

Gender disparity in organisation and the resultant human resource mismanagement: A case analysis

Ronald B. Crawford

University of Greenwich Business School, UK

consult@hrodc.com

<http://www.hrodc.com>

Abstract: This paper addresses 'gender disparity' in organisation. Using a multinational organisation, as a basis for data elicitation, the empirical analysis explores its human resource utilisation, on basis of gender, to assess parity of treatment. The research employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative data elicitation techniques. All comparative tables are chi-squared, with probability taken at ' $p < 0.05$ '. The empirical data suggests that management, through its discriminatory practices, fail to adequately utilise its human resource, negatively affecting gender relationships and worker commitment, jeopardising overall organisational effectiveness.

Keywords: Gender disparity, human resource utilisation, committee membership, marketing intelligence, worker commitment, resonance.

1. Introduction, theoretical and conceptual discussions

Organisations, many having surpassed the requirements of equal opportunities in employment, tend to focus on the management of a diverse workforce as a survival imperative. Much has, therefore, been aired regarding the management of workforce diversity (Kanji, 1993; Lapin, 1990; Wisniewski and Stead, 1996; Certo, 2000; Harvey and Allard, 1995; Miller and Rowney, 1999; Moore, 1999; Loden & Rosener, 1991; Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy, 2001; Hicks-Clarke and Iles, 2000), management being advised of their legal obligations towards diversity, and the socio-political, and economic implications of its mismanagement (Stephenson & Lewin, 1996; Scheinholtz, 2000; Gomez-Mejia, Belkin and Cardy, 2001). This drive has, nevertheless, overshadowed the age-old issue of 'gender disparity'.

Despite the UK's effort, in the form of legislation (*Equal Pay Act, 1970, Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations, 1983*, and the *Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986* (Equal Opportunities Commission, {EOC} 2000a & 2001) to protect women's employment rights, it cannot be said that all expectations have been met. This remains the case, even with the additional protection that the *Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999* (EOC, 2000b) afford. Women are often victims of discrimination (Mills, 1998, as cited in Wicks and Bradshaw, 1999). Not only are they victims of low paid employment (EOC, 2000; Halim, 1993 – as cited in Watson, 1995) but they also have restricted access to senior (Zane, 2002) and boardroom (Kersten, 2000) management positions, with only a 9.8% chance (IMS - cited

in McDougall, 1996; EOC, 1999) - propagating 'glass ceiling' (Dix, 1999; Zane, 2002) - sometimes blamed on women's unassertiveness (Gallese, 1999). Gender discrimination is further evidenced by the number of Employment Tribunals cases - 3,809 in 1999/2000 (Employment Tribunal Services, 2000).

Justification of gender disparity is sought by a number of unfounded claims – e.g. they use humour, a popular management tool, more sparingly with male than with their female colleagues (Cox et al, 1990 - as cited in Smith et al, 2000; Mitchell, 1985 as cited in Walker, 1988). To the contrary, and despite the language dilemma (Sellers, 1991), empirical evidence produced by Smith, Harrington and Neck (2000) indicates that, given the appropriate environment the 'gender similarity effects', does not exist.

Irrespective of the perspective to gender studies, we acknowledge that differences in perception and approach exist between male and female. These differences are beneficial to organisations in several ways least of which is the reduction in or aversion of cohesiveness (Lee and Chon, 200; Piper, Marache, Lacroix, Richardson and Jones, 1983; Pirog, Schneider and Lam, 1997; Certo, 2000; Dessler, 2001; Eaton, 2001; Robbins, 2000; Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn, 2000; Manz and Neck, 1997), thereby addressing groupthink (Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn, 2000; Eaton, 2001; Manz and Neck, 1997; Neck, 1996; Dessler, 2001; Robbins, 2000) and the enhancement of 'teamthink' (Manz and Neck, 1997).

Committee and taskforce membership, the elicitation of, and receptivity to, women's views

and comments are simple ways by which the marketing intelligence (Kotler and Armstrong, 2001) might be exploited (Boddy and Paton, 1998; Certo, 2000; Robbins, 2001). Effective decisions might be assured if gatekeeping (Gross, Tabenkeken and Brammli-Greenberg, 2001; Pirog, Schneider and Lam, 1997) is accorded a heightened degree of importance in-group dynamics, ensuring that 'resonation' (Crawford, 2001), among other dysfunctional attributes, is averted. Resonation is the situation whereby an idea or view that one member proposes, usually at a meeting, is given little or no attention or is completely dismissed but is overwhelmingly received when another member re-presents it.

Nevertheless, several organisations such as Quaker Oats; IBM; Ciba-Geigy; and Pacific Telesis (Gomez-Mejia, Balkin & Cardy, 2001) have demonstrated their desire to employ some of the most innovative strategy to address the gender imbalance. These initiatives include the creation of 'Mummy Tracks'. This means that an employer gives women extended leave with benefits for up to three years.

While the foregoing discussion provides a basis for understanding some of the pertinent issues at stake, we need to establish national and organisational contexts for an assessment of gender parity. This empirical analysis accepts this challenge by investigating the level of parity of treatment of male and female, in a case study organisation. Specifically, it enquires into its human resource utilisation, as is manifest in its operation.

2. Formulating the empirical research

2.1 The Setting

Pike International, the pseudonym for the case study organisation, is a limited liability company, having several overseas bases. Its technological infrastructure facilitates advanced Material Requirement Planning (Boddy and Paton, 1998; Hillier, Hillier and Liberman, 2000). Recognising the need to keep up with operational developments it employs strategic and operational changes, much of which has been instituted without total integration into the pre-existing system. Institutionalisation (Crawford, 1994), therefore, is seldom achieved. The organisation has experienced reduced effectiveness, over the past few years, customers and clients growing

increasingly dissatisfied with the quality of its products and services. Product recalls, rejects and service 'referrals' have proven very expensive to maintain. Production has sagged, increasing lead-time, with deliveries falling behind schedule.

The company employs just over 2,000 workers, with a masculine to feminine gender mix ratio of 3:1. It operates a functional structure, even though it has foreign subsidiaries. The structure nevertheless facilitates the establishment of teams their leaders having a noticeable degree of power, providing a great deal of opportunity for effective career management.

Teams are usually small, with 5-12 workers, compared with departments, which may exceed 50. They are operationally flexible, numerically and functionally (Atkinson, 1984; Buchanan and McCalman, 1993; Dyer, 1998; Goodenham and Nordhaug, 1997; Kathuria, 1998; Parker and Jackson, 1993; Pettinger, 1998; Salmon, 1996; Saundry, 1998; Tregaskis, 1997; Wong, 1993), facilitating worker deployment between them, and simultaneous membership of different teams.

2.2 Methodology Employed

The empirical study was conducted over a two-year period, culminating in the questionnaire administration. As part of the contract, for consultancy engagement, the researcher conducted research into the organisation's diversity management, from which senior management hoped to benefit.

150 questionnaires were originally administered, representing a 7.5% sample. 105 questionnaires were returned – a rate of 70%, reducing the sample to 5.25%. This is slightly above the 5% that some experts (e.g. Bienstock, 1996; Govindarajulu, 1999; Hansen, Hurwitz and Madow 1993; Warwick and Lininger, 1975; Williams, 1978) suggest as adequate for desirable precision. Others (e.g. Bouma and Atkinson, 1987; Ching Biu Tse, 1995; Devore and Peck, 1993) recommend a sample of 97-100, irrespective of its percentage of the population. A stratified random sample (Clark-Carter, 1997) was attempted, to assure proportionate race and gender representation. The sample consisted of 71.4% of the respondents were male and 28.6% female (Table 1), closely matching the existing organisational demography (above).

Table 1: Sex of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	75	71.4	71.4	71.4
Female	30	28.6	28.6	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

It was possible to achieve a sample constituent of 66.7% Whites, compared with 33.3% minority ethnic groups – 27.6% being Blacks (Table 2).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid White	70	66.7	66.7	66.7
Asian	4	3.8	3.8	70.5
Black	29	27.6	27.6	98.1
Chinese & Other	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

The questionnaire consists of 33 closed ended items. The management of the case study organisation provided the mechanism for stratified random samples. The quantitative data analysis was facilitated by SPSS (Boum & Atkinson, 1995; Brace, Kemp and Snelgar, 2000). It attempts, therefore, to establish whether the null hypothesis (Clark-Carter, 1997; Kanji, 1994) can be accepted – i.e.

H_0 : There is no significant difference between the treatment and perception of the sexes. The results of analysis were chi-squared, with the level of significance taken at $p < 0.05$.

The foci of the gender element of the analysis were to:

- Ascertain the effectiveness of human resource utilisation, based on the degree to which the sexes are 'represented' and consulted.
- To test the reality, and workers' perception, by sex, of the internal environment.

To facilitate this, a combination of data elicitation techniques was used, which as Crawford (2002) suggests, are most invaluable in ensuring that the reality is compared with informants' perception of particular issues. For example, the researcher was able to "compare direct observation, documentary analysis and interview responses on particular issues" (Crawford, 2002, p. 12). The researcher analysed documents, audio-recordings of meetings, observations of interactions and

conversations but maintained high ethical standards.

Questionnaire responses were cross-tabulated to facilitate a comparative analysis of the information. For example, Question 14 asks: "Of how many committees or task forces have you been a member?" The responses to this question were cross-tabulated with those of Question 2 enquiring of respondents' sex. The product is a table (not presented), showing the number and percentage of respondents who were members of these groups, at some stage - 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more, task forces or committees. The sample represents all the age ranges, closely matching the population, the majority – 29% - between 40 and 46, followed by the 26-32 age-range, at 20% (Table 3).

The main limitation of this research is the generalisability of its findings, constrained by the use of a single setting. Further research will, therefore, be necessary to explore a number of issues raised, using samples of national and international contexts.

Table 3: Age range of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	11	10.5	10.5	10.5
	26-32	20	19.0	19.0	29.5
	33-39	18	17.1	17.1	46.7
	40-46	29	27.6	27.6	74.3
	40-46	17	16.2	16.2	90.5
	54-60	7	6.7	6.7	97.1
	Over 60	3	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	100.0	

3. The findings

3.1 Utilisation of Human Resources

The empirical analysis reveals that managers at Pike International are inconsistent with selection of members of committees and taskforces. With 70% male and less than 30% female members of only one of these groups, there is no significant difference between the sexes, at: $\chi^2 = 8.529$, $df = 5$, $p < 0.112$. 90% male and 10% female also belong to 4 taskforces. While there is no significant difference, at $\chi^2 = 10.545$, $df = 5$, $p < 0.061$, between current committee memberships based on sex, 25.3% male, and 53% female are not members. 22.7% male and 16.7% female are members and 88.2% and over 85% male and 11.8% and 14.3% female, respectively, belong to 3 and 4 committees.

6.5% male and 16.7% female never had their views accepted at departmental meetings - significant at: $\chi^2 = 9.638$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.047$. Table 4 also shows that 100%, 87.5%, 88.2%, and 54.8%, of male, respectively, always, very often, often and seldom had their views accepted.

There is a significant difference between the degrees to which members' views were accepted, at team meetings, based on sex ($\chi^2 = 29.896$, $df=4$, $p < 0.000$). More than 90% male, compared with less than 7% female said they very often had their views accepted at team meetings. Male also represents 90% of the accepted views, 10% being female. 40.5% and 62.5%, male and 59.5% and 37.5% female respondents seldom and never had their views accepted. One female worker responding, unofficially, to a memo from her

head of department regarding non-attendance at meetings, suggested the following:

"I thought they would be relieved that I was absent. It is a good thing to have only part of the group involved in discussions and taking all the decisions. I am one of the 'complete observers' – be there but do not interrupt the proceedings!

"What is most irritating is that when, occasionally, I think that I have a great idea! That brilliant idea! Thinking, "they will have to listen this time"! Then I present that brilliant idea! My best ever! But it 'falls to the floor!' No one takes any notice of what I have to say. What is most disappointing is that my idea is rejected! No thought is given to my workable proposal!

"But what is even more infuriating! What really annoys me – that makes me feel to leave the meeting in protest, is that someone else steals my idea, presents it to members and they welcome it as though they had never heard it before!

"So often colleague sit beside me to get my ideas, just to bring them out to management and receive commendation from them.

"When, occasionally, we receive a visit from senior management, at one of our meetings, they say stupid things but still gain their recognition. They sometimes solicit our views before the meeting, and then present them before we have a chance to do so.

"If we try to make a comment, we are asked to wait but they are allowed to interrupt the process. Sometimes I get interrupted before I finish my statement – they pretend to know precisely what I was going to say. I am not

given a chance. Now, I conclude that it does not make sense trying. I will be the 'complete

observer' that they want me to be!"

Table 4: View acceptance at departmental meetings by sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
View Acceptance At Dept Meetings	Always	Count	4	0	4
		Expected Count	2.9	1.1	4.0
		% within View Acceptance At Dept Meetings	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	5.3%	.0%	3.8%
		% of Total	3.8%	.0%	3.8%
	Very Often	Count	14	2	16
		Expected Count	11.4	4.6	16.0
		% within View Acceptance At Dept Meetings	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
		% within Sex	18.7%	6.7%	15.2%
		% of Total	13.3%	1.9%	15.2%
	Often	Count	30	4	34
		Expected Count	24.3	9.7	34.0
		% within View Acceptance At Dept Meetings	88.2%	11.8%	100.0%
		% within Sex	40.0%	13.3%	32.4%
		% of Total	28.6%	3.8%	32.4%
	Seldom	Count	23	19	42
		Expected Count	30.0	12.0	42.0
		% within View Acceptance At Dept Meetings	54.8%	45.2%	100.0%
		% within Sex	30.7%	63.3%	40.0%
		% of Total	21.9%	18.1%	40.0%
Never	Count	4	5	9	
	Expected Count	6.4	2.6	9.0	
	% within View Acceptance At Dept Meetings	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	5.3%	16.7%	8.6%	
	% of Total	3.8%	4.8%	8.6%	
Total	Count	75	30	105	
	Expected Count	75.0	30.0	105.0	
	% within View Acceptance At Dept Meetings	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	

$$\chi^2 = 17.259, df = 4, p < 0.002$$

On one occasion Valerie, a junior worker, read the contents of an email (attachment) of the minutes of a previous meeting, which omitted the suggestion that she made regarding ways of heightening customer and client awareness. In shock and disbelief, she broke her silence moments later with the following observation:

"The least that I would expect is that they would listen to me. Even when I say something positive, my name does not appear on the 'record'. I am made to feel stupid – but many organisations take the 'stupid ideas' that workers have and make millions from them.

Look at Microsoft! Look at most other corporate giants! They listen to people! They value all contributions!

“We are different, and it is that difference that makes it necessary for us to meet and trade ideas but this is not what is happening, here! This is the reason that we are literally stagnated! We are in the mire! And management is incompetent! They do not have a ‘clue’! – Completely ‘clueless’!”

In order to secure a wide range of view, to facilitate effective decision-making (Dessler, 2001), managers at Pike International frequently consult 95% male and less than 5% female subordinates. As Table 5 indicates, 81% male are seldom consulted compared with less than 20% female. With 40.9% male and 82.1% female, who are never consulted, by managers, they are twice as likely to consult male than female, a pattern team leaders (Table 6) and corporate managers reflect (Table 7).

Table 5: Consultation From Managers By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Consultation from Manager	Often	Count	22	1	23
		Expected Count	16.1	6.9	23.0
		% within Consultation from Manager	95.7%	4.3%	100.0%
		% within Sex	33.3%	3.6%	24.5%
		% of Total	23.4%	1.1%	24.5%
	Seldom	Count	17	4	21
		Expected Count	14.7	6.3	21.0
		% within Consultation from Manager	81.0%	19.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	25.8%	14.3%	22.3%
		% of Total	18.1%	4.3%	22.3%
	Never	Count	27	23	50
		Expected Count	35.1	14.9	50.0
		% within Consultation from Manager	54.0%	46.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	40.9%	82.1%	53.2%
		% of Total	28.7%	24.5%	53.2%
Total	Count	66	28	94	
	Expected Count	66.0	28.0	94.0	
	% within Consultation from Manager	70.2%	29.8%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	70.2%	29.8%	100.0%	

$$\chi^2 = 14.559, df = 2, p < 0.001.$$

Table 6: Consultation From Team Leaders By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Consultation from Team Leader	Very Often	Count	4	0	4
		Expected Count	2.8	1.2	4.0
		% within Consultation from Team Leader	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	7.3%	.0%	5.1%
		% of Total	5.1%	.0%	5.1%
	Often	Count	18	0	18
		Expected Count	12.7	5.3	18.0
		% within Consultation from Team Leader	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	32.7%	.0%	23.1%
		% of Total	23.1%	.0%	23.1%
	Seldom	Count	13	3	16
		Expected Count	11.3	4.7	16.0
		% within Consultation from Team Leader	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%
		% within Sex	23.6%	13.0%	20.5%
		% of Total	16.7%	3.8%	20.5%
	Never	Count	20	20	40
		Expected Count	28.2	11.8	40.0
		% within Consultation from Team Leader	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	36.4%	87.0%	51.3%
		% of Total	25.6%	25.6%	51.3%
Total	Count	55	23	78	
	Expected Count	55.0	23.0	78.0	
	% within Consultation from Team Leader	70.5%	29.5%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	70.5%	29.5%	100.0%	

$$\chi^2 = 18.182, df = 3, p < 0.000$$

Table 7: Consultation From Corporate Managers By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Consultation from Corporate Managers	Very Often	Count	1	1	2
		% within Sex	1.4%	3.3%	1.9%
	Often	Count	16	1	17
		% within Sex	21.6%	3.3%	16.3%
	Seldom	Count	23	2	25
		% within Sex	31.1%	6.7%	24.0%
	Never	Count	34	26	60
		% within Sex	45.9%	86.7%	57.7%
	Total	Count	74	30	104
		% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 16.232, df = 3, p < 0.001$$

There is no significant difference ($\chi^2 = 2.691, df = 3, p < 0.442$) between the percentage of male and female, 98.3% and 92% respectively, who volunteer advice to team leaders. However, team leaders reject 60% of the views of female and 28.1% of male. Leaders always accept the volunteered information of 19.3% male but none of the female (Table 8).

Table 8: Leader's Acceptance of Volunteered Information By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Leader's Acceptance of Information	Always	% within Leader's Acceptance of Information	100.0%		100.0%
		% within Sex	19.3%		13.4%
		% of Total	13.4%		13.4%
	Very Often	% within Leader's Acceptance of Information	100.0%		100.0%
		% within Sex	8.8%		6.1%
		% of Total	6.1%		6.1%
	Often	% within Leader's Acceptance of Information	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
		% within Sex	24.6%	8.0%	19.5%
		% of Total	17.1%	2.4%	19.5%
	Seldom	% within Leader's Acceptance of Information	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
		% within Sex	19.3%	32.0%	23.2%
		% of Total	13.4%	9.8%	23.2%
Never	% within Leader's Acceptance of Information	51.6%	48.4%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	28.1%	60.0%	37.8%	
	% of Total	19.5%	18.3%	37.8%	
Total	% within Leader's Acceptance of Information	69.5%	30.5%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	69.5%	30.5%	100.0%	

$$\chi^2 = 15.357, df = 4, p < 0.004$$

62% and 30.3% male and 67.7% and 32% female respondents often and seldom volunteer information to managers, a significant difference at: $\chi^2 = 3.038, df = 4, p < 0.551$. From the analysis managers always accept the advice that 27% male and 3.6% female provide them. 7.1% female and 27% male say that their heads of department often accept their suggestions, a significant gender difference at: $\chi^2 = 24.284, df = 4, p < 0.000$.

There is a significant difference in the pattern with which corporate managers consult the sexes ($\chi^2 = 16.232, df = 3, p < .001$) - a total of 13.3% female, and 54.1% male. Therefore, they neglected to consult almost twice as many females (86.7%) as males (45.9%).

While they very often consult 3.3% female and 1.4% male, they often consult 21.6% male and just 3.3% female. In addition, they also seldom consult 31.1% male and 6.7% female.

When asked: "To what extent do you think that you have access to important information from outside your organisation that would improve its chances of success? an overwhelming 80% female, compared with just under 25% male suggest that they do - to a great extent. Just over 50% male and 16.7% female agree that they possess this type of information - interpreted as marketing intelligence - to a fair extent (Table 9).

Table 9: Worker's Access to Marketing Intelligence By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Access to External Information	To a Great extent	% within Access to External Information	52.0%	48.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	34.7%	80.0%	47.6%
		% of Total	24.8%	22.9%	47.6%
	To a Fair Extent	% within Access to External Information	88.4%	11.6%	100.0%
		% within Sex	50.7%	16.7%	41.0%
		% of Total	36.2%	4.8%	41.0%
	To a Limited Extent	% within Access to External Information	100.0%		100.0%
		% within Sex	8.0%		5.7%
		% of Total	5.7%		5.7%
Not at All	% within Access to External Information	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	6.7%	3.3%	5.7%	
	% of Total	4.8%	1.0%	5.7%	
Total	% within Access to External Information	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	

$$\chi^2 = 18.114, df = 3, p < 0.000$$

Managers and team leaders consult 65.3% male and 15% female - 85% female not being consulted at all – significant at: $\chi^2 = 27.523$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.000$.

3.2 Workers' Perception, and Reality, of the Internal Organisational Environment

The findings indicate that females are less likely to seek promotion than male. For example, 16.7% female and 10.7% male never sought promotion. Of those who sought promotion 1-4 times 76% were male but only 24% were female. 19.6% female and 80.4% male sought promotion 5-9 times.

Altogether 37.95% female and 62.05% male applied for promotion 5 or more times – a significant difference at: $\chi^2 = 8.893$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.031$. 73.1% female, compared with 32.9% male, suggest that they were never successful in their bid for promotion, but 43.8% male and 23.1% female said they were successful on 1-4 occasions.

Similarly 23.3% male and 3.8% female say they have been successful 5-9 times (Table 10). Analysis indicates that females are (more than twice) more likely to be unsuccessful in their application for promotion as than their male counterparts - significant at: $\chi^2 = 13.271$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.001$.

Some informants threatening boycott accuse the selection panels of customising job descriptions and personnel specifications to ensure that their preferred candidates 'unmistakably' match the 'engineered profiles'. Others suggest that panel members are "downright discriminatory". One female member claims:

"Management has a way of trying to explain away what is openly their highly discriminatory practices!

"But one thing that they have forgotten is that the people that they try to 'brainwash' with their 'excuses' are far more intelligent than they are. They don't even realise that with a 'discipline' like mine, I am able to determine the irregularities.

“They do try to insult one’s intelligence – to a great extent they do! But It is better that we ignore them.”

Table 10: Times Successful In Bid For Promotion By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Times Successful	None	% within Times Successful	55.8%	44.2%	100.0%
		% within Sex	32.9%	73.1%	43.4%
		% of Total	24.2%	19.2%	43.4%
1-4 Times		% within Times Successful	84.2%	15.8%	100.0%
		% within Sex	43.8%	23.1%	38.4%
		% of Total	32.3%	6.1%	38.4%
5-9 Times		% within Times Successful	94.4%	5.6%	100.0%
		% within Sex	23.3%	3.8%	18.2%
		% of Total	17.2%	1.0%	18.2%
Total		% within Times Successful	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%
		% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 13.271, df = 2, p < 0.001$$

On her return from visiting an overseas ‘agency’, and having received the briefing on another round of appointments, a furious female worker exclaimed:

“Why do you think that I have never applied?! It does not matter how lucrative the position is, it will never really appeal to me. I am not certain who ‘calls the shots’ but I think that I have a fair idea.”

“Why ‘don’t’ they follow the ‘management succession chart’ that they have created, and to which no one else but them have access? Why do they keep wasting our time?”

After another ‘fatal’ attempt to secure the promotion to which she had long aspired, and for which she thought that she was ideally suited, Millie stormed out of her office, on receiving the disappointing news. She sighed effortlessly - in an unforgiving tone, and spoke unerringly:

“I am not now certain what is required of me!

“I am that person! I fit the profile - like none other! – Yet, I was denied the opportunity to advance!

“This is not a mistake! It is deliberate! I could do that job. Very well but has got everything to lose.. I should be valued – taken seriously. I have really overstepped my bounds, this time. I wasted my time and ‘theirs.’

“I could have spent my time more profitably. Its ok!

“I will be here long enough to see fail.”

There is, no significant difference between the types of feedback that colleagues provide their counterparts, based on their sex. For example, while 26.7% of male and 16.7% female say that the comments that they receive are positive, 34.7% and 40% of them respectively say that the comments are negative. However, only 5.3% male and 6.7% female think that they receive mixed comments ($\chi^2 = 3.506, df = 5, p < .623$).

24% male and no female describe the work atmosphere as very friendly, while 40% male and 20% female think that it is friendly. The remainder of respondents think that it is either unfriendly or intolerable the former being the perception of most female (Table 11).

Table 11: Work Atmosphere By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Work Atmosphere	Very Friendly	% within Work Atmosphere	100.0%		100.0%
		% within Sex	24.0%		17.1%
		% of Total	17.1%		17.1%
	friendly	% within Work Atmosphere	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within Sex	40.0%	20.0%	34.3%
		% of Total	28.6%	5.7%	34.3%
	Unfriendly	% within Work Atmosphere	54.8%	45.2%	100.0%
		% within Sex	22.7%	46.7%	29.5%
		% of Total	16.2%	13.3%	29.5%
	Intolerable	% within Work Atmosphere	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex	13.3%	33.3%	19.0%
		% of Total	9.5%	9.5%	19.0%
Total	% within Work Atmosphere	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	

$$\chi^2 = 18.381, df = 3, p < 0.000$$

20% male but no female describe their colleagues as extremely supportive, while 40% male and 10% female think that they are supportive. 8% male, compared with 26.7% female find their colleagues to be fairly supportive, with 28% male and 63.3% female suggesting that their colleagues are unsupportive - significant at: $\chi^2 = 25.848$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.000$.

Just over 17% male and no female perceive their managers as extremely supportive. 90% of the female respondents and less than 30% of the male, describe their managers as unsupportive (Table 12).

Frustrated with her low-level of utilisation, one informant observes:

"When my manager needed quality assurance award, ... 'paraded' me and used my influence to gain accreditation. However, as soon as the organisation gained its enviable status, I was no longer of any importance to them.

"They would have expected that my memory would have been as conveniently short as theirs. However, I cannot help but remember how important I was to them before they achieved their current status. Not only does my 'wretched deployment' hurts but it stifles me!"

Another worker, having achieved first-level supervisory status remarked:

"One would have thought that the fact that we are paid fairly handsomely – I have never groused over the 'pay issue' – we would be expected to produce 'our worth in gold'. Unfortunately, the non-recognition of our potential contribution in particular spheres – ones to which we are known to be able to make a valuable contribution – is something that is beyond my comprehension.

"Irrespective of how 'obnoxious' managers perceive particular groups of workers, it is their technical expertise and the quality of their contribution that should really count. In the end, it is the organisation, which loses out, strategically and operationally. There were many occasions when things have gone wrong and I am convinced that I am able, and willing, to help but no one asks me.

"I have stopped volunteering because of being turned down for tasks that I am competent to undertake, and for which I am not being paid, adds insults to injury. The excuses that one is given insult, and suffocates, one's intelligence!"

Table 12: Assistance From Managers By Sex

			Sex		Total
			Male	Female	
Assistance from Managers	Extremely Supportive	% within Assistance from Managers	100.0%		100.0%
		% within Sex	17.3%		12.4%
		% of Total	12.4%		12.4%
	Supportive	% within Assistance from Managers	91.4%	8.6%	100.0%
		% within Sex	42.7%	10.0%	33.3%
		% of Total	30.5%	2.9%	33.3%
	Fairly Supportive	% within Assistance from Managers	61.5%	38.5%	100.0%
		% within Sex	10.7%	16.7%	12.4%
		% of Total	7.6%	4.8%	12.4%
	Unsupportive	% within Assistance from Managers	51.2%	48.8%	100.0%
		% within Sex	29.3%	70.0%	41.0%
		% of Total	21.0%	20.0%	41.0%
	5	% within Assistance from Managers		100.0%	100.0%
		% within Sex		3.3%	1.0%
		% of Total		1.0%	1.0%
Total	% within Assistance from Managers	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	
	% within Sex	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	

$$\chi^2 = 23.837, df = 4, p < 0.000$$

One recently promoted informant, already frustrated with her new role, remarks:

"I have had complaints from colleagues that they are 'stretched to the limit'. For me, that could not possibly be a complaint. They are overworked and under-paid but I am under-utilised! I do not mind 'their' withholding a portion of my salary, if I felt that I was satisfactorily assigned".

Female respondents' perception of Pike International's discriminatory practices extends to 'working times'. Several informants complain of receiving unreasonable requests from managers to work extra hours, for which, unlike others, they are not paid. Some are called back to work before the expiration of their lunch break. On one occasion, while having lunch with a female minority ethnic worker, she looked at her watch and remarked:

"Sorry! But I really have to go! I was not supposed to have been at lunch in the first place. It is against the rule but my manager insists that I eat on the premises and get back to my desk as soon as I am finished. I do not fancy being out of a job! I know of the Tribunals but nobody knows what might be the outcome of any case that I bring against the company.

"I am very sorry but I really have to go! Bye!"

4. Empirical discussion, summary and conclusions

Evidence suggests that there is a gender disparity in Pike International's treatment of workers, explicit in committee and task force membership, and acceptance of views at meetings. Overall, the analysis reveals male dominance on committees. More than 90% of those who belong to 4 task forces or

committees are male and less than 10% female.

There is a significant difference between the extent to which respondents perceive that their views are accepted at team meetings ($\chi^2 = 29.896$, $df=4$, $p<0.000$). More than 90% male and less than 7% female very often, and 90% male and 10% female often had their views accepted.

Disparity in the treatment of male and female extends to internal promotion, even where women have superior qualifications to their male counterparts. The number of males with PhDs is 3% more than female but 73.3% female compared with 66.7% male respondents have qualifications at degree level and above. Volunteered information does not escape inequity. Team leaders reject 60% of the views that female members offer, compared with only 28.1% of those that their male counterparts present, a significant difference at: $\chi^2 = 15.357$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.004$. 96.

Discrimination compromises the effectiveness of its human resource utilisation, valuable skills, knowledge and expertise remaining untapped (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Little account is taken of the fact that workers command marketing intelligence to varying degrees. An overwhelming 80% female, compared with just under 25% male, suggest that they have a great deal of marketing intelligence. Just over 50% male and 16.7% female agreed that they possess this information, to a fair extent – a significant difference between them (Table 12). Despite this factor, senior managers consult 13.3% of the female respondents, compared with 54.1% of their male counterparts.

Several writers have offered help in managing diversity, not least of whom are Flood and Romm (1996); Gill (1996); Groschl and Doherty (1999); Kersten (2000); Rifkin and Fulop (1997). Not only should organisations confront diversity issues (Flood and Romm, 1966) but they should also ensure that there is a:

- Zero tolerance policy
- Stringent workplace behaviour standard
- Supportive workplace relationship skills programme (Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999) encouraging organisational citizenship behaviour (Chattopadhyay, 1999).

- Diversity policy and procedure statement (Horwitz, Boemaker-Falconer and Searll, 1996).
- Constant monitoring of the diversity policy.

While training should be provided to create sensitivity to diversity issues (Allen, 1994; Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy, 2001; Lindsay, 1994; Loo, 1999; Moore, 1999; Njeri, 1989; Phomphakdy and Kleiner, 1999), managers, in particular, should be trained (Allen, 1994) to recognise that gender diversity implies difference in attitude, desires, values and behaviour (Jackson et al., 1995, as cited in D'Netto and Sohal, 1999). However, like any other initiative, the scheme's survival is contingent on the continuity of resource allocation.

References

- Allen, R 'The need for diversity in corporate training' *Industrial and Commercial Training* Vol 26 No 10 (1994) pp 15-17.
- Atkinson, J 'Manpower strategies for flexible organisations' *Personnel Management*, (Aug 1984) 28 - 31
- Bienstock, C C 'Samples size determination in logistics simulations' *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, Vol 26 No 2 (1996) pp 43-50.
- Boddy, D & Parton, R *Management: An introduction*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey (1998).
- Boumam, G D & Atkinson, G B J *A handbook of social science research: A comprehensive and practical guide for students*, Oxford University Press, Oxford (1995).
- Buchanan, D & McCalman, J *Digital equipment, Scotland: The VLS story*. In D. Gower, K Legge and C Clegg, *Case studies in organisational behaviour and human resource management*, PCP, London (1993)
- Certo, S *Modern Management*, Prentice Hall, London (2000).
- Chattopadhyay, P 'Beyond direct and symmetrical effects: The influence of demographic dissimilarity on organisational citizenship behaviour'. *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol 42 No 3 (1999) pp 273-287.
- Crawford, R B *Gender, race & ethnicity: Key elements of unexploited workforce diversity*. Paper presented at *Rethinking Gender, Work And Organisation: Gender, Work and Organisation Conference - An*

- International Interdisciplinary Conference*. Keele University, Staffordshire, England (2001).
- D'Netto, B & Sohal, A S 'Human resource practices and workforce diversity: An empirical assessment' *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol 20 No 8 (1999) pp 530-547.
- Dessler, G *Leading people and organisation in the 21st century*, Prentice Hall, London (2001).
- Devore, S & Peck, L *Statistics: the exploration and analysis of data*, Wadsworth Publishing Company, California (1993).
- Dix, C A *Chance to the top: The lives of women business graduates*, Bantam Press, London (1999)
- Dyer, S 'Flexibility models: a critical analysis' *International Journal Of Manpower*, Vol 19 No 4 (1998) pp 223-233.
- Eaton, J 'Management communication: The threat of groupthink' *Corporate Communications; an International Journal*, Vol 6 No 4 (2001) 183-192.
- Edge, S A M 'Creating an environment of mutual respect within the multicultural workplace both at home and globally', *Management Decision*, Vol 37 No 1(1999) pp 24-28.
- Employment Tribunal Services *Annual Reports and Accounts*, The Stationary Offices Limited, London (2000).
- EOC *Good practice guide: Genuine occupational qualifications*. EOC, London, UK (2000).
- EOC *Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay Acts*. EOC, Manchester, UK (2000a).
- EOC *Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975; 1998*. EOC, London, UK (2001).
- EOC *Women and men in Britain: The labour market*. EOC, Manchester, UK (1999).
- Flood, R L & Romm, R A 'Contours of diversity management and triple loop learning', *Kybernetes*, Vol 25 No 7/8 (1996) pp154-163.
- Gallese, L R *Why women aren't making it to the top*, The Conference Board, New York (1991, April)
- Gill, P 'Managing workforce diversity: A response to skill shortages' *Health Manpower Management*, Vol 22 No 6 (1996) pp 34-37.
- Gómez-Mejía, L R Balkin, D B & Cardy, R L *Managing Human Resources*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey (2001).
- Goodenham, P N & Nordhaug, O 'Flexibility in Norwegian and UK firms: Competitive pressure and institutional embeddedness' *Employee Relations*, Vol 19 No 6 (1997) pp 568-580.
- Govindarajulu, Z *Elements of sampling and theory and methods*, Prentice Hall Inc, Upper Saddle River NJ (1999).
- Gröschl, S & Doherty, L 'Diversity management in practice' *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol 1No 6 (1999) pp 262-268.
- Gross, R, Tabenkin, H & Brammli-Greenberg, S 'Gatekeeping: a challenge in the management of primary care physicians' *Journal of Management in Medicine*, Vol 15 No 4 (2001) pp 283-302.
- Hansen, M H, Hurwitz, W N & Madow, W G *Sample survey methods and theory volume1*, John Wiley & Sons Inc, New York (1993).
- Harvey, C *Understanding Diversity*, Harper Collins, New York (1995).
- Hicks-Clarke, D & Iles, P 'Climate for diversity and its effects on career and organisational attitudes and perceptions' *Personnel Review*, Vol 29 No 3 (2000) pp 324-345.
- Horwitz, F M, Boemaker-Falconer, A & Searll, P 'Human resource development and managing diversity in South Africa' *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol 17 No 4/5 (1996) pp 134-151.
- Kanji G K *100 Statistical Tests*, Sage Publications, London (1994).
- Kathuria, R 'Managing for flexibility: A manufacturing perspective' *Industrial Management and Data Systems*, Vol 98 No 6 (1998) pp 246-252.
- Kersten, A 'Diversity management dialogue, dialectics and diversion' *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol 13 No 3 (2000) pp 235-248.
- Kotler, P & Armstrong, G *Principles of marketing*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey (2001).
- Lapin L.L. *Statistics for modern business decisions*, Academic Press, London (1990).
- Lee, C, & Chon, K 'An investigation of multicultural training practices in the restaurant industry: The training cycle approach' *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol 12 No 2 (2000) pp 126-134.
- Lindsay, C 'Things that go wrong in diversity training: Conceptualisation and change with ethnic identity models' *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, Vol 7 No 60 (1994) pp 18-33.

- Loo, R 'A structured exercise for stimulating cross-cultural sensitivity' *Career Development International*, Vol 4 No 6 (1999) pp 321-324.
- Manz, C C, & Neck, C P 'Teamthink: beyond the groupthink syndrome in self managing work teams' *Team Performance Management*, Vol 3 No 1 (1997) pp 18-31.
- McDougall, M 'Equal opportunities versus managing diversity: Another challenge for public sector management?' *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, Vol 9 No 5 (1996) pp 62-72.
- Miller, G E, & Rowney, J I A 'Workplace diversity management in a multicultural society' *Women in Management Review*, Vol 14 No 8 (1999) pp 307-315.
- Moore, S 'Understanding and managing diversity among groups at work: Key issues for organisational training and development' *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol 23 No 4/5 (1999) pp 208-217.
- Neck, C 'Letterman or Leno: a groupthink of successive decisions made by the National Broadcasting Company' *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol 11 No 8 (1996) pp 3-17.
- Njeri, I 'When different groups convene, the ignorant and the curious can be unexpectedly rude' *Times* 6:1, Los Angeles, (1989, April 2).
- Parker, S K, & Jackson, P R 'The implementation of high performance work teams' In D. Gowler, K. Legge and C. Clegg. *Case Studies In Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management*, pp 42-55. P. C. P, London (1993).
- Pettinger, R *The Flexible Workforce*, Cassell, London (1988).
- Phomphakdy, R & Kleiner, B H 'How to eliminate discrimination in the workplace' *Equal Opportunities International*, Vol 18 No 2 (1999) pp 43-36.
- Piper, W E Marache, M, Lacroix, R & Jones, B 'Cohesion as a basic bond in groups' *Human Relations*, (Feb 1983) pp 93-108.
- Pirog, S F, Schneider, P A, & Lam, K K 'Cohesiveness in Japanese distribution : a socio-cultural framework' *International Marketing Review*, Vol 14 No 2 (1997) pp 124-134.
- Rifkin, W, & Fulop, L 'A review and case study on learning organizations' *The Learning Organization*, Vol 4 No 4 (1997) pp 135-148.
- Robbins, S *Organizational Behaviour*, Prentice Hall International Inc, (2001).
- Robbins, S P *Management Today*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey (2000).
- Salmon, J 'Bargained flexibilisation: The dynamics of change towards new work organisation' In A. McGoldrick (ed.). *Cases In Human Resource Management*, Pitman, London (1996).
- Saundry, R 'The limits of flexibility: the case of UK television' *British Journal of Management*, Vol 9 (1998) pp 151-62.
- Schermerhorn, J R, Hunt, J G, & Osborn, R N *Organisational Behaviour*, Wiley and Sons Inc, New York (2000).
- Sellers, S *Language and sexual difference: Feminist writing in France*, Macmillan Educational Ltd, London (1991).
- Smith, W J, Harrington, K V, & Neck, C P 'Resolving conflict with humour in diversity context' *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol 15 No 6 (2000) pp 606-625.
- Stephenson, K & Lewin, D 'Managing workforce diversity: Macro and micro level hr implications of network analysis' *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol 17 No 4 (1996) pp 168-196.
- Walker, N A *very serious thing: Women's humour and American culture*, University of Minnesota, Minnesota (1988).
- Tregaskis, O 'The "non-permanent" reality'. *Employee Relations*, Vol 19 No 6 (1997) pp 535 -554).
- Watson, T J *Sociology Work and Industry*, Rutledge, London (1995).
- Wicks, D & Bradshaw, P 'Gendered organizational cultures in Canadian work organizations: Implications for creating an equitable workplace' *Management Decision*, Vol 37 No 4 (1999) pp 372-380.
- Williams, B A *sampler on sampling*, John Wiley & Sons, New York (1978).
- Wisniewski, M & Stead R *Quantitative Methods for Business*, Pitman Publishing, London (1996).
- Wong, D 'The permanent search for temporary staff' In D Gowler, K Legge and C Clegg *Case Studies In Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management*, pp 75-81, P. C. P, London (1993).
- Zane, N C 'The glass ceiling is a floor my boss walks on: Leadership challenges in managing diversity' *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, Vol 38 No 3 (2002) pp 443-354.

