

### CHAPTER XIII

#### DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

##### 13.1 INTRODUCTION

A description of the sample is presented in this chapter. The dispersion of the subjects across demographic variables such as age, gender, home language, marital status, religious denomination, educational qualifications, income and years of service are described and summarized by way of frequency tables. The general characteristics of the sample will be evident from these frequency tables.

##### 13.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE BY MEANS OF FREQUENCY TABLES

Frequency tables are part and parcel of descriptive statistics. Healy (1990:24) views frequency distributions as tables summarising the distribution of a variable by reporting, “the number of cases contained in each category”. It is a form of classification and description of numbers that assists the researcher in interpreting the information obtained and to understand the important features of the data (Ferguson, 1981:17). Ott *et al.* (1990:697) define a frequency table as “a table used to summarize how many measurements in a set fall into each of the sub-intervals (or classes)”. The frequency tables presented for the biographical variables will also contain cumulative percentages that are obtained by successively adding the individual percentages. The primary purpose of the cumulative-percentage column is to ascertain the percentage of values falling below (or above) a given score or class interval in the distribution of what percentage of values is “greater than” or “less than” a specified value (Theron, 1992:374).

Frequency Tables 13.1 through 13.8 present the descriptions of the sample across the demographic variables. The values are tabled against the frequency of occurrence. Table 13.1 presents the distribution of subjects across age groups.

**TABLE 13.1: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL GROUP.**

Age category (years)	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
18 - 20	63	11,8	11,8
21 - 25	167	31,4	43,2
26 - 30	124	23,3	66,5
31 - 40	94	17,7	84,2
41 - 50	44	8,3	92,5
51 and over	40	7,5	100,0
Total	532	100,0	----

According to Table 13.1 the subjects were fairly evenly spread between the young and the old. The average age of the subjects is 26 years, which is quite young. However, the mode (the value of the response category in a frequency distribution that has the largest number of cases) is 23 years, and that indicates that the sample consists mainly of young adults.

In order to do an analysis of variance a recoding of the categories was done. This recoding resulted in five groups, where the first four groups indicated in Table 13.1 remained the same and a new, fifth group, comprised of subjects in the age bracket 41 years and over (i.e. 15,8 %).

Table 13.2 presents the distribution of subjects across gender groups.

**TABLE 13.2: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL GROUP.**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Male	246	46,2	46,2
Female	286	53,8	100,0
Total	532	100,0	----

Table 13.2 indicates the gender distribution of the sample that is favourably female in its composition. Because there is not a huge inequality in the distribution between the genders, this variable can be used as an independent variable in the data analysis.

Table 13.3 presents the distribution of subjects according to home language.

**TABLE 13.3: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF HOME LANGUAGE.**

Home language	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Afrikaans	457	85,9	85,9
English	71	13,3	99,2
Other	0	0	99,2
Missing cases	4	0,8	100,0
Total	532	100,0	----

Table 13.2 indicates that the distribution of the sample across language is predominantly White in origin, with 99,2 % of the subjects belonging to this ethnic group. Although the English-speaking subjects are in the vast minority in this sample, a comparison with the Afrikaans group would be interesting. Black people are not represented in the sample, which makes comparisons with other groups impossible.

Table 13.4 presents the distribution of subjects according to marital status.

**TABLE 13.4: MARITAL STATUS DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL GROUP.**

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Married	242	45,5	45,5
Unmarried	266	50,0	95,5
Divorced	24	4,5	100,0
Total	532	100,0	----

According to Table 13.4 the subjects were fairly evenly spread between the married and unmarried groups. The majority of the subjects are unmarried, possibly because the total sample group is quite young with an average age of 23 years.

In order to do an analysis of variance a further recoding of the categories was done. This recoding resulted in two groups, where the first group indicated in Table 13.4 remained the same, and a new second group comprised of subjects that were either unmarried or divorced (i.e. 54,5 %).

Table 13.5 presents the distribution of subjects according to religious denomination.

**TABLE 13.5: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION.**

Religion	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Reformed Church (Gereformeerd)	38	7,1	7,1
Reformed Church (Hervormd)	59	11,1	18,2
Dutch Reformed Church	331	62,3	80,5
Apostolic Faith Church	8	1,5	81,9
Afrikaans Protestant Church	12	2,3	84,2
Baptist Church	0	0	84,2
Roman Catholic Church	4	0,8	85,0
Methodist Church	20	3,8	88,8
Anglican Church	8	1,5	90,3
Rhema Church	12	2,3	92,6
Jehovah Witnesses	8	1,5	94,1
Other	32	5,9	100,0
Total	532	100,0	-----

According to Table 13.5 the subjects belonging to the three Afrikaans churches are by far in the majority, comprising 80,5 % of the sample. A recoding of the categories was done to improve comparability between the denominations. This recoding resulted in two groups, where the Reformed (Gereformeerd) Churches, the Reformed (Hervormd) Churches, and the Dutch Reformed Church formed the first group comprising 80,5 % of the sample. The other religions namely AFM, APC, Baptist, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Anglican, Rhema, Jehovah, and the other churches were grouped together (i.e. 19,5 %).

Educational qualifications may have quite an effect on the work-related needs and attitudes of the subjects in this organization undergoing transformation. The distribution of the Educational qualifications is presented in Table 13.6.

**TABLE 13.6: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Matric	460	86,5	86,5
Diploma	44	8,3	94,7
Degree	20	3,8	98,5
Post-graduate degree	8	1,5	100,0
Total	532	100,0	----

Analysis of Table 13.6 reveals that subjects with a matric qualification were by far in the majority. It has been the policy of this organization for many years to employ only people with at least a matric qualification. A recoding of categories was done to enable the researcher to do an analysis of variance for two groups, specifically on the locus of control orientation, work-related needs and attitudes of subjects in this organization. The recoding resulted in two groups, those with matric (i.e. 86,5 %) and those with post-matric qualifications were grouped together, and this composite group comprises of 13,5 % of the total sample.

The distribution of the subjects across income is presented in Table 13.7.

**TABLE 13.7: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO INCOME PER MONTH.**

Income	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
2 300 – 3 500	47	8,8	8,8
3 501 – 4 500	187	35,2	44,0
4 501 – 5 500	88	16,5	60,5
5 501 – 6 500	68	12,8	73,3
6 501 – 7 000	60	11,3	84,6
More than 7 000	82	15,4	100,0
Total	532	100,0	----

Table 13.7 reveals that 44 % of subjects earn less than R 4 501,00 per month (less than R 54 012,00 per annum). This might be linked to the fact that a large percentage of the subjects have only matric (i.e.86,5 %), and are relatively inexperienced - 43,2 % of the subjects are 25 years or younger. Although it is the policy of this organization to employ only people with at least a matric qualification, no job-grading system is in place that can link income to job levels. It is important to note that although people with post-matric qualifications are employed, they are not necessarily remunerated according to their qualifications, but rather through loyalty to the organization in terms of years of service. The average income per month is R 5 000,00 (R 60 000,00 per annum). An analysis of variance for the different groups would be interesting, specifically on the work-related needs, attitudes and the locus of control orientation of subjects in this organization.

The distribution of the subjects according to years of service is presented in Table 13.8.

**TABLE 13.8: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE.**

Income	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Less than 1 year	15	2,8	2,8
1 – 2 years	115	21,6	24,4
3 – 5 years	139	26,1	50,6
6 – 10 years	108	20,3	70,9
11 – 15 years	44	8,3	79,1
16 – 20 years	62	11,7	90,8
Longer than 21 years	43	8,1	98,9
Missing cases	6	1,1	100,0
Total	532	100,0	----

Table 13.8 reveals that 24,4 % of subjects have less than three years of experience in this organization, and 50,6 % have less than six years of service. This might be linked to the age distribution, since 43,2 % of the subjects are 25 years or younger, and the huge turnover of staff since the transformation started 18 months ago. A recoding of the categories was done to obtain a better comparability between the groups. This recoding resulted in four groups, with people in the first group having up to two years of service (i.e. 24,4 %), those with three to five years of service (i.e. 26,1 %), those with six to ten years of service (i.e. 20,3 %), and those with eleven or more years of service (i.e. 28,0 %).

### 13.3 CONCLUSION

It is evident from the preceding discussion that the sample is predominantly young, white, Afrikaans-speaking with a Calvinistic orientation to work. Most subjects are female (53,8 %), the majority of the subjects are younger than 31 years (66,5%) while the average age is 26 years. Subjects predominantly have a high-school education, and 13,5% of the subjects have tertiary education. The low average age of the subjects impacts on the years of service within this organization. The majority has less than 6 years service and 24,4% of the subjects have less than 3 years service. Consequently the income of the subjects is also relatively low. Most subjects belong to either the Dutch Reformed Church or its two Afrikaans sister churches. English-speaking subjects are by far in the minority (13,3%) and belong predominantly to the Methodist church. The characteristics of the Afrikaans-

speaking subjects may have an impact on the attitudes towards transformation, as this process is driven by English-speaking people that are fairly new to the organization.