that literature review is essential as a means of ‘thought organisation’ and records of evidence or material gathered. Literature review, although it seems to be a task with a clear beginning and definite end it is more ongoing and open than that – it provides a platform on which a researcher can organise thought and arguments on evidence that has already been collected.

Through literature review, the researcher can identify other areas of focus. Some of the key words that are used for ‘review’ are ‘analysis’ which is the capability to dissect and scrutinise literature and ‘criticisms’ which implies the capability to identify and explain strengths and deficiencies (Brewerton and Mill, 2001).

The critical analysis of the management of conflict and transformation in the public sector will focus on how other researchers have dealt with the topic. While some work has been done on transformation in the public service, most of research in this area has concentrated on how the public service must transform, extend to which policies were formulated to serve as a guide to transforming the public service. There was no evidence on the literature search that was conducted that there was a relationship between conflict and transformation.

The literature review for the purpose of the study also included legislation and related regulations that govern transformation in the public service. The reason for this is that transformation in the public service is guided by policy that has so far been formulated to ensure that the public service attempts to redress the imbalances of the past such as discrimination against women and people with physical disabilities.
From this point of view, it can therefore be argued that it is not only academic research that informs transformation in the public service but also legislation which was informed by international best practices guiding transformation as well as research that reflected the extend to which vulnerable groups such as women and people with physical disabilities have been discriminated against.

4.3 LEGISLATION RELATING TO TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.3.1 White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995

On its accession to power the Government of National Unity inherited a society marked by deep social and economic inequalities, as well as by serious racial, political and social divisions. Guided by the principle of national reconciliation, the new South African Government adopted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to reorient and reunite society towards a common purpose, that of a socially coherent and economically equitable society (White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995).

The White Paper sets the tone for transformation of the public service and paves the way for legislation to be enacted to eradicate social and economic inequalities.

Among other things, the White Paper addresses the following:

- A new vision and mission for the South African public service.
- The main challenges and opportunities presented by the transformation process.
- Comparative insights and lessons from abroad.
- Priority areas and processes for transformation.
- The policy instruments necessary to effect change.
- The principal financial implications of the transformation process.
- Rationalisation and restructuring the public service.
- Institution building and management.
- Representativeness and affirmative action.
- Transforming service delivery.
- Democratising the state.
• Human resource development and training.
• Employment conditions and labour relations.
• The promotion of a professional service ethos.

The White Paper is relevant for the study of transformation in the public service in that it provides guidelines to management of the public service on transformation targets and sets out clear time frames for achieving the desired objectives.

4.3.2 White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service and Administration 564 of 1998

The purpose of the White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service and Administration is to provide a policy framework that sets out the mandatory requirements and steps that national departments and provincial administration should take to develop and implement their affirmative action programmes. The paper also sketches the accountability, monitoring and reporting responsibilities of various players within affirmative action programmes.

According to the White Paper, government inherited a Public Service which was strongly influenced by discriminatory employment policies and practices based on race, gender and disability. Hence some groups are poorly represented at decision making levels and in other technical occupational classes. The Constitution identifies the issue of representation in the Public Service as one of the main foundations of a non-racist, non-sexist and democratic society that integrates people with disabilities.

When the Government came into power in 1994, initiatives were put into place to remove discriminatory practices and policies in employment. Measures were also developed as an interim arrangement to facilitate and promote accessibility to the public service by all.
4.3.3 The Public Service Regulations

Part VII of the Regulations sets out Principles in terms of the Procedures for Appointment, Promotion and Termination of Service as follows:

“Employment practices shall ensure employment equity, fairness, efficiency and the achievement of a representative public service. Affirmative action shall be used to speed up the creation of a representative and equitable public service and to give practical support to those who have been previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination to enable them to fulfil their maximum potential. Employment practices should maximise flexibility, minimise administrative burdens on both employer and employee, and generally prevent waste and inefficiency”

Whether this has taken place as planned is quite debatable given that even posts as low as deputy director level in the public service are politically influenced if not determined. For example, in the North-West Province for the past three to four years there has been a problem with the appointment of Security Managers to implement the MISS in government departments. In a total of nine departments, at least four had Security Managers who were seen as having being imposed by the political principals on the establishments and had no experience and/or qualifications on security.

4.3.4 The Employment Equity Act (Act 55) of 1998

The employment Equity Act deals with equity in the public service employment for designated groups and provides as follows that ‘every designated employer must, in order to achieve employment equity, implement affirmative action measures for people from designated groups in terms of this Act.’ According to the Act, a designated employer must:
(a) Consult with its employees as required by section 16 of the Act;

(b) Conduct an analysis as required by section 19;

(c) Prepare an employment equity plan as required by section 20; and

(d) Report to the Director-General on progress made in implementing its employment equity plan, as required by section 21.

The Act further makes provision for affirmative action measures that must be implemented by the designated employer and these must include:

(a) Measures to identify and eliminate employment barriers, including unfair discrimination, which adversely affect people from designated groups;

(b) Measures designed to further diversity in the workplace based on equal dignity and respect of all people;

(c) Making reasonable accommodation for people from designated groups in order to ensure that they enjoy equal opportunities and are equitably represented in the workforce of a designated employer;

(d) subject to subsection (3), measures to-
   (i) Ensure the equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce and;
   (ii) Retain and develop people from designated groups and to implement appropriate training measures, including measures in terms of an Act of Parliament providing for skills development.

The Employment Equity is relevant to the study of transformation because it places the responsibility on senior managers in the public service to provide equal opportunities to all people, including those defined as ‘designated people’. This involves conducting an audit of equity in terms of race and gender in order to set out clear and achievable targets.
4.3.5 Public Service Regulations as amended by Government Notice No. R 840 21 June 2002

PART X C provides the following about the mandating and management of negotiations:

“An executing authority may enter into an agreement on a matter of mutual interest only if-

(a) she or he has responsibility for managing collective bargaining on behalf of the State as employer in that forum;
(b) she or he has authority to deal with the matter concerned; and
(c) she or he meets the fiscal requirements contained in regulation X (C)

C.2 Collective bargaining shall be regulated by the Labour Relations Act.
C.3 In the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council, which deals only with matters transverse to the public service, the Minister shall manage negotiations on behalf of the State as employer.

C.4 In a sectoral bargaining council, which deals with matters transverse to a sector in the public service-

(a) if one executing authority manages the sector, she or he has responsibility for managing collective bargaining; or
(b) if more than one executing authority manages the sector, Cabinet shall nominate one of the executing authorities to manage collective bargaining.

C.5 An executing authority shall provide the Minister with a copy of any collective agreement concluded in the bargaining council of her or his department or sector.
4.3.6 A Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service: 2006 – 2015 Consultation Document, November 2006

The Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service (2006 – 2015) is aimed at achieving women’s empowerment and gender equality in the workplace. Additionally, it is aimed at ensuring a better quality of life for all women through improved and accelerated service delivery by the Public Service.

The Framework goes beyond a mere increase of number of women at all levels of the SMS to include the element of empowerment, development and leadership of women. Government has identified the following priority areas with the central theme of accelerating change to improve the quality of life of the people both in rural and urban areas:

- Reduce poverty and unemployment by half by 2014;
- Provide the skills required by the economy;
- Consolidate democracy and build a caring and responsive state;
- Combat crime and corruption;
- A better national profile; and
- Play a progressive role in Africa and the world.

In his Inaugural Address in 1994, President Mandela noted that genuine liberation in our country would not be achieved “unless we see in visible and practical terms that the condition of women in our county has radically changed for the better and that they have been empowered to intervene in all spheres of life as equals with any member of our society.”

This political commitment to women’s empowerment and gender equality is enshrined in the South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996 and its Bill of Rights. It is expressed as “the transformation of the State into a genuinely non-sexist and no-racist society”.

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There has been a considerable increase in the representation and participation of women in public life, particularly in the labour force, guaranteed by a forward-looking legislative framework, including the Public Service Act of 1994, the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, the Employment Equity Act, 1998, and the Promotion and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000.

In 2003, Cabinet adopted the minimum target of 30% women in the Public Service, and which is also contained in the White Paper for Transformation of the Public Service, 1995. In November 2005, Cabinet adopted a revised employment equity target of 50% women at all levels in the SMS by 31 March 2009 (Cabinet Memo 867A of 2005, dated 30 November 2005, file number CM 86A/2005). In addition, Cabinet also supported the development of a Gender and Governance plan of action that would ensure substantial progress is made on women's empowerment and gender equality in the Public Service.

4.4 Research on the management of transformation in the public service

A library search was conducted at the library of the North-West University (Mafikeng Campus) to find out if there was any research that has been conducted on the topic before. The search indicated that research had been carried out in the following areas:

- The management of diversity in the public sector
- Transformation in the South African public sector
- The management of performance in the public service

While these dealt with the related concepts such as management and transformation, it appeared that no study had been conducted, at least as far as the North-West University library was concerned about the analysis of the relationship between transformation of the public service and conflict.

Further literature review was conducted on books, newspapers, government publications, and Web sites in order to source more information regarding management of transformation, specifically in the public service.
It is remarkable that while there is literature on management of transformation, diversity management or change management, literature that deals specifically with ‘transformation of the public service in South Africa’ as a source of conflict was still relatively limited given that extensive research and projects on the topic only started after 1994.

An internet search was conducted on the following websites, www.gov.za, www.parliament.org.za and www.dps.gov.za. These websites yielded massive information on the legislative framework and policies on transformation in the public service. However, none indicated any research conducted on the relationship between transformation and conflict in the public service.

### 4.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter on literature review focussed on the legislation and policies that were relevant to transformation in the public service in South Africa. It further gave a synopsis of what each piece of legislation and policy expressed regarding transformation of the public service. It is notable that not much information was found and discussed regarding literature search at universities except a search that was conducted at the North-West University. It therefore will not be accurate to argue that no research had been conducted about the topic in the past, safe to say the search at the university library and linked databases did not indicate anything to that regard.
CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Interpretation and presentation of data deals with the manner in which the researcher gives meaning to the data collected. The discussion in this chapter focuses on the techniques that are used for interpretation of data and how best to present the data in a research report. Although both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the research study, the data presentation will take a form of number (quantitative method) to give an account of the findings and to test the hypothetical statements that have been formulated.

5.2 Data reduction

According to Bailey K.D. (1987:332) the quantity of data may be so great that the researcher cannot report all of it in the research report. The mass of data must be reduced and then analysed, so that a succinct set of conclusions or findings can be reported to a scientific audience.

The main task of data reduction is coding. Coding for computer analysis generally consists of assigning code numbers to each answer category so that they may be stored in the computer. It is much easier to store and retrieve numbers than it is letters or words, thus the necessity to change categories from word or sentence responses to numbers.

5.3 Pre-coding

According to Bailey K.D. (1987:333) numerical coding can be conducted both when the questionnaire itself is being written (precoding) or after the questionnaire has been administered and the questions answered (post coding). Precoding is limited to closed ended questions whose answer categories are known in advance such as ‘yes’ and ‘no’ responses.
In open ended questions the researcher is often not sure exactly what answers or how many different answer categories will be given, and so he/she cannot establish codes until the data has been analysed.

In the research study, pre-coding was allocated to the responses because most of the questions were closed ended. However, some of the close ended questions were followed by open ended questions which required the respondents to motivate for the answer given. Indeed a numerical coding of the responses was conducted in order to count the responses and interpret the data.

A table with a total number of questions, total categories of responses and total number of questionnaires was drawn. The response to each question was marked on the appropriate column to firstly determine how many similar responses were given to each question and secondly to add the total number of responses per question.

This was followed by dividing the total responses per question by twenty (20) and multiplying the answer by hundred (100) to get a percentage variance. The difference would then account for different percentages per variable and the total for each variable would then give a hundred percent account. The tables below reflect the presentation and interpretation of data.

**Table 1:** Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender category</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race category</td>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 5 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 15 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 20 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years and more</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Direct experience of transformation in immediate workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Reasons for lack of transformation in the public service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor management</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of policies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Responsibility for management of transformation in public service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: The impact of management on transformation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10: People negatively affected by lack of transformation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with disabilities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Type of conflict common in the public service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-organisational</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Known causes of conflict in the public service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor management</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of transformation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Causal relationship between transformation and conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Responsibility for resolving conflict in the public service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff forums</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15: Can conflict be resolved or only managed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: Lessons learned from conflict in the public service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17: The public service has conflict management strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Interpretation of data

From the tables for data presentation the following interpretation was made:

Gender

Of the total number of respondents, 90% were male and only 10% female. As was indicated earlier on, there were fewer females than males in the chosen department and the possibility of lower number of women in the sample was higher.
Race

A total of 95% of the respondents were Africans and only 5% were whites and there were no Coloured and Indian respondents. The reason for the latter is that within the people from whom the sample was chosen there were no Coloured and Indian people.

Age

15% of the respondents were below the age of 35, 45% were between 35 and 45, 30% were between the ages 45 and 50 while 10% were between 50 and 60 years of aged.

Years of employment in the public service

A total of 5% of the respondents have been employed in the public service for at most four years, 20% have spend between 5 and 10 years, 20% have been in the employ for 10 to 15 years, 30% for 15 to 20 years while 25% have been employed for 20 and more years.

Knowledge of transformation in the public service

85% of the respondents indicated that they had knowledge of transformation while 15% indicated that they did not have any knowledge of transformation in as far as it related to the public service.

Direct experience of transformation

55% of the respondents felt that they had been directly affected by transformation while 45% felt that they had no direct experience of transformation in their immediate work environment within the public service.
Reason for lack of transformation

45% of the respondents chose not to respond to the reason for lack of transformation in the public service. 45% reasoned that poor management was the reason for lack of transformation and 10% attributed it to lack of transformation policies.

The reason for lower response to this question is the sensitivity that surrounds the issue of transformation and fears that people have to express their views without fear or being victimised or reprimanded.

Responsibility for transformation in the public service

5% of the respondents were of the view that corporate service in the public service must be the driving force behind the implementation of transformation. 10% were of the view that transformation was the responsibility of senior management while 85% felt that both the corporate services and senior management in general had to oversee the transformation of the public service.

The impact of management on transformation

Of the respondents, 30% felt that management was key to transformation, 40% felt that management had a minimal role to play in transformation of the public service while 30% felt that management had no role to play in transformation in the public service.

People negatively affected by lack of transformation

50% of the respondents were of the view that women were the worst affected by lack of transformation. 35% felt that people with disabilities and 15% cited men as people who were adversely affected by lack of transformation in the public service.
Types of conflict common in the public service

65% of the respondents were of the view that inter-organisational conflict is prevalent in the public service while 35% felt that an interpersonal conflict is common in the public service.

The reason for this, one may argue is that even conflict at interpersonal level, say between a manager and an employee is in most cases dealt with through formal forums such as staff forums, labour unions and staff meetings. It therefore implies that more often even conflict that can start at interpersonal level between two people often affects groups (employee organisations and management formations).

At another level, one can refer to inter-group conflict which happens at collective level where unions challenge management decisions on issues such as performance management, promotions, working conditions, remuneration and other conditions of employment. Further to that conflict exists between mandatory bodies and employers when dealing with issues affecting employees, an apposite example would be labour disputes that are often referred to the CCMA, the Labour Court and the State Attorneys.

Causes of conflict in the public service

Most of the respondents – 80% attributed conflict in the public service to poor management while 20% felt that lack of transformation was the cause of conflict.

This implies that conflict in the public service is not necessarily the result of transformation but is the effect of poor management. This suggests that whether transformation took place or not, the manner in which the public service is managed would determine extent of more conflict than transformation per se.
Responsibility for resolving conflict in the public service

50% of the respondents were of the view that managers in the public service had the responsibility to resolve conflict, 35% felt that this was the role of staff forums while 15% felt that unions had to resolve conflict in the public service.

Management is again seen as key to dealing with conflict. It is remarkable that the respondents see managers as having solutions to all the challenges that the public service is faced with, a clear indication of the tensions that permeate the public service in South Africa and the apportioning of blame on management.

Conflict resolution or conflict management

This question was to determine if the level of understanding of conflict has evolved with time or if it was still seen as an anomaly that had to be eradicated.

85% of the respondents felt that conflict had to be resolved which, is an indication of how negative conflict is still perceived. Only 15% were of the view that conflict need to be managed. The distinction between the resolution and the management of conflict demonstrates the two extremes of understanding conflict as undesirable and the view of conflict as means to exchange diverse views and new approaches to change and transformation.

Lessons from conflict in the public service

65% of the respondents indicated that there were no lessons that could be learned from conflict in the public service. 25% of the respondents were of the view that conflict in the public service had some lessons to teach while 10% chose not to respond to the question.
Conflict management strategies in the public service

50% of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of any conflict management strategies in the public service while 30% indicated that there were strategies to deal with conflict and 20% did not respond.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Data that was collected was presented according to each of the variables and this was followed by the interpretation to validate or nullify the hypothesis. It is remarkable that the hypothesis that the research formulates for testing can be invalidated by the data collected because it is not possible for the researcher to know the exact response that each respondent would give to the questions asked. Data presentation and interpretation also proved to be the most difficult part of the research and the most critical. A statistical analysis of data was presented to indicate the percentage difference of each of the responses.
CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings of the study are used to test the validity of the hypothesis. Where most of the respondents attribute a specific condition to a variable, it might be deduced that the hypothesis is true. However, where the sample was not representative, it cannot be convincingly argued that the hypothesis is valid even when there is a higher positive response to the variable or variables testing it. The research study sought out to identify the challenges in the relationship between transformation and conflict and recommend remedial action to address such challenges.

6.2 Research Findings

6.2.1 Validity of the hypothesis

The data collected indicated that the hypothetical statement that public service employees in the central district area of the North-West Province were not aware of any transformation policies and strategies was invalid. This is because most of the respondents indicated that they were aware and knew about the policies and strategies by government towards transformation of the public service.

Most of the respondents cited poor management as the reason for conflict in the public service. This therefore implies that the hypothesis that both poor management and lack of transformation policies were reasons for conflict was invalid - it was in fact poor management rather than transformation that gave rise to conflict.

The hypothesis that senior management in general was responsible for transformation of the public service proved to be valid in that the respondents indicated that senior managers had the responsibility to ensure that transformation took place.
Women were seen as the worst affected by lack of transformation, which implied that the hypothesis that both women and people with disabilities were negatively affected was partially invalid. The emphasis was more on women than on people with disabilities in as far as the adverse impact of lack of transformation was concerned.

More than fifty percent of the respondents were of the view that conflict was an anomaly that had to be resolved. This view suggests that conflict is undesirable and had to be eradicated. This implied that the hypothesis that conflict must be managed and not resolved was invalid. Responses indicated that conflict was still treated as undesirable by most public service employees.

This emphasises the view of conflict as a deterrent to social cohesion rather than a process by which people can share opinions and views irrespective of how different they are. The distinction between the view of conflict as a deterrent to cohesion and the view that it is a normal process which demonstrates the true essence of human life and its diverse nature demonstrates two extremes of the understanding of conflict. One is that of conflict as a means to exchange diverse views and formulate new approaches to life and the other is that of conflict as a social ill that must be eradicated.

The hypothesis that there were lessons to be learned from conflict proved to be invalid in that 65% of the indicated disagreed with the assertion that conflict provided an opportunity to learn. A conclusion can be drawn from the study that transformation is not the cause of conflict in the public service. Poor management rather than transformation was the reason why there were strikes, cases of unfair discrimination and harassment which contributed to conflict in the public service.
6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Empowerment of women in the public service

What the findings indicated is that both male and female public service employees think that women have not benefited much from transformation. However, this sentiment is not shared by the Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service (2006 – 2015).

According to the Strategic Framework for Gender Equality in the Public Service, there has been a considerable increase in the representation and participation of women in public life, particularly in the labour force, guaranteed by a forward-looking legislative framework, including the Public Service Act of 1994, the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, the Employment Equity Act, 11998, and the Promotion and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000.

In March 2005, the public service workforce stood at 1 073 033 employees, showing a net increase of 29 336 employees from December 2004. Of these figure, Blacks represented 86.5% of the workforce, while women represented 53.3%. In regard to women with disabilities, as at 31 March 2005, out of a total of 571 871 women employed in the Public Service, 586 were women with disabilities. Overall, employees with disabilities received 0.15% of all promotions in the Public Service.

In terms of women in management, as at 31 March 2005, while women made up 53.3% of the Public Service workforce, they only constituted 29% of Senior Management positions. However, by March 2006, of the total of 6727 SMS employees, 2017 (i.e. 30%) were women, indicating that the target set by Cabinet in 2003, has been met within the Public Service. Gender in the Professional Occupations indicates that while there are 64% women in the professional occupation category, they tend to be concentrated at the lower levels of the occupational category (Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service (2006 – 2015)).
The indication is that while the target set by government for transformation are met, women still proportionally occupy lower positions in the public service. What is required is a transformation mechanism that will provide women with mobility in the workplace. Skills development, on the job training for women graduates and internship programmes are some of the programmes that could empower women to occupy management positions in the public sector.

6.3.2 Establishment of manager-employee forums

It is very clear that the employees were not aware of the forums that were established in order to provide them with a platform to negotiate their conditions of employment. Most of the respondents were not aware of employer – employee forums and this meant that the forums such as the OSF were perceived by the employees as non functional or ineffective in dealing with their employment conditions in an amicable manner.

Poor manager-employee relations imply that employees may not take instructions and respect authority, and in the same breath managers may not give employees an opportunity to express their frustrations without fear of being victimised.

In some government departments such as the organisation that has been chosen for the research, middle managers and supervisors are invited to extended management meetings in order to have a direct interaction with management and get an opportunity to reflect on the concerns of operational employees. Firstly, this ensured direct interaction with managers, secondly, it enables the middle managers to understand strategic objectives and business processes of the organisation. Lastly, it creates a consistent flow of information from senior management to operational employees since middle managers are required to report back after every extended management meeting.
6.3.3 Conflict management training for managers and employees

The research study indicated that conflict is still perceived as undesirable hence the idea by the respondents that conflict has to be resolved, which suggests that conflict is undesirable and has to be dealt away with.

Employees and managers need to be trained in the management of conflict so that conflict is not seen as an anomaly but is understood as an opportunity to exchange ideas, opinions and to find new meanings to the challenges in the public service.

6.3.4 Future Research

The study focussed on the relationship between conflict and transformation in the public service. The basis of the study was that transformation was the reason why there was conflict between managers and employees in the public service.

Further research must still be conducted on the positive contribution of transformation in the managing of conflict and improving working relations in the public service. Research can still be conducted on how best transformation has been managed in the public service and whether legislation on transformation has improved service delivery and reduced negative perceptions about the public service in South Africa.

6.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the validity of the hypothesis based on the findings of the research study. It further suggested recommendations relating to the research topic and the lessons from the study and indicated areas on which further research could be conducted in order to draw more lessons on the relationship between conflict and transformation in the public service. Emphasis was on the need to do more in order to transform the public service to benefit more women and people with disabilities with considerable attention to the latter in that transformation has to a larger extend focussed on black males and women than people with physical challenges.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCMA</td>
<td>Commission for Conciliation and Mediation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPSA</td>
<td>Department of Public Service and Administration</td>
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<td>GNU</td>
<td>Government of National Unity</td>
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<td>MISS</td>
<td>Minimum Information Security Standards</td>
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<td>OSF</td>
<td>Organisational Staff Forum</td>
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<td>PSTF</td>
<td>Public Sector Transformation Forum</td>
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<td>RDP</td>
<td>Reconstruction and Development Programme</td>
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<td>SMS</td>
<td>Senior Management Service</td>
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Public Service Regulations as amended by Government Notice No. R 840 21 June 2002


The Employment Equity Act (Act 55) of 1998


