The Effectiveness of Gender Equity Policies in Higher Education: The Case of the Durban University of Technology

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ABSTRACT Recent research has shown that despite the progress women have made in the workplace, they still lag behind in terms of higher level and rewarding positions. This situation is attributable to the policies that do not meet the needs of female employees. This paper therefore seeks to examine the effectiveness of gender equity policies in advancing the careers of women in higher education, using the Durban University of Technology as a case study. A mixed method design was adopted in which a sample of 250 women was drawn from academic and administrative units using stratified random sampling. A questionnaire was used to collect data, which was analyzed in order to highlight the factors influencing the career progression of women in higher education. The findings revealed that more policies need to be designed and effectively monitored in order to improve the working conditions of women in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, little attention was given to the role of women in society. Paid work was mostly the domain of men, while domestic chores were predominately reserved for women (Britt and Carbin 2014: 4). The struggle to achieve gender equity at workplace has led to significant breakthroughs in the conditions of women. According to Jha and Jha (2013: 14), the number of women pursuing managerial and professional careers has increased in comparison to the past. This development has prompted institutions worldwide to make it a priority to come up with policies that eliminate all gender stereotyping in the workplace (Stromquist 2013: 5). With regard to South Africa, the following milestones can be highlighted. In 1996, the Bill of Rights was introduced to ensure that all citizens received equal treatment. In 1997, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (No 75 of 1997) was also introduced to enhance the position of women in workplaces. Furthermore, Affirmative Action was introduced through the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 (South Africa 1998) to ensure that the employment and promotion of Africans, Indians, Coloreds, women and people with disabilities should be equal in the workplace. In the same period, the Commission for Employment Equity (1998) was created to monitor the implementation of Affirmative Action policies and transformation in the workplace in terms of race, gender and disability.

South Africa is making significant efforts to ensure that gender equity is achieved at all levels. It is also signatory to five international conventions and agreements relating to gender equality, namely, the SADC Gender and Development Protocol, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of Women in Africa, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action, and the UN Millennium Development Goals. The overarching goal is to address issues of equality, empowerment and the reduction of gender-based violence in South Africa.

Considering the number of reports and policies in place, it is expected that women would be proportionately represented at the top of organizational hierarchies in the workplace. This is however not the case when one looks at the progress of women in senior and top management positions in both public and private sectors organizations (Homeryr and Mzobe 2011: 1). Homeryr and Mzobe (2011: 1) believe that organizational structures and systems are the cause of this problem. According to Moodie (2010: 2), in South Africa, women in higher education do not advance to the same level as men, especially

at senior level. This is mainly a consequence of pervasive patriarchal attitudes, the lingering effects of apartheid and women's childbearing responsibilities. On the other hand, Tsoka (2010: 4-6) argues that few women advance to top academic and managerial leadership positions as a result of prejudice in the workplace, a lack of assertiveness and mentorship, sociocultural perception, and societal values that continue to oppress women.

The lack of progress of women is not peculiar to South Africa. It is an international phenomenon. The 2012 Grant Thornton Report shows that few women are advancing to senior management positions in organizations. The report indicates that in 2004, the percentage of women in senior and top management positions was nineteen percent, in 2007, it had improved to twenty-four percent, in 2009, it remained constant at twenty-four percent, while in 2011, it dropped to twenty percent, and finally, in 2012, it increased to twenty-one percent. Given this picture, it is worth noting that more issues have to be addressed in order to improve the progress of women. This implies that more research needs to be conducted and more policies implemented in order for there to be significant improvement in the career progression of women in general, and Durban University of Technology in particular.

Women in Higher Education

Looking at the historical background and status of women in higher education in general, there has been more progress in lower positions than in the senior and top levels of organizations. According to Gabriela et al. (2013: 3), this is based on the fact that recruitment procedures have improved in comparison to the past. Unlike in the past, today it is very common to find women serving as chancellors, vice-chancellors, deans, heads of department and other high-level officials in many universities worldwide. However, the problem that arises is that the proportion of women in such positions is small in comparison to men (Gabriela et al. 2013: 3). Scholars and policymakers have pointed out that improving the representation of women across all types of institutions and levels of academia will help create more comprehensive and friendly climates for both men and women (Bhandare 2008: 266; Alvesson and Billing 2009: 236). Moreover, one may expect that, since universities are at the fore-

front of higher learning, critical analysis and innovation, they would be more rational when it comes to gender equity, However, this does not appear to be the case (Wallace and Merchant 2011: 2). Wallace and Merchant (2011: 2) believe that equity has not been attained in universities, even with a critical mass of senior women, because of workload increases and the greed of the organizations.

A study conducted by Silander et al. (2012: 4) in the Swedish higher education system shows that the total number of women who are professors and senior lecturers in the humanities, in veterinary medicine and in odontology, are very few compared to the total number of female lecturers in the same fields. This implies that in Sweden higher education, women are under-represented in senior positions. Another study conducted by Yinhan et al. (2013: 5) in China reveals that the proportion of women who are in higher positions in Chinese higher education is still very small in comparison to other countries, despite the fact that women have managed to break through the glass ceiling and enter the ranks of the elite. Findings by Harris and Leberman (2012: 6) in New Zealand also show that this under-representation of women applies to New Zealand's universities, despite the country holding on to the fifth position in the 2009 Global Gender Gap Ratings scorecard published by the World Economic Forum.

In the case of South Africa, Tsoka (2012: 8) reveals that even though women have made their way into middle and top-management positions, they are still under-represented as compared to their male counterparts in the workplace, despite the enactment of policy frameworks addressing gender equity. Statistics indicate that in 2007, the number of women in managerial positions was forty-one percent and men was fifty-nine percent. However, in 2008, this figure went down from forty-one to thirty-eight percent, while there was an increase in male managers from fifty-nine percent to sixty-two percent (Tsoka 2012: 8). These statistical figures confirm that there is a decrease in the promotion of female managers. The author further explains that in 2010, statistical evidence in Gauteng revealed that there were 10.8 percent of men as compared to five percent of women in top managerial positions. This means that the representation of male leaders is twice that of female leaders. However, of even more impor-

tance are the finding of Hofmeyr and Ndobe (2012:8), whose study revealed that South African boardrooms are male dominated by sixty-seven percent, meaning that women are found mostly at the middle and bottom of the organizational ladder. The implication is that more men occupy top and senior management positions as compared to women. The statistics clearly indicate that women have made progress. However, this is insufficient when compared to the significant increase in the number of women in higher education worldwide.

According to the Chartered Management Institute Report (2013: 8), women do not rise as rapidly as their male counterparts because men and women have different career aspirations when it comes to managerial positions. Elaqua et al. (2009: 4) argue that main components of the glass ceiling that prevent women from making it to the top position in organization are policies and practices such as career development, training, promotion and compensation. Batool and Sajid (2013: 4) reveal that the major obstacle to the progress of women in the academic domain is selection and promotion. Women complain that more men than women are on academic boards and that this has created a lack of transparency as promotion and selection are not transparent. Women also complain that despite fulfilling the criteria for promotion, they are still not promoted. Moreover, Batool and Sajid (2013: 4) note that promotion systems largely depend upon the publication record of academics. Due to a lack of publications women are not promoted. The reason for this lack of publication is that domestic responsibilities limit women's research activities. Boushey and Farell (2013: 6) add that workingwomen are disadvantaged by a lack of policy solutions on how to balance their domestic responsibilities and workplace activities, since women generally take a larger share of family responsibilities. However, it is noted that there are inconsistencies across countries when it comes to the concern and support of employers in developing policies and programs to support the career advancement of women. According to Davidson and Burke (2011: 2), the most proactive countries in support of women managers and professionals seem to be Canada, Britain and the United States whereas employers in Argentina, Turkey and South Africa seem to be the least. The researchers believe that ef-

forts to achieve equality for women have not been fully addressed and has led to women not being able to demonstrate their full potential. There is therefore a serious need for policymakers to transform gender practices in order to achieve equitable results.

Employment Equity in South Africa

To be able to analyze the Durban of University Technology's policies in relation to employment equity, staff development, and the appointment and promotion of staff at the university, it is important to firstly understand the main Employment Equity Act that governs the Republic of South Africa. The following paragraphs describe this law and its purpose.

The main aim of the Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998 is to eliminate the unfair discrimination and practices and by implementing affirmative action to redress the disadvantages in employment that have been experienced by designated groups (Hunter 2012: 391). It also aims to achieve equity at the workplace by promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment and practices in employment. According to Hunter (2012: 391), the Employment Equity Act has two main sections. The first deals with discrimination and equity. The Act states that no employee should be discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, marital status, pregnancy, family responsibility, ethic or social origin, color, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience belief, political opinion, culture, language, birth or HIV status. Secondly, the Act deals with affirmative action and states that it is not unfair to discriminate where affirmative action is being applied in an organization. The Act applies to employees in all organizations except those in the South African Secret Service, the National Intelligence Agency and the National Defense Force (Hunter 2012: 391). This implies that managers should make decisions about employees based on their skills, knowledge and experience.

The Employment Equity Act (S.A. 1998: 6) provides for medical and psychometric testing of employees as well as affirmative action. Affirmative Action requires all employers who employ fifty or more employees to implement favorable measures for designated groups, namely women, disabled people and Black people such as Africans, Indians and Coloreds who have been disadvantaged by apartheid laws.

Furthermore, there is the organizational analysis clause which ensures that employment procedures, policies, practices and the work environment identify any barriers which might be disadvantageous to people. The clause also requires an Employment Equity plan. Managers have to draw up a five-year plan, which illustrates how they plan to rectify the inequalities in the organization. Penalties are imposed on non-compliant organizations. Appeals are addressed in the Labor Court.

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 is a very important Act that cannot be ignored because it relates to the main objectives of this paper, given that the Act's main purpose is to address equity at the workplace. The focus here is on whether this Act has achieved its main objectives as stipulated and whether these rules are being implemented and monitored. Research findings have proven that gender equity at the workplace has not been achieved in South Africa as a whole and at DUT in particular (Tsoka 2012; Hofmeyr and Mzobe 2012; Moodie 2010; Grant Thornton Report 2012; Chartered Management Institute Report 2013; SABPP Women's Report and the DUT Labor Workforce Profile 2013). It is apparent that solutions are needed.

Gender Equity at the Durban University of Technology

The Durban University of Technology recognizes the Affirmative Action and Employment Equity Legislation of South Africa as an important part of transformation from apartheid. It therefore commits itself to transform and eradicate this discriminatory past by setting up a constitution to ensure that the Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998 achieves its goal (Durban University of Technology Employment Equity Policy 2007: 2-3).

The Durban University of Technology Employment Equity policy (2007: 2-3) addresses the issues of equity in the workplace, overcoming discrimination through training and development, ensuring that employment equity becomes integral to strategic staff development, and ensuring that the Durban University Technology achieves realistic targets. The policy also provides for specific strategies and measures to be implemented to achieve equity amongst designated groups (Blacks, Coloureds, Indians, women and persons with disabilities) in the areas of recruitment, remuneration/benefits, work evaluations, and promotions, amongst others, in accordance with the University's employment equity plan.

Apart from the Employment Equity policy, the Durban University of Technology also has a sexual harassment policy for the well-being of its staff. The institution commits to providing a safe and secure environment free of sexual harassment for all members of the Durban University of Technology community. The purpose of this policy is to preserve the fundamental rights, dignity, integrity and privacy of all individuals and does not tolerate any threat or act that directly or indirectly interferes with an individual's performance at work (Durban University of Technology Sexual Harassment Policy 2007: 2). There is a Gender Forum at the institution that is responsible for women's issues.

However, the question that arises is whether these policies are adequate to promote the progress of women in their careers, and whether they are well implemented and monitored. The findings of this study revealed that these policies have not achieved their objectives. The Durban University of Technology Department of Labor workforce profile (2013: 3) statistics revealed that, the occupational levels of male and females in senior management positions, the number of females is 4 while males are 14, and in professionally qualified, experienced specialists and mid-management, the number of females is 278 while males are 322. Lastly, in the skilled technical, academically qualified workers, junior management, supervisors, foremen and superintendent's categories, the number of females is 354, while males are 265. This situation indicates that the progress of women as compared to their male counterparts is not at the same level, implying that the policies are not achieving their objectives. The present study shows that women are still under-represented in higher positions as compared to their male counterparts at the Durban University of Technology.

Challenges to Gender Equity

Gender equity at work can be viewed in different ways and is one of the most challenging situations to change (Silander et al. 2012: 12). Gender inequality is a feature of social relations in most societies. It is linked to poverty, violence, the labor market, health, housing and

education. It structures the relations of production and reproduction and is inextricably linked to knowledge construction and dissemination. Yet there has been little sustained attention globally to explore the challenge facing gender equity at the workplace in general and higher education in particular. Gender inequality has been left largely to feminist academics to record and account for the persistent inequalities and gender power relations of academic life (Morley 2005:2). According to Morley (2005:2), the challenge for gender equity has given rise to the formation of a partnership with gender scholars in Nigeria, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania to begin to plan and evaluate interventions for gendered change in areas such as curriculum transformation, staff development policy networks and transfer are strong across the Commonwealth. According to Onsongo (2009: 2), attempts on gender equity were made by the 1998 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, which demanded the elimination of all gender stereotyping in higher education at all levels and in all disciplines in which women are under-represented as well as the increase of women's active involvement in decision-making. Despite this positive call, it is important to note that equity at the workplace is still a challenge.

According to Dominica (2004: 5), one of the challenges facing gender equity is that government resource allocation to the bureau remains minimal. He argues that a gender perspective is not routinely incorporated in sectoral or national plans. Hence, training and sensitization at all levels is a prerequisite. Another study conducted in the US by Aderson (2011: 5) found that the long-term challenges faced by women resulted from minor distinctions in hiring, promotion and evaluation. Teigen (2012: 3) identifies three main reasons why gender equity is a challenge. Firstly, there is a lack of positive action policies on equal promotion procedures, as well as poor monitoring of authority in day-to-day work. Secondly, challenges on family and redistribution policies in parental leave policies, kindergarten and finally, employment segregation patterns exist whereby women dominate the public sector while men dominate the private sector. Teigen (2012: 3) points out that seventy percent of the public sector comprises women, while less than forty percent of women were in the private sector. This implies that there is a problem when it comes to the employment of women in the private sector.

In the case of South Africa, the struggle for gender equity was started way back in 1994 by the government, with numerous activities to redress the unequal past and to reposition the country for the future. The transformation agenda was articulated in documents such as the Education White Paper 3: A Program for the Transformation of Higher Education (1997). The Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training (2012) was also introduced with a focus on the transformation and overcoming of the inequities of the past, as well as developing a higher education system so that it would make a far greater contribution to social, economic and political development. Affirmative Action, which refers to a body of policies and procedures designed to eliminate discrimination against marginalized groups including ethnic minorities and women, was also implemented. Its main objective was to redress the effects of past discrimination (Onsongo 2009: 2; Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training S.A. 2012: 8; White Paper on Transformation of Higher Education S.A. 1997: 10). Despite these transformation plans and policies that having been developed, gender equity has still not been accomplished. Indications are that there is room for further improvement.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at the Durban University of Technology using probability sampling. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013: 254), probability sampling implies that all the elements (that is, each person) in the population have an equal chance of being chosen as a subject. The fact that each subject had an equal opportunity of being chosen without any kind of bias from the various groups gives a high generalizability to the findings. A stratified random sampling procedure was used to group the population into the academic and administrative groups and a random sample was taken from each stratum. Tracing the parameters of different subgroups within a population would not be possible without stratified random sampling

procedures (Sekaran and Bougie 2013: 249). The stratified random sampling technique is a method whereby the population is first divided into common selected groups that are relevant, appropriate and meaningful in the context of the study. In other words, it involves stratifying the elements along meaningful levels and strata (Sekaran and Bougie 2013: 249-250).

The sample size for the study was 250 out of a target population of 693. The study used both quantitative and qualitative research designs (mixed method), whereby self-administered questionnaires were used to collect the data. The questionnaire comprised of open-ended and close-ended questions. The close-ended questions were quantitative, while the open-ended questions were qualitative. The close-ended responses were then analyzed using SPSS, while the open-ended responses used the inductive approach to highlight the factors influencing the career progression of women in higher education.

FINDINGS

This part of the paper presents the results and discusses the findings obtained from the questionnaire in this study. The questionnaire was the primary tool used to collect data and was distributed to women in various support departments at the Durban University of Technology. The data collected from the responses was analyzed with SPSS version 22.0. The results will present the descriptive statistics for the data that was collected in the form of graphs, cross tabulations and other figures. Inferential techniques applied include the use of correlations and chi-square test values, which are interpreted using p-values.

The Ages of Respondents

Table 1 shows that approximately two-thirds of the sample (66.5%) were between the ages of thirty to fifty years. There were nearly twice as

Table 1: The ages of respondents

The ages of the respondents	Percentage
30	11.7
30-50	37.0
40-49	29.6
50-50	19.1
Older than 60	2.6

many respondents who were older than fifty years as there were those who were younger than thirty years. The constitution of the sample indicated a mature and experienced group of respondents. This is useful as the responses derived would have been from an informed opinion. This is also borne out in terms of the consistent scoring, as observed by the reasonably high reliability values.

The Marital Status of Respondents

As seen in Table 2, nearly half of the respondents (48.9%) were married, followed by single women (37.1%), divorced (7.2%) and widowed (6.8%). The fact that the majority of career women at Durban University of Technology are married could possibly place women in a disadvantaged position. Research has shown that some cultures and traditions restrain the movement of women from travelling to attend conference presentations conduct and research, whilst promotion largely depends on publication records (Botool and Sadjid 2013: 13).

Table 2: Marital status of women

Marital status of women	Percentage
Single	37.1
Married	48.9
Widow	7.2
Divorced	6.8

The Types of Positions

As seen in Table 3, the response rate was very low for instructional and research professionals. The results were as follows.
· Lecturer (37.2%)
· Senior lecturer (28.3%)
· Junior lecturer (15.0%)
· Associate professor (8.0%)
· HOD/Deans (2.7%)
· Professor (2.7%)
· HTC Counselor (1.8%)
· Associate directors (9%).
In the occupational position for non-instructional professionals, the findings showed that senior management was 34.7 percent while junior management was 65.3 percent. This indicates that there are fewer women in top positions at the Durban University of Technology.

Table 3: Types of positions held at work

Instructional/Research Professionals	Percentage
Professor	2.7
Associate professor	8.0
Senior lecturer	28.3
Lecturer	37.2
Faculty research coordinator	3.7
Associate directors	.9
HTC counsellors	1.8
Junior lecturer	15.0
HoD/Dean	2.7
Total	100.0

Occupational Position for Non-instructional Professionals	Percentage
Senior management	34.7
Junior management	65.3
Total	100.0

The Perceptions of the Career Progress of Women at DUT

Table 4 shows that even though more than half (51.6%) of the respondents believed that the university supports the career progression of women, similar numbers disagreed (41.5%) regarding promotional opportunities, and 50.4 percent responded that management does not understand the challenges that women face. The responses to these questions imply that the university does not show strong support for the promotion of women since they do not understand the challenges women face. This finding is similar to the assertion by Kern, Wright and Carrese (2011: 4) that the institutional environment is one of the reasons for the lack of progress of women, due to the individualistic and non-collaborative nature of the work culture.

The Policies and Career Motivation at DUT

Table 5 shows that the majority (54.2%) of respondents agreed that gender factors are considered when formulating policies at the Durban University of Technology. 22.5 percent neither agreed nor disagreed, while 23.3 percent disagreed with this fact. This implies that the Durban University of Technology adhere to the Employment Equity Act of South Africa (1998: 6), which stipulates that employment policies, practices, procedures and the work environment must identify any barriers that might be disadvantageous to women, disabled people and Black people.

The second question shows that forty-seven percent of respondents also agreed that staff members are well informed about the various policies at work relating to human resource while 29.9 percent disagreed with this view and 22.8 percent neither agreed nor disagree. The purpose of this question was to find out whether women's lack of progress was related to a lack

Table 4: Perceptions of the career progress of women at DUT

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
The University supports the career progression of women	51.6	19.1	29.3
Promotion trends at the university show strong support for women	29.4	29.0	41.5
Management at the university understands the challenges women face	24.4	25.2	50.4

Table 5: Policies and career motivation at DUT

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
Gender factors are considered when formulating policies.	54.2	22.5	23.3
Staff members are well informed about the various policies at work relating to human resources	47.3	22.8	29.9
There are adequate policies in place to motivate women	29.6	26.7	43.8
Gender policies are periodically amended to address the challenges women face	22.0	26.9	51.0
The monitoring and evaluation of policies implemented is normally carried out	29.0	25.7	45.3
At my university, employment equity policies are applied	52.2	26.5	21.2

of information about various policies. However, the findings revealed that this was not the case.

The third question asked whether there were adequate policies in place to motivate women in their careers. Almost forty-four percent disagreed, 29.6 percent agreed, and 26.7 percent neither agreed nor disagreed with this view. The study sought to explore this because studies elsewhere have revealed that there are insufficient policies in place to address gender issues (Elaqua et al. 2009; Boushey and Farrell 2013; Stromquist 2013; Coward 2010). The implication is that there is therefore a need for more policies to address this issue, especially policies related to study and sabbatical leave.

The fourth question aimed to investigate whether gender policies are periodically amended to address the challenges women face. Fifty one percent disagreed with this question, twenty-two percent agreed, while 26.9 percent neither agreed nor disagree. Therefore, the assertion by Davidson and Burke (2011: 2) that there are great inconsistencies across countries when it comes to interest in and programs to support women's career advancement is true. This may be the reason why Alvesson and Billing (2009: 157) noted that managerial positions are more stressful to women than men. There is the need for management to look into this issue.

The fifth question aimed to identify whether the monitoring and evaluation of implementation policies is normally carried out at the Durban University of Technology. Almost forty-six percent disagreed, twenty-nine percent agreed, while 25.7 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. This is contrary to the Durban University of Technology employment equity policy (2007:5), which stipulates that "*Durban University of Technology is committed to reviewing on an ongoing basis all its policies and related procedures to ensure alignment with its Employment Equity Policy in order to identify good practices and discriminating barriers in all of its policies and related procedures*".

Lastly, the respondents were asked whether employment equity policies are applied at the Durban University of Technology. Fifty two percent agreed, 21.2 disagreed, while 26.5 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. This implies that the Durban University of Technology recognizes that affirmative action and employment equity are an integral part of the transformation and eradication of the discriminatory past.

In this section, the respondents were asked to provide answers to the following question: *What policies would you suggest to improve career progression at Durban University of Technology?* Most of the respondents responded as follows:

- Training and development policy (36.8%)
- Policy on study and sabbatical leave (31.6%)
- More policies to support women with children (21.1%)

DISCUSSION

One of the objectives of this study was to analyze the Durban University of Technology's current policies in relation to staff development, employment equity, appointment and promotion of staff at the university, and how these policies affect the progress of women at the university. Based on the questions asked, the study revealed that staff development/progress is still not at the same level as men, even though gender factors are considered when formulating policies and staff members are well informed about the various policies at work relating to human resources. Furthermore, it was confirmed that Employment Equity policies are applied at the Durban University of Technology. However, even though Employment Equity policies are applied at the Durban University of Technology, most of the respondents responded that there are inadequate policies in place to motivate women in their careers. This fact is in line with the assertion that there are insufficient policies to address the challenges that career women face (Boushey and Farrell 2013; Stromquist 2013). Davidson and Burke's (2011: 2) findings also reveal that there are great inconsistencies across countries when it comes to the interest and support of employers in developing policies and programs to support women's career advancement. For them, organizations in Canada, Britain and the United States seem to be the most proactive whereas employers in Argentina, South Africa and Turkey seem to be the least proactive in support of their women managers and professionals. Another study by Karthick and Ramesh (2016: 1) reveal that the problem of women lack of progress is as a result of age, marital status, educational qualification and lack of experience to meet job requirement. In the case of the Durban University of Technology, the re-

spondents believe that this reason might be because gender policy is not periodically amended to address the challenges women face. Even the monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation is not carried out regularly.

Moreover, in terms of the appointment and promotion of staff at the university, most of the respondents believed that promotions should be based on qualifications and experience in administration, teaching and research. This is contrary to White et al.'s (2011: 6) findings in Australia, which revealed that women perceive research to be difficult and they also lack the courage to do it due to large workloads and family responsibilities. In summary, it is clear that policies at the Durban University of Technology have not achieved their objectives since women are still under-represented.

CONCLUSION

This paper has highlighted the challenges faced by career women in higher education. It also looked at the status of women in higher education and women at the Durban University of Technology. The study found out that women are under-represented at the Durban University of Technology and the policies are insufficient to promote women in their careers. It is therefore, important to note that what needs to be done in order to bring about change and equality is not only to implement laws (the Employment Equity Act), but also to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of the policies implemented are carried out effectively, as well as reviewing the policies as stipulated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

More Policies to Support Women with Multiple Roles

The university needs more policies, regulation and infrastructure to help women resolve the tension between personal and professional roles. This can be done through the provision of reasonable maternity leave and childcare centers within the institution. There is also a need to make management positions more flexible by finishing meetings on time and within working hours.

Insufficient Policy to Support Women who are On Contract

The study found out that women on contract are not satisfied with their contracts and this affects their progress to top positions. Therefore, the university needs to develop policies that ensure equal opportunities for all staff, such as policies on study and sabbatical leave. This will help motivate women to consider advancing in their careers.

Effective Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of Policies

After the policies have been formulated, there is a need to put monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure that the right procedures are followed in the selection and recruitment of staff to senior management level. Those in charge of this duty at the Durban University of Technology are the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Institutional Support) or Director (Human Resources). Information on all aspects of promotion criteria should be made known to all members of staff. There is also a need to monitor areas of equity and diversity in staff recruitment and promotion. Moreover, it is necessary to change the culture of higher education in order to enhance women's academic research capacity.

It is also advisable to regularly review policies relating to employment and working conditions at the Durban University of Technology, in order to address new problems that may arise. It was observed that most policies were last amended in 2007, a few in 2009, and these have not been reviewed since.

Periodical Amendment of Policies

The findings revealed that gender policies were not periodically amended to address the challenges women faced. The researchers recommends that management should ensure that gender policies are amended periodically in order to address some of these challenges.

LIMITATIONS

The limitation of this study was that the population under study was female academic and administrative staff only. Male and support

staff's viewpoints were not included, which may be required in a broader study of the same topic. Secondly, the fact that the study was limited to the Durban University of Technology means that the results can only describe the career progress of women at the DUT and no other institution. Furthermore, the fact that only a sample of 250 out of 693 women amongst the academic and administrative staff was used implies that, a bigger sample of this same study may provide a more comprehensive result of women's progress at the Durban University of Technology. Lastly, the results of the findings were limited to the period in which the study was conducted.

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