

A STUDY TO IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE INTERCULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AND
THE PROMOTION OF BLACK MANAGERS IN A TEXTILE ORGANISATION

by

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submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF COMMERCE

in the subject of

INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NOVEMBER 1992

SUMMARY

A STUDY TO IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE INTERCULTURAL PERCEPTIONS
AND THE PROMOTION OF BLACK MANAGERS
IN A TEXTILE ORGANISATION.

This research proposes to identify and evaluate intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers within the South African context from a qualitative perspective. A literature review is presented, which covers aspects of perception, culture, the self, and promotion. Cultural categories are analysed to identify relationships not considered in the literature. An interview questionnaire based on Osherson (1980) is constructed, which leads respondents through five areas: demographic characteristics, work identity, value system, cultural identity, and intercultural perceptions and promotion. Three case studies are analysed, the themes for each interview being integrated. Conclusions regarding possible new analytical categories, and recommendations in the form of a possible outline for future research, are presented.

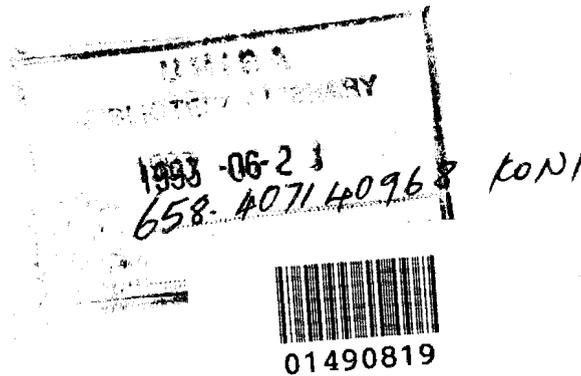


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CHAPTER 1THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING1.1 INTRODUCTION

In South Africa, ethnic Africans occupy the lowest levels of organisational hierarchies. Over the past decade, a genuine concern for the well-being of the black population and the determination to make a significant contribution to it, has evolved. According to Schlemmer (1986), over and above the need for political, social, and economic stability, several driving forces triggering change exist. A severe shortage of managerial and technical skills is being faced. Companies need to be seen as equal opportunity employers. The skilled manpower crisis needs to be addressed, giving consideration to how blacks are currently promoted. An effort is required to compensate for historical and current imbalances. Khoza (1986) prescribes guarded preferential treatment for blacks in present day South African commerce and industry. Promotion based on incorrect, generalised, and distorted perceptions and prejudice could result in ineffective human resource utilisation, and an inability to change.

The hypothesis of change posits the question of how to manage the transition from a middle management comprised of 99% white employees in 1991 to a middle management comprised of 30% white employees and 70% black employees by the year 2000. According to Khoza (1986), the descriptive black already makes equal opportunity an emotive subject. The very real perceptual, motivational, and communication barriers in employment and promotion practices are highlighted. Blacks are selected for employment on the basis of education and experience; without consideration of their individual essential behavioural traits, such as strengths, needs, wants, priorities, and attitudes.

Holzman (1991), points out a few weaknesses within the psychological profession in South Africa. The needs and interests of white South Africans are served, rather than the majority non-white population. In addition, relative to the total population, a shortage of competent psychologists exists. Ross (1977), discusses the trend towards the rejection of social science neutrality and professional detachment; discussing the problems faced by the advocate of less-than-equal groups in society. According to van der Walt (1991), behavioral scientists and psychologists are increasingly under pressure to contribute towards the equalising process in South African society. Newman (1991), points out that traditionally the workplace is the only place where people of different races have met, and in this respect the workplace can be viewed as a microcosm for the rest of society. The choice between rapid integration and upgrading of blacks in education and housing, or an escalation of current turmoil, conflict, and polarisation, is offered by Khoza (1986).

Identifying and evaluating intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers should assist practitioners in understanding people who are different, managing the difference, and focussing on creativity and common values.

1.2 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

This research proposes to identify and evaluate intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers. The study will not attempt to act as an intervention, nor to evaluate the effectiveness of the employees who have been promoted to management level. The study will be limited to male managers who have been promoted to middle management level within a specific organisation.

Considerable emphasis has been placed in the literature, and to a certain extent in practice, on the concepts of affirmative action and equal opportunity. During the 1980's a

proliferation of research in the field of black advancement occurred, with attempts being made to identify obstacles to success. Equal opportunity refers to fundamental freedom without distinction to race, sex, language, religion, or any other discriminatory variable; and may take the form of qualified or unqualified individualism. Affirmative action is an attempt to readdress historical inequalities in opportunity, and to allocate benefits on the grounds of race and group. The political connotations of affirmative action manifest themselves in heated debate and differences of opinion between and within groups.

The present government is against interference by the state via the legislation of equal opportunity, not believing this approach to be conducive to economic advancement. The enablement of people to self-development and achievement is stressed. The African National Congress (ANC) criticize the to date feeble and elitest response by industry and commerce to the challenge posed by affirmative action. Legislation is seen as a means to an end, which may be the only option to avoid a crisis. The Freedom Foundation recognises black achievement, and the innate capabilities displayed over the last two decades. The Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO) view affirmative action as a method for ensuring that equal opportunity is not halted by past privileges. The Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) have highlighted the negative view held by the majority of black workers; affirmative action being seen as a substitute for basic democratic rights. There is therefore a need for groups of people from different cultures to enhance their understanding of the manner in which different people perceive reality; in order to cope with an ever changing and technologically advancing society.

Qualitative research which deals with perceptions, must take into account the complex and multi-determined phenomena of prejudice. The literature reveals that different theoretical orientations to explain prejudice emerge in response to

specific social and historical circumstances. Jones (1972), defines prejudice as a negative attitude towards an individual or a group based a process of social comparison, in which ones own group is taken as the positive point of reference. Discrimination is the behavioural manifestation of prejudice, and is comprised of those actions whose objective it is to uphold group characteristics and supremacy, at the expense of others. Racism is defined by Jones as the expression of superiority over that of another. Individual and institutional racism are manifested in cultural racism, which expresses the superiority of one race's cultural heritage over that of another. In South Africa, with it's heterogeneous cultures, it is imperative that decision -makers examine the perceptions of themselves and others to avoid perpetuating and supporting a culture which promotes prejudice, discrimination, and racism.

According to Nzimande (1991), the psychological profession in South Africa has concentrated on individual and interpersonal levels of analysis, while failing to expose behaviours which have brutalised society. Researchers are trained and provided with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities; but fail to understand the perceptions of different cultural groups in relation to their own. Promotion of blacks to management levels must be viewed in the context of the current situation in South Africa. Promotion is part of the total advancement concept; and would appear from the literature, and from the small percentage of blacks at middle management levels, to be a personnel practice wherein intercultural perceptions play a significant role.

Looking through various literature sources (Watts, 1988; Bhagat, 1979; Scott, 1982; Torbiorn, 1985; Coldwell & Moerdyk, 1981; Spaight and Keys, 1987; and Schlemmer, in Smollan, 1986), common problems which could relate to the promotion of black managers are identified:

- * cultural differences
- * racial prejudice and discrimination
- * problems of advocacy
- * cross-cultural methodology
- * the structure of managerial roles
- * management paradigms
- * attitude toward the work ethic
- * trust differences in organisational settings
- * upward mobility
- * differences in job satisfaction
- * the integration of blacks into organisations
- * organisational and social obstacles
- * changing racial perceptions

1.3 PROCEDURE FOLLOWED TO ADDRESS PROBLEM STATEMENT

The following figure illustrates the conceptual approach to be followed during this study:

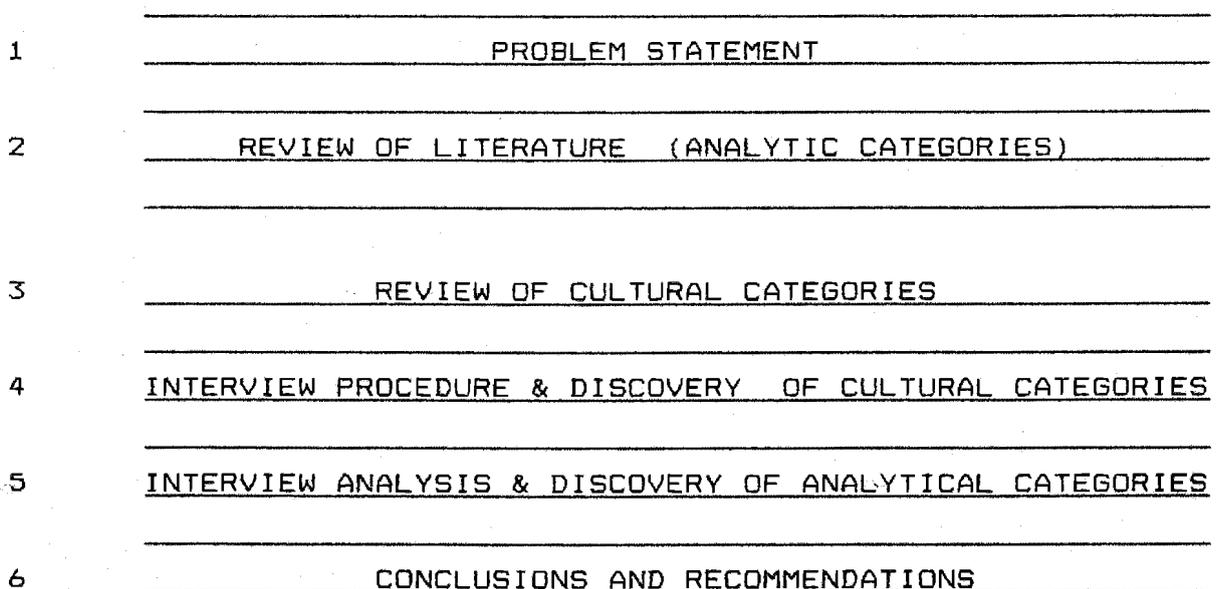


FIGURE 1: PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN THIS DISSERTATION

After examining the problem statement, the first phase of the dissertation is to present a literature overview related to intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers.

The literature review aids in the construction of the interview questionnaire; establishing the domain, and specifying categories and relationships that may organise the data.

After discussing the related literature, cultural categories are reviewed- a process by which the investigator uses the self as an instrument of inquiry; drawing on personal experience to separate the structural from the episodic, and the cultural from the idiosyncratic (McCracken, 1988). This phase allows for the identification of categories and relationships not considered in the literature.

The next step would be the construction of an interview questionnaire with the objective of discovering cultural categories. The format of the questionnaire is based on that of Osherson (1980), adapted to suit the purpose of this investigation. Demographic questions are used to open the interview, aimed at moving the respondent to talk without overspecifying the substance or perspective of this task. The categories identified from the literature and review of cultural categories are used to divide the questionnaire into five parts:

- * demographic characteristics
- * work identity
- * value system
- * cultural identity
- * intercultural perceptions and promotion

After the interview has been conducted, analytical categories are discovered through analysis. The object of the analysis is to determine the categories, relationships, and assumptions that inform the respondents view of the world, and the topic in particular. A five stage process described by McCracken (1988), is followed, moving from the particular to the general. The result of this process would be the identification, organising, and interrelating of themes, thus isolating the

substance of the paper. Thus the themes from each interview are brought together, the particulars of the individual losing emphasis to the general properties of thought and action within the culture or group under study.

Before concluding the dissertation, conclusions regarding possible new analytical categories and relationships are drawn, and a possible outline for future research presented.

1.4 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Intercultural perceptions, as a concept, has not been directly defined in the literature. The concept, culture, has been widely defined; as has the concept of perception. Promotion, as a concept, is defined in terms of upward mobility, placement, and advancement. Black managers, in the South African context, is defined in terms of race and organisational level.

On a sociological level, culture is defined as a set of norms shared by all or most members of a society or ethnic group (Krech, Crutchfield, & Ballachey, 1962). On a psychological level, such norms correspond to a set of norms or principles inherent in the individual's frame of reference (Torbiorn, 1982; Elrenhaus, 1983), as quoted by Torbiorn (1985). Singer (1987), defines culture at a group level as the accepted and expected pattern of learned, group-related perceptions - including language, attitudes, values, belief systems, and behaviours - of an identity group. Singer proposes that each individual is a member of a particular collection of groups, ranking the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the groups to which he belongs differently. Therefore each individual must be considered to be culturally unique. The degree of cultural variation within a society may also be explained in terms of subcultures; segments based on nationality, religion, geographic locality, race, age, sex, occupation, or social class. Thus the term intercultural must be viewed in its

broadest context; between-cultures at national, group, and individual levels.

Perception refers to the process by which an individual selects, evaluates, and organises stimuli from the external environment. Perception refers both to that which is immediately experienced by a person, and the processes giving rise to that experience, in the context of environmentally and genetically determined growth of connections among cells in the brain. According to Singer (1987), culture is constituted of group-related, learned perceptions; and perceptions which are not group taught, such as individual physical differences in sensory receptors, should not be considered part of cultural perceptions, neither should physical or environmental factors that affect perceptions. However the distinction between various types of perceptions is never clear cut.

The concept perception is therefore viewed in its broadest context to include physical determinants, environmental determinants, learned determinants, attitudes and values, belief systems, misperceptions, and reality.

The concept promotion refers to the advancement of an employee from one level in an organisational hierarchy to a higher level; involving increased responsibility, greater task complexity, higher status, and larger rewards. Promotion decisions may be based on seniority or competence, and may be formal or informal. The measurement of competence requires an appreciation of past performance and a prediction of future potential. Promotion is therefore a concrete personnel action, which is the result of performance appraisal and career management. In practice, in the South African context, promotion is defined more in terms of upward mobility, placement, and advancement. Advancement, according to Van Graan (1989), refers to progress made up the organisational ladder, and not solely to promotion to managerial positions. Advancement is synonymous with the upward mobility of employees on a planned basis. However advancement cannot occur

if a group of employees are denied entry to organisations; or are not integrated into organisations effectively. Therefore placement of employees becomes a critical aspect of promotion.

The descriptive - black managers - has received considerable attention in the literature. According to Human and Hofmeyer (1985), a manager's job is difficult to define, as the requirements for technical, human, and conceptual skills vary from level to level. Watts (1988), offers a broad, structural-functional definition. The manager occupies a position above the first line supervisory role, but below that of an executive; and functions to set objectives, organise activities and people, motivate and communicate, and develop people including himself. For the purposes of this study, managers are therefore defined as employees who have supervisors reporting to them, who in turn have subordinates reporting to them. The emphasis falls on black (in the sense of African) managers, however much of what is discussed could be applicable to other non-white groups in South Africa.

1.5 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

South Africa's dualistic economy, which has cleaved along racial lines, has promoted awareness of the necessity of accelerating levels of black utilization (Templer, 1982). A small area of overlap between black and white employees in similar positions exists, and the interaction effect of race and language in cross-cultural situations are difficult to control (Templer, 1982). Differences exist between African and Western world views and cultural paradigms, with regard to the conceptions of causation, probability, time, self, and morality (Coldwell & Moerdyk, 1981). The effects contrasting world views have on specific managerial processes need to be taken into account in order to understand the position of black managers in South Africa caught in the racial crossfire.

The question was raised at the First Conference in Fairness in Personnel Decisions in South Africa in 1991, as to whether affirmative action really works. Cascio (1991) discusses the move in America away from colour-blindness, to balanced assimilation while preserving identity. This latter approach demands research which is committed to remaining in touch with materials gathered in the field to illustrate textual claims and interpretive perspectives. Nzimande (1991) states that whites do not understand the realities of blacks, preaching a Western model which is not accepted by the majority. This dissertation's primary objective would concentrate on providing an understanding of intercultural perceptions, to better equip decision-makers in organisations to provide for anticipated manpower shortages through efficient utilisation of the black labour force in managerial positions.

Qualitative research is the approach selected to investigate cultural differences, racial prejudice and discrimination, attitudes toward the work ethic, trust differences, differences in job satisfaction, and changing racial perceptions; in relation to managerial roles, upward mobility, the integration of blacks into organisations, and the organisational and social obstacles which inhibit the promotion of black managers.

The major difference between qualitative and quantitative research is the way in which each tradition treats its analytical categories. The quantitative goal is to isolate and define categories as precisely as possible; before the study is undertaken, and to determine with great precision the relationship between them. The qualitative goal is to isolate and define analytical categories during the process of research, expecting changes during the course of events. According to McCracken (1988), qualitative methods are applicable when the questions for which data are sought cause the respondent greater difficulty and imprecision. Revealing ones perceptions, particularly those of an intercultural nature, is unlikely to be a ready or unambiguous response.

The purpose of this study is to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which individuals from different cultures construe the world. The intention is not to draw quantitative conclusions from qualitative data, but rather to observe a different reality.

The number and kinds of respondents required for qualitative and quantitative research differs, the latter having as a prerequisite the construction of a sample of the necessary size and type to generalise to the larger population. In qualitative research the principle of less is more is applied to respondents; the objectives being intensive, not extensive. In this study three black managers are interviewed, and their intercultural perceptions in relation to the promotion of black managers compared. New paradigms, which satisfy the conditions of explanation more powerfully than those previously established in the literature, could emerge. As no realistic opportunity for replication and confirmation of explanations exists, these discovered analytical categories must, according to Patton (1980), exhibit the following conditions:

- * be exact, without ambiguity
- * be economic in the use of assumptions
- * be mutually consistent
- * conform to knowledge of the subject
- * be unified and organised
- * not compromise on accuracy
- * be fertile, suggesting new insights

The motivation for this study is thus to address the problem statement via a qualitative research approach; which has as its goal the identification and analysis of unexplored relationships, in the current South African context, which satisfy the conditions of explanation detailed above.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 2 of the dissertation deals with a critical overview of the literature related to intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers. This chapter deals with a broad approach to perception, culture, the self, the organisation, and promotion.

Chapter 3 approaches the literature more critically with the aim of emphasising the need for an integrative approach to the study of intercultural perceptions, and their relationship to the promotion of black managers. Thus cultural categories are reviewed.

Chapter 4 represents a synthesis of of the first three chapters in the form of the interview questionnaire development and procedure. The discovery of cultural categories is described.

Chapter 5 looks at a critical evaluation of the interviews, presenting each as condensed case studies, and describes the discovery of analytical categories.

Chapter 6 presents the conclusions and recommendations arising from the study.

1.7 SUMMARY

This chapter has briefly looked at the problem statement and the procedure that was followed to address it.

The problem statement for this dissertation is;

=====
What factors may emerge in a study of intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers?
=====

CHAPTER 2OVERVIEW: CRITICAL REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with an overview of available literature on the topic of intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers. It must be emphasised that most of the literature deals with perception, culture, the self, the organisation, and promotion or advancement as separate areas of study. A reason for this is that each area needs attention internationally, and the purpose of this chapter is to integrate the findings which facilitate understanding within the South African context. Emphasis must be placed on the fact that very little literature exists on the specific topic of intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers. The need for an integrated and structured approach will be highlighted.

2.2 WHAT IS PERCEPTION?

The gestalt psychologist Kurt Koffka asked the question many years ago as to why things look the way they do. Perception refers to what is immediately experienced by a person, and the processes giving rise to this. Psychology is the science of human and animal behaviour, and perception is a crucial factor in determining that behaviour. Interpersonal interaction is governed by our experience of others. Individuals elaborate, transform and combine sensory inputs, selecting certain inputs to be at the focus of experience. Form, depth, and movement perception are influenced by past experience and learning, and motivation, emotion, and expectations. Immediate experience results from the whole pattern of sensory activity and the relationships and organisations within this pattern. Constancy of experience occurs despite variations in sensory input,

which is filtered by attending to certain inputs for inclusion in the focus of experience (Morgan, King, & Robinson, 1979). Internal and external factors directing attention are interrelated. External factors refer to intensity and size, contrast and novelty, repetition, and movement. Internal factors refer to motives or needs, preparatory set, and interest (Morgan et al.). Internal factors, to the extent that they are part of an individual, give direction and stability to our perception. The question is raised as to whether perceptual processes are innate or learned. The nativists argue that brain organisation is determined by genetic codes, while the empiricists hold that genetic codes provide a rough blueprint which interacts with nature. Alterations in the environment during critical periods can change the way connections are made in the brain (Morgan et al.).

2.3 INTERPERSONAL PERCEPTION

2.3.1 Understanding interpersonal perception

Interpersonal perception is described by Massarik and Wechsler (1979), as quoted by Watts, (1988), as the vehicle through which people form impressions about, and understand, one another. The degree of accuracy is reflected in empathy. Laing, Phillipson, and Lee (1966), as quoted by Watts, propose that people act in the light of how they assume others see them, or what they perceive as the intention of others. Individual differences occur as people assign meanings to situations and to the actions of others, arising from their collective perceptions, assumptions, and expectations based on individual experiences. Perceptions according to Krech, Crutchfield, & Ballachey (1962), are the product of the physical and social environment, values, needs, goals, and passed experiences. Historical factors are stressed by Hellriegel and Slocum (1976), as quoted by Watts, which include the influence of culture and learning.

Cultural and language obstacles to information transfer are discussed by Peters (1973). The writer differentiates between semantics, linguistics, and perception; acknowledging the effects of proxemics and kinesics in communication, and the influence of cultural and occupational mores. While semantics comprises words as symbols which induce identification reactions, and linguistics comprises the language patterns which categorise experiences; perception influences what we say. Interpersonal perception in this context is determined by the individual environment faced, the stimuli encountered, the degree of sensory perception involved, and the internal state of the perceiver. Different environments preclude receiving same stimuli, while internal states are the products of the teachings of culture. Body language and the use of social distance may be further barriers to information transfer. The combined effect of these obstacles is that a shared event produces separate experiences. However, information transfer takes place even in the presence of cultural and language barriers.

Perception of the emotional content of speech has been investigated by Albas, Mc Cluskey, & Albas, (1976), who discovered that language and culture are crucial factors in the transmission of emotion at all levels of communication. Intercultural differences in elements of paralanguage have not received much attention in the research. Although the Albas study was conducted in Canada with white and indian adult males, the important point is made that individuals from different cultures can speak the same language differently, as culture pervades our perceptions on an internal level.

Forgus and Forgus (1983), found that skilled mediation, in supportive group dynamics atmospheres, improved communication transmission; interpreting their results from an outflow theory of perception. Certain interpersonal styles facilitate transmission, reducing equivocation and encouraging self-expression and clarification. Within group communication is distinguished from between groups communication, the latter

being an attempt to understand the perspective of the other side. The concepts of joint validity and potential compatibility are useful in clarifying bias. A list of concensual suggestions, derived from problem-solving sessions, has important implications for intercultural perceptions in South Africa. The promotion of multi-racial contact is viewed as a way to provide the experiential learning that cultural differences are a matter of education and socialisation. The notion that children should be brought together to counteract the indoctrination of years of apartheid, in a rational education system involving the learning of each others languages, is suggested. The outflow theory of perception proposes that we only code information for which we have available categories. The conciliation of different points of view is a gradual process, as individuals seek confirmation of their own views when faced with a discrepancy.

2.3.2 Work related perceptions

Szilagyian and Wallace (1980), define perception as the individual process whereby people organise and interpret incoming stimuli into a message reacted to in terms of action or behaviour. As a filter, perception determines the unique approach adopted by an individual in dealing with organisational factors. Hofmeyer (1982) regards perception as a primary mechanism of employee interaction with, and adjustments to, jobs, groups, and organisations, formally and informally. According to Peters (1973), a strong need exists to evaluate one's own progress - and that of one's organisation - against the progress of others. The more one departs from the precise, universal language of mathematics, the more perceptions become relevant.

Perceptual differences exist at the various hierarchical levels in the organisation, partly due to people in different roles being motivated differently. Organisational events are viewed from varying vantage points, based on the source of information. Tannenbaum (1966), as quoted by Watts (1988),

discusses the systematic differences between social and psychological environments, claiming that at higher levels people experience satisfaction with regard to authority, self-esteem, and self-actualisation. Performance appraisal reveals differences between superior and subordinate perceptions of subordinate performance; signalling inadequate communication partly due to authority and status distinctions. Perceptual incompatibility between employees of different racial groups related to promotion, compensation, hiring practices, job satisfaction, and treatment, have been documented (Jedel and Kujawa, 1976), as quoted by Watts.

Watts (1988), assumes that perceptual disparities held by black managers and their work associates will be the result of hierarchical and racial differences. Beckett (1980), as quoted by Watts, suggests that blacks generally blame the organisation for racism, discrimination, and tokenism; and are reluctant to admit personal shortcomings. Organisations attribute problems to blacks' poor education and background; rejecting employment practice and company policy shortcomings. The nature and extent of perceptual differences reflect enduring perceptions, attributions, patterns of interaction, and action tendencies which have not been fully researched. The discrepancies have individual, group, and organisational repercussions, making coordination difficult.

2.3.3 Black managerial perceptions in South Africa

Watts (1988), studied the perceptions of black managers and their work colleagues in South Africa, exposing problems experienced by the former in the white-dominated managerial world. Research has concentrated on black and white management behaviour and viewpoints, without uncovering underlying perspectives and perceptual differences. Watts (1988) investigation examined the perceptions of 34 black managers and selected work colleagues with regard to the black manager and advancement issues. In depth focus interviews were conducted, exposing fundamental interpersonal perceptual

discrepancies between black managers and their work associates. Work problems and behavior were attributed to external situational criteria by black managers; while work colleagues ascribed them to the personal disposition of the black manager. Euclidean distance analysis has revealed that the largest discrepancies occur between black manager-boss dyads, while white superiors perceptions are closer to those of white peers.

Templer (1982), compares perceptions of managerial powerbase and organisational commitment of black and white employees; contrasting employees perceptions with those of immediate superiors. Results indicated the relative importance of race related differences above those of status. The traditional stereotype of low black commitment is questioned, indicating the lack of power of organisational management to tap the contributions of the emerging black management group. The interactional effects of both cultural and situational variables is acknowledged. The power of management is defined in terms of their ability to make subordinates take action which would not have occurred without intervention. Different forms of power are required for groups differing in levels of commitment. Employees at different levels are hypothesised to differ in their perceptions of managerial power. Commitment involves general identification with, and participation in, a calculative or reward-oriented relationship. Templer's (1982) analysis indicated that in general superiors considered reward power as important, while subordinates rated legitimate power highest. The degree of urbanisation proved to be an important intervening variable, the rural black tending to identify more strongly with the legitimate power structure of the organisation. Situational factors therefore need to be taken into account. In essence, the communal culture which accepts authority, contrasts with the Western culture which questions its competency.

2.4 WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture is the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs which serve to regulate the individual behaviour of members of a particular society. In a sense culture is a society's "personality". According to Singer (1987), every group that shares a similar pattern of perceptions constitutes a culture. Beliefs consist of the multitude of mental or verbal statements reflecting an individual's particular knowledge and assessment of something. Singer explains beliefs in terms of a system which includes the totality of perceptions, attitudes, values, and identities that a person at a given time accepts as true of world as it is experienced. A disbelief system consists of a series of subsystems that a person at a given time rejects as false. Values are beliefs which are relatively fewer in number, serve as a guide for culturally appropriate behaviour, are enduring or difficult to change, and are widely accepted by the members of society. Beliefs and values are both mental images which affect a range of specific attitudes, and influence the way an individual responds to a specific situation. Singer defines values as the desired events or situations one would like to see happen; including desires, wants, needs, or goals. Each individual and group ranks the importance of values differently. Customs are overt modes of behaviour that constitute acceptable ways of behaving in specific situations.

2.5 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURE

2.5.1 The nature of culture

The characteristics of culture illustrate its scope and complexity. An individual becomes aware of how culture has molded his behaviour when exposed to people with different cultural values or customs. Culture exists to satisfy the needs of the people within a society; offering order, direction, and guidance in all phases of human problem-

solving. Culture is learned formally when adults and older siblings teach a young family member appropriate behaviour. By imitating the behaviour of selected others, a child learns informally. Technical learning occurs in an educational environment when a teacher instructs a child what, how, and why things are done. Culture is thus learned as part of a social experience. The learning of one's native culture is known as enculturation; while the learning of a new or foreign culture is known as acculturation. Members of a society require a common language to communicate and share meaning to acquire a common culture. The symbolic nature of human language sets it apart from all other animal communication, a symbol being defined as anything which stands for something else. Culture is not the sole province of a few individuals, but is shared by a significant portion of the society. Social institutions transmit the elements of culture and make the sharing of culture a reality; the principal institutions being the family, the school, and the church. The family serves as the primary agent for enculturation, passing along basic cultural beliefs, values, and customs to society's members. Educational institutions impart basic learning skills, history, patriotism, citizenship, and technical training to prepare people for significant roles in society. Religious institutions provide and perpetuate religious consciousness, spiritual guidance, and moral training. Culture is further transferred via the mass media. Culture is dynamic - changing in response to new technology, population shifts, wars, changing values, and customs borrowed from other cultures. Change is necessary if culture is to continue to function in the best interests of society.

2.5.2 Subcultures

Society may be segmented into smaller subgroups based on nationality, religion, geographic locality, race, age, sex, occupation, and social class. In primitive tribal society, the same set of cultural values and customs prevails throughout the group. A highly unified culture is ruled by commoners. In

a complex society, diversity in religious beliefs, racial backgrounds, food customs, and social practices occurs. The culture profile of a society or nation is comprised of two distinct elements:

- (1) the unique beliefs, values, and customs subscribed to by members of specific subcultures, and
 - (2) the central core cultural themes that are shared by most of the population, regardless of specific subcultural memberships.
- Most South Africans born in South Africa consider themselves South Africans, although they frequently retain a sense of identification and pride in the language and customs of their forefathers. Religion influences symbolic behaviour. A wide range of climatic and geographic conditions exist, therefore regional identification is used to describe others. The labels assist in developing a mental picture or stereotype of others. All major age subgroupings of the population may be considered separate subcultures. Sex-related characteristics are not usually treated as subcultural differences. However sex roles are usually culturally determined, and sex discrimination has received considerable attention recently. The major racial subcultures in South Africa are White, African, Asian, and Coloured. Although differences exist among all the groups, the majority of research has focussed on black-white differences. Subcultural interaction refers to the relationships between multiple subcultural memberships.

2.5.3 Cross-cultural analysis

Culture is measured by psychometric tests to study motivation and personality; by attitude measurement techniques, by observational fieldwork, content analysis, and value measurement instruments.

Rohner (1984), identifies the areas of interest in terms of systems of behaviour, and in terms of meanings embodied in social systems and cultures. These aspects are affected by psychological processes, developmental processes, and issues

of mental health and illness. Triandis (1980), views cross-cultural analysis as the systematic study of behaviour and experience occurring in varying cultures, influenced by cultures, and resulting in changes in cultures. The term culture is descriptive, including a wide range of phenomena both behavioural and meaningful. Culture is generally conceived of as an independent variable, affecting a dependent variable, but not causing behaviour. The level of analysis can be described as societal. Jahoda (1984), suggests the idea of culture as a system rather than a variable. Cross-cultural analysis establishes the differences inherent in different societies; and is the product of a Western framework, based on rational analysis, argument, and limited synthesis. The black cultures in South Africa emphasise more intuitive, holistic ways of conceptualising the world; and the challenge therefore lies in the gaining of understanding of other cultures within a framework acceptable to these cultures which concurrently stands up to the criteria of empirical research.

2.6 COMPARISON OF WESTERN AND AFRICAN CULTURES

Redding (1980), lists five factors which distinguish the Western and African cultures:

- * causation
- * probability
- * time
- * self
- * morality

2.6.1 Causation

The Western view of causation stems from the Ancient Greek concept that if a particle of matter occupied a particular place at a particular time, it was because another particle had pushed it there.

The African notion that the particle's behaviour was governed by the fact that it was taking its place in a "field of force" alongside other particles that are similarly responsive, stems from the African ontology. This consists of a hierarchy based on the amount of "vital force" each tier possesses. Causation occurs in accordance with the ontological hierarchy, and in agreement with three irreversible laws proposed by Tempels (1959), as quoted by Coldwell & Moerdyk (1981):

- i) Man, living or dead, can directly reinforce or diminish the being of another.
- ii) Man's vital force can directly influence inferior force beings in their being itself.
- iii) A rational being, spirit or living, can act indirectly on another rational being by communicating his vital influence to an inferior force through the intermediacy of which it influences the rational being. This influence will be effective providing the object is not inherently the stronger force or reinforced by a third party, and the object does not pervade itself by resource to superior forces exceeding the enemy.

The African conception of causality is thus a rigidly pre-determined and fixed universe, in which possible causes are limited. It is, for example, inconceivable that an inferior vital force such as a germ, can cause disease in a superior force such as man. Disease is attributed to higher level forces such as the malevolence of a spirit. The African ontology is illustrated in Figure 2:

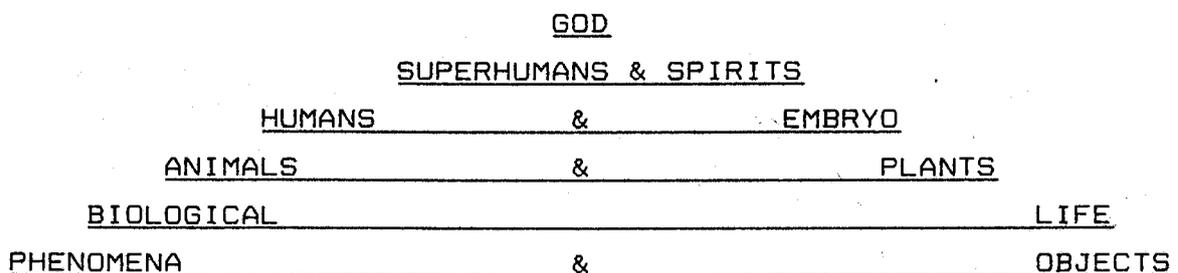


FIGURE 2: AFRICAN ONTOLOGY HIERARCHY

2.6.2 Probability

The Western notion of probability accomodates the calculation or prediction of the future.

The African world view of the future is fatalistic. Events are either certain to occur, constituting potential time; or have taken place, in which case they are actual time. The "intermediate" probability view does not exist, as events are one of two things: certain and predictable, or they do not exist until they have been experienced.

2.6.3 Time

The Western view of time is linear, the continuum being divisible into sections which are measurable. Out of this accurate time-sense come concepts such as punctuality, scheduling, and deadlines.

The African view of time is in terms of specific events; and time is meaningful at the point of the event, and not at the mathematical moment.

2.6.4 Self

In the Western world view, the individual is key. The relationships outside the family and close friends are largely instrumental in enabling the individual to achieve more in association with others than alone.

From the African viewpoint an individual is not an isolated, independent entity, but a link in the chain of vital forces; joined from above to the ascending line of ancestry, and from below to the sustaining line of descendants.

2.6.5 Morality

Benedict (1946), as quoted by Coldwell & Moerdyk (1981), discusses the distinction between Western and Oriental systems of morality. The place of authority filled by shame in Japanese ethics, is the same as that filled by conscience and avoidance of sin in Western ethics. The Oriental system relies on external sanctions such as criticism; while the Western system inculcates absolute standards of morality, and relies on man's development of an internalised conviction of sin. The African notion of morality is a combination of the above, including both guilt and shame dimensions. The guilt aspect is embedded in the ontological hierarchy of forces. Acknowledgement of higher living forces and the maintenance of rank, increases life. Moral and legal obligations are honoured on pain of loss of vital force. The shame view is based on a notion of community of spirit and interdependence. Aid is given and expected, being a moral obligation which increases in accordance with vital rank.

2.7 THE CULTURE OF POVERTY

In contemporary American society the work ethic is considered a strong motivator. There exists a core of black youths who are hard to employ, alienated from organisations, and distrustful of the ecosystem. Dissatisfaction with, and rejection of, the work role results in negative job behaviours and outcomes, for example absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover. The moderating effects of the black ethnic community and cultural values, and the negative experiences, strengthen the alienation. Several writers have attempted to explain this phenomenon in terms of what has been labelled the "culture of the disadvantaged and poverty", that transcends racial, national, and regional boundaries. This concept could be usefully applied within the South African context to facilitate understanding of the majority.

The culture of poverty according to Lewis (1965), as quoted by Bhagat (1979), is a counterculture; the ultimate goal of which is to encourage ecosystem distrust, and magnify helplessness and isolation. Rainwater (1970), as quoted by Bhagat, suggests that the slum subculture encourages three coping strategies:

- * The expressive lifestyle is an effort to make oneself interesting and attractive to others to gain immediate gratification.
- * The violent lifestyle emphasises the use of physical force against individuals and institutions who act as obstacles to immediate goal accomplishment; and may be adopted if the first option is unavailable or ineffective.
- * The depressive lifestyle strategy focusses on essential physical survival as a person grows older.

Certain stringent characteristics of the black ethnic culture prevent black workers from finding meaning and satisfaction in their jobs.

2.8 CULTURE-ASSIMILATOR TRAINING

Trainers in industry need to focus on cultural variables to alleviate breakdowns in communication, and deterioration of interpersonal relationships. The habitual, culturally-conditioned responses of white male-dominated organisations do not result in reinforcement, being associated rather with supervisor and co-worker disapproval. Culture-assimilator training is an attempt to reduce cognitive mismatching and mismatching through rendering the interpersonal behaviour of participants in an exchange situation more satisfying. Members of two dissimilar cultures make similar attributions concerning the causes of an intercultural episode. The extent to which a superior perceives a subordinate's behaviour the same way as the subordinate does, is increased. The judgemental process is slowed, as multiple determinants are focussed upon; and trainees develop cognitive complexity and

impulse control.

Graen (1976), as quoted by Bhagat (1979), conducted research which revealed that early role rejectors experienced the role ambiguity of low differentiation of the task situation. Wanous (1977), as quoted by Bhagat, suggests that realistic job previews decrease cognitive dissonance. The work of Gardiner (1972), as quoted by Bhagat, on racial prejudice showed that people can be trained to reduce prejudice.

Harris (1979), proposes that intercultural interfaces should be an enriching experience, instead of which ignorance of intercultural differences is one of the major causes of misunderstanding in a world which is becoming increasingly interdependent, but strife torn. The goal of culture-awareness training is to help employees become more appropriate, sensitive, and consistent in their behaviour in human interactions. Creating more options in individual lives through learning facilitates competence in present positions, prepares for new career assignments, and general readiness for occupational, organisational, and social change. People who are underdeveloped or underemployed cannot contribute to industrial development. Populations need to be liberated through the provision of opportunities, so that they can identify their capacities and develop their potentialities. A cross-cultural orientation is required to create a balance between organisational needs and delivery systems.

The importance of recognising cultural influences on ones' own thinking is stressed. Culturally biased elements lead individuals to make false assumptions about others, handicapping their interactions. Every individual needs to develop the capacity to communicate respect, be non-judgemental, to personalise knowledge and perceptions, to display empathy, to be flexible in roles, to demonstrate reciprocal concern, and to tolerate ambiguity. Perception is emphasised as a transactional process.

Behaviour in intercultural settings needs to be brought in line with knowledge and theory.

2.9 THE SELF

2.9.1 What is the self?

According to Morgan, King, and Robinson (1979), the term the self has two distinct sets of meanings:

- * peoples' attitudes about themselves, also known as the self-concept or self-image
- * the psychological processes by which the individual manages and copes, thinks, remembers, perceives, and plans; also known as the executive functions

Thus the self may be viewed as an object or a process. Self-concepts are prominent in psychoanalytical and phenomenological theories; the former emphasising the ego which comprises the executive function, and the latter building on the perceived, subjective world of one's immediate experience. The emphasis in this study is on the phenomenal field, as described by Rogers. This is the individual's frame of reference and may or may not correspond with external reality. When analysing the relationship between intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers, it is necessary to take into account individual congruencies and incongruencies. Maslow's self-actualisation theory also emphasises a humanistic approach, relying on one's internal perceptions, or introspections. Although the advent of behaviourism switched the emphasis in research to more sophisticated and complex measures of observable events, there has been a resurgence of respect for a humanistic approach.

2.9.2 The self and work

Bhagat (1979) discusses the relationship between the self and work in terms of four themes which comprise the work ethic. Black ethnic values, coupled with negative job experiences, prevent a large portion of the black population from identifying strongly with the work ethic. Organisational policy and the use of culture-assimilator training, have a role to play in integration. Bhagat discusses researchers who have attempted to show that workers respond and perform better in the face of challenges if they have internalised the standard norms and values of the middle class (Hulin & Blood, 1968; Turner & Lawrence, 1965; Dubin, 1956; and Dubin & Champoux, 1977), as quoted by Bhagat. The effect of the black workers' social world on their identification with the work ethic, is not well researched. The focal concern of the black lower class subculture does not emphasise the work ethic, and occupational models are not readily available. The absence of a work-related cultural emphasis renders the black youth unprepared for the transition from family, school, and neighbourhood, to the social and technical role of work. Himes (1965), as quoted by Bhagat, shows that deprivation of early socialisation makes it difficult for blacks to compete with their white peers.

Black-white ethnic differences in identification with the work ethic have had some implications for organisational integration in America. The degree to which these can be related to the South African situation has not been thoroughly investigated. However, taking into account the differences between the African and Western world views, the assumption is made that a degree of correlation exists between black-white ethnic differences in America and in South Africa. The propensity of blacks to identify with the four themes of the work ethic is reviewed. These are rooted in the Protestant tradition and are:

- * provision - the role of working
- * independence - locus of control
- * success - outcomes
- * self-respect - self-esteem

i) The role of working. A masculine role in society means being a good provider for the family. Blacks accept the role of working to provide material goods, but do not associate the lack of work with personal failure as do whites. The black hardcore unemployed value economic support and saving money as being the most important work-related outcome; whereas hardcore unemployed whites report an inverse relationship between the evaluation of work, and not working.

ii) Locus of control. Work enables an individual to earn an income which reduces his dependence on others. With regard to dependence, whites view this condition as undesirable due to the associated negative psychological consequences. It is linked to the concept of being unable to affect changes in ones' immediate environment, perceiving that their power and efficacy is reduced. This internal locus of control has found to be stronger in both white children and adults, than in blacks (Gore & Rotter, 1963), as quoted by Bhagat (1979). Battle & Rotter (1963), as quoted by Bhagat, found that lower class blacks were more external in their locus of control than upper class blacks. Lefcourt & Ladwig (1965), as quoted by Bhagat, found that achievement did not positively reinforce blacks in developing an internal locus of control orientation. The cause of failure by blacks in the academic world is attributed by blacks more to external factors than to their own internal characteristics.

iii) Outcomes. Effort expended at work allows an individual to reap the benefits of an acceptable standard of living and position in society. Research has shown that the majority of blacks do not believe in the success element of the work ethic (Bhagat, 1979). Blacks perceive the goal structure of their jobs differently from their white counterparts, expecting

extrinsic outcomes rather than achievement, recognition, and advancement. Stephenson (1957), as quoted by Bhagat, found that blacks tended to plan for the short term, and expected higher chances of failure in life through working, attributed to American organisations having been characterised by racial discrimination in personnel practices.

Managerial pay policies and behavioural consequences are discussed by Thakur (1980); who proposes that the degree of understanding of job objectives and the perceived importance of the individuals role, are directly related to pay differentials. This relationship impacts upon the suitability of criteria; and if the discrepancies are large, behaviour options will be largely negative. Analyses which move from the micro analysis of the job and incumbent, to the macro analysis of the environmental conditions, are therefore meaningful. Serious mismatches in the output-input ratio exist when effort and performance are not perceived to be linked to rewards. An understanding of the external factors which distort the perceived equitability of internal outcomes, is therefore required; cognisance being taken of the differences between intercultural perceptions.

iv) Self-esteem. The act of working hard has inherent dignity, and reflects upon the worth of a person. Identification with the self-respect theme has shown in the research to be weak, as is the link between hard work and gaining self-esteem (Katz, 1974), as quoted by Bhagat (1979). Even in the face of equal cognitive ability, young black adults were compliant toward white age peers. Blacks are inclined to reject their race due to the emotional wound of living in a white world of prejudice and discrimination; and in the process experience a lowered sense of self-respect. Himes (1965), as quoted by Bhagat, argues that black communities do not provide adequate social reinforcers, while social and economic pressures weaken the development of a positive association. In a slum culture, human nature is conceived of as essentially bad, destructive, and immoral; and

a child reared under these conditions attributes frustration to internal personality.

2.9.3 The effect of colourism

Jones (1986), defines colourism as an attitude or predisposition to act in a certain manner because of the colour of a person's skin; acting favourably towards those with a skin colour like theirs and unfavourably towards those with different skin colour. The role of stereotypes in avoiding mental overload by acting like shorthand, is discussed. Stereotypes, the result of direct and indirect experiences since infancy, cannot be eliminated. Bringing people to a level of awareness to control their impact is essential. The power of stereotypes is in their circularity, as people seek to confirm their expectations and resist contradictory evidence. Blatant bigotry is a problem in organisations, but neutrality and confirmation to socially approved behaviour are greater obstacles to blacks. Racially motivated behaviour goes unnoticed, unmentioned, or unpunished. Promotion decisions are subjective, colourism adding an extra layer of subjectivity. Double standards exist when the qualities rewarded in white managers become the reason the black manager is disliked and penalised. For example, white aggressiveness is termed black arrogance, while a lack of aggressiveness is seen as an inability to assert oneself. Advancement in organisations requires support from the top, and while this may be forthcoming, at the middle management level competition is conditioned by colourism; and the issue of prejudice is most acute. Discrimination occurs when people are not treated as individuals, and respect for their unique ability and character is not forthcoming. Preferential treatment forces every applicant to be regarded as a member of a group, at the expense of consideration of merit. A balance is therefore required between an emphasis on group effects. Arguments in favour of individualism are often made by those not in favour of improving race relations.

2.9.4 Trust differences between blacks and whites

Scott (1982), identifies trust as one critical element of successful management. Griffin's (1967), definition of trust, as quoted by Scott, characterises it as a positive force from which cooperation is derived, and contrasted to mistrust as the unwillingness of individuals to take cooperative action that increases their vulnerability to possible negative outcomes. Interpersonal trust has been identified as a key ingredient of cooperative relationships, with implications within the managerial context (Mellinger, 1956), as quoted by Scott. Basic attitudinal differences between blacks and whites have been attributed to discrimination, culture, economic levels, and education (Katz, 1974), as quoted by Scott.

The influence of race on employee attitudes has been explored through the analysis of superior-subordinate relationships. King & Bass (1974), present persuasive arguments related to the trust levels of racial combinations, however the empirical evidence is mixed. Parker's (1976) research of superior-subordinate behaviour in an organisational setting, as quoted by Scott (1982), found the race of subordinates and the racial combinations of work groups to be critical variables. Trust is based on the perceived predictability and positive intent of another, assuming cultural differences and limited social contact between the races. King & Bass, therefore hypothesise a complex interpersonal relationship, based on past cultural expectations and the dominance of whites in power positions; which results in different racial groups displaying different leadership behaviour, which is also differently perceived by subordinates. Factors to be considered include the traditional promotion policy, average pay levels, degree of urbanisation, and age, education level, and gender. Results of an analysis by Scott, indicated that only where blacks reported to whites, were trust levels significantly lower. Interaction and proximity increase positive attitudes towards other persons, breaking down prejudices. However the distrust of whites in positions of authority may have become the norm in black

culture, and preconceived notions become difficult to change. A contextual approach with an increased emphasis on the monitoring of organisational trust is called for.

2.10 THE ORGANISATION

2.10.1 The structure of managerial roles in intercultural settings

Torbiorn (1985), discusses the operation of a social system through its members; a role consisting of the activities normally allocated to a particular person, and defined in terms of expectations. In organisations several factors affect organisational needs for degree of control; these including managerial position, interdependence of parts of the organisation, characteristics of local markets, cultural barriers, local resources, regulations and restrictions, duration and history of the organisation, and special tasks of the particular manager. Several important role relations cut across cultural boundaries. Intercultural communication requires the ability to formulate, manifest, and understand norms relevant to a manager's role behaviour and outcomes. Ambitions reflecting motives such as trust, loyalty, and integrity, need to be accommodated in addition to pure skills. Integrity must be indisputable from all perspectives; as a detached or professional attitude, while maintaining the managers self-respect, is unlikely to promote empathetic understanding. The result may be a lessening of confidence within role relationships. Organisations, according to Torbiorn (1985), should take nationality into consideration in staffing decisions; realising the importance of intercultural communication and perception skills, and the level of competence necessary for managerial posts.

2.10.2 Management Paradigms

The effects contrasting world views have on specific managerial processes are discussed by Coldwell & Moerdyk (1981). According to Coldwell & Moerdyk, Africa has evolved its own philosophy and corresponding world view; which pervades black managers' thinking. Black managers in a white mans' world are therefore considered paradigms apart. Management practices in South Africa are essentially Anglo-American in orientation. Black managers' fundamentally different paradigms are likely to result in a mismatch between organisational and individual characteristics, affecting their level of efficiency. Coldwell & Moerdyk discuss paradigm conflict, offering a tentative model of the source of world view and cultural paradigms, using Popper's notion of three worlds. As the Western system of management in South Africa is imported, and one can only postulate the effects of the African world view on Black management; the effect the latter would have had had it dominated and shaped the Western view to meet its own cultural specifications, remains unknown.

2.10.3 Managerial Effectiveness

The African world view according to Coldwell & Moerdyk (1981), affects black managerial effectiveness. Intercultural perceptions stem from varying world views, while effectiveness in a position is a prerequisite for promotion. Tempels (1959), as quoted by Coldwell & Moerdyk, discusses the effect of the imposition of the imported Western world view in South Africa on the indigenous African world view. Through the education system the African becomes literate and is familiarised with the techniques, but lacks the understanding of whites. This prevents the motivations of his conduct being comprehended. Onyemelukwe (1973), as quoted by Coldwell & Moerdyk, distinguishes between form and substance in describing the superficiality of the African adoption of Western cultural paradigms. The form is observed but the substance is not grasped. The motions are carried out, without enthusiasm or

responsibility. Black managers therefore pay lip service to Western managerial values, lacking the commitment necessary to be truly effective. Consideration must be given to the deep polarisation of basic African paradigms and the Western worldview. The importance of ontological recognition in a company's promotion policy is indicated by Onyemelukwe when he discusses the tendency by management not to base their decisions on tenure, and to place outsiders in superior positions to older workers. Coldwell & Moerdyk, describes the effects of ignoring ontological status in the supervision of subordinates, when workers are treated like implements rather than human beings. Alienation is particularly distressing to black workers who want recognition and respect of their full value as men by whites.

In the McKay (1980) study, as quoted by Coldwell & Moerdyk (1981), of upwardly mobile black managers, the importance of an interest in the whole person in upward communication is indicated. When a white refers to an adult black male worker as a "boy", little respect for age is shown; ignoring the individual's rightful position in the ontological hierarchy. This injures pride, but more importantly undermines the core of the individual's cultural beliefs. The African concept of time rebels against the elimination of a leisurely work arrangement, and the emphasis on accomplishment of the task rather than the manner in which it is done. The mechanisms by which managerial techniques are perceived and assimilated into organisational practices, or rejected, requires further investigation.

The African and humanitarian approach of sharing of resources, according to McKay (1980), as quoted by Coldwell & Moerdyk (1981), emphasises acceptance and participation. This approach contrasts with a production orientation, which stresses productivity at the expense of human relations and social upliftment. The blacks view of work emphasises the group over achievement. Mokoatle (1980), as quoted by Coldwell & Moerdyk, notes that entrepreneurial black South African managers avoid

delegation of authority to an unrelated manager, as nepotism and paternalism are the norm. This legitimate authority conflicts with the Western ideal of bureaucratic impartiality; and Coldwell & Moerdyk, conclude that where differences are ignored, the effectiveness of black managers and workers is reduced.

Black managers are therefore faced with the dilemma of choosing between the importance of being part of the community, and the importance of materialistic competitiveness and self-assertive individualism necessary to progression within the present social system. Blacks acceptance of Western cultural paradigms seems inevitable, while it is unlikely that they will abandon their own cultural paradigms. A resurgence of pride in African values and world view is apparent (Wilsworth, 1980). The community spirit pervades the social structure and socialisation process, serving as a survival mechanism for large portions of the black South African population. Coldwell & Moerdyk (1981), stress the need for a new community concept of business, which takes account of the traditions and culture of the African worker while allowing the economic aims of Western business enterprises to be met.

2.10.4 The transference of managerial skills and knowledge across cultural boundaries

The incorporation of practices and technologies into the design of management programmes has been investigated by Smith & Thomas (1972). The managerial processes are a function of beliefs and assumptions; reflecting the social, economic, and political environment in which they are embedded. An expanding economy such as that of South Africa, requires growth of managerial competence, which is thwarted by a lack of understanding of the motivational structures of managers. Cultures which encourage dependence may produce managers who avoid responsibility, seek direction and favour, and lack individual choice. The ripple effects of the behaviour and attitudes of organisational members as they relate to central

and peripheral environments, must be considered. The effects of contrasting world views on specific management processes is therefore relevant to the transference of skills. Planning presupposes the Western concepts of linear time, causality, and probability; contrasting with the fatalistic, non-linear African perspective. Organising involves the use of impartial criteria to enhance the bureaucratic efficiency of an organisation. The African view avoids most forms of abstract thinking, relying on interpersonal relationships for control and coordination. Directing presupposes the Western ideals of fairness and objectivity in leadership; whereas the African view involves tacit acceptance of favouritism, based on estimated indebtedness. Regarding control systems, the abstract linear logic expressed in Western notions of causality and time, is central. Control mechanisms are created to achieve specific objectives with a predictable degree of success, according to strict time schedules and deadlines. The African perspective lacks what Westerners label rationality and objectivity.

The organisational implications of the intercultural perceptual differences include attitudes towards:

- * participative decision-making
- * levels of cynicism
- * morality of the managerial role
- * labour and government intervention
- * conservatism

Smith & Thomas (1972), propose that the performance of society as a whole as reflected in its level of economic development, affects the competence of the manpower available to organisations. Schein (1967), as quoted by Smith & Thomas, argues that we need a systematic investigation of the kinds of attitudes that accompany the managerial role; and most importantly whether these attitudes are a consequence of, or a prerequisite for, that role.

2.10.5 The relationship between perceptual congruence and job satisfaction

According to Hatfield & Huseman (1982), the moderating effects of individual characteristics are minimal, whereas communication between superior and subordinate is related to all aspects of satisfaction. By definition a subordinate's received role is his or her perception of the sent role. Perceptual congruence and satisfaction measures showed a consistently significant relationship in the study conducted by Hatfield & Huseman. The moderating effects of subordinates' sex, race, age, and tenure were significant only with regard to sex and race. Among blacks, only congruence about expression was significantly related to satisfaction. Congruence between superior and subordinate may not be as important as the subordinate's perception of factors affecting the superior-subordinate relationship. In as much as intercultural perceptions are related to communication, the former must have a pronounced effect on the perception of job satisfaction by black managers.

Kanugo & Wright (1983), discuss the types of rewards managers seek in the work environment, and their perceptions of the degree to which job expectations are satisfied. Although this study is based on four international countries, the results are relevant to the South African situation. The types of job outcomes related to job satisfaction differ significantly from one culture to another. Motivation and job satisfaction levels are determined by the interaction between value orientations or expectancies, and the perceptions held with respect to job outcomes. The results indicated that significant differences exist in the cognitive value systems of different cultural groups, which overshadow differences in the levels of satisfaction experienced with regard to job outcomes. The implications for the design of effective motivational and reward systems in organisations in South Africa, are therefore apparent.

2.11 PROMOTION

2.11.1 An orientation

In America, equal opportunity laws have brought blacks in large numbers into corporate managerial ranks. Jones (1986), however discusses conversations with black managers who display dissatisfaction, dismay, frustration, and anger because they have not gained acceptance on a par with their white peers. The question is asked whether black managers will ever be allowed to move up the organisation and succeed in the old-fashioned way by earning it. The 60's equal opportunity issues have been replaced by protection of individual liberties and self-help. While top management may be committed to promoting qualified blacks into positions of responsibility, the problem is the influence of unconscious, unthinking criteria on the choice.

According to Jones (1986), there was a strong emphasis in America in the 70's for getting the right number of black managers. Companies selected aggressive, self-motivated, high-achieving blacks; who are now frustrated by the confrontation of the same racial barriers. The feeling among higher level blacks is that the psychological contract made by corporations is unfulfilled for black high-achievers. Credentials fail to qualify them in the minds of many white people. The black middle manager who thinks that he has been held back by a white superior because of race may remain silent and find his career pigeon-holed. If he proves unfairness, he is handicapped by being labelled too sensitive and a troublemaker. Corporations and educational institutions have provided potential black managers with the background to move up to more responsible positions, and proteges expectations of success are proportionate to their preparation. Jones devised a questionnaire listing 15 words and phrases that interviewed persons used to describe the climate for blacks in their organisations. This exercise served to clarify the attitude of black managers who feel rejected.

The descriptions mentioned frequently included:

- * "supportive in words only"
- * "lacks positive direction"
- * "has a policy of tokenism"
- * "reluctant to accept blacks"
- * "indifferent"

The situations discussed by Jones range from a white executive being poached from a prime competitor at a much higher salary rather than the promotion of a black manager; to praises, raises, and transfers rather than promotion. Although white executives say they do not see race as a factor, this is contrary to black perceptions. White executives prefer to see situations as issues of personal shortcomings, while blacks conclude that they are being treated as a group. Deep-seated attitudes, that may not even be consciously held, much less manifested in provable illegal behaviour, disadvantage blacks.

2.11.2 Promotion potential

According to Jones (1986), promotion potential depends on an informal network of cooperative relationships. Friendships, internal and external assistance, and developmental assignments are keys to success. Black managers feel that they are treated as outsiders and do not benefit from relationship networks. The prevailing social throwback among whites about blacks in America is that they are stupid, lazy, dishonest, or preoccupied with sex. Senior executives' attitudes permeate an entire organisation, the corporate climate and culture being a reflection of the unspoken beliefs of senior executives; and middle managers desiring to be executives conform to these norms. The underlying, political buddy system influences pay increases and promotion opportunities; with peoples' prejudices coming into play to decide outcomes. White managers fear ostracism from other whites when they sponsor black managers for promotion or high-visibility assignments. Blacks are therefore channelled into the community, industrial,

public, and personnel relation functions; but not the core functions which make business grow or bring in revenue. They are thus not groomed for general managerial roles. Black managers feel that they are given financial rewards rather than leadership, but that money does not relieve a poverty of satisfaction and spirit. The pressure to conform limits black managers degree of candour. In addition, some white managers become defensive if prejudice is mentioned, and this combination results in a mutual patronising and misreading; making blacks and whites unable to exchange ideas and express their feelings.

Charoux (1987), discusses the success rate of assessment centres in the identification of black leadership potential in South Africa. Seven major issues are highlighted; these being racial mixing, blacks ability to cope with language, the use of black assessors, training required, time allocated, psychological testing, and the benefits to be derived. With regard to intercultural perceptions, the benefits include the identification of potential based on individual strengths and weaknesses, the communication gap between white superior and black subordinate may be bridged, and the organisation's racial climate changed. Certain criteria, such as situational sensitivity, can be specified and the weight of these increased. The combination of race and sex is a controversial issue. Lillicrap (1987), discusses problems facing black and female managers in South Africa, while Jones (1986), discusses the problem from an American perspective. It is within this issue that the most primitive emotions interact, and stereotypes gain strength. Research shows that the higher a white male climbs in the organisational hierarchy, the more likely he is to hold negative stereotypes about blacks, and the more accepting he is of white woman in a managerial role.

Black managers, while suffering the pain of prejudice, must maintain performance when recognition is withheld. Securing the trust of fellow blacks while gaining acceptance by whites, requires a delicate balancing act. Psychological problems can

result from the denial of ethnicity. Affirmative action has as its objective to ensure that all players compete on a level playing field. Equal opportunity for promotion only exists where there is unlimited opportunity, commitment coming from the top down. The corporate culture needs to focus on competence and performance regardless of race or gender, rather than comfort and fit. Failing this, the culture will continue to default to traditional etiquette and attitude.

Hofmeyer (1982), claims that black advancement programmes have yielded disappointing results, due to disregard of black managers perspectives, experiences, and perceived training needs. There is a need to study the work situation of the black manager from his own frame of reference, as well as that of the organisation, to ensure a holistic, contextual approach. Competing systems of interpretation need to be investigated to obtain information on the emergence, maintainance, and change of circumstances.

2.11.3 Job mobility

The relationship between perceived success of black managers and job mobility is discussed by Spaights & Keys (1987); and common career and personal traits among successful black managers in America described. Since the late 1950's little research has been conducted on the effect of job mobility on a manager's pattern of success and effectiveness, in conditions congruent with the individual's personal traits. A lack of agreement on specific personal criteria related to managerial success exists. According to Spaights & Keys, authors have recently noted that distinct stages at which mobility is relevant as a tactic occur; although the type, timing, and optimal age for stages is not agreed. Few studies have included black managers, or dealt with issues of barriers to upward mobility, stress, or showcase versus decision-making positions. Inner conflicts involved in serving the black community, black perceptions of the good organisation, and black managerial alienation, have been researched (Hunt &

Howard, 1977), as quoted by Spaights & Keys. Davis & Watson (1982), as quoted by Spaights & Keys, identified situational and personality criteria associated with successful black managers, such as aggressiveness, confidence, individuality, and comfortableness in uncertain situations. Frequent job changes were considered an important career strategy, and a broad range of experience, an asset.

Spaights & Keys (1987), defined intra-organisational mobility as the number of prior jobs within the current organisation. Job mobility was defined as the number of previously held positions outside the current organisation. Perceived success as a black manager was defined as being at the level and salary in the organisation that the black manager perceives as the expressed career expectations. Using systematic sample techniques, managers were provided a biographical data sheet and the Ghiselli Self-Descriptive Inventory (GSOI). Results indicated no significant relationship between high scores on the GSOI and perceived job success; or between high job mobility and the latter. There were also no significant differences between job mobility rates of successful and unsuccessful black managers in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. The findings were however consistent with equity theory, which assumes that employees compare their output to income ratio with relevant others. Success was reflected in the ability to delegate to achieve own and organisational goals. A high need for job security also prompted black managers to stay in unsatisfactory jobs. The writers concluded that mobility may not be generally beneficial to black managers, but could be situation specific.

2.11.4 The organisational progression of employees

Black managers can be expected to emerge from the group of employees who are low on coercive power, high on legitimate and identification power, and have the highest general identification with the organisation. Differences in the perceptions of black and white employees as they move up the

organisational hierarchy were found by Templer (1982), to be marked. As white employees progress, managerial power is increasingly emphasised and identification weakens, while the opposite is true of blacks. In comparison to the group from which they are drawn, black managers in South Africa are few in number; forming a select group who have achieved status despite the system. They are perceived as better off than their white counterparts, who do not enjoy the exposure generated by black advancement programmes. Change is limited by the strict structural predeterminants in South African society. More flexible exchanges within the psychological contract should enable organisations to take advantage of the managerial talent available. To facilitate the progression of blacks in organisations, beliefs held about different race groups should be questioned, and reality sought above cultural stereotypes.

Charoux (1983), suggests that organisations should have, as their primary objective, black employees actual integration into the organisation. The black potential manager needs to feel part of, and accepted by, the organisation if his commitment and productivity levels are to increase. The importance of organisational entry is emphasised, as a contemporary phenomenon. Failure to accomplish this will be politically disastrous, and the future manpower shortage costs extensive. Obstacles to organisational entry are legal, climatic, and methodical. Black managers perceive the problems to revolve around five factors, according to Charoux:

- * a lack of preparation during formative years
- * rejection of the spirit of competition
- * inappropriateness of academic training
- * inhibited social interaction
- * a lack of appreciation of corporate customs

Manpower planning needs to be supplemented by individualised planning, taking factors such as the distinction between objective and perceptual climate of the organisation into

account. Management is faced with the problem of arriving at valid criteria for black managerial effectiveness; classical predictors having proven deficient due to the unique position of the black manager.

Cox & Nkomo (1986), discuss differential performance criteria for black and white managers, investigating the degree to which they vary. A form including items measuring a social behaviour dimension and a task/goal dimension was developed. Appraisal ratings of both groups were correlated with measures of overall job performance and promotability. Results indicated that social behaviour factors correlated more highly with overall performance for black ratees, with implications for black managers and organisations. Most organisations rely on performance appraisal to identify and rank candidates for promotion, therefore racial bias may account for underrepresentation of blacks at middle management levels. Studies in this area are ambiguous, and have concentrated on overt discrimination. Recently authors have focussed on the possibility that the meaning of performance ratings, and the weighting of rating criteria, are race related. Beatty (1973), as quoted by Cox & Nkomo, reported that social behaviour factors influenced ratings to a greater extent than programme content or taste-related behaviour, identifying a need to compare the evidence to white ratees results. Huck & Bray (1976), as quoted by Cox & Nkomo, investigated the predictive validity of assessment centres, finding ratings of administrative skills and effective intelligence correlating more highly with performance for whites than for blacks. Sensitivity to social environment was more highly correlated for blacks. Fernandez (1981), as quoted by Cox & Nkomo, found that total conformity to organisational norms is more critical to success than actual ability and performance.

Human & Hofmeyer (1985), have emphasised selection as a key element in black advancement. The job search process by black potential managers is characterised by the handling of four issues: occupational choice, unrealistic self-perceptions,

coping with racism, and coping with competition. The socialisation process needs to be defined in terms of the extent to which both the organisation and the black manager feel that the black manager has accepted organisational values and is committed to its goals; is accepted by the majority of the staff; handles responsibility adequately; copes with the marginality of his situation; is trusted with confidential information; and is sought out for counsel. A special and intensive focus is required to bring advancement to the most disadvantaged of the three non-white groups: the African black.

2.12 SUMMARY

This chapter dealt with a critical review of literature related to intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers. Firstly, it gave attention to what perception is, the understanding of interpersonal perception, work related perceptions, and black managerial perceptions in South Africa.

Secondly, the characteristics of culture in terms of the nature of culture, subcultures, and cross-cultural analysis were discussed. A comparison of Western and African cultures was presented, listing five distinguishing factors. The culture of poverty and culture-assimilator training were discussed.

In the third instance, the self in relation to work was explored; including the effect of colourism, and trust differences between blacks and whites.

Fourthly, a brief discussion emphasised the organisation in terms of the structure of managerial roles, management paradigms, and managerial effectiveness. The transference of managerial skills and knowledge across cultural boundaries, and the relationship between perceptual congruence and job

satisfaction, provided a contextual approach.

Fifthly, various perspectives and attitudes towards promotion were highlighted. This final part of the chapter dealt with promotion potential, job mobility, and the organisational progression of employees.

Where this chapter has looked at a broad overview of literature related to intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers, the next chapter will look at integrating the analytical categories to arrive at cultural categories and relationships not considered in the literature.

CHAPTER 3INTEGRATION: REVIEW OF CULTURAL CATEGORIES3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks closely at the literature, giving a more detailed and systematic appreciation thereof. In qualitative research, the investigator's own experiences are not treated as bias and set aside, but used to enhance understanding. The clearer understanding of one's own vision of the world permits a critical distance from it (Patton, 1990).

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to identify categories and relationships not identified in the literature, preparing the templates for the matches in the interview data.

First of all, attention is given to perceptions and personal meaning.

Secondly, the individual and society are explored.

Thirdly, the concept of self from a personal perspective is discussed.

In the fourth place, an appreciation of organisational functioning is given.

In the fifth place, personal insights into advancement are supplied.

Finally, the interrelationships between the emerging cultural categories are identified. Attention is given to the selection of categories for the interview questionnaire, and the formation of questions contained in each category.

3.2 PERCEPTIONS AND PERSONAL MEANING

A person attaches meaning to an object or event in terms of his or her relationship to the former. Perceptions have a bearing on a person's behaviour and functioning, the degree being determined by the extent of the relationship. Therefore the perceptions we hold about ourselves determine the meaning of our experiences. It would be a false dichotomy to separate intellectual from emotional behaviour, as our experience and behaviour depends on the entire perceptual field at any given moment. A person progressively differentiates from the general perceptual field through the process of learning. Perception is thus an irreversible process. The degree to which perceptions are remembered depends on the clarity of awareness and the effect of need on remembering, as well as the effect of the total field at the time of perception (Combs, 1988).

When a review is made of selected literature related to perception, the personal meaning a person attaches to an object or event needs to be taken into account. Intercultural perceptions related to the promotion of black managers go beyond that which is contained in the theory, or that which is immediately observable. They include also that which has a personal meaning for the individual. While the literature provides extensive information on interpersonal and work related perceptions; when one takes personal meaning into account, a cultural category emerges which is best described as the meaning an individual attaches to a perception in terms of its relationship to him- or herself.

The effect of stereotyping is an important factor which inhibits attempts to achieve understanding. Stereotyping is defined in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary as "a standardised mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, affective attitude, and an uncritical judgement". Stereotypes are therefore based on a lack of information, due to inadequate differentiation within the general perceptual

field. Decisions based on stereotyped assumptions obscure reality, and create real injustice for all parties involved. Jones (1972), in his discussion of racism and prejudice, identifies a totalitarian personality; describing traits such as:

- * conventionalism
- * anti-intracceptionism
- * superstition and stereotyping
- * destructiveness and cynicism
- * projectivity

Theories of prejudice are based on historical, sociocultural, situational, psychodynamic, and stimulus-object perspectives. A model is therefore proposed by Jones which analyses racism in terms of individual, institutional and cultural aspects. Individual aspects include attitudes, behaviour, socialisation, and self-interest. Institutional aspects include labour, legal, health, economics, educational, political, and housing. Cultural aspects include aesthetics, religion, music, philosophy, values, needs and beliefs. This model would appear to encompass the full perceptual field of aspects related to racism; and may be useful in the understanding of personal meanings attached to objects and events by individuals from different cultural groups.

3.3 THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

The literature review which touches on aspects of culture is by no means extensive. Various theories define culture, describe the characteristics thereof, compare Western and African cultures, describe the culture of poverty, and propose culture-assimilator training as a means to improving intercultural interfaces.

Over the past two decades, myths such as the dark continent, the jungle, and the inferior race, have been exploded; and the

contribution made by the African continent to civilisation, recognised. In America, blacks have always been bi-cultural and bilingual, living and working in two different worlds; and the same is increasingly true of black South Africans. White society has created a social system that serves them well, the control factor being economic. It is generally accepted that blacks need to be assimilated into South African society as equal partners in the development of its future. An understanding of intercultural perceptions should assist in the facilitation of this ideal.

In perceptual psychology, the concern is with the proper understanding of experience, of behaviour, and of the relationship between the two. The goal is to provide a frame of reference for the understanding of the whole person. Combs (1988), makes a distinction between a perceptual group and an identity group; both being comprised of a group of people who perceive some aspect of the external world similarly, while only in the case of the identity group is this freely communicated. Similarity of perception decreases when communication decreases, and recognition of identity with a particular group sharpens. A further distinction is necessary between personal, group, and national cultures. Values conflict, but cultures survive as they are able to identify in varying degrees with different value systems. The conflict is seldom conscious, and when it is, the individual, group, or nation will attempt to find some third party identity to rationalise, neutralise, accommodate, or synthesise conflicting value systems.

Theory may be used to conceptualise intercultural differences. Any phenomenon pertaining to a person is determined by the multiple effects of the internal dynamics of the person, the interpersonal dynamics of the group, the intergroup relations, and the characteristics of the environment. Identity groups share common biological characteristics, historical experiences and world views. The group a person represents at a given point depends on the intergroup context in which the

event occurs. The context is determined by group boundaries, power differences, affective patterns, cognitive formations, and leadership behaviour.

Groups condition their members' perceptions of objective and subjective phenomena; and transmit theories and ideologies to explain experiences and influence intergroup relations. Objectivity may be defined from an intergroup perspective as an interpretation of reality by members, unaware of the role of membership on perception, or choosing not to recognise alternative conceptions. When one analyses individual perceptions, cogniscance has to be given to the effect of group membership on personal meaning.

Schlemmer, in Smollan (1986), defines society as an organic interaction of elements in which meanings, statuses, and commitments are generalised across a range of specific domains of credibility. The importance of subtle, informal processes, which create consistency in social action, is acknowledged. Interracial contact has been demonstrated to be effective in diminishing racial hostility. Festinger and Kelley, as quoted by Jones (1986), propose that motivational, perceptual, and social control may be used to change what people want, their experience of objects and events, and social attitudes and group norms.

Jones (1986), concludes that racist attitudes lead to racist behaviour, which leads to racist problems. Cultural racism provides the background for institutional racism. Individuals socialised by racist institutions evolved individual racism. Individuals in turn perpetuate and support culture. A cultural revolution could be said to occur if the value of human life were to dominate society, if people understood that one cannot impose a value system on others, and that one can only ask others to examine their actions, judge them, and retain those which make the world a better place for all. The United States Supreme Court concluded in 1954 that in the field of public education, separate but equal had no place.

America, like South Africa, is not a homogeneous society. The move in America has been away from a melting pot society to a mosaic society, where groups retain their own identity but work towards common economic goals. The aim is to balance assimilation, while preserving identity. The Americans have learnt that colour-blindness did not work, and that it has taken three generations for socio-economic status to be equalised. There are no role models for the future, and business needs to investigate the opportunities inherent in a multicultural workforce. Different viewpoints result in creativity, and are a sustained source of competitive advantage. Human resources management will need to value rather than tolerate diversity. Diversity will have to be communicated, cultivated, and capitalised on in the 1990's (Cascio, 1991).

Thus a cultural category is identified which goes beyond the theoretical aspects of the concept of culture, to encompass the individual in society and the personal meaning attached to this role.

3.4 THE SELF FROM A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

The concept of self in psychology has been widely researched in the literature, and often questioned in the behavioural sciences. Recent years have seen a rebirth of interest in internal forces and symbolic functioning. People perceive themselves in terms of values, which vary with regard to centrality and clarity. From a phenomenological perspective, self-perceptions form a complex pattern of interrelationships, which result in a degree of consistency and stability over time. The effects of the family, culture, and educational institutions need to be taken into account in the development of the self concept.

The media have emphasised individual and group contributions to encouraging personal growth and independence within the

various peoples of South Africa. Through career empowerment, blacks can be shown how they can manage their own careers through managing the social and psychological issues which they face.

According to Ncube (1986), it's not easy being a manager if you're black, due to conflicting roles. In the eyes of the shop floor workers they are perceived as people who have crossed the floor, the upward move being seen as bourgeois and elitist. They are perceived as traitors who cannot be trusted or confided in. The black manager's white colleagues see him as a threat to their territory and a challenge to the myth of white supremacy. Black managers are promoted from groups which operate collectively, while the black manager is treated as an individual. Often the black manager does not have the authority of other managers. In addition the black manager is conspicuous by his absence at social activities which are known to promote business relationships. The black manager is expected to play a role in uplifting the working classes and providing leadership, but at the same time has to answer questions as to why he is not exerting power and control. The black manager is therefore caught in South Africa's racial crossfire.

Spaights and Keys (1987), explored the relationship between personal traits in various employment sectors. There appears to be little consistency as to the theoretical bases of the management process itself or of the effective manager. Various theories have lead to assumptions that there are specific personal qualities that coincide with managerial abilities, but there is little consensus regarding these qualities.

Various aspects which have been investigated include the effect of job mobility on a given manager's pattern of success and effectiveness, the personal quality-situational interaction component, synthesis theories bridging the gap between internally consistent management theory and actual practice, and trait concerns. Most studies focussed on white

managers to the exclusion of blacks. The tools used in personnel decision-making are derived from these studies, and it is conceivable that black managers may possess unique personality traits that combine in a certain pattern.

The Spaight and Keys' (1987) study discovered that black upper-level managers score higher than those on a lower level on self-actualisation, masculinity, and self-assurance. There is no significant difference in personal traits of successful and unsuccessful black managers. In addition there are no apparent differences in personal or management style of black management in the various employment sectors. This explains the movement of black managers from sector to sector as they do not have to change management styles.

Singer (1987), discusses the politics of human behaviour, in terms of who gets what, when, and how. Power is seen as both relative and contextual, positive and negative. The five components of power are:

- * wealth (material and human)
- * organisation (formal and informal)
- * information (basic and specific)
- * status (ascribed and aquired)
- * will (conscious and subconscious)

In arriving at a cultural category, the effect of the self on perceiving and becoming must be taken into account. The self a person knows is that person's basic frame of reference, and is the point of orientation for all behaviour. A category emerges which encompasses personal growth, managerial perceptions, traits, and power. In order to understand intercultural perceptions and their relationship to the promotion of black managers, the selective effect of the self on perception requires investigation.

3.5 AN APPRECIATION OF ORGANISATIONAL FUNCTIONING

The position of blacks in the workplace during the 1980's was characterised by a struggle for acceptance; blacks continually justifying their abilities and credentials, and leaning harder on black subordinates to avoid giving the appearance of favouritism. Through the process of enculturation, customs and usages have changed. However deep-rooted beliefs and traditions resist change, and are often strengthened in adversity. In offering direct testimony of where black managers stand, the progress they have made, the problems that exist, the way blacks feel, and what seems difficult and unresolved; the intention is not to prove anything, but to increase understanding. The topic in organisations is highly charged, but the importance of candour is not diminished by this.

From a systems viewpoint, the functioning of industrial subsystems is interdependent with family, community, religious, and political subsystems. The integration of activities of diverse groups is problematic in South Africa, and organisations fail to benefit from sources of shared commitment and perception in society. Intercultural differences may become irrelevant by the structural separation of communities into racial subcultures. Industry cannot afford to divorce itself from its natural role in politics and social change.

The problem of residential and racial segregation is possibly the greatest for industry in their attempts to promote blacks to managerial levels.

Black-white group differences in organisational perceptions and cognitive structures were investigated by Alderfer, Tucker, Morgan, & Drasgow (1983), via a questionnaire comprising six main content areas: general race relations, management group, hiring, advancement, firing, and personal

opinions. Important subscales included promotion discrimination, white promotion advantage, white self-protection, blacks easily fired, and affirmative action as a negative. The results of analyses of factor dispersion matrices indicated that the perceived negative effect and behaviour of whites towards blacks, including organisational policies, has the effect of hindering black advancement; while actions supportive of blacks are deemed to be at the expense of whites. Blacks experience less satisfaction than whites from the overall situation. The interaction of race and satisfaction explains the variance in the results for blacks and whites. Traditional satisfaction measures may provide independent or irrelevant information with regard to core issues in intercultural perceptions. Of particular significance is the process of denial for both groups. Blacks denied that actions to overcome racism would be damaging to whites; while whites denied the existence of racial tensions, thus freeing themselves from any sense of competition. Blacks perceive change to be aimed at the established, undeserved advantage whites have over blacks. Whites perceive change to be aimed at altering the balance of resource allocation, resulting in their experience of loss. The more satisfied a white is, the greater is the acceptance of white racism. Whites tend to think of themselves in individual terms, while blacks are thought of in group terms. Therefore both blackness and whiteness define group membership.

In a study by Human and Hofmeyer (1987), white managers expressed positive attitudes towards non-discriminatory organisational and social values and structures. The majority felt business should accept blacks, value their work, create equal opportunity, let blacks compete, open facilities to all, and supported affirmative action. However more than half felt that blacks did not have the objectivity to evaluate business situations properly. Just less than half perceived black managerial behaviour to be influenced by emotions, as did just less than half believe challenging work to be less important to blacks than whites. Doubt over blacks' self-confidence

required for leadership, and blacks ability to contribute to overall organisational goals was expressed.

Contradictions are the majority belief that blacks have the ability to aquire skills, while only half beleived that blacks are as capable of acquiring mathematical and mechanical skills as whites. In addition, while 90% agreed blacks could compete with whites for top executive positions, only just over half beleived it is acceptable for blacks to assume leadership roles as often as whites. 68% felt that top management was committed to developing and advancing blacks to management positions, while only 17% felt that whites in the company believed that blacks had what it takes.

A clearer understanding of the changing work ethic on the part of management is a must if a company is to maximise its human potential. There is a need to reemphasise organisational innovation; and to restructure the environment so that superordinate goals are met, power equalisation conditions exist, and benefits are incurred through interracial interactions.

Thus a cultural category is identified which goes beyond the structure of managerial roles and management paradigms; to include an appreciation of the changing position of blacks in the South African workforce, and the relationship of this position to the broader socio-political environment. The personal meaning attatched to organisational functioning by an individual, is relevant.

3.6 INSIGHTS INTO ADVANCEMENT

The advancement of blacks in the South African economy is discussed by Schlemmer, in Smollan (1986), the dissappointing record of multinational corporations in their efforts during the 1980's to appoint and promote blacks into higher levels in the organisational hierarchy; despite the resources available

being highlighted. Conventional explanations vary from criticism to defence of white management; the former being in the constraints to action, and the latter in the comparison of attitudes and abilities. While valid, these explanations are insufficient, and the effects of social segregation are investigated to explain the phenomenon. The transmission of effective managerial skills, through observation and communication in the situation, is discussed. The informal process is hampered for blacks due to segregation in the wider society. Mentoring, which concentrates on the formal aspects of the job, fails to compensate and tends to be paternalistic. Regarding trust and motivation, black managers do not receive the kind of feedback and reassurance that is a precondition for the confidence required for advancement. Difficulties are experienced in adapting to the culture of organisations, and the guidance provided through social intimacy is lacking for blacks. In South Africa, increasing political tensions result in avoidance of conservatism, due to the gravity of issues in the country. Black managers are faced with the dilemma of community versus company loyalty, becoming increasingly vulnerable in townships. Whites easily identify with the managerial establishment, while for blacks the management-employee division coincides with the racial one.

Affirmative action has been viewed as a programme created to correct years of inequities, in a system that has been highly discriminatory. Disparate perceptions held by blacks and whites have caused tension in the workplace, and in society in general. The economic gap between whites and blacks has widened to crisis proportions.

Black people have been introduced into management levels in limited numbers and special roles, in predominantly white organisations. The perception and understanding of racial dynamics varies for different populations, with implications for patterns of interaction among black and white managers, racial group membership, and individual satisfaction with pay and promotion. The design of organisational interventions and

social policy needs to take into account the fact that the managerial arena is no longer without racial differences; requiring new insights for improved change strategies.

There is an increasing awareness that qualitative aspects, particularly employees attitudes, determine the amount of progress which occurs in business. Top management and human resources departments can control policy, planning, selection, and training; but not fear and prejudice which resists in departments and on factory floors daily. Attitudes reflect how an individual feels about something, influenced and shaped by the environment, on the people who play an important part in the individual's life. Change is resisted, and existing frameworks reinforced. Selective perception and retention promotes racial stereotyping. Overt and covert strategies are employed by whites who resist black advancement. Differences in the nature and structure of attitudes occur. Some aspects of black advancement are easily accepted, while others are rejected. Attitudes grounded in an established belief system resist change. The degree of consensus amongst employees about acceptability varies. Focussing on the attitudes of white managers, patterns are identified to suggest alternatives for attitudinal change in organisations.

The real issues, ie negative items and items about which little consensus may be reached, have been identified. A problem is that of other whites as an obstacle to black advancement:

- * the perception that blacks lack objectivity and assertion
- * are emotional
- * and do not find work as challenging or important as whites

Cascio (1991), in his discussion on the American perspective, at the first conference on fairness in personnel decisions, categorised different forms of unfair discrimination in practice. These are:

- i) Intentional discrimination - open expression of / bigotry
- ii) Unequal treatment - disparate sets of standards for groups
- iii) Unequal effect - same standard but has unequal effect on different groups
- iv) Continuation of past effects - perpetuated over time
- v) Retaliation against employees who complain about discrimination

Charoux and Hurst (1991), discuss the predictive validity of the assessment centre in identifying black leadership potential. In this longitudinal study, the upward mobility of black employees in the lower echelons was monitored and assessed. The results indicated that the assessment centre process is reliable and valid, and that certain dimensions play an important role in this regard, which have important implications for a new South Africa.

Manganyi (1991), discusses psychology and racial differences in South Africa, emphasising the inappropriateness of the traditions of Western psychology in solving the treachery of apartheid.

According to Singer (1987), an intercultural communicator should be in touch with his own perceptions and identity, personal cultures, and conflicts. The Johari window represents a visual conceptualisation of the information that is known to us and that which is known to others. It is important to assess one's intrapersonal power and communication, as a prerequisite for the assessment of others. The same is applicable to the assessment of groups, intergroup communication forming the basis of the diffusion of innovation and transfer of technology.

From another perspective, the medium to long term shift in emphasis from black advancement to black empowerment, can be analysed. Hypothesising that in the future blacks will be in a

position of control, black advancement becomes irrelevant. Blacks would proceed to hire qualified blacks in positions of real power and authority. Black advancement may be criticised for emphasising negative stereotypes grounded in reasons why blacks cannot perform, and for insinuating that the issue is a white responsibility in that blacks are unable to develop themselves. From this point of view, there is no relation between competence and skin colour, and research should be looking at the qualities that make a manager (not a black or white manager) successful.

The literature on advancement and promotion therefore appears to be lacking a balance between theories of white and black thinkers. The majority of the investigations have taken place in America, and that which has been conducted in South Africa has been predominantly initiated by white researchers. While the literature provides an orientation to the topic of promotion: and encompasses aspects such as promotion potential, job mobility, and the organisational progression of employees; greater insight into intercultural perceptions is required. Developments in South Africa over the past decade have had a significant effect on these perceptions, particularly the concept of affirmative action. The question of the white researcher's ability to assess the process objectively, has been raised. Therefore a cultural category is identified which takes into account the changing intercultural perceptions of promotion in an uncertain climate.

3.7 THE SELECTION OF CATEGORIES FOR THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

The selection of categories for the interview questionnaire is based on Osherson's (1980) approach to men and career change at midlife. Osherson covers life domain areas with opening questions related to work, family, social relations, leisure, and health; with a past, present, and future orientation. Understanding specific career changes becomes part of

understanding the larger process of how individuals change and grow during adulthood, placing career issues in the context of the general life situation. A developmental, life-history approach is used to establish the subjective meaning of work for the individual through the life cycle. Thereafter, Osherson's study turns to the specific analysis of career change at midlife, and finally returns to the general issues of adult development.

The categories selected in this study are drawn from a synthesis of the literature, and the cultural categories identified in this chapter.

The first part of the questionnaire deals with demographic characteristics, including the perceptions and personal meaning the individual attaches to his situation.

The second part deals with the work identity of the individual, and in particular the individual's perception of his role in society.

The third part explores the individual's value system, and attempts to understand the individual's self-concept from a personal perspective.

The fourth part deals with the individual's cultural identity, including an appreciation of organisational functioning in South Africa with regard to the position of blacks in the workforce.

Finally aspects of intercultural perceptions and promotion are covered, drawing on insights into black advancement.

The intention is therefore, like Osherson, to explore life domain areas which relate to intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers, in order to understand the larger process, placing promotion issues in the context of the general life situation.

3.8 THE FORMATION OF QUESTIONS CONTAINED IN EACH CATEGORY

The Osherson (1980) principles of minimal intervention and attention to affective linkages are applied in the formulation of questions. The first principle allows the person's organisation of meanings to emerge, rather than directing what the associational flow should be. The second principle emphasises the discovery of relationships underlying affective issues, central life events, and significant figures. The questions therefore allow the investigator to listen for, and be sensitive to, the self-relevance of topics in the life domains discussed.

In the first part of the interview, the questions are aimed at prompting the individual to talk freely about himself, his background, and changing perceptions thereof. The respondent is also asked to discuss his family. These questions are drawn directly from Osherson's approach, as they serve the purpose of facilitating interaction, without overspecifying the content. The intention is to enable the investigator to discover the meaning the respondent attaches to his background and development, and his relationship to this.

In the second part, the current employment status of the individual is explored; again drawing on the questions posed by Osherson regarding the importance attached to the work role. The emphasis is on the proper understanding of the individual's experience of himself in society, of behaviour, and of the relationship between the two. This section questions the progression of the individual to his current status, and stimulates the respondent to consider alternatives. Group membership issues could be accommodated in these questions should they arise. The future of the respondent is questioned, allowing for possible discussion of the effects of a rapidly changing society in South Africa.

The third part is comprised of questions which seek to uncover

the personal value system and principles of the respondent. behaviour is probed, including their influence on his functioning in his present vocation. The intention is to gain insight into the complex pattern of interrelationships of self perceptions. The last question in this section deals with changing values, providing the respondent with an opportunity to discuss the effects of the family, culture, institutions, and the media.

The fourth part contains questions which further explore the individual's perceptions of culture, and the importance attached to group membership. The personal meaning attributed to cultural identity; and the relationship thereof to personal growth, managerial perceptions, personal traits, and power; may be investigated. The respondent is moved to discuss intercultural perceptions with the last two questions in this section.

Finally, the relationship between intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers, is posed as a direct question. A second question focusses the discussion on the personal experiences of the individual in this regard. The next three questions probe the respondent's perceptions of organisational functioning, and his unique position within the system. The respondent is then called upon to identify possible obstacles to further advancement; and to discuss the company's approach to the integration of blacks into the organisation. A question is also raised to obtain insight into the individual's perceptions of the importance of previous experience.

The questions in the above section represent an adapted version of the Osherson (1980) approach to midlife career change. They therefore encourage the respondent to relate his personal experiences and perceptions of events and figures; while providing an opportunity to raise issues such as the black struggle for acceptance, problems of residential and educational segregation, the attitudes of white managers, and

the changing work ethic.

The last five questions relate to changing racial perceptions, conflict, satisfaction, and the future for black managers in South Africa. The aim of this section is to gain insight into the respondent's thoughts about some of the topical issues raised in the literature. The intention is to stimulate the individual to draw some conclusions about the topic of the study. The possibility exists that interview linkages between life domains across time and lines of effect, may be revealed.

3.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has focussed on a closer, more personalised view of the literature; and attempted to integrate the topics discussed in chapter two. The creation of categories and questions in the interview questionnaire is discussed; and the themes expanded upon in the fourth chapter. This following chapter looks at research methodology, and the approach adopted for this study.

CHAPTER 4RESEARCH METHODOLOGY4.1 INTRODUCTION

"It is only when science is able to make inferences about things that it is able to progress beyond the immediate and the palpable to deal with the abstract and remote. A science limited to that which is directly observable would never be able to deal with such matters as electricity, atomic physics, or human disease (Margenau, 1973, Powers, 1973a, Combs and Snygg, 1959), as quoted by Combs (1988).

This chapter deals with the research methodology employed to establish intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers.

Firstly, general problems of cross-cultural psychological assessment in the South African context are described.

Secondly, qualitative techniques in general are briefly described.

In the third instance, a comparison is drawn between qualitative and quantitative methodology.

Fourthly, the motivation for the choice of technique for this study is supplied.

In the fifth place, the four-step method of inquiry employed is discussed in detail, with particular emphasis on questionnaire construction and interview procedure.

Finally, the procedure adopted to analyse and write up the qualitative research is described.

4.2 GENERAL PROBLEMS OF CROSS-CULTURAL ASSESSMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT.

Alexis Retief (1988), provides a historical survey of South African cross-cultural assessment, discussing methods and techniques; and theoretically analysing psychological and interdisciplinary perspectives. A model is proposed for understanding culture as "the most central theoretical construct of cross-cultural psychology". The core issue is the similarities and differences between members of different cultures. Three categories for investigation are evaluated: projective, factorially-based, and qualitative. An interdisciplinary approach demonstrates the salient aspects of the relationship between culture, mind, and behaviour. Genetic, biological, social, and cultural factors are linked into one theoretical framework. From a systems perspective, the confusing domain of phenomena are classified in terms of the similar roles they fulfil in the maintainance of systems. Comparisons attempt to effect an interface of meanings between cultural systems, which construe their social worlds in non-identical ways.

The move away from a mentality where differences in behaviour are assumed to have a genetic or racial base, to one emphasising an appreciation of differences considered as variations in lifestyles, is apparent. According to Retief (1988), Western civilisations influence on traditional cultures has resulted in transitional societies readjusting to new states of equilibrium. The majority of the inhabitants of Southern Africa are undergoing rapid acculturation - a research trend of the 1970's and 1980's. Prior to this, adaptability testing had predominated the colonial research tradition. The problem of selection and placement in industry, the assessment of cognitive abilities, and educational psychology, have increased in importance. Basic comparative problems have come to the fore within the parameters of research requirements. As the black people in this country become more emancipated, they will be viewed less as tools of

management and more as people and equals.

Although ethnocentrism as a basis for comparative judgements has nearly vanished, issues of equivalence and comparability, the translation of meanings, and bias, continue to influence the methodology.

With regard to comparability, the notion of levels of analysis, as described by Berry (1980), is relevant. Dimensional identity can exist at a structural or functional level, for example the structure of industrial organisations; while variation could exist at another level, for example individual observable behaviour. Universals, characteristics common to all human beings, can be used as common denominators along which individuals or groups may vary and be compared. Alternatively equivalence - functional, conceptual, or metric - may be demonstrated with regard to concepts and data across groups. Functional equivalences pre-exist naturally, while conceptual equivalences are discovered in the local meaning of concepts of the people measured. Metric equivalence may be established after data collection and analysis.

Translation problems can occur in the orientation, instructions, and interview questions posed to subjects. In addition, for open-ended questions, the responses themselves may have to be translated. Idiomatic forms of speech can also pose problems. The terms used must refer to real things and experiences familiar to cultures studied, particular attention being paid to whether a concept actually exists in the culture being studied.

Bias may be found in test items, or may be more subtle as in a bias towards finding differences or similarities. Fairness becomes an important issue in personnel decisions.

4.3 QUALITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Qualitative research looks for patterns of interrelationships between many categories, rather than the sharply delineated relationship between a specific set of them. The difference between qualitative and quantitative techniques lies in the trade-off between precision and complexity-capturing ability. The difference is therefore in the data-reporting function of the respondent.

Qualitative techniques employ the systematic observation of behaviour in natural settings, the primary objective being to categorise, detail, and supply an account of the phenomena under study. The conclusions drawn are not always independent of the subjective interpretation of the investigator. The confirmation of hypotheses is therefore not of primary concern, but rather the provision of insight into complex, changing phenomena, such as culture.

Qualitative research falls into one of two categories - basic or applied. The contribution made to basic research, which pursues knowledge for the sake of knowledge, is through grounded theory via inductive strategies. In applied research, with its purpose of helping people understand the nature of a problem in order to exercise effective control, qualitative researchers contribute personal insights and experiences to recommendations.

In addition to these two categories, qualitative research may be of an evaluative nature, employing summative, formative, or action research techniques. The purposes in this instance would be to determine the effectiveness of an intervention, to improve upon an intervention, or to solve problems in a practical situation.

Qualitative techniques also fall broadly into two categories; the first being fieldwork strategies and observational

methods, and the second being qualitative interviewing.

Naturalistic observations take place in the field. The purpose of observational data is to describe the situation, activities, people, and meanings attributed by the participants to an event. Field work strategies seldom involve a single method or technique. Observational data may be collected in a number of ways, including participant observation, field observation, qualitative observation, direct observation, or field research. Variations in observational methods occur in terms of observer involvement, the covert or overt nature of observations, duration, observational focus. Three stages are generally apparent in fieldwork; these being entry into the field, data-gathering, and the closing stage. This contrasts with the four-step method of inquiry pursued in this qualitative interviewing study.

The purpose of interviewing is to allow us to enter in to the other person's perspective, assuming that this perspective is meaningful, and able to be made understandable. The quality of the data obtained is closely related to the skill of the interviewer. According to Patton (1990), interviews fall into three different categories, depending on the degree to which questions are predetermined:

- * the informal conversational interview,
- * the general interview guide approach, and
- * the standardised open-ended interview.

While the first approach relies on spontaneous and natural interaction; the second approach summarises a set of issues to be explored, without specifying the wording or sequence of questions. The standardised open-ended interview consists of predetermined questions which take each respondent through the same sequence. Although flexibility in probing is limited and dependent on the skill of the interviewer, the possibility of bias is reduced by avoiding conducting different interviews

for different people with varying emphases on the results. The common characteristic of all three approaches is the open-ended nature of questions posed; which contrasts with closed instruments which force subjects to fit their knowledge, experiences, and feelings into the evaluator's categories. The basic principle of qualitative interviewing is therefore to provide a framework in which interviewees can express their own understandings in their own terms.

4.4 COMPARISON BETWEEN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE.

The differences between, and relative strengths and weaknesses of, qualitative and quantitative method choices, are relevant.

Qualitative methods facilitate the study of phenomena in depth and detail. Quantitative methods employ standardised measures to ensure that varying frames of reference can be accommodated in a limited number of known categories to which values can be assigned.

Retief (1988), describes qualitative research as accommodating the natural, complex, and unique behaviours characteristic of all culture. The systematic observation of behaviour in natural settings is employed to classify, describe, and account for phenomena. The selection of subjects and observations is less standardised, and there is less concern with quantification and statistical analysis than with quantitative techniques. In cross-cultural research, the conclusions drawn depend to a certain extent on the subjective interpretation of the investigator. The observer, as a participant, is obtrusive; which may influence behaviours. The relationship of qualitative techniques to theory is critical. The development of theory facilitates the selection of important variables, and the exploration of alternative frames of reference; giving direction to methodological strategies.

The aims are the prediction of the behaviour of certain phenomena under certain conditions, and the description of reality. The theoretical framework provided by the review of related literature, is required to address the range, variability, and qualitative differences in human behaviour as a function of cultural variables. Within this context, methodological aspects can be applied with meaning. The role of qualitative techniques is gaining recognition in the contribution made in terms of valuable insights to the assessment tradition.

Quantitative measures have the advantage of facilitating the assessment of a limited set of variables of a large sample, to allow for comparison and statistical aggregation of the data. The results are broad, generalisable findings, which may be presented accurately and concisely. The quality of instrument construction and administration determines validity and reliability.

By contrast, qualitative methods result in an abundance of detailed information about a larger number of variables of a smaller sample. Understanding is increased at the expense of reduced generalisability. Validity and reliability depend on the skill, adeptness, and thoroughness of the researcher as the instrument. According to Guba and Lincoln, in Patton (1990), the loss in rigor is offset by the researcher's flexibility, insight, and ability to build on tacit knowledge.

4.5 THE CHOICE OF TECHNIQUE FOR THIS STUDY.

Options and strategies for any applied research inquiry depend on the following:

- * the purpose of the investigation
- * the consumer of the findings
- * the type of information required
- * the time available
- * the employable resources

The choice of qualitative techniques for the study of intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers, is based on an analysis of the above. The purpose of the investigation as specified in chapter one is to identify and evaluate relationships. The consumers of the findings will be both academics and practitioners. The type of information required is that which increases insight, and provides a basis for further research. The time available is limited by the Senate regulations, and cannot exceed two years. The employable resources are the promoter, the researcher, the organisation, and the literature.

Objections have been raised to the experimental methodological paradigm, characteristic of the majority of cross-cultural research (Miller, 1987). From a systems viewpoint, culture is regarded as a changing entity; whereas traditional ways of doing research artificially segment and categorise phenomena. The effect may influence, or cause, outcomes. An adequate analysis of the developmental processes that motivate change is hampered when experimental method dictates procedures and levels of understanding.

Frankel (1986), describes qualitative research as a cooperative endeavour, emphasising the necessity of a team approach. Sensitivity with regard to roles may result in hidden defences and accusations, and the importance of an outside moderator is stressed.

Clark (1973), discusses the role of the white researcher in black society. Taking a futuristic look at contemporary researchers, the writer identifies two perspectives: the materialistic orientation, and the non-materialistic. The former is characterised by an emphasis on behaviourism and genetic determinants; while the latter, represented by phenomenology, emphasises psychic determinants. Both approaches are concerned with internal determinants, however the materialistic approach is in opposition to the ontological premise of black thinkers, which is spiritual in essence.

Qualitative research enables the researcher to go beyond the reported facts; and to analyse the problem from various perspectives, without imposing a predetermined frame of reference upon interviewees.

According to Patton (1990), research, like diplomacy, is the art of the possible. A qualitative inquiry strategy draws on several ideals, the themes of which which are utilised by degree. The themes are:

- * situational observations (naturalistic inquiry)
- * openness (inductive analysis)
- * situational empathy (holistic perspective)
- * direct contact and experience (insight)
- * attention to process (dynamic focus)
- * appreciation of uniqueness (case orientation)
- * neutrality (objectivity)
- * design flexibility (adaptability)

From strategic ideals, practical choices are made as the investigator moves from a discovery or inductive approach, to focus on emerging patterns and to deduce and verify the research. Variety in qualitative inquiry occurs in relation to the theoretical orientations of the investigator. For the purposes of this study, a phenomenological approach is adopted. The question asked is what the structure and essence of experience of this phenomena is for these people. The focus is on how phenomena are perceived and integrated to create a world view. However, in this study there is no methodological mandate for the investigator to experience the phenomenon directly. Indeed it would not be possible. Instead the personal insights and experience of the researcher are brought to the fore in a heuristic manner. The research participants remain visible in the analysis of data, and continue to be portrayed as whole persons. However, while the culture of a group of people, socially acceptable behaviours, common meanings, the relationship between human behaviour and the environment, and the functioning of a system as a whole are

important and interrelated variables; in practice the methods of qualitative inquiry can be separated from the epistemology from which they emerge to stand on their own as reasonable ways to increase understanding.

4.6 THE FOUR-STEP METHOD OF INQUIRY

The qualitative research circle is divided into four quadrants, each representing a successive step as follows:

4.6.1 Review of literature (analytical categories)

The process of defining problems, assessing data, and providing the concepts on which percepts are based, is contained in the first two chapters of this study. Literature related to perception, culture, the self, the organisation, and promotion, are qualitatively analysed to determine how assumptions force the definition of problems and results. The specification of these analytical categories establishes the domain and relationships that may organise the data.

4.6.2 Review of cultural categories

The process of using the self as an instrument of inquiry in order to identify categories and relationships not discussed in the literature, is contained in the third chapter of this study. Templates for matches in the interview data are thus prepared. Through the investigator increasing her own understanding of her vision of the world, the adoption of a critical distance from it is possible. The chapter therefore looks at factors related to the understanding of intercultural perceptions.

4.6.3 Interview procedure and the discovery of cultural categories

In construction of the questionnaire, use is made of Osherson's free-associative approach, in an attempt to obtain rich detail and adhere to the real texture of the individual's life. The analytical and cultural categories described in the second and third chapters appear in the interview, bracketed by related topics that precede and follow them. The aim is to discover the perceived problems, satisfactions, and events related to the promotion of black managers.

The methodology consists of three broad sections:

- * the design of the study
- * the interviewing process or method
- * the analysis of the resulting data

i) The design of the study

The participants were located during discussions with the Human Resources Director of the Frame Group. According to McCracken (1988), the choice of respondents should be limited to those unknown to the investigator, and who have no special knowledge or ignorance of the topic. As the company had not yet embarked on an equal opportunity or affirmative action programme, the selection of a sample was limited by the availability of black managers who had achieved their status in the natural course of events. The issue is therefore one of access, not generalisability. The provision of information by the researcher is considered primary by Osherson, therefore the purpose and procedures of the research was presented to the participants in an initial meeting. Those willing to participate signed an agreement of confidentiality (refer Appendix 2). Negotiations of meeting times were conducted, establishing the venues and seating arrangements. Frankel (1986), sites preparation and organisation as vital to the prevention of both obvious and subtle blocks in the execution

of research. In this study participants were allowed adequate time to arrange their schedules around participation. It is not unusual for participants to arrive with hidden agendas which could affect the research, therefore the ability of the interviewer to elicit both honest negative and positive responses, and discover suggestions that contain personal bias is imperative. The qualitative research project is ended with a debriefing, which combines, corrects, and clarifies the insights gained during sessions.

ii) The interviewing process or method

Osherson (1980), describes an approach to working with people in the analytical situation, the analyst being a source of interpretation and feedback to the interviewee. As people differ in the extent to which they are prepared to hear about themselves and their experiences; the importance of establishing a relationship characterised by cooperation, openness, and trust, is emphasised. A face-safe atmosphere must be created, by body posture, facial gestures, and simple informational opening questions. A transitional phase, such as promotion, cannot be validly isolated from its beginnings in the broader life history of the individual. Consideration in this study is therefore given to the larger general issues which surround the research. The process of change takes on different meanings, depending on whether it stems from positive growth or negative defensiveness. An attempt is made to understand the manner in which individuals come to terms with the reality of their achievements, and how the work situation defines the self. The approach to challenges and conflicts, and the subjective meaning of work is investigated. The aim of the interview is to elicit the interviewee's own organisational experiences and subjective frame of reference related to intercultural perceptions and black managers promotion to management level. The method accomodates ideosyncratic features divorced from rigorous standard research (refer appendix 1: Intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers).

Biographical questions are used to open the interview, and to allow for the obtaining of simple descriptive details of the individual's life. Questions are aimed at moving the respondent to talk, without overspecifying the substance or perspective of this talk. The object is to watch for key terms which the respondent can be encouraged to expand upon. Planned prompts are used when categories identified do not emerge spontaneously. The questionnaire is seen as an instrument to gather data concerning how humans behave, concurrently attempting to discover and verify regularities. Responses are a function of both the variable being measured, and the degree to which the respondent feels at liberty to reveal information. The distance between the respondent and the researcher is reduced by the relevance of the questions to the respondent's personal experience. The respondent may be asked to recall exceptional events, to help the respondent achieve a new distance. Contrast questions are used only when the above options are exhausted, to allow the researcher to account for all the formal characteristics of the topic under discussion.

Work identity questions follow the biographical questions. Alderfer and Brown (1972), discuss the demonstration and awareness of a respondent's life dilemmas as a means to earning the trust of organisational members. The writers showed that more information threatening to the respondent could be elicited by the designing of an empathetic questionnaire, than by traditional instruments attempting to measure the same variables.

Value system questions follow the work identity questions. In the provision of threatening material, role and experience of the respondent may result in the description of systematic phenomena being less threatening than an acknowledgement of ones own contribution to the problem. In other instances, accepting ones own contribution is easier than perceiving a systematic problem. The difficulty lies in determining whether perceptions expressed, reflect reality. A person's perception has its own reality. The importance of empathy is emphasised

in attempts made to obtain accurate, but potentially threatening material.

Cultural identity questions follow the value system questions. In a study involving racial issues, the researcher is faced with the question of whether race is a high correlate, or an identity marker, of a particular ideology. According to Osherson (1980), the parameters of the response should be left open for the individual to structure answers. This approach is applicable to this study as an exploratory one; where literature directly related to the problem in South Africa, is limited. An attempt is made to avoid built-in data bias and distortion.

Thus general areas of interest to be covered with each respondent are formulated in advance. The principles of minimal intervention and attention to affective linkages are adopted. The interviewee is encouraged to go beyond initial statements, expanding upon them. Specific preconceptions of what would be found, or the particular elements which would emerge as important, are purposely not made. The final category of questions deals with intercultural perceptions and promotion. The object is to focus on the relationship under study, and to integrate the responses of the previous sections.

The interview protocol becomes a constructed text, which is read and analysed. The interview, as a source of information, represents a challenging opportunity to capture relevant data in the middle of complicated conversation. During the course of the interview, the investigator listens for impression management, topic avoidance, deliberate distortion, minor misunderstandings, and outright incomprehension. In this study, the respondents are therefore given room to talk and allowed to follow their own lead, to enable the investigator to obtain sufficient data to establish matches on reflection. Glib assumptions on the part of the researcher are thus avoided, and detail is generated.

iii) The analysis of the resulting data

Drawing on Osherson's (1980) discussion of analysis of data, three approaches are used in this study. The analysis of data is directly related to the writing up process, and is described in greater detail in the last section of this chapter. Firstly, affective linkages between the categories identified across time are reconstructed, to establish the impact of events on the respondents life related to perceptions of the promotion of black managers. Secondly, the language of the participant is learnt in so far as the personal meaning and significance of key words and phrases are understood. Thirdly, the structural or process aspects of the interview are analysed, two dimensions receiving particular emphasis. These are structural dysfunction - or how the interview hangs together, and working alliance - or the relationship between the interviewer and the respondent.

In terms of the four-step method of inquiry, these approaches are equivalent to the phase of interview analysis and the discovery of analytical categories.

4.6.4 Interview analysis and discovery of analytical categories

The research circle is completed when analytical categories are discovered through analysis; the object being to determine the categories, relationships, and assumptions that determine the respondents view of the world, and the topic in particular. The five stage process described by Mc Cracken (1988), is relevant:

i) Firstly the utterances are treated in their own terms ignoring relationships to other parts of the text. Important material is sorted from unimportant material to discover assumptions and beliefs which are the core. The self is used as an instrument in an intuitive way, using matches and templates from the literature and culture reviews to search

out systematic properties of the interview data, while avoiding premature closure.

ii) Secondly each observation is developed, related back to the transcript, and then related to other observations.

iii) The focus shifts from the main body of the transcript to the confirming or discouraging of developing possibilities. The field of patterns and themes emerging are refined, and general aspects of the interview become apparent.

iv) Interrelationships are decided through judgement, and organised hierarchically under chief points. Residual themes are recognised as possible contradictions.

v) Finally the themes for each interview are brought together, and through a process of transformation the cultural categories become analytical categories. The particulars of the individual lose emphasis to the general properties of thought and action of the group under study. The frame of reference shifts to that of the investigator, observations becoming conclusions ready for academic presentation.

4.7 THE IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES

In identifying themes for the individual case studies, attention is given to the possible linkages between the categories. The responses to the biographical questions may be related to the respondent's work identity in a unique way not previously described in the literature. The respondent's work identity may have an impact on his value system, or visa versa. The respondent's background may have directly influenced his cultural identity, or alternatively more recent events could have altered the respondent's perceptions. The respondent's intercultural perceptions could be related to a combination of his biographical characteristics, work identity, value system, and cultural identity; but the

importance of the relationship could vary. In attempting to determine the respondent's perceptions of intercultural perceptions and promotion, all possible linkages need to be taken into account in order to understand the respondent's view.

In order to obtain a degree of accuracy in this understanding, insight into the personal meaning the respondent attaches to words and phrases is required. The probing of initial responses and the rephrasing of questions is therefore essential.

In addition to the above considerations, the researcher analyses the structural aspects of the interview to determine the effects of process factors on the responses. The identification of themes is affected by the flow of the interview and the relationship formed during the event. The analysis which takes place during the interview is largely dependent on the skill of the interviewer; and while every attempt is made to apply this consistently, certain themes may predominate due to the emphasis placed on them by the interviewer. The effects of unequal weighting of factors is reduced by objective analysis of structural dysfunction and working alliances after the interview is completed.

The organisation of themes under chief points for each case study, facilitates the integration of themes from the individual interviews. Themes which appear residual in an individual case could be common with themes from another case or cases. While an appreciation of uniqueness is essential, the move must be made from an inductive approach to focus on emerging patterns to deduce and verify the research. Thus while the respondents remain visible, the particulars lose emphasis to the general properties of thought and action of the group under study. The themes are organised and interrelated to arrive at the essence of the paper. Through a process of transformation the cultural categories described become analytical categories, upon which conclusions and

recommendations are based.

4.8 CONCLUDING THE STUDY

According to Wolcott (1990), one does not conclude a qualitative study, and should avoid going beyond what is, making announcements of what ought to be. By identifying, organising, and interrelating themes, the investigator has isolated the essence of the paper. The researcher needs to establish whether there is agreement between one's findings and the literature. Therefore a closing statement states what has been attempted, what has been learned, and what new questions have been raised. Alternatives to a formal conclusion include summaries, recommendations or implications, or a statement of personal reflections. In this study conclusions take the form of the identification of new cultural categories and relationships. Recommendations take the form of a possible outline for future research. This investigation seeks to avoid providing practitioners with the opportunity of saying, "So what?" An outline of the additional information or insight required to pose a solution is provided. The view is taken that the research could assist those responsible for action in examining the possible consequences of alternatives, and serve as a model in conducting further inquiry on their own.

According to Patton (1990), focus is essential in reporting findings. Sufficient description and quotations are necessary to allow the reader to understand the basis for interpretation. Verification and validation material are helpful at the point that findings are presented. The investigator takes cognisance of the fact that not all findings are of equal importance or credibility. Qualitative reports tend to be relatively lengthy; and an executive summary, which presents the essence of findings, conclusions, and reasons for confidence in the study, is therefore useful to practitioners. This is not seen as an entire representation

of the study.

Thus the analysis presents a challenge which requires subtlety, involves risk, and allows for accomplishment when managed efficiently.

4.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has looked at research methodology in general, and described briefly the approach selected to establish the relationship between intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers.

CHAPTER 5A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE INTERVIEWS5.1 INTRODUCTION

Three interviews with black managers in the Frame Group were conducted by the researcher during July, August, and September 1992. This chapter looks at a critical evaluation of the interviews, presenting each as a condensed case study. The integration of the findings, facilitates the discovery of analytical categories.

In this chapter the interview procedure as outlined in chapter four is followed; the perceived problems, satisfactions, and events related to the promotion of black managers being explored. Agreement was obtained from the respondents' immediate superiors and the relevant personnel departments, prior to the purpose and procedures of the research being presented to the respondents in initial telephone conversations. Agreements of confidentiality were signed by the respondents at the outset of each interview. The interviews ranged in length from approximately an hour to an hour and a half. Two of the respondents were totally unknown to the investigator, the third having been introduced on a prior occasion. The respondents were believed to have no special knowledge or ignorance of the topic; however the interviews revealed a strong people orientation in at least two, and a highly objective approach in the third. The investigator failed to uncover any hidden agendas, and believes that honest negative and positive answers were elicited for the majority of the questions. A short debriefing followed each interview to combine, correct, and clarify the insights gained.

This chapter then completes the research circle by establishing the categories, relationships, and assumptions

that determine the respondent's view of the world. The five stage process described in chapter four is followed, the final stage being the integration of the themes for each interview.

Chapter six looks at conclusions and recommendations based on the themes identified.

5.2 CASE STUDY: RESPONDENT A

5.2.1 Background

Respondent A is employed as a senior personnel officer at the Frametex site in New Germany. This interview was conducted first; the process being taped on a tape recorder, and the protocol written out ad verbatim. The respondent had been introduced on a prior occasion to the interviewer, and the biographical questions used to open the interview served their purpose adequately. When asked to tell the interviewer about himself, the respondent replied that in the first instance he was black, and that he was sure that this was most important. He described himself as forty-two years of age, and married with four children at school. His wife he described as a higher primary school teacher who was studying to improve her position. He indicated that he was the only one who had not done anything yet. When probed, he elaborated that he had not been studying this year, listing a number of courses that he had completed and the difficulties experienced studying correspondence. He hastened to add that he could not use his age as an excuse.

When probed as to where he came from, the respondent was unsure of the question. A further probe as to home and background resulted in the respondent advising that he would not say much about the rural areas as he had not stayed there for a long time. He elaborated on having been born and bred in the Inanda area; moving to Clairwater township at the age of eleven, and to Kwandengezi township in 1978. When asked

whether that was now his home, he responded that it was a long story involving moves to Pongola, Durban, Umlazi, and finally New Germany. The respondent indicated that he had worked in Pongola, and as an industrial relations officer in Durban; and that he had owned a house in Umlazi. He purchased a home in New Germany due to the proximity of his and his wife's work.

When probed as to how the respondent felt about where he came from, he replied that it taught him a lesson, and that he had gained something from it, be it not much. He explained that people from the rural areas are, and to quote "a little bit out of town"; and that in those days he did not know anything about Inkatha, the ANC, or the PAC. He added that these days a young boy from the rural areas would advise with which organisation his support lay. When probed further as to what he could have gained from his background, the respondent mentioned the way rural parents raise their children and his appreciation for having experienced this himself. At this point the interviewer put words into the respondent's mouth by stating that he was saying that times had changed. The respondent agreed, and mentioned the unrest, the political problem, and recent events on the South Coast.

The interviewer attempted to summarise by saying that she understood that the respondent viewed his background in a positive light, but that this might not have been the case had he been growing up in this day. The respondent agreed, reiterating that he would like his children to be brought up in the way that he was. He felt that things had become so westernised, and had totally changed the parent-child relationship. When asked whether the respondent had anything to add regarding his family, he advised that they were well-to-do and eager to develop themselves. He laughed over his daughter's expectation of becoming a pilot and the prerequisites for this career. He concluded his discussion by emphasising that his was a progressive family, determined to get better.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his demographic characteristics are identified as follows:

- * his acceptance of the importance of the fact that he is black
- * his pride in the achievements of his family
- * his confusion with regard to the positive and negative aspects of his rural background

Taking into account the description of perception as that which is immediately experienced by a person, and the processes giving rise to it; and the theory that interpersonal interaction is governed by our experience of others; people acting in the light of how they assume others see them, or what they perceive as the intention of others; the importance the respondent lays on the colour of his skin is to be expected.

With regard to family achievements, the African view of an individual as a link in the chain of vital forces may be relevant. In addition, the work ethic appears to dominate and motivate aspirations in the respondent's family. The role of working is not purely a masculine one, and the locus of control appears internal as the respondent blames himself for not progressing further with studies. There appears to be an appreciation on the part of the respondent that effort expended allows an individual to reap the benefits, and that the act of working hard has an inherent dignity.

The respondent's replies to questions related to his background vary from a reluctance to discuss the rural aspects, to an expressed desire that his children be raised in the manner that he was. It would appear that the respondent has become aware of how culture has molded his behaviour, having been exposed to people with different cultural values or systems. The movement from a rural to an urban environment could have disrupted the order, direction, and guidance

offered by the former; while the latter has provided new opportunities.

5.2.2 Work Identity

The respondent's reply to the question regarding his current employment status or actual job title, was that the job title was that of senior personnel officer. When asked what was important to him about his work, he hesitated, asking for the question to be repeated. He appeared unsure as to how to answer, laughing and saying that he was running the mill. He found it to be very motivational; his job encompassing all aspects of the personnel function, but with less emphasis on training. He mentioned the regional training manager's responsibility in this regard. He stressed the industrial relations aspect, and when asked whether it was an important function, he emphasised the fact that all the functions he was involved with were equally important. He advised that the previous year retrenchments had been necessary, and that cases had gone for arbitration.

When asked how the respondent felt about these functions on a more personal level, he replied that he did not have a problem with the different sections, but that the administration presented difficulties. When probed he advised that he was doing all he could to catch up, following the retrenchment of his secretary and personnel officer. He advised that he had meetings to attend along with other work, and pointed to a board which he used to prioritise his tasks. He admitted that without this system he would, and to quote: "...I'll crack my head".

The interviewer suggested that it sounded like the respondent understood the pressure he was under, and coped with it. The respondent agreed, and acknowledged the assistance of his superior. He described the support and motivation offered. When asked how being a senior personnel officer affected the way he felt about himself as a person, the respondent replied

that he felt he should be given more exposure to certain things, in particular industrial court hearings and manpower budgeting. He expressed a need to understand information being passed down to him; rather than being told what was to be done, and having to comply with parameters which were not always workable. The respondent stated that he was happy, but that he felt he could be further developed. He mentioned that his predecessor had been a personnel manager, and he felt that there was still something lacking in his own development. The respondent struggled to describe how his being in the position had contributed to his self-esteem, and his belief that management had shown their confidence in his abilities. He reached the conclusion that he was being developed by being expected to cope with a variety of functions, but reemphasised his belief that exposure to manpower budgeting and forecasting could broaden his understanding of the job. When asked whether the confidence and status gained in the work situation affected his everyday life, the respondent replied that his home-life was affected in that he did not have much time to spend with his children. Although the respondent agreed that his job took up a lot of his personal time, he stressed that his family understood and that it was not a big issue.

When asked how he reached his present position, the respondent initially replied that his educational background was the first consideration; and then rephrased his answer saying that the factors which had got him to where he was were his experience and then his educational background, and the progress he had made in his job. The interviewer probed as to the route the respondent had taken, and the latter's reply was based on his personal experience of qualified incumbents who are unable to handle a job. When asked whether he felt that this was through a lack of experience, the respondent replied that experience and education go hand in hand. He advised that experience without educational qualifications could also be problematic; citing as an example managers' lack of knowledge of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and the difficulties experienced in putting employees aspirations into perspective.

The interviewer summarised that experience and educational background could be considered the primary reason for the respondent reaching his present position. The respondent indicated that his seniors could see that he had made progress, from the time that he was employed as a junior personnel officer. Laughing, he contemplated whether he would be made a personnel director, or replace the existing one.

In response to the question as to whether there was anything keeping the respondent from considering alternatives, or whether he had any questions or doubts about his future, the respondent answered that he had no doubts about his future. He then asked if the question referred to the work under discussion or in general. When guided to continue discussing the work situation, the respondent described himself as stable, and not disposed towards job hopping. He felt that should he resign, he could better his position; but that a higher salary did not necessarily mean a better job in practice. He felt that this incongruence could be demotivating, and that he was satisfied with his present circumstances, providing that the Pinetex mill did not close. The respondent then expressed his faith in the future of the organisation; and stated that at the present time, while he might think of alternatives, he would not consider taking any action unless the company were to close.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his work identity are identified as follows:

- * his assessment of the job as involving more than the title suggested
- * his need for self-development in order to cope adequately
- * his emphasis on the dual role of education and experience

The description in the literature of perception as a filter determining the unique approach adopted by the individual in dealing with organisational factors, is relevant.

Perception is regarded as a primary mechanism of employee interaction with, among other things, the job. The structure of managerial jobs in intercultural settings needs to be taken into account. By definition a subordinate's received role is his or her perception of the sent role. Communication between superior and subordinate is related to all aspects of satisfaction, and it would appear that the respondent experiences a certain degree of role ambiguity. On the one hand his subordinates have been retrenched, increasing his work load; and on the other hand he is expected to function in a variety of areas, but has not been given the managerial title of his predecessor.

With regard to the respondent's need for self-development, he appears to look to senior management to involve him in higher level decision-making. This contradicts previous statements made by the respondent when discussing his family, relating to the work ethic and the assumption of responsibility for one's future. The transference of managerial skills and knowledge across cultural boundaries, is relevant. The possibility exists that the respondents superiors have not taken into account the intercultural perceptual differences which include attitudes towards decision-making, and the morality of the managerial role. The respondent could be of the opinion that management is obliged to develop him further, due to the African and humanitarian approach of sharing of resources which emphasises acceptance and participation.

In emphasising the dual role of experience and education, the respondent revealed his understanding of the effects of the physical and social environment, values, needs, goals, and passed experiences on perceptions. According to the outflow theory of perception, we only code information for which we have available categories; while cultural and language obstacles to information transfer also occur. While experience and education are fundamental to achieving progress, their joint contribution may be more relevant to a black manager in a white mans' world.

5.2.3 Value System

The respondent was asked to describe his major values, the principles he strives to live his life for, not only work-related but in general. He described himself as a happy-go-lucky person, but was unsure how to proceed with his reply. He suggested that it may be a weakness, but that he liked to work with people. He expressed a desire to get things going and see things happening. The respondent described himself as very persevering, and as having a lot of patience but did not know whether this could be considered a value. The interviewer confirmed that patience could be considered a value to the extent that it was used in certain situations. The interviewer then probed to establish whether the aforementioned principles were considered important to the respondent in the way he tried to live his life. He responded that it was important to see things happening to avoid feeling withdrawn, a predisposition which resulted in nothing going right. He commented that he was not in favour of a passive role, preferring to be outspoken and to meet and talk with people.

When asked how the values discussed affected the way the respondent felt about being a senior personnel officer, he replied that he felt he was well accepted by everybody. He admitted a further weakness in the time it takes him to confront someone who has done him a disfavour. To quote: "I am not so quick. I think". The respondent explained his approach as giving a person a chance, so that the respondent is able to distance himself from the event and avoid getting hurt. He described it as his way of getting some intrinsic satisfaction. When asked whether there was anything else that the respondent did especially because of his values, he discussed the detrimental effect which jumping to conclusions can have on another's ego. He provided an example of a person who is unable to accept what he is told, and whom may be destroyed; describing his approach as one of preparation.

When asked whether he felt his values were changing, the respondent advised that they were not changing much. When probed, he advised that it depended on the situation, and that the question seemed ambiguous. The respondent added that he was easily adaptable and did not see his values changing radically. To summarise the investigator asked whether the respondent felt he would stick with his core values, adapting them to certain situations; to which he agreed.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his value system are identified as follows:

- * his orientation towards working with people
- * his need for involvement in action
- * his careful approach to interpersonal interactions

The literature describes the choice that black managers must make between being part of the community and being a competitive individual. A resurgence of pride in African values has been noted internationally, while community spirit serves as a survival mechanism for many South Africans. The possibility exists that the respondent is increasing his effectiveness by adopting a humanitarian approach in a bureaucratic environment.

With regard to the respondent's preference for assuming an active role, this contradicts literature which describes the superficiality of the African adoption of Western ideals. The respondent is clearly doing more than pay lip service, and could not be considered to be lacking the commitment necessary to be effective.

The literature describes the African view of time in terms of specific events, the emphasis being on the manner in which a task is done rather than the meeting of a deadline. In addition, human relations are stressed in contrast to the Western orientation towards productivity.

5.2.4 Cultural Identity

When asked what the respondent felt his cultural identity was, he was confused as to how he could explain himself. His dilemma centered around having been born in a rural area, and being currently in an urban area. The respondent expressed the desire to elaborate, but found it difficult to be specific. He then advised that he did not believe much in the cultural aspect. He indicated that his background had not emphasised the issue. The caring aspect emerged, with a description of the medical careers followed by his parents. The short period spent in the rural area left him feeling caught between the rural and the urban. When probed, the respondent advised that he could accommodate people from the rural areas, and was not easily upset. He admitted to being more urbanised at work, but hastened to add that he still respected his parents. He could not contemplate creating a social distance between himself and his parents, and described the separation during his stay in Pongola as not so happy. The respondent expressed a fleeting desire to be free from this, but remained unsure. The interviewer sought clarification that strong family ties existed, which the respondent agreed on. He felt that it was an acquired rather than an inherited thing, and confirmed that he was more urban than rural.

The interviewer then asked as to which ethnic group the respondent belonged. The respondent replied that he was pure Zulu, but that he did not find problems in mixing with other ethnics providing cultural or ethnic issues did not arise. He listed the groups he did not have a problem with, citing the only problem as language. He explained that Nguni-related languages he understood, but not Sotho and Venda. He advised that conversations were held in English, which was well accepted. The respondent advised that people from other countries like Lesotho were less linked.

When asking the question regarding membership to a group, the interviewer was unsure to which group the respondent might refer. The respondent advised that the group was urban. The interviewer sought clarification as to whether the group was more urban than Zulu, to which the respondent replied that it was more urban than rural. The interviewer added that the respondent was obviously Zulu by birth, to which he agreed. Combining the two aspects of his membership, the question regarding the importance thereof was asked. The respondent advised that he could not separate himself from it. The interviewer asked whether everything was important about his membership, and the respondent agreed. Expressing a reluctance to discuss politics; the respondent advised that he was happy that he was a Zulu, and in any event could not change the fact. He advised that the Zulu group had very good values. When probed, he commented that England, or every nation, has got its own way of doing things. The respondent advised that he enjoyed being a Zulu, was brought up as one, and would die as one.

The interviewer enquired whether there was anything the respondent particularly liked about belonging to the urban Zulu group, to which he replied emphasising that respect was a core value. He explained that as a Zulu he could not bear to see another suffering, and would do his best to help. The respondent told a historical story of a man who would give a cow in exchange for a spoon; not because he was a fool, but because the owner of the spoon was in need. The interviewer acknowledged that the two items were not equal in value, whereupon the respondent advised that it was the interchange of feelings that was important. The man would give even far more to show respect. When probed, the respondent advised that respect for others, for seniors, and for children was important. Children should also respect their elders, taking instructions without questioning authority; in the same way that Zulus respect their chiefs. The respondent then laughed, advising that he did not enjoy this sort of respect from his own children. He cited an example of his child blaming a

teacher for his failure, and not wishing to return to a school. The interviewer summarised by stating that respect was a strong feeling, to which the respondent agreed.

When asked whether there was anything the respondent particularly disliked about being an urbanised Zulu, the respondent responded in the negative, with the proviso that the relationship between himself and people in the rural areas remained intact. He mentioned that problems arose when an urbanised Zulu looked down upon a person in the rural areas, stressing a black in the rural areas. The interviewer queried whether this did happen, to which the respondent replied in the positive. He cited an example of a degreed doctor who does not return to rural areas to give service, preferring to set himself up in a township. The rural people then suffer, having to travel to get help. The interviewer commented that this went against the culture of respect and maintaining of ties, to which the respondent agreed. He explained that people raised in the townships and urban areas have a negative attitude towards rural areas, but that this was not applicable in his case.

In response to the question as to how the respondent viewed individuals of different cultures, he advised that he did not know what to say. When probed, he added that he did not like to say. He then cited an example of how when he lived in Umlazi he had a neighbour who knew what was happening in the respondent's family and visa versa. They could approach each other with problems, unlike people in town who are less concerned with their neighbours' affairs. The respondent admitted that he did not know whether this assumption was correct, but that he had experienced it. He advised that he would be familiar with about 15 families in his area, and would punish neighbours' children if they were doing something wrong. The respondent advised that the interviewer, or whites in general, would not do that. The interviewer agreed, whereafter the respondent stated that he was not referring to whites in particular, except to point out that cultures are

different. He postulated that in time cultures may intermingle to form one culture, adding that it would not be in this generation, or maybe five generations to come.

The interviewer then summarised by saying that the respondent appeared to recognise the differences between individuals from different groups. The respondent added that blacks, whites, and Indians were totally different; whereas among the different African cultures there was a tie in that they were black. The interviewer introduced the concept of a culture within a greater culture, which the respondent rephrased in terms of a micro and macro situation.

When asked how the respondent felt individuals from different cultures viewed him, he advised that they would accept him and that there was no blockage to interaction.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his cultural system, are identified as follows:

- * his dilemma of being caught between the rural and urban cultural systems
- * his inability to view himself separately from the group to which he belongs
- * his appreciation of respect as a core cultural value
- * his lack of surety in discussing other cultures

It would appear that the respondent learned culture as part of a social experience, having spent his influential years in a rural environment. The literature compares Western and African cultures in terms of five factors, of which the morality aspect appears to influence the respondent's perceptions. It is possible that the respondent experiences a certain degree of guilt in admitting that he has left the rural area, and can no longer adhere to a spirit of community and interdependence.

The literature regarding group membership discusses the distinction between perceptual and identity groups, and it would appear that the rural group is now of a perceptual nature to the respondent. He identifies with the urban Zulu group, and it is possible that the interview rendered the conflict more conscious.

Groups condition their members' perceptions of objective and subjective phenomena. The ideology proposed in the example of providing for the needy is used by the rural Zulu to illustrate respect. From a western viewpoint, the exchange of goods is not rational, but from an intergroup perspective objectivity is an interpretation of reality by members. The personal meaning which the respondent attaches to respect must be taken into account.

While theory may be used to conceptualise intercultural differences, the group a person represents at a given point depends on the intergroup context in which the event occurs. The possibility exists that the respondent is unsure how to discuss individuals from other cultures or groups, when in certain instances he may feel that he is also part of the other culture or group. His description of the integration of cultures could symbolise his acknowledgement of the acculturation taking place in his life, as the work situation forces an increasingly urbanised approach.

5.2.5 Intercultural perceptions and promotion

At this point the interviewer asked whether the respondent had time to continue, the respondent replying that he wished to continue.

The interviewer explained that the section to follow was an integration of issues discussed during the interview, and the relation of these to the work situation. The question as to what the respondent thought was the relationship between intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers

was asked, and immediately rephrased. The interviewer asked whether the respondent thought that what had been discussed was related to black managers being promoted. The respondent advised that he did not know how to answer the question, but that he would make a general statement. The respondent added that the question was very wide, to which the interviewer agreed. The respondent continued, advising that because of the current situation, the general perception of senior management was that blacks should be put in senior positions. He advised that if these blacks were not supposed to be there, then he considered this to be a form of window-dressing. He was against this, and if this was the case would prefer to remain as an ordinary person than be placed in a senior position. The respondent felt that one could be developed for or within a senior position, but that companies should not embark on this course of action purely because other companies were. The interviewer suggested that the concept became meaningless, to which the respondent agreed. He felt that a person should be developed so that he could be competitive with people of other races in similar positions. The interviewer then indicated that at the expense of putting words into the respondent's mouth, she would ask whether the respondent thought that there was a lack of understanding of how a person needed to be developed. The respondent advised that he did not think there was a lack of understanding, but that people tended to do things haphazardly. The interviewer agreed laughingly.

The question was then rephrased on a more personal level, related to the respondent's experience of intercultural perceptions affecting his progress. He replied he had been affected to a certain degree, but not because of cultural background. When probed, the respondent searched for a word to describe what had had an effect. The interviewer suggested general background or education, to which the respondent agreed. He added that he thought that cultural background had no relevance to the job he was currently doing.

In response to the question as to how the respondent related to management ideals and how the company was run, he advised that because policies were not discriminatory, they were good. The respondent found the non-discriminatory climate to be acceptable. The interviewer sought clarification as to whether the policies were stated to be non-discriminatory, or whether they were so in practice. The respondent advised that he found the policies to be non-discriminatory, and could quote examples. The interviewer summarised by stating that it appeared that the respondent had experienced this personally and possibly been aware of colleagues being offered opportunities. The respondent then expressed the need to use examples, and when probed about the practice of policies, advised that there could be a discriminatory element. The interviewer felt at this point that she could have pushed the issue too far, and moved on to the next question.

The question regarding the extent to which the respondent felt that he was trusted by organisational members, was answered in the positive, the respondent adding that he enjoyed their confidence. The interviewer probed as to whether information and opinions were shared with the respondent, who replied that this was the case with colleagues and his immediate superior but not with top management on the issues previously mentioned, such as manpower forecasting. On probing, the respondent explained that decisions taken at this level, and without his participation, affected him directly. He went on to provide examples of how the morale of his people was affected.

The respondent hesitated when asked how effective he thought he was as a senior personnel manager, and the interviewer rephrased the question in terms of how well he thought he was doing his job. The respondent advised that he thought very well, except for the previously mentioned administration problem. On probing, he advised that he was coping with the workload, but needed to develop himself in the administration area.

When asked whether the respondent thought there were any obstacles to further improving his position, or any reasons why he thought that he could not go further, he advised that at that moment his development had come to a stand still, but that there was nothing stopping him from developing himself. The interviewer probed as to whether the respondent could identify a particular obstacle, to which he replied that it was all up to himself. He felt that he was regarded as having the potential, and could assume a more senior position at another site.

The question posed as to the integration of blacks into the company, be it from outside or within, elicited the response that the policies were wonderful, but that the practice remained a question mark. The question was rephrased in terms of whether the methods employed to recruit blacks allowed them to feel a part of the organisation. A positive response resulted, as was the case when the respondent was asked whether he felt part of the organisation.

When questioned as to the importance of previous positions, the respondent advised that he would not have reached his present position without the previous experience. He then asked whether the question referred to positions within the organisation or elsewhere. The interviewer advised that both were relevant and asked whether the respondent saw a distinction between the two. The respondent advised that he had gained more experience in the organisation than in other companies, emphasising that he was responsible for the whole personnel function.

The interviewer asked what the respondent felt about changing racial perceptions at a management level. The respondent requested clarification, to which the interviewer asked whether the respondent felt that management was changing the way it felt about him. The interviewer acknowledged that this was a difficult question as the respondent was being asked to gauge others thoughts. The respondent advised that management

were trying, stating his belief that he had been placed on the donations committee along with directors for a reason. He felt that they were deliberately providing him with exposure. The interviewer then summarised by asking whether the respondent thought that managements' perceptions were changing, eliciting a positive response. The respondent added that they had an employee who had whites reporting to him, which gave an indication of the acceptance by top management that they needed to bring blacks in, but not just for window-dressing purposes. The interviewer sought clarification that the reason was because they could do the job, to which the respondent agreed.

The question posed as to what effect racial differences had on conflict in the work situation, elicited the response that it was not there now. On probing, the respondent added that he could not speak for other departments, but that he did not think that conflict existed between the different racial groups. He explained that the canteen facilities were available for all to use. The interviewer then queried whether problems experienced would be related to issues other than that of race, to which the respondent replied that problems were work-related. He added that people had come to understand each other and to persevere, and searched for a word to describe this. The interviewer suggested accommodation, to which the respondent agreed.

The question was posed as to how satisfied the respondent was with his present situation, or how happy he was in his present job. He advised that he was happy, and then hesitating added that circumstances were changing daily, and that small things did make one think. He admitted that a measure of doubt did exist.

When asked what the respondent thought the future held for black managers in South Africa, he replied that it depended on the company, and that the government could not be held responsible. When probed as to whether the respondent thought

the situation in time to come would change the way that black managers were promoted, he advised that changes would not happen quickly. He questioned whether the managing director would promote a black manager to a director position. When asked what the respondent thought the future held for himself, he advised that he could see himself as a director, and possibly a managing director. At this point the tape had ended and the respondent indicated that it was just as well.

The respondent was thanked for his time. He expressed the hope that he had answered the questions properly, to which reassurance was given.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of intercultural perceptions and promotion, are identified as follows:

- * his distrust of managerial intentions in promoting unsuitable candidates
- * his rejection of the effects of cultural background on job-related issues
- * his support of non-discriminatory organisational policies
- * his need for a participative approach to top level decision-making
- * his appreciation of managerial efforts to provide opportunities for blacks within the organisation
- * his emphasis placed on the company and its leadership to determine the extent to which positive change became a reality

The literature related to the American situation asks the question whether black managers will ever be allowed to move up the organisation and succeed in the old-fashioned way. The possibility exists that South Africa could fall into the same trap as did America in the 70's, where the emphasis was on getting the right number of black managers. The respondent appears to sense that the outcome of promotions based on this theory would have detrimental effects on both the employee

and organisational functioning. The literature supports this view, describing the feelings of rejection experienced by black managers due to policies of tokenism.

With regard to the respondent's rejection of the effects of cultural background in the work situation, several possibilities exist:

- the respondent could be rejecting the culture of poverty, having adopted an approach which removes feelings of alienation, possibly through effective integration or culture-assimilator training
- the respondent could be of the opinion that to admit that cultural effects exist would reduce his effectiveness
- the respondent could genuinely believe that one's cultural background is irrelevant to the work situation

While the respondent believes that the organisation's policies are non-discriminatory, he is in two minds as to their actual practice. The respondent could have experienced some of the more subtle effects of colourism, such as double-standards or the lack of fulfillment of the psychological contract.

The issue of participative decision-making was raised by the respondent when questions related to trust were asked. Evidence in the literature regarding trust differences between blacks and whites is mixed, but the importance of past cultural expectations and the dominance of whites in power positions must be taken into account. The respondent is possibly looking for the interaction and proximity which increases positive attitudes and breaks down prejudice.

The respondent appears to be of the opinion that management is making an effort to provide opportunities for the promotion of black managers. This is viewed favourably in cases where the promotion potential of the employee is understood. The fact that senior executives' attitudes permeate an entire organisation is relevant, and it would appear that the Frame

Group's corporate climate and culture facilitates black advancement. However promotion potential depends on an informal network of cooperative relationships, and if white managers fear ostracism from other whites or revert to an underlying, political buddy system, black managers are not groomed for core functions.

White society in South Africa has created a social system which serves it well, and while it is generally accepted that blacks need to be integrated as equal partners, the question remains as to where the responsibility lies. From the respondent's viewpoint, the company and its leadership should provide the impetus for change. In a country experiencing a major reassessment of social, economic, and political standards, the respondent views the managing director of the company in which he is employed as a key player.

5.2.6 Interrelationships Between Emerging Themes

Shifting the focus from the main body of the transcript, emerging themes are refined; facilitating the identification of relationships and the organisation of these under chief points.

i) Personal meaning attached to ethnicity.

The respondent appears to intellectually and emotionally perceive himself to be black. The personal meaning he attaches to his rural background could be considered his frame of reference, which initially he is reluctant to expose. The respondent's value system would appear to stem directly from this source. Taking into account the concept that people view themselves in terms of values, the respondent is unable to see a distinction between himself and his heritage.

ii) Adoption of the Protestant work ethic

The respondent appears to cultivate and promote the work ethic in his family life. In the work situation, the respondent appears committed, but not convinced. The degree to which he

has internalised the standard norms of the middle class is difficult to determine. He remains compliant, and looks to authority to address change in the future.

iii) Criticism versus defence of white management

The respondent's perceptions reflect the diversity of opinion which is found in the literature. As a personnel manager, it is probable that the respondent has been exposed to a certain degree to the writings of both black and white researchers and practitioners in the field of black advancement. While a paternalistic management approach is rejected, intentional discrimination is not an issue. The criticism levelled at black advancement for insinuating that the issue is a white responsibility could be relevant.

The above themes are integrated with those of the other two interviews, following discussions of the case studies.

5.3 CASE STUDY: RESPONDENT B

5.3.1 Background

Respondent B is employed as the senior security officer for the Frame Group, based at the Frametex site in New Germany. This was the second interview to be conducted, and the respondent was unknown to the interviewer. Limited notes were taken by the interviewer during the course of the interview, as the interview was taped. However, due to a fault with the tape-recorder, the researcher had to recall much of the detail, which did not pose too many problems. When the researcher approached the respondent's immediate superior to obtain consent to conduct the interview, the respondent's immediate superior advised that he did not wish his subordinate to get any ideas about furthering his managerial status. The researcher advised that the purpose of the interview was academic, and should not be seen as an organisationally instigated intervention to alter perceptions.

The biographical questions used to open the interview moved the respondent to talk, and appeared to reduce the distance between the interviewer and the respondent. The first question posed which requested that the respondent tell the interviewer something about himself did not elicit a verbal response, and it appeared as if the respondent had been taken by surprise. The interviewer then probed, asking where the respondent came from. He advised that he had been born in Umzumbe near Port Shepstone. The respondent explained that this was a rural area. He advised that he had since moved to the Kwamakhutha township. When asked how the respondent felt about where he came from, he advised that he had a great affinity for the place. When probed as to how important the respondent's background was to him, he advised that it was very important. He explained that it represented the ancestral way of living. He viewed his place of birth as a haven to which he could return when the troubles of the world became too much for him. The respondent advised that he could walk among the hills and ask for forgiveness, and that in this way he could experience peace. When probed as to whether the respondent thought his views about his background were changing, he advised that they were not.

When the respondent was asked to tell the interviewer about his family, he advised that his parents were illiterate. He went on to explain that he had married and produced nine children, because he had been an only child. When probed as to where the respondent lived, he advised that he stayed in a company house in New Germany. He advised that not all of his children stayed with him, and that some of them lived with his parents.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his background, are identified as follows:

- * his reluctance to describe himself as an individual, preferring terms related to his home and family
- * his dependence on the African world view as a frame of reference in coping with life's problems

The literature describes five factors which distinguish Western and African cultures, one of which is the self-concept. From the respondent's perspective, it would appear that he views himself not as an isolated, independent entity, but as a link in the chain joining his ancestors to his dependents. This is illustrated by the importance he attaches to his parents over that of himself or his family.

The African world view based on the African ontology explains causation in terms of a hierarchy of vital force. It would appear that the respondent believes that his ancestors have the power to change situations in his life for the better. With regard to morality, it would appear that the acknowledgement of higher living forces enables the respondent to reduce feelings of guilt and increase his capacity to live.

5.3.2 Work Identity

The question posed as to what the respondent's current employment status was, was rephrased to what his current work situation was. The respondent advised that he was a senior security officer, reporting to the loss prevention manager. He explained that he had some 40 employees reporting to him, of which about ten were whites. He advised that he had people of both gender reporting to him. When asked what was important to him about his work as a senior security officer, the respondent advised that his responsibility was to protect the company's property and its employees. He explained that this was not restricted to the Frametex site only, but included other sites. The respondent advised that regular meetings were held between the security personnel of the various sites. When the respondent was asked how he felt about being a senior security officer, he advised that he

considered it a challenge. He explained that he had not been in the position for very long, and that the position had previously been held by a white man. He commented that when he had joined the company, positions of authority were held by white males only. He said that there were not even any white females who exerted any influence. He then pointed towards the next office, explaining that the Xhosa woman who was his immediate subordinate, was a visible example of how times had changed.

When the question was posed as to how being a senior security officer made the respondent feel about himself as a person, he advised that it made him feel as if he was managing well. When asked whether being a senior security officer affected the things the respondent did in his everyday life, he replied that it did not. When probed as to whether the respondent did anything especially because of his position, he advised that obviously he was called out in the middle of the night, but that this was part of the job. He explained that he had been in security for most of his working life, and that his family was aware of what his job entailed. He explained that he generally made flexible arrangements when planning a trip to his homelands, in case an emergency occurred.

In response to the question as to how the respondent reached his present position, he replied without hesitation in two words, and to quote: "Hard work". The interviewer probed as to whether the respondent considered that hard work alone had facilitated his progress. The respondent advised that one had to take into account the learning experiences of courses and outside training. He explained that he had worked for the South African Police (SAP) for three years, and that this experience had been most useful. When asked whether there was anything that kept the respondent from considering alternatives, he advised that he was considering alternatives. He commented that he thought that in the future a great deal of emphasis would be placed on the industrial relations function. The respondent advised that he was considering

doing some sort of course which would possibly allow him to combine the security aspect with industrial relations. The interviewer probed, saying that she thought this was an interesting concept. The respondent replied that he was unsure about the idea, and would have to think about it further.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his work identity, are identified as follows:

- * his awareness of the diversity of his subordinates, and the role that historical factors had played in determining job specifications
- * his drawing of a line between work and family life
- * his commitment to the work ethic

The literature proposes that the race of subordinates and the racial combinations of work groups are critical variables in superior-subordinate relationships. It would appear that the respondent takes cognisance of past cultural expectations and the dominance of whites in positions of power.

While the distinction is not obvious, the respondent appears to apply a different set of rules in the work situation to that which he applies outside of it. This is not deemed to be a form of inconsistency, but rather a coping mechanism. While the African world view is appropriate outside of work, the respondent appears to adapt his view within the work situation in a manner which allows him to appreciate organisational functioning.

The respondent appears to identify with aspects of the Protestant work ethic as described in the literature. While the role of working and an internal locus of control do not appear to be particularly important to the respondent, it would appear that the relationship between effort expended and the benefits reaped is perceived to be strong. The respondent

appears to understand the job objectives and the importance of his role. There is therefore no evidence of a mismatch between the output-input ratio. In addition, the act of working hard appears to hold inherent dignity for the respondent; who does not feel the need to reject his race but rather to promote the ideal that if one is prepared to work hard, regardless of one's race, this will pay off.

5.3.3 Value System

When asked to describe the major values or the principles the respondent strove to live his life for, he hesitated in answering. This was not perceived as a reluctance to answer, but rather as an indication that the respondent required time to formulate his ideas. After a lapse of time the respondent advised that he strove to live his life in peace. He added that this applied both to the workplace and at home. He explained that whenever a problem arose, he handled it through negotiation. When asked how the respondent thought his values affected the way he felt about himself as a black manager, he replied that his values allowed him to, and to quote: "... win through peace". When probed, the respondent explained that he was able to discuss issues with people who opposed him; and by listening to their side of the argument, could reach a compromise. He stressed that in so doing, he felt that he had achieved something for himself.

When asked whether there were things that the respondent did especially because of his values, he advised that what was important to him was that happiness lead to happiness. The respondent advised that he took steps to ensure that his subordinates were satisfied with their positions. He advised that if they were happy, then so was he.

When asked whether the respondent thought his values were changing, he replied, and to quote: "Not to that extent". The interviewer felt that the respondent may have felt that there was some predetermined degree to which his values were

expected to have changed. She queried whether this was the case, and the respondent replied that he simply did not feel that his values were changing very much.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his value system, are identified as follows:

- * his orientation towards the maintainance of peace in relationships in general
- * his use of this approach in achieving his ends, and the stability he attached to his convictions

The literature describes the personal meaning attached to events and objects in terms of an individual's relationship to the latter. It would appear that the respondent perceives himself to be a negotiator, striving to achieve win-win situations in his daily life.

The relevance of the irreversibility of the perceptual process is evident. The respondent is clearly aware of his perceptions, and the same are strengthened by his need to remember them. It would appear that the respondent has learnt to retain his own identity, while working with others towards common goals. The respondent appears to be able to accommodate the viewpoints of others, and use the creative thought generated to secure for himself a competitive advantage. While the literature proposes that values resist change for a variety of reasons, one must assume that if the values held are serving one adequately, change should not be deemed necessary.

5.3.4 Cultural Identity

The interviewer phrased the question as to the respondent's cultural status in terms of to which racial or ethnic group he belonged. The respondent advised that he was a Zulu. The question was asked as to what was important to the respondent

about his membership in this group. He advised that in the old days a person was proud to be known as a Zulu, as the Zulu nation stood for what was right. The respondent added that in this day and age, it was difficult to be sure. When probed, the respondent provided an example of how a Zulu would be reluctant to travel to Johannesburg, as on arrival if he opened his mouth to speak he would be recognised as a Zulu. The respondent advised that people who hated the Zulus would think nothing of killing them on the spot. The respondent admitted that his personal freedom had been reduced by the very fact that he was a Zulu.

When asked how the respondent felt about being a Zulu, he advised that besides the problem he had already mentioned, he felt that it was great to be a Zulu. When probed as to what he especially liked about being a Zulu, the respondent advised that he felt the Zulus had good, strong values. He explained that they were a fair people, and that they would always try to help others. When asked whether there was anything that the respondent especially disliked about being a Zulu, he advised that he found it threatening on occasions. When probed, the respondent failed to expand upon this; and the interviewer assumed that he was referring to the aforementioned example.

When the question was posed as to how the respondent viewed individuals of different cultures, the respondent smiled and advised that he had no problem with individuals of different cultures. He said that he understood different cultures. The respondent advised that he made a point of finding out about the traditions and practices of different race groups. He explained that he had a number of Afrikaans people who reported to him, and that he had devised a way of asking them to do things that appeared to be a suggestion rather than a command. He added that with the Xhosa people, a suggestion might be misinterpreted, and that they preferred to be told exactly what to do. The respondent, appearing to be enjoying the topic, went on to advise that he thought people spoke in

different ways, and that one had to understand the emphasis people placed on words. He advised that when he was appointed, some of his black staff came to him and advised him that they thought that in his previous position he had been very strict. They were concerned that in his new position he may become more so. On the other hand, management appeared to regard his sternness as a desirable trait. The respondent advised that he had found it necessary to draw a balance between what was expected of him from different people. He hastened to add that he had explained that his new position would not alter his manner of dealing with people. He commented that if anything, the greater power he now exercised allowed him to be more flexible.

When the question was posed as to how the respondent thought individuals from different cultures viewed him, he advised that this was difficult for him to ascertain. He related the question directly to the job situation, saying that so far he thought that most people were happy with him. When probed as to how he thought individuals from different groups felt about him, the respondent commented that people did not tell him what they thought.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his cultural identity, are identified as follows:

- * his identification with the Zulu nation, and his assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to this group
- * his appreciation of the differences between the perceptions of various racial and ethnic groups due to their cultural backgrounds

The respondent appears to identify with the Zulu nation in terms of learned beliefs, values and customs which regulate his behaviour. Thus his knowledge and assessment of things, his guide to culturally acceptable behaviour, and his overt

modes of behaviour, are consistent. While his level of acculturation may be high, his culture survives and his appreciation thereof heightened by objectivity. Assimilation is balanced, and identity preserved.

The respondent appears to understand the emotional content of speech; and supports the view expounded in the literature that individuals from different cultures can speak the same language differently, as culture pervades our perceptions on an internal level. The respondent appears to facilitate information transfer even in the presence of cultural and language barriers, by gaining insight into cultures differing from his own. The respondent could therefore be described as a skilled mediator, with an interpersonal style which reduces equivocation and encourages self-expression and clarification. It is assumed that the respondent experiences intercultural experiences as enriching.

5.3.5 Intercultural Perceptions and Promotion

The respondent was unable to provide an answer to the question as to what he thought the relationship between intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers was. The question was explained in terms of how the respondent felt that the way people thought about different groups affected the promotion of black managers. The interviewer then related the question to the respondent's personal experience, to which he replied that he could only explain that he felt that people were divided into two groups, those that understood and those that did not. The respondent added that he felt that the attitudes of both workers and management were changing, and that this would become increasingly important in the future. When probed, the respondent advised that people would have to become more disciplined within themselves.

The question was then posed as to how the respondent related to management ideals, or the way that the company was run.

He replied that in his opinion the personnel department carried out policies effectively, and that the industrial relations and administration aspects presented no problems. When asked to what extent the respondent felt he was trusted by organisational members, he advised that this was difficult to know. He explained that his position was one of trust, and that he assumed management trusted him. The respondent added that he could not say whether particular individuals trusted him. When probed whether the respondent felt that management and colleagues shared information with him, he replied that the sharing of information happened often. He added that people generally worked to the book in his area, each worker knowing what his or her function was. The respondent added that he thought that this was the best way to work.

When the question was posed as to how effective the respondent thought he was as a security manager, he replied that he had not heard any bad remarks. When probed as to how well the respondent thought he was doing his job, he laughed saying that he thought the interviewer should ask his superior that question. The interviewer remained silent, but the respondent failed to expand upon his answer.

When the interviewer asked the respondent what factors he thought acted as obstacles to furthering his position, the respondent immediately advised that he had something on his mind. When probed, the respondent declared that he had come up against a brick wall, emphasising this by hitting his head with his hand. The interviewer asked the respondent what the brick wall was, and he replied that although he was fairly new in the job he knew that there was no where further to go. He explained that his superior was responsible not only for security, but for the fire department and medical services as well. The respondent advised that his superior was a highly qualified white man, and that he could not envisage himself ever having the attributes necessary to be promoted to that level. When probed as to whether the respondent thought there were any reasons why he could not improve his position,

he replied that he could undergo training to obtain certificates, but that this would be difficult as the company appeared to be cutting back on assistance.

When asked whether the respondent thought that company policies facilitated the integration of blacks into the organisation, he queried whether the interviewer was referring to the existence of equal opportunity. The interviewer explained that she wanted to know whether the respondent thought that the methods the company used to bring blacks into the organisation allowed them to feel part of the organisation. The respondent replied that he could not answer for other departments, but that certainly within his department there was equal opportunity and that newcomers were made to feel welcome. When probed as to whether the respondent felt a part of the organisation, he replied that he did.

When asked how important the respondent felt experience in previous positions was, he advised that for himself his experience with the SAP had been very important. He said that he had been educated in law procedures, and that this was not part of the general security training. The respondent therefore felt that he had some specialist knowledge, and advised that people from all levels came to him for advice. When probed as to whether the respondent thought he had been able to advance because of the jobs he had held in the past, he replied that he had no doubt about this. He said that as he had explained his police training had given him an edge, and that furthermore he felt he had proven himself within the company.

When asked what the respondent thought about the effect of changing racial perceptions at a management level, he replied that changes were not obvious. He added that the fact that he was in the position that he was could be considered obvious, but that he felt that this had been achieved more through hard work than changing perceptions. When asked what effect the

respondent thought racial differences had on the degree of conflict which occurred in the work situation, he replied that he could only comment on his department. The respondent explained that there was not in his opinion any conflict in his department. When asked how satisfied he was with his present situation, the respondent advised that he was very satisfied.

In response to the question posed as to what the respondent thought the future held for black managers in South Africa, he replied that he thought there was a future for black people providing they were prepared to work for it. When probed, the respondent advised that some black people felt that jobs should be handed to them on a plate. He added that because changes were taking place in South Africa, people assumed that they would be better off in future. The respondent emphasised that the fact remained that one had to give to receive. When asked what the respondent thought the future held for himself, he advised that he realised it was necessary to improve oneself from time to time. The respondent added that he intended to do further studies, and also to learn more within his job.

The interviewer thanked the respondent for his time. The respondent advised that he had been interviewed a few days before, but that the questions had been very different. He explained that the company had changed its insurance agents, and that he had been asked to give detailed descriptions of rules and procedures. The respondent commented that while this exercise had been tedious and time-consuming, the questions were not as difficult to answer as those the interviewer had asked.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of intercultural perceptions and promotion, are identified as follows:

- * his appreciation of blacks' struggle for acceptance in the workplace, and group differences in organisational perceptions and cognitive structures
- * his reluctance to evaluate his own progress objectively
- * his frustration with having experienced an obstacle to progress
- * his emphasis on the merits of hard work, and his perception of blacks in general as lacking an appreciation of this

The respondent appears to be aware of the historical development of the work force, and the effects of political and social segregation. While he acknowledges that changes have taken place, the respondent does not attribute these to the effects of changing racial perceptions. He appears to identify with those who understand racial dynamics.

The respondent appears to lack the confidence required for advancement, possibly not receiving the kind of feedback and reassurance necessary. He fails to compare himself to significant others in a positive light.

It would appear that in terms of promotion, the management-employee division coincides with the racial one for the respondent. While he acknowledges that further training and experience could better his chances of advancement, he cannot envisage himself replacing a white manager at a higher level.

It would appear that the respondent is aware of the pressure placed on Blacks to lean harder on black subordinates; but at the same time expresses an opinion that blacks are not committed to achieving results through hard work.

5.3.6 Interrelationships Between Emerging Themes

The chief points under which the relationships between emerging themes are organised, are discussed.

i) The maintainance of an African world view.

In accordance with the literature, the respondent appears to perceive himself less as an individual, and more as a member of society. He strives to maintain balance and harmony in his life for the benefit of the community and the organisation to which he belongs. The respondent appears to identify strongly with his cultural heritage and background; and is not prepared to sacrifice his beliefs and values for personal gain.

ii) An appreciation of intercultural differences.

The respondent appears to be aware of individual, institutional, and cultural aspects of racism; taking into account attitudes, social influences, and heritages in attempting to understand the behaviour of individuals and groups. This insight is used effectively by the respondent to cope as a black manager, and to facilitate the preservation of his own identity.

iii) The questionability of the input-output ratio.

While the respondent appears to identify strongly with certain aspects of the Protestant work ethic, he is faced with the dilemma that this philosophy could be rendered inappropriate by circumstances beyond his control. The respondent appears to touch on the issue that without attitudinal change in organisations, the continuation of past effects will continue to act as an obstacle to the promotion of black managers.

5.4 CASE STUDY: RESPONDENT C

5.4.1 Background

Respondent C is employed as a production manager at the Seltex site in New Germany. This interview was conducted last, with copious notes taken during the course thereof. The respondent was unknown to the interviewer. The biographical questions used to open the interview served the purpose of obtaining simple, descriptive details of the respondent's life.

These were communicated in a straightforward manner, the respondent showing no intention to expand upon the basic facts. On being asked to tell the interviewer about himself, the respondent advised that he was a South African who had been born in Durban 35 years ago. He advised that at the present moment he was married; and had two children one of which was in standard nine, and the other at preschool. He stated that he had experienced the normal traumas of growing up. He added that he had a mother and a father, but no brothers or sisters. His wife was employed as a clothing designer for a major retail chain. As the respondent had moved to discuss his family of his own accord, the interviewer probed as where the respondent lived. He advised that he stayed in Kwadangezi township, and that he owned his own house. The interviewer probed as to whether the respondent thought his views about his background were changing, to which he replied in the positive.

At this point the respondent appeared to relax, and advised that whenever he was interviewed he felt the need to go deeper. He explained that when one was very underprivileged, especially with regard to education, there were so many disadvantages in adult life. He described his mother as semi-literate and his father as having reached standard six. He advised that there had been no communication in English, and that secondary school was difficult for him as he had to take both English and Afrikaans to matric level. The interviewer inquired as to which school he had attended, to which he replied St. Augustine's High School. The respondent explained that they had to do three languages, to which the interviewer replied that she had not been aware of this. The respondent stated that Blacks could not blame the system for their failure, and that they should work a little harder.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his demographic characteristics are identified as follows:

- * his view of himself in the first instance as a South African
- * his acknowledgement that his underprivileged background had presented problems in adult life
- * his experience that these problems could be overcome, and that it was up to the individual to do so

The respondent described himself in terms of nationality rather than race.

The literature proposes that members of a society require a common language to communicate and share meaning to acquire a common culture. While the respondent's family served as a primary agent for enculturation, an educational institution provided an opportunity for acculturation. The respondent's perception of the effects of a lack of preparation during formative years, appears to have a direct bearing on his behaviour and functioning.

The respondent appears to identify with the work ethic in that he believes that one is able to affect changes in one's immediate environment. It would appear that the respondent's own achievements had positively reinforced the development of an internal locus of control. The success element of the work ethic is therefore supported.

5.4.2 Work Identity

When asked what his current employment status was, the respondent advised that he was a production manager. When asked what was important to him about his work as a production manager, the respondent replied that it was his responsibility to meet deadlines and targets, to improve communication between management and employees, and to create and implement new procedures where necessary. The question was posed as to how the respondent felt about being a production manager, to which he replied that he felt great. He explained that the appointment had been fairly recent, having started in 1989 as

a shift manager. When probed as to what the respondent especially liked about being a production manager, he replied that he was given a lot of leeway to make his own decisions. He added that he had been getting bored in his previous position. When probed as to what he especially disliked about being a production manager, the respondent advised that there was not really anything that he disliked about the position. He described himself as not the sort of man who expected a pat on the back; but rather a results-orientated person to which production figures were important.

When asked how being a production manager affected the way the respondent felt about himself as a person, he admitted that the role had changed his perceptions about himself. He advised that it had changed his social life in terms of the people he associated with. When probed, the respondent expanded only in so far as to say that he now possibly associated with people that he would not have in the past. When asked how being a production manager affected the things he did in his everyday life, the respondent advised that it did not affect him particularly. He advised that although he was unsure how to put it, he did not like people who did not mean anything. He therefore was very choosy about his friends. He added that on a practical note, he now had more money in his pocket, and could take the family out more often.

When the question was posed as to how the respondent reached his present position, he rephrased the question as to how he was appointed. The respondent explained that initially there were three of them- two white gentlemen and himself. He continued saying that to put it bluntly eventually the others had fallen by the wayside, resigning because they could not take the pressure. He commented that one of these people had been a highly qualified technician, close to retirement age, with whom he had had a very good relationship. The respondent explained that he reached a stage where he confronted the general manager to establish where he stood. The respondent had sought clarification on his future prospects with the

company, and advised his superior that he had been offered a job by another company and that he had a good mind to join. The respondent explained that his superior had advised in confidence that the intention was to promote the respondent within a year or two. The respondent then pointed out that his position had been created, following the resignation of the quality assurance manager and the resumption of this additional role by his immediate superior.

The respondent requested that the question posed regarding the consideration of alternatives be rephrased, the interviewer responding by asking whether the respondent had any questions or doubts about his future. The respondent replied that he had none, and that he was confident that nothing stood in his way. He stated that he was not afraid of the colour of his skin, and that he believed that the best man for the job would always be appointed.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his work identity, are identified as follows:

- * his identification with the prescribed job description for his position
- * his acknowledgement that his work identity had altered his social standing
- * his direct approach to formulating his aspirations
- * his faith in the equality of the organisational system

While the literature discusses the effects of contrasting world views on specific management processes, the respondent appears to have assimilated the Western concepts of linear time, causality, and probability. To function as a production manager it is critical that an incumbent plans, organises, directs, and controls. The respondent appears to use impartial criteria to enhance the bureaucratic efficiency of the organisation, and enforce control mechanisms to achieve objectives with a predictable degree of success within

specific time frames. This contradicts the view that the African perspective lacks what Westerners label rationality and objectivity.

The relationship between perceptual congruence and job satisfaction has been explored in the literature, including the relevance of reward structures. It would appear that the interaction between the respondent's value orientation and the perceived job outcomes have resulted in a high degree of satisfaction and motivation. The respondent appears to have adopted a spirit of competition, gained appropriate academic training, removed obstacles to social interaction, and fostered an appreciation of corporate customs.

The respondent clearly takes the initiative in developing himself, obtaining commitment from the organisation. It would appear that he has adopted the Western world view of the individual as key. This would explain him viewing relationships outside the family and close friends as largely instrumental in enabling him to achieve more in association with others than alone.

The respondent does not appear to have been the victim of prejudice, believing that there is no place for racially motivated behaviour in the workplace. The respondent appears to have been treated as an individual, with respect for his unique ability and character shown.

5.4.3 Value System

The interviewer asked the respondent to describe his major values, the principles he strove to live his life for. He responded with one word- self-development. The respondent then added that financial security was also important to him. He advised that he intended to be in a position to provide an education for his children, and to provide them with the best of whatever they needed. When asked how his values affected the way he felt about himself as a production manager, the

respondent replied without hesitation that he believed in training people to a stage where they would be able to take over from him. When asked what kinds of things the respondent did especially because of his values, he advised that he would further his education along the lines of the job that he was currently doing. He commented that financial security was a self-explanatory concept, and that he had obviously got everything to cover his retirement in the form of retirement annuities and insurance policies. He added that he avoided being extravagant. He reiterated that he avoided extravagant parties as this got expensive. The interviewer agreed, to which the respondent added that he preferred to go to extravagant parties hosted by others.

When asked whether he thought his values were changing, the respondent replied, and to quote: "For the better, yes". When asked how the respondent thought they were changing, he replied that several factors made his values change. He mentioned his new appointment, and outside factors. When probed, the respondent hesitated and then proceeded to reveal that deep down he felt very sorry for the black nation. He extended this empathy to South Africa as a whole. The respondent explained that because we have different races, languages, and tribal groups, he thought that the country was on a collision course with accepted standards of behaviour. He advised that while people were fighting for political rights, they were destroying the country. The respondent explained that approximately ten years ago the slogan "Liberation now and education later" was promoted. However the promoters were educating their children at private schools, and the majority had suffered the consequences of their actions. He went on to say that even today when one looked in the streets it was the black children, not the indians, whites, or coloureds, who were not at school. The respondent advised that the whole infrastructure of the black family had broken down. The respondent admitted that sometimes he was embarrassed that he was a black. At this point the interviewer felt the need to reciprocate, and

advised that the feeling was mutual, meaning that at times she was embarrassed that she was white. The respondent did not appear to be surprised at the honesty of the moment.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his value system, are identified as follows:

- * his commitment to self-development, to maintain the financial security which would allow him to provide adequately
- * his honesty and objectivity in assessing the situation in South Africa

According to the literature, values serve as a guide for culturally appropriate behaviour, and are widely accepted by the members of society. The respondent's expressed values of self-development and financial security are widely accepted Western values in South Africa. He clearly identifies with the work ethic in terms of the role of working as provider, locus of control in terms of independence, outcomes in terms of success, and self-esteem in terms of self-respect. The respondent's values appear to be very central and clear; and it is possible that through career empowerment, he has managed the social and psychological issues which he faced. The literature shows that black managers at an upper level score higher than those at a lower level when personal traits such as self-actualisation, masculinity, and self-assurance are measured. In addition, when looking at the components of power: wealth, organisation, information, status, and will; it would appear that the respondent's behaviour is governed by these.

The respondent appears to appreciate the roles that individuals and groups play in society. Pointing out that the course that the country was taking was not in line with accepted standards of behaviour, showed that the respondent was able to distance himself from the situation and view it

objectively. At this point the colour of his skin did become an issue, and his honesty allowed him to express his feelings in this regard.

5.4.4 Cultural Identity

When asked what his cultural status was, the respondent hesitated to reply. The interviewer then rephrased the question, asking to which racial or ethnic group the respondent belonged. The respondent advised that he was Zulu, expanding upon this he added that one could describe him as an urbanised, Westernised Zulu. When asked how the respondent felt about being an urbanised, Westernised Zulu, he advised that he had absorbed and assimilated things that he liked from other cultures. He explained that he had learnt a lot in the process, and that he had adopted value systems from other cultures. The respondent advised that his parents values had been passed on to him. However his parents still lived in the same way that his ancestors had. He advised that they still believed in the influence of bad luck, and would for example slaughter an animal to evoke a change in their misfortunes. The respondent described this as ancestor worship, but hastened to add that his people were Christian. He described the situation as one of dual belief. The respondent advised that he had tried to talk to his parents, telling them that the way that he thought was totally different from the run of the mill. The interviewer sought clarification as to whether the respondent had actually tried to influence his parents, to which he replied that he had on numerous occasions. When asked whether there was anything that the respondent particularly disliked about being an urbanised, Westernised Zulu, he said that there was not.

When the question was posed as to how being an urbanised, Westernised Zulu affected the way that the respondent felt about himself as a person, he replied that he felt proud and better than the next person. When probed, he advised that rural people are all the same. When probed further, he

repeated himself as if the words were self-explanatory and declined to comment further.

When asked how the respondent viewed individuals from other cultures, he replied, to quote: "Put it this way, basically I'm colour blind". He added that he liked or disliked people on the basis of the way they talked or handled themselves. He hastened to add that this did not mean that he was not prejudiced. He used as an example that when he was driving, and another driver acted recklessly, if it was not a black taxi, then the respondent would be sure to exclaim: "That's a bloody indian!". The interviewer advised that she thought the respondent was going to say that it was a woman.

When the question was posed as to how the respondent thought individuals from different groups viewed him, he advised that in interactions with various groups at various stages in his life, he had not really had a problem. The respondent added that in the work situation and outside of work, he had not had any traumatic experiences. Laughing he added that this was except for having been locked up for past offences. The interviewer summarised by saying that there did not appear to be any incidents which the respondent could recall, to which the respondent added that he felt he had always commanded a lot of respect.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of his cultural identity, are identified as follows:

- * his acknowledgement of himself as an urbanised, Westernised Zulu
- * his adoption of values from other cultures to suit his needs
- * his recognition of his break with tradition
- * his feeling of superiority over rural people
- * his non-racial approach to assessing individuals
- * his acknowledgement of the effects of prejudice

The respondent appears to have adopted a Westernised frame of reference fully.

The respondent appears to understand his experiences and behaviour, and the relationship between the two. He has successfully identified with different value systems, and while he does not share the common biological characteristics or historical experiences of a white South African, he identifies with the the latter's world view.

The respondent does not appear to have been faced with the dilemma of community versus company loyalty. He appears to have accepted change, and not tried to reinforce existing frameworks.

While the respondent admits to feelings of superiority over rural people, he is reluctant to discuss these emotions in greater depth. The possibility exists that this is one of the areas which he has not fully come to terms with. His objective approach generally allows him to analyse events and people effectively, but this aspect remains unexplained.

The literature proposes that a cultural revolution would occur if the value of human life were to dominate society. This is possibly the ideal to which the respondent is aspiring. He denies that he is predisposed to act in a certain manner because of the colour of a person's skin. Although stereotypes cannot be eliminated, the respondent appears to have reached a level of awareness where their impact can be controlled.

While the respondent would like to believe that his judgement is not marred by the effects of colourism, he is honest enough to admit that he does make use of standardised mental pictures which represent an oversimplified opinion. Although the example cited is humorous, one can deduce that the respondent is aware of the existence of prejudiced personality traits.

5.4.5 Intercultural Perceptions and Promotion

The interviewer posed the question as to what the respondent thought the relationship between intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers was. She was on the verge of explaining the question in simpler terms, when the respondent advised that he would answer the question by saying that he did not believe in affirmative action. He stated that affirmative action would lower our managerial standards. The respondent advised that people should be selected on merit, regardless of other considerations. He felt that the promotion of individuals because they were black would eventually backfire. The interviewer commented that since the respondent had brought up the topic of affirmative action, she would like his opinion on the view proposed in the literature that affirmative action was necessary to compensate for historical and current imbalances. The respondent advised that in his opinion two wrongs do not make a right.

The interviewer probed further asking whether the respondent thought that the way that people perceived different groups, affected the promotion of black managers. The respondent advised that he did believe that there was an element of prejudice in practice. He added that he did not feel that the prejudice came from one side only. The respondent advised that if one was black, one could feel that one had been promoted because one was black. He added that if people were sufficiently professional, they could rise above this. He then expressed his doubts as to whether people were sufficiently professional.

When asked whether the respondent thought intercultural perceptions had affected his promotion to a black manager, he advised that colleagues from different race groups had been happy with the announcement of his promotion. The respondent explained that they had come in and congratulated him.

The interviewer then posed the question as to how the respondent related to management ideals, or how happy he was with the way the company was run. He replied that he was satisfied with the basic policies, then suggested that perhaps the interviewer should cease taking notes. He explained that he was not happy with the way that the managing director operated. The respondent described the managing director as too autocratic. Seeking clarity, the interviewer suggested that possibly the state that the company was in called for this approach. The respondent replied that he admired a no-nonsense approach, but that there were more ways than one to skin a cat.

The interviewer posed the question as to what extent the respondent felt he was trusted by organisational members, to which he replied that he felt he was highly trusted. On probing as to whether the respondent felt that management and colleagues shared information with him, the respondent indicated a positive answer, but declined to comment further.

When asked how effective he thought he was as a black production manager, the respondent advised that he thought he was very effective. He added that not only did he think he was very effective, but that he knew he was. When asked what factors acted as obstacles to the respondent furthering his position, he advised that he could only think that lack of expertise could hold him back. He added that this expertise would be of a technical nature. He indicated that his immediate superior was highly qualified.

The question posed as to company policy facilitating the integration of blacks into the organisation proved difficult for the respondent to answer. He advised that his was a small business unit, and it was difficult for him to comment, except on a personal basis. He explained that he had been seconded to the apparel manufacturing division to learn about the manufacture of garments, and that he had been exposed to these operations in previous positions. The respondent advised that

he had therefore been given some sort of grounding when he joined the company. When asked whether he felt part of the organisation, the respondent answered in the positive.

In response to the question regarding the importance of experience in previous positions, the respondent advised that experience in his field was of vital importance. He emphasised that this was especially the case as one moved up the organisational ladder. The respondent was of the opinion that whether one recruited internally or externally, experience was equally important. He then added that the whole issue was debatable, as a university graduate could also be appointed to a high level position. When asked whether the respondent felt he had been able to advance because of jobs held in the past, he replied in the positive.

When asked to discuss what he felt about the effect of changing racial perceptions at a management level, the respondent advised that he thought they were changing. On probing whether the respondent thought that management was changing the way it felt about himself as a production manager, the respondent advised that he did not see it that way.

When asked what effect the respondent thought racial differences had on the degree of conflict in the work situation, he replied that the major problem in industry was that black employees were highly politicised and prejudiced against Whites. When probed as to whether the respondent felt this applied to all levels of black employees, the respondent advised that it applied specifically to A and B levels. He added that based on his experience at Natal Knitting Mills, people from foreman level upwards, were very positive and very work-orientated. He said that in general people at higher levels were anti conflict, and did not support stayaways and strikes. The respondent advised that perceptions changed as people were promoted up from the floor.

When asked how satisfied the respondent was with his present situation, he advised that he was very happy. The question posed as to what the respondent thought the future held for black managers in South Africa, elicited the response that black managers in South Africa have a bright future. The respondent commented that when one looked at population ratios, it was inevitable that one would be seeing more black faces. The respondent suggested that it would not take laws to enforce this change, and that it was bound to happen eventually. He said that the absence of family planning in the black community had resulted in there being a greater proportion of teenagers than any other age-group, and that this generation would find their way into the workplace. When probed, the respondent added that he believed with improved education standards and improved interpersonal perceptions, the way that blacks would be promoted in the future would be much improved.

When asked what the respondent thought the future held for himself, he advised that he did not think he had reached the zenith of his abilities. He said that he saw himself at the top in possibly ten years time. He added that his intention was to become a director by the age of 48. The respondent then explained that he had a cousin in America, who had worked for three companies in his life. The respondent's cousin had progressed from being a marketing official to a brand manager, and then to a branch manager. The respondent explained that this man had been advised that he would be placed on the board of directors on his return from a six month training course in America. The respondent commented that this man had really made strides. The interviewer suggested that possibly this man had served as a role model to the respondent, to which he agreed. The respondent then added that the two of them had grown up together and progressed in a similar fashion, up to the point that the respondent's cousin had attended university. The respondent then proceeded to discuss the necessity of having either a role model or a mentor in the work situation. He closed the discussion by saying that

whatever he and his cousin did, their actions were on a par.

The interviewer then thanked the respondent for taking the time to answer the questions, to which he replied that it had been a pleasure. Although the purpose of the interview had been explained to the respondent at the outset, the respondent asked the interviewer how she was going to use the information she had obtained. She explained that the intention was to establish relationships based on the factors which had come to light during the three interviews. The respondent then queried why the interviewer was studying a topic which was not relevant to her current job. The interviewer advised that she had embarked on the project to satisfy her own needs. The respondent commented that it was likely that should the interviewer seek employment in the area of her studies, her salary was likely to take a dive, to which the interviewer agreed.

The interviewer then thanked the respondent again for his contribution, to which the respondent replied that he was pleased to have met the interviewer.

Assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondent's perceptions of intercultural perceptions and promotion, are identified as follows:

- * his disbelief in a policy of affirmative action, and his doubts concerning the professionalism of work associates in handling the issue
- * his questioning of authority
- * his self-confidence in acknowledging his effectiveness
- * his recognition of conflict in the work situation as politically based
- * his positive attitude to the future of black managers in South Africa
- * his recognition of his self-actualisation motive, and the role that models and mentors played

The literature proposes that blacks are selected for employment on the basis of their education and experience, without consideration of their individual behavioural traits. The respondent appears to sense a lack of understanding between cultures and particularly with regard to decision-makers, of the effects of perceptions on the promotion of black managers. It is possible that the respondent anticipates that while interventions may serve the interests and needs of white South Africans, they do not facilitate the understanding of people who are different. The respondent however appears to divorce himself from that category of people who may require upliftment.

The literature proposes that employees at different levels differ in their perceptions of managerial power. While the respondent expressed some concern over publically criticising the company's leadership, he did not refrain from giving his opinion with a certain degree of candour. The respondent's acceptance of the Western cultural tendency to question authority, together with his degree of commitment, could render the type of power exercised by the managing director unacceptable to him.

If the respondent is in fact caught in South Africa's racial crossfire, this is not readily evident. He does not appear to have struggled for acceptance, but could feel the necessity to justify his abilities and credentials.

With regard to conflict in the work situation, the fact that subtle, informal processes operate to create consistency in social action is important. From the respondent's perspective, it would appear that black workers on the shop floor are conditioned to act in opposition to white management. Once they are removed from this group and given a degree of authority, their perceptions change and they orientate their efforts towards accomplishing organisational goals. The question as to the superficiality of the African

adoption of Western ideals needs to be raised.

The respondent's positive attitude to the future of black managers appears to stem from his belief that people would have to take the initiative in coming to terms with their differences, and channel their efforts towards common goals. His view of change as inevitable can only be considered a healthy one; given that the social, economic and political changes currently being experienced in the country are deemed to be irreversible.

While the literature proposes that within a culture of poverty, negative experiences strengthen alienation; and that white male-dominated organisations fail to reinforce the positive aspects of the work ethic in black employees; this does not appear to be the case in the experience of the respondent. It is possible that the respondent's superior perceives the respondent's behaviour in the same way as the respondent perceives his own behaviour. The judgemental process could therefore have been slowed, and the respondent able to develop cognitive complexity and exercise impulse control. Opportunities have been provided for, and developed by, the respondent; enabling him to identify his capacities and develop his potentialities. In addition, the influence of a positive role model on the respondent's perceptions, is relevant. It is probable that effective managerial skills have been transmitted through the respondent's observation of, and communication with, a successful black manager.

5.4.6 Interrelationships Between Emerging Themes

The chief points under which the relationships between emerging themes are organised, are discussed.

i) Adoption of a Western world view.

The respondent does not appear to live and work in two different worlds. He appears to have been assimilated into

South African society as an equal partner to his white counterparts in the development of its future. The respondent's frame of reference appears to serve him well. While he describes himself as an urbanised, Westernised Zulu; he distances himself from those aspects of the rural African tradition which no longer fit his cognitive map. The objectivity which is central to the Western world view, enables the respondent to divorce himself from the feelings of guilt and shame which characterise the African notion of morality.

ii) Colour blindness versus the recognition of differences.

The respondent acknowledges the effects of an underprivileged background on adult life, with particular emphasis on language; which in South Africa is a race-related variable. In addition to this, he recognises the fact that being the incumbent of a job traditionally held by a white person, has altered his perception of his social standing. The respondent appears to draw a greater distinction between himself and rural people, than between himself and other races. On the other hand, he aspires to an approach which judges people on their individual merit; and would appear to put this into practice.

iii) A future orientation.

The respondent appears to have taken goal-directed action at a number of critical stages in his life. It is assumed that the handling of problems, such as languages, required considerable effort and intelligence at an early age. It would appear that the size of his family has been controlled to ensure that his children may be adequately provided for. During the course of his working life, the respondent has taken steps to facilitate his progression, including a degree of risk. He has aspirations for his further development in the future, and has planned for his retirement. The respondent discusses his own and other black managers' future in a positive light. In addition, it is noted that the respondent appears to take an interest in the future of the interviewer.

5.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has analysed the individual case studies, identifying emerging themes and integrating these under chief points. The sixth chapter integrates the chief points from the individual case studies to facilitate the identification of new analytical categories.

The study is concluded in this following chapter by drawing conclusions and making recommendations based on the analytical categories described.

CHAPTER 6THE IDENTIFICATION OF NEW ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES RELATED TO
INTERCULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AND THE PROMOTION OF BLACK MANAGERS6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study has attempted to identify and evaluate intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers. A qualitative research approach was adopted with a view to generating data of a contextual nature; the major areas of emphasis being in the literature related to the topic, and in the presentation of individual case studies. The purpose of this final chapter is to arrive at new cultural categories which increase insight into, and understanding of, the complex pattern of interrelationships. The intention is to provide a framework for further research, and a guide to practitioners.

The synthesis of the chief points identified in chapter five facilitates the discussion of four major themes as follows:

- * African versus Western world views
- * The work ethic
- * Intercultural differences and interpersonal interaction
- * Corporate culture and promotion

These categories are further integrated by the drawing of conclusions and the making of recommendations.

6.2 AFRICAN VERSUS WESTERN WORLD VIEWS

In the three case studies presented, the frames of reference of the individuals are central to their perceptions. Respondents A and B define themselves in terms of their rural

backgrounds, their value systems stemming directly from this source. These individuals view themselves as an integral part of their heritage. While respondent A experiences a degree of uncertainty regarding his current identity, respondent B identifies strongly with the African world view and does not appear to experience any ambiguity. The importance attached to a community spirit is expressed by both these respondents, and would appear to influence their perceptions and behaviour in varying degrees. Respondent C, by contrast, has adopted a Western world view, which allows him to distance himself from his background and heritage. He defines himself in terms of his current urbanised and Westernised status; his value system stemming from this source. This black manager views himself as an individual, as an equal partner to his white counterparts in South African society. The importance attached to personal gain is expressed by this respondent, and would appear to influence his perceptions and behaviour in a number of life domains.

In attempting to expand upon this theme, consideration is given to assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondents' perceptions. It would appear that black managers do act in the light of how they assume others see them, or what they perceive as the intention of others. Respondent A, aware of the purpose of the interview, stressed the importance of the colour of his skin. Respondent C, also aware that he was being interviewed because he was black, ignored the relevance of it. Respondent B, describing himself more in terms of his membership, did not stress the importance of his individual blackness.

The extent to which black managers identify with either a rural or urban group, is also relevant. Respondent A experiences difficulty in defining himself in these terms. The possibility exists that he perceives that the researcher views him as an urbanised black, and intellectually he knows that he has become urbanised. Deep-rooted beliefs, however, have not been superseded by the adoption of urban or Western points of

view. Respondent C clearly defines himself as urbanised and Westernised, this identity facilitated by his urban birth and his rejection of traditional rural views. Respondent B, by contrast, maintains the bond with his rural background; and while his physical abode is an urban one, his perceived home is rural. For this black manager there is no stigma attached to rural peoples, but rather a sense of pride in the continuation of tradition.

6.3 THE WORK ETHIC

In the three case studies presented, the work ethic as a factor in determining progress, is relevant. Respondent A emphasises the importance thereof in both his own, and his family's, self-development. Respondent B identifies strongly with the work ethic in terms of his work identity, but not in other life domains. Respondent C also identifies strongly with the work ethic, and combines this with a forward-thinking approach characteristic of Western cultures. The literature discusses the importance of managements' recognition of the changing work ethic, but the causes and consequences thereof remain unclear. While explanations vary from the effects of background to changing social, political, and economic factors; the unique combination of influences on an individual's life is not taken into account.

In attempting to expand upon this theme, consideration is given to assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondents' perceptions. It would appear that differences with regard to African versus Western world views do not impact upon the adoption of the work ethic. World views appear to influence the approach and behaviour, but not the existence thereof. Respondent A experiences a degree of role ambiguity with regard to his workload and responsibility in relation to the extent to which he enjoys recognition. However, he perceives work to be directly related to outcomes, and emphasises the need for self-development. He appreciates the

dual role of experience and education in preparing an individual for advancement. Respondent B is totally committed to the work ethic, isolating this factor as the reason for his progress to date. Respondent C has assimilated the work ethic into his world view. He appreciates the necessity of applying oneself to overcome disadvantages, and to find solutions to problems. This black manager has an internal locus of control; which enables him to identify fully with his current work situation and to formulate goals for the future. If the principles inherent in the work ethic dictate organisational functioning, then his faith in the equality of the system is well-founded. However, in the case of respondent B, circumstances which he perceives as beyond his control, act as obstacles to progress. A point is reached where the adoption of the work ethic is not the sole criteria for success.

With regard to behaviour influenced by the work ethic, individuals' world views act as blueprints for action. Respondent A looks to authority to address change, which could be explained by the emphasis he places on respect as a core cultural value. From an African perspective, management is obliged to assist their employees in bettering themselves; and in so doing, create community spirit. This black manager recognises that dual perspectives operate, as a Western perspective requires that individuals assume responsibility for their futures. Respondent C, having assimilated a Western viewpoint, does not view management as the catalyst for change. He questions managements' maturity in accepting employees at face value; but this does not hinder him from taking goal-directed action on his own initiative. This black manager believes he will reap the benefits of his efforts in the future; and is not prepared to accept other peoples' lack of understanding as a stumbling block to his own increased understanding and development. Respondent B resorts to his African world view to obtain the strength which allows him to maintain harmony in the face of adversity. This black manager understands that in certain instances, attitudes will be the determining factor in the availability of opportunities.

6.4 INTERCULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND INTERPERSONAL INTERACTIONS

In the three case studies presented, the degree to which the respondents appreciate intercultural differences varies, and affects their interpersonal interactions. Respondent A both criticises and defends white management, as if he perceives it as a separate culture of which he is unsure whether or not he is a part. Respondent C draws a greater distinction between himself and rural peoples, than between himself and other races or cultures. Respondent B displays the greatest insight into the perceptions and behaviour of individuals, groups, and cultures. Respondents A and B display an orientation towards working with people; while respondent B displays a results orientation which views people as instrumental in reaching a planned objective. Respondents A and B draw a measure of satisfaction from interpersonal interactions, but for different reasons. Respondent A appears to rid himself of feelings of obligation towards his subordinates, by ensuring that they are treated fairly. Respondent B enjoys the challenge which dealing with individuals with different frames of reference brings. This black manager has developed his negotiation skills to an extent which allows him to experience even problematic interactions in a positive light.

In attempting to expand upon this theme, consideration is given to the assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondents' perceptions. It would appear that intercultural perceptions influence behaviour in interpersonal interactions; and that the relevance of this depends on the black manager's individual orientation. It is generally accepted that personality is jointly influenced by heredity and environment. The effect of world views is therefore once again taken into account in explaining the significance of intercultural perceptions for different personalities. Respondent A expresses concern for his family, his parents, his community, and his colleagues. This black manager stresses human relations above productivity, and exercises caution in his approach to interpersonal situations which involve a

degree of risk for either of the parties. He understands the psychological damage which can result from a lack of empathy. While he effectively participates in individual interactions, he experiences difficulties in relating to an individual as a part of a larger group. Thus the effects of cultural aspects on organisational functioning is not easy for him to describe. Respondent B is aware of the diversity of his subordinates, and the significance of racial combinations of work groups. This respondent views the maintenance of peace in interpersonal relationships as paramount. This objective is not achieved through compromise alone, but rather through the added advantage the respondent has over the majority. He acknowledges the existence of intercultural differences and their influence on perceptions; and retains his own identity while accommodating others. This black manager's behaviour is consistent with his value system, and he experiences no difficulty in generalising from individuals, to groups, to cultures.

Intercultural differences are perceived in another light by respondent C. His concern is less with interpersonal interactions, and more with a broad view of the situation in South Africa. This black manager's behaviour is governed by accepted Western standards, and he differentiates on the basis of adherence to these ideals. He describes himself as colour-blind, but recognises the influence of stereotypes. The principles he strives to live his life by, dictate his perceptions of individuals, groups, and cultures in terms of status rather than race.

6.5 CORPORATE CULTURE AND PROMOTION

In the three case studies presented, the degree of consensus among the respondents regarding non-discriminatory company policies, is high. However, all three express a concern with the inappropriate application of the affirmative action concept. Respondent A rejects black advancement approaches

which stem from what he perceives as the wrong reasons. Respondent B emphasises the merits of hard work as means to advance, which reduces the necessity to take affirmative action. Both respondents B and C take into account the changing political situation in South Africa, which has altered the expectations and aspirations of the black majority. Respondent C totally rejects the affirmative action concept, regarding it as the unsound course of action to correct the imbalances of the past.

In attempting to expand upon this theme, consideration is given to assumptions and beliefs which form the core of the respondents' perceptions. Respondent A expresses a need to be involved in action, and would appreciate a greater level of participative decision-making. This black manager supports managements' attempts to integrate blacks into the organisation; but believes that decisions taken to develop blacks should be based on a genuine intention to provide equal opportunities, and not to create an image of equality. The organisation's culture could be perceived by this black manager as one which requires that black managers conform to the prescribed white managerial role as closely as possible. He therefore denies that cultural differences should be considered a criteria in assessing performance and progress. The subtle effects of colourism may be difficult for a black manager to define, but could be assumed to explain the classification of policy, but not necessarily practice, as non-discriminatory. The literature describes a process of denial by both black and white managers of the existence of conflicts of interest arising from the provision of equal opportunities. The possibility exists that black managers who perceive themselves as having achieved a degree of success without being exposed to an affirmative programme, do not wish to have their efforts undermined in any way. If less deserving candidates are promoted as a matter of course, then the perceived input-output ratio is threatened. This black manager's concern also stems from his world view, where respect predominates as a core value. In his opinion, to place

a black in a managerial position without preparing him or her fully for the role, would be unfair to the individual and the organisation. It is probable that fear of failure for blacks advanced in this manner, is also relevant.

Corporate culture, and the effect it has on the provision of equal opportunities, is expanded upon by respondent B. This black manager takes historical factors into account in explaining the composition of the workforce. While an appreciation is shown for the importance of attitudinal change in an organisation, this black manager experiences difficulties in describing others perceptions of himself. The possibility exists that some black managers may be unsure of the degree to which attitudinal change has, or is, taking place in their work situations. They are therefore confident in describing organisational functioning in broad terms, but the opposite is true of relating issues directly to themselves as individuals. This is not the case with respondent C, who actively compares himself with significant others, and questions corporate identities which do not gel for him. The community versus individual orientation of the African and Western frames of reference could be relevant. From an African perspective, corporate culture could be considered a type of community spirit, which is identifiable in a group context; but difficult to explain in terms of individuals who are of secondary importance to the whole. From a Western perspective, the corporate culture exists because of the actions of individuals.

A different emphasis is placed on corporate culture and promotion by respondent C. This black manager identifies strongly with the prescribed job description, and enjoys the trappings of success. The objectivity displayed by this individual enables him to assess social organisational factors which impact upon the distribution of power. It is probable that this black manager would adapt his behaviour to coincide with corporate custom, providing he did not have to compromise his values. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which

this individual's perceptions and behaviour have been shaped by the adoption of a Western frame of reference, and the extent to which they are a reflection of his unique personality. The best assumption one can make is that both are of equal importance, and that generalisations should be made with caution. This black manager, if he has been the victim of prejudice, does not bear any scars; and even an under-privileged background has become more of a challenge than an issue.

Another important aspect of corporate culture and promotion which respondent C sheds some light on, is the question of politically motivated action at the shop-floor level and the extent to which this dissipates in favour of company goal-directed action as employees progress up the organisational ladder. Clearly the solution to the problem cannot lie in the promotion of all employees with a view to stimulating attitudinal change; but there could be merit in a further point raised by this black manager. Although the role played by models and mentors was recognised by the respondent only after considerable discussion, it could deserve more consideration than it is given in practice. The literature describes the ineffectiveness of formal mentors in enlightening their proteges on issues other than those prescribed. In addition, the literature describes the lack of role models in poverty cultures. It is recognised that organisations in turn do not have access to proven methods of overcoming current problems. The self-actualisation motive is described by Maslow as being at the top of the hierarchical pyramid of needs; and it is possible that for the majority this ideal is not perceived as being within their reach. Indeed they could be ignorant of its existence if we consider that the concept is born of a Western frame of reference. While the intention should not be to force a foreign value system onto another culture, the reality is that at present the black manager still has to succeed in a predominantly white male-dominated business world in South Africa.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS

As discussed in chapter four, the aim of qualitative research is not to confirm hypotheses, but to provide insight into complex, changing phenomena. The question asked in this study is what the structure and essence of experience of intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers is for black managers themselves. The focus has been on how phenomena from different life domains are perceived and integrated by the individual to create a world view. The standardised open-ended interview questions took each of the respondents through the same sequence, and served the purpose of generating detail which has allowed the researcher to go beyond the reported facts.

In this study, conclusions take the form of the identification of new cultural categories and relationships. The focus on the emerging patterns facilitates deduction and verification of the research. To isolate the essence of the paper, the themes are interrelated to describe in holistic terms what has been learned, and to raise new questions for further research. Agreement between the findings of this study and the literature has been established through discussion of respondents' core assumptions and beliefs and the organisation of these under chief points. The new cultural categories drawn from this analysis, and representing new ways of looking at intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers, are further integrated in the concluding statement.

The literature has described the differences between African and Western world views, and the implications of these differences for industrial organisational functioning. It has discussed the superficiality of the African adoption of Western frames of reference, as well as the role of culture-assimilator training in increasing awareness of intercultural differences. What appears to be a new perspective in this study is the effect of an African versus a Western world view on a variety of life domains of a black manager, which

directly or indirectly impacts upon promotion issues in the organisation studied. It would appear that the adoption of an alternative frame of reference to that under which an individual is raised, could become permanent and an intergral part of that individual's personality and behaviour when certain conditions have prevailed during the course of the individual's life. In addition, the degree of comfortableness in recognising ones adoption of alternative perspectives could depend on either these conditions, or the individual's personality, or a combination of the two. The identification of black managers with either a rural or urban group also does not necessarily relate directly to the frame of reference selected. The distinction goes beyond the physical place of abode of the individual, and encompasses perceptions of value systems and their origins.

The view presented largely in the American literature regarding Blacks lack of identification with the Protestant work ethic, is not supported by this study. It would appear that the adoption of the principles of the work ethic, is independent of the world view orientation. Black managers, displaying opposing frames of reference, all identify with the work ethic in this study. This identification would appear to be based on a recognition of the work ethic as a major factor contributing to success. A black manager's world view becomes an important consideration in assessing behaviour related to the work ethic, which manifests itself in the work situation. The extent to which change is viewed as the responsibility of the individual is relevant.

Intercultural interactions are facilitated by an awareness of intercultural differences, and it would appear that this could be more relevant to black managers who display an orientation towards people. In the work situation, a black manager who has to communicate with a production orientated individual who does not share his humanitarian approach; may view the process more personally than a white counterpart because of the importance attached to human relations in the African world

view. The possibility exists that these black managers have addressed the problem by developing their communication skills to allow them to cope in adverse situations. The question is raised as to the necessity of training potential black managers who might meet with failure by being unprepared. Black managers who have adopted a Western frame of reference could be at an advantage in being able to distance themselves from situations, and view interactions in more global terms.

Corporate culture has over the past decade become an increasingly important concept, particularly in the South African situation where the workplace has been the meeting place of races and cultures. In this study, the respondents expressed the opinion that the organisation's policies were non-discriminatory, and simultaneously rejected affirmative action interventions which were not based on merit. It might be expected that black managers with an African frame of reference would support affirmative action programmes because of the emphasis on lifting the majority. From this study it would appear that the principles of the work ethic dominate the thinking of both African and Westernised black managers. With reference to the three case studies presented, there appears to be a general consensus that the black population of this country needs to be developed, but that any action on the part of management which undermines the principle of equality, is unacceptable. Within this broad concept, there are three points of view:

- * It is the joint responsibility of management and the prospective black manager to create opportunities for the training and development of the latter.
- * Prospective black managers who apply themselves will reach a certain level within the current system; but unless there is a significant shift in the attitudes of both decision-makers and the people who must abide by these decisions, a ceiling will be reached which results in frustration.

- * Providing blacks are given an equal start in terms of background and education, it is up to the potential black manager to assume responsibility for his own self-development.

13 // All three points of view are valid, in that they represent the reality of the situation for the individual concerned. What would appear to be a conclusion, is the fact that black managers within a single organisation perceive the corporate culture differently. Due to the influence of stereotypes, whites often view blacks as a group, and fail to take unique characteristics into account. The question is raised as to whether an affirmative action programme is too much of a blanket approach to meet individual needs.

A further point to consider is that possibly the emphasis should not be so much on the changing racial perceptions at a management level, but rather on the changing perceptions of individuals of different race groups as they advance within their careers. If these shifts in attitudes were fully understood, then interventions could be designed to maximise the effects of positive attitudes and take correctional action to minimise the effects of negative attitudes.

6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations provided in this study take the form of a possible outline for future research. It is hoped that the additional information generated in this paper, will provide insight into intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers. Although a solution to a problem is not posed, the researcher trusts that the findings will assist those responsible for action in examining the possible consequences of alternatives.

It is suggested that researchers and practitioners alike could consider the following areas as requiring further

investigation in this country:

- * The sensitivity of the issue of African and Western frames of reference for the individuals involved; and the impact of the adoption of these perspectives on functioning in a variety of life domains which impact upon the working life of the black individual.
- * The importance of the work ethic for black managers; and the extent to which this may be undermined by inappropriate action on the part of decision-makers.
- * The importance of human relations to black managers who retain an African frame of reference; and the contribution these individuals can make towards increasing awareness of intercultural perceptions and resulting behaviour.
- * The merits of an affirmative action programme which fails to take individual differences into account needs to be questioned.

While the provision of equal opportunity has been recognised as the path to the future, consideration should be given as to where the responsibility lies. The work situation cannot be isolated from larger society; and the issues faced by organisations who attempt to tackle the problem are complex, and may be beyond the control of the organisation. However, if each individual in South African society assumes responsibility for his or her own level of awareness of intercultural perceptions, the well-being of the country as a whole will be promoted, and not just the potential black managers.

APPENDIX 1

INTERCULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AND THE PROMOTION OF BLACK MANAGERS

Part 1: Demographic characteristics

1.1 Please tell me about yourself?

probe: Where do you come from?

How do you feel about where you come from?

How important to you is your background?

Do you think your views about your background are changing?

1.2 Please tell me about your family?

probe: What is your family position?

Where do you live?

Part 2: Work identity

2.1 What is your current employment status?

probe: What is your current work situation?

2.2 What is important to you about your work as _____?

probe: What is important to you about being a _____?

2.3 How do you feel about being a _____?

probe: What do you especially like about being a _____?

What do you especially dislike about being a _____?

2.4 How does being a _____ affect the way you feel about yourself as a person?

2.5 How does being a _____ affect the things you do in your everyday life?

probe: Do you do anything especially because of your being a _____?

2.6 How did you reach your present position?

2.7 Is there anything that keeps you from considering alternatives now?

probe: Do you have any questions or doubts about your future?

Part 3: Value system

- 3.1 Please describe for me your major values, the principles you strive to live your life for?
probe: What is important to you in the way you try to live your life?
- 3.2 How do your values affect the way you feel about yourself as a _____?
- 3.3 What kinds of things do you do especially because of your values?
probe: How does belief in your values affect what you do in your capacity as a _____?
- 3.4 Do you think your values are changing?
- 3.5 How are they changing?

Part 4: Cultural identity

- 4.1 What is your cultural status?
probe: To which racial or ethnic group do you belong?
- 4.2 What is important to you about your membership in this group?
probe: What is important to you about being a _____?
- 4.3 How do you feel about being a _____?
probe: What do you especially like about being a _____?
What do you especially dislike about being a _____?
- 4.4 How does being a _____ affect the way you feel about yourself as a person?
- 4.5 How do you view individuals of different cultures?
probe: How do you feel about individuals from different groups?
- 4.6 How do you think individuals from different groups view you?
probe: How do you think individuals from different groups feel about you?

Part 5: Intercultural perceptions and promotion

- 5.1 What do you think the relationship between intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers is?
probe: How do you think the way people think about different groups affects the promotion of black managers?
- 5.2 What do you think the relationship between intercultural perceptions and your promotion to a manager has been?
probe: How do you think the way people from different groups feel about you has affected your promotion to a manager?
- 5.3 How do you relate to management ideals?
probe: How happy are you with the way this company is run?
- 5.4 To what extent do you feel that you are trusted by organisational members?
probe: Do you feel that management and colleagues share information and opinions with you?
- 5.5 How effective do you think you are as a _____?
probe: How well do you think you are doing your job?
- 5.6 What factors do you think act as obstacles to further improving your position?
probe: Are there any reasons why you cannot improve your position?
- 5.7 Do you think the company policies facilitate the integration of blacks into the organisation?
probe: Do the methods the company uses to bring blacks into the organisation allow them to feel a part of the organisation?
Do you feel a part of the organisation?
- 5.8 How important do you think experience in previous positions is?
probe: Do you think you have been able to advance because of jobs you have held in the past?
- 5.9 Please tell me what you feel about the effect of changing racial perceptions at a management level?
probe: Do you think management is changing in the way it feels about yourself as a _____?

5.10 What effect do you think racial differences have on the degree of conflict which occurs in the work situation?

probe: Do you feel that individuals from different racial groups experience problems at work?

5.11 Please tell me how satisfied you are with your present situation?

probe: Are you happy in your present job?

5.12 What do you think the future holds for black managers in South Africa?

probe: Do you think the situation in South Africa in time to come will change the way blacks are promoted to managers?

5.13 What do you think the future holds for yourself?

probe: What do you think will happen to you in time to come?

APPENDIX 2

AGREEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Hi, my name is Trish Koning. I work for the Frame Group as a marketing manager in the household division at Texfin. I am conducting research on intercultural perceptions and the promotion of black managers, as part fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters degree in industrial psychology through Unisa.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research project. Your participation is very much appreciated. Before we start the interview, I would like to reassure you of your rights as follows:

- * your participation is entirely voluntary
- * you are free to refuse to answer any question at any time
- * strict confidentiality applies (the interview will be available only to acaedemics at institutions, and to Frame Group personnel as deemed necessary by the Managing Director)

Excerpts of this interview may be part of the final report, but this would not include names or identifying characteristics.

I would be grateful if you would sign this form to show that I have read you the contents.

----- (signed)

----- (printed)

----- (dated)

(Interviewer keeps signed copy, and leaves unsigned copy with respondent)

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