

**EXECUTIVE COACHING IN DIVERSITY FROM A SYSTEMS
PSYCHODYNAMIC PERSPECTIVE**

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the subject

CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DECEMBER 2009

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I declare that **EXECUTIVE COACHING IN DIVERSITY FROM A SYSTEMS PSYCHODYNAMIC PERSPECTIVE** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

(Ms LSP Motsoaledi)

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My Promoter, Prof Frans Cilliers. Thank you for authorising me fully to do this work and for your guidance and support.

I am eternally grateful for the generosity of the participants who trusted me with their private thoughts and experiences, and provided me with enormous learning opportunities.

Phatudi Maponya. Your support has been immeasurable. If I started counting the mountains you moved for me, I would never finish.

Kgomotso Sekhute. I am richly blessed for having a friend I can always count on.

Michelle May. I cherish your uplifting support and piercing insights.

Naledi Mabenge. Thank you for being you.

My Mother, Elizabeth Motsoaledi. Thank you for keeping the home fires burning and for being there for Naledi when I was buried deeply in work.

Tshepiso Motsoaledi. For always showing up when I need you.

To friends who are always ready to offer support. Rhulani Makhubela, Maria Sebate, Omphile Sebitloane, Solani Bvuma, Mando Nteo, Portia Sekati and Buyi Mbambo.

Dr Olga Coetzee. Thank you for your encouragement and for lending me your books.

To God, for walking the path with me.

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SUMMARY

This descriptive research addressed the challenges of working with the conscious and unconscious aspects of diversity in order to enhance insights into covert and deeper diversity dynamics in organisations. The research supported the evolving trend of shifting the systems psychodynamic orientation from the group to the individual context. The general aim was to describe a systems psychodynamic coaching model, and to determine its trustworthiness in assisting executives to work effectively with conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics. Literature was reviewed to provide a theoretical foundation of diversity challenges which executives face in South African organisations. This was augmented by systems psychodynamic literature, which provided a theoretical basis upon which to understand the intrapsychic aspects of the executives and their interplay with systemic dynamics.

The empirical study was conducted over ten months to determine the trustworthiness of executive coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective. Data was gathered using the organisational role analysis approach, and analysed by means of the systems psychodynamic discourse analysis method. Nine major themes and their related sub-themes were identified, namely, gender, race, ethnicity, authority, disability, language, age, de-authorisation of diversity work, and the coaching process. Through the coaching, the executives gained insights into their intrapsychic environment and the complex, multifaceted and intersecting nature of diversity in their organisations. They were assisted to take up their leadership roles more effectively and to take action on behalf of their organisations. The research hypothesis formulated and the conclusion made was that executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective displays trustworthiness.

Key terms: Systems psychodynamics, group relations, object relations, executive coaching, systems psychodynamic coaching, organisational role analysis, diversity, race, gender, leadership and authority.

CHAPTER ONE

SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a background to the research, which explores the origins of, and accompanying efforts to manage workforce diversity. The South African context during the study highlights the prevailing climate within which some of the diversity dynamics manifested. The motivation for the study, the research question, and aims of the study follow. Systems psychodynamics, which incorporates psychoanalysis, object relations and the systems paradigm is then introduced as the paradigm perspective for the study. The research design, which includes the research type, unit of analysis, the trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations, will then be presented. Finally the research methodology, encompassing the three phases of the research, will be discussed.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Diversity has always been a salient feature of societies (Arredondo, 1996) across cultures and civilisations (Ertürk, 2001). Gender differences were observed in the Garden of Eden, multilingualism was evident in the Tower of Babel, and racial and ethnic differences were visible in ancient tribes before the time of recorded history (Arredondo, 1996). Those with power have historically violated the human rights of others in order to protect their interests and entrench authoritarian rule (Ertürk, 2001). The typical manner in which societies dealt with differences was repressive rather than celebratory, in order to enforce the known, since differences were perceived as threats. At times, this involved turning

differences into defects and treating those who were different as lesser beings (Sampson, 2000). Skolnick and Green (2004) pointed out that communication and relations between diverse cultures remain fraught with paranoia, hatred, envy and an inability to understand the other, which borders on a belief that accepting the other is a violation of the divine order. Arredondo (1996) referred to this practice as denial of diversity. Historically, this denial has manifested itself in terms of colonisation of countries, holy wars, and attempts to homogenise those who are different. In the United States, a multicultural country often compared with South Africa despite glaring socio-economic differences (Hilliard, 2001/2002; Prinsloo & Cloete, 2002), expansion, colonisation and slavery have been used to enforce conformity (Arredondo, 1996). In contemporary South Africa, apartheid is widely acknowledged as representing the most destructive way of dealing with differences (Hilliard, 2001/2002; Siedman, 1999). South Africa's resistance to decolonisation efforts, prevalent in many parts of the world after World War II, and its concomitant intensification of apartheid, earned it labels such as the last bastion of a dying order. Apartheid has consequently been described as the highest stage of white supremacy (Siedman, 1999).

Struggles for human rights by the oppressed, such as the civil rights movement, women's liberation movement and demands for gay rights marked the beginning of the diversity movement (Bierema & Thomas, 2008; Ertürk, 2001). Workforce diversity as a discipline, however, emerged in response to the 1987 Hudson Institute landmark report entitled Workforce 2000. The Hudson Institute is a policy research organisation, which highlighted imminent demographic changes in the United States labour force in the year 2000. According to this report, 2000 signified the end of the American century (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Workforce 2000 reported that developments in technology, international competition and demography would influence the United State's economic and social environment. One of the four major trends expected to shape the demography was the slow growth of the workforce. In addition, this workforce was envisaged

to become older, more female, and more disadvantaged. This report thus projected that women and minorities would outnumber white males in the labour force (Johnston & Packer, 1987). To respond constructively to this imminent reality, workplaces were encouraged to change their demographics in order to stay competitive in the new labour market (Cañas & Sondak, 2008; Ertürk, 2001; Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000; Plummer, 2003).

Attempts have since been made to normalise and democratise societies as the diversity movement has evolved (Human, 2005). However, the effects of segregation and intolerance remain visible in many segments of society (Dixon & Durrheim, 2003). In the workplace, these manifest themselves as adversarial relationships, mistrust and poor communication between identity groups, poor team work, high turnover rates of individuals from designated groups and low levels of productivity (Adele, 2002). Attempts to deal with differences in the workplace are often met with feelings of fear, anger and bewilderment (Cavaleros, Vuuren & Visser, 2002; Cilliers & May, 2002). Since organisations are microcosms of society, diversity conflicts are expected to spill over into workplaces (Booyesen, 2007a; Chrobot-Mason, Ruderman, Weber, Ohlott & Dalton, 2007; Taylor, 2004).

It is the researcher's personal view, supported by articles published mostly in the mainstream media, that key events occurring in South Africa during the data collection phase of the study, between November 2007 and August 2008, reinforced the intense, pervasive and unyielding nature of diversity challenges. Arguably, the most significant occurrence was the changing political leadership within the ruling party. Berger (2007) described this as a key development in South Africa's democracy. Thabo Mbeki lost power to Jacob Zuma in December 2007 during an ANC conference widely described as the most divisive in ANC history (Clayton, 2007; McGreal, 2007). Jacob Zuma seemed to unleash intense reactions in South Africans. The normal anxieties related to change seemed to

be exacerbated by Zuma's departure from the entrenched norms of the dominant culture. Described as being controversial, he espouses traditional African practices, is a polygamist, lacks 'formal' education, and in addition to being charged with corruption, was accused of raping a woman infected with HIV (Berger, 2007). His election as head of the ruling party caused an acrimonious split (Berger, 2007) in the party, which culminated in Mbeki's dismissal as president of the country on 20 September 2008 (Berger, 2008; Saunders, 2008). The formation of a break-away opposition party (Berger, 2008) was one of the events set in motion by these anxiety-provoking political changes.

During the course of this study, a white teenage boy was arrested for shooting dead four blacks in what was described as a racially motivated crime (Fourie, 2008; Mouton & du Plessis, 2008). Later, the University of the Free State video, in which black cleaners were fed food allegedly urinated on by white students, in an act meant to mock racial integration, was broadcast locally and internationally (Sapa, 2008). Somewhere in between, there were power cuts, also referred to as load shedding, which triggered intense feelings of anger and anxiety. A black woman was stripped and sexually assaulted for wearing a mini-skirt at a busy taxi rank in Johannesburg, sparking outrage among human rights organisations, including gender organisations (Mapumulo, 2008). This was followed by xenophobic attacks, during which blacks attacked and killed black foreigners living in townships, accusing them of stealing jobs and being criminals. During these attacks, the gruesome murder of a Mozambican national, reminiscent of the mid-1980's 'necklacing' during the height of political turbulence in apartheid South Africa, occurred (Maluleke, 2008; Rank, Govender & Nombembe, 2008). This xenophobia was laden with ethnocentrism, as local blacks from certain ethnic groups such as the Tsongas were also attacked (Maluleke, 2008). Undocumented comments by diversity workshop participants, in which the researcher has been a facilitator, have intimated that these attacks should be

seen as Afrophobia, since only black foreigners are the targets of fear and hatred.

All these events occurred alongside the more enduring discourse of crime which is characterised by racial undertones, and racially charged debates regarding sport, particularly rugby, described by Carroll (2008) as one of the last white man's bastions and regarded as an embodiment of the Afrikaner spirit. These did not preclude the Zimbabwean crisis (Steinberg, 2009), which dominated virtually all national discussions for a long time, and the economic gloom which reportedly signalled a recession (Williams, 2008). These incidents brought to the fore the need for diversity interventions to constructively address the divisions in society and in the workplace.

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

Diversity scholars and practitioners have attested to the increasing workforce diversity in the global market (Cox & Blake, 1991; Human, 2005; Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000; Miller & Katz, 2002; Nkomo & Kriek, 2004; Plummer, 2003). In response, effective diversity management has been advocated as a business strategy that can increase organisational competitiveness (Cox & Blake, 1991; Miller & Katz, 2002; Nkomo & Kriek, 2004).

South African workplaces have also become increasingly diverse as a result of the changing socio-political climate (Cavaleros et al., 2002). Various pieces of legislation such as the Employment Equity Act, the Labour Relations Act and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, all underpinned by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (South African Department of Labour, 2004), have influenced demographic changes in South African workplaces. The Bill of Rights, contained in the second chapter of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, is a cornerstone of democracy. It enshrines the rights of all people and

affirms the right to human dignity, equality and freedom. In addition, its equality clause explicitly prohibits unfair discrimination directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnicity, social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth (South African Government Information, 1996). The Labour Relations Act aims to promote economic development, social justice, labour peace and the democratisation of the workplace (Van Jaarsveld & Van Eck, 2002). The Basic Conditions of Employment Act aims to advance economic development and social justice by regulating the right to fair labour practice, through establishing and enforcing basic conditions of employment (South African Government Information, 1996).

The Employment Equity Act (EEA), promulgated in 1998, has been the main driver of workplace demographic representivity (Feldner-Busztin, 2004; Human, 2005). This Act makes provision for the establishment of the Commission for Employment Equity, whose purpose is to advise the Minister of Labour on the various codes and regulations required for the implementation of the Employment Equity Act. One of the functions of this Commission is to research and report to the Minister of Labour on matters relating to the application of the Employment Equity Act. From 04 May 1999, the Commission was expected to submit an annual report to the Minister of Labour (South African Department of Labour, 2004). The eighth and ninth reports submitted by the Commission for Employment Equity, covering the years 2008 and 2009, revealed gross under-representation of Africans (blacks), coloureds and people with disabilities in key areas of the labour market (Commission for Employment Equity, 2007-2008/2008-2009). South Africans of Chinese descent, declared a designated group in 2008 (Mbola, 2008) were not featured in the reports. The group was classified as coloured in apartheid South Africa, yet was excluded from the benefits of employment equity and black economic empowerment in democratic South Africa until 2008 (Mbola, 2008).

The profile of the economically active population is presented in Table 1.1 below. This table indicates that Africans (blacks), a numeric majority in South Africa, constituted a staggering 79% of the economically active population nationally in 2009, followed by whites who made up 9.6%, and coloureds at 8.9% and finally, Indians who made up 2.5%. Males from all race groups outnumbered females in the national economically active population by a negligible margin in 2008. These figures were slightly different in 2009, with African females representing the most drastic change, as they exceeded African males by 6.9%. Indian females exceeded Indian males by 0.3%. The percentage of African males decreased by 2.7%, white males by 2.1%, coloured males by 1% and Indian males by 0.6%. The number of white and coloured females, on the other hand decreased by 0.4%.

Table 1.1 Profile of the national economically active population

Economically Active Population		Male	Female	Total
African	2007 – 2008	40.4%	34.4%	74.8%
	2009	37.7%	41.3%	79%
White	2007 – 2008	6.7%	5.4%	12.1%
	2009	4.6%	5%	9.6%
Coloured	2007 – 2008	5.3%	5.0%	10.3%
	2009	4.3%	4.6%	8.9%
Indian	2007 – 2008	1.8%	1.0%	2.8%
	2009	1.2%	1.3%	2.5%
Total	2007 – 2008	54.2%	45.8%	100%
	2009	47.8%	52.2%	100%

(Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report, 2007-2008/2008-2009)

Table 1.2, presented next, demonstrates that 58.4 % of white males held the majority of top management positions in 2008, followed by African males at 12.9%, Indian males at 5.0%, and finally coloured males at 2.9%. The 2009 results indicate that the number of white males has increased by 2.7%, and coloured males by 0.6%, whereas the number of African males has decreased by

3.1%, followed by Indian males, who have decreased by 0.2%. The pattern is similar with regard to females in 2008. White females were in the lead at 9.8%, followed by African females at 5.9%, and Indians and coloureds at 1.1% and 1.0% respectively. In 2009, white females increased in number by 1.9% and coloured females by 0.2%, whereas African females decreased in number by 2.1%, while the percentage for Indian females stayed the same. A similar trend was visible in the senior management category, although the number of white males decreased slightly by 8.4%, a percentage which was largely absorbed by white females who increased in number by 5.4% in that category, followed by Indian females who increased by 1.1%. Black and coloured females increased in number by 0.4% and 0.8% respectively. In 2009, the number of white males in senior management positions decreased by 2.6%, whereas white females increased in number by 2.6%. African males and females decreased in number by 0.7% and 0.1% respectively, and coloured males and females increased by 0.3% and 0.5% respectively. Indian males increased in number by 0.2%, whereas Indian females decreased by 0.1%.

Table 1.2 below highlights the concentration of Africans in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations in 2008 and 2009. The African group, followed by the coloured group, was concentrated largely in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations, with Africans making up 80.9% and coloureds making up 12.6% of the unskilled workforce. The white group made up 1.1% while the Indians made up 1.3% of unskilled members of the workforce. The professional, specialist and middle management levels reflect a typical pattern of white overrepresentation. The skilled and lower management level show some significant shifts, particularly with regard to females, as shown by a decrease of white females from 15.3% in 2008 to 12.5% and an increase of African females from 13.6% in 2008 to 18.9% in 2009. More African males, at 30.5% were on the skilled and lower management level in 2008, compared to white males at 20.3%.

Table 1.2 Number of employees by occupational level, race and gender

Occupational level		Males				Females			
		African	White	Coloured	Indian	African	White	Coloured	Indian
Top management	07-08	12.9%	58.4%	2.9%	5.0%	5.9%	9.8%	1.0%	1.1%
	09	9.8%	61.1%	3.5%	4.8%	3.8%	11.7%	1.2%	1.1%
Senior management	07- 08	12.6%	50.0%	4.3%	5.8%	5.5%	15.2%	1.8%	2.4%
	09	11.9%	47.4%	4.6%	6.0%	5.4%	17.8%	2.3%	2.3%
Professional, Specialists, Middle management	07- 08	15.5%	38.7%	5.3%	5.6%	8.6%	18.5%	3.2%	3.1%
	09	16.5%	33.2%	4.9%	5.6%	11.5%	18.4%	4.5%	3.3%
Skilled and lower management	07- 08	30.5%	20.3%	7.2%	4.0%	13.6%	15.3%	5.6%	2.7%
	09	30.9%	18.5%	6.5%	3.7%	18.9%	12.5%	5.1%	2.7%
Semi-skilled	07- 08	44.3%	3.7%	6.7%	2.1%	22.6%	6.2%	8.1%	2.3%
	09	46.3%	4.0%	6.3%	2.0%	23.0%	5.5%	7.0%	1.9%
Unskilled	07- 08	55.5%	0.8%	6.8%	0.8%	25.4%	0.3%	5.8%	0.5%
	09	56.0%	0.8%	5.3%	0.6%	27.3%	0.4%	5.0%	0.4%

(Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report, 2007-2008/2008-2009)

The discrepancies between the different races have been attributed to the legacy of apartheid, which resulted in the concentration of skills in the white group (Nkomo & Kriek, 2004). Consequently, the new government struggled to find suitable candidates from previously disadvantaged groups to lead some parastatals, because the cohort of excellent black business leaders was starting to make its presence felt only recently (Nkomo & Kriek, 2004). However, resistance to transformation and its increasingly destructive nature have also been blamed for perpetuating the status quo (Booyesen, 2007b; Feldner-Busztin, 2004; Fraser-Moleketi, 2001; Human, 2005). Cilliers and Stone (2005) presented a psychodynamic analysis to explain this scenario. They reported that efforts to implement employment equity programmes were undermined by an unconscious rational-irrational conflict. The rational sentiment of supporting such initiatives existed alongside the denigration of equity efforts. The white male subgroup,

notably concentrated in the upper echelons of organisations, were reported to deconstruct the good intentions and plans of employment equity, resulting in splits between different sub-groups, which manifest themselves as power struggles in equity forums. The white males' position was, however, reinforced by power projected into them by the previously disadvantaged other and the introjection of denigration by the previously disadvantaged other. Through identification with these projections by the different sub-groups, systems become involved in unconscious collusions in order to maintain the status quo (Cilliers & Stone, 2005). This results in misalignment between equity legislation and formal organisational policies on the one hand, and implementation on the other hand in many organisations (Booyesen, 2007b). Organisations which are reluctant to transform develop organisational cultures which are not accommodating towards the other (Human, 2005).

Diversity management has been looked up to as a means to facilitate inclusive work environments which value diversity (Miller & Katz, 2002), and support redress processes which are often plagued by volatile reactions amongst diverse groups (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2007). Booyesen (2007c) reported that tensions and conflicts between diverse groups are very real in South Africa and can have harmful effects. Fraser-Moleketi (2001) remarked that the most significant diversity attributes in South Africa are race and ethnicity. Booyesen (2007a) noted that the different race groups felt devalued, as whites perceived there to be reverse discrimination. Leonard and Grobler (2006) remarked that some previously disadvantaged individuals could be advantaged at the expense of better or equally qualified whites. Blacks on the other hand are blamed for lowering of standards and are labelled as incompetent (Booyesen, 2007a).

The biggest responsibility for fostering diversity-friendly organisational cultures lies with executives (Hyter & Turnock, 2005; Miller & Katz, 2002). Feldner-Busztin (2004) described senior management commitment as being the most

fundamental success factor. Miller and Katz (2002) added that the unyielding nature of diversity challenges requires longer and more intensive work with leaders in order to set the tone for diversity processes, because successful change is driven from the top.

1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Training has been adopted as a general means of addressing diversity challenges by many South African organisations (Cavaleros et al., 2002). Such training, however, is typically implemented in an ad hoc manner (Gildenhuys, 2003). Consequently, a recurring concern related to diversity programmes is that learning is not institutionalised so that it can contribute significantly to sustainable transformation. Cilliers and May (2002) and Cilliers and Koortzen (2000) highlighted the significance of the psychodynamic perspective in addressing hidden and unconscious forces of diversity, and cautioned against working only on the conscious and rational level, as this prevents an adequate understanding of diversity. The training approach can be regarded as appropriate as a means of raising diversity awareness. It is, however, ineffective when it comes to dealing with diversity on a deeper level. Armstrong and Huffington (2004) remarked that the traditional approaches do not make significant contributions to understanding and addressing complex responses to change. The systems psychodynamic approach, on the other hand, addresses the root level on which fundamental shifts occur.

Organisational leaders are urged to acknowledge the role that unconscious dynamics play in organisational life and in deepening insights into leadership (Kets de Vries & Engellau, 2004). Principles of psychodynamics can be applied to executive coaching in order to identify how unconscious material affects executives' decisions, contributes to poor leadership and decreases organisational effectiveness (French & Vince, 1999; Kilburg, 2004).

Psychodynamic executive coaching is also effective in transferring training outputs into the work environment (Kilburg, 2007a). Dreaschlin (2007) reiterated the effectiveness of executive coaching as a strategy to raise the diversity-sensitivity orientation of leaders. Eddy (2008), however, noted a paucity of studies that have linked diversity management to the commitment of executives or leadership theory. Kilburg (2007b) noted a similar dearth of empirical research on executive coaching, particularly as it applies to management within a consultation context. Kampa-Kokesch and Anderson (2007) identified only a handful of empirical studies in the area of executive coaching.

Witham (2008) criticised the field of diversity management for being rigid and not displaying much innovation in dealing with its challenges. Executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective offers a new way of working with diversity in order to enhance available methods of addressing diversity challenges. For many leaders, working from this perspective will be new and challenging. However, the transforming nature of organisations and the unyielding nature of diversity challenges require that leaders add an ability to work with deep, hidden aspects of work life to their skills base. Leaders who appreciate the role of their intrapsychic environment, role factors and organisational dynamics that impact on them are better equipped to take up their roles effectively (Newton, Long & Siever, 2006) in order to pursue a diversity agenda in an a significant way.

The problem addressed by this research is how to coach executives from a systems psychodynamic perspective to enable them to understand conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics, so that they can take appropriate actions on behalf of their organisations.

The research question

The research question was phrased as follows: Would systems psychodynamic coaching display trustworthiness and assist executives to work effectively with conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics within their organisations?

1.5 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The general aim of this study was to describe a systems psychodynamic coaching model, and to test its trustworthiness in terms of assisting executives to work effectively with conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics within their organisations.

More specifically, the research intended to achieve the following aims:

- To explore conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics that executives experience in their workplaces.
- To explore the intrapsychic environment of executives and its interplay with diversity dynamics.
- To deepen executives' insights into the conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics, in order to assist them to work more effectively with diversity and to enable them to take action on behalf of their organisations.
- To contribute to the theoretical knowledge of coaching executives in the area of diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective.
- To determine the trustworthiness of executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective.

1.6 THE PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

Systems psychodynamics is the paradigm perspective for this research. This paradigm perspective solidifies its place in the Industrial/Organisational Psychology field through its systematic application of behavioural science knowledge. Such application is aimed at improving work performance, and wellbeing for individuals, groups and organisations. The Australian Psychological Society Interest Group on Coaching Psychology noted that coaching psychology draws on and develops established psychological practices, and also develops its own coaching specific theory and research base. Coaching thus fits into the predominant focal point of Industrial/Organisational (I/O) Psychology, which is enhancing the effectiveness and productivity of organisations, and the well-being of its workforce, by applying psychological principles and methods, to understand and influence work behaviour and attitudes, and organisational structures (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007).

The systems psychodynamic perspective was heavily influenced by psychoanalysis, object relations and the systems paradigm (Fraher, 2004a).

1.6.1 Psychoanalysis

A major premise of psychoanalysis is that mental processes are unconscious (Freud, 1935). The unconscious refers to hidden mental activities that are beyond the awareness of individuals, while the conscious refers to mental activities within the range of full awareness. Although hidden from awareness, the unconscious mind influences conscious feelings, thoughts, attitudes, actions and relationships with others (Townley, 2008). A major goal of psychoanalysis is to lift repression so that the unconscious can become conscious (Friedman, 1968).

Psychoanalysis focuses on instinctual drives, which are inner needs that seek gratification (Friedman, 1968). Two major instinctual drives are libido or the life force, and morbidus or the death instinct (Townley, 2008). Libidinal drives include the sexual drive and all emotions that are related to love in its broad sense. Morbidus is generally from the destructive instinct (Freud, 1948) but is not entirely negative as it propels people to take many daily actions such as participating in sport, and thus it can be used constructively. Psychoanalysis has also drawn attention to the Oedipus complex, which is an unconscious conflict starting in childhood, and emanating from wishes and prohibitions in relation to one's parents (Freud, 1949; Friedman, 1968). This conflict of incestuous attachment (Thwaites, 2007) is characterised by amorous feelings towards the opposite sex parent and destructive feelings towards the same sex parent, which subsequently evoke guilt and fear of retaliatory punishment. Healthy resolution of the oedipal complex occurs through identification with the same sex parent (Friedman, 1968).

Psychoanalysis posits that the mind is made up of the id, ego and superego (Freud, 1949). The id, which contains instinctual drives, is governed by the pleasure principle and pushes for expression in order to experience instant gratification. The desires of the id are countered by the ego, which operates according to the reality principle and mediates between the id and the external environment. The superego or conscience includes moral codes of families and societies, and the ideals of civilisation. The ego must also find ways to satisfy the prohibiting demands of the superego (Friedman, 1968; Segal, 2006). A weakened ego experiences anxiety and in reaction, develops defence mechanisms against the anxiety (Friedman, 1968; Gabriel & Carr, 2002; Kilburg, 2000).

Psychoanalytic phenomena have relevance in formal organisations, and applying the psychoanalytic perspective to the study of work and organisations facilitates a deeper understanding of organisational life (Czander, 1993; Townley, 2008).

1.6.1.1 *Critique of psychoanalysis*

Psychoanalysis is valuable for the vast insights it provides into human nature (Czander, 1993). Mills (2005) described the unconscious as a significant, original contribution to understanding human experience. Politzer (1994) remarked about the capacity of psychoanalysis to deal with the intimacy of psychological facts and thus provide in-depth knowledge of the human psyche. Kenny (2009) hailed psychoanalysis for its valuable contribution to the study of contemporary organisations because it has shed light on aspects of organisational life that have previously remained inaccessible to mainstream management theory.

Psychoanalysis has, however, over the years been criticised for failing to yield significantly to empiricism and for not providing evidence for its causal claims (Edelson, 1988; Politzer, 1994; Rofé, 2000; Segal, 2004). Langs (1992) added that psychoanalysis' lack of rigorous, quantification and controlled measures earned it the label of a pseudo-science. Psychoanalysts have been challenged to produce laboratory studies proving the existence of an autonomous unconscious. In addition, psychoanalysis was accused of being unable to support its claim that repression of conflict is a prerequisite of neurosis (Edelson, 1998; Rofé, 2000). Furthermore, psychoanalysis has been blamed for being too focused on the past, promoting destructive thinking and not teaching people skills (Segal, 2004).

Proponents of psychoanalysis, however, have maintained that clinical evidence is sufficient to prove the existence of unconscious phenomena, whose existence

ought not to depend upon the laboratory scientist's ability to create it (Edelson, 1988; Rofé, 2000). Frosh (2003) remarked that the criticism of psychoanalysis was often a reflection of struggles between different ways of conceptualisation rather than the best strategies of experimentation and investigation.

Psychoanalysis' view of man as a biological entity motivated by libidinal and aggressive instincts (Izenberg, 1976; Solomon, 2006) was challenged for its reductionistic tendencies, as it failed to recognise man's history and his purposive and meaning-giving qualities (Izenberg, 1976). This criticism was attributed to the dismay experienced by proponents of the rationalist tradition over psychoanalysis' notion that man is not fully in control of himself. Such a view tapered the optimism about the potential of man's freedom (Izenberg, 1976).

1.6.2 Object relations

Melanie Klein is credited with pioneering the object relations school of psychoanalytic thought, which provides an interpersonal perspective to the study of humans. It has also added significantly to an understanding of work and the organisation (Czander, 1993; Obholzer, 1994). The term object-relations acknowledges the fact that from the beginning, an infant has relations. The first object is the mother's breast (Klein, 1997), which is good if it is gratifying and provides nourishment upon demand, and bad when it is frustrating and delays or withholds nourishment. When the mother is unable to satisfy the needs of a child, primitive defence mechanisms such as splitting, introjection and projection are used (Stapley, 2006).

1.6.2.1 *Splitting*

The infant deals with the confusion and anxiety emanating from the conflict of dealing with a mother who is available and nurturing, while being unavailable and withholding at the same time, by splitting her into two parts. Through splitting she becomes an idealised mother and a hated, denigrated mother (Solomon, 1995; Stapley, 2006).

1.6.2.2 *Introjection*

Introjection is the unconscious process of taking in objects such as people including their emotional aspects, values and concepts. Such objects are internalised as mental images and representations to be used throughout life. When good objects are evoked, they elicit positive feelings, conversely, when bad objects are evoked, they elicit negative feelings (Stapley, 2006).

1.6.2.3 *Projection*

Through projection, an individual's unacceptable behaviour, unconscious wishes and ideas, which would be painful if accepted, are thrust upon objects (Stapley, 2006). Some of these disowned urges and feelings include aggression, ambition, envy, competition, and taboos (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004).

1.6.2.4 *Projective identification*

Projective identification requires an object to identify with, introject and contain projections, as if they belong to the object (Segal, 2006; Stapley, 2006). Projective identification may be directed towards the ideal object in order to avoid separation, or it may be directed towards the bad object in order to gain control of the source of danger (Segal, 2006).

1.6.2.5 *Critique of object relations*

Czander (1993) described object relations as a useful model for contributing to an understanding of work and the organisation because, unlike classical psychoanalysis, it de-emphasises the role of instincts. Its interpersonal basis explains behavioural dynamics from a two-person interactional model and thus considers the role of the environment. Mills (2005) added that object relations diminishes the traditional authority of the analyst because the analyst's self-disclosure makes it more interactive, humane and holistic. Masling and Bornstein (1994) remarked that object relations provides a language capable of bridging abstract theoretical concepts with practical analytic experiences. In addition, unlike classical psychoanalysis, it is easier to operationalise and its concepts can be quantified for empirical purposes.

Hirschhorn (1999b) hailed object relations for providing a useful basis for explaining the identification process between managers and subordinates in the workplace. Fraher (2004b) lauded its capacity to elucidate the role of primitive defences in groups. Rustin (2005) added that object relations is a valuable resource for political and social thinking, which is needed to curb the pervasive individualism of modern societies, which often translates into experiences marked by defences, triggered by fear of outsiders.

Like its predecessor, classical psychoanalysis, object relations has been criticised for being pessimistic, paying much attention to negative feelings and focusing more on internal life at the expense of external reality. In addition, the outcomes of its interventions tend to depend on the quality of analyst's training, personal attributes and the client's attitudes towards the analyst and the analysis (Segal, 2004). Current neuropsychology research has produced evidence which validates Klein's ideas about infant behaviour. Such evidence confirms that infants actively participate in their social life and possess significant emotional and perceptual capacities (Segal, 2004).

1.6.3 Systems paradigm

The basic tenet behind general systems theory, regarded as the first science of wholes, is that complex organisms cannot be entirely comprehended by breaking them down into parts and studying those parts. The theory proposes that the whole must be the subject of analysis since it enables studying the crucial relationship between its parts (Fitzgerald, 2009). General systems theory was founded on the premise that all systems, regardless of their attributes, share commonalities and have a hidden connection amongst them (Skyttner, 2001). The hallmarks of general systems theory include interrelatedness, holism, goal-seeking, transformation, negentropy – the import of energy from the environment, regulation, hierarchy, differentiation, equifinality - different ways of achieving the same objective, multifinality - achieving different objectives through similar means (Skyttner, 2001). Stapley (2006) defined a system as an organised, unitary whole composed of two or more interdependent subsystems, with boundaries that distinguish it from its external environment.

Open systems exchange matter with the environment (Bertalanffy, 1968; Stapley, 2006; Van Tonder, 2004) and therefore all living systems, including organisations, are open systems, adaptive and capable of self-renewal (Skyttner, 2001). The concept of open systems provides a significant basis for leading whole-system change (Duffy, 2008). Components of open systems include the design, division of labour, levels of authority, reporting relationships, nature of work tasks, processes and activities, strategies, primary tasks, boundaries and interactions of an organisation (Gould, Stapley & Stein, 2004). Kilburg (2000) reiterated that systems theory studies organisations and their management in a way that allows for an analysis and synthesis of relatedness and interactions in complex and dynamic environments. According to Fraher (2004b) relationships between the part and the whole, the whole and the environment, the individual and the group, and the individual and the organisation can be looked at simultaneously in order to understand organisational defence mechanisms.

Wardsworth (2008) noted that the new focus of systems thinking was on change and development, addressing issues and improving problematic situations.

1.6.3.1 Critique of systems paradigm

General systems theory is credited for its capacity to facilitate whole system change (Fitzgerald, 2009). Wardsworth (2008) applauded its relevance to address change and development and to improve problematic situations.

According to Fitzgerald (2009) the difficulties of grasping the entire whole often tempts systems theory practitioners to resort to the very reductionistic methods which general systems theory seeks to challenge. One challenge of grasping the entire whole is the difficulty of accurately deducing internal experiences from external representations. Herrsher (1995) cited resistance to change, particularly organisation-wide resistance, as one of the challenges of implementing systems thinking. Such change is threatening since it heralds multiple changes in mentality, territory identification, power, structure and culture. Dash (1995) suggested that a basic challenge in systems practice was establishing whole conceptions because the field lacked a definite body of knowledge to which practitioners could adhere. Wardsworth (2008) however, noted the emergence of a new and increasingly popular systems thinking trend which is systemic, trans-disciplinary and socio-bio-technical, and encourages holistic thinking about all human diversity. This trend represents a departure from the old linear, status-quo preserving, determinist, objectivist, predictive, structural-functional kind of systems thinking, which was accused of following the reductionistic tradition.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of this study includes an explanation of the type of research, unit of analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations.

1.7.1 Type of research

The descriptive case study approach was adopted to obtain comprehensive, in-depth knowledge (Zucker, 2001) and contextual description (Yin, 2003) of executive coaching in the area of diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective. The complex nature of the subject matter necessitated a research approach which would uncover the multiplicity of factors which interact in order to produce the observed conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics in organisations (Yin, 2003). The research strategy entailed a review of literature, accompanied by an application of executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective to six case studies.

An overview of how the research was conducted is provided below:

- A literature review was conducted in order to provide a theoretical basis for understanding the concept of diversity as it relates to executives within the South African context.
- A systems psychodynamic literature review was conducted in order to explore conscious and unconscious processes in organisations, and to determine the suitability of this approach to executive coaching.
- Data was gathered by means of a qualitative research approach using Organisational Role Analysis (ORA) within a coaching context as a method to determine the trustworthiness of coaching executives in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective. ORA emerged from organisational consultancy, systems theory and group relations training (Newton et al., 2006) to enable managers and leaders to take up their roles more effectively (Bunning, 2006), address dilemmas and exercise their authority and leadership (Newton et al., 2006).
 - Six clients were coached over a period of eight months during which the interactions between their intrapsychic environment, roles and organisational dynamics were observed.

- Data was interpreted using systems psychodynamic discourse analysis, a method which facilitates depth in terms of the interpretation of data (Henning, 2004; Smit & Cilliers, 2006), and allows for the extraction of knowledge from systems psychodynamic theory and the researcher's subjective sense-making abilities (Cilliers, 2007).

1.7.2 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was the individual in relation to the person-role-system diversity framework.

1.7.3 Ensuring trustworthiness

Qualitative research adopts a naturalistic approach in order to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, unlike quantitative research which focuses on observable, measurable facts through experimental research (Golafshani, 2003). According to Healy and Perry (2000), social phenomena are tenuous and causal relations in this regard are dependent upon the context. Thus, concepts such as validity, reliability, generalisability and objectivity, primarily rooted in the positivistic perspective that underpins quantitative research, are employed differently in qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003; Sinkovics, Penz & Ghauri, 2008). Qualitative research concerns itself with achieving trustworthiness, which encompasses concepts such as credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability in order to enhance the quality of research (Sinkovics et al., 2008). According to Golafshani (2003) the researcher is an instrument in qualitative research, and thus the credibility of the study depends on the ability and effort of the researcher. Credibility is the equivalent of internal validity (Sinkovics et al., 2008) and ensures that the researcher's findings are true from the perspective of the subjects (Devers, 1999; Dyson & Brown, 2006). Transferability is regarded as equivalent to external validity or

generalisability (Sinkovics et al., 2008). It is about the degree to which the findings can be generalised to other settings similar to the one in which the study occurred (Devers, 1999; Dyson & Brown, 2006). Dependability is similar to reliability (Evans, 2007; Golafshani, 2003), and is achieved when the methods and logic of the researcher's findings are explicit and transparent in order to achieve consistency (Sinkovics et al., 2008). Confirmability is the equivalent of objectivity (Devers, 1999; Sinkovics et al., 2004) and calls upon the researcher to demonstrate freedom from bias in interpretation (Sinkovics et al., 2008).

1.7.4. Ethics

The research was conducted in an ethical manner characterised by privacy, confidentiality, and mutual consent, which ensured that the participants were respected and not harmed in any way.

1.8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research entailed three phases, namely the literature review, the empirical study and the conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

PHASE 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

- This phase provided the theoretical foundations of diversity dynamics and the diversity challenges of executives.
- A theoretical basis for the systems psychodynamic perspective, including executive coaching, was also provided. This facilitated an understanding of intrapsychic aspects of executives and below the surface organisational dynamics, in order to enable executives to take action on behalf of their organisations.

PHASE 2: EMPIRICAL STUDY

- Data was collected through executive coaching using the Organisational Role Analysis method. This was used to observe the interplay between the intrapsychic environment and roles of executives, and organisational dynamics. This data was then used to determine the trustworthiness of coaching executives in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective. The researcher took notes during each coaching session, as well as afterwards during the period of reflection.
- The data was typed and salient material relating to diversity and systems psychodynamics was highlighted.
- Themes were coded into broad diversity categories in order to organise the data.
- Frames of language action were searched for in order to explore sense-making, followed by the rereading of the data.
- Various discourse markers were highlighted.
- Related discourses were named as sub-themes conceptualised from a specific discourse perspective.
- Data was reread in order to uncover deeper layers of meaning.
- The data interpretation was reviewed and augmented with literature review.
- Working hypotheses were formulated.
- A research hypothesis was formulated.

PHASE 3: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- This phase outlined how the study had met the set aims, answered the research question and solved the formulated problem.
- The limitations of the study were also highlighted.

- Recommendations were made in terms of coaching executives from a systems psychodynamic perspective, as well as for future research.

1.9 CHAPTER DIVISION

This study includes the following chapters:

Chapter two:	Diversity amongst executives; This chapter includes a background to diversity, diversity theories and paradigms, and the role of leadership in relation to diversity.
Chapter three:	Systems psychodynamics and executive coaching; The systems psychodynamic perspective is adopted to highlight unconscious phenomena that influence the intrapsychic environment of individuals and organisational dynamics. Attention is also paid to executive coaching from systems psychodynamic perspective in this chapter.
Chapter four:	Research design and methodology; The research design and the methodology of this study are presented in this chapter.
Chapter five:	Findings; The findings of the data analysis, including interpretations and the research hypothesis are presented in this chapter.
Chapter six:	Conclusions, limitations, and recommendations;

This chapter draws conclusions to the study,
highlights its limitations and makes recommendations.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This first chapter has provided a background to and motivation for the research. In addition, it formulated the problem statement, articulated the aims of the research, and presented a summary of the research design and methodology of the research.

CHAPTER TWO

DIVERSITY AMONGST EXECUTIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins by providing a brief background to diversity, definitions of diversity and related concepts and terms. It includes some diversity theories and paradigms that have contributed to an understanding of diversity dynamics. The chapter also examines diversity dynamics as they relate to the dimensions of race, gender, disability and language. The intersectionality of diversity is elucidated in order to explore the complex and multidimensional nature of diversity. Diversity is then linked to executives who have to mobilise intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup and organisational resources in order to position diversity as a major strategic objective. Some of the diversity challenges facing leaders are examined followed by a look at leadership based diversity paradigms. The chapter concludes by examining arguments for and against a business case for diversity.

2.2 BACKGROUND TO DIVERSITY

Diversity has been a reality in societies from the beginning of time. Historically, the powerful have violated the human rights of others in order to protect their interests and entrench subjugation, to ensure that they stay in power (Ertürk, 2001). Common ways of dealing with diversity were oppressive because differences were perceived as deficiencies (Sampson, 2000). Although diversity was visible from time immemorial, the diversity movement originated in civil rights

and other liberation movements against women and gay oppression (Bierema & Thomas, 2008; Ertürk, 2001).

Workforce diversity as a discipline, however, emerged in response to the 1987 Hudson Institute landmark report entitled *Workforce 2000*. The Hudson Institute, a nonpartisan, policy research organisation, predicted imminent demographic changes in the United States labour force in 2000 (Johnston & Packer, 1987). The report described the year 2000 as marking the end of the American century. According to *Workforce 2000*, developments in technology, international competition and demography would influence the United State's economic and social environment. One of the four major trends expected to shape the last years of the twentieth century was slow growth of the workforce, which would also become older, more female, and more disadvantaged. The report projected that only fifteen percent of new entrants to the labour force over the next thirteen years would be native white males. This was a significant decrease of native white males who, at the time made up 47 percent of the labour force. To continue to flourish, *Workforce 2000* urged organisations to maintain the dynamisms of an aging workforce, reconcile the conflicting needs of women, work and families, and integrate blacks and Hispanics workers fully into the economy (Johnston & Packer, 1987).

These predictions, about imminent dramatic shifts in the labour force composition, were compelling enough to prompt organisations to embrace diversity management (Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000). To respond constructively to this prediction that women and minorities would outnumber white males, who had been the historical majority in the labour force, workplaces were urged to change their demographics in order to stay competitive in the new labour market (Ertürk, 2001). Plummer (2003) confirmed that the workplace heterogeneity was indeed increasing due to the number of women and minorities entering the labour force.

Workforce diversity, however, was a global reality visible in developing and industrialised countries (Fraser-Moleketi, 2001; Ospina, 2001).

South African workplaces have become increasingly diverse as a result of the changing socio-political climate (Cavaleros et al., 2002). Various pieces of legislation such as the Employment Equity Act, the Labour Relations Act and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, all underpinned by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (South African Department of Labour, 2004), have influenced demographic changes in South African workplaces. The equality clause, contained in the Bill of Rights, explicitly prohibits unfair discrimination directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnicity, social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth (South African Government Information, 1996).

Globalisation is another major factor which provided the impetus for diversity management and legitimised it as a business imperative with implications for organisational survival and success. It is described as an interconnectedness among citizens of the world, leading to the compression of time, distance and space. In addition, globalisation fosters heightened social, political, economic and cultural relations (Eitzen & Zinn, 2006). The emergence of the worldwide market, and business transactions with foreign countries have highlighted challenges which arise when people from different backgrounds interact (Bowes, 2008). O'Leary and Weathington (2006) noted that the global market continues to move towards demographic diversity.

Earlier trends in managing diversity advocated assimilation as a logical and desirable process. Such assimilation was towards the ideal employee, who was typically portrayed as espousing values, beliefs and traditions of a white, heterosexual, Christian and non-disabled male. The new worker attitude,

however, rejected this embedded notion of assimilation hence the current trend in diversity management is towards inclusion (Cañas & Sondak, 2008; Miller & Katz, 2002) and harnessing the collective and synergistic brilliance of all employees (Miller & Katz, 2002). The field of workplace diversity has evolved from the earlier period during which diversity efforts were premised on the legal, moral and ethical imperatives, to the current trend which emphasises the business imperative (Cañas & Sondak, 2008).

Over time, diversity management borrowed from many fields such as anthropology, economics, education, human resources management, organisational behaviour, organisation development, political science, psychology, sociology, social work and law. It is thus a multi-disciplinary field which established itself as a discipline of study, teaching, research and practice in the late 1990s (Plummer, 2003).

2.3 DIVERSITY-RELATED DEFINITIONS

Douglas (2008) reported that diversity, described as a social movement a generation ago, has evolved to become the norm in many organisations today. This, however, has not simplified its conceptualisation or definition. Witham (2008) remarked that only a few organisations have an official definition of diversity, despite the proliferation of diversity initiatives and related policy formulations. Thomas (1995) noted a recurring tendency to cluster diversity-related subjects such as affirmative action, multiculturalism, inclusion and pluralism under the banner of diversity, creating considerable confusion. Booyesen, Nkomo and Beaty (2002) reported a similar trend in South Africa. A related concern about the conceptualisation of diversity is its tendency to focus more on compliance, gender and race (Witham, 2008). Cox and Beale (1997) maintained that diversity is neither so all-inclusive that it needs to consider every single difference, nor so narrow that it has to be limited to race and gender.

Cañas and Sondak (2008) added that diversity is expansive, but not without boundaries because countless layers of diversity would over-stretch its definition. Diversity is thus regarded as a fluid and dynamic concept instead of one with absolute and distinct properties. Most diversity definitions reveal a tendency to emphasise its all-encompassing nature.

2.3.1 Diversity definitions

Thomas (1995) defined diversity as any combination of items characterised by differences and similarities.

Clements and Jones (2002) defined diversity as all the characteristics that go into the shaping of individual perspectives. Similarly, Booysen (2007a) highlighted many differences such as race, gender, age, language, physical characteristics, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, parental status, education, geographic origin, profession, lifestyle, religion, position in the hierarchy, and any other difference, in defining diversity.

According to O'Leary and Weathington (2006) when organisations refer to diversity management they put salient, fixed diversity aspects such as race, gender, age and physical disability on centre stage as these tend to result in workplace discrimination.

Cañas and Sondak (2008) emphasised an organisational focus by defining diversity as the varied perspectives and approaches to work that members of different identity groups bring to the workplace.

A definition of diversity from an organisational behaviour perspective emphasises the impact of every individual difference on tasks or relationships. Such a definition implies that diversity affects many aspects of an organisation such as

its products, services, intrapersonal, interpersonal and organisational experiences (Cilliers & May, 2002).

This study adopts a working definition of diversity which refers to all characteristics that shape individual perspectives, and the impact of such on organisational tasks and outcomes, and intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships (Clement & Jones, 2002; Thomas, 2005).

A distinction has been made between primary and secondary dimensions of diversity (Cañas & Sondak, 2008; Ruderman, Hughes-James & Jackson, 1996). Primary diversity dimensions are those aspects of an individual that are inborn and, or exert a strong influence on early socialisation, and have a powerful impact on a person's life. Such dimensions, namely, race, gender, sexual orientation, personality and physical abilities contribute to the core of one's identity (Cañas & Sondak, 2008; Plummer, 2003). The backdrop of historical racial segregation in South Africa, enforced by apartheid (Hilliard, 2001/2002; Siedman, 1999), reinforces the significance of race as a primary dimension of diversity. Nkomo and Kriek (2004) reported that racial segregation and its effects still haunts the workforce and results in diversity seen primarily through the lenses of race.

Secondary dimensions of diversity, on the other hand, are those aspects of identity that contribute to the core but do not fundamentally change that core (Plummer, 2003). They are more mutable, less visible to others and more variable (Cañas & Sondak, 2008), and play a key role in shaping values, expectations, and experiences. However, their degree of influence on a person's life differs (Ruderman et al., 1996; Plummer, 2003).

2.3.2 Diversity management

Thomas (1995) introduced the term diversity management as a reaction to the narrow view of race and gender diversity. A concern was that such a narrow focus would result in an incomplete transformation of organisations (Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000).

According to Plummer (2003) diversity management uses applied behavioural science methods, research and theory to manage organisational change and support the diversification of workplaces. It aims to eliminate subjugation based on human differences in order to improve the health and effectiveness of organisations. It is supported by values of respect for human differences, social justice, participation, community, authenticity, compassion, proaction, humility, effectiveness and lifelong learning.

In defining diversity, Mor-Barak (2005) on the other hand, focused on the policy and programme implementation in order to ensure that organisational members are included into formal and informal structures of organisations.

Definitions of diversity management have much in common with definitions of organisation development. The latter also applies behavioural science knowledge and practice to manage planned change, and attempts to institutionalise such change in the entire system in order to facilitate organisational effectiveness, while espousing values of humanity (Cummins & Worley, 2001).

2.3.3 Employment equity and affirmative action

Equity related processes such as employment equity and affirmative action are often viewed as similar to diversity (Feldner-Busztin, 2004). This is a result of

initial attempts of the diversity movement to create a just work environment supported by legislative requirements (O'Leary & Weathington, 2006). Thomas (2006) asserted that tendency undermines the credibility of diversity initiatives. These related concepts are briefly explored to distinguish them from diversity.

Employment equity is a legislative framework promulgated in post-apartheid South Africa to achieve redress in organisations (Feldner-Busztin, 2004). It aims to promote equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination. In addition, it aims to implement affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by the designated groups. This is to ensure that the designated group is equitably represented in all occupational categories and across all occupational levels (Adele, 2002; Feldner-Busztin, 2004; Thomas & Robertshaw, 1999). Adele (2002) remarked that prior to the promulgation of the Employment Equity Act, some of the large organisations in South Africa had started to implement affirmative action measures.

Affirmative action on the other hand is the appointment of suitably qualified candidates from the designated group to achieve employment equity. Affirmative action measures must identify and eliminate employment barriers which adversely affect people from designated groups (Feldner-Busztin, 2004; Thomas & Robertshaw, 1999).

The Employment Equity Act adopts affirmative action measures to promote equity in the workplace. The two are thus intricately linked as affirmative action is the vehicle that helps organisations to achieve the desired state of equality (Feldner-Busztin, 2004; Thomas & Robertshaw, 1999). Diversity, on the other hand, goes further than demographic representivity as it attempts to create inclusive work environments (Cañas & Sondak, 2008; Miller & Katz, 2002).

Adele (2002) highlighted the importance of drawing lessons from international practices in order for South African organisations to implement employment equity processes successfully. To a large extent the country has incorporated these lessons. From Japan, the lesson learnt is to combine international best practice with local cultural practices to gain a competitive advantage. The lessons from Canada include government monitoring and compliance, and incorporating organisational culture into equity practices. From the United States, the lesson is to ensure that the focus is not too much on demographics at the expense of investment in human capital. In Britain fragmented, arbitrary implementation, guided largely by voluntarism has resulted in little workforce demographic change.

2.4 DIVERSITY CONCEPTS AND TERMS

Many concepts and terms are central to the field of diversity management. The next section addresses some of in order to enrich an understanding of diversity dynamics.

2.4.1 Race

Race has been defined from a biological, social, socio-political and cultural perspective. Harvey (2007: 21) asserted that the central emphasis in all race definitions is that 'race is more result than cause'.

According to Thompson and Akbar (2003) the biological definition of race is based on physiological characteristics such as skin colour and other physical attributes presumably based on genetics. Thompson and Carter (1997) noted that the definition of race as a scientific construct has been widely and consistently questioned. It has been challenged for its failure to fully take into account the amount of interracial breeding that has taken place over time.

Cartmill and Brown (2003) criticised the biological concept of race as unrealistic, valueless in practice and historically productive of suffering and injustice. Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton (2001) concurred that race has been used to legitimise oppression and exploitation by dominant groups (Thompson & Akbar, 2003). Cañas and Sondak (2008) noted that some individuals maintained that they do not belong to any race groups identified officially in the United States. Others claim to belong to more than one race group. Consequently race criteria have been described as arbitrary, which makes the concept of race variable over time. Jung (2000) highlighted the manner in which the label coloured was imposed on heterogeneous groups comprising South Africans of mixed origin, the Khoisan or the Malay group by the apartheid government. A coloured person was therefore defined as one who was neither white nor black. As a result, the politics of the coloured identity were laden with tension and ambiguity. Indians on the other hand were classified as Asians, while Japanese were classified as honorary whites.

The definition of race as a social construct provides an alternative to the notion of race as a biological construct. Proponents of the social or cultural definition of race focus on people who share a common cultural heritage, such as customs and language. Such scholars focus on traditions, beliefs, values and contribution to knowledge and art in defining race from a cultural perspective (Doane, 2003; Thompson & Akbar, 2003).

The socio-political definition of race recognises a group's shared background, history, and struggle against oppression and domination (Thompson & Akbar, 2003). Harvey (2007) stated that race is a socio-political reality which is produced at the intersections of social, legal, cultural, economic and political processes, and legacies of history and human activities. Within the South African context, coloureds and Indians who identify strongly with experiences of oppression and marginalisation, tend to see themselves more as black than as

their historically ascribed racial groups. Some may, however, prefer to distance themselves from blackness because they possess some whiteness and therefore can avoid the stigma of black blood (Makalani, 2004). Sonn and Fisher (2003) noted the ambivalent status of coloureds as the apartheid system has positioned them as both the oppressed and the oppressor.

Thompson and Akbar (2003) highlighted a tendency to combine biological and cultural factors in the definitions of race. This study aligns with that stance but also encompasses a socio-political perspective. It thus adopts a working definition of race as a biological and socio-political construct which refers to people who share salient physical characteristics such as skin colour, a cultural heritage and common experiences of being oppressed or privileged.

2.4.2 Gender

Gender is a socially constructed, multifaceted concept (Thorne, 2001) reflecting what it means to be a woman or a man (Cheng, 1999). It is discursively constructed from historical, social and cultural discourses about beliefs, values and practices which constitute femininity or masculinity (Pini & McDonald, 2008). Syed and Murray (2008) stated that despite the commonly held view that sex is a biological construct while gender is a social construct, the two are actually closely interconnected. Therefore, it is difficult at times to establish where sex ends and gender begins. To that effect, gender exists because biology does not determine the social component. Hofstede (1998) added that gender is the modern term for sex which highlights the distinction between women and men. According to Cheng (1999) gender is an institution which prescribes patterns of expectations, determines the daily social order, and permeates major societal arenas such as the family, ideology, economy and politics. In studying work goals by gender, Hofstede (1998) noted a universal trend whereby men stress ego goals while women stress social goals.

The working definition of gender adopted in this study accepts it as a social construct, which prescribes gender-defined roles for different sexes in major institutions of society such as the family, church, ideology, economy and politics.

2.4.3 Culture and Ethnicity

Culture is the constitution of basic assumptions, which an identifiable group of people hold about one another, to guide their relations and interactions, and to provide common ground for communication (Gibson, Maznevski & Kirkman, 2009; Hong, 2009). Such assumptions make up the deepest level of culture because they are often subconscious and rarely questioned. In addition, culture is shared and visible through values, beliefs, norms for social behaviour and artifacts such as social institutions and physical items. Beliefs are subjective judgement concerning a relation between the object of the belief and some other object, value, or attribute. Values are enduring, prescriptive beliefs that a specific mode of conduct is socially desirable to an opposition mode of conduct (Gibson, Maznevski, & Kirkman, 2009).

Hong (2009) added that as culture is transmitted from one generation to the next, it is constantly modified as some aspects of tradition are falsified or deemed irrelevant by newer social reality. Berry and Triandis (2006) further distinguished culture by its subjective and objective features. Subjective culture refers to beliefs, attitudes, expectations, norms, ideals, roles, tasks and values. Objective culture refers to concrete and observable elements such as artifacts, institutions and structures. Gibson, Maznevski and Kirkman (2009) added that although culture is multi-dimensional and embodies distinct concepts, it can only be understood when viewed as a gestalt of various interacting elements.

Triandis (2008) highlighted some universals of social behaviours, which remain stable across time and place. Simple universals are found in all cultures and

include human sexuality or communication. Variform universals are found in some form in all cultures, such as aggression or ethnocentrism. Functional universals are behavioural practices which lead to similar social consequences, such as child rearing patterns which breed similar personality types. Diachronic universals entail elements which may change across time, while the psychological laws driving them remain the same, such as basic processes of learning. Ethologically-oriented universals refer to universals found in hierarchical stratification (Triandis, 2008).

Umans (2008) reported that the conceptualisation of demographic variables in general is problematic, but especially more so with regards to culture. The term culture has been used to refer to race, ethnicity, racio-ethnicity and nationality. In some instances its definition has included religion and language. According to Hong (2009) culture is shared by a collection of interconnected individuals, who are often demarcated by race, ethnicity, or nationality. Black and Stone (2005) used race and ethnicity interchangeably. Umans (2008) reported a tendency to imply race when referring to culture in the United States, and nationality when referring to culture in Europe. Ethnicity is regarded as more multidimensional than culture as it encapsulates race and other factors. Ethnicity has also been defined broadly - as encompassing common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, cultural and other institutional forms of life (Plummer, 2003; Scurfield & Mackey, 2001).

Cox (2004) challenged the tendency in the United States to refer to whites and blacks in terms of race and to Hispanics and Asians in terms of ethnicity as such differentiations erroneously suggest that groups are biologically or culturally distinct from one another. This intimates that Cox, supported by Umans (2008), perceives culture and ethnicity as synonymous or closely linked. Consequently Cox (2004) referred to racioethnic groups to encompass biological and cultural aspects of groups.

It appears that by and large most scholars use culture and ethnicity interchangeably, a conceptualisation which is adopted in this study, albeit narrowly, to the exclusion of language and religion, as offered by Plummer (2003). The working definition of culture and ethnicity adopted is that the two are a socially transmitted way of life, which includes norms, values, beliefs, and practices of a group of people who interact together over time.

2.4.4 Ethnocentrism

Falger, Vine and Reynolds (1986) reported that the concept of ethnocentrism is an old one noted by nineteenth-century anthropologists. Although commonly noted amongst primitive peoples, it has featured significantly in the history of civilisation and in contemporary times. Ethnocentrism and xenophobia, defined as fear and enmity aroused by strangers, were strongly incriminated in the evolution of warfare (Falger, et al., 1986).

Ethnocentrism has usually been defined as a belief in the superiority of one's ethnic group. It involves an in-group/out-group split in which cohesion, solidarity, loyalty, and glorification of the in-group are accompanied by hostility towards out-groups, which are often perceived as inferior, subhuman or evil (Falger et al., 1986). Healy (2003) added that ethnocentrism undermines the richness and integrity of other cultures. McRae (2004) reported that ethnic groups are often preoccupied by greed, suspicion, idealisation of the self and denigration of the other in their desire for domination, at the expense of growth and development. This study aligns with McRae's (2004) definition, particularly its reference to the idealisation of one's ethnic group and denigration of the other.

2.4.5 Minorities

Dworkin and Dworkin (1982) formulated a number of dimensions to identify minority groups such as numeric size, power, status, social category and being the source or target of behaviour. They also defined minorities as a group of people without power, who because of their physical and cultural characteristics, are singled out from others in society for differential and unequal treatment. Consequently, such groups regard themselves as targets of collective discrimination (Dworkin & Dworkin, 1982). Barbosa and Cabral-Cardoso (2007) concurred that minorities are often targets of repeated prejudice and discrimination. Healy (2003) added that minority groups tend to be a self-conscious social unit.

The term minority is regarded as a misnomer because power rather than numeric size is the most significant distinguishing feature. It has been suggested that the term minority must be substituted by the terms subordination and domination (Dworkin & Dworkin, 1982). Healy (2003) reiterated that minority groups can be large as in South Africa and other countries previously colonised by European countries. Despite the changes in South Africa and economic and political gains of blacks, whites in general remain more powerful and affluent. Blacks in South Africa are therefore a minority group because their economic emancipation, cultural and linguistic esteem remain largely unrealised (Healy, 2003). According to Dworkin and Dworkin (1982) minority status is shared by numerous groups, not all of which are racial or ethnic. Some could be based on gender while others could be based on political groups, religious groups, social classes, and national groups. In the United States, the term minority has been used historically to define African Americans, Hispanics, women, homosexuals, the disabled and other marginalised groups.

2.4.6 Disability

Mitra (2006) reported that there is a lack of consensus over what constitutes disability between disability and social science researchers. This is because many disability definitions serve different purposes. Multiple disability definitions have been supported because they are able to capture the multifaceted nature of disability. Such multiple definitions are further believed to serve the disabled well as definitions have far reaching social, economic and political consequences for the disabled. Definitions affect the eligibility of the disabled for programmes, thus narrow and rigid definitions of disability may take away essential opportunities from the disabled. Field and Jette (2007) however, stated that this absence of a universally agreed definition of disability prevents the consolidation of scientific knowledge, which is crucial for optimum disability management.

Various disability models have added depth to the understanding and conceptualisation of disability. These are the medical model, the social model, and the Nagi model.

2.4.6.1 *The medical model*

Murphy and Pardeck (2005) reported that models for understanding disability have roots in moral or spiritual beliefs. Ancient Greeks and Romans believed that the disabled were punished by God and thus were somehow responsible for their disability. A common practice that followed was to abandon disabled or deformed children. Judeo-Christianity supported the Greek and the Romans beliefs about the disabled. Turmusani (2003) referred to this as the isolation model. This model significantly influenced the medical model, which emerged in the 1990s. The medical model locates the problem of disability in the individual. While the moral model uses theology to disguise this view, the medical model uses science. According to the medical model the disabled have biological

deficiencies and must be cured through medical treatment and rehabilitation. The person's unwanted condition thus puts him or her in a sick role (Murphy & Pardeck, 2005). Mitra (2006) criticised the medical model for being normative, implying that if someone is on a wheelchair, this means that they will never get 'well' and be able to function like a so-called normal person. Turmusani (2003) commented that many disability definitions are influenced by the medical model. Criticism of the medical model consequently resulted in the expansion of disability definitions to consider broader issues such as impairment, activity and participation.

2.4.6.2 *The social model*

This model perceives disability as a social construct. Disability is not seen as an attribute of an individual but rather as created by the social environment (Mitra, 2006). Field and Jette (2007) concurred that disability is an interaction between an individual and the environment. According to the social model, society disables those with physical impairments by imposing upon them unnecessary isolation, which prevents them from fully accessing and participating in key societal activities. Therefore what is required is social change. The disabled are viewed as synonymous to an oppressed minority as they face discrimination and segregation through sensory, attitudinal, cognitive, physical and economic barriers (Mitra, 2006). This model has also been referred to as the minority group model as disability is seen as similar to race and gender. From this perspective, the disabled are victims of ableism, a belief that they are inferior to the non-disabled because they are different (Murphy & Pardeck, 2005). According to Turmusani (2003) the social model has politicised disability to facilitate political change and empower the disabled to become a changing force.

2.4.6.3 *The Nagi model*

Nagi (1991) conceptualised the functional limitation model and framed it as an inability or limitation to perform socially defined roles as expected within their socio-cultural and physical environment. This contextualised model thus provides a relativistic view of disability so that what is regarded as a disability differs from one socio-cultural situation to another. The model positions disability on a chain which starts with an impairment which may culminate as a social construct.

The capability approach adopts a positive view of disability by focusing on what the person can do as opposed to what he or she cannot do. This approach is recognised as a useful framework for defining and understanding disability (Mitra, 2006).

This study's definition of disability aligns with the social and Nagi's model of disability, while espousing the capability approach of disability. It accepts that those with physical impairments are isolated unnecessarily and their competencies are undermined by an unaccommodating society.

2.4.7 Acculturation and multiculturalism

The concept of acculturation enhances the understanding of dynamics between different cultural groups. Acculturation describes a process which is used to address cultural differences, cultural change and adaptation between groups in instances where minority groups are merged with a majority group. Methods of acculturation are usually categorised into four types, namely, assimilation, separation, deculturation and integration (Cox & Beale, 1997).

Assimilation is a complex process in which formerly distinct and separate groups come to share a common mainstream culture, and merge together socially (Healy, 2003) while adopting the conventional norms stipulated by the prevalent culture (Awbrey, 2007). This results in the reduction of differences amongst groups (Healy, 2003). Very little of the culture of minority groups is preserved during assimilation (Bernal, Trimble, Burlew & Leong, 2003; Cox & Beale, 1997). Awbrey (2007) noted the many difficulties associated with assimilation for minority groups. Such difficulties relate to excluding minority groups from defining rules and norms that give society meaning. Consequently, dominant groups regard their own worldviews as neutral, given, universal and the prototype after which minority groups must model themselves. This gives birth to social marking, a sociological phenomenon of focusing attention on certain aspects while ignoring others. Minorities marked on the basis of salient characteristics such as race and gender experience difficulties related to negative stereotyping that those who are unmarked can escape in their unexamined backgrounds. Assimilation also inculcates self-alienation as those departing from the unmarked norms judge themselves harshly against unattainable standards. The values and traditions of the assimilated group may collapse, leading to a false self (Awbrey, 2007).

Pluralism exists when groups maintain their individual identities so that their cultural and social differences persist over time (Healy, 2003). In a pluralistic society a two-way acculturation process occurs in which both cultural groups change to some degree in order to adopt some of the norms and values of the other to reflect interdependence (Cox & Beale, 1997). Mor-Barak (2005) described a pluralistic organisation as one having a heterogeneous workforce, and responsive to the call for equality even though minorities remain represented at the bottom of the organisation and are expected to assimilate.

Plummer (2003) described multiculturalism as a pluralistic culture which reflects the interests, contributions and values of members of diverse groups. According to Mor-Barak (2005) a multicultural organisation is an ideal which can inspire a vision of effective diversity management as organisations rarely achieve this level of integration. A multicultural organisation truly incorporates all members and values cultural differences while freeing itself of bias and favouritism toward one group at the expense of others (Mor-Barak, 2005).

Since African languages and cultures tend to be undervalued and stigmatised in broader society and in workplaces (Booyesen, 2007d), while South African organisational cultures remain unaccommodative (Human, 2005), previously disadvantaged groups tend to assimilate. Thus South African organisations can be regarded as pluralistic.

2.4.8 Prejudice and discrimination

Prejudice is the tendency of an individual to think about other groups in negative ways, to attach negative emotions to those groups and to prejudge individuals on the basis of their group membership (Healy, 2003). Prejudice thus has a cognitive and affective aspect. A prejudiced person tends to think about other groups in terms of stereotypes and to experience negative emotional responses to other groups. Such prejudgments are easier to make than objective judgments, which require more energy, knowledge integrity and time. Cognitions of prejudice are thoughts and beliefs about others, feelings and emotions about others and behavioural predispositions and intended actions (Korostelina, 2007). Prejudice may lead to discrimination, which is unequal treatment of a person or persons based on group membership (Healy, 2003). According to Barbosa and Cabral-Cardoso (2007) the cognitive nature of prejudice makes it more difficult to deal with than actual discrimination.

Discrimination may take many forms such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ageism, ableism and other forms of oppression (Plummer, 2003). Black and Stone (2005) stated that oppression could be placed on a continuum which ranges from primary, secondary and tertiary oppression. On a primary level the oppressor actively and explicitly imposes unwanted conditions and experiences onto the oppressed or withholds desirable factors from the oppressed. On a secondary level, the oppressor does not actively oppress but benefits from the conditions of oppressing the other. On a tertiary level the oppressed seeks approval from members of the dominant group and sells out or indirectly victimises members of their own groups (Black & Stone, 2005).

Haley, Sidanius, Lowery and Malamuth (2004) reported that different psychological processes influence the type of discrimination different targets experience. They argued that discrimination based on sex is more paternalistic compared to discrimination against race, ethnicity and social class, which tends to be more aggressive. They reasoned that the symbiotic relationship between the sexes makes total annihilation of the other sex self-defeating as the dominant group needs its counterpart.

From the above definition it appears that prejudice, with its cognitive, affective and intentionality is a prelude to the more action-based discrimination, which manifests in both obvious and subtle ways.

2.5. DIVERSITY THEORIES AND PARADIGMS

The multi-disciplinary nature of diversity is supported by a variety of theories and paradigms (Plummer, 2003). Many refer to related concepts which highlight their connectedness. Some of the theories and paradigms can be perceived as elaborations of previous ones. A few major ones are included in the next section because they attempt to explain central diversity concepts and processes.

2.5.1 Social dominance theory

Social dominance theory incorporates many theories of oppression such as realistic group conflict, social identity theory, and neoclassical elite theories (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) to explain sources of group based prejudice and discrimination (Aquino, Stewart & Reed, 2005). It focuses on the connecting point between the worlds of individual personality and attitudes, and the sphere of institutional behaviour and social structure. It posits that all human societies are fundamentally structured along group-based social hierarchies. Typically the social structure consists of one or a small number of dominant and hegemonic groups at the top, and one or a number of subordinate groups at the bottom. The dominant group is characterised by its possession of a disproportionately large share of positive social value or material and symbolic things by virtue of ascribed membership. Conversely, the subordinate group is characterised by a disproportionately large share of negative social value (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Members belonging to the dominant group tend to resist losing the status quo because it provides them with privilege and power which they are motivated to protect (Thomas & Plaut, 2008).

Social dominance orientation has provided theoretical support for social dominance theory (Aquino et al., 2005). It refers to the degree to which individuals desire and support a group-based hierarchy within which groups regarded as superior dominate those regarded as inferior. Social dominance orientation is an important factor in explaining people's acceptance or rejection of inequality. People with a high social dominance orientation adopt beliefs, values and attitudes or ideologies that justify group-based inequality. Such people convince themselves that groups deserve their ascribed position. McKay and Avery (2006) added that those with high social dominance orientation tend to be prejudiced, politically conservative, favour the military and are patriotic while rejecting social programmes aimed at benefiting women, minorities and gays. Minorities with high social dominance orientation tend to accept institutions which

distribute power and privilege unequally and may therefore endorse viewpoints that do not benefit their identity groups (McKay & Avery, 2006).

2.5.1.1 Realistic group conflict theory

Sidanius and Pratto (1999) stated that realistic group conflict is amongst the simplest of socio-psychological models of intergroup relations. It was developed by a number of social scientists to explain intergroup phenomena such as war, domination, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, and discrimination. The theory posits that intergroup conflict is the result of real groups competing over real material or symbolic resources in a winner-takes-all-manner. Such competition ultimately breeds hostility (Brief, Umphress, Dietz, Burrows, Butz & Scholten, 2005). The belief that one group's gain represents the other group's loss leads to perceptions of group threat, which ultimately translates into conflict and destruction (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and within the organisational context, declines in organisational functioning (Brief et al., 2005). Falger et al., (1986) stated that group conflicts are rational and inevitable as groups have incompatible goals and compete for scarce resources. Coetzee (2007) remarked that identity groups endeavour to enhance opportunities for members of their own groups.

According to Booysen (2007c) realistic group conflict theory is in keeping with social identity conflict, defined as any discordant interaction which occurs between members of diverse social identity groups, creating feelings of threat, being undervalued, or disrespected in groups. Such conflict is thus rooted in threats to people's collective need for dignity, safety, recognition, control and purpose. Rousseau and Garcia-Retamero (2007) stated that a shared sense of identity decreases the perception of threat while increasing collaboration.

2.5.1.2 *The Neoclassical elite approach*

According to Sidanius and Pratto (1999) the Neoclassical elite approach was influenced by political sociologists inspired by Marxism, who focused on conflict between ruling elites and masses of ordinary people. Their unique stance is that democracy and group-based social equality are inherently unattainable. The ruling elite stay in power by rationalising their power through systems that legitimise their ideologies as sacrosanct. The elite control assets such as organisational skills, economic resources and institutions and thus easily impose their will on the disempowered majority. Proponents of the approach argue that by virtue of their control over major institutions, an organised small minority will always triumph over a disorganised majority. According to the Neoclassical elite approach there is essentially no difference between one political system and another or between so-called democracies and traditional monarchies (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

2.5.1.3 *Social identity theory*

Social identity, a socially constructed concept which is influenced by processes inherent in social structures, is regarded as one of the most popular and controversial concepts in social science. It is used to analyse socio-psychological phenomena on the individual, group, cultural and societal level (Korostelina, 2007). Social identity refers to those aspects of an individual's self-concept that are based on group membership (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). An individual belonging to a specific social group will internalise his or her membership in this group and perceive it as part of his or her personality. Social identity as a membership is used to explicate processes of socialisation and internalisation that inform the development of gender-based identity, ethnic, racial identity and cultural identity (Korostelina, 2007) and invariably interactions with diverse individuals. According to Turner (1982) social identity has a

cognitive and an emotional component, which strengthens social identity. The cognitive component is mobilised during the process of categorisation and intergroup comparison, while the emotional component reinforces feelings associated with group membership such as love and enmity (Korostelina, 2007).

Social categorisation theory suggests that through identification with the group, people's identities become characterised by a collective identity. Since people belong to multiple identities, they have multiple representations of themselves. The categorisation process can be regarded as depersonalising at times because individuals are not viewed as unique, but as part of a system with interchangeable identities. Social identity has a link with social categorisations which create a 'we' – who belong, versus 'them' – who are excluded and potentially exploited. Salient social identity results in a minimisation of individuality as boundaries between the self and the group weakens (Korostelina, 2007; Turner, 1982). Social categorisation explains why individual interests do not play an important role in group dynamics. The identification with members of the in-group elicits a similarity bias, a typical outcome of which is favouritism and interpersonal attraction towards demographically similar individuals. Conversely, such comparisons result in poor group relations as group members are threatened by differences embodied by the out-group and defend themselves by denigrating them or judging their in-group as superior (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Contact theory posits that having contact with members of an out-group transforms attitudes towards them into positive ones. Several conditions must, however, be in place to reduce intergroup prejudice such as equal status amongst groups, collaborative interactions, opportunities for personal acquaintances with out-group members who do not conform to stereotypes, and supportive norms by authorities (Korostelina, 2007).

2.5.2 The similarity-attraction paradigm

The similarity-attraction paradigm demonstrates further how people relate to one another on the basis of their social identities (Eddy, 2008). On a basic level it explains the striking tendency to form cliques around identity membership in organisations and in broader society. The paradigm posits that individuals who share demographic traits also tend to share common life experiences and beliefs, and therefore find social interactions less stressful and more positive. This often translates into a sense of comfort, consideration, and supportive behaviour towards one another. Thus people are more attracted to and consequently prefer to associate with those whom they perceive as similar to themselves. In the same vein, demographically similar organisational members appear to enjoy important benefits (Eddy, 2008). According to Foley, Linnehan, Greenhaus and Weer (2006) demographic similarity between the supervisor and subordinate contribute towards supportive supervision. Supervisors tend to offer more family support to subordinates who are similar to them in race or gender, and are especially supportive of subordinates who are similar to them in both race and gender. Conversely, such similarities encourage subordinates to disclose family difficulties and subsequently a supportive reaction from the supervisor (Foley et al., 2006).

2.6 DYNAMICS CENTRAL TO DIVERSITY

Dynamics of diversity as they relate to race, gender and language are explored in the next section.

2.6.1 Race and racism

Young (2001) defined racism as the assumption of superiority and the arrogance that goes with it. Recent race literature elucidates a phenomenon called

contemporary racism. Thomas and Plaut (2008) stated that contemporary racism has taken on an insidious form as its explicit manifestation has been replaced by more subtle ones. Modern racists express their intolerance in socially acceptable ways such as supporting policies that disadvantage minorities (Thomas & Plaut 2008). Aversive racists may endorse egalitarian practices despite unconsciously harbouring negative belief systems based on racial differences. They tend to engage in rationalised prejudice and will discriminate when their actions can be justified on a non-racial basis (Hite, 2006; Thomas & Plaut, 2005).

Despite its ubiquity, race is regarded as a taboo globally. This has been attributed to its use in justifying the most flagrant forms of discrimination globally (Byrd, 2007). It was removed from formal classification systems in the Netherlands as being classified racially was believed to elicit anxieties of institutional stigmatisation amongst race groups. Although unnamed, race remains conspicuous as notions of ethnically or culturally superior groups abound, replacing race tension with significant ethnic tensions (Essed & Trienekens, 2008). Mbeki's presidential era in South Africa was characterised by race identity politics which included questioning whether white South African could claim to be African (Booyesen, 2007d). The shifting social and political power in favour of blacks was accompanied by strong assertions by blacks that they were the only authentically African group. The ruling ANC suggested that white South Africans should be called Eurokaners or Afropeers and not Africans to reflect their European descent. This was described as an exclusionary, new form of oppression by blacks (Booyesen, 2007d).

Makalani (2004) asserted that attempting to eradicate racial classification is more likely to contribute towards perpetuating racism than to its demise. Cheng (1999) maintained that race is a master status as it is a dimension according to which people categorise one another upon first encounters. It has historically been a

defining feature in many aspects of life in many countries. According to Steyn and Foster (2008) race in South Africa remains the most visible form of social division which still creates segregation within schools, on local beaches, on university campuses and in residences. The entrenchment of racial separation tends to manifest itself in whites' resistance to integration and the new social order in South Africa, and in many young whites leaving the country in huge numbers, creating an abnormal population profile. Prinsloo and Cloete (2002) remarked that the white group tended to be the most highly segregated and therefore integrating at the slowest rate.

Distiller and Steyn (2004) examined race dynamics through patterns of emigration and semigration. They defined emigration as an extreme form of rejecting the potential new identity brought about by the new order. Boundaries are therefore shifted to maintain the comfort zone of the old identity not accorded by democratic changes. Although emigrating is a reaction to fears and anxieties of crime, education, and unemployment, it is also seen as an attempt to preserve whiteness. In post-apartheid South Africa there are no spaces reserved for whites within which they can nurture their modern, western, and first world identities. The preferred destinations are the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. The last two countries, like South Africa, were once colonies of the first, but are notably different from South Africa by the numeric minority of their indigenous populations (Distiller & Steyn, 2004).

Semigration is another common process of rejecting the new social order. This is defined as physically remaining in South Africa while withdrawing psychologically and opting out of being a citizen. The practice of building high perimeter walls, enclosing neighbourhoods and keeping communities gated also reflects physical semigration that allows for private boundary management not offered by the new order which instead propagates integration (Distiller & Steyn, 2004). Pettigrew (2004) noted that in the United States white attitudes towards

blacks have changed significantly in the last few decades and many demonstrate a willingness to interact with blacks. However, this willingness tends to diminish in situations where whites are the minority.

2.6.1.1 Psychological effects of racism on blacks

Scurfield and Mackey (2001) challenged the exclusion of race-induced stress or trauma from the psychiatric classification of disorders. According to Neblett, Shelton & Sellers (2004) exposure to a range of race-related experiences such as racial discrimination can result in significant psychological distress of a clinical nature. Scurfield and Mackey (2001) described possible causal factors in the manifestation of race-related stress or trauma as racial assault and race-hate speech. Exposure to such could be acute and marked, or covert and subtle or cumulative, over a period of time, leading to a negative worldview and self-denigration.

Hite (2006) noted that the majority of blacks reported perceptions and effects of racism compared to whites who tended not to perceive racism or its effects. Twine and Gallagher (2008) referred to this as whites' blind spot to racial inequality or to the pervasively injurious effects of prejudice. Booysen (2007c) noted a similar phenomenon in South Africa. Although whites often acknowledged tension in organisations, they did not always appreciate the depth of the tension, whereas the previously disadvantaged groups clearly experienced the tension, which registered at a much deeper level (Ngambi, 2002).

Scurfield and Mackey (2001) reported that positive race-related experiences could buffer traumatic race-related exposure and contribute towards coping. In addition, negative experiences can result in positive attitudes. Frankl (2004) highlighted the innate capacity of individuals to detach from painful situations and transcend difficulties as resources which help people to move away from pain

towards fulfilment. Jones (2004) concurred that black people could adapt in a healthy manner if they consistently rejected the contingency of their self-worth on white approval. Such blacks are regarded as having psychological self-sufficiency, which is the point at which self-esteem and resilience intersect. At this intersection, targets of racism, survivors of trauma and abuse demonstrate capacity for adaptive and creative thinking and behaviours. Scurfield and Mackey (2001) concluded that resilience, increased pride in one's racial heritage and commitment to human rights and social justice could come about as a result of surviving traumatic experiences.

Philogène (2004) used the stress and coping framework to explain positive attitudes and behaviours in race-related trauma survivors. This framework considers the interplay between individuals and situational factors in order to explain why members of similar groups experience different outcomes when they are exposed to similar racial experiences. Nebblett et al., (2004) explored how experiences of discrimination are cognitively appraised by means of the transactional approach to stress and coping. According to Philogène (2004) a strong racial identity increases the likelihood of attributing negative treatment to racial prejudice. Thus blacks for whom race is a central aspect of their identity were more likely to attribute ambiguous discriminatory events to race. However, a strong racial identity can also serve as a buffer against prejudice and discrimination. Nebblett et al., (2004) posited that self-efficacy moderated the impact of racial discrimination.

2.6.1.2 Psychological effects of racism on whites

Spanierman and Heppner (2004) asserted that racism affects not only the victims but also the overt perpetrators, and the silent and blind whites, to varying degrees. The phrase 'the cost of racism to white people' refers to the psychological consequences whites are subjected to because of racism

(Spanierman & Armstrong, 2006). According to Spanierman and Heppner (2004) the costs of racism to white people can be conceptualised as affective, cognitive and behavioural. Anxiety and fear tend to colour the experiences of whites in relation to other races. Anger, sadness and helplessness are also common once whites realise the institutionalised and pervasive nature of racism. Awareness of receiving unfair advantages triggers guilt and shame. Another common emotional response is apathy, expressed as a lack of interest in racial problems and resistance towards culture sensitisation programme.

Spanierman and Heppner (2004) highlighted the split between deed and creed which creates a double social and psychological consciousness in whites. This has been referred to as social schizophrenia for those socialised to be racist because their racial ideologies, which produce unequal material effects and racist attitudes, exist comfortably alongside highly principled values of equality, freedom and meritocracy (Chubbuck, 2004). Myers (2003) highlighted a conflictual approach of white people to black people which, on the one hand is disdainful towards them for failing to meet white standards while fearing and resenting their advancement. The social schizophrenia is believed to lead to moral and social ambivalence. Harvey (2007) on the other hand commented that it made many whites ill-prepared to understand racism or participate in its eradication. Wasserman, Gallegos and Ferdman (2008) elucidated the difficulties for members of dominant groups who have to come to terms with a social identity associated with historical oppression and power, regardless of whether the individual experiences that association personally.

Behavioural effects of racism on whites include limited social relationships with people of other races and avoidance of racial situations. Relations to other whites also become compromised as awareness of racism surfaces. Threats of expulsion from the white group at times translate into pressure to remain silent and conform to racial ideologies because deviance leads to punishment. This is

compounded by the innate need to belong and to be accepted by the in-group (Spanierman & Heppner, 2004).

2.6.2 Identity development paradigms

Identity development is the process of establishing a relationship with a reference group which may result in the adoption of certain attitudes, values, behaviours and goals (Thompson & Akbar, 2003). Identity groups are groups whose members share some common physical characteristics, have participated in equivalent historical experiences, are subjected to similar social forces, and as a result have similar worldviews (Thomas & Plaut, 2008). Identity groups could be based on race, ethnicity, gender, age or any other difference that an individual might identify with. In the next sections racial and gender identity development will be explored.

2.6.2.1 *Racial identity development*

Abrams and Trusty (2004) defined racial identity as evolving and active beliefs that the racial group to which one belongs is a meaningful reference group. Thompson and Carter (1997) defined racial identity as the sense of collective identity individuals have, which are influenced by the perception of sharing a common heritage with a certain race group. Racial identity entails attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that emerge from contextual experiences of race, which influence how people view themselves and the world through the lenses of race. Developing such an identity is a lifelong process. According to Abrams and Trusty (2004) the process of developing a racial identity is movement towards well-being, personal growth, personal control and adjusting in stratified societies. Scott and Robinson (2001) used racial identity development to highlight the psychological heterogeneity in race groups, as the degree to which members of a race group identifies with their race group differs.

2.6.2.2 *Black racial identity development*

Black racial identity development or psychological Nigrescence was conceived by Cross (1971), who advocated the transcendence of blacks from a worldview which devalued them while deifying whiteness to one of self-acceptance and self-respect (Thompson & Carter, 1997). According to McDermott and Samson (2005) black identity development concerns itself with group attachments amongst blacks. Helms (1993) has been elaborating on Cross' model for over ten years, and has included all racially marginalised minorities in the United States (Thompson & Carter, 1997). The statuses of racial identity development entail the pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion and internalisation status. Abrams and Trusty (2004) explained that Helms (1993) used status and not stages to emphasise the dynamic nature of the process of racial identity. Status implies that depending on the type of racial stimuli activated, statuses other than the one primarily negotiated by individuals can be accessed. According to Harvey (2007) the basic task of blacks is to challenge negative societal messages and develop an empowered self.

Pre-encounter status

Abrams and Trusty (2004) reported that at this status of development race does not have salience for blacks. Hall, Freedle and Cross (1972) stated that blacks are programmed to perceive the world as being non-black, antiblack or the opposite of black. The behaviour and basic attitudes of blacks towards themselves are determined by the oppressor's logic. Thompson and Carter (1997) added that the predominant belief is that blacks and their culture are inferior to whites and their culture. The social conditions of blacks which include poverty, disproportionate imprisonment, fewer economic resources, and poorer educational backgrounds are used as evidence to confirm the failure of blacks. Tuckwell (2002) added that blacks at this status are oblivious to socio-political history. Consequently blacks functioning at this status aspire to assimilate and

acculturate into white society (Sue, 2006). Once they are integrated into the white group and have acquired the status of exceptional blacks, they fear losing it as blackness is associated with shame and rejection. The active manifestation of this stage includes overt denigration of blacks and idealisation of whites (Thompson & Carter, 1997). Abrams and Trusty (2004) stated that negative incongruous information highlighted by racial discrimination or positive incongruous information elicited by positive messages about blackness may prompt blacks to move away from this status.

The encounter status

Abrams and Trusty (2004) reported that this status signals increasing race awareness and decreasing denial of race as blacks realise that they cannot attain full access or advantage in white society. Hall, Freedle and Cross (1972) stated that during this status, some shocking experiences occur which shatter black people's feelings about themselves and their interpretation of the conditions of blacks. They may feel intensely what being black means. According to Thompson and Carter (1997) this includes the rude realisation that no matter how exceptional a black individual is, or how much they conform to white standards, most whites will always perceive them as inferior. This is typically followed by a frantic, obsessive, determined search for black identity Hall, Freedle and Cross (1972). Thompson and Carter (1997) added the selective information processing of the preceding status is abandoned. During this status information processing mechanisms are characterised by a repression of anxiety-provoking racial stimuli. Although confused and bitter at first, a gradual excitement over pursuing a new black identity emerges.

Immersion-emersion status

During this status blacks involve themselves in a world of blackness; they turn inward and withdraw from everything that is white and experience overwhelming attachment to other blacks (Hall, Freedle & Cross, 1972). Thompson and Carter (1997) added that blacks immerse themselves in blackness to construct a new definition of what it means to be black. Some of the pursuits of individuals functioning at this status are learning about black culture, examining its strengths and weaknesses, and understanding the socio-political implications of being black. Tuckwell (2002) added that an idealisation of blacks and a devaluation of whites occur as such blacks withdraw from the dominant culture (Sue, 2006). Typically such blacks alienate themselves from blacks who are experiencing pre-encounter and their white peers. This stage is characterised by hypervigilance towards racial stimuli and dichotomous thinking to process racial thinking. Abrams and Trusty (2004) remarked that during this status, blacks experience intense emotionality and adopt extreme stances.

Internalisation status

Blacks at this status are able to integrate fully their evolved black identities into their core (Thompson & Carter, 1997) as they become internally referenced (Tuckwell, 2002) and develop inner security and comfort in their socioracial group identity (Abrams & Trusty, 2004; Sue, 2006). Jones (2004) added that such blacks assert their own interpretations of reality and are able to distance themselves from the disparaging attitudes of the dominant group. Hall, Freedle and Cross (1972) stated that such blacks reject racism and other forms of oppression, and feel great compassion for all oppressed people. According to Thompson and Carter (1997) relationships with whites who merit such relationships are established and a realistic evaluation of white culture for its strengths and weaknesses occurs. Complex and flexible information processing

mechanisms are adopted to deal with racial stimuli. Abrams and Trusty (2004) remarked that some individual will be multicultural as they embrace themselves and others fully.

Internalisation-Commitment

During this final status, racial acceptance expands further and integration occurs in a fluid manner. Individuals at this stage may use their personal identities as catalysts for change (Abrams & Trusty, 2004) as they develop the capacity to empathise and collaborate with other marginalised groups (Tuckwell, 2002) in the pursuit of social change, social justice and civil rights (Sue, 2006).

2.6.2.3 *Whiteness*

Scholarly work on whiteness and white identities dates back to 1936 and grew significantly in the 1990s, especially in the United States (Twine & Gallagher, 2008). Whiteness and white identity studies are multi-disciplinary in nature, drawing from such disciplines as history, cultural studies, communications, sociology and social psychology (McDermott & Samson, 2005). Twine and Gallagher (2008) reported that such studies tend to acknowledge the hegemony of white supremacy as a global phenomenon, and examine how whiteness as a form of privilege and power, travels from western countries to colonies throughout the world.

Such studies reveal hidden power relations in racial hierarchies by examining structures of society, ideological beliefs and state practices that maintain white privilege even as those are overtly challenged by democratisation processes and multiculturalism (McDermott & Samson, 2005). According to Andersen (2004) whiteness is conceptualised as an unacknowledged norm and a system of racial privilege. Essed and Trienekens (2008) noted that the critical study of whiteness

in the United States highlights white guilt, confessions of shame, denial of racism, absolution from responsibilities for existing racial injustice and discomfort over white identity. Within the South African context, (Pretorius, 2003) reported a tendency of whites to carry the guilt. Doane (2003) stated that whiteness studies adopt a critical perspective to encourage whites to confront issues of race and thereby make white dominance problematic. This includes challenging the normalisation, universality of and unquestioned whiteness (Young, 2001). According to Twine and Gallagher (2008) the recent trend has moved away from conceptualising whiteness as a uniform social identity that each white person identifies with. Whiteness instead is seen as situational, relational, historical, repositioned, reshaped, and including dissonant ethnic identities as racial boundaries shift. McDermott and Samson (2005) challenged the claim that many whites do not think of themselves within a racial context because they are not confronted with their race regularly. They reasoned that this is changing because the white population is declining while other race groups such as African Americans and Hispanics assume positions of prominence. Hurtado and Stewart (1997) had earlier asserted that whiteness became more definable when its owners lost privileges associated with it such as jobs through racial reform policies. Whenever such happened, whites were able to articulate what it means to be white.

Steyn and Foster (2008) studied whiteness in South Africa and reported patterns of resistance that mirror those in other parts of the world, notably in the United States. In particular, whites' reaction to diminishing dominance has been consolidated internationally around the issue of affirmative action. As soon as affirmative action was introduced in South Africa, the international vocabulary of affirmative action as reverse discrimination quickly took hold.

2.6.2.4 *Racial privilege*

An important factor in whiteness studies is the issue of white privilege (Doane, 2003). Racial privilege, rooted in historical white supremacy, which positioned whiteness as highly prized, has equally received significant attention in literature from different disciplines (Black & Stone, 2005). Racial privilege is defined as a special advantage that is granted and not earned through effort or talent, is linked to a preferred status or rank, and is exercised to the benefit of the recipient and the detriment of others (Hite, 2006). This degree of privilege for the dominant group can be deciphered by the ease of access to societal resources, level of inclusion in mainstream culture (Davidson & Proudfoot, 2008) and living in societies that position whites' worldviews as correct (Spanierman & Hepper, 2004). Hite (2006) stated that racial privilege is often outside the awareness of the recipient.

McDermott and Samson (2005) reported that such invisibility of privileges associated with whiteness is particularly evident in whites who do not have much interracial contact. According to Black and Stone (2005) the privileged tend to deny being privileged to maintain a fragile sense of superiority, and ward off the incongruence that comes with recognising and understanding privileges. Acknowledging privilege is threatening in that it may require an acknowledgement of one's role in the potential oppression of others and renunciation of some privileges. Through such denial, privileges appear normal, natural and unremarkable (Twine & Gallagher, 2008). The denial of racial privilege is accentuated when privileged groups challenge transformation efforts by labelling them as reverse discrimination rather than acknowledging their own privileges (Black & Stone, 2005; Steyn & Foster, 2008). Hurtado and Stewart (1997) challenged white people's tendency to distance themselves from racial and class privilege, and to refuse to take responsibility for the unequal status quo. Such whites often cited a lack of conscious intentions on their part to create the unequal status quo, on the grounds that they acquired racial and class

privileges through birth circumstances which they had no control over. Such thinking was challenged for its refusal to acknowledge the genesis of privilege, which was historically accorded on the basis race, and consequently impacted on future generations.

McDermott and Samson (2005) attributed the denial of privilege to a desire to accentuate individual achievement. Booyesen (2007b) highlighted the common tendency to adopt meritocracy as a tool to reinforce the denial of privilege. Meritocracy is therefore challenged as a myth which reinforces the belief that those in the privileged group are able to access their privileges purely because of effort, while denying the extent and impact of such privileges. Such a view presumes that those denied privileges have to attribute their inability to access privileges to personal defect or to cultural characteristics such as motivation and values (Andersen, 2004).

McDermott and Samson (2005) described the denial of racial privilege as the foundation of colour-blind racism, an ideology that asserts equality of races with regards to rights and experiences. Such an ideology challenges redress policies and programmes on the grounds that such policies strengthen racial divisions, while ignoring institutionalised racial stratification (Lewis, 2004). While such assertions sound reasonable and even aligned to the goals of human rights movements, they have been labelled as attempts to empty whiteness of its privileges rather than challenging the status quo (McDermott & Samson, 2005).

Black and Stone (2005) reported that studies of racial privilege have been challenged for adopting a black and white perspective, while ignoring the experiences of other marginalised groups. It is now widely recognised that the nature of privilege, like many social phenomena is complex, and includes competing and conflicting aspects. Racially privileged individuals might embody other marginalised socially constructed identities such as being female and gay.

According to McDermott and Samson (2005) poor, working class whites and those with high levels of interracial contact are more likely to have a complex understanding of what it means to be white, which might include experiences of pride and shame. Andersen (2004) expressed concern that whiteness studies could mark whites and portray being white as a handicap. The observation that most writers on whiteness are white males suggests an awareness of the discomforts of living in a racial and gendered society on the part of the white males. However, it also presents challenges as those pursuing this progressive discourse are also seen as the problem and their efforts could thus be discredited.

2.6.2.5 White racial identity development

McDermott and Samson (2005) reported that the historical focus of racial identity studies on minorities has attracted criticism for excluding whites from such studies and thereby highlighted the significance of a white racial identity. According to Hite (2006) whites who have a higher racial identity development are more likely to have explored and questioned the implications and privileges associated with being white, and would have thought consciously about race issues. Thompson and Carter (1997) underscored the process of white racial identity development, depicted by six statuses namely, contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, immersion-emersion and autonomy. According to Harvey (2007) the basic task of whites is to develop a positive white identity based in reality and not on assumed superiority.

Contact status

Thompson and Carter (1997) stated that the first status occurs upon encountering a black person. Typically a white person realises that a black person is different but misses the opportunity to acknowledge or examine his or

her differences. This leads to a conclusion that white simply is, while black is different. Obliviousness is the primary information-processing strategy employed at this status. Whites at this status tend to be comfortable with the racial status quo and are oblivious to racism (Tuckwell, 2002). According to Scott and Robinson (2001) at this status whites are not conscious of being beneficiaries of white privilege.

Disintegration status

According to Tuckwell (2002) this status is characterised by conflict between in-group loyalty and humanism once white people realise that institutional racism and racial inequality exist. An information processing strategy employed is ambivalence and suppression of anxiety-provoking knowledge. Whites at this status may fraternise with blacks who, in turn, are suspicious of their motives while experiencing backlash from whites who perceive them as disloyal. Whites at this status may realise that the easier path is associating with whites, and may therefore collude with white supremacy at the expense of blacks (Thompson & Carter, 1997).

Reintegration status

Whites at this status rationalise and justify white privileges as earned (Thompson & Carter, 1997), and seek to protect them (Scott & Robinson, 2001). Information processing mechanisms are selective, accompanied by a re-emergence of the denigration of blacks. Honest race discourse happens within same race groups and blacks who share a denigration of other blacks are embraced as friends, to sell the image of colour-blindness (Thompson & Carter, 1997).

Silvestri and Richardson (2001) summed the preceding statuses up as the beginning of the abandonment of racism.

Pseudo-independent status

The construction of a positive white racial identity begins with this status (Scott & Robinson, 2001). The individual at this status has to resolve major dilemmas in order to abandon racism. While denying that blacks are inferior, residues of racism linger on in temptations to judge them against white standards. Tuckwell (2002) referred to this as commitment to the in-group and deceptive tolerance of the other. Eventually this incongruence is confronted, which typically summons the necessity for a more congruent identity (Thompson & Carter, 1997).

Immersion-emersion status

At this status misconceptions regarding race are replaced with accurate information (Scott & Robinson, 2001). Individuals at this status immerse themselves in white consciousness-raising groups to find clarity in the meaning of whiteness (Thompson & Carter, 1997), and to redefine whiteness (Tuckwell, 2002). It becomes more meaningful and relevant to challenge racism as opposed to changing blacks. At this status whites tend to be hyper vigilant to racial stimuli as they experience heightened sensitivity to racial injustice (Thompson & Carter, 1997).

Autonomy status

This status is characterised by complex and flexible information processing mechanisms and culminates in comfort over one's white identity. Whites at this status internalise a positive definition of whiteness, accompanied by a realistic appraisal of one's and other's perpetuation of racism. They overcome the inclination to oppress, denigrate or idealise race members because the different races no longer represent threats. Opportunities to increase awareness of

various forms of oppression are actively sought with the aim of eradicating them (McDermott & Samson, 2005; Thompson & Carter, 1997).

According to Silvestri and Richardson (2001) these preceding statuses of pseudo-independence, immersion-emersion and autonomy are about the development of a non-racist identity.

2.6.3 Gender diversity dynamics

Dynamics of gender as they relate to feminist identity development, hegemonic masculinity, gender relations during transformation, intersectionality of diversity and white women and diversity will be discussed next.

2.6.3.1 *Feminist identity development*

Racial identity development models were followed by women's identity development, which similarly moves through different stages throughout the life span of women. Downing and Roush (1985) proposed a model of feminist identity development which was heavily influenced by Cross's (1971) black identity development model. They delineated the following stages;

<i>Passive acceptance:</i>	Being unaware of inequality and discrimination (Downing & Roush, 1985) and thus accepting traditional gender roles (Sue, 2006).
<i>Revelation:</i>	Experiencing a crisis that forces one to confront inequalities and prejudice while feeling angry and guilty at previous obliviousness (Downing & Roush, 1985; Sue, 2006).

<i>Embeddedness-Emanating:</i>	Being submerged in and identifying with one's identity group to reflect and explore one's identity (Downing & Roush, 1985).
<i>Synthesis:</i>	Integrating the experiences of oppression (Downing & Roush, 1985) while developing a positive feminist identity (Sue, 2006).
<i>Active commitment:</i>	Commitment to taking meaningful action to effect societal change and eradicate oppression (Downing & Roush, 1985; Sue, 2006).

Hoffman (2006) explored the role of female gender confidence, which is one's sense of competence about one's femininity, emanating from personal expectations in identity development. The necessary prerequisites for gender self-confidence are gender identity and gender self-acceptance, which is security about one's own femaleness. Women's contentment with their femininity has been linked to the feminist identity stage of active commitment wherein they are committed to eradicating oppression against women. Conversely, women experiencing a crisis characterising the revelation stage are more likely to be discontent about their experiences of being a woman. This stems from the experience of confronting inequalities which may seem daunting.

2.6.3.2 *Black feminism*

Womanism (Hoffman, 2006) is a perspective that was developed as a reaction to feminism's tendency to focus on white females while excluding the efforts and experiences of black women (Hite, 2006; Hoffman, 2006, hooks, 1981). According to Houston and Davis (2002) womanism is black women's way of naming their activism in a way that distinguishes it from white women's feministic movements. Henry (2004) added that womanism is not a fixed, closed

conceptual system, but continually evolves through its rejection of all forms of oppression and commitment to social justice. hooks (1981) noted that black women were active in the labour force before white women because they performed manual labour alongside black males for many years. However, black women did not fully participate in the women's liberation movement because they were impeded by the politics of colonisation and racial imperialism. In some instances, white female racism barred them from full participation. White female scholars who support feminist ideology have also ignored the contribution of black women. Despite this, advocates of black women's rights maintained that women's rights could be attained only if women joined together to present a united front and bond based on shared political beliefs (hooks, 1981).

Henry (2005) observed that black feminist thought is grounded in collective knowledge, lived experiences, historical positions and the political economy. Noting that theoretical interpretations of black women's experiences ranged from revolutionary to depoliticised representations, it was concluded that black women could not be conceived as a homogenous class. However, despite their varying degrees of progression, all black women face marginalisation. According to Houston and Davis (2002) womanism is distinguished from feminism by its basic premise of multiple jeopardy based on racial, gender and class oppression. hooks (1981) remarked that black feminists were more radical because of the circumstances created by racist oppression. Therefore they focused on racial reform measures while attempting to solve specific problems they faced such as defending their virtue, which was tarnished by American sexist mythology. Black women's movement also focused on poverty, care for the elderly and disabled, education and prostitution. White feminists, exempted from some of the challenges faced by black women, could focus on education, charity or formation of literary societies.

Brazaitis (2004) explored the difference between American white women and black women, against the backdrop of their different socialisation, and societal power structures. Historically, black women were expected to work in fields and were treated as harshly as their male counterparts. White women, on the other hand, were portrayed as delicate angels of the house who embodied ideal notions of femininity, and needed protection. Consequently, the socialisation process for black women to become gendered and raced beings has resulted in their tendency to use aggression as a survival tactic.

hooks (2004) remarked that solidarity between women seemed impossible. This stemmed from an apparent dwindling interest in radical feminism, which was primarily attributed to the inability to define feminism and reach consensus. This problem was traced to the foundation upon which feminism was popularised, which asserted that feminists sought equality with men. This stance was problematic given the inherent racial and class inequalities in society as not all men were equal, and some men were actually powerless in relation to men from the ruling group. A related concern was that feminism would benefit white women in the middle and upper class groups, while affecting the social status of working class and poor women in an insignificant way. Black feminists were also wary of white feminists who denounced the sexist, racist and imperialist white male while simultaneously equating women's liberation with obtaining the right to fully participate in an oppressive system designed to benefit the white male (hooks, 2004). Black feminists noted that for white feminists, sisterhood did not mean surrendering their allegiances to race, class and sexual preference (hooks, 1981).

Black feminists have encountered perennial dilemmas which have resulted in reluctance of some black women to label themselves feminists. These include the fallacy that feminism is an academic or white philosophy (Henry, 2005). White feminists have accused black feminists of focusing solely on racial reform

measures as they believed that patriarchy was to blame for racism and class exploitation (hooks, 1981) and therefore, resisting patriarchal domination was a more justifiable focus area than resisting racism and other forms of discrimination (hooks, 1998). Bea (2003) added that earlier white feminists expected black women to choose between organising against racism and struggling against gender discrimination. Black feminists have also been accused of devaluing the struggle to end racism (hooks, 2004), dividing the black race and thus producing tensions between black men and women. They have also been accused of following white women (Henry, 2005). Black feminists, in turn, have criticised black males for their refusal to support women's efforts to obtain equal rights (hooks, 1981).

Brazaitis (2004) remarked about black and white feminists in relation to males from their own racial groups. White women are in a unique position of being oppressed because of their gender but also of oppressing because of their race. Thus in speaking out against sexism, white women and black women face different challenges. For white women, speaking out may risk their connections to white males but it does not take away their white privilege. Black women who speak out against sexism risk connections to black males without the buffer of white privilege. These differences make crossing racial boundaries authentically difficult for women and compromise the ideals of feminism and sisterhood. Black women's power over white women is located in their capacity to reject and exclude white women from sisterhood. White women on the other hand, have the power to be racist, to betray and abandon blacks who try to join them.

Brazaitis (2004) concluded that white women have the capacity to either preserve or upset the status quo that has conferred privilege and power upon white males and thereby dispel the myth of meritocracy.

In the final analysis both feminism and womanism have commonalities in that they share a culture of resistance, despite the unique challenges faced by black feminists (Houston & Davis, 2002).

2.6.3.3 *Intersectionality of diversity*

Multiracial and black feminism recognised the multiple disadvantages experienced by minority ethnic women whose gender and race intersect to create unique challenges. Essentially this was a challenge to the liberal feministic approach for its tendency to adopt a homogenous view of females while ignoring the multiple jeopardy faced by ethnic minority women (Brazaitis, 2004). Browne and Misra (2008) reiterated that any analysis of women that excludes race is incomplete and more likely to refer to white women's perspectives. Consequently, there has been an increasing call by researchers to abandon the traditional unidimensional approach to diversity dimensions in favour of the intersectional approach, which considers the interaction of various factors such as race, gender, class and ethnicity (Hoffman, 2006). According to Booyesen (2007a) diversity factors should not be seen as separate social constructions but rather as indivisible and interlocking categories.

This trend of adopting an intersectional approach to diversity is supported by critical race theory, which was started by law scholars from minority ethnic backgrounds. Critical race theory built upon the perspective that racial thinking informs patriarchy. This perspective asserts that the law colludes in perpetuating racism and upholding white supremacy within gender, class and other diversity dimensions. According to critical race theory, working towards the eradication of racism is part of eliminating all forms of subjugation (Hoffman, 2006). In agreement, Morrell (2002) stated that race oppression is central to an understanding of gender in South Africa. In conjunction with multiracial feminists, critical race theorists reject traditional claims by organisations of meritocracy,

race neutrality and gender equality. They maintain that biases are institutionalised into organisational norms and structures (Hoffman, 2006).

Syed's (2007) intersectionality study highlighted that minority ethnic women are more predisposed to racist and sexual discrimination in employment than their white counterparts or males from their backgrounds due to historical and economic factors. While Syed focused primarily on Australian women, Booysen (2007b) drew parallels with structural barriers in South Africa. The educational qualifications of many blacks are regarded as inferior to those of whites because of Bantu education. In addition, South African cultures are patriarchal while workplaces conform to Western cultural ideals. Syed (2007) concluded that intersectionality, especially as it pertains to minority ethnic women is a universal phenomenon. Browne and Misra (2008) reported that the experience of being a token was the same for both black and white women who felt alienated by the organisational culture. Black women, however, had unique experiences, in particular the heightened experience of being perceived as incompetent and unqualified.

Although levelled at the black male too, he is able to advance much more than the black female. The black male benefits from the perception that managerial roles are better suited for males. Booysen (2007c) reported that South African management practices are influenced heavily by an Anglo-American orientation despite the multiple cultures and subcultures indigenous to the country. The traditional dominance of white males in management makes the Anglo-American management training approach adopted by many South African organisations more suitable for white males. Socialised assumptions that 'white is right' 'west is best' and 'think manager, think male', abound. Such socialisation processes create challenges not only for the black female, but for the black male also.

2.6.3.4 *Hegemonic masculinity*

Most gender studies in organisations focus on women (Cheng, 1999). When men are typically studied, it is usually from an essentialist perspective, which posits that their behaviours are determined by their biological traits. Hegemonic masculinity has, however, enjoyed considerable attention in literature on gender issues. It is regarded a culturally idealised form of masculine expression typically displayed by the dominant group (Cheng, 1999). According to Connell (2002) hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to women and subordinate masculinities. Cheng (1999) remarked that it is characterised by aggression, domination, competitiveness, stoicism and control. Syed and Murray (2008) added that masculine hegemony sanctions blunted emotional displays because expression of emotions is seen as improper. Since hegemonic masculinity is portrayed as superior, the other which is feminised, or failed or marginalised masculinity is perceived as less than. Emphasised femininity is welcomed only to the extent that it serves the interests of hegemonic masculinity, to reinforce its strengths and position of dominance (Cheng, 1999).

Cheng (1999) pointed out that masculine behaviour is not always performed by men only. Equally, feminine behaviour is not performed by females only. Scott and Robinson (2001) added that female powerlessness does not translate into male powerfulness. As women assume powerful positions because of affirmative action, some of them introject and display hegemonic masculinity. Thus women aspiring toward organisational success have endeavoured to present themselves as hegemonically masculine (Cheng, 1999). Rindfleish and Sheridan (2003) remarked that senior management levels are locations of hegemonic masculinity. Thus contemporary hierarchical organisations accord men and women the opportunity to claim hegemonic masculinity. Despite the accessibility of hegemonic masculinity to females, Davidson and Proudford (2008) highlighted associated challenges. Although hegemonically masculine women executives in a predominantly male organisation may exert substantial power as individuals,

they are still members of a subordinant group and would still need to negotiate group-based dynamics. Black and Stone (2005) highlighted the challenges of hegemonic masculinity for men. The accessibility of such masculinity due to socialisation processes and privileges conferred upon men are not always empowering. Not all men feel powerful and many experience restrictive emotionality which inhibits them from owning and expressing fear, dependency and weakness. Syed and Murray (2008) added that framing leadership within masculine terms works against men who embrace their feminine qualities.

2.6.3.5 Gender relations during transformation

Silzer (2002) remarked that much published research about executives has focused mostly on white males because they have been the traditional occupants of executive jobs. Thus less is known about the careers of non-traditional executives such as women and minorities. McTavish and Miller (2006) examined progress made by women in the United Kingdom over the years. Their findings revealed that in thirty years since equity legislation was promulgated, women's representation to directorship level increased by fourteen percent, which translated into an average of 4.6% per decade. Women in many countries are still up against the legendary glass ceiling especially in private organisations (Gatrell & Swan, 2008). The term glass ceiling was coined in the 1960s to describe organisational processes that create disadvantage and the difficulties women encounter in attempting to access the highest echelons of organisation. A glass ceiling is a transparent but impermeable barrier through which women can see the upper echelon but do not reach it (Gatrell & Swan, 2008). Silzer (2002) suggested that demographic factors, skills, choices, structural factors and biases are some of the reasons accounting for the persistence of the glass ceiling for women and minority employees.

Despite the slow progress in the advancement of women, their entry into different professions has become easier than it was a few decades ago (McTavish & Miller, 2006; Gatrell & Swan, 2008). In South Africa shifts in gender power are seeing women starting to assume significant positions of power in upper echelons, particularly of government departments (Morrell, 2002). This picture is a departure from the past when women were concentrated in caring functions such as nursing, welfare and education (Fraser-Moleketi, 2001). Booyesen (2007b) noted that by 2006 the quota of 30% women representation in South African parliament was reached, about twelve years after democracy. Postma (2004) stated that South African women access positions as chairs of boards easier than chief executive positions.

An examination of the power dynamics characterising women empowerment revealed that the most visible challenge is the unyielding influence of patriarchy (Morrell, 2002). Gatrell and Swan (2008) defined patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices which are used by men to dominate and oppress women. Morrell (2002) reported that the relatively easy access and advancement of women has not overthrown patriarchy or relegated men from their domination of public life, politics and earnings. Silzer (2002) concurred that comparable qualifications of women to men do not translate into comparable career success. Women in general find it difficult to obtain mentoring and to be given stretch assignments, predisposing them to dead-end jobs. In addition, when there is an opportunity to promote women, they are held to a much higher standard. Lumby and Coleman (2007) reiterated that legislation is not sufficient to overcome gender inequality as deeply internalised patriarchal values by both genders exert a stronger and pervasive influence on power distribution between the genders. Morrell (2002) traced power dynamics between the genders to the liberation movement. Women who actively participated in the struggle for liberation held leadership positions only in structures exclusively meant for women such as the women's league.

The reactions of men to the changing power relations between the genders have been noted to vary from apathy, to embracing women empowerment efforts, and in some instances, to overt hostility as men feeling threatened by women empowerment wage war on the women (Morrell, 2002). Backlash to gender transformation at times manifests itself as attempts to limit the gains made by women or maintaining that men are disadvantaged. This backlash was attributed to patriarchy, with its notion that male biological sex is superior and preferred (Black & Stone, 2005). The interaction of patriarchy and women's reproductive status is an obstacle for women as they attempt to carve out identities as career women. Since they are seen and represented as the maternal sex, their reproductive status is used against them. Even celibate or childless women cannot escape the reproductive implications of their gender. Women thus face a double-edged sword as they navigate their way through organisational life. Whereas they are traditionally discriminated against for their reproductive implications, childless women are looked upon with suspicion. They are regarded as selfish and incapable of performing feminine roles adequately (Gatrell & Swan, 2008). Consequently women managers are expected to perform caring roles and are punished for adopting behaviours associated with masculinity, despite the fact that leadership is usually expressed in masculine terms such as toughness, authority, aggressiveness, and individualism (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Syed & Murray, 2008). Francoeur, Labelle, Sinclair-Desgagné (2008) reported that men tended to denigrate a female manager when she gave negative feedback but did not do the same when the manager was male.

Gatrell and Swan (2008) rejected the notion of gender-neutral organisations because workplaces produce and reproduce gendered structures and processes, even as they appear gender-neutral on the surface. Gendered processes are evident in many ways such as ideas about proper roles for men and women and through daily actions, events and rules. Organisational discourse also reveals

the gendered nature of work. Organisational strategy is typically framed in militaristic metaphors, and masculine imagery, such as goal-oriented, aggressive, and lean and mean organisations, abound.

Attempts by women to fight patriarchy and ensure women emancipation emerged in the form of feminism (Syed & Murray, 2008). Liberal feminists typically assert women's rights through demanding incremental policy changes and progress within areas traditionally associated with men. Radical feminists oppose such a stance which they associate with assimilation of women into traditional social contexts. They perceive this as a continuation of the status quo, which places males and their needs at the centre of society and social policy. This assimilation has been associated with conventional diversity management practices, which are largely influenced by a hegemonic masculine approach towards increasing women's participation in employment. Radical and cultural feminists emphasise a positive view of womanhood, and celebrate sisterhood. They value traditionally feminine attributes such as nurturance and collaboration, which are historically undervalued in organisations (Gatrell & Swan, 2008; Syed & Murray, 2008). Booysen (2007a) supported this stance by stating that the transforming management landscape in South African organisations should embrace a culture which values feminine attributes in order to be congruent with true democratisation. Similarly Francoeur et al., (2008) suggested that organisations whose management teams comprise women give credence to significant social issues such as work/family balance and flexible work arrangements.

Eddy (2008) acknowledged female solidarity as a significant factor in women empowerment as women in executive roles typically function as champions of change for women's issues. Such women form alliances and collaborate with other women, and thus demonstrate loyalty and gender-sensitivity in managerial practice. McTavish and Miller (2006) on the other hand, remarked about the

complex relations between women, which at times manifest as contradictions between feministic-inspired solidarity, and the socially constructed woman in senior management. The latter has been criticised for sabotaging women's advancement and labelled a queen bee, and a female misogynist - someone who hates females. Eddy (2008) described the queen bee syndrome, as a tendency amongst some women executive to deny systematic discrimination against other women. Such women consequently fail to pave the way for other females wishing to advance their careers. McTavish and Miller (2006) posited that solidarity behaviour as it relates to senior women in management is multidimensional and implies some fragmentation of solidarity and sisterhood. To assist women to advance, the complex nature of solidarity and sisterhood must therefore be examined.

2.6.4 Language diversity dynamics

The concept of language has been inherently linked to issues of power and identity (Craith, 2007) as it is often used by those in power for hegemonic purposes (Simpson, 2008). As people assert their rights and express identities through language, it is additionally a potent marker of difference (Craith, 2007). Healy (2003) noted that ethnic unity and cultural identification are routinely defined by language in many countries. Languages are thus not isolated systems but interact with other systems beyond linguistics such as culture, environment and politics. Speaking the right language is a form of cultural and linguistic capital or investment which can enhance one's credibility. English enjoys the status of being the right language as it is regarded as an elite language in many countries. It is associated with socio-economic, cultural and political power, and privileges not enjoyed by mother tongue speakers, as those are ranked low on the social scale (Craith, 2007; Mesthrie, 2002) as their status is historically diminished (Booyesen, 2007d). Simpson (2008) pointed out that in many African countries proficiency in an ex-colonial, European country language

is esteemed as an indicator of education and a means to achieve status and economic advancement. Proficiency in English is thus highly desirable amongst ambitious sections of African society.

Within a multilingual setting, positioning a language favourably over others sets the scene for increased domination of some languages over others (Simpson, 2008). In South Africa language is an emotional and political issue (Craith, 2007). Several factors have been put forth to explain the suppression of indigenous languages in South Africa. True post-colonial democracy came late, in the 1990s, and consequently the domination of a European-inspired regime was entrenched for a significant amount of time. In addition, globalisation worked against the possible rise of local economic and cultural forces that would elevate local languages. This was supported by the legacy of segregating ethno-linguistic groups within the homelands system.

In the new South Africa, English has become the language which has fortified its position at the expense of the other ten official languages (Simpson, 2008). Booysen (2007d) reported that despite the South African government's attempts to recognise the historically undervalued indigenous languages, English asserted its position as the unofficial, official business language. The hegemony of English in South African has repercussions for other languages. The value of African languages tends to be underestimated and at times stigmatised. This is evident when the multilingual abilities of blacks are nullified by an imposition of European languages rather than a validation of the languages already spoken fluently. Simpson (2008) commented that the impact of English dominance was particularly strong on Afrikaans speakers, who reportedly felt the loss of power and status more intensely, especially given the historical dominance of Afrikaans. In addition, adopting eleven official languages was a covert ploy to reduce the linguistic power of the previous regime, and therefore amounts to a relegation of Afrikaans. Mesthrie (2002) added that English's gate-keeping properties

inhibited full participation, making its usage a huge challenge for second-language speakers. A prevailing mindset which silences black South Africans is that they have not been able to acquire the necessary proficiency in English to use it effectively. In addition, their accents are denigrated, resulting in them becoming self-conscious and censoring their contributions (Cobas & Feagin, 2008). This is supported by English prescriptivists, who advocate flawless standards of English usage and consequently challenge the evolution of English propelled by the many second-language users in South Africa. Simpson (2008) responded to the increasing domination of English by describing language as an indispensable part of the quest for a just social order, as language enables the full participation of all citizens in their development and that of the country.

2.7 EXECUTIVES AND DIVERSITY

Diversity dynamics as they relate to executives are explored in the following section.

2.7.1 Executives defined

The term executive tends to be misused by labelling every manager an executive without much regard to the position such a manager assumes. In some instances, managers labelled as executives do not have reports. Executives are defined as general managers, corporate officers, and heads of major organisational functions and business units (Silzer, 2002). The terms executive and leader are generally used interchangeably as will be the case in the study. Elaborations of the executives' positions reveal similarities between the two. Since executives occupy the most visible and influential positions in most organisations, they have a huge impact on organisational success and efficiency (Miller & Katz, 2002). Byrd (2007) referred to leaders as the most influential part of an organisation.

Chrobot-Mason et al., (2007) defined leaders as individuals with formal organisational authority, whose processes and actions lead to shared direction, alignment and commitment. They regarded leadership as the reciprocal process by which leaders with motives, values and resources propel others into action to realise organisational goals. Wasserman et al., (2008) viewed leadership as an activity influenced by position, type of performance and role in the system and thus suggested that anyone can be a leader. Plummer (2003) added that leadership is an ongoing interactive process within a setting which is underpinned by ambiguity or paradox and thus implies change through deliberate influencing of individuals, groups or the organisation towards a desired direction, focus, approach or process. A central aspect emerging from these definitions is the sanction to steer organisations towards a desired common destination. Obholzer and Miller (2004) noted the inherent tension between leaders and followership. They maintained that working with unconscious personal, interpersonal, group, inter-group and intra-institutional processes among leaders and followers is essential. According to Hirschhorn (1997a) a post-modern organisation leader is more psychologically present, reveals passions and vulnerabilities and also makes himself or herself transparent and accessible.

2.7.2 Diversity leadership

The key role of leadership is to shape the system, to mobilise employees by expressing a compelling vision and to create conditions that bring the vision to life (Wasserman et al., 2008). In addition, leadership is about the management of internal and external change in order to ensure that the two are harmonised to achieve results. Although change can occur internally, it is often driven by external factors such as the diversity imperative (Obholzer & Miller 2004). Within the context of a diversified workforce, leaders are responsible for holding and communicating the complexities and challenges of diversity in ways that are coherent and easy to engage with for employees (Wasserman et al., 2004).

Ayoko and Härtel (2006) coined the term 'diversity leadership' to refer to those leading or managing diverse or heterogeneous workgroups, who are regarded as the key factor in bringing about a workplace which values diversity. Laubscher's (2001) optimistic stance is that diversity management amounts to good people management, and can be developed in managers, at all levels to facilitate the commitment to lead diversity across the organisation.

An essential ingredient for leading diversity is a fundamental change in the assumptions and attitudes of leaders about diversity (Buttner, Lowe & Billings-Harris, 2006; Laubscher, 2001). In addition, leaders must facilitate behaviour changes that must translate into changes in the organisational culture. Such as process begins with behavioural compliance, where followers merely obey commands from senior leaders in order to receive a reward or to avoid punishment. The second level occurs when followers identify with the leader's commitment because they understand that such behaviour is valued in the organisation. At the final level of internalisation, the followers have accepted the leaders' values as their own and do not need to be policed. Strategic leadership is required to move employees to this final level of internalisation (Hyter & Turnock, 2005). According to Nkomo and Kriek (2004) South Africa leaders must be diversity architects and pay attention to personal and structural aspects of diversity.

2.7.3 Top management teams

Cannella, Park and Lee (2008) stated that increasing complexity and ambiguity in the heightened competitive landscape of contemporary organisations have made it difficult for companies to rely solely on chief executive officers. Instead, there is a move towards focusing on the combined capacity of members of top management teams (TMTs) to drive organisations forward. The concept of TMTs is rooted in the field of business administration (Umans, 2008). Syed and

Murray (2008) defined top management teams (TMTs) as a group of people who operate at the upper echelons of top decision-making and develop organisational strategies to achieve organisational goals.

Diversity dynamics impacting on TMTs, which are the key drivers of diversity initiatives, were examined by various scholars to highlight the pervasive nature of diversity. Cannella et al., (2008) studied race dynamics within TMTs and their impact on diversity organisational outcomes. They reported that diversity within TMTs was a double-edged sword as it yielded both negative and positive outcomes. The positive outcomes included the ability to generate more alternatives, better evaluations of alternatives and better predictions of environmental changes. TMT diversity impacted positively on firm performance particularly when the proximity between TMT members increased. The success of TMTs was thus dependent upon the context within which the team operates. The negative outcomes included slower decision making, communication breakdowns and interpersonal conflict. Syed and Murray (2008) reported that diverse groups tend to marginalise some members on the basis of their demographic attributes. According to Umans (2008) shared aims and goals, which foster informal, open and flexible TMT communication enhance communication in diverse TMTs.

2.7.4 Diversity leadership challenges

Many diversity leadership challenges have been articulated ranging from the placement of diversity initiatives within organisations, to demographic issues and controversies around the business case of diversity.

According to Plummer (2003) working effectively with diversity in order to serve purposeful organisational change is a core leadership competency, particularly since leaders of diverse teams face more challenges than leaders of

homogeneous teams. The increasing workplace diversity has, however, not been supported by an increase in the development of leadership practices that respond appropriately to diversity challenges (Aguirre, 2008). Byrd (2007) noted that existing models of leadership are inadequate to address challenges of diversity. Zane (2002) attributed leadership-deficiency in addressing diversity matters effectively to the practice of placing diversity challenges within the broad ambit of organisational change.

2.7.4.1 Resistance to legislated change

Human (2005) described South African workplaces as the primary seats of workplace racial integration which, despite the tremendous changes in recent times, are fraught with diversity difficulties. Many South African companies have the necessary transformation policies and formal procedures pertaining to equity, inclusion, non-discrimination and good employee relations. However, these have not been internalised as many were formulated hastily to placate the government (Booyesen, 2007a; Nkomo & Kriek, 2004). Consequently these do not foster inclusive organisation cultures (Booyesen, 2007a; Human, 2005). Fraser-Moleketi (2001) asserted the need for a critical number of black managers to confront organisational cultures to effect transformation. A common challenge many organisations are faced with is the inability to retain employees from previously designated groups. Some of the reasons offered for such include lip service and no commitment from senior leadership to employment equity, a lack of cultural sensitivity and pressure to assimilate, malicious compliance through tokenism, ineffective talent management, limited access to high visibility projects or positions and restricted access to mentors and informal networks, and a lack of role models (Booyesen, 2007c). Van Tonder, Havenga and Visagie (2008) remarked that these typical sources of conflict manifest in a complex and multifaceted nature rather than in a reductionistic manner.

A persistent diversity argument is whether change must be legislated or if it must be voluntary. Those against legislated change, notably from the previously advantaged group, argue that change must not be enforced but must instead be allowed to evolve naturally. The tendency by this group is to perceive attempts to redress imbalances through equity legislation as punitive (Laubscher, 2001). Voluntary change hardly alters organisational demographics in a significant way (Adele, 2002) because those with power, who tend to be vocal and influence decisions (Foldy, 2004), chart the course of change and are able to bypass legislative imperatives. Thus a single-level conceptualisation of managing diversity through implementing equity legislation is doomed to fail (Syed & Murray, 2008). Eddy (2008) and Feldner-Busztin (2004) added that equity legislation is only partially successful in increasing women and minorities in the workplace because they are usually concentrated at lower levels of organisations. In many instances, organisations voluntarily implement equity legislation only to serve their business objectives when they coincide with the needs of women and minorities. Booyesen (2007b) concurred that compliance is only the beginning in the process of change while Adele (2002) highlighted that voluntarism in the implementation of equity legislation results in little change.

Thus legislative and environmental factors ultimately play a secondary role to executives' discretionary powers to adopt diversity practices. This is in line with the strategic-choice theory which argues that top executives make decisions that influence organisational outcomes and performance (Eddy, 2008). In addition, organisational structures and responses are modelled after those in power (Eddy, 2008). Buttner et al., (2006) added constituent pressure as another dimension that influences the extent to which leaders implement diversity initiatives. Leaders are more likely to implement diversity initiatives if pressure is put on them by their constituents. This stance could neutralise the influence of the leader if the constituents are members of the out-group. However, if the

constituents are members of the leader's in-group, the leader's power is bolstered.

Within African governments, leaders tend to reserve positions for members of their ethnic groups to assert their power (Kauzya, 2001). In South African government departments, the minister personally selects the Director-General. Such a decision is usually heavily influenced by partisan and subjective considerations (Balogun, 2001).

Obholzer and Miller (2004) stated that internally driven change without external pressure to change can easily fall prey to institutional resistance to change, leaving the system untransformed.

2.7.4.2 Social identity conflict as a leadership challenge

Social identity conflict is one of the major challenges facing leaders as deep-rooted societal conflicts spillover into the workplace, affecting work negatively and also creating considerable distress for organisational members (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2007). The most common and obdurate causes of social identity conflict often identified in South Africa are race, ethnicity, gender and language as many South Africans experience intense unyielding emotions rooted in the country's apartheid practice of racial segregation (Human, 2005; Nkomo & Kriek, 2004). According to Pretorius (2003) the emotional baggage of South Africans imprisons them and negatively influences diversity-related experiences (Cilliers & May, 2002). Consequently it is hard for members to individuate from their identity groups, particularly as the fantasy of the rainbow nation crashes (Coetzee, 2007).

Within the public sector typical diversity leadership challenges include social exclusion, political favouritism, representation of various ethnic groups, forming a

national identity and ensuring that identity conflicts do not feed into broader social conflicts to threaten stability and democracy (Ospina, 2001).

Fuelling social identity conflict is faultlines, conceptualised by Lau and Murnighan (1998) as lines hypothetically splitting groups based on salient characteristics that tend to align in particular contexts (O'Leary & Weathington, 2006). Lau and Murnighan (1998) remarked that faultlines become stronger when group members share many traits. The potential for identity-based conflict increases when faultlines are activated by societal events which impact on organisational members. Nkomo and Kriek (2004) highlighted the fragile and deep fault-lines among South Africa's diverse racial groups as evidenced by the tendency to interpret events through a racial lens, leading to racial splits.

Employees look up to leaders whose reaction can escalate or de-escalate intergroup conflict to neutralise conflict (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2007). Booysen (2007c) cautioned that traditional leadership approaches would be ineffective in addressing social identity conflicts as many of them are premised on a homogenous workplace with a common culture and do not cater for South Africa's heterogeneity.

Hannum and Weber (2005) intimated that the challenge for such leaders is to accept identity conflict as inevitable and embrace it as an instrument which deepens organisational sense-making. Laubscher (2001) suggested that leaders must review and revise norms about diversity while addressing and alleviating unintended consequences. In addition, leaders must develop cultural intelligence, defined as the capacity to operate effectively within a diversified work environment in which one's reference system differs from other members of the workforce (Nkomo & Kriek, 2004; Plummer, 2003).

The well-known contact hypothesis, which is premised on the notion that contact between groups can reduce prejudice and discrimination, has practical limitations for the real-world context. Inter-dependence which emanates from a common goal, equality in status, and frequency of contact are necessary prerequisites for meaningful contact (Plummer, 2003). The lingering segregation and intolerance work against sustaining meaningful contact (Dixon & Durrheim, 2003). Decategorisation has also been noted for its inefficiency in reducing prejudice, particularly because it is met with resistance in collectivistic cultures. In addition, the apartheid legacy in South Africa makes it difficult to rely on crosscutting to minimise intergroup hostility (Booyesen, 2007c).

2.7.4.3 Diversity resistance as a leadership challenge

An insidious threat to diversity leaders is resistance to diversity which takes many forms, both overt and covert (Hebl, Madera & King, 2008). That actual accounts of workplace discrimination are on the rise, despite a proliferation of diversity processes and proclamations of tolerance for diversity, suggests that diversity processes are resisted (Thomas & Plaut, 2008). At times diversity resistance is subtle and difficult to discern. Breaches of etiquette, angry glares and withholding of information represent subtle forms of diversity resistance which can appear like customary workplace behaviour. Diversity resistance impacts negatively on the careers and the well-being of historically disadvantaged employees and can be placed on a continuum ranging from isolation and exclusion to hate crimes (Probst, Estrada & Brown, 2008).

Thomas and Plaut (2008, p. 5) defined diversity resistance as a 'range of practices and behaviours within and by organisations that interfere, intentionally or unintentionally, with the use of diversity as an opportunity for learning and effectiveness'.

According to Wasserman et al., (2008) diversity resistance is an expression of the complexities and challenges of diversity and inclusion efforts. Chrobot-Mason, Hays-Thomas and Wishik (2008) on the other hand placed diversity resistance within the organisation development context and thus saw it as resistance to change.

Thomas and Plaut (2008) highlighted the phenomenon of diversity burnout and fatigue in organisations, which manifests on an individual level. Typically members from previously advantaged groups express feelings of helplessness and exhaustion, accompanied by an abdication of responsibility and accountability. On the other hand members from previously disadvantaged groups tend to express resistance to exposing their vulnerabilities and doing all the work again.

Double-bind messages as diversity resistance

Avery and Johnson (2008) reported that double-bind messages regarding diversity, which abound in organisations, are a reflection of diversity resistance. Formal organisational stances may openly proclaim commitment to diversity while these are poorly aligned with actual management practices (Human, 2005). At times this can be reflected in well-intentioned initiatives such as affinity groups, which convey both positive and negative messages. The positive message is an acknowledgement of differences and the creation of a platform where different employees can receive social support and mentorship. The negative message is that such groups must alone be concerned with challenges facing them, as if they or their challenges are separate from the larger organisation (Avery & Johnson, 2008).

Davidson and Proudford (2008) remarked that diversity resistance is the result, primarily of reactions of those from the dominant group, aided by the secondary

reactions of the subordinate groups, as both operate within a context of oppression that teaches them to maintain the status quo. The dominants resist diversity through denial, lamentation and backlash while the subordinates use complicity, indiscriminate attacks, intragroup competition and resignation to resist diversity (Davidson & Proudfoot, 2008).

Interpersonal discrimination as diversity resistance

According to Hebl et al., (2008) interpersonal discrimination is another form of diversity resistance. This type of discrimination involves behaviours that are legal, subtle and nonverbal in nature such as increasing social distance, decreasing eye contact, reducing interaction times with or smiling less with the stigmatised other. Interpersonal discrimination results in fewer informal social networks, low assistance and social support, and insufficient information about work that has a direct bearing on work performance and advancement. Thomas and Plaut (2008) reported that the cumulative effects of interpersonal discrimination include diminished self-esteem, lowered efficiency for one's role, burnout and stress. Probst et al., (2008) asserted that being a minority in the workplace is often one of the best predictors of stressful outcomes. For many victims, the typical response to interpersonal discrimination is silence.

Cultural ideologies resisting diversity

Organisational diversity resistance is a reflection of the larger cultural ideologies that resist diversity. These include the institutionalised melting pot, the meritocracy myth and the colour-blind ideal (Avery & Johnson, 2008), which ultimately support sameness, assimilation, maintaining the status quo (Thomas & Plaut, 2008) and deny the privileges conferred upon some groups at the expense of others (Hite, 2006).

According to Steyn and Foster (2008) social taboos against acknowledging and openly expressing racist sentiments have not diminished racism or prejudice. Instead they have led to discursive strategies that present negative views of out-groups as reasonable, justified and acceptable while at the same time protecting the speaker from charges of racism and prejudice.

Leadership based diversity paradigms

A more recent trend has been to locate diversity resistance within an organisational paradigm marked by an overarching response to diversity that is reactive and is inclined towards denial, avoidance, and manipulation (Thomas & Plaut, 2008). Ely and Thomas (2001) identified three leadership-based organisational paradigms for managing diversity. These are the discrimination and fairness paradigm, the access and legitimacy paradigm and the integration and learning paradigms. The first two reinforce diversity resistance while the last one offers the opportunity of working constructively with diversity. Cañas and Sondak (2008) reported that the leadership paradigms for managing diversity do not follow a logical sequential order but are rather paradoxical as pockets of resistance exists alongside progress. According to O'Leary and Weathington (2006) research found virtually no support for the benefits of the discrimination and fairness paradigm and the access and legitimacy paradigm, and some support for the integration and learning paradigm. Integrating aspects of each perspective seem to provide maximum benefits.

Discrimination and fairness paradigm

According to Ely and Thomas (2001) this perspective attempts to ensure justice and the fair treatment of all. Prejudice is suppressed while discrimination is eradicated. Thomas and Plaut (2008) pointed out that leaders who subscribe to this paradigm expect historically disadvantaged employees to assimilate into the

dominant culture. Thus efforts to transform such organisations are based only on accommodating legal responsibilities (Canas & Sondak, 2008). The paradigm assumes that everyone is similar and aspires to be the same and thus its advocates want to preserve the dominant organisation culture. Leaders who subscribe to this paradigm are unlikely to explore how the diversity of its workforce can facilitate different ways of effectively working together for organisational efficiency. Most South African companies adopt the discrimination and fairness paradigm (Laubscher, 2001).

Access and legitimacy paradigm

Ely and Thomas (2001) stated that leaders who subscribe to this paradigm recognise that their consumers are diverse and thus attempt to reflect such diversity in some parts of their workforce. Thomas and Plaut (2008) added that historically disadvantaged employees are accepted only because they offer organisations access into their ethnic communities to gain more consumer power. The bottom-line is therefore the primary reason for incorporating previously disadvantaged individuals into organisations (Cañas & Sondak, 2008). Ely and Thomas (2001) noted that the popular business case for diversity is rooted in this perspective although this perspective uses diversity only at the margins. Minorities placed in units mandated to break into such ethnic markets often leave organisations feeling exploited and used after discovering that they will be stuck in sections that serve minorities and will never be integrated throughout organisations (Thomas & Plaut, 2008). A benefit of this paradigm is increasing managerial positions for women and blacks. However, the manner in which differences affect work is not explored (Laubscher, 2001).

Integration and learning paradigm

The integration and learning paradigm embraces the business case for diversity more than the former paradigm and incorporates different employees' perspectives into the main work of the organisations (Cañas & Sondak, 2008). According to Ely and Thomas (2001) this paradigm uses insights, skills and experiences of diverse employees to rethink its primary task, redefine its markets, products, business practices and strategic orientation of the organisation including the organisation culture for maximum benefits. It thus fosters learning and enhances effectiveness (Thomas, 2005). Leaders advocating this paradigm thus learn and grow from their diversified workforce (Laubscher, 2001).

2.7.4.4 Workplace bullying as a leadership challenge

Another diversity leadership challenge is workplace bullying. Bullying is aggression that happens within an interpersonal context, which can spill over into the group and organisational level. It is purposeful, repeated and harmful enough to result in psychological distress or economic loss for the victim or target (Heames & Harvey, 2006). Bullying is an inclusive concept encompassing harassment, intimidation, and violent behaviours (Branch, Ramsay & Barker 2007). Djurkovic, McCormack and Casimir's (2005) study noted that workplace bullying can be classified into five main categories; threat to professional status, threat to personal standing, isolation, overwork and destabilisation. In addition they reported that it is the victim or target's perspective of the perpetrator's behaviour as unjust and violent that determines whether or not interactions are considered to be bullying. Although conscious, bullying can also be driven by unconscious forces. As diverse individuals are required to work together in a highly competitive and stressful work environment, bullying behaviour may ensue. Diverse work environments tend to be characterised by competition,

power struggles, territorialism, envy, prejudice and dysfunctional group dynamics and thus enable bullying behaviour (Heames & Harvey, 2006). According to Lutgen-Sandrik and Alberts (2006), workplace bullying can be gendered or raced but its pervasive nature makes anyone prone to it.

Bullying can manifest as persistent fault-finding or criticism, name calling, increasing work pressure and in extreme forms, physically harming targets (Heames & Harvey, 2006). At times bullying involves passive, non-acts of social ostracism (Lutgen-Sandrik & Alberts, 2006). Djurkovic et al., (2005) reported that the type of bullying behaviour tends to depend on the reaction of the target. In addition, the bully uses a different range of behaviour to bully different targets. The impact of bullying on the targeted person is often humiliation, indignation, psychological distress, psychosomatic complaints and health problems which may interfere with job performance as it creates an unpleasant working environment. It usually results in resignations or reduced morale as the quality of work life for the target is reduced (Heames & Harvey, 2006). Lutgen-Sandrik and Alberts (2006) studied metaphors used by targets to describe the experience of being bullied. Many of the metaphors likened bullying to war, nightmares, brokenness and making targets feel like children. Secondary effects of bullying can be felt by colleagues and bystanders. The fear of retribution from the bully often results in a self-preservative mode of silence and submission (Heames & Harvey, 2006). Djurkovic et al., (2005) described three broad categories of the victims' reactions to bullying as avoidance, assertiveness or seeking help. Avoidance such as transferring to another division or resigning was found to be the most commonly adopted mode of dealing with bullying.

Bullying has been attributed to innate, dispositional characteristics and unresolved childhood experiences of the bully. In addition, situational factors such as organisational structure, group norms, status dynamics and strained relationships enable bullying behaviour (Heames & Harvey, 2006). Power

disparity is a hallmark of bullying behaviour. The power can be attained from positions, social networks and having contact with influential people (Branch et al., 2007; Heames & Harvey, 2006). The perpetrator's need for dominance thus usually drives bullying (Heames & Harvey 2006). Bullies tend to use meetings for public floggings, to which targets respond by shrinking to invisibility (Lutgen-Sandrik & Alberts, 2006). The targeted victim usually has low self-esteem and lacks high powered friends (Heames & Harvey, 2006).

If unattended to, bullying can escalate to group norms and develop into a dysfunctional organisational culture. Social learning theory posits that witnessing bullying behaviour on a regular basis could result in its tolerance and desensitisation of others, who in turn may internalise the deviant behaviour and repeat it (Heames & Harvey, 2006).

A significant amount of research on workplace bullying tends to focus on downwards and horizontal bullying when managers and colleagues bully subordinates and co-workers, respectively. Not enough attention has been given to upwards bullying when managers are targets of bullying from their staff. As managers depend on staff to achieve organisational goals, staff invariably has power. Upwards bullying typically manifests as failure to attend meetings, disruptions in meetings, sabotage and challenging the manager (Branch et al., 2007).

Heames and Harvey (2006) described mobbing as bullying incidents where multiple perpetrators are involved in bullying the victim or victims. Vandekerckhove and Commers (2003) referred to mobbing as a sophisticated version of workplace bullying such as putting harmful pressure on the target.

2.7.5 Diversity leaders and the business case for diversity

Plummer (2003) emphasised the significance of understanding the business case for diversity. This is a phrase which originated in the United States in the early 1990s (Litvin, 2006), and is regarded as having the potential to improve competitiveness, productivity and profitability for organisations (Hyter & Turnock, 2005). With the passage of a significant amount of time since the advent of workforce diversity, Human (2005) reported that many companies have begun counting the costs of managing diversity poorly, as well as the benefits of managing it effectively. Litvin (2006) defined the business case for diversity as a management imperative which emphasises economic benefits organisations can yield if they invest in workforce diversity. Making a business case entails constructing a comprehensive illustration of the ways in which organisations employing diverse employees will result in measurable increases in the bottom line.

2.7.5.1 *The business case for diversity*

Proponents of the business case for diversity cite many benefits of managing diversity. Some of these include, higher-quality group decision making, greater creativity and innovation, organisational flexibility due to multiple perspectives, cost saving, winning the competition for talent, reduced turnover and lawsuits, increased organisational commitment, greater marketing capability and enhanced business growth (Cañas & Sondak, 2008). Marketers with similar demographic backgrounds to customers have insights required in order to market products to such customers (Cañas & Sondak, 2008). Cox and Blake (1991) highlighted the link between diversity and creativity, which is supported by a long tradition in psychological research on team work. The tradition states that the whole is more than the sum of its parts and thus diverse team are able to enjoy synergy. Cañas and Sondak (2008) stated that multiple perspectives that

diverse employees bring to the workplace raise the level of critical analysis, which challenges groupthink that may occur in a homogenous group. Syed and Murray (2008) noted different patterns of employees' cognitive structures with regard to organising and responding to information.

According to Hyter and Turnock (2005) organisations which do not view their employees as valuable assets, are wasting human capital potential. Generally, diverse employees represent a largely underutilised resource that can be tapped in order to enhance organisational success (Cox & Blake, 1991).

2.7.5.2 *Arguments against the business case for diversity*

The dominance of the business case for diversity discourse resulted in research to validate its assertions of returns on investment through empirical evidence. Scientific research into diversity management's capacity to positively and convincingly impact on the bottom-line has proven elusive (Litvin, 2006). Evidence to support the business case has yielded mixed outcomes, which are positive, negative or neutral (Cañas & Sondak, 2008). Diversity of tenure, educational and functional background, and race were found to generate high quality ideas which enhance creativity and innovation, and increase motivation and cooperation. Diversity, however, was also found to increase interpersonal conflict, reduce cohesion, commitment and interpersonal communication (O'Leary & Weathington, 2006). These findings undermine the strength of the business case and the diversity movement because the harsh world of business requires direct profit-linked reasons to convince leaders of diversity's return on investment (Laubscher, 2001). The unimpressive research findings have been attributed to poorly managed diversity programmes and the difficulties of creating valid measures of increased organisational performance due to diversity (Cañas & Sondak, 2008). Cannella et al., (2008) ascribed the inconclusive findings to the conceptualisation of diversity, which is a complex and multi-layered construct,

and the context within which it is embedded. They concluded that inconsistent findings in the literature were not erroneous per se but attributable to the omission of important contextual factors. Ely and Thomas (2001) added that moderating factors could be attributed to mixed findings. O'Leary and Weathington (2006) reiterated the need to move away from the problematic conceptualisation of diversity as a unitary concept. In addition, they highlighted the challenges of diversity research as it is not a values-free subject but yields results which are loaded with difficulties of political correctness. Hyter and Turnock (2005) recognised the compelling nature of the business case for diversity on a macro-level, while acknowledging the challenge of its relevance to all organisations. Consequently they advocated a contextual articulation of the business case for organisations and their industries. Each company thus has to customise its diversity business case by critically examining its costs and benefits with regard to crucial business activities.

According to Litvin (2006) the wanting evidence of the business case for diversity calls for its reconstruction, taking its genesis into consideration. The business case for diversity emerged as a reaction to the backlash against equal employment opportunity and affirmative action programmes. Workforce diversity was launched as a threat to workplace homogeneity and the American melting pot, as unmeltable ethnics, who resist assimilation, were expected to proliferate in organisations. Diversity management was thus expected to transform the workforce threat into an economic and competitive vehicle.

Litvin (2006) attempted to reframe the business case by emphasising its probability of return on investment, and the long-term commitment required to yield benefits, without articulating time frames. This represented a departure from the optimistic, traditional stance of the business case advocates. Litvin (2006) asserted that the business case for diversity thrived because it was part of a normalised, taken for granted, Mega-Discourse which espouses financial

achievements for organisations while denouncing the moral, ethical, legal and human imperatives. The Mega-Discourse is strengthened by other projects such as work-family policies, spirituality in the workplace and social responsibility, which are encapsulated within it. O'Leary and Weathington (2006) criticised this bottom-line mentality for its conditional valuing of diversity because it implies that diversity is valued only because diverse individuals are beneficial to the organisation. Litvin (2006) added that the business case is used selectively as it disregards the chaos of human diversity, which emanate from the uniqueness of individuals. She asserted that attempting to continue pursuing meaningful diversity work within the Mega-Discourse ambit is futile. Meaningful diversity work can be practiced if the origins and purpose of organisation are conceptualised in a fundamentally different way that moves beyond achieving immediate gains and turning workforce diversity into profit-making machinery. O'Leary and Weathington (2006) acknowledged the need to embrace the ethical imperative within the business case as a narrow emphasis on profitability only is counter-productive. To embrace the narrow business case while ignoring social justice would thus amount to supporting a system that contributed to prevailing inequities.

2.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The first part of this chapter began by outlining a diversity background, followed by various definitions of diversity and diversity management. Central concepts of diversity such as race, gender, ethnicity, minorities and prejudice and discrimination were addressed. This was followed by an outline of some theories that have provided a framework for diversity. Dynamics that play a key role in diversity such as racism, gender and masculinity were also explored. The second part of this chapter explored diversity as it relates to executives. Diversity leadership challenges, leadership based diversity paradigms and the business case for and against diversity were also addressed.

CHAPTER THREE

SYSTEMS PSYCHODYNAMICS AND EXECUTIVE COACHING

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with the history and conceptual framework of systems psychodynamics. It includes theories which underpin the systems psychodynamic approach such as psychoanalysis, object relations and systems theory. Key psychodynamic concepts are also highlighted. The second part of this chapter looks into the history and conceptual roots of executive coaching. This is followed by a section on executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective, with particular emphasis on the organisational role analysis method. Systems psychodynamic concepts, transference and counter-transference within executive coaching are also explored.

3.2 THE HISTORY AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF SYSTEMS PSYCHODYNAMICS

The systems psychodynamic perspective, also referred to as the Tavistock tradition (Armstrong, 2005) is an interdisciplinary field which encompasses the triad of psychoanalysis, group dynamics or group relations, and systems theory (Armstrong, 2005; Fraher, 2004a). It is also an evolving area of theory and practice (Klein, 2006).

The psychoanalytic roots of the field observe the interplay between conscious and unconscious mental processes (Armstrong & Huffington, 2004). Systems psychodynamics was heavily influenced by Freud's contributions (Fraher, 2004a). Melanie Klein's object relations work, which built upon Freud's thinking

but also deviated from it, also contributed significantly to the systems psychodynamic perspective (Townley, 2008).

The psychological lessons which were acquired during World War I provided the impetus for the Tavistock Clinic, which was founded in 1920. These lessons contributed eclectic knowledge of groups and organisations to systems psychodynamics (Fraher, 2004a; Gabriel & Carr, 2002).

Group relations training apply principles of psychoanalysis to groups as a whole (Fraher, 2004b). Bion (1961) played an instrumental role in transforming psychoanalysis into an organisational theory which could be applied to groups and institutions. He did this through his experimental work on the leaderless group and his studies of basic assumption groups (French & Vince, 1999). Group relations also transformed the traditional clinical stance of observing phenomena from the outside to observing such phenomena from the inside. This translated into the use of oneself as an instrument in order to understand group dynamics (Fraher, 2004a).

The Tavistock group supported the basic premise of Lewin's field theory, which challenged the traditional scientific paradigm for being ineffective in uncovering and analysing whole aspects which make up complex human systems (Fraher, 2004a). Miller and Rice (1967) pioneered the conceptualisation of systems psychodynamics and equated Freud and Klein's ego functioning in individuals to boundaries in systems. However, they did not use the term in their 1967 seminal publication on systems of organisations, a paper that propelled the field to centre stage (Awbrey, 2003; Fraher, 2004a). The term was used explicitly and formally later by Neumann in 1999 even though it had appeared in the Tavistock Review of 1992/1993 (Fraher, 2004a).

Systems thinking is a key tenet of systems psychodynamics. It was influenced by theories of psychophysical systems, field theory methods, organisations as defences against anxiety, open systems thinking, and sociotechnical approaches (Fraher, 2004b). According to Campbell (2007) systems thinking provides a framework for understanding relatedness and connectedness of everything.

French and Vince (1999) remarked that group relations has expanded focus beyond its traditional domains to draw upon theories and methods which enhance its sociopolitical, philosophical, and spiritual dimensions. Group relations approaches have included new events such as role analysis, diversity, transformation, social dreaming and yoga. It also provides a framework to intervene from a variety of roles, such as member, leader, researcher, coach or consultant.

3.3 DEFINITION OF SYSTEMS PSYCHODYNAMICS

The term systems psychodynamics refers to the whole repertoire of psychological behaviours within and between groups and organisations (Neumann, 1999). It explains motivating forces which emanate from the interconnectedness of various sub-systems of a social unit. Such motivating forces are embedded in the conscious and unconscious of individuals, groups and organisations (Neumann, 1999). Conscious behaviours are clear, rational and observable. Unconscious behaviours on the other hand are imbued with the unknown, unwanted and threatening instincts and feelings (Cilliers & May, 2002). The systems psychodynamic perspective fosters an understanding of organisations, and highlights the challenges of management and leadership. Such an understanding enables managers and leaders to take effective action and also facilitates psychic development in such managers and leaders (Cilliers, Rothmanns & Struwig, 2004; Vansina & Vansina-Cobbaert, 2008). According to Vansina (2008) psychodynamics focuses on an enlarged notion of the

unconscious system. Such a notion is concerned with what is repressed and suppressed in groups, social interactions and social defences embedded in work systems.

Some scholars and researchers such as Gould et al., (2004) use the terms systems psychodynamics and group relations interchangeably. Others use group relations and group dynamics interchangeably (Armstrong & Huffington, 2004). Fraher (2004b) defined group relations as the study of group dynamics within a holistic system.

3.4 SYSTEMS PSYCHODYNAMIC THEORIES

Key theories of systems psychodynamics include psychoanalysis, organisations as social defences, object relations and systems theory.

3.4.1 Psychoanalysis

A major tenet of psychoanalysis is that mental processes are essentially unconscious. Those which are conscious are isolated acts and parts of the whole psychic entity (Freud, 1935). Although Freud is widely credited with discovering the unconscious, Gabriel and Carr (2002) asserted that the term was coined and applied first by Hewett in 1889, who at that time declared that 'unconscious knowing and willing defied all interpretations'. While Hewett used the term in physiology, Freud pioneered its application to human behaviour. The unconscious refers to mental activity which is hidden and beyond the awareness of individuals. Forms of expressions of the unconscious include free associations, dreams, slips of tongues, inexplicable actions (Freud, 2002; Stapley, 2006), fantasies, jokes, insults, powerful emotions, forgetting and compulsions (Gabriel & Carr, 2002; Freud, 2002). The conscious on the other hand refers to mental activity which is within full awareness (Stapley, 2006). The

barrier between the conscious and unconscious mind is near impermeable because material in the unconscious is severely repressed, particularly because it is rooted in infancy. To access unconscious material requires one to make painstaking and sustained efforts. Since the unconscious mind influences conscious feelings, thoughts, attitudes, actions and relationships with others, one goal of psychoanalysis is to lift repression to enable the unconscious to become conscious (Friedman, 1968).

Instinctual drives play a key role in psychoanalysis. These drives are inner needs which seek gratification (Freud, 1948; Friedman, 1968). Two major instinctual drives are libido or the life force, and morbidus or the death instinct (Townley, 2008). Libidinal drives include the sexual drive and all emotions that are related to love in its broad sense. Morbidus is generally derived from the instinct of destruction (Freud, 1948), but it is not entirely negative as it can propel people to participate in many daily activities such as sport (Friedman, 1968). According to Freud (1935) intrapsychic conflict, which causes nervous and mental disorders, can be traced back to instinctual impulses of a sexual nature.

Psychoanalysis has also drawn attention to the Oedipus complex (Freud, 1949). Thwaites (2007) described the Oedipus complex as an inevitable passage through which each child must pass. This conflict is born out of the dependence of infants on parents. From a boy's perspective, the Oedipus complex is a desire to retain its original, infantile love object, which is the mother. This desire makes the father a rival. The Oedipus complex creates unconscious conflict because feelings of affection towards the opposite sex parent co-exist alongside destructive feelings towards the same sex parent. The destructive feelings towards the same sex parent evoke guilt and fears of retaliatory punishment (Friedman, 1968). This conflict of incestuous attachment (Thwaites, 2007) is accentuated by castration anxiety which occurs when a boy believes that he is vulnerable to castration by a powerful father who seeks to restrain his sexual

activity (Freud, 1949). Freud (1948) described castration anxiety as the fear of being separated from a highly valued object.

Segal (2006) remarked that during the oedipal phase the infants project their own libidinal and aggressive desires on to their parents because they sense that their parents have a libidinal link. According to Friedman (1968) successful resolution of the Oedipus complex occurs when the infant is no longer fixated on the opposite sex parent and begins to identify with the same sex parent.

Psychoanalysis further posits that the mind is made up of the id, ego and superego. The id is the most primitive part of the mind and contains aggressive and libidinal drives. It pushes for expression in order to experience instant gratification because it is governed by the pleasure principle (Freud, 1949; Friedman, 1968). Instinctual expressions which are desired by the id are forbidden by society. The ego thus develops to interact between the id and the external environment by drawing upon memory, logic and judgment (Friedman, 1968). The ego transforms the pleasure principle into the reality principle, which is prescribed by societal norms (Gabriel & Carr, 2002). It learns to postpone gratification, endure a degree of pain and relinquish certain sources of pleasure (Freud, 1949). The superego or conscience includes moral codes of families and societies, and the ideals of civilisation (Gabriel & Carr, 2002). The ego must also find ways to satisfy the prohibiting demands of the superego (Friedman, 1968). According to Gabriel and Carr (2002) the ego is driven by the id while being constrained by the superego. If the ego is weak, it experiences anxiety about the external world, and moral anxiety in relation to the superego and the passions of the id. To avoid the anxieties of painful and threatening instincts, the ego provides energy for defence mechanisms (Friedman, 1968; Gabriel & Carr, 2002; Kilburg, 2000).

3.4.2 Defence mechanisms

Defence mechanisms are unconscious behaviours which are mobilised by the individual who is faced with unpleasant reality and anxiety (Obholzer, 1999; Stapley, 2006). According to Hentschel, Smith, Draguns and Ehlers (2004) defence mechanisms arise out of the neurotic conflict between the ego and the id as the ego strives to prevent the expression of instinctual impulses. Some of the common defence mechanisms that occur unconsciously are listed below:

- Rationalisation: The most common defence which occurs when opinions are manipulated to avoid recognising unpleasant experiences (Peltier, 2001; Stapley, 2006).
- Intellectualisation: Avoiding the emotional implications of a situation by treating it purely on an intellectual level (Hentschel et al., 2004).
- Denial: A common defence which involves disowning some aspects of a conflict so that it appears non-existent (Stapley, 2006).
- Repression: Keeping mental processes which are capable of being conscious in the unconscious system (Freud, 1949).
- Repression: Unconscious forgetting which occurs when the mind automatically blocks out the thought contents of an affect which is out of consciousness (Blackman, 2004).
- Sublimation: The most constructive defence that reflects cultural evolution (Czander, 1993) and makes the unacceptable acceptable and useful (Stapley, 2006), by transforming a basic instinct into a higher form (Townley, 2008).
- Reaction formation: The reversal of opposites such as when sadism becomes masochism or hate becomes love to eradicate negative consequences of instinctual desires (Hentschel et al., 2004).

Undoing and rituals:	Defying super-ego proscriptions and experiencing guilt and then atoning by punishing the self through symbolic acts (Blackman, 2004).
Passive aggression:	Feeling hostile towards someone feared and acting in a manner which inconveniences the feared person (Peltier, 2001).
Regression:	Reverting to an earlier, less mature level of behaviour that was more gratifying than the current anxiety provoking state (Stapley, 2006).
Identification:	Replacing internal desires by external desires of those idealised and deemed worthy of internalising (Stapley, 2006).
Identification with aggressor:	The introjection of the aggressor into the superego (Kets, de Vries, 2004; Stapley, 2006).
Displacement:	Shifting an aspect of conflict from the original object to a substitute object which is perceived as an easy target unlikely to retaliate (Stapley, 2006).
Humour:	Emphasising funny aspects of a painful or threatening situation to avoid related feelings (Blackman, 2004; Peltier, 2001).

3.4.3 Organisations as social defences

Psychoanalytic phenomena have relevance in formal organisations, and applying the psychoanalytic perspective to the study of work and organisations facilitates deeper understanding (Czander, 1993). According to Townley (2008) the unconscious in organisations can be reflected in repeated mistakes, unsolved problems, denied conflicts and in ritualistic defences. De Board (2000) noted the presence of many other defence mechanisms in organisations. According to

Czander (1993) sublimation allows employees to achieve gratification at work because work activities can gratify refined derivatives of primitive instincts. Identification processes are also activated when subordinates introject a part of the leader into their ego ideal and offer their followership.

The struggles between superiors and subordinates are regarded as oedipal struggles. The castration anxiety which subordinates experience in relation to leaders keeps their aggressive instincts towards leaders at bay. The hierarchical nature of work can be equated with the family structure. From a psychodynamic perspective, all employees want to be favoured children of the superiors and also want to replace the leader. However, murderous wishes towards the leader are defended against through reaction formation, which often manifests itself through espousing values of equality to taper primitive feelings of envy and jealousy (Czander, 1993). The diminishing capacity of traditional rituals and institutions such as the church to contain societal anxiety infuses the workplace with defensive measures to protect members of the workforce (Obholzer, 1999).

Jacques (1955, cited by Hoyle, 2004) applied the notion of defences to the workplace in which the source of resistance to change can be traced back to the social system. Although primarily designed for work purposes, the social system is also used as a defence against anxiety. De Board (2000) reiterated that the structure of organisations can be used as a defence against anxiety. Lyth (1989) contributed significantly to the theory of social defences, which was one of the earliest major constructs used to define the systems psychodynamic approach (Fraher, 2004b). It focuses on the anxiety which arises from the nature of work itself (Obholzer, 1999). Social defences correlate to the concept of individual defence mechanisms (Lyth, 1989). They are embedded in the structure of the organisation and enmeshed into the organisational experience in order to relieve anxiety and create safety (Kets de Vries & Engellau, 2004). Lyth (1989)

remarked that over time, social defences appear like aspects of the structure and culture of an organisation.

The theory of organisations as social defences states that organisational tasks and individual inadequacies elicit anxiety. Individuals defend against this anxiety by fragmenting the core problem to a state which cannot be recognised. The fragments of the problem are then projected on to salient aspects of the job situation. In turn, these fragments are experienced as the true source of the problem. Invariably, the responsibility for these fragments becomes fragmented and projected into elusive sources such as 'them' or authorities (Lyth, 1989). Gabriel and Carr (2002) added that in some instances efforts to contain organisational anxieties lead to an avoidance of real problems and opportunities as members flee from imagined threats. Lyth (1989) insisted that the core of the problem must be addressed in order to facilitate organisational learning and efficiency.

Gould et al., (2004) remarked that the process of understanding and working through organisational defences, for the purpose of facilitating task achievement, can be slow and painful. This is partly because social defence systems develop over a long period of time. Therefore when serious changes are required, they can be experienced by members as catastrophic because the social defence system must be restructured.

Bain (1998) introduced the notion of system domain defences to indicate that social defences which occur within a particular organisation tend to exist beyond the confines of such an organisation. Such social defences permeate the 'system domain,' which refers to other organisations sharing a primary task. This system domain fabric reinforces defences, and makes it difficult for organisations to sustain learning.

3.4.4 Object relations

The object relations school of psychoanalytic thought added significantly to the understanding of work and the organisation (Czander, 1993). The theory provides an interpersonal perspective on psychoanalysis and has largely replaced the instinctive view (Townley, 2008). According to the object relations perspective, people are object seeking and over time they acquire the ability to relate to objects (Czander, 1993). In essence the term object-relations acknowledges that from birth the infant has relations, most significantly to the mother. The mother is an object which can elicit ingredients of an object-relation such as love, hatred, fantasies, anxieties and defences (Stapley, 2006). Klein (1997) emphasised that the first object for the baby is the mother's breast. When the mother is unable to satisfy the needs of a child, he or she uses primitive defence mechanisms such as splitting, introjection and projection (Stapley, 2006).

3.4.4.1 *Splitting*

Splitting is one of the defences that develops early in life and remains visible throughout life. It separates the good primary internal objects from the bad ones (Solomon, 1995). The breast is good because it is gratifying and provides nourishment upon demand. It is bad when it is frustrating and delays or withholds nourishment. The infant deals with the confusion and anxiety which arise from the conflict of dealing with a mother who is available and nurturing while being unavailable and withholding at the same time, by splitting her into two parts. In essence this is a separation of love and hate. Through splitting her into a loved, idealised mother and a hated, denigrated mother, the infant does not have to deal with the mature reality that integrates the good and bad aspects of the same mother. The infant generalises this early developmental interaction with the breast and the mother to other people (Stapley, 2006).

3.4.4.2 *Projection*

Projection occurs when an individual splits off his or her unacceptable behaviour and unconscious wishes because the complexity of integrating them is too painful. The individual then pushes these split parts on to objects (Stapley, 2006). Some of disowned urges include aggression, ambition, envy, competition, and taboos (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). Klein (1997) reported that good parts are also projected, turning the object into an idealised one capable of protecting the subject against persecution. However, if this projection is done excessively the good parts of the self are felt to be lost, resulting in an over-dependence on the idealised object.

3.4.4.3 *Introjection*

Introjection is the unconscious process of taking in objects such as people including their emotional aspects, values and concepts. Such objects are internalised as mental images and representations to be induced throughout life. When good objects are evoked, they elicit all the positive feelings associated with pleasure and reward. Conversely, when bad objects are evoked, they trigger all the negative feelings associated with fears, frustrations and anger (Stapley, 2006).

3.4.4.4 *Projective identification*

Projective identification was first introduced by Melanie Klein in 1946. It is regarded as a form of unconscious, constructive interpersonal communication (Knight, 2007) and also as a defence against unimaginable anxiety (Knight, 2007; Stapley, 2006), which could be rooted in primitive envy of the object's idealised qualities (Cilliers & May, 2002).

Projective identification requires an object to identify with, introject and contain projections as if they belong to the object (Segal, 2006; Stapley, 2006). Projective identification may be directed towards the ideal object to avoid separation or it may be directed towards the bad object to gain control of the source of danger (Segal, 2006). Projections could include utterances, silences, gestures, and actions (Billow, 2006).

Stapley (2006) pointed out that if objects accept the projections and act accordingly, objects are likely to be colluding with the projector. This implied collusion can heighten the repulsion which the subject has attached to the unwanted parts. Usually objects which accept and introject the projections are ready containers for the projections. The object can thus influence the projector's experience by rejecting the projections. When the object rejects the projections, the projector is left with unwanted feelings, which he or she must take back and own. Gould et al., (2004) stated that the object can transform the projections into benign material in order to communicate them to the projector in a less threatening way. The object can grow psychologically if he or she contains and processes the feelings and thoughts evoked by the projections. Cilliers and May (2002) pointed out that some projections exert a domineering effect on the object and thus have a destructive effect on the object's coping. This can be manifested as compromised thinking. Gould et al., (2004) remarked that when projective identification occurs, the object undergoes visible changes in behaviour as he or she is subtly pressured to behave according to the material projected on to and into him or her (Gould et al., 2004).

3.4.4.5 *Paranoid-schizoid position*

The paranoid-schizoid position is evident throughout life (Klein, 1957). The type of anxiety which is prevalent in the paranoid-schizoid position is that persecutory objects will infiltrate the ego in order to engulf and annihilate both the ideal object

and the self. Klein named this position paranoid-schizoid because the dominant anxiety is paranoid, and the ego state is characterised by splitting into good and bad, which Klein described as schizoid (Klein, 1957; Stapley, 2006). Klein used the word position to emphasise that the experience is not fixed but recurs throughout life. When this state is activated the bad parts of the self are split off and then projected out to injure, control and take possession of the object so that it becomes the bad self, while the good is introjected (Klein, 1997).

When anxiety is activated, the split is widened and projection and introjection are used to keep the persecutory and the good far from each other. There are times when overwhelming badness is felt to be inside. When this happens, the good is projected to keep it safe. In some instances persecutors are introjected and identified with to gain control of them. When persecution is too intense it may be completely denied in what might be referred to as the phantasy (the concept is explained on page 123) of total annihilation (Segal, 2006). If persecutory anxiety is excessive individuals struggle to experience idealised internal objects and fail to feel secure because introjection is inhibited and all objects are felt to be persecutory. Fixation on the paranoid-schizoid position also occurs as the individual fails to perceive whole objects (Czander, 1993).

The paranoid-schizoid position is also evident within organisational life. Organisations can become polarised into all-good or all-bad parts with individuals and divisions waging intraorganisational wars on each other, triggering defensive reactions and regression. It is particularly difficult to successfully integrate the different parts of organisations because the defences are triggered by multiple and complex sources of conflict (Diamond, Allcorn & Stein, 2004).

3.4.4.6 *Depressive position*

The depressive position occurs when the infant realises that part-objects are actually whole objects; that the object that is loved is the same object that is hated (Segal, 2006; Solomon, 1995). This recognition of whole objects makes way for ego integration by the infant (Segal, 2006). The depressive position also entails an integration of good and bad parts of the object, the internal and external world, and an ability to work with paradoxes (Klein, 1997). Halton (2004) referred to this process as merging two halves of the story into one narrative. In the depressive position anxieties of ambivalence are prevalent. The child's anxiety is driven by an awareness of the potency of his destructive impulses to destroy the loved object, including its introjected good parts.

When the infant realises that the object is independent, he or she experiences helplessness and intense introjective processes. The infant's need to possess the object and to protect it from its own destructiveness also grows. The integrated infant who can remember and retain love for the good object will experience feelings of mourning, and pining for the good object which will be felt to be lost (Segal, 2006). In addition, feelings of guilt over aggressive impulses directed against the loved object are experienced (Klein, 1997). This makes way for reparations to restore and protect the injured objects (Klein, 1997), and to return life and wholeness to the object (Segal, 2006) in a manner which allows for satisfactory object-relations and sublimations (Klein, 1997). Reparation thus reduces depressive anxiety or guilt (Czander, 1993). Halton (2004) referred to this process as reparative creativity which implies the capacity to care. Failure of reparation leads to despair while its success leads to renewed hope (Segal, 2006). The potency of projective identification and splitting is diminished in the depressive position (Solomon, 1995).

If the paranoid-schizoid position cannot be worked through because persecutory anxiety is too intense, then working through the depressive position is equally

hindered. This could result in a regression in which persecutory fears are strengthened, and fixation occurs, which could lead to psychosis (Klein, 1997).

Within the organisational context, the depressive position triggers reflective and empathic interactions which impact positively on interpersonal relations. Organisational members do not feel fragmented or threatened by the thoughts, feelings or actions of others when the organisation is in a depressive position. They are capable of emotional containment when distressing workplace emotions or events occur. Primitive defences of the paranoid-schizoid position are replaced by less regressive defences such as humour and rationalisation (Diamond et al., 2004). The depressive position is regarded as the basis of all creativity and sublimation and forms the basis for one's attachment to work (Czander, 1993). Reparative creativity aims to repair damage at work. It recognises the human dimension of organisations and strives towards the achievement of healthy interpersonal interactions to buffer against destructive and aggressive impulses (Halton, 2004).

Newton et al., (2006) remarked that the depressive position is not superior to the paranoid-schizoid position. Instead, for development to occur, it is essential that there is movement between fragmentation and integration. Existing only in the depressive phase could lead to sterility, compromise and stagnation. Therefore, after integration, dialogue with disintegration must be pursued to allow for renewal.

3.4.5 Systems Theory

The basic tenet behind general systems theory, regarded as the first science of wholes, is that complex organisms cannot be entirely comprehended by breaking them down into parts and studying those parts. The theory proposed that the whole must be the subject of analysis since it enabled studying the crucial

relationship between its parts (Fitzgerald, 2009). General systems theory was founded on the premise that all systems have common characteristics. The theory cuts across many disciplines such as the generalised concept of organisation and information and communications (Skyttner, 2001). Skyttner (2001) formulated the hallmarks of general systems theory. These hallmarks include interrelatedness, holism, goal seeking, transformation, negentropy – the import of energy from the environment, regulation, hierarchy, differentiation, equifinality - different ways of achieving the same objective and multifinality - achieving different objectives through similar means (Skyttner, 2001).

A system is an organised, unitary whole composed of two or more interdependent subsystems, with boundaries that distinguish it from its external environment (Stapley, 2006; Van Tonder, 2004). Open systems exchange matter with the environment (Bertalanffy, 1968; Stapley, 2006; Van Tonder, 2004) and therefore all living systems, including organisations are open systems (Bertalanffy, 1968), which are adaptive and capable of self-renewal (Skyttner, 2001). The concept of open systems provides a significant foundation for leading whole-system change (Duffy, 2008). Components of open systems include the design, division of labour, levels of authority, reporting relationships, nature of work tasks, processes and activities, strategies, primary task, boundaries and interactions of an organisation (Gould et al., 2004; Klein, 2006). Kilburg (2000) reiterated that systems theory studies organisations and their management in a way that allows for an analysis and synthesis of relatedness and interactions in complex and dynamic environments. Campbell (2007) reported that systems thinking enabled an understanding of the relatedness of everything and the connectedness of people, things, and ideas.

According to (Fraher, 2004b) relationships between the part and the whole, the whole and the environment, the individual and the group, and the individual and the organisation can be looked at simultaneously to understand organisational

defence mechanisms. Wardsworth (2008) noted that the new focus of systems thinking was on change and development, addressing issues and improving problematic situations.

Complexity and chaos are an inevitable state of organisations and are also visible in most natural systems (Dolan, Garcia & Auerbach, 2003). Chaos theory was originally developed to understand and predict patterns in naturally occurring systems that seem random in nature, such as a tornado within a thunderstorm. Individuals and organisations are complex systems as they have traits of naturally occurring systems. These include multiple interacting variables that are difficult to predict and control (Boyatzis, 2006; Grobman, 2005; Kilburg, 2000). Complex systems are adaptive and evolve over time as the systems change (Boyatzis, 2006; Grobman, 2005). A complex adaptive system is a system of independent parts which act in unpredictable ways but whose actions are interconnected, so that an action in one part changes the context for other parts (Grobman, 2005).

Organisationally, traits of complexity include unexpected changes, uncertainties, ambiguity, lack of control, complex decision-making, group interdependence, high performance standards, confusion, disintegration, dehumanisation, and neuroticism (Dolan et al., 2003). Old, mechanical linear models of understanding organisations are thus ineffective in complex modern organisations and cannot guide organisations to respond appropriately to increasing changes. According to Keene (2000) the state of complexity lies in the paradoxical space where order and chaos co-exist, also called the edge of chaos. The edge of chaos offers great potential for innovation and creativity (Dolan et al., 2003), and for bounded instability (Diamond et al., 2004). Van Tonder (2004) described chaos as order disguised as disorder. Grobman (2005) explained that just as an organisation is close to disintegrating into chaos, a quasi-equilibrium state emerges out of the system's attempts to maximise its complexity and adaptability. Viewing

organisations in terms of complexity theory can provide orderly management within organised chaos. From a managerial perspective, working with stability and flexibility is essential to achieving organisational effectiveness. Leaders need to understand that the very change and uncertainty they try to avoid gives rise to the order and control desired. Thus control may prevent creativity and innovation (Keene, 2000). Dolan et al., (2003) stated that rather than controlling chaos, such chaos ought to be guided by behavioural boundaries in the form of values. Organisations can thus be framed as chaotic systems capable of self-organising.

3.5 SYSTEM PSYCHODYNAMICS CONCEPTS

Some of the key concepts central to the field of systems psychodynamics, applicable to this research, are explored in the next section.

3.5.1 Anxiety

The systems psychodynamic view accepts the existence of primitive anxieties of a persecutory and depressive nature, and the mobilisation of social defence systems against them as central features (Gould et al., 2004). Anxiety is an experience visible from the earliest stages of infancy. It can be derived from many different sources such as the activities of the death instinct. A fear of annihilation by an over-powering object can also be introjected, turning the anxiety into internal persecutors (Klein, 1997). Other primary sources of anxiety include the trauma of birth (Freud, 1935) and the frustration that occurs when an external object fails to meet needs (Klein, 1997). Freud (1948) stated that primal anxiety is brought about by separation from the mother. Later, Freud (1949) described neurotic anxiety as free-floating and ready to attach itself to any thought which justifies its existence. Obholzer (1999) described primitive anxiety as an ever-present, all-pervasive anxiety which mankind is destined to

experience. Within the work environment, anxiety is regarded as the basis of all organisational behaviours (Cilliers & Koortzen, 2000).

3.5.2 Phantasy

Phantasy, which is distinguishable from fantasy by spelling it with a 'ph' begins at birth and never stops. Spelt with an 'f', fantasy refers to conscious daydreaming. Phantasy on the other hand constitutes a conglomeration of unconscious instinctual drives including aggressive drives, defences, anxieties, and the self and internal representations which interact within the inner world in an emotive way (Solomon, 1995). Freud (1949) stated that despite the demands of the reality principle, man struggles to relinquish pleasure without some compensation hence he resorts to phantasy for gratification. Segal (2006) added that unconscious phantasies and reality are constantly and mutually interacting with each other.

3.5.3 Envy, Jealousy and Greed

Envy is an expression of primitive, sadistic instincts which operate from the beginning of life. It is the irate feeling that someone else possesses and enjoys something sought-after, triggering an envious impulse to spoil it, annihilate it or take it away (Klein, 1957; 1997). Envy is thus a response to a lack of something sought-after (Gutmann, Ternier-David & Verrier, 2002). It can also elicit a desire to fuse with the object in a parasitical way so as to become part of the object (Cilliers & May, 2002). Envy represents attempts to be as good as the object. When efforts to fuse with the object fail, envy aims to spoil the goodness of the object in order to take away the source of the envious feelings (Segal, 2006). Solomon (1995) stated that envy manifests as devaluing, ruthlessness and mockery. It has also been described as more callous than hatred. Klein (1957; 1997) stated that the first object to be envied is the feeding breast as the infant,

driven by anxiety, believes that the breast has an ever-flowing supply of milk which the breast keeps to itself. Instinctual drives and unconscious fantasies of the infant thus infuse the breast with attributes that surpass its feeding capacities.

Segal (2006) indicated that envy can be regarded as the earliest direct externalisation of the death instinct as it attacks the source of life. The act of spoiling is detrimental to development since the very source of goodness that the infant is dependent upon is turned bad. This inhibits the introjections of the good. In addition, the envious subject is unable to enjoy the good within because paranoia projected on to the other creates anxiety that the other will steal the good from the subject (Solomon, 1995). The infant can attain satisfactory development if the breast is integrated into its ego with good-enough security (Klein, 1957; 1997). Excessive feelings of envy lead to despair as the inability to find an ideal object results in loss of hope for love or help. The destroyed objects can become the source of endless persecution and later guilt (Segal, 2006). Within the work environment, those in leadership positions, who personify idealised or elevated parts are most likely to be deposed when envied (Huffington, 2006). According to Tangney and Salove (1999) envy is thought to motivate individuals to better themselves, improve their talents and abilities, and be more productive. However, because it is stigmatised, it is rarely owned.

Jealousy on the other hand, a word often confused with envy, is based on envy but involves at least two people, and often three people (Klein, 1957). Envy is considered to be manifest earlier than jealousy when objects are not yet perceived as whole, although it persists into whole-object relationships (Segal, 2006). Solomon (1995) stated that while envy wants to destroy what the other has, jealousy craves it. Klein (1957) added that jealousy fears to lose what it has, while envy is pained at seeing another have that which it wants for itself. Jealousy is based on love (Segal, 2006), wherein the subject believes that what belongs to him or her has been taken away or could be taken away (Downing,

1977; Klein, 1957) by a rival (Segal, 2006; Tangney & Salove, 1999). Since jealousy pertains to a triangular relationship, it occurs when objects are clearly recognised and differentiated from one another (Segal, 2006). Downing (1977) added that jealousy originates in the family setting through the oedipal situation during which the same sex parent is felt to be the rival. Jealousy is thus competitive since it occurs in relation to a rival and whenever the fear of losing the fear of losing the loved object is aroused.

Greed is an insatiable craving exceeding needs, as if the subject wants to devour the entire breast or all the good (Klein, 1957) regardless of consequences (Segal, 2006). This may result in spoiling the object and destroying it. Envy can merge with greed by attempting to possess all of the object's goodness while depleting it so that it no longer contains anything enviable (Segal, 2006).

3.5.4 Holding and containment

The concepts of holding and containment are different yet overlap, hence they tend to be used interchangeably. In work situations holding and containing are almost always intertwined (Vansina & Vansina-Cobbaert, 2008). According to Winnicott (1965), who introduced the concept of 'holding', it denotes actual physical holding of the infant and the provision of care and safety. Thus holding is about an external and sensuous experience which occurs when a mother is holding a baby. It represents a bridge between the womb environment and the outside world (Vansina & Vansina-Cobbaert, 2008).

According to Winnicott (1965) satisfactory parental care occurs through three stages which overlap. The first one occurs during holding, the second one occurs when the mother and infant live together, and finally when the father lives with them. Good-enough holding provides a foundation for a sense of wholeness and stability (Vansina & Vansina-Cobbaert, 2008). According to Grotstein (2008)

the mother as a holding object intuitively understands what the needs of the infant are and is preoccupied with facilitating autonomy for the infant. The holding mother facilitates maturation without being directly involved in an I-Thou interaction. This way she can be regarded as a developmental coach. Winnicott (1965) highlighted the developing infant's capacity for symbol formation through his interaction with transitional objects. These could be a piece of cloth or a teddy bear, which is symbolic of some part-object such as the breast. Through this symbolism the infant demonstrates capacity to demonstrate between inner objects and external objects, fantasy and reality and subjectivity to objectivity. The primary purpose of transitional objects is to defend against anxiety of the depressive type (Winnicott, 2000).

The concept of containment on the other hand was developed by Kleinian psychoanalysts. As with holding, the mother, who will later be replaced by social groups, is regarded as the original container (Vansina & Vansina-Cobbaert, 2008). The containing mother recognises her infant's emotional states, transforms them and interprets them to the infant. Conversely, the infant recognises the container that meets its instinctual and affection needs. The contained infant, however, is not passive (Vansina & Vansina-Cobbaert, 2008). Bion (1970) posited that processes in the container-contained relationship operate in a two-way manner, during which both parties take some responsibility for co-constructing the experience. The contained is not always a passive recipient. For instance, while the container is trying to understand the contained, the contained acts as a container. As soon as the container presents an interpretation to the contained, the roles become transiently reversed as the container becomes the contained. Grotstein (2008) remarked that material returned to the contained may be mingled with the personality of the container. The contained must thus discern which material is in sync with his or her authentic needs, and discard that which belongs to the container. According to Vansina and Vansina-Cobbaert (2008) the developmental potential of

containment depends on the degree to which the container recognises and accepts himself or herself as a container. In addition, the container must not be too disturbed by the contents to be contained.

The maternal holding environment is relevant to an understanding of group dynamics. Members of groups experience unconscious feelings rooted in the primal and intense maternal bond. Consequently the group often becomes the nurturing mother unconsciously sought by group members for nurturance (Stapley, 2006). Huffington, James and Armstrong (2004) reported that containment is important in the work environment to assist members to focus on the tasks of the organisation. Lack of containment may take away the mental space individuals and groups need for creative decision-making. On an individual level this may be felt as a diffuse sense of personal vulnerability and a questioning of one's competence and professional identity.

3.5.5 Relatedness

Relatedness is an inescapable process of mutual influence between individuals, the individual and the group, and/or groups, the group and the organisation and between the organisation and wider society (Stapley, 2006). Through relatedness, unconscious processes of the individual influence group, organisational and institutional processes. Relatedness starts in early infancy when the baby exists in relation to the mother, and this continues throughout life. It is inescapable because human nature is socially oriented and this precludes the existence of the individual outside others (Stapley, 2006).

3.5.6 The basic assumption life of groups

All groups are characterised by an interaction between two emotional states, the work group and the basic assumption group (Stapley, 2006). The work group is

sophisticated (Fraher, 2004b) and based in reality. It is inclined towards cooperation and actively pursues task achievement (Fraher, 2004b; Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). Work groups are often undermined when the tasks become anxiety-provoking. When confronted by difficult tasks or unacceptable feelings and thoughts such as anger, envy and competition (Stapley, 2006), or a need to avoid the pain of work (Fraher, 2004b) the work group regresses unconsciously to a basic assumption group. Group members contribute unconscious material which forms a group mentality and diminishes individuality as members join the emotional life of a group. Basic assumption behaviour of the regressed group destabilises the group and moves it away from task accomplishment. Groups trigger primitive fantasies, fragmentation and anxieties of persecution by the bad breast because they symbolise the maternal holding environment. Therefore, basic assumption behaviour is inevitable (Stapley, 2006). Tension always exists between the work group and the basic assumption group. This tension is usually balanced through behaviours and psychological processes such as defence mechanisms, ground rules and expectations (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004).

Hayden & Molenkamp (2004) reported that the basic assumption life of a group is never depleted. It is also not necessary for the group to rid itself of its basic assumption traits. Some societal institutions positively exploit basic assumption needs and thereby provide vehicles through which to channel these strong primitive feelings. This way basic assumption life can serve the work task. In this sense the church satisfies dependency needs, the military satisfies fight-flight needs while political systems with their emphasis on succession satisfy pairing needs. Mysticism and cosmic consciousness satisfy oneness needs.

Bion (1961) identified three basic assumption groups, namely, dependency, fight-flight, and pairing. Turquet (1974) added the fourth one, called oneness, while Lawrence, Bain and Gould (1996) added a fifth one, called me-ness.

3.5.6.1 *Basic assumption dependency*

In the basic assumption dependency mode, the group seeks an all-knowing and all-doing leader, who may or may not be the formal leader, to satisfy their needs. The group unconsciously determines the most ready and suitable member to take up this leadership role (Stapley, 2006). The basic assumption dependency group is a trap for a charismatic leader whose personal traits allow him or her to exert authority (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). In this mode group members behave as if they are immature children, devoid of purposeful thought (Stapley, 2006) and dependent on an imaginative parental figure or system (Cilliers & Koortzen, 2000). This mode can be construed as manipulation of authority figures out of their roles into the roles of parents (Cilliers & Koortzen, 2000). Bion (1961) remarked that when the wished for leader refuses to satisfy the group's needs, the group reacts with indignation because it feels entitled to receive guidance. The assigned leader inevitably fails to accomplish the impossible task set out by the group. The group then encourages another group member to replace the failed leader and expects him or her to be omnipotent, an expectation he or she will also fail to fulfil (Stapley, 2006). When this leader fails, the group expresses disappointment and hostility in different ways (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004).

3.5.6.2 *Basic assumption pairing*

In the basic assumption pairing mode the group is focused on fusing (Stapley, 2006). The survival of such a group depends on magical reproduction through which a Messiah is expected to be born to save the group from its anxiety-provoking difficulties (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). Two people usually provide the group with hope and enthusiasm – vital ingredients to such a group. Although their gender is immaterial, the interaction of the pair is of a sexual nature and the mood is pleasant due to the hope of a birth. This is usually

created by the pair dominating the discussion (Stapley, 2006) or providing mutual intellectual support resulting in passivity of other group members (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). However, hope for this group can only be sustained for as long the leader remains unborn (Stapley, 2006). Pairing also manifests as splitting. Anxiety experienced because of diversity may trigger the splitting of the whole group into smaller groups where feelings of safety and belonging can be met. This may lead to intra- and inter-group conflict (Cilliers & Koortzen, 2000).

3.5.6.3 *Basic assumption fight-flight*

In the basic assumption fight-flight mode the group comes together to fight an enemy or escape from a threat (Stapley, 2006). Fighting could entail active aggression, scapegoating, physical attack (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004), envy, elimination, sibling rivalry or fighting for a position (Cilliers & Koortzen, 2000). In the fighting mode, the attack is not based on reality but it is an unconscious attempt to avoid a task (Stapley, 2006). An acceptable leader is one who mobilises the group to attack, typically someone with paranoid tendencies or to lead the group in flight (Bion, 1961). However, the constant bickering and competition ensures that such leadership is short-lived (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). Fleeing could take the form of withdrawal, passivity, avoidance or ruminating on the past. An acceptable leader is one who minimises the importance of the task and facilitates anti-task behaviour in the group. When the basic assumption pairing meets fight-flight, the tone is characterised by erotic aggression (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004).

3.5.6.4 *Basic assumption oneness*

This mode of functioning occurs when group members desire to join in a powerful union with an omnipotent force to surrender and relieve the self from active participation, in order to achieve well-being and wholeness. Such a group could

commit itself to a movement or cause outside itself to survive. Leaders offering a philosophy of life or methods to achieve higher levels of consciousness are esteemed by such groups. This group typically loses its capacity to think independently as it feels merged with other group members as it attempts to indulge a wish for Salvationist inclusion (Turquet, 1974).

3.5.6.5 *Basic assumption me-ness*

This mode of function is the opposite of oneness (Lawrence, 2000). In this mode of functioning group members behave as if the group is a non-group or an undifferentiated mass. The invalidation of the group and the emphasis on individuality are motivated by a fear of engulfment (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004) for the individuals who fear being lost to the group (Lawrence, 2000). Industrialised cultures have given prominence to this basic assumption. Me-ness is stimulated by social anxieties of living in tumultuous, modern societies. As individuals become aware of disturbing realities in the external world, they retreat deeper into their inner worlds as a defence against confronting such challenges. This has also been referred to as socially induced schizoid withdrawal. Interactions in this mode are mechanical and devoid of affect. This basic assumption group is an unconscious system of defence against both the experiences of work and other basic assumption groups (Lawrence, 2000).

3.5.6.6 *Basic assumptions and the individual*

Basic assumptions essentially refer to group dynamics (Bion, 1961). De Board (2000) noted that individual psychology is ultimately group psychology as the individual and the group are related through processes of mutual influence (Stapley, 2006). It can be deduced that the organisation-in-the-mind of the individual (Armstrong, 2005) can trigger off basic assumption reactions in the individual based on dynamics emerging in the client's work life as will be

demonstrated in the empirical study. Pooley (2004) remarked that basic assumptions which characterise clients' interactions with others ought to be worked through in coaching.

3.5.7 Valence

Valence is a term Bion borrowed from physics (Obholzer, 1999) which signifies the tendency of an atom to combine with others (Obholzer & Miller, 2004). Within systems psychodynamics it refers to an individual's propensity, vulnerability and readiness to combine with others and collude with them in acting upon basic assumptions (Obholzer & Miller, 2004; Stapley, 2006). Each individual has the tendency to enter into the unconscious and irrational aspects of group life in an idiosyncratic manner (Stapley, 2006). Someone whose valence is activated by group anxiety over change is likely to be used by the group to resist innovation. Valence is not fixed as it changes over time and in different contexts (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004).

3.5.8 Power and authority

Power is perceived as the capacity to influence behaviours of others so that they can behave in accordance with the wishes of the powerful. Power is therefore potential and relies on a dependent relationship. Different sources of power include reward, knowledge, coercion, position, expertise, opportunity and the person (Czander, 1993; Stapley, 2006). Obholzer (1994) added that power is a characteristic of persons and not roles and can thus be derived internally and externally. Authority and power have been used interchangeably, creating confusion. Czander (1993) and Stapley (2006) added that authority has been misconstrued to mean influence and authoritarianism. Influence on the other hand requires approval, whereas authoritarianism stifles freedom of expression. The latter often emerges out of an over-focus on hierarchical structures, which

evoke strong obedience in employees, resulting in a collusive dynamic between subordinates and superiors.

Authority means that those with authority have the right to do anything within boundaries indicated by the terms of their authority. The most common source of authority is institutionalised power, which has a legal foundation. Managerial authority is conferred by those with the power to delegate such authority. Authority is thus the legitimate application of power that is directed at fulfilling the primary task of the organisation (Stapley, 2006). According to Czander (1993) authority is the only justifiable tool which encourages promotion and maintenance of submission and compliance in the workplace. Stapley (2006) added that when power is used outside the boundaries of legitimate authority, it may be considered abused. An example is using power as a political tool to further personal interests in a manner that undermines the achievement of organisational objectives or that represses others. Leadership authority, which can be vested in any organisational member, refers to attempts of leaders to influence their followers to carry out organisational tasks. For formal authority to be effective, those subjected to it must accept it. Authority is also derived from above, within and below (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004; Obholzer, 1994). Obholzer and Miller (2004) added that authority from within is influenced by the inner world of the leader, derived from a personal identity imbued with a sense of confidence that the task and related anxieties are manageable.

Authority has a significant impact on the psychic life of subordinates in the work environment (Czander, 1993). Relationships and relatedness to authority are influenced by the fact that individuals start out life dependent on authority figures. Thus in interacting with authority figures in the work environment, the unconscious is re-enacted as past feelings emanating from childhood interactions with authority are triggered (Stapley, 2006). Subordinates thus invest superiors at work with the moral authority once accorded parental figures

(Hirschhorn, 1997b). Making sense of these experiences requires an understanding of introjected authority figures (Stapley, 2006). These transference reactions are particularly reinforced when the distance between subordinates and superiors is magnified, obscuring the authentic nature of the object (Czander, 1993). Ambivalence towards authority, which is experienced as nurturing and punitive, can also be linked to the infant's experience of total dependence on the mother and the accompanying terror and rage at abandonment. Failure to appreciate that childhood discipline is essential makes it hard for subordinates to accept upward delegation of authority. This results in a projection of childhood discomforts to authority figures (Chattopadhyay, 2002).

The changes brought about by technological and economic changes are transforming authority relationships. This makes it essential for subordinates to rely on their own personal authority. Drawing upon personal authority fosters more psychological presence as individuals bring more of themselves to the work environment (Hirschhorn, 1997b). Exercising authority can be an anxiety-provoking experience. Anxieties related to exercising authority may stem from not having a good-enough internal image of oneself due to a punitive superego. Exercising power and authority also elicits feelings of competition and sibling rivalry. A competitive dynamic can inhibit taking and giving authority, resulting in stagnation and an inability to take real decisions (Stapley, 2006).

Czander (1993) asserted that factors which play a role in the dysfunction of authority are structures of systems, which are driven by desires to control and dominate. Chattopadhyay (2002) highlighted the typically dysfunctional interplay between hierarchy-in-the-mind and authority. At times this translates into managers behaving as controllers, denying the reality that authority can be exercised only because it is conferred. The perception of authority in organisations as a limited resource can result in a loss of creativity as organisational members disconnect from their personal authority because they

believe that knowledge and power are located only at the top. These factors can combine to create abuse of authority or anxieties over its abuse.

3.5.9 Boundaries

Boundaries are physical and psychological and demarcate what is inside and outside a system (Czander, 1993; Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). They hold together the components of systems and protect them from environmental stress by selecting matter, energy and information to be excluded or included (Skyttner, 2001). Various psychological boundaries separate reality and fantasy, thought and impulse, person and function, and one group from another. Individuals and groups, which are regarded as open systems, require boundaries that are strong enough to contain what is inside and permeable enough to allow transactions between the inside and outside environment (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). If boundaries are too open, the system becomes overwhelmed by the environment, predisposing it to a highly influential environment which can disrupt the work of the organisation. Conversely systems with too rigid boundaries wilt and die, due to stagnation and inflexibility to environmental changes (Fraher, 2004b). The more firmly boundaries are drawn, the stronger individuals identity with them and thus resist attempts to change them. People must thus be assisted not to be overly dependent on boundaries (Palmer, 1999).

Holding in the maternal womb and then in the maternal hands represents the first boundary for the infant. As the external world is brought into the awareness of the infant, individuation from the mother and other objects begins to occur. Mental development also occurs from an interaction with the external world so that with time the infant's reliance on the physical containment provided by the mother evolves to containment in the infant's mind (Stapley, 2006).

Like individual boundaries, organisational boundaries mark entry points into the system and distinguish between that which is inside the organisation, and outside the organisation (Czander, 1993; Diamond, et al., 2004). Boundaries are a suitable place from which to decipher the identity and characteristics of the organisation. As entry points, they mark the point at which the organisation meets its environment, and where non-members can access information about the organisation's culture and ideology. Symbolic representations of the organisation abound at the point of entry. People cross many boundaries during the day and experiences in different systems are influenced by the experience of crossing the boundary. The interface between systems and subsystems is either connected or broken and the boundaries offer opportunities for collaboration or conflict. It is at the boundary point that the self can become a potent instrument for observation of an organisational identity (Czander, 1993).

According to Diamond et al., (2004) the systemic framework of organisational boundaries highlights multiple boundaries within and between organisations. These call for effective boundary maintenance to ensure that the technological core, efficacy and integrity of organisations are protected. Decisions made at the boundary have a significant impact on the internal life of any system. Boundary maintenance is a crucial management task that ensures organisational success and adaptation. Conversely, faulty boundary management leads to internal problems within the organisation (Czander, 1993; Diamond et al., 2004). The process of boundary maintenance can be influenced by the unconscious, and crossing boundaries during integration and collaboration efforts can create anxieties which can trigger defensive responses.

The typical portrayal of organisational boundaries as concrete entities without sufficient regard to their affective attributes has been criticised. A proposition that organisational boundaries embody different emotionally-laden surfaces has been suggested (Diamond, et al., 2004). Thus substituting surfaces for

boundaries to add an affective and psychological feel to the notion of organisational boundaries is regarded as essential. Surfaces go beyond physical boundaries to a space where subjective and intersubjective meaning is created (Diamond et al., 2004).

3.6 EXECUTIVE COACHING

The origins of executive coaching are presented next, together with the need for empirical research related to this field. The relevance of executive coaching to the systems psychodynamic perspective is also discussed.

3.6.1 Historical and Conceptual Roots of Executive Coaching

Executive coaching has been part of management consulting since the advent of consulting services because consultants have often offered senior executives advice on how to run their organisations. The field of executive coaching, however, gained significance in the last twenty years (Kilburg, 2007b). Officially, executive coaching as a sub-discipline of management services catapulted to centre stage in the 1980s. The impetus for executive coaching came from different organisational programmes such as the executive development programme, the evolution of the multirater feedback system and the evolution of the field of organisation development (Kilburg, 2007b; Van den Poel, 2007). Grant and Cavanagh (2007) attributed the rise of contemporary coaching psychology to a lack of systematic application of psychological knowledge to other groups beyond the clinical population. The first research into executive coaching was conducted in 1987 while the first journal article to apply the term coaching to leadership development was published in 1993 (Kilburg, 2007b).

Kampa-Kokesch and Anderson (2007) remarked that writers were speculating when they wrote about the origins of executive coaching as it was not clear when

the field was born. Kets de Vries and Korotov (2007) proposed that coaching could be regarded as a repackaged therapeutic offering for the office because the term coaching was more appealing and less threatening than therapy.

Kilburg (2000) summed up the field of executive coaching into three phases. The first phase occurred between 1950 and 1979 when professionals employed organisation development and psychological techniques in their work with executives. The middle period which occurred between 1980 and 1994, was marked by an increase in professionalism and the beginning of standardised services. The third phase, which started in 1995 and runs to date has witnessed an increase in publications on executive coaching and a high demand for executive coaches. This last phase also includes the formation of professional organisations and certification programmes, and increased calls for research into the effectiveness of executive coaching (Kilburg, 2000).

3.6.2 The dearth of standardisation and research in executive coaching

Garman, Whiston and Zlatoper (2000) reviewed seventy-two articles on executive coaching and discovered that most executive coaches have advanced training in psychology. This indicates that executive coaching is strongly rooted in applied psychological sciences. They also revealed a lack of universally recognised standards of expertise in executive coaching. Consequently, some executive coaching professionals and practices attract criticism. However, executive coaching as a practice is acknowledged as worthwhile.

Kilburg (2007b) remarked that empirical research on the actual work of senior practitioners in the field of executive coaching is lacking, especially as it applies to management within the consultation context. The empirical base of coaching applies mostly to athletics and special needs populations. This, however, has not suppressed the publication of many articles on the topic.

3.6.3 Definition of executive coaching

According to Kilburg (2007a: 28) executive coaching is 'a helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organisation, and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods, in order to help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and, consequently, to improve the effectiveness of the client's organisation within a formally defined coaching agreement'.

Kilburg (2007a) reported that most definitions of executive coaching encapsulate the following:

- A formal consulting relationship between a client and a professional coach.
- A focus on enhancing the performance of clients.
- A time-limited engagement.
- Collaboration between the coach and client.
- An assessment of the client.

According to Kets de Vries (2004) the purpose of executive coaching is to develop a focused strategy to enhance the productivity of individuals, teams and organisations. This is particularly relevant when success depends on personal commitment and interactions with others at a deeper emotional level.

Roberts and Jarrett (2006) emphasised the applicability of executive coaching not only to those at the top but also to a broader audience. Individuals with executive responsibilities such as planning and implementing organisational tasks are thus suitable beneficiaries of executive coaching.

3.6.4 The difference between coaching and mentoring

Coaching and mentoring have both risen sharply, and in the process some definitional confusion of both has ensued as practitioners and scholars disagree over the true distinction between coaching and mentoring (Garvey, 2010). More similarities than differences have been noted between coaching and mentoring (Clutterbuck, 2008). According to Parsloe and Wray (2005) both coaching and mentoring are processes which enable or support learning in an increasingly complex and technology dominated world of work. In terms of their skills base, both coach and mentor possess a good grasp of processes, techniques and attitudes required to achieve the goals of coaching and mentoring.

According to Clutterbuck (2008) the main difference between the two is that coaching addresses performance in some aspects of an individual's work or life, while mentoring is more often associated with much broader, holistic development and with career progress. Parsloe and Wray (2005) added that the important practical difference between coaching and mentoring relates to the focus of learning and time frames. Whereas coaching is short term, mentoring is long term. In addition, mentoring is more often oriented towards an exchange of wisdom, support, learning or guidance for the purpose of personal, spiritual, career or life growth. It is also used to achieve strategic business goals and its contents can be wide ranging. Coaching is typically results, performance, success, or goal-directed, with an emphasis on taking action and sustaining changes over time. It is often used to improve performance in a specific area, and tends to be more practical than theoretical (Parsloe & Wray, 2005).

According to Garvey (2010) the emotional bond between the mentor and the mentee is the key difference between mentoring and coaching. Mentoring is dependent on the human qualities of trust, commitment and emotional engagement. Often in successful mentoring, the partnership is characterised by mutual respect and affection, which may result in friendship.

3.6.5 The difference between coaching and psychotherapy

Some similarities between coaching and psychotherapy have been noted. Both practices are concerned with behaviour, emotion and cognition, and depend on meaningful discussions between the client and therapist or coach. These discussions may take the form of confrontation, clarification, interpretation and working through issues (Kets de Vries, 2004). According to Sperry (2004) both coaching and psychotherapy adopt a similar view of human nature such as respect for clients, belief in clients' capacity to resolve issues and a collaborative relationship. Huffington et al., (2004) added that the boundary between the two can be fluid because therapy is a healing art, while coaching addressing the disease of clients in organisations.

Sperry (2004) set executive coaching and psychotherapy apart from executive psychotherapy, which was described as a form of therapy in which a therapist and an executive establish a collaborative relationship, and employ psychotherapeutic techniques to resolve the executive's work-related problems.

Cavanagh and Grant (2006) referred to the field of coaching psychology to distinguish between psychologists offering coaching from other coaching practitioners. Coaching psychology utilises theories and techniques developed across the spectrum of the psychological discipline,

According to Rotenberg (2000) despite the overlapping methodologies between executive coaching and psychotherapy, they each embody distinct paradigms. For instance, compared to therapists, executive coaches are expected to have a more systemic perspective. Kets de Vries and Korotov (2007) stated that since the organisation should benefit from coaching, both the executive and indirectly the organisation are the clients. According to Sperry (2004) coaching adopts a present and future focus, and a goal and action-orientation. Stern (2008) added that coaching focuses on building skills and plans, and on putting them into

practice. Its goals are to improve or achieve a specific outcome and to identify learning opportunities. Psychotherapy on the other hand, adopts a reflective, passive stance. Cavanagh and Grant (2007) remarked that coaching typically deals with a non-clinical or non-distressed client base, unlike psychotherapy which tends to adopt a pathological orientation.

Rotenberg (2000) emphasised that psychoanalytically trained therapists who coach executives must be familiar with the language of business, organisational culture, and must articulate their coaching framework clearly, including its underlying assumptions. Conversely, executive coaches who adopt a psychoanalytically influenced approach must be familiar with the role of psychoanalytical phenomena such as the unconscious, transference and counter-transference.

3.6.6 Coaching critique

With the proliferation of coaching, Renton (2009) observed that some coaching has been bad, produced mixed outcomes, effective, or has occasionally been brilliant. Berglas (2002) noted that a majority of executive coaches are former athletes, lawyers, business academics and consultants, and cautioned that executive coaches who lack rigorous psychological training could do more harm than good. Such coaches tend to ignore or trivialise deep-rooted psychological problems that they do not understand. Often they promise quick, easy answers which tempt executives to invest in them despite their inability to address executives' problems adequately. This lure of quick fixes is fuelled by organisations' overarching focus on the bottom-line. Coaches also tend to fall in the trap of treating symptoms and not disorders by preferring to adopt techniques borrowed from behavioural psychology.

Lee (2010) remarked that the depth offered by psychodynamic coaching is not always appropriate, especially when clients are looking for relatively short engagements to help them think through particular issues. In such instances, it may be more appropriate to select approaches that focus on the present and the future, without necessarily digging into patterns learned from the past. Thus when clients are looking for pragmatic solutions, the psychodynamic approach falls short. In addition, the approach tends to be overly concerned with problems and may miss the value of focusing on clients' strengths. Lee (2010) also lauded the psychodynamic approach to coaching for its capacity to work below the surface and to manage boundaries. Such boundary management enhances the creation of holding and safety, which in turn, allows for the defences to loosen. The role of restraint and silence allows clients to think more than do, reflect more than solve, and to tolerate the discomfort of not knowing, and thus appreciate the transformative potential of awareness.

3.6.7 Systems Psychodynamic Coaching

Scholars and practitioners (Bunning, 2006; Kets de Vries, 2004; Kilburg, 2000; Newton et al., 2006) have contributed significantly to the field of executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective. Essentially, they have shifted systems psychodynamics from a group to an individual orientation.

Kilburg (2000) incorporated complexity theory, human behaviour, psychodynamics, and pragmatism to executive coaching. This was in response to a prevailing tendency to focus on the mechanics of coaching while ignoring the complexities of the coaching process. Kets de Vries and Korotov (2007) highlighted the comprehensive perspective which psychodynamic coaches adopt in order to understand the below the surface dynamics. Such dynamics are associated with the clients' intrapsychic activities, leadership dynamics,

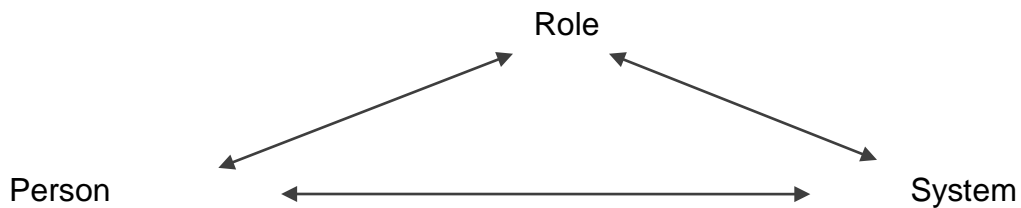
interpersonal relationships, collusive dynamics, social defences, corporate culture, toxic organisations and imprisonment of the past.

3.6.7.1 *Organisational Role Analysis*

Newton et al., (2006) applied Organisational Role Analysis (ORA) to in-depth coaching. ORA evolved out of organisational consultancy, systems theory and group relations training, although it is regarded as more supportive than the latter. ORA is a method of working with individual managers and leaders in order to enable them to take up their roles effectively (Bunning, 2006). Newton et al., (2006) added that this approach investigates the role that systemic issues play in creating work and role performance problems for executives. The approach also allows managers to address their dilemmas and exercise their authority and leadership (Mersky, 2006). ORA is concerned with whole systems and their relatedness. Its premise is that an individual's experience reflects more than just the individual and that the whole and its part are linked. An examination of one aspect of the system will therefore open the way to understanding the whole system (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). The emotional experience of a manager in an organisation, for instance, may on the surface appear to have personal significance, when it is actually a sign of a current or emerging organisational reality (Armstrong, 2004). ORA allows for individual phenomena such as transference to be analysed while taking into consideration its interrelatedness to the unconscious dynamics in the organisation as a whole (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). ORA has been revised by many systems psychodynamic consultants. It has been called organisational role consultancy, role consultancy and more recently executive coaching (Roberts & Jarrett, 2006). This has resulted in variations in its fundamental conceptual framework (Lawrence, 2006a).

Person-role-organisation

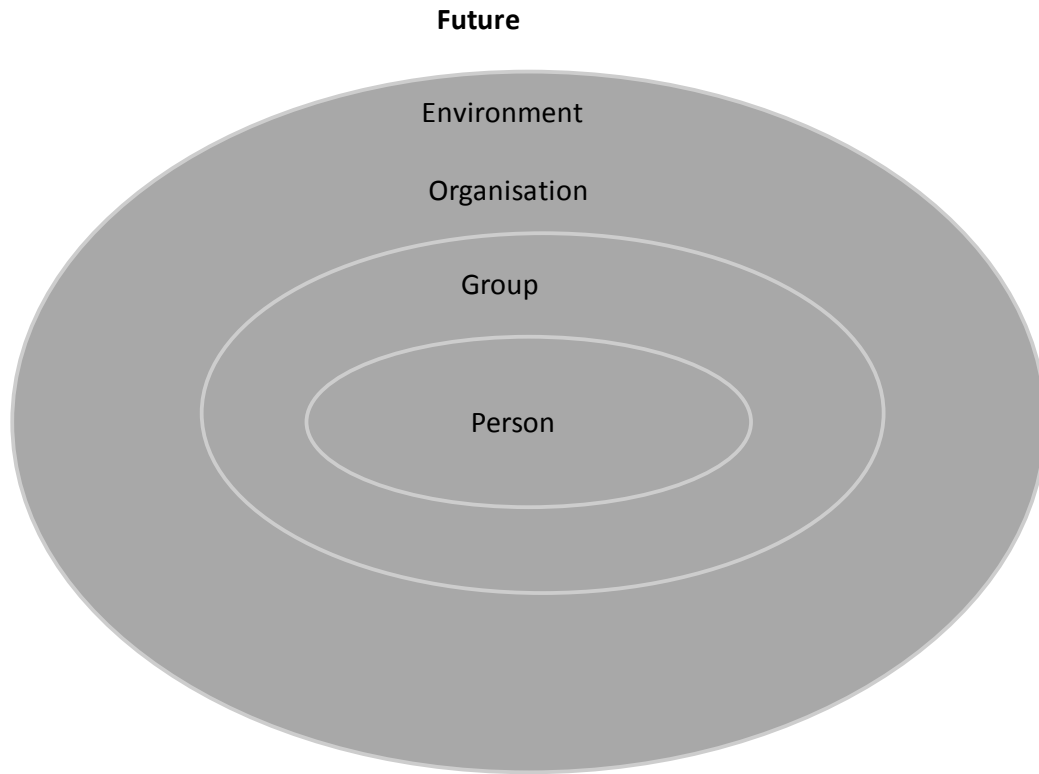
ORA focuses on the client's organisational role. This is regarded as the place where person and organisation meet or where the personal and the social meet. By placing a role under scrutiny the system is inevitably also placed under scrutiny (Huffington, 2006). Miller and Rice (1967) depicted the interplay between the individual in role in their organisation in figure 3.1 below:



(Miller & Rice, 1967)

Figure 3.1: The relationship between person, role and system

Huffington (2006) proposed that the person-role-system model should be expanded into a series of concentric circles which surround the individual client, as depicted in the figure 3.2 below. This model puts the client within a context of a series of interconnected boundaries or hierarchically organised layers of meaning including the group, organisation, environment and the future, in order to understand the client deeper.



(The Tavistock Consultancy Service, 1998)

Figure 3.2: The contextual perspective

The term role is used in a more comprehensive and metaphorical way in ORA. ORA believes that role behaviour is dynamic and evolving because it is influenced by organisational aspects such as other roles, tasks, system boundaries, resources and the role holder (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). A role can be defined psychologically when the client internalises it, develops it and adapts to it, on the basis of his or her interpretation of the role. A sociological role is that which is seen by others such as colleagues and subordinates. Psychological and sociological roles can be contradictory such as when clients discover that others are critical of their behaviour. This can result in clients being reluctant to take up action for their system despite the decisions they make during coaching to do so (Reed & Bazalgette, 2006). This can also be related to the notion of the

primary task, which can be normative, existential or phenomenal. The normative primary role is the task that organisational members ought to pursue based on the definition and prescriptions of authority. The existential primary role relates to that which members believe they are actually pursuing. The phenomenal primary role on the other hand, relates to the task which members are actively engaged in but not consciously aware of. Clients ought to align the normative and existential primary roles to adopt an optimum position (Hoyle, 2004).

According to Reed and Bazalgette (2006) Organisational Role Analysis assists managers to;

- Examine and express their experiences at work.
- Enhance the meaning of their experiences at work as it relates to purpose, systems and boundaries.
- Take opportunities to find, make and take up their organisational roles more effectively in order to influence the functioning of the system.
- Transform the way they achieve the aims of their organisations.

The process of taking up a role represents efforts individuals make to discover how best they can commit themselves to the tasks entailed in their roles. Through this process primary tasks and targets of the organisation interact with conscious and unconscious aspirations of the person (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). Reed and Bazalgette (2006) explained that a role is taken up when a role holder identifies the aim of the system, aligns his or her own desire to that aim, embraces the aim of the system and chooses actions and behaviours which best contribute to achieving the system's aim. This complex field implies tension, conflict and risks which are made conscious by role analysis (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). Long, Newton and Chapman (2006) stated that the experience of a role and taking up a role can be affected by aspects such as the gender, training and age of a client.

Working in role is offering leadership from any position in the organisation (Reed & Bazalgette, 2006). By doing so, the role holder unconsciously provides containment of organisational experiences delegated to the role holder, for the organisation (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). When role taking is avoided, boundary violation occurs as the boundary represented by the role is invariably rejected. For individuals to take up their roles effectively, it is essential for them to comprehend the task in order to appreciate the context which impacts on the role (Hirschhorn, 1997b).

Organisation-in-the-mind

ORA highlights the concept of organisation-in-the-mind. This concept was created by Pierre Turquet and later developed by David Armstrong and colleagues (Huffington, 2006). Armstrong (2005) stated that the organisation-in-the-mind must be understood literally and metaphorically. It is the client's conscious and unconscious mental representations of the organisation. Huffington (2006) described the organisation-in-the-mind as an individualistic perception of how activities and relations are organised, structured and connected internally. The organisation-in-the-mind is essentially part of an individual's internal world, which relies on personal experiences of interactions, relations and activities. This internal world elicits emotions, values and responses which may be positively or negatively influenced by management and leadership. According to Mersky (2006) for some clients, the organisation-in-the-mind reflects unexplored and unresolved ordeals of childhood. These could result in such clients projecting their chaotic internal worlds on to organisations.

A core task of ORA is to bring the client's organisation-in-the-mind to the fore for the client to reflect on their emotional experience. ORA presupposes that all material that the client brings reflect some aspect of organisational life, and therefore helps in assessing the client's engagement with his or her role, others

and the organisation itself (Huffington, 2006). ORA relies on the analysis of the client's imagination and fantasies about the organisation (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). Since each role holder has a different organisation-in-mind, it is elusive to discover a single reality to any system as each system is complex and always in flux (Long, Newton & Sievers, 2006).

Hypotheses development

The goal of ORA is not to solve the problems as most managers tend to focus on solving problems for which they already have solutions, without identifying and understanding the real issues (Borwick, 2006). Through hypothesising certain conditions are temporarily magnified, while new questions are raised. This entails an iterative process as the client tests the hypotheses proposed in the coaching sessions back in the work environment. Over time the client learns how to learn as their insights are deepened and they think systematically and systemically (Roberts & Jarrett, 2006). When hypotheses are shared, they can function as an intervention because the client system gains insight by accepting it. They are thus considered an effective means for creating change (Borwick, 2006).

The binocular vision

The binocular vision, as depicted in table 3.1 below, presents role analysis from an individual and group perspective (Biran, 2006). When psychoanalytic phenomena are observed through the individual lens, it is referred to as the oedipal situation. When it is observed through the group lens, it is called the Sphinx situation. The latter includes the social unconscious and forces outside the control of the individual which can become apparent during role analysis (Lawrence, 2000; Newton et al., 2006).

Table 3.1: *The binocular vision*

Oedipus	Sphinx
Ego-centric	Socio-centric
Narcissism	Social-ism
Past	Future
Finite	Infinite
Establishment	Mystic
Ps (paranoid-schizo)	D (depressive)

The two positions are characterised by paradoxical constant movement. At times the two poles wish to fight each other while yearning for unity of the two (Biran, 2006). Lawrence (2006b) used the binocular vision to highlight the inevitable dilemma individuals face as they struggle between the egocentric and socio-centric positions. This predisposes humans to incompleteness, compromise and uncertainty. By placing the individual between the narcissistic and social-istic pole, role analysis acknowledges that to develop in role, one ought to accept that egocentric needs will only be partially fulfilled.

Biran (2006) used the binocular vision differently to understand societies in conflict. In this context the binocular vision is situated on the mature, opposite side of the monocular vision continuum. The latter is characterised by social narcissism while the former is based on an ability to accept different cultures. The two visions, monocular and binocular are depicted in the table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2

Monocular vision	Binocular vision
Social narcissism	Ability to love the other
Impressed by the similar	Accepting the different
Projection on the other	Able to contain weaknesses and urges
Dehumanising the other	Able to defend human dignity
Superiority	Reciprocity

3.6.7.2 *Brunning's Six-Domain Model of Executive Coaching*

Brunning (2006) presented an eclectic executive coaching model which she tentatively entitled the Six-Domain model. The model is premised on the interconnectedness of the Person, Role and the System, central to Organisational Role Analysis. The model explores psychoanalytic effects on organisational thinking and consultation. The Six-Domain Model of Executive Coaching is depicted in figure 3.3 below and represents a dynamic, flexible and sensitive coaching approach to clients as they relate to their past, present and future.

The Person elements encompass the client's personality, life story, and choice of professional role. Other aspects of the Person such as skills, competencies, abilities, and talents, aspirations, career progression, and future career options may support or oppose the Role elements. The System in which the client performs his or her role is the stage on which the drama unfolds. The model encourages executives to access additional knowledge behind each of these domains to gain deeper insights. The domain allows for selection of the most appropriate area of focus for the coaching (Brunning, 2006).

The domains are interconnected and continuously in motion, implying that each domain exerts an influence on others. This interaction may be harmonious or disharmonious, some roles and work environments may be more conducive to optimal performance while some personalities and life stories may predispose some individuals to work effectively or less effectively. It is essential for clients to work with all the domains in order to avoid focusing on one domain only (Brunning, 2006).



(Brunning, 2006)

Figure 3.3 Brunning's six-domain model of executive coaching in action

3.6.7.3 Kilburg's 17-Dimensional Model of Psychodynamics and Systems Coaching

Kilburg (2000) developed a 17-dimensional model of psychodynamics and systems coaching, which is highlighted in table 3.4 below. This model provides a framework for executive coaching and encompasses basic concepts of systems theory and psychodynamics, which are interconnected in a manner which is feasible to executive coaching. The elements in the 17-dimensional model are capable of interacting with one another to create complex situations that coaches ought to attend to.

Table 3.4: Key Elements of Psychodynamic and Systems Model

Key Elements of Psychodynamic and Systems Model

Psychodynamic Elements	Systems Elements
<i>Rational self</i>	<i>System structure</i>
<i>Instinctual self</i>	<i>System contents</i>
<i>Conscience</i>	<i>Input elements</i>
<i>Internalised self</i>	<i>Throughput elements</i>
<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Output elements</i>
<i>Defence</i>	
<i>Emotion</i>	
<i>Cognition</i>	
<i>Past relationships</i>	
<i>Present relationships</i>	
<i>Focal relationships</i>	

System structure

Structural elements entail aspects such as tasks, roles, mission, values organisation culture, hierarchy, departments and centralisation versus decentralisation. Informal structural elements include things such as interests, relationships and political alliances (Cummins & Worley, 2001; Kilburg, 2000).

System process

Process elements include the input-throughput-output matrix encompassing complex processes such as leadership, followership, decision-making, goal setting, communication, exchange of energy, group process, motivation, information systems, control processes, resource allocation, socialisation, human resources processes, resource acquisition, organisation, change and life cycles (Cummins & Worley, 2001; Kilburg, 2000).

System contents

The system contents include traditional departments of institutions such as research and development, manufacturing, marketing, human resources, finance and facilities management (Cummins & Worley, 2001; Kilburg, 2000).

Psychodynamic Elements

The psychodynamic elements include intrapsychic factors such as the instinctual self, rational self, conscience and idealised self and intrapsychic conflict, defence mechanisms, resistance to change, and interpersonal relationships at any given time (Kilburg, 2000).

3.6.8 The traits of a systems psychodynamic coach

Some of the key traits systems psychodynamic coaches must have include being an effective container, having empathy and curiosity to work with the unconscious.

3.6.8.1 *The coach as container*

An important role of the coach is to provide a safe environment which facilitates reflective containment (Diamond, 2007; Kilburg, 2000). Lee (2010) concurred that the first task of a coach is to set up a 'holding environment' (Winnocott, 1965), which is a physical and psychological space in which clients feel safe enough to be open with their thoughts and feelings, to be able to share their anxieties, frustrations, aspirations and deepest hopes. Diamond (2007) and Kilburg (2000) added that some of the important aspects which provide containment include a formal agreement, boundary conditions such as time, place, fee, goals, confidentiality, cancellation, follow-through, and information

exchanges. The interpersonal traits which are essential in a coaching experience include consistency, respect, empathy and positive regard. Diamond (2007) added that deep listening and trust-building are traits which provide a good enough holding environment. According to Lawrence (2006b) containment through a non-confrontational and reflective attitude encourages the clients to see beyond surface reality. Pooley (2004) reiterated the significance of containment as it relates to projective identification. The coach provides containment when he or she accepts client's projections and holds them until the client is ready to explore them.

Attachment as containment

Attachment theory has special relevance to the coaching relationship (Pooley, 2004). It focuses on how the parent-infant relationship provides a model for relating to adults and peers in later years. The theory asserts that experiences in relationships ought to be interpreted on the basis of an attachment system. Attachment research suggests that if people do not consider how their early relationships impacted on them, they are doomed to respond in unproductive, habitual ways in their adult relationships (Bennett & Saks, 2006; Pooley, 2004). A fundamental premise of Bowlby (1970), who is a pioneer in the field of attachment, is that infants have a built-in propensity to attach to a caregiver in order to feel protected. Attaching to a caregiver thus forms a secure base for children. If the attachment is secure, children explore their world freely. Conversely, when they feel threatened, they retreat to their secure base. According to Rholes and Simpson (2004) proximity maintenance, a safe haven, separation distress and a secure base are key features of attachment.

According to adult attachment research, coherence and self reflection are hallmarks of secure attachments. Securely attached adults are able to monitor their thinking, to recognise their biases, have empathy, and can manage their

emotions and seek guidance (Bennett & Saks, 2006). Three insecure patterns of attachment which have been identified are dismissing, preoccupied, and unresolved or disorganised. Dismissing attachment patterns manifest themselves as discomfort with intimacy. Preoccupied attachments display neediness and dependency. Unresolved or disorganised attachments are believed to result from major loss or abuse or trauma, and lead to fear of asking for help (Bennett & Saks, 2006).

Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) highlighted individual differences in attachment system within organisations. They related the dynamics between leaders and followers to emotional attachment patterns. Leaders with insecure attachment patterns were found to reduce morale, foster anxiety and rebellion. They tended to focus more on their own needs while doubting their ability to help followers. Avoidant leaders on the other hand, tended to avoid dependence on others and equally failed to nurture followers. On a group level, members of groups seek secure bases by positioning themselves in close proximity to their in-group members in times of need (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Pooley (2004) reported that a secure base is essential in coaching as it provides containment. Clients can experience this secure base physically and emotionally. Physically this relates to the availability of a suitable space, and emotionally it refers to a non-judgmental, reliable, consistent, open, and respectful attitude. Insecurely attached clients could however, seek coaching as a substitute for secure attachments which are unavailable in many organisations, and could thus foster dependency on coaches.

3.6.8.2 *Empathy*

Davis (2004) remarked that many definitions of empathy all have one thing in common; the transformation of the observed experiences of the other into a

response within the self. Lawrence (2006b) stated that empathy allows the coach to identify with his or her client's suffering, and to help them work with material from the unconscious. Such a coach must attain the tragic position, which entails placing difficulties within their proper historical contexts instead of scapegoating individuals. The tragic position implies that the coach must be in a depressive position, as working with clients' tragedies requires doing inner reparative work. Drawing from intuition also assists the coach to understand the meaning attached to such experiences (Lawrence, 2006b).

Kets de Vries and Korotov (2007) referred to mature empathy as temporary merging with the other on an emotive level, thereby deliberately regressing oneself to access an emotional knowing of the other, while preserving the self. Such empathy requires the ability to have an empathic wall with which to isolate oneself from the others' emotions to prevent complete fusing with the other.

The coach must also assist clients to have empathy for themselves in role. Such empathy for the self is a prerequisite for clients' confrontation with their flaws and unpleasant aspects of their role experiences. Creating distance from their psyches assists clients to address their problems impersonally and thus trade psychotic thinking for reality thinking (Borwick, 2006; Lawrence, 2006b).

Bion (1970) described this openness to exploring unconscious meanings through empathy and intuition as listening without memory or desire. He asserted that listening with an active memory encouraged premature judgements. In addition, it made material presented difficult to understand.

3.6.8.3 *The mental model of the coach*

A coach working in the systems psychodynamic framework must be able to think the unthinkable and adopt a discerning mental model that challenges a

conventional understanding of reality. This requires curiosity when limits of understanding are reached. The coach must also authorise himself or herself to be in role, over and above being authorised by the coach's peers, the organisation and the client (Obholzer, 1994). The latter's authorisation needs to be continually earned (Lawrence, 2006b).

3.6.9 The coaching process

According to Lawrence (2006b) coaching transforms the thinking between the coach and client. When coaching starts, the client tells one story which is revised and transformed by the end of coaching. Clients will typically present issues they want to work with. It is the task of the coach to uncover the obvious and hidden issues to work with. Working with clients in the 'here and now' allows them to also work with the 'out there' issues of their working lives. The unconscious pervades each coaching session and can be deciphered through difficulties of the consultant in staying on task, maintaining boundaries, reflecting on the client's material in a balanced way, or in the manner through which the emotional dimension of the consultation is engaged with (Newton et al., 2006). The unconscious can also be accessed through reverie when there is silence or a lack of words between the coach and client. Dreams can also be used in coaching to offer an analysis of the client's experience and ought to be seen as providing commentary on organisational issues. They should not be used to address individual pathology the way a psychoanalyst would use them (Lawrence, 2006b).

3.6.9.1 *Stages of coaching*

Pooley (2004; 2006) identified three stages of coaching as the beginning, the middle and the termination stage.

The beginning stage

The primary aim of this phase is to establish trust in order for clients to express their needs and concern. It is also to lay out the boundary and collaborative conditions in the coaching relationship and to agree on desired outcomes (Pooley, 2004; 2006; Sperry, 2004).

The middle stage

Pooley (2004; 2006) described this phase as the search for perfection. The concept of good enough (Winnicott, 1989) is vital to this stage in order to allow clients to explore options when they feel stuck because they tend to exist within contexts of idealised perfection. During this stage an exploration of presenting issues ought to lead to widening and deepening of discussions between the client and consultant. The coach expertly assumes the position of 'not knowing' to explore the unspeakable and unthought. The coach thus facilitates the capacity of the client to tolerate knowing and not knowing, to find answers in unexpected places and to uncover deeper layers of meanings. In the process the client is enabled to work with complexity and to find strategic solutions that have a systemic orientation (Pooley, 2004; 2006).

The termination stage

The last stage of coaching entails working with endings and loss and evaluating what has been achieved against the agreed goals. The ending may trigger anger, regression, and a yearning for what was. Evaluation is worked through at different points during the coaching relationship. As the client's capacity to think deeper grows, new goals emerge. At various points it is also essential to provide feedback to both the coach and the client (Pooley, 2004; 2006; Sperry, 2004).

Throughout the life cycle of coaching, each stage evokes anxiety over connections between the coach and client, issues of judgment, and concerns about the trustworthiness of the space (Pooley, 2004; 2006).

3.6.10 Coaching dilemmas

Some of the coaching dilemmas within the systems psychodynamic perspective include fostering transformation, focusing on revelation and working with interpretations.

3.6.10.1 Clients leaving the system

During the process of coaching the behaviour of the executive may change in a way that the organisation did not foresee or expect. The self-exploration that occurs during coaching may move the executive further away from the organisation, when he or she realises that their role within an organisation is beyond salvation. Leaving the organisation could thus be in the interest of the executive and the organisation (Brunning, 2006).

3.6.10.2 Transformation versus change

The coach must strive towards facilitating transformation rather than change for the clients because change comes from without whereas transformation comes from within. Gearing towards transformation puts clients in charge because in order to transform, they have to own their thinking and exercise their authority (Lawrence, 2006b).

3.6.10.3 *Politics of salvation or revelation*

Executive coaching can focus on rescuing or revealing. The two positions are referred to as the politics of salvation or revelation (Lawrence, 2006b). Politics implies influencing someone while salvation is similar to the rescue fantasy in therapeutic relationships. The former propels the coach into a directive mode as they draw upon past knowledge and solutions. Obholzer (2007) remarked that coaches ought to avoid moving into a managerial role, as doing so supports the politics of salvation, and would be more suitable to mentoring (Lawrence, 2006b). The chances of the client having profound insights and transforming are bolstered when politics of revelation are engaged in (Brunning, 2006).

3.6.10.4 *Making interpretations*

Frank (2003) reiterated that making the implicit more explicit is central to the interpretive process that guides consultants to understand the complexities of human experience. However, making direct interpretive reference to unconscious material that surface in coaching is not always necessary because this could make the session too clinical (Rotenberg, 2000).

3.6.11 **Coaching and basic assumption behaviour**

Basic assumptions are relevant within the coaching relationship. In a sense the need for coaching can be regarded as a need for dependency on the part of clients who experience their complex and changing organisations as anxiety-provoking. This dependency must be seen as reflecting the stage in the development of the coaching relationship. While clients are being contained, they in turn create a containing culture for their staff. Coaching can also trigger the basic assumption of pairing as clients enter the coaching relationship with the hope that something new or different will emerge that will enhance their

functioning. The need to work with hope and with despair is at the core of the coaching relationship. The coach must work with both without being in fight or flight or facilitating dependency (Pooley, 2004).

3.6.12 Transference

Transference is the repetition compulsion which originates from past experiences and represents an attempt to resolve painful, traumatic or conflicted relationships with childhood figures (Freud, 1949) in most emotionally meaningful relationships (Corradi, 2006). Klein (1997) similarly defined transference as psychological experiences involving past internalised figures which are reawakened when the unconscious opens up in the present. Kets de Vries and Engellau (2004) concluded that the psychological boundaries between the past and the present are removed when transference is activated and therefore transference represents a confusion of time, person and place.

Although transference has historically been associated with the client-psychoanalyst relationship, it is applicable to various psychotherapeutic processes (Corradi, 2006) and to many dyads such as the observed and the observer, subject and researcher, patient and therapist or consultant and client (Sullivan, 2002) and leader-follower (Kets de Vries & Engellau, 2004). Psychodynamic processes between the consultant and the client have commonalities with object relational processes of psychoanalysis (Akthar, 2007; Diamond, 2007). Corradi (2006) stated that the coach ought to expect, recognise and work with transference when it makes itself known through clients' repetitions. The containment of the coaching environment ought to create a reparative experience for the client experiencing transference. This occurs when the coach's attitude negates the client's expectations so that where the client expects wrath and judgements, the coach offers empathic understanding. Corradi (2006) argued that the reparative mechanisms of transference are

frequently more effective than the interpretations of the psychodynamic therapist. When transference re-enactments are identified and worked through, they shed light on the client's internal world and can result in positive change (Mersky, 2006).

Knight (2007) posited that the analytical relationship is socially constructed because the analyst does contribute toward the client's material. Transference, therefore, is never simply the client's experience of the analyst, but it also includes the analyst's participation in the client's repetitions. This phenomenon is referred to as relational transference. It is in sync with post-modern relational psychoanalysis, which departs from object relations by emphasising mutuality. This is the notion that the subjectivity of the patient and the analyst are inevitably intertwined. Thus the patient's psychological material is not separate from the subjectivity of the analyst. In this regard, it becomes imperative for the analyst to differentiate the patient's psychological material from their own.

3.6.13 Countertransference

Countertransference refers to the mental material in the unconscious of the therapist which relates to his or her unresolved difficulties that are stirred up in relation to clients (Scharff & Scharff, 2005). A broader definition of countertransference focuses on all conscious and unconscious reactions of the therapist toward the client (Rosenberger & Hayes, 2002). The moderate perspective of countertransference makes a distinction between the therapist's reactions based on the shared reality which emanates from the therapeutic situation and those which are elicited by the therapist's unresolved conflicts. According to Fauth and Hayes (2006) countertransference is normal and ought to be used to the benefit of the client and therapist in order to provide insights.

Rosenberger and Hayes (2006) shared a useful framework of countertransference in order to understand it clearly. They classified countertransference into five main components: origins, triggers, manifestations, effects and management. Origins refer to the areas within the therapist that are unresolved. Triggers are therapeutic events which bring up the therapist's unresolved issues. On a cognitive level countertransference is typically discernable as distorted perceptions of clients, faulty recollections of client material, defensiveness that impedes understanding, uncertainty, and changes in intervention planning. On an affective level the therapist's anxiety, boredom, sadness, anger and nurturing instincts are common experiences. Behaviourally, the therapist displays avoidant or withdrawal tendencies. These affect the quality and outcome of therapy. Fauth and Hayes (2006) argued that therapists ought to manage their emotional reactions and conflicts during sessions.

Sullivan (2002) remarked that there is a dearth of theoretical and empirical information on the manifestation of countertransference in the organisation. Parallel processes are regarded as counter-transferential activities which are specifically geared to the organisational context. These are activated when the consultant holds up a mirror to the client in the same way that the client holds up the mirror to the consultant. Parallel processes could be reflected in dynamics found in the system which permeate the consulting experience to mimic the system or supplement it. The consultant may take on the characteristics of the client system such as when he or she experiences tension in the consulting relationship, which reflects the tension inside the client system.

3.6.14 Analytic third

Poulton, Norman and Stites (2006) described the analytic third as individual subjectivities co-created by the analyst and analysand, and their intersubjectivities. It therefore goes beyond the interplay between transference

and countertransference. According to Diamond (2007) the analytic third is the space between subject and object, and fantasy and reality. It is also referred to as the psychological triangular space or transitional space in two-person object relational psychoanalysis (Winnicott, 1965). The analytical third emerges when people connect at a deeper emotional level of experience, when they are fully exploring the unconscious; its meanings, reasons, motivations and actions. It is the space where culture, play, creativity and imagination are located. The analytic third is also the place where the consultant provides containment for the client to foster creativity in problem-solving. It also provides the space within which to work with transference, countertransference and projective identification. Working with the analytic third is thus essential when working in-depth with organisational analysis and change from a psychoanalytically informed perspective. The analytic third is a place of surrender, not submission. It implies the ability to work with the other's perspective or reality without giving up distinctiveness from the other in order to co-construct this space (Diamond, 2007).

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter started off by exploring the history and conceptual framework of systems psychodynamics, followed by theoretical contributions to the field, notably psychoanalysis, object relations and systems theory. Concepts central to the field of systems psychodynamics such as anxiety, phantasy, holding and containment, envy, valence, basic assumption behaviours, boundaries, power and authority were also explored. This was followed by an examination of executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective, with special emphasis on the organisational role analysis. Other related coaching models, were also described. The traits of a systems psychodynamic coach, the coaching process and psychodynamic phenomena impacting on the coaching experience such as transference and countertransference were also elucidated.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an account of the qualitative empirical research is provided. The chapter begins with a description of the qualitative research design, followed by the data gathering method and steps and actions taken. Data analysis and the trustworthiness of this study are also discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary.

4.2 THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

The qualitative research method used for collecting data was the descriptive case study. Hancock (2002) described the case study as a versatile approach which is able to utilise different methods of data collection. The case study has also been portrayed as a comprehensive, systemic examination of a phenomenon of interest in a real or imagined situation to obtain rich, in-depth knowledge (Le Roux, 2003; Zucker, 2001). The context within which the study occurs is important because often it contains important variables that describe the phenomenon under study. In some instances, the context and the phenomenon under study cannot be separated (Yin, 1993). The case study thus allows for a revelation of multiple factors which interact to produce the characteristics of the phenomenon studied (Yin, 2003). Cox (2004) added that the relative paucity of well-established theoretical bases for diversity-related topics such as race and ethnicity makes the case study method crucial for studying such phenomena. The complexity of such topics requires that methods advocated by conventional positivistic research be relinquished in favour of

qualitative designs. Descriptive case studies, adopted in this study, offer a thorough description of a phenomenon within its context (Yin, 2003).

4.3 MEASUREMENT

In the next session the data gathering method and the research procedure are outlined.

4.3.1 The data gathering method

The method used to gather data and its application are discussed next.

4.3.1.1 Organisational Role Analysis

Organisational Role Analysis (ORA), which is an in-depth systems psychodynamic coaching method described in Chapter 3, was adopted for the empirical research. ORA evolved out of organisational consultancy, systems theory and group relations training (Newton et al., 2006) in order to enable managers and leaders to take up their roles more effectively (Brunning, 2006), to address dilemmas and to exercise their authority and leadership (Mersky, 2006). ORA is concerned with whole systems and their relatedness (Sievers & Beumer, 2006). The method has been revised by many systems psychodynamic consultants. Previously, it has been called organisational role consultancy or role consultancy, and more recently it was called executive coaching (Brunning, 2006).

The basic premise of organisation role analysis is that the person and organisation meet in role (Brunning, 2006; Newton et al., 2006). ORA draws from the concept of organisation-in-mind, which is based on the exploration of the client's subjective experience of his or her organisation (Sievers & Beumer,

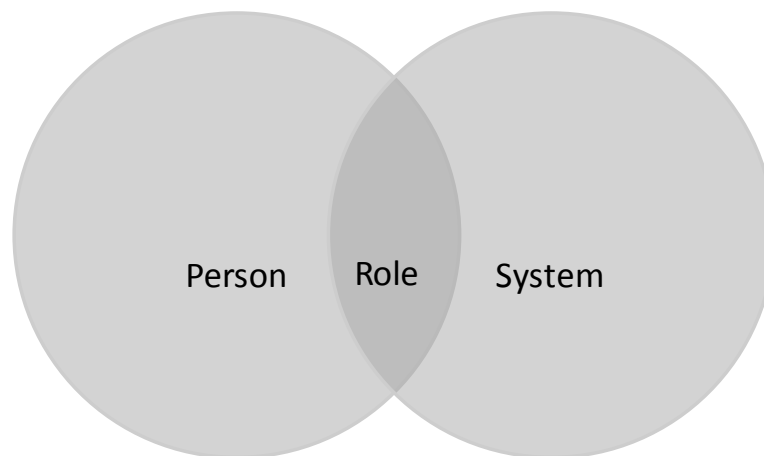
2006). The approach also emphasises the development of hypotheses which ought to be tested, examined and stretched so that newer, better and more accurate ones can be developed (Borwick, 2006).

4.3.1.2 *Organisational Role Analysis Application*

Various methods of ORA have been developed and practiced. In this research the method which was adopted was conceptualised by Newton et al., (2006). This method included four major steps of Organisational Role Analysis;

Step 1

The model of role and concepts which underlie ORA such as organisation-in-mind, finding, making and taking role were shared with the client, including a graphic representation of person-role-system as shown in figure 4.1 below.



(Sievers, Workshop in London, 2000)

Figure 4.1. Person, role and system

Step 2

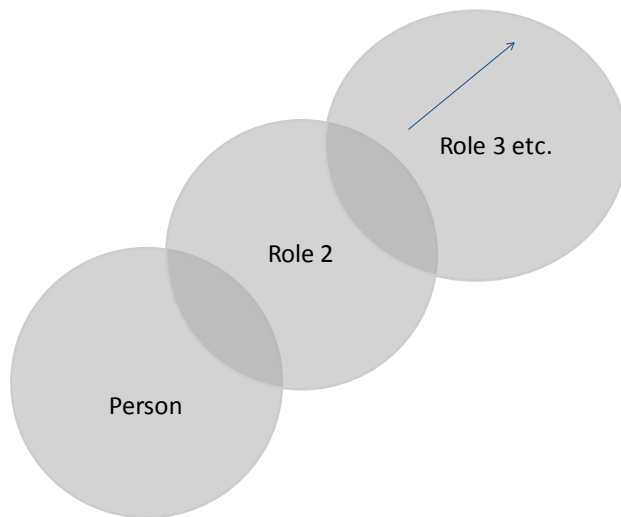
The clients were asked to draw roleogrammes or role drawings on large sheets of paper using crayons. They were then invited to use symbols and colours to represent their images and thoughts. These role drawings acted as transitional objects and provided the client and consultant with the opportunity to process the experiences of clients in role, task, role relatedness and relationships. Although the role drawings were initially used to provide subjective data, their significance diminished as unconscious information surfaced.

The instructions for the role drawings could be:

- *draw yourself in role at work*
- *draw your organisation with your place in it*
- *draw your experience at work*

The clients were requested to draw a role biography, which is the biography of the person-in-role as represented through various work roles that they had taken up throughout their lives, as is graphically represented in figure 4.2 below. They were also asked to imagine themselves at different stages of their lives, such as at age six, sixteen and at their first permanent job. Their roles could be task related, for example, they could include caring for younger siblings or feeding pets or they could be emotional, such as being protective towards their mother. The clients were urged to focus on their most significant roles. These different roles were then reflected upon to establish links to current work roles in the form of patterns, common themes and the meaning of each role in relation to their current work role. In addition, the impact of various roles on the clients' current work roles was explored. This provided insights into the origins of valencies in roles. Long (2006) stated that early experiences in childhood were relevant for

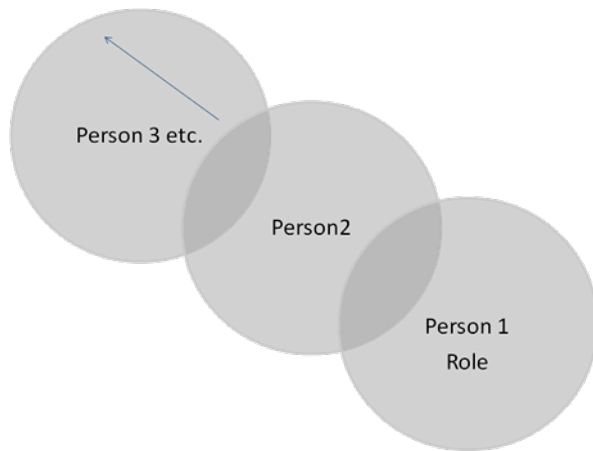
the development of work ethic, choice of career, emotional role development, leadership capacity, attitudes to authority, and capacities to represent others.



(Long, 2006)

Figure 4.2 Role Biography

The clients were also requested to present their role history, as depicted in figure 4.3. This referred to the history of their organisational role, which was shaped over time by different predecessors. The role history accepts that influences on the person in their current role come from the system, the role history and its relatedness to other roles, and the person, their role biography, and their skills and attributes. In their current work roles, clients are at the intersection of their own role biography and the history of that role.



(Long, 2006)

Figure 4.3 Role History

Step 3

The consultant and client then made associations of the drawings using fantasies, comments, images and physical reactions to the drawings.

Step 4

The consultant and client discussed the extent to which the person, role and organisation's interrelatedness unearthed fundamental role issues for the client, and the unconscious dynamics in the relationship of the role holder with the organisation.

4.3.2 The research procedure

The research procedure describes how the clients were recruited, including the briefing and coaching process.

4.3.2.1 *The recruitment of clients*

The sampling procedure followed to maximise learning in the period of time available for the study (Tellis, 1997) is described next.

Purposive sampling

The sampling method applied in the study to select participants was purposive sampling. In purposive sampling the researcher uses his or her own judgment to choose participants (Bachman & Schutt, 2003). The participants are selected for a purpose which typically has to do with their unique qualities (Evans, 2007; Schutt, 2006). In addition, the sample may be obtained from a specific predefined group (Evans, 2007). Such participants are usually knowledgeable about the subject matter under study (Bachman & Schutt, 2003; Schutt, 2006). Schutt (2006) identified criteria which participants of a purposive sample must meet to ensure that the sample represents the issues under investigation sufficiently. These criteria are:

- Being knowledgeable about the situation or experience under study
- Being willing to talk
- Representing the range of points of view

A purposive sample may not represent a large population but it is sufficient to address the issue under investigation (Schutt, 2006).

The following process was followed by the researcher to obtain a sample for the study.

- The researcher wrote a formal proposal to several government Departments requesting permission to conduct the study. The proposal

outlined the purpose, context, process of the study, and the selection criteria for the recruitment of participants.

- A nominal fee was also requested for the coaching study that was envisaged to take place over a six month period, with coaching occurring twice a month for two-hour sessions for each participant. The proposals were addressed to the Director-General of the Departments and mailed through the post.
- A few Departments declined to participate in the study on the grounds of time and operational constraints, while several others did not respond to the request.
- The Director-Generals of three Departments, The Department of Public Works, The Department of Provincial and Local Government, and The Department of Public Enterprise granted permission for the study through letters and an e-mail, respectively. Two Departments requested a waiving of the nominal fee, to which the researcher acquiesced. The other Department agreed to the study unconditionally.
- The organisations that requested a waiving of the fee were informed that the participants would be the primary client of the researcher, who would not be obligated to report to their organisations on the coaching process or outcomes.
- Ten participants were initially sought for the study. The criteria for participant selection were that they must be managers, diverse, particularly on race and gender dimensions, and be willing to receive coaching. The number of participants requested from each organisation was not specified in the proposal to ensure that a sufficient sample was available. The rationale was that the organisation that responded promptly would be engaged first for practical reasons.
- One Department nominated five participants (a black female, a white female, a coloured male and two black males). During the contracting meeting with the second Department three participants were requested in

the light of the number of participants offered by the first organisation, while considering the need to accommodate the third Department, which subsequently suggested four participants (two black males, a black female and a white female). One participant from the second Department, a black female, was involved in a motor vehicle accident shortly before the sessions started and had to take sick leave for a few months, so she was excluded from the study. The remaining two participants from that organisation were a black male and a white female.

- One participant from the first Department, a black male, withdrew from the study after the first session. Many difficulties were encountered in the third Department, resulting in coaching starting a few months after it had started in other organisations, and consequently stopped. The coaching had started with a black male and a white female.
- The study eventually included six participants, four from the first Department and two from the second Department whose demographics are presented in the table below. To ensure the anonymity of the clients given the small sample from only two organisations, some demographic details are withheld.

Table 4.1 Client Demographics

Clients	Race	Gender	Division	Designation
Client 1	White	Female	Facilities and Administration	Manager
Client 2	Black	Male	Human Resources	Manager
Client 3	Coloured	Male	Governance	Manager
Client 4	Black	Female	Ministry	Manager
Client 5	White	Female	Human Resources	Manager
Client 6	Black	Male	Human Resources	Manager

The coaching was originally envisaged to last six months. However, in the end it lasted ten months, from November 2007 until August 2008, due to unforeseen circumstances affecting the availability of the participants. Most participants had

warned the researcher in advance that the nature of their work and related pressures were likely to affect consistent attendance and adherence to time frames.

Although the sample size was smaller than originally planned, the data collected reached the point of data saturation. Fresh data was no longer yielding new theoretical insights, particularly in the key diversity categories of race, gender and authority (Charmaz, 2006).

4.3.2.2 *The briefing process*

The briefing process is described in the next session.

- Each Department allocated a coordinator for the study, a black female in one, and black males in the remaining two.
- The coaching commenced with a briefing meeting between the researcher and the coordinator from each organisation, all from the Human Resources Department. The two black males assumed the dual roles of coordinators and participants.
- The process of coaching was explained to the coordinator who would then brief the participants. The researcher also undertook to maintain confidentiality and to adhere to ethical principles.
- The coordinators in the first and second Departments scheduled the first coaching dates via e-mails and provided the researcher with coaching dates. The coordinator from the third organisation advised the researcher to request the nominated candidates to participate in the study, brief them and schedule dates with them.

4.3.2.3 *The coaching process*

The coaching process is described next.

- The consultant met with each client for the first time during the coaching session. The first session entailed explaining the research objectives, the coaching process to be followed, undertakings by the researcher to conduct the sessions in a confidential and ethical manner, outlining the underlying ORA coaching methodology, providing basic concepts of systems psychodynamics and generally providing containment while building rapport. The researcher presented the clients with written information outlining the ORA methodology and an overview of the systems psychodynamic perspective. The information provided was minimal to avoid overwhelming the clients with reading obligations and to make room for here-and-now learning. Both the consultant and the client signed a contract stipulating conditions of engagement during the coaching period.
- During the first session, the clients were requested to depict roleogrammes, outlining their experiences of being in role in their organisation, on large paper. They were provided with crayons and a pencil for the role drawing.
- From then onwards, coaching dates were coordinated by the consultant and the clients, either in the session or via e-mail when there was uncertainty about future dates.
- The introductory notes and the contract are attached as Appendix A. The notes which the consultant used to guide the sessions and to maintain some consistency are included in Appendix B.
- In the second session the clients were requested to depict a role biography and a role history, highlighting key influences from their past. Once again they were provided with a large paper, crayons and a pencil.

- The first two sessions were semi-structured and primarily focused on the assessment of the client-in-role experiences.
- The third session had an assessment aspect in that the clients were asked to identify an unresolved significant diversity problem, in which they had a role responsibility whose outcome was important to them. The clients were also requested to articulate their diversity-related coaching goals. They were informed that they would be required to present their preoccupations in subsequent coaching sessions.
- From the fourth session onwards most coaching sessions started with an enquiry about the client's preoccupations. Other sessions started by revisiting previously discussed issues. Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the different sessions unfolded uniquely for each client. The consultant and clients shared hypotheses, and the process of working with the conscious and unconscious behavioural dynamics started actively.
- The middle sessions, from the fourth to the tenth sessions, included an evaluation of the coaching through reflection on progress, shifts or stuckness.
- The last session focused on termination issues and on the provision of overall feedback to both the consultant and the client, and future reflections.
- All clients attended the twelve sessions which had been agreed upon in the contracting phase.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was done by means of discourse analysis.

4.4.1 Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is capable of effectively analysing systems psychodynamic organisational behaviour (Smit & Cilliers, 2006). Henning (2004) described discourse analysis as an appropriate data analysis method for researchers who adopt a critical perspective. Van Dijk (2001) stated that discourse analysis focuses primarily on social problems and political issues. According to Henning (2004) lived experiences, social relations and economic factors influencing those experiences are the focal area of critical research. In addition, discourse analysis considers the context within which interaction and communication occur. Therefore, the common vocabulary for such researchers include notions such as power, dominance, hegemony, ideology, class, gender, race, discrimination, interests, reproduction, institutions, social structure and social order (Van Dijk, 2001).

Contexts, both broader social-distal, or immediate local-proximate (Hardy, 2004; Henning, 2004), produce certain discourses which promote certain ways of being, while discouraging other ways of being (Gallant, 2008). The critical perspective asserts that intellectual theories do not enjoy the same status as they are affected by unequal power distribution in societal institutions. Knowledge is regarded as socially constructed as it is influenced by social and historical contexts which cannot be divorced from ideologies (Henning, 2004; Van Dijk, 2001) and thus cannot be value-free (Van Dijk, 2001).

Critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 2001) deconstructs the world through challenging the positivistic paradigm, raising critical consciousness and breaking down societal structures whose oppressive ideologies perpetuate social inequalities (Henning, 2004). According to Gallant (2008) power is gained through ingrained dominant discourses and can be changed through identifying, examining and redefining the discourses. Since discourses are regarded as channels to a reality beyond the discourses (Sitz, 2008), the critically-oriented

researcher is interested in exploring how discourses are generated and maintained, and how they shape people's lives (Henning, 2004). Discourse analysis challenges the taken-for-granted knowledge and questions the tendency to naturalise knowledge (Sitz, 2008).

In this study discourse analysis was used to determine the discourses which frame the language action, and sense making of the participants, including how the discourses were generated and maintained within their social contexts. The discourse markers related to the participants' interpretations, values and beliefs about their behaviours and the social actions (Cilliers, 2007; Henning, 2004). They were also framed in the form of metaphors which are carriers of meaning (Henning, 2004).

Discourse analysis is enriched by making extensive interpretations, beyond language and the data context to examine relations, behaviours, events and social patterns (Henning, 2004). Smit and Cilliers (2006) added that linking the conscious and unconscious behaviours enriched the understanding of the phenomenon under study. The application of the systems psychodynamic lens (Smit & Cilliers, 2006) offers a process for understanding deep, covert and complex organisational behaviour (Cilliers, 2007; Smit & Cilliers, 2006) and thus complements discourse analysis by facilitating depth in the interpretation of data (Henning, 2004). This method of combining discourse analysis with systems psychodynamics is called systems psychodynamically informed discourse analysis (Smit & Cilliers, 2006). It entails the interpretation of the manifesting basic assumptions and relevant systems psychodynamics behavioural constructs. In addition, this method allows for the extraction of knowledge from the systems psychodynamics theory and from the researcher's subjective sense making capacities (Cilliers, 2007).

4.4.2 The discourse analysis procedure

Typical steps involved in discourse analysis as formulated by Cilliers (2007), Evans (2007) and Henning (2004) include the following:

- Data transcription
- Immersion in the data to find pertinent themes
- Coding the themes with an appreciation of multiple meanings in the themes
- Searching for a frame within which language actions and language are placed
- Rereading of the data to highlight discourse markers which include phrases, words, interpretations, beliefs, values, metaphors
- Giving a name to established patterns of meaning or conceptualising them from a specific discourse position
- Interpretation of data through the systems psychodynamic lens

The data analysis procedure that was followed in the study included the following steps:

- The researcher often took notes during each coaching session and after the sessions in order to capture what had transpired but was not noted during the session. These notes reflected the systemic aspects which had an impact on the coaching experience such as the nature of the trip to the participant, the entry experience, the choice and setting of the coaching room, the conversations, experiences, emotions, hypotheses, interpretations, and the personal experience of the researcher. This was to ensure that conscious and logical, and unconscious, irrational aspects of the coaching experience were fully captured.

- The data was typed after each coaching session. Significant material which related to diversity in a salient manner and to the systems psychodynamic paradigm was highlighted.
- Themes were coded to organise the data. The codes which were selected at this stage were broadly related to the categories of diversity that were emerging such as race, gender, ethnicity, authority, disability and language. The fluid nature of diversity categories was noted and as more evidence was gathered in subsequent sessions, it was used to shed more light into the most primary and relevant code.
- Frames within which language actions were embedded were searched for to find meaning and explore how participants were making sense of their reality. This process entailed reading the data several times to identify more compelling frames.
- Various discourse markers were identified and highlighted. Some of these included metaphors, analogies, rhetoric, interpretations and beliefs.
- Related discourses were named as sub-themes.
- The data was read several times to uncover deeper meanings and to make interpretations from the systems psychodynamic perspective. This entailed identifying unconscious processes colouring the participants' experiences and sense making. This stage also entailed framing some themes and sub-themes from a systems psychodynamic perspective.
- As the literature reviewed became richer, the data was read again several times to review the interpretations from a distance to allow for different meanings to emerge, add deeper meanings and to provide theoretical support.
- The interpretations were organised into themes and followed by a working hypothesis for each theme.
- A research hypothesis was articulated.

4.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH

In this section issues relating to the trustworthiness of this study is addressed.

4.5.1 Trustworthiness of qualitative research

Healy and Perry (2000) asserted that the quality of research conducted within a paradigm must be judged according to its paradigm's terms. Reliability, validity, generalisability and objectivity are methods deemed appropriate for quantitative research (Sinkovics et al., 2008). Quantitative research focuses on observable, measurable facts through experimental research (Golafshani, 2003). For the quantitative researcher, reality is out there, to be discovered objectively in a value-free manner (Healy & Perry, 2000).

Qualitative research on the other hand adopts a naturalistic approach to understand phenomena in context-specific settings (Golafshani, 2003). According to Healy and Perry (2000) this is unavoidable because social phenomena are tenuous and causal relations are contingent upon the context. The qualitative researcher therefore immerses himself or herself in the research and is present during changes, which can be recorded before and after they occur (Golafshani, 2003). According to Golafshani (2003) the researcher is an instrument in qualitative research, thus the credibility of the study depends on the ability and effort of the researcher. Qualitative research should bring about quality and rigour (Golafshani, 2003). Trustworthiness includes credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability, all of which address issues of reliability and validity in qualitative research (Sinkovics et al., 2008). Qualitative research does not treat reliability and validity separately (Golafshani, 2003). Validity is sufficient to demonstrate the presence of reliability. Validity is not conceptualised as a distinct, preset universal concept but a contingent construct

rooted in the process and intentions of the research methodology and projects (Golafshani, 2003).

4.5.1.1 Credibility

Credibility is described as parallel to internal validity and concerns itself with harmonising realities of the participants and those realities as represented by the researcher (Sinkovics et al., 2008). The study is regarded as having credibility if its findings are true from the perspective of the participants, or if they have truth value (Devers, 1999; Dyson & Brown, 2006) within the research context. Multiple sources of data collection, theoretical framework and refining hypotheses can be used to enhance credibility (Devers, 1999).

4.5.1.2 Dependability

Dependability is regarded as equivalent to reliability and concerns itself with the stability of findings over time. This has also been referred to as consistency (Evans, 2007; Golafshani, 2003). The methods and logic of the researcher's observations and inferences must be explicit and transparent (Sinkovics et al., 2008). Golafshani (2003) reported that an inquiry audit can enhance the dependability of qualitative research through careful examination of the process and the product of the research. The dependability of data can thus be ensured when steps of the research are verified through an assessment of raw data, data reduction products and process notes.

4.5.1.3 Transferability

Transferability is considered parallel to external validity or generalisability in quantitative research (Sinkovics et al., 2008). It has also been referred to as fittingness (Dyson & Brown, 2006). Transferability is about the degree to which

the findings can be generalised to other settings similar to the one in which the study occurred, by providing thick descriptions of the study context (Devers, 1999; Dyson & Brown, 2006). Salient conditions of the study thus ought to overlap and match other similar settings (Sinkovics et al., 2008). Thus the researcher must ensure that key aspects of the context from which the findings arise are identified (Devers, 1999).

4.5.1.4 *Confirmability*

Confirmability is parallel to objectivity in quantitative research (Devers, 1999; Sinkovics et al., 2004). It is also referred to as neutrality (Golafshani, 2003). To achieve confirmability, researchers must demonstrate that their data and their interpretations are not influenced by their biases and imaginations. The data and interpretations must also be coherently and logically gathered (Sinkovics et al., 2008). According to Devers (1999) confirmability is achieved when evidence from the subjects and context is produced to corroborate the findings.

4.5.2 Trustworthiness of this study

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability was engendered.

4.5.2.1 *Credibility of this study*

The theoretical framework of the study was described and referred to during the study. This framework allows for different levels of observation from different sources to uncover deeper meanings. During the study this translated into working with all the information available. Such information was presented verbally and through unconscious manifestations from various sources impinging on the coaching experience. This satisfies the requirement for having multiple

sources of data to corroborate the interpretations. Working with hypotheses in a collaborative manner as advocated by Organisational Role Analysis contributed to credibility as participants could confirm or disconfirm their truth value.

4.5.2.2 Dependability of this study

The theoretical stance, research method and the process and logic were fully explicated in this study. The literature review explained the paradigm perspective and key concepts and constructs that underpin the study. The research method, data gathering method, research procedures including data analysis methods were also described in detail to achieve dependability in the study. During the empirical study, the detailed raw data was referred to constantly to understand the participant's experiences. The hypotheses arrived at were preceded by two levels of reporting. The first level of reporting drew considerably from the raw data to present evidence. The second level of reporting was making interpretations based on the evidence presented by the first level. Finally, a working hypothesis was presented based on the interpretations. These steps made explicit how the findings, supported by literature, were made and added to achieving dependability of the study.

4.5.2.3 Transferability of this study

To achieve transferability of this study, the contexts within which the study occurred and its salient features were identified. Participants' demographic characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, marital status, family backgrounds, academic and occupational backgrounds, their units and organisations, and the external environment impacting on their experiences were consistently referred to in the study to provide a context for their experiences and interpretations.

4.5.2.4 *Confirmability of this study*

The experience of the consultant in the systems psychodynamic perspective, extensive experience in the subject matter of diversity, self-knowledge and the capacity for self-reflection, awareness of counter-transference processes, and the extra-vision provided by the promoter contributed significantly to the confirmability of the study. The duration of the data collection process, eight months, provided sufficient evidence for observed and inferred phenomena. The first level of interpretation provided evidence upon which the findings were based.

4.5.3 Researcher's positionality

According to Walt, Schneider, Murray, Brugha and Gilson (2008) researcher's positionality refers to how researchers are viewed or situated, their institutional base and perceived legitimacy. Key dimensions of researcher's positionality include their race, gender, ethnicity, class, profession, and whether they are insiders or outsiders. Such positionality influences the types of issues and agendas which are surfaced during the research process. Sato (2004) noted that multiple discourses characterising the research process positions researchers differently at any given time to create multiplex subjectivities. Walt et al., (2008) added that researcher's positionality is tied to issues to power and resistance. It is therefore imperative for researchers to increase their reflexivity by being conscious of their power, resources and positions, and how these interact to define the agenda and generate knowledge.

The researcher in this study is a middle-class black, female, Setswana-speaking clinical psychologist and diversity management consultant, in her late thirties. Historically, as a black female, she was relegated to the bottom rung of the hierarchy. However, in South Africa's new dispensation, she is enjoying equity privileges that are elevating her position, especially in government's departments

such as the participating organisations which were headed by black females. The tendency to equate diversity with blacks, despite being misguided, legitimised her role as a diversity researcher. Her language is the fifth most spoken in the country (SouthAfrica.info). Although sharing such a position with English, it does not carry the same status as English (Craith, 2007). However, in the city of Pretoria, where the study took place, it is one of the most frequently spoken languages. Nevertheless, only one of the six clients had Setswana as a mother tongue and the entire research process was undertaken in English, a second language for all six clients. This somewhat levelled the linguistic playing field for the researcher and participants.

As noted by Sato (2004) the researcher's positionality and power shifted constantly during the different discourses. As a black researcher she gained tremendous access into the psyche of black participants in so far as race issues were concerned. Her race, however, diminished her capacity to fully access race-related information from white participants. As a female she was able to access meaningful information regarding dynamics linked to emotionality from female participants. Her qualifications as a psychologist, diversity and systems psychodynamic consultant enhanced her legitimacy to undertake the research hence the participating organisations authorised the study from the top. As an outsider with no ties to upper echelons of participating organisations or obligations to report the findings of the study to such organisations, she was trusted by the participants. There were times when being an outsider was limiting in that the researcher was not always familiar with organisational structures, processes, procedures and cultures. Finally, she had the full authority to write the thesis.

4.5.4 Ethics

Ethical considerations in the study centred on issues of privacy, confidentiality, and transparency over usage of data as advocated by Rowley (2004). Trust, respect, mutual consent and the contracts signed were also of utmost importance to ensure ethical engagement between the researcher and the participants. The sensitive nature of diversity discourse and interaction, coupled with the volatile political context within which the study occurred, in which the participants were embedded, made ethical considerations particularly imperative. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the clients, their names, ages and those of their organisations were omitted from the findings.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter began with a description of the qualitative research design. This was followed by describing the measurement adopted for the study which entailed the data gathering method and the research procedure in which the recruitment of clients and their demographic features were highlighted. This included a description of the contracting process and the coaching process followed. The data analysis method and steps included in the data analysis procedure were also described. The trustworthiness of the qualitative research was described through reflecting on its credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. The chapter was concluded with due consideration to matters pertaining to the ethics of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the various diversity themes and sub-themes that emerged during the study. Interpretations of events and experiences for each sub-theme are provided, followed by a working hypothesis. Literature augments the interpretations where possible. The findings are then integrated, and all working hypotheses are synthesised into a research hypothesis. The chapter concludes with a summary.

5.2 DIVERSITY THEMES

The following themes and sub-themes emerged:

5.2.1 Theme 1: Gender as a diversity challenge

- Splitting off of femininity by female leaders
- Exclusion of the black male
- Male insubordination to female authority
- Resistance of the black male to working with the black female
- Confusion of the identity of the black female leader
- Gender pairing
- Conflict avoidance by female leaders

5.2.2 Theme 2: Race as a diversity challenge

- The myth of black empowerment
 - The unchanged status quo

- Blacks labour, whites enterprise
 - Blacks as containers of incompetence
 - Black self-oppression
- Whites' experience of black organisations as traumatic
- Whites complain, blacks defend
- Exclusion of the white male from diversity work
- Deprivation of the coloureds
- Coloureds as guinea pigs
- Racial pairing
- Race dynamics at the boundary
- Defences against open race discourse
 - Resistance to making racial connections
 - Blacks defend against racial anger
 - Whites avoid race; blacks are sensitive to race

5.2.3 Theme 3: Ethnicity as a diversity challenge

- Ethnic pairing
- Conflicts over expressions of cultural identity

5.2.4 Theme 4: Authority as a diversity challenge

- Authority as punitive and inaccessible
- Projection of confusion by authority on to lower levels
- Paranoia of authority figures
- Ambivalence towards authority
- Authority as a defence
- The anxiety of changing political leadership
- Anxieties of survival

5.2.5 Theme 5: Disability as a container of deficiencies

5.2.6 Theme 6: Language as a tool of power

5.2.7 Theme 7: Age as a container of irrelevance

5.2.8 Theme 8: De-authorisation of diversity work

- Resistance to diversity at the organisational boundary
- The disempowerment of HR as a diversity container

5.2.9 Theme 9: The coaching process

- The clients as a system
- The role of transference
- The role of counter-transference
- The progress of clients during coaching

5.3 GENDER AS A DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

Identified gender sub-themes and their working hypotheses will be discussed in this section.

5.3.1 The splitting off of femininity in female leaders

Female leaders were described as unapproachable, closed off and frightening. A black male client recounted an urge to run away rather than share a lift with a black female leader who was reputed to be stern. However, once in the lift, the female leader proved to be warm and cordial. The client compared this female leader who had a 'serious face and elicited jitters and butterflies in everyone,' to her male counterpart who tended to be frivolous, humorous and approachable. In addition, the black male client described a coloured female manager to whom he reported directly as domineering, 'enforcing rules like the police,' micro-managing, devaluing his work, and needing to prove to him that she was in charge. His outspoken nature reportedly elicited threats of punishment for insubordination, particularly when he disagreed with the manager in the presence of junior staff. The constant arguments created fear in the client that the manager would withhold his bonus and consequently expel him from the organisation. The client believed that the manager had blocked his promotion to a position he was already acting in. He labelled the manager as not sufficiently strategic; an accusation the manager would level at him at a later stage. During the fourth session the client reported feeling extremely stressed and keen to

accept a lateral move in the organisation. In a later session he said he was on guard, felt aggressive and was about to snap at his manager. He reported sensing a temperamental tendency and an imminent explosion on the part of the female manager. He said he understood why some subordinates snapped and slapped their superiors at work.

The client attributed his female manager's coldness to underdeveloped maternal instincts as she was childless. During the eighth session he kept taking his wedding ring off and putting it back on. He said that, unlike other managers, the female manager was very quiet at demanding executive meetings, but lashed out at him later. He reported that the conflict was spilling over into his marriage and family life. In the ninth session the client reported that he had become withdrawn at home, less responsive to his children, and sometimes went to bed without eating. In the last session the client reported tension in his marriage as his wife was rejecting his first child whom he had fathered with another woman.

A coloured male client from another organisation described his black female leader as vocal, confrontational and prone to dealing with issues in an embarrassing manner. Consequently his sleep was disturbed at times as he ruminated over making flawless presentations at meetings which she chaired in order to avoid being put on the spot by her.

These experiences were not limited only to male clients. A black female client reported being harshly treated by a female manager at a previous organisation. The female client explained that some women leaders understood equality with men to mean that they had to deny their feminine parts. This led to bitterness as these women envied those women who embraced their femininity. The client also decried the conflict women leaders experienced as they were often chided for expressing their femininity; if they cried, that was all they were remembered for, despite their hard work.

A white female client related how expressing her emotions at work had worked against her. She remarked that in organisations, 'you don't use emotions because you are confronted if you do'. She described two instances in which she had displayed 'unacceptable emotions'. In the first, she had applied for a position and was told that she was not good-enough, even though she had been consistently rated among the highest performers. In her shock, she could not speak but cried, and was told, 'for someone in your position, you do not do that'. On the second occasion she was unjustly accused in a meeting of taking a poor decision, after which she became angry and 'lost her composure'. A male colleague later advised her that 'in any situation at work, emotions must be out and only facts must be in'. The client concluded that men were in a better position at work because they were able to suppress their emotions. Consequently she stopped participating in many meetings and whenever she communicated in writing, she asked someone to check that her emotions were not slipping through. In the eighth session she wrote an e-mail to her male manager complaining about her working conditions and asked the consultant to read the mail to ensure that unacceptable emotions could not be read into the letter. Because of her suppressed emotions, the client reported experiencing a choking sensation in the area of her thyroid, which had been operated upon in the past.

Another white female client reported her shock at seeing a senior black female leader in a caring and gentle mode. The leader had expressed support for the management team and staff and showed them a video with a moving message of unity and harmony. However, the leader also said that those wishing to leave the organisation were free to do so. This client seemed to focus more on this negative message than on the positive one.

5.3.1.1 *Interpretations*

Taking up a traditionally male role seemed to push female leaders to split their femininity off and, as a result attract projections of aggression. This splitting seemed to be reinforced by entrenched gendered leadership in organisations, which places a higher premium on a masculine expression of leadership characterised by aggression, domination, competitiveness, rationality and control (Cheng, 1999). Projecting masculinity into leadership roles seemed to pressure female leaders to trade off typically feminine attributes such as caring, tenderness and emotional sensitivity (Syed & Murray, 2008) for aloofness and aggression. The split between the females' expressed masculinity and disowned or hidden femininity, however, seemed to undermine their leadership efficacy. In disowning femininity, authentic female power seemed lost. The difficulties of integrating the lost feminine part resulted in the female leader's flight from participation and expression. In addition, the split created conflict not only within the female leader but also within the other as the tenderness of femininity was sought to contain anxieties and soothe (Gatrell & Swan, 2008; Stapley, 2006), while being rejected as a deficiency ill-suited to the work context and the leadership role. As a result, when female leaders failed to fulfil unconscious fantasies of creating a good-enough holding maternal environment (Stapley, 2006), they were labelled as withholding, devouring mothers capable of annihilation. However, when these female leaders attempted to assert their authority, the males went into competition with them, and at times did so through projecting incompetence on to them.

Female leaders also seemed to trigger unresolved unconscious conflicts with other significant female figures such as the emasculating wife, thus accentuating displaced aggression (Czander, 1993; Stapley, 2006). This made the work environment depleting for the male because the woman, as an object of

persecution, was found both at home and at work. As a defence against the anxiety of disintegration, the male seemed to be using aggression.

5.3.1.2 Working hypothesis

Projecting masculinity into leadership roles creates a splitting off of femininity in female leaders which leads to a fight-flight interaction between the genders as female leaders contain the aggression projected on to them. Dependency is evident when female leaders are expected to nurture like good-enough mothers. When they inevitably fail, counter-dependence is triggered when their maternal instincts are deemed under-developed, and thus they become bad breasts (Klein, 1997). The disowning of femininity triggers a fight-flight reaction in the female leader who flees as she struggles to integrate her feminine part.

5.3.2 Exclusion of the black male

A black male client in a predominantly black organisation reported that a black female leader appointed more whites at the top on grounds that they had more skills and expertise, followed by women. He believed that it was because the black female leader had attended predominantly white schools and thus had an allegiance to whites, and being female, also to females. As a result of this apparent allegiance to whites, the client described her as 'an enigma'. Black males in the organisation reportedly felt undermined because they believed their 'integrity was sanctioned by whites, who were perceived as idea-makers'. Consequently, they left the organisation feeling unhappy that they had hit a glass ceiling. The client reiterated in several sessions that competent black males did not apply to fill vacant senior positions, reasoning that 'they did not want to run when someone clicked a finger' - in other words, they did not want to be bullied by whites at the top. The client described black males as an endangered species in the organisation. At the time of the interview, two black males had just

resigned. The client said that he was '99.9%' sure that a white male would be appointed to the senior post that had been vacated. This was indeed the case. The client was distressed and did not have the reassurance that he would be appointed to the senior position in which he had been acting for close to a year. He attributed this delay to the 'head being all over the show as she is a very busy lady, with power cuts happening'. The client believed that a senior white female, who seemed disinterested during his interview, was an obstacle to his promotion. He suspected that a woman was being sought for the position. During this conversation the client was interrupted by a woman who brought tea, but only for the consultant.

The client explained that his division, human resources, was at the 'heart' of the organisation and that it was the 'driver engine and was much closer to the head of the institution hence the head had to ponder more before making the appointment'. (In another organisation a black male overlooked for a promotion also described his unit as the 'engine for the department' and close to the black female leader). During the eighth session the client reported that the post in which he was acting had been frozen pending the outcome of a work study commissioned to automate some functions, which would be followed by restructuring to determine which roles were required. The client was unhappy and disappointed. In the ninth session on entering the premises, the consultant gave the name of a wrong organisation (a Freudian slip) to the security personnel who had to grant her access to the organisation. She had previously abandoned coaching in the 'wrong organisation' because too many things had been stuck. During the coaching session the client reported that the work study, which had been delayed for close on a year, was facing further delays. His promotion had now become dependent on the findings of the work study, which would affect many people. He gave the example of a senior white official who was highly experienced and influential but was without tertiary education, and another white employee who was promoted without an interview. During the tenth session the

client reported feeling depressed because two female managers were at loggerheads with their subordinates, two black males who were subsequently fired. He was dismayed that black males were yet again at the receiving end of 'injustice'. One was accused of underperforming but the client disagreed, suggesting that performance was very complicated and that no measures had been put in place to support him, even though he had not been employed very long. He attributed his dismissal to personality clashes and abuse of power by those at the top. The dismissed black male and his female manager reportedly had an adversarial relationship from the outset. The client used the analogy of a divorce to describe their interactions, referring to 'irreconcilable differences' and 'irrevocable disrepair,' which had been the accumulation of 'fermenting misunderstandings, leading to strong antagonism between the two'. The second black male was labelled as aggressive and insulting; imminent dismissal was thus indicated. The client hinted that documentation was lacking to support the disciplinary processes and somehow he was expected to embellish the cases to suit the positions of the managers. He was disconcerted at the violation of ethics and morality. He said black males 'enter the organisation in numbers but they leave more than any group'. This client suggested that males were targeted because women who had never married tended to be vindictive towards men.

In another session this black male client and a black female client suggested that the senior black female leader was under pressure from the white minister to appoint more whites at the top. The black female noted that the leader was sandwiched between a white minister and a white deputy. The white deputy was believed to be actually running the department as she was more experienced and thus more powerful. She reportedly earned an astronomical salary, which far surpassed that of her black female superior and could not be accommodated by the salary system. Two salaries were therefore paid out to her.

Some of the client's sentiments seemed to be supported by a white female client in the same organisation who reported that a white woman had been promoted unfairly because she was favoured by the black female leader.

5.3.2.1 Interpretations

There seemed to be a split between the black male and the black female in the upper echelon of the organisation. This split between the female 'head' and the male 'heart' appeared to be a defence against intimacy between the two. On one level there could be anxiety over the black power that might emerge out of the union of a black male and a black female, which could produce a black child (organisational culture). On another level, there could be anxiety over working with both rationality and emotions. The split between the head and heart also seemed to signal a reversal of roles and power relations (Morrell, 2002) as females were traditionally associated with the heart and males with the head and subsequently with leadership. The work study, expected to culminate in automated functions, also seemed to suggest resistance to working with the human aspects of the organisation, and perhaps uncovering its shadow. The analogy of a divorce conveyed the entrenched difficulties of the black man in pairing with the black female and with whites. Instead it seemed easier for the white male to pair with both white and black females. The black male's inability to pair with the females and with whites, his experience of vulnerability as an endangered species, and of being undermined, created anger which led to a fight-flight reaction (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004).

The new-found black power as a scarce resource seemed to trigger sibling rivalry issues in blacks who projected discrimination on to black leaders. Coetzee (2007) found that identity groups endeavoured to enhance opportunities for members of their in-group. Thus crossing racial boundaries and sharing privileges with members of the out-group made one an object of mystery -

something that could not be integrated in the mind. This could explain the rationalisation adopted by a member of the in-group in order to defend against anxieties of exclusion. The individuation of the female leader seemed to upset members of her identity group (Coetzee, 2007).

The commissioning of a work study before appointing a black male suggested that the black man had to be placed under scrutiny before promotion. The reluctance and the uncertainty surrounding the appointment of black males to senior positions in which they had been acting for a long time, suggested a mirroring of the uncertainty around the country's leadership. Despite Zuma's appointment as leader of the ruling party (Berger, 2007), it was unclear for some time whether he would finally take office as president of the country because of his pending corruption trial, which faced endless delays and postponements. Like Zuma, the black males had the positions, but in effect did not have them. It appeared that females were standing in the way of the black male, yet there was another covert layer of ministers, black and white, above the female leaders who determined who was appointed to the top. Ultimately it seemed the 'power cuts' experienced by the black male were driven by the male ministers who appointed those from their in-group to top positions. Balogun (2001) reported that personal considerations weighed heavily on political appointments in the civil sector. White males and females were used as obstacles to the black male's promotion. This could be due to their valence for disconnections as they embodied differences of gender and race.

5.3.2.2 *Working hypothesis*

The difficulties of crossing boundaries across differences result in mystery being projected on to members of the in-group who pair with those from the out-group while excluding those from the in-group. The difficulty the black male experiences in pairing with females and other males creates a fight-flight reaction

for the black male. White males and females are used as containers of power struggles between males at the top as they solidify their positions of dominance by surrounding themselves with those from their in-groups.

5.3.3. Male insubordination to female authority

A white female client battled for a very long time to win the cooperation of some black male subordinates in her team. She mentioned this in almost every session, and whenever she seemed to be resolving something, she encountered a new obstacle. She had had to do the work of one male on several occasions because the male ignored deadlines and aspects of his job that he did not enjoy. The male reportedly once refused to read and respond to important e-mails and lied that his computer was malfunctioning. After the client tried to have it repaired, he defiantly told the manager that he would not read his e-mails as he was working on an overdue report. His oppositional behaviour frustrated the female manager and reflected negatively on her competence. The client believed that the subordinate wanted to be a senior executive. Eventually his chronic insubordination cost the client and her manager negative performance reviews as her unit had missed important deadlines. In the sixth session, the client said that the male subordinate was a 'psychopath', based on a book she was reading about psychopaths at work. Later she said he was 'intimidating and overruling'. When the subordinate was rated lower on his performance review by an independent moderating committee, he blamed the client for this, maintaining that if he had his own unit, he would do better.

Another black male subordinate often threw tantrums when the white female manager requested him to perform tasks, although eventually he would comply. Sometimes the male did not greet colleagues, arrived late for regular team sessions, offered no apologies and turned his back on everyone. During the sixth session with the client this black male was in the opposite room having a

meeting with his supervisor to express his disgruntlement. The client reported feeling 'automatically guilty' as she was 'walking on egg shells' with this male. She stated that whenever she exercised her authority, male subordinates saw it as interference. She was frightened that exercising her authority would provoke the males' wrath and expose her to punishment by her seniors. The client believed that the black male subordinate had an 'open door' to the black female leader and was thus quick to report her at senior levels. She suspected that the male was responsible for a disciplinary process during which she was accused of being emotionally abusive and subsequently removed from her 'career base'. In a previous session the client had mentioned that her husband did not understand her when she mentioned her mistrust of the black female leader.

For a long time the client was very reluctant to confront both subordinates, which resulted in work overload and resentment on her part. She repeatedly reported that working with the insubordinate males was like working with children. In the first session the client had mentioned that she did not have children and that work was her life. She had displayed a pattern of mothering her subordinates, doing their work rather than challenging them. Once she even paid for a function from her own pocket rather than disappointing them when the organisation refused to fund it, and then later expressed frustration when they did not respond as she had expected.

The client reported in the fourth session that gender diversity was important as some males needed more authority. In the sixth session while talking about a newly appointed male who would have a female reporting to him, she commented, 'fortunately he is male'. The female had been rebellious towards her previous female supervisor.

5.3.3.1 *Interpretations*

The persistent deauthorisation of the female manager by males and their projection of incompetence on to the women seemed to be rooted in unyielding patriarchy (Morrell, 2002). The males' anger and envy of female authority triggered an urge to sabotage the female (Klein, 1957) while using their aggression as a tool to maintain their domination. The males' behaviours could also be framed as workplace bullying as they threatened the professional standing of the female manager and created work over load for her (Djukovic et al., 2005; Heames & Harvey, 2006). Thus although the female manager yielded power as an individual, she still had to deal with being a member of a subordinate group (Davidson & Proudford, 2008). Doing the work of the male subordinates could be perceived as a demotion of the female manager to a position of subservience, where she traditionally belongs. The insubordination seemed fuelled by females' beliefs which sanctioned male authority as a result of a patriarchy-influenced socialisation process. Thus both genders ultimately colluded to keep male domination alive through deeply internalised patriarchal values (Lumby & Coleman, 2007). The analogy of a psychopath seemed to convey the entrenched gender difficulties as psychopaths often do not respond to interventions and are thus chronically locked in destructive patterns. As a psychopathic object, the male possessed great capacity to harm without experiencing anxiety or remorse, and thus contained the destructive instinct for the genders. The female thus split off the destruction and held on to the creative instinct and this way she had to do reparative work for wounded gender relations. Projective identification could thus have happened for both genders.

Issues of race, culture and power, coupled with unfinished personal business seemed to intersect (Hoffman, 2006) to compound the conflict between the white female manager and her black subordinates. This was evident when pairing of the subordinates with a mistrusted black female authority figure resulted in

paralysing anxieties in the white female manager. She appeared to have also projected her mistrust of her husband on to the senior black female leader, and the males who, culturally, represented authority. The client eventually traced her pattern of relating to males to the complex relationship she had with her stepfather which often triggered fears of rejection. Her stepfather was an idealised and feared object, and her ambivalence was repeated in her relationship with the male subordinates she feared but simultaneously protected in a transference manner (Kets de Vries & Korotov, 2007). The inability of the white manager to exercise her authority could also have been a reflection of the guilt whites carry regarding the past oppression of blacks (Pretorius, 2003). This seemed to have given her valence for containing racial aggression.

The client's over-identification with work made the workplace a potent arena for unconscious, unfulfilled fantasies and projections (Czander, 1993). Her admission that she did not have children and that work was her life suggested an unconscious wish to turn her subordinates into her children. In doing her children's work she expected adoration or approval in return, but when it was not forthcoming, she experienced frustration and lashed out. It seemed that when her good part did not elicit submission, she replaced it with her bad part. Her children, in return retaliated by seeking a more good-enough mother in another female leader. The client's good nature may have been excessive and thus triggered anxieties of a smothering mother whose acts of nurture had to be resisted.

5.3.3.2 *Working hypothesis*

Males envy female leadership and refuse to authorise it by projecting inadequacies on to them and using aggression as a tool to dominate them. Projective identification with traditional gender roles maintains patriarchal gender

relations. Race, gender, culture, power and unresolved personal issues intersect to compound gender dynamics, leading to paralysing fight-flight behaviour.

5.3.4 Resistance of the black male to working with the black female

The only delegate who openly refused to take part in the study was a black male. He was the last person to participate in the coaching, and this only after the coordinator had reminded him to. During the earliest sessions the consultant was never late but arrived three minutes late to the first session with this male. This was because the parking bays inside the building were full and the consultant had to park in the street - something that happened very rarely. The client led the consultant to a boardroom, which was inappropriate for coaching as it was too big and had glass walls which reduced privacy. The consultant suggested finding a more private room. During the session the client expressed reservations about participating, citing that he had been misinformed about the study and implying that he was suspicious of a 'double-agenda' on the part of his employer. He had thought that his role would end after one session and said he would not have material to offer over six months. He was also concerned about the intensity of the experience. He mentioned an uncomfortable diversity workshop he had attended a few years before. The coaching process was explained to him and he was reassured of containment and of having enough material as his preoccupations would suffice. He was given the outline of the process and an overview of the coaching framework. The session was halted after an hour to give him time to consider his participation. When he left he asked the consultant to suggest future dates. A week later, when the consultant enquired about his decision to participate, he stated that he was withdrawing from the study.

A black male from another organisation also expressed reservations about taking part in the study. His anxieties seemed to stem from being new to the role of

organisation development. He promised to contact the consultant after reconsidering his participation. When the consultant called him again after a few weeks he reported that he had not had time to think about his participation. The consultant decided to leave him out as he seemed unwilling to participate.

Yet another black male participated in coaching for only three sessions as many obstacles emerged to prevent the coaching from continuing. The client was very resistant to the task of the role biography during one coaching session. He challenged revisiting early childhood as he did not believe that adult behavioural manifestations could be linked to childhood. When asked to illustrate his role biography through colours and pictures he refused, saying that the consultant would be analysing his colours and then claim that he was aggressive. He expressed doubt in the consultant's ability to handle unconscious childhood material that might surface. The client was concerned that coaching was becoming 'too psychological'. In his roleogramme he created columns and wrote in black and white, producing a sterile picture with lines dividing the different phases of his life. During the second session the client was surprised to see the consultant and said that he had forgotten about the session. He claimed that it was unlikely that he had agreed to a session being held on a Monday. During the third session he reported that he had an urgent document to work on and suggested multi-tasking; in other words, that the consultant coach him while he worked on the document. The session exceeded the time boundary by forty minutes as the client insisted on 'closure' on an issue. He seemed to want a solution. The client did not want to commit to future sessions in advance, preferring to be called a day before to confirm his availability. At times though, he would ask for the consultant's advice and analysis. Once he remarked that he would take advantage of the sessions instead of consulting a psychotherapist. Just before the fourth session, the client telephoned to inform the consultant that his building had been flooded. The client suggested that sessions be held at the consultant's psychotherapy consulting office. The consultant declined; wary of

being seduced into a therapeutic mode, especially since the client had demonstrated a need for salvation (Brunning, 2006). In addition, his commitment was questionable. It seemed that expecting him to walk a considerable distance to the consultant's office or to drive there and have to pay for parking would be asking too much from him. He was urged to find a suitable meeting room in his organisation but he did not respond to the consultant, so the sessions were terminated prematurely.

5.3.4.1 Interpretations

The coaching seemed to represent a personal invasion for the client who led the consultant to the room with huge glass walls, such as he might have experienced in the organisation. His difficulty in finding a suitable place for coaching and the huge glass walls could be indicative of his difficulties in finding a place of containment within an organisation led by a black female and thus in the consultancy system led by another black female. Perhaps the boardroom with the huge glass walls reflected the experience of being scrutinised, heightened by the perception of the black female object as a trickster, capable of tricking the black man into revealing more than he wanted to, and possibly being found out. This seemed to suggest his denied aggression, which he was projecting on to the female as his fantasy was that she was the bad breast as her analysis would persecute him (Klein, 1997). Perhaps, as the black female accepted positions of power, the fantasy was that she also had to accept the aggression that accompanied the hegemonic masculinity of leadership (Cheng, 1999). The other black male client seemed to resolve his ambivalence towards dependency and counter-dependency by putting the black female to the test and being over-demanding. If the black female could prove her containing ability beyond doubt by being an ever-flowing breast (Klein, 1957) she would pass the test and thus be worthy of working with him. The consultant's valence for the paranoia projected on to her was in her apparent 'double agenda' (double-agent) status.

She existed in a traditional world in which the black man had been awarded power by patriarchy, but also in the world of work where she was betraying him by taking power from him. All black males had female bosses, so their resistance to female authority was projected on to the consultant. It seemed that revealing certain things to a black female or having the black female access private material about the black male (weaknesses/shadows) heralded more loss of power for the black man. He also seemed hindered by 'not having' enough to offer and being 'new' as if he could not engage with the black woman from those unfamiliar positions of vulnerability. Anxieties over new ways of relating to the black female, perhaps as reflected in the flooding of the coaching space, seemed catastrophic, resulting in an abortion of what might have been born. It thus seemed that the black male experienced catastrophic anxiety when having to relate to the empowered black female. This was evident in the earlier difficulty of finding a suitable place for the pairing of a black male with a black female, as if that could not happen under the new circumstances.

5.3.4.2 Working hypothesis

The empowered position of the black female elicits paranoia in the black male who projects his inadequacies on to the female leader. His resistance to pairing with her from a position of newness and vulnerability creates fight-flight behaviour.

5.3.5 Confusion of the identity of the black female leader

The theme of confusion of the identity of the black female leader emerged from the beginning of the coaching before the consultant had even met the black female client. The consultant expected the client to be someone she knew because of her name; in the event, this proved not to be the case. The client confirmed that people confused her with someone else who had the same name,

and also with a character with the same name on a local television soap opera. The coaching study coordinator had said the client was a psychologist. It turned out that the client had studied psychology only in her undergraduate years. She reported that, in her most recent position, her job title and job description had changed so often that in the end she did not know what she was doing. Her work environment had been extremely hostile and persecutory, affecting her to the point where she 'lost her identity, sense of self, debating skills, communication skills and sense of honesty as everything had been a game'.

The position of the black female leader led to a discussion about the deputy president of the country, a black female, who was often unseen, forgotten or regarded as a token. After Mbeki was recalled she had said it would be better if she quit. The client elucidated that as black female leaders they were stepping out of their traditional roles for the first time and had to deal with challenges of identity as they assumed key leadership roles. Although they needed recognition at work and had to prove themselves, at home they still had to prove that their organisations had not distorted them by allowing them to forget that they were still black females. This created a 'schizophrenic existence' as they survived in two different and sometimes conflicting worlds. The client believed that being a deputy president of the country did not exempt the black female from fulfilling traditional role expectations when she visited her rural in-laws. She asserted that it would be difficult to compete with white counterparts who could make funeral arrangements over the telephone because she was expected to 'wait for the grave to be filled with soil before leaving the graveyard'.

5.3.5.1 Interpretation

It seemed that as the black female assumed the leadership role, confusion from within and without emerged around her identity, revealing the conflict of existing in different worlds. This triggered a fight-flight reaction. The unfamiliarity of a

black female leader seemed to elicit defences to keep her in a known and familiar position of subservience hence she was often perceived as a token, was unseen or deposed if she stepped outside that position. The confusion seemed to contain projections of inadequacies which she introjected, resulting in alienation from the self. The unique position of the black female leader who, despite her power still had to submit in a traditional world, confirmed the intersectionality of diversity for black females whose race, gender and culture met to predispose them to multiple challenges (Hoffman, 2006). The client seemed to be alluding to the stifling effect of black culture, which made it difficult for the black female to compete with her white female counterpart, as she was stuck at a place of death where she had to wait while the grave was filled with soil (manually with spades), while the white female mobilised a fast and efficient technological device to navigate a similar challenge.

5.3.5.2 Working hypothesis

As the black female transcends her traditional position of subservience to become a leader she faces multiple jeopardy as confusion is projected into her to deauthorise her and keep her in a familiar, less anxiety-provoking position, whilst concomitantly she is stifled by cultural demands.

5.3.6 Gender pairing

A male client who was locked in a long and bitter power struggle with his female manager reported that his male secretary shared his belief that the female manager was trying to get rid of him. The male secretary was involved in a labour dispute with the female manager because she had not signed his leave forms after he had informed her in advance that he needed to be away from work for a day. The client described the male secretary as excellent. The male client reported that, 'we retaliate when she takes us on and this seems to soften her'.

These males believed that female leaders were more lenient towards female subordinates. A white female client in another organisation reported that a senior black female leader had surrounded herself with females.

5.3.6.1. Interpretations

Power struggles between the genders triggered pairing of the aggressive type between males against the female, resulting in a fight-flight interaction. Deauthorisation of female leadership seemed to occur as competence was projected on to males. The gender pairing seemed to be based on the need for affiliation and self-preservation against the enemy who was perceived to be outside the pair.

5.3.6.2 Working hypothesis

Males pair against females and project competence on to other males to defend against their anxieties of domination by females.

5.3.7 Conflict avoidance by female leaders

From the outset, a white female client reported during the coaching that she was being consistently undermined by two black male subordinates who displayed anti-task and rebellious behaviour. The client had avoided instituting disciplinary processes when they were clearly warranted. She stated several times that she would do anything to avoid conflict. At times she almost begged the subordinates to fulfil their tasks. The client noted that one of these subordinates was already 'walking on thin ice with many people' and was 'going to be hit'. Yet she did not want to hand him over to the 'lion's den'. This was despite the client's knowledge that the subordinate's former manager 'almost had six heart attacks' because of him and the fact that she lay awake at night wondering how

she should deal with him. In addition, the client had the support of her supervisor. The subordinate's cooperation was crucial and urgent as the client's unit was responsible for the security of the minister during the electricity crisis, when many irate citizens threatened his safety. These facts, however, did not propel her to take disciplinary action, nor did the more than sufficient evidence that she had gathered against the subordinate.

Finally, in the sixth session the client traced her conflict avoidance pattern back to her childhood and the dynamics of rejection in her family. She was afraid that the subordinates would reject her if she instituted disciplinary processes and explained that, 'if you want to kill me, ignore me'. This was further exacerbated by a charge of emotional abuse levelled against her by her subordinates. The client and her manager eventually received negative performance reviews because of her inability to deliver required services on account of these anti-task subordinates.

Another white client in a different organisation had battled for a long time to fully exercise her authority in relation to a coloured subordinate. This subordinate challenged her authority, withdrew from important meetings with potential donors, missed making a presentation to one of the highest stakeholder forums, made the client and the organisation look unprofessional, was chronically late, missed flights when they were working out of town, and missed deadlines, claiming to be analytical, yet submitting sub-standard work. After complaining about the subordinate in one session, the client started speaking about her children's attitude to time. Later she remarked with frustration, 'I'm almost carrying her; it takes so much energy'. The client reported that each time she tried to address the subordinate's behaviour, she managed to find a new excuse or postponement. The client's anxiety was about being attacked by the subordinate. She described the subordinate as opinionated and oppositional. In a later session the client reported that a messenger jokingly called the

subordinate the 'DA' (opposition political party) because of her initials. The client dreaded issuing a letter of warning as she would prefer to focus on helping the subordinate to realise her potential rather than punish her.

In the fifth session the client remarked that the organisation was threatening to dock under-performing employees' salaries, yet the organisation was notorious for tolerating under-performance. In fact, the organisation had at times rewarded substandard work and seemed incapable of rooting out non-delivery. After attending a resilience training programme, the client was ready to address the subordinate. She felt that in addition to the coaching, the programme had equipped her further to understand her subordinate better by using the drama triangle tool, depicting individuals as victims, saviours or rescuers. The consultant had brought up the drama triangle while working with the other white female client who also avoided conflict.

In the seventh session the client reported that she had been firm with the subordinate. She had insisted on having a meeting with her and was happy with her accomplishment. She said she wanted to buy the consultant a rose for urging her to exercise her authority. She spoke about being the soft one at home and avoiding conflict at all cost since harmony was very important to her. She explained that her sister was the confrontational one. In the ninth session the client reported that she had at last had a most constructive and frank discussion with the subordinate and for the first time she was seeing progress and cooperation from her.

The experiences of the females were in stark contrast to those of two males in the study. The coloured male client had confronted his black male superior over his antagonistic behaviour shortly after it occurred. He reported that their relations improved afterwards. The client attributed his acceptance of conflict and his self-authorising attributes to having been the black sheep in his family. A

black male client had also not hesitated in issuing a warning letter to a white female subordinate who had been defying him.

5.3.7.1 Interpretations

The refusal of the female managers to confront the anti-task behaviours of their subordinates seemed to stem from deep-seated unconscious conflicts that competed against rationality in the conscious, as provided by ample evidence, indicating the competing demands of the conscious and unconscious wishes (Cilliers & May, 2002). The females seemed to have transferential interactions with their subordinates who unconsciously represented childhood figures. In saving the male subordinate, one of the females could master the unresolved childhood task of winning her stepfather's approval. The other female did not have to own the hostility she had split off and projected on to her sister and the female subordinate who could also act out oppositionally. The task of discipline was thus avoided because it revived the disowned shadow, which could inflict pain. In disowning the aggressive instinct it seemed the masochistic instinct was held on to. This aggression directed at the self resulted in stress, martyrdom and a depletion of inner resources, hence resilience training was required to allow for a confrontation. The defence of undoing (Blackman, 2004) was mobilised in the female who was given, and had then introjected the label of abuser. By rescuing the subordinate, she could make reparations and rid herself of the guilt and projections of abuse (Czander, 1993). This seemed apparent as well in the other female who, after confronting her subordinate, wished to buy a rose, to perform an act of love as if to undo the injury. The denial of the shadow was supported by the male who reported ease in confronting conflict as he had introjected projections of being the black sheep in his family. It seemed females avoided conflict as it was incongruent with their traditionally feminine traits of nurturance and their mothering instincts, which were triggered by subordinates who were representations of their children. The anger that was defended against would

thus trigger intrapsychic conflict. Projective identification occurred with projections of a mother who should soothe and use gentle methods of conflict resolution.

This reluctance to engage with conflict also seemed to mirror the organisational dynamic of ambivalence towards discipline. While threatening to withhold salaries and bonuses as punishment for under-performance and non-delivery, in actual fact it rewarded them. Thus the managers' behaviour could be a reflection of identification with the organisation's culture.

Having black subordinates seemed to have contributed to the 'stuckness' of the white female managers in instituting disciplinary procedures. The fear of being accused of racism appeared to have been evoked by a conflict across the racial boundary among whites whose hyper-vigilance to racial stimuli (Thompson & Carter, 1997) was aroused in predominantly black organisations. The subordinates' disruptive and uncooperative behaviour on the other hand, supported the notion of upwards bullying (Branch et al., 2007).

5.3.7.2 Working hypothesis

Female managers seem to be more reluctant to confront conflict than male managers owing to an introjection of mothering attributes and splitting off of destructive impulses, while males' introjection of masculine attributes associated with aggression allows them to confront conflict more easily. Conflict at work seems to evoke deep-seated, unresolved transferential issues.

5.4 RACE AS A DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

Race sub-themes that were identified and their working hypotheses will be discussed in this section.

5.4.1 The myth of black empowerment

Various sub-themes relating to the myth of black empowerment are discussed below.

5.4.1.1 The unchanged status quo

A black female client remarked in every session that the fundamental status quo in the country as a whole and in organisations in particular had not changed. She explained that change was only a façade and that blacks were still forced into an old system. Blacks were reportedly still jittery in the presence of white managers. The client used the Eskom power crisis as an example which revealed that whites were still in charge and that the black government was still in their shadow. She said that it was the norm to have power cuts in townships at any time without any warnings or any indication of when reconnections would occur. Now there had suddenly been an outcry because everyone was affected. The client expressed annoyance at white neighbours who complained about electricity cuts. The power dynamic between a black female and a white male minister was used to stress that whites were still in charge. A department headed by a black female minister, was responsible for the power and energy crisis yet a white male minister, from another department was appointed to speak on the issue to the public. The client remarked that ‘the white talks, the black is quiet’. The black minister reportedly took speeches to the white minister for validation but this was never reciprocated. In later sessions, the client referred to blacks today as well-paid slaves and invalids as whites had the decision-making powers. The client noted that even in an organisation where the mandate was black empowerment, whites held the senior positions. According to the client the races would coexist harmoniously only if the whites could ‘come down to my level’.

Two black clients expressed shock that blacks were so grossly underrepresented in the upper echelons of their predominantly black organisation.

A black male client felt disrespected by a white colleague who had intruded in his space and had asked during a coaching session, 'why would a white person order you around as if you are a junior?' Later, he stated that a white male who had been recently promoted was referred to as '*baas*' by blacks who experienced him as condescending. Another black client lamented that whenever blacks asserted themselves against whites it led to a serious fight. The client believed that whites pushed to see how far they could go but blacks were afraid to push back, so for the sake of peace they became martyrs. The client intimated that something 'major, even violent' had to happen to create a major shift in the unchanged situation, especially as 'we had avoided bloodshed', during the transition. The client proposed that race issues required a 'Jerry Springer' kind of platform where everyone could speak their mind and express their emotions because typically, if blacks said what they truly felt, they were labelled as barbaric. The client felt that blacks were reluctant to risk their comfort by challenging the status quo. The client restated in several sessions that the original order was difficult to change, especially on a psychological level as people tended to go along with the tried and tested.

A coloured client working in an agricultural industry was alarmed that the managers of all the national branches of his organisation were white males. The client reported the resistance of white farmers to sharing their knowledge with emerging black farmers. According to the client there was a plethora of research findings and knowledge that was withheld by white farmers who felt threatened by the changes and wanted to preserve their position of advantage.

Interpretations

Blacks seemed to accept deprivation more easily than whites as evidenced by their relative acceptance of the electricity cuts. This seemed linked to their history of dispossession and exclusion (Adele, 2002). Although blacks have gained some senior positions and accompanying perks, it seemed they experienced powerlessness in relation to whites. Internalised beliefs about the historical order seemed to inhibit blacks from asserting themselves. Sonn and Fisher (2003) believed that oppression resulted in a reluctance to take risks and a tendency to cling to what the group has. This emerged poignantly in the question of who had a voice and who did not; and the feeling that blacks needed whites to sanction their voices. Foldy (2004) reported that the more powerful members of groups tended to be more vocal and influential in decision-making. The comment 'whites must come down to my level' confirmed deeply-held notions about the lower position of blacks in the historical racial hierarchy. Regarding blacks as slaves and whites as *baas* suggested residues of the master-slave relationship between whites and blacks. An inferiority-superiority dynamic seemed embedded in structures of society, including those that purported to support transformation. The notion of superficial changes and residues of past inequalities has been supported by various writers (Booyesen, 2007a; Human, 2005).

The negative labelling of blacks seemed to be a silencing defence against hearing their long history of suffering. The Jerry Springer show request suggested that some projective identification with the negative labelling had occurred and that, perhaps, blacks wished to return these projections of barbarism. The hope seemed to be that, through the Jerry Springer show the label of barbarism could be equally owned. Suggesting such an extreme show also suggested that race relations could not be equalised on a reasonable platform. This could be a reflection of the intensity of resistance to equality.

Whites seemed to trigger anxieties of annihilation in blacks who in turn suppressed their aggression, which then found expression in fantasies of violence. The jump from powerlessness, 'jitteriness' and martyrdom to the other side of violence seemed to rest in avoiding the middle position, from where diversity issues could be worked on constructively. The sharing that transformation requires seemed to evoke anxieties of loss in the haves and thus a withholding reaction, which pushed the races even further apart.

Working hypothesis

The upward mobility of blacks and the power shifts that are visible are not a true reflection: there is a fundamental lack of change, supported by an introjection of historical inequities, manifesting in blacks' difficulties in asserting themselves and whites' resistance to sharing privileges. This inevitably perpetuates the superiority-inferiority dynamic between the races.

5.4.1.2 Blacks labour; whites enterprise

A black client mentioned the long road blacks still had to walk towards true economic liberation. According to this client, blacks' privileges had to be shared with previous generations which had been deprived. They had to do for their parents what their parents could not do for themselves so their progress was compromised. According to the client, it would take years for a black child to 'own a flat and a car, even when his or her parents were on par with whites at work'. The client believed that as black executives, they lagged far behind whites; they did not 'have shares in the stock market' and thus were not equal economically; they were only now starting to compete, and had not even been in the race in 1994. The client expressed with dismay, that 'whereas whites are at step 1, we are at step -10'. In reflecting on this, the client kept making a comparison between the possessions of the Minister of Labour, a black male,

and the Minister of Public Enterprise, a white male, and wondered why the two ministers came up as examples. In a subsequent session the client said, 'at work whites give orders while blacks do the work'.

Interpretations

It seemed that the privileges that blacks enjoy from black economic empowerment do not fully belong to them as they have to share them with previous generations who did not benefit from such empowerment. The realisation that the previous generation made sacrifices on behalf of blacks, for which the present generation now has to make reparations seemed to move them to a depressive position. This, however, further expands the gap in wealth accumulation between blacks and whites who are competing for resources. The power whites still possess and their decision-making positions seemed to trigger resentment in blacks as they laboured while whites enterprised. Nkomo and Kriek (2004) reported on the gap between the groups and noted that the cohort representing excellent black business leaders was only now starting to make its presence felt. Blacks could unconsciously harbour suppressed anger towards the previous generation which did not accumulate wealth for them, but instead indebted them. This anger would then be displaced (Stapley, 2006) to whites whose refusal to share privileges gives them valence for greed as they hoard the good.

Working hypothesis

The long road to true economic empowerment for blacks triggers fight-flight reactions as they resent whites' continued accumulation of wealth and blacks' labouring for them and for previous generations.

5.4.1.3 *Blacks as containers of incompetence*

A black male client reported that white colleagues seemed to believe that blacks did not deserve their positions and that whites could 'deliver better' as they believed they had the right answers. Upon joining the organisation, he was told that another black colleague who had been working under a difficult white manager would have some peace as the client would now share his burden. The client believed that the colleague had been bombarded with not good-enough messages, which he attributed to a superiority complex on the part of whites. Another black male client stated that a white colleague at times undermined blacks and did not trust the information that came from them.

A white female client was highly critical of the way the organisation in general, and her old unit in particular, was run. During the first three sessions of coaching she kept asking, 'why don't they put me back there?' suggesting that once there, everything would be fine. The client criticised the most senior black female's leadership skills, describing her as impulsive and incapable of analysis. This was contrary to the black clients' unanimity in their high regard for the black leader's competence. A black client described the black leader as dynamic, energetic and sharp. Another white female client expressed doubt at the suitability of a black candidate who had been appointed in a position which had been withheld from her. A black female client believed that a coloured assistant did not authorise her as whenever she issued instructions, the coloured assistant checked first with the client's manager, a white male, to verify these orders. Eventually the client stopped asking for her help and did everything herself.

Interpretations

When employees were confronted with incompetence, they tended to project it on to black employees, based on ingrained beliefs, and blacks' valence for incompetence as a result of their history of deprivation, exclusion from

meaningful work roles and an inferior education system (Booyesen, 2007b). It seemed that projecting incompetence on to blacks was a result of the envy triggered in whites when blacks assumed idealised roles. Blacks seemed to defend against the projections of incompetence by pairing. The racial split was evident when blacks attributed goodness to a black leader, while the white client attributed badness to the same female. In addition, blacks projected a superiority complex on to whites, suggesting that they themselves held on to an inferiority complex. The racial hierarchy apparent between the black manager and her coloured subordinate seemed to reflect a social order based on the past in which coloureds were given social advantages over blacks while at the same time being oppressed (Sonn & Fisher, 2003).

Working hypothesis

Blacks are containers of incompetence because of the introjected historical racial hierarchy and the distribution of resources which located superiority and goodness into whites, and inferiority and badness into blacks.

5.4.1.4 Black self-oppression

A black client expressed a belief that blacks were addicted to bondage, having been slaves for so long. According to this client, despite the new platform blacks had been given, they could not do without the master because they were unable to perceive their value without white validation. Therefore blacks in positions of power surrounded themselves with whites and listened to white executives more than to black executives. The client expressed a need for blacks to re-educate and accept themselves as they had forgotten who they were because it had been too painful to be black. She believed that this had given rise to the fantasy that if one could be like whites, one would be superior and 'a force to reckon with'. As a result, blacks believed that success meant wearing designer clothes and

speaking English in a flawless white accent, giving power to the fantasy 'when I grow up I want to be white'. The client suggested that blacks were mentally more oppressed than physically, and thus self-liberation was more daunting. She said, 'we are enslaved minds, we are free but not free'. According to this client, blacks lacked commitment and loyalty to one another but would do anything to please whites. The admission of black self-oppression midway in the coaching came after bemoaning the insults visited upon blacks by the apartheid system and by whites in earlier sessions. Another black client remarked that empowered blacks had amnesia as they had forgotten the reasons for their empowerment. According to the client, greed and selfishness had overcome them.

A white client in another organisation was frustrated by a black subordinate who was competent but lacked faith in his abilities. The client had high regard for this subordinate and had urged him several times to apply for senior positions but the black subordinate never believed he was sufficiently prepared and thus missed out on a managerial position more than once, only to have less competent incumbents fill these posts.

Interpretations

The introjection of whites as superior and blacks as inferior seemed to have created an infantilisation dynamic between the two races. Whites as parental objects seemed to contain anxieties of individuation which blacks experienced when engaging with independence and empowerment. This confirmed the enduring nature of the pre-encounter status characterising racial identity development during which blacks believe that they are inferior and whites are superior (Tuckwell, 2002). It also seemed to be a manifestation of an acceptance of negative group identities resulting from oppression (Sonn & Fisher, 2003). A sibling rivalry dynamic emerged when blacks projected incompetence on to other blacks as if to keep them out of new pairing with

idealised whites, with whom they wanted to fuse (Cilliers & May, 2002). Anxieties of lack, based on a history of deprivation, seemed to trigger greed in blacks as all of the good was hoarded to the exclusion of other blacks. This might also indicate that identification with the aggressor took place (Stapley, 2006). The repression of blacks' true identity suggested that projective identification with projections of denigration had occurred, resulting in contempt for the self which was seen as unworthy of advancement (Sonn & Fisher, 2003). The amnesia referred to suggested that a splitting off of unwanted parts, which represented this deprivation and denigration, had taken place. In admitting to black self-oppression, a move from the paranoid schizoid position of blaming whites to the depressive position (Klein, 1957) from which the daunting task of psychological self-liberation could be engaged with, seemed apparent. Thompson and Carter (1997) reported that blacks need to evolve to the internalisation status of their racial identity to achieve full self- acceptance and a realistic appraisal of whites.

Working hypothesis

The prolonged subjugation of blacks and their introjections of inferiority seem to have created a fixation on struggle which triggers anxieties about individuation when they have to engage with independence and empowerment. This results in an infantilising dynamic, creating dependence on whites and a desire to merge with them while detaching from their identity group.

5.4.2. Whites' experience of black organisations as traumatic

White clients working in predominantly black organisations described their experiences as traumatic. A white female client placed in a division created for 'unwanted employees' described her position as 'unlucky'. Being moved out of a life-long career base was described by the client as 'traumatic, worse than a

divorce'. The client felt undermined by the experience. The trauma and humiliation experienced by the client permeated her dream life and sometimes created sleepless nights. The underlying emotion was rejection. The client drew a broken line across her heart in the roleogramme and said it reflected pain and brokenness. She drew a tear and said it was camouflaged by make-up, and a cloud which represented the vacuum inside her. The client expressed reluctance to apply for a senior position as being rejected would be even more 'traumatic'. The trauma seemed exacerbated by a belief that the client's manager and subordinate, who were both black had paired against her.

The client recalled feeling that she was worth something in a previous, white-dominated organisation, and not as demotivated as she was in the current organisation, which had 'put a damper on me'. She reported feeling stuck on the receiving end of criticism and said telling the truth would be like 'pouring petrol into fire,' as in the past the truth had been used against her. The client reported powerlessness in leading a project as a black subordinate imposed discordant views, invited a consultant onto the project team without consulting her and disregarded the client by going straight to the black senior leader in order to get what he wanted. In the third session the client reported that she had applied for a position at a new organisation. She said she was looking forward to being in a role she enjoyed, to using her brains again and not being looked down upon. The client mentioned the experience of being cast out in almost all the sessions.

A theme of powerlessness permeated all of the first eight sessions, often triggering images of her being in prison in the consultant's mind. The client reported stifling guilt whenever her subordinates were unhappy. In the last session the client reported that a black female manager, who had been reporting to her and was her main support in the team, had been transferred to another department. She was surprised that it had happened so easily for the black colleague who had reportedly informed the most senior black leader that she was

bored in the current unit. This was in sharp contrast with her earlier request, which had been denied, to return to a department she was passionate about, and triggered feelings of unfairness.

This experience of trauma was echoed by another white female client who stated that it was traumatic to have others appointed above her because of equity targets. The client described the predominantly black organisation as hostile. According to her, questions were not asked at an executive meeting as people 'took you on' if you raised questions. The client described the organisation as a 'war zone,' where it was safer to make a note and speak to others privately than in a meeting. The unspoken message heard by many white employees was 'just do the work and keep quiet'. They believed that their opinions were not appreciated, and this had resulted in a highly experienced white employee leaving the organisation. The client stated that the rest of them 'sussed out the attitude, were quiet and did the work behind meetings, as in meetings we do not engage much'.

This negativity saw a very experienced white employee with the longest service record choosing words carefully when asked questions, to avoid being perceived as stepping on toes. In the sixth session the client reported feeling overworked; her physiotherapist had said she could not help her relieve her extremely tense muscles and asked her to take better care of herself. She had a minor accident while parking her car, fell in the bath and acknowledged these as little signs that she was not in control; that she needed to come to a halt, to 'clear her head'. She was visibly distressed and tearful. The client had been experiencing work overload for a long time, with no support from her superiors. She reported that it was very hard as for a long time it had been known that senior positions were not for whites; she had been 'working harder, working longer hours, praying that she would be trusted, and not seen as stupid for my size'. She said she was given a position after a long time, but only after being rejected twice in the same

organisation. Now she had to show them how grateful she was, and prove they had made the right decision. In the sixth session she shared a dream in which a workaholic friend had been playing hockey with a stick. The dream seemed to be a reflection of her own workaholic tendencies, within the competitive context of work - trying to improvise to reach objectives without resources, while dealing with the challenges of employment equity. It seemed that the client was unconsciously referring to being disadvantaged in a predominantly black organisation where she had been overlooked for promotion and still had to do her best without either support or resources. She reported fantasies of being on a Buddhist retreat on a mountain for a month, where there was simply peace.

The client later reported frustration at waiting over a year for feedback on obtaining resources, and instead of the feedback she requested, she was analysed, as if to turn her into a patient. She reported feeling flabbergasted and questioned her excessive zeal, patience and naivety. An external consultant to the organisation had commented that she was over-worked and doing the work of those above her. In the tenth session the client reported pain in realising that her black manager was still not working on written reports prior to the meetings. As a result, she had to go to great lengths to explain to him what he should have known and thus did her work twice. She reported that a headstrong white female who refused to take it was victimised until she left the organisation. The client was concerned that speaking out would block her prospects of promotion.

A black male client reported that an experienced and qualified white colleague refused to apply for a senior position because she did not want to be distressed: she was unhappy about the black male leader whom she experienced as too domineering. Another black client reported that a prevailing perception in an organisation led by a black leader was that if you were not in the good books of the leader and you were white, especially Afrikaans, you were out.

5.4.2.1 *Interpretations*

The loss by whites of long-held positions seemed to be experienced as dispossession which triggered disintegration and alienation from the self, as valued objects (marriage and the heart), suggested by the analogy of divorce and brokenness, were lost or harmed, leading to experiences of trauma. The vacuum seemed to stem from the loss of identity which accompanied the loss of positions that had been central to one's sense of self. Laubscher (2001) reported that redress processes were experienced by whites as punitive. The experience of trauma suggested that the dispossession exceeded the range of white people's normal experiences. Rejection ignited not-good enough issues that undermined competence and motivation. Whites as members of the out-group seemed to struggle to fulfil needs for belonging and affiliation, and the desire to access privileges that members of the in-group, blacks, accessed easily. Eddy (2008) believed that support networks characterised by racial similarities provided a buffer against stress and negativity. Probst et al., (2008) claimed that being in the minority in the workplace was often one of the best predictors of stressful outcomes. It seemed that whites working in predominantly black organisations where the upper echelon was predominantly black were shifting towards a minority status, in line with shifting power relations.

Feeling rejected and devalued made it difficult for the white female in this study to fully own her promotion, thus she over-compensated to prove that she was worthy of the promotion. This seemed driven by anxieties of annihilation due to uncertain career prospects during transformation. Being in the numeric minority also appeared to elicit paranoid fantasies about the other, accentuated by the other's links with mistrusted and feared objects of authority, resulting in the inability to exercise authority. The paralysing guilt and helplessness suggested that the client introjected the negative attitudes and abuse projected into her. Her emotionality and whiteness as a leader of a black team combined to

strengthen her valence to projections of the abuser. The casting out of whites and their victimisation suggested identification by blacks with the aggressor (Stapley, 2006). Ostracising and overworking them seemed to be manifestations of workplace bullying. Heames and Harvey (2006) noted that those who lack high-powered friends have been found to be more prone to being bullied. The predominantly black organisation could be punishing white employees unconsciously for the past. Reducing whites to hands and expecting only performance from them could be an attempt to dehumanise them. Perhaps the 'war zone' was in fact about the silent war raging between the races as they changed positions and competed for resources. Flight out of the organisation and into sickness was activated for white members. The system seemed to be using the white client who had adopted an assertive coping style (Djurkovic et al., 2005) in response to the bullying, as a container of uncertainties and the stresses of imminent changes. Being white during transformation could create valence for career uncertainties and threats.

5.4.2.2 Working hypothesis

Whites experience predominantly black organisations as traumatic, feeling that they are victimised, exploited and excluded. This results in a fight-flight dynamic. Whites also seem to be used as containers of hostility, helplessness and anxieties related to uncertain career prospects. The experience of whites as the out-group in predominantly black organisations appears similar to that experienced by blacks in predominantly white organisations.

5.4.3 Whites complain; blacks defend

A note on the door of the room in which a white client, the first participant in the study, was coached, read 'caucus complainant'. The note related to an earlier disciplinary meeting and was not connected to the coaching in any way. The

white client was very disgruntled and upset about being treated unfairly in the organisation. She had been accused of being emotionally abusive towards staff, put on leave, and placed in a position about which she was not passionate. A human resources executive from another department, the union and an external psychologist were appointed to investigate the claim. The client reported having being exonerated by the findings, which attributed problems in her team to organisational issues. The client became emotionally overwhelmed and tearful while describing the experience. She seemed outraged and complained that she had helped a great deal in her previous division but had not been offered her job back. She resented this lack of recognition.

When a black client was asked to draw a roleogramme in his first session, relating his experiences of being in role in the organisation, he shared his personal story while doing so. He spoke about growing up under difficult circumstances. The client related how he had to work underground in the mines from a young age. He recalled a racist treating him badly and said the episode had stayed in his mind for a long time, and that he had harboured fantasies of revenge. This story was interrupted by an older white female and a younger black male requesting a signature from the client, who did not take up the story again after the interruption.

During the second session with this black client, there was a note on the door of the same coaching room that read 'caucus defendant'. Similarly, the note was unrelated to the coaching session. During the role biography the client revisited his previously abandoned story. He reported growing up in a 'very, very, very poor, rural, uneducated background' with no role models as everyone worked on the coal mines. The client recalled his family's farm being dispossessed. He added that there was an expectation that all children would work on the farm for six months and go to school for six months. He remarked 'I never asked how I survived,' after escaping, as he had always somehow managed to go to school.

By the age of eight or nine he had started working as a 'garden boy'. At the age of sixteen he was working on the mines. The client recalled humiliating experiences during which black men were subjected to medical examinations where their private parts were examined. He later stated, 'the turbulence of the 1980s impacted on us in so many gory ways – police attacking, a number of people stabbed like watermelons, blood splattering all over the place, people flying out of windows, running out of showers naked'. He said the violence was so bloody that he was not keen to talk about it. Before university he spent a year in prison, on suspicion of being a terrorist, 'tortured and tormented'. The client became tearful while relating these experiences.

5.4.3.1 Interpretations

The unconscious seemed to convey a significant message about race dynamics within the context of transformation, as seen in the two clients who embodied opposites; a white female and a black male. The white female was removed from the position that was later occupied by the black male. She experienced her removal as hostile; it had elicited palpable sadness, helplessness and a sense of injustice (Laubscher, 2001). The black appointment on the other hand, was underpinned by an apologetic attitude that hinted at turmoil brewing below the surface which he had to contain. Upon joining the predominantly black organisation the black client was advised not to ruffle feathers, to tread carefully and to avoid confrontation. It appeared that his appointment was seen as an intrusion, or that he was regarded as a guest who had to be grateful and return the favour of attaining the privilege by being the container of racial turmoil. Because his position had previously been held by a white client, he reported that, as the 'new kid on the block who had been made acting head of the human resources division, he did not experience ecstasy but ambivalence'. This was manifest on a concrete level when tea, coffee and biscuits were offered, just like they had been offered in the session with the white client. In this case, neither

the client nor the consultant could open the water flask; they had to ask for help. It seemed that blacks engage with their new privileges and resources with ambivalence. Perhaps enjoying privileges which carry the burden of depriving the other who resents the new order elicits unconscious anxieties of being a persecutor.

5.4.3.2 *Working hypothesis*

The loss of power and privilege is experienced by whites as unfair dispossession, triggering pain and envious attacks on blacks, which manifest as complaints. Blacks' acquisition of power is marked by an apologetic attitude that seems to stem from anxieties of being perceived as the persecutor. Thus they engage with the privileges in an ambivalent way, as if privileges and persecution are synonymous.

5.4.4 Exclusion of the white male from diversity work

Some demographic groups were excluded from the study; the white and Indian male, and the coloured and Indian female. As parts of the whole and objects-in-the-minds of clients, they were included in the study indirectly at various points because they featured significantly in the diversity discourse. He was represented by the white male cabinet minister and white male executives. There were many occasions on which white males dominated diversity discussions, suggesting the crucial role they play in diversity dynamics.

The consultant expected one client to be a white male on account of his name and was surprised and relieved to find that he was coloured. The consultant felt it would be easier to coach a coloured male than a white male, and that the coloured male was more likely to be cooperative than a white male. This position

seemed to exist in the collective as among the original twelve clients identified for coaching from three organisations, there were no white males.

5.4.4.1 Interpretations

The exclusion of the white male appeared to be fuelled by a perception that the white male, having been the biggest beneficiary of the past unjust system, excluded from the employment equity designated group, and yet still the holder of power (Nkomo & Kriek, 2004), with the most vocal inclination, is the most resistant to transformation and thus to diversity work . It could also be suggested that as an object of persecution, he evoked anxiety of the persecutory type which was defended against by excluding him. The white male, who seemed to have introjected projections of superiority and persecution, may also be colluding in his exclusion by denigrating transformation to keep the status quo the same (Cilliers & Stone, 2005). Refusing to work with resistance is an avoidance tactic which keeps things unchanged as all parts of diversity are not worked with; and perhaps this reveals an unconscious anxiety about the change that is sought.

5.4.4.2. Working hypothesis

Resistance to diversity, contained by the white male who has valence for it, is not worked with but excluded and denied expression as if in working with diversity the quest is for oneness.

5.4.5 Deprivation of the coloureds

During the second coaching session with a coloured client, someone came to offer a glass of water, but only to the consultant. Afterwards the client talked about his mother as the protector and his father as a disciplinarian as if the deprivation had triggered a need for preservation and containment. In the fourth

session the client asked someone to arrange for water and biscuits but was told that there were no biscuits as they had 'been abused' in the previous two weeks. The next day the consultant returned to coach a black female client and without the client having to ask for them, biscuits were offered readily. There were sessions in which nothing was offered, but it was not offered to both the consultant and the black or white clients. In the sixth session with a black client, water had been offered only to the consultant but this was followed by a profuse apology to the client. Sessions which almost always had a choice of refreshments; tea, water, and biscuits, occurred with the white client. Logically, this was because the white client headed administration and facilities, but on an unconscious level it could be a reflection of the ease with which whites access resources. The coloured client's deprivation emerged also in concerns over unavailability of a closed office, subordinates to supervise and a secretary to 'make photocopies,' feeling invisible to a black female senior leader who was not part of his interview process (all other clients had interacted closely with the black female leader), plus being excluded from meetings involving the minister. The coloured client was the only one who expressed concern about these aspects. Although at some point during the coaching experience, two black males, a white female, and the coloured client (four of the six clients) had all expressed a wish to resign, this client was the only participant in the study to resign, only to be preoccupied with resigning shortly after joining a new organisation. The client mentioned a new organisation that was recruiting him and although he said he would not accept the offer, he spoke about that organisation as if he had already joined it.

From the ninth until the eleventh session, coaching was held at a coffee shop as the client believed that his office had been bugged. He believed that this was because the black male chief executive officer, whom he experienced as antagonistic, felt threatened by his position as chief risk officer, a new role in the organisation, which was changing some business operations. The client

reportedly spoke his mind and challenged what he termed a 'malady' of tardiness and complacency in the organisation.

A preoccupation for the coloured client while in the employ of the previous organisation had been his black male manager whom he experienced as oppressive. This black male had paired with an Indian consultant who had been in the organisation longer than both the client and the manager and who was close to the powers that be. The client found it difficult to find his space in this pair, and gain access to the power which the black manager could reach through the Indian consultant. Upon joining the new organisation, the client found it difficult to penetrate a similar clique formed by three black executives.

A recurring challenge for the client that began in childhood was a feeling that he was in the shadow of others. In the eighth session he spoke at length about anxieties of being in the shadow of two friends, one of whom was also a colleague in the same industry, who was now offering him a job.

The twelfth session was held in the client's office. He believed the session would be safer as it would be largely about feedback. He played music to interfere with the suspected bugging devices.

5.4.5.1 Interpretations

The minority status of the coloured client, the only coloured in the study, seemed to deprive him of containment, validation, inclusion and access to resources and networks of power, creating fight-flight behaviour. His minority status also seemed to create me-ness which in turn elicited paranoia as oppressive and antagonistic enemies had to be fought. The paranoia resulted in the physical relocation of sessions outside the workplace. This may also have been a reflection of unconscious fantasies in the system to expel the client to rid itself of

the anxieties of being scrutinised by risk and thus being found out. The flight through resignation and restlessness might be a reflection of the difficulties coloureds experience in finding their place in the country and in organisations as they often lament having not been white enough in the old dispensation while currently not being black enough. Pretorius (2003) reported that coloureds tend to struggle with issues relating to acceptance, rejection, acknowledgment and fitting in. The anxiety in other clients who expressed discontent but did not leave the organisation could have been contained by having other members of their social identity groups around to provide social support. They may also have projected their anxiety onto the coloured client. Perhaps by speaking about being in the shadow of others all his life, the client was unconsciously referring to being in the shadow of other races with whom he could not procreate as he failed to penetrate their unions.

5.4.5.2. Working hypothesis

The deprivation of the coloured client seems to reflect difficulties of finding a place of belonging and containment. This creates valence for fight-flight and projections of paranoia on to the out-group with whom the desired pairing is difficult.

5.4.6 Coloureds as guinea pigs

A study coordinator referred to the clients as the consultant's guinea pigs during a briefing meeting. In the second session, the coloured client said he was a guinea pig in his family as they tried everything on him because he was the youngest. In the fifth session, the client expressed resentment over attempts by the organisation to turn him into a puppet, by trying to make him do things that violated his principles.

His role in the organisation he had joined recently was newly created, thus placing the organisation and himself in relatively unfamiliar territory. The client was alarmed that so many in the organisation did not know much about risk, as he had become the first person ever to share crucial information with them. He later said that risk had become the new buzzword. The black chief executive officer seemed to have an ambivalent relationship with the role of the client. While the client believed his role was there to give the chief executive officer 'peace of mind,' and he saw himself as an ally, the chief executive officer often fought him on public platforms, creating confusion in the client. It was as if the chief executive officer recognised the significance of the role of risk in the organisation but shunned it at the same time. Perhaps the chief executive officer was in a way experimenting with the role of risk. In all the sessions held in the new organisation, the client often reported being 'cheesed off,' at what was being done to him or happening in the new organisation, a phrase he never used during coaching while at his previous organisation.

The client reported that he had been in predominantly white and black organisations respectively, always in the minority, and being in the middle he moved freely between the two races and could mix with people of all races at work. He once expressed agitation over his manager's request to spend some time with him, saying, 'why spend time with one person when there are a hundred and fifty people I can spend time with?' However, the client hinted that others resented him for straddling the race line.

5.4.6.1 Interpretations

Being young is associated with vulnerability, and the vulnerable are often susceptible to being used as guinea pigs. The role of risk embodied infancy and newness for the organisation and was located in a coloured client with minority status. The organisation thus seemed to be using infantilisation as a defence

against anxieties associated with the role of risk. The client's ability to move between different races offered adaptability to the system which used this to project experimentation and ambiguity on to him. Jung (2000) remarked that the coloured identity was filled with ambiguity because the group was historically placed in a conflictual space. It could be that the coloured client was unconsciously used by both blacks and whites to test the waters regarding how to make racial connections, thus becoming the bridge for the two races which typically occupied opposing positions.

5.4.6.2 *Working hypothesis*

The coloureds seem to be used for experimentation with newness and ambiguity by systems, because of their valence for adaptability, and for testing racial interactions between blacks and whites.

5.4.7 Racial pairing

Two black clients in a predominantly black organisation whose upper echelon was mostly white blamed the white minister for the status quo. One anticipated an exodus of whites at the top when the new minister, expected to be black, replaced the white minister. It was reported that a coloured minister in another department had been accused of employing only coloureds and whites at the top. A white female was reportedly appointed instead of a black female who had been leading a key project, resulting in the latter's resignation and chaos in the organisation leading the public sector. Subordinate black officials had signed a petition accusing the coloured minister of racism.

A black male would say, 'my dear lady' whenever referring to coloured or black colleagues, but would identify white colleagues by their names. The client explained that when he was thrown in the 'deep end and had to deal with issues

alone', the coloured woman was the only one who helped him. Another black client reported that a white predecessor did not give him a clear hand-over; that she gave him 'piles of documents, a very quick overview, five minutes summary', and did not hold him by the hand. A black executive was keen to assist him but was very busy so the client had to rely on other blacks in other organisations. Another black client reported that his white predecessor who was a telephone call away soon became annoyed with his requests for guidance so he stopped seeking help from her.

A white client whose work relations with a coloured subordinate were marked by difficulties expressed relief when her black manager requested to have the coloured subordinate transferred to his project. The white client believed that the coloured subordinate was doing well there, that the black male manager was holding her hand as he liked working closely with people. The client was happy that she did not have to look after them, and that the two would look after each other.

A black client reported plans to reorganise work to facilitate team collaboration as team members tended to work closely with those from their race groups. The client wanted to move people around to foster multi-skilling and also 'break the cabal'. The client believed that racial pairing was more intensified in two older white colleagues who always wanted to do things together. Whenever it was necessary to separate them they accused human resources of allowing blacks to work together, saying 'you and your people can go together but we cannot'. The white females preferred to seek guidance from a white female who used to be in human resources rather than collaborate with other blacks in the division. The client was frustrated that a white colleague agreed with him when preparing for presentations privately but fought him publicly when he made the presentations.

A black client pondering a looming transfer in the light of politics and leadership changes in the organisation said that if she could choose an ideal unit, it would be one led by a black man because it would be 'safe'. The client explained that whenever their black leader threw a tantrum, whites took it personally, whereas blacks rationalised that the leader was a scatterbrain.

5.4.7.1 Interpretations

The belief that there must be an exodus of one group for the other group to find its space, and the support offered to in-group members, seemed to prolong the segregation and entrench differences between the races. This supported the realistic group conflict theory's premise that one group's gain represents the other group's loss, leading to perceptions of group threat and conflict (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Safety, endearment and tolerance between members of similar race groups, in line with the similarity-attraction paradigm (Eddy, 2008) also seemed to intensify projections of badness on to the other. Fostering racial connections through the work design alluded to the anxieties of social interactions across the races and perhaps the coldness and distance between different races. The racial pairing which occurred in private but was publicly aborted could be a reflection of shame at being seen together and thus an undoing of the private pairing across races. It could also reflect envy, manifesting as an attempt to spoil the object's success or bullying through using the presentation forum to publicly flog the client (Lutgen-Sandrik & Alberts, 2006). Skolnick and Green (2004) stated that the inability to make connections bordered on the belief that doing so would be a violation of a divine order. The pairing that occurred in this study between blacks and coloureds to the exclusion of whites, and between coloureds and whites to the exclusion of blacks seemed to highlight the fluid position of coloureds. Sonn and Fisher (2003) noted the ambivalent status of coloureds as they have been positioned as both oppressed and oppressor.

5.4.7.2 *Working hypothesis*

Racial pairing creates safety for members of the in-group and maximises their access to resources at the expense of the out-group, while entrenching the separation of the races.

5.4.8 **Race dynamics at the boundary**

A black client reported that a white female predecessor, whom he experienced as difficult and uncooperative, seemed to interpret his coming over as an attempt by the organisation to denigrate her and the work she had done. The client said that she was not a happy person at all and subsequently left the unit. Another black client was not prepared to mentor a new manager who was appointed in the role he had been acting in for a long time.

A white client explained that it had been difficult to hand work over to a new incumbent because she had worked extremely hard and had found it difficult to separate from the work. She said, 'I had to divorce myself from the work to refrain from interfering'.

5.4.8.1 *Interpretations*

The departure of the white colleague on the arrival of the black client seemed to mirror the semigration that sees whites leaving their suburbs when blacks move into their neighbourhood (Spanierman & Heppner, 2004). The difficulties old employees experience over separating from work upon being replaced by new incumbents may be triggered by anxieties of extinction and anger over the devaluation of their contributions. It seemed work became an extension of the self and being forced to detach from it elicited me-ness as the subject focused on self-preservation. The changes, complexity and unpredictability of work kept the

dynamic alive as the hostility of replacement was recycled and acted out at the boundary as new incumbents eventually encountered newer ones assuming desired roles. Envy and sibling rivalry seemed triggered as new incumbents unconsciously represented newly born siblings taking away the good breast from the mother.

5.4.8.2 Working hypothesis

The replacement of old employees by new ones seems to trigger anxieties of extinction, anger over devaluation, and envy resulting in a punitive and retentive attitude towards new incumbents.

5.4.9 Defences against race

Some of the sub-themes which emerged under this topic are discussed below.

5.4.9.1 Defences against open race discourse

In one session it took an unusually long time, at a usually highly efficient organisation to admit the consultant, as if something was being avoided. While waiting for the client at the reception, a newspaper article of a white, seventeen year old boy who had shot dead four blacks in the North West Province caught the consultant's attention. At the age of fourteen the boy had shot a black man and claimed he had mistaken him for a monkey. The article triggered anger in the consultant, which turned out also to be felt by the black client.

The black client's preoccupations were anger at whites for complaining about power cuts and the white boy who had shot dead four blacks. The crime had triggered memories of trauma in the client, over an injustice her family had suffered years before. Her father had died after stopping to help a white female

motorist who was stuck. While getting out of the car, some white youths who were reportedly drunk drove past, hit and killed him. The white female motorist denied that her father had stopped to help her. White police officers who arrived at the scene supported her and thus the white youths were declared innocent. She said because of the incident she would never stop to help anyone, and especially mistrusted whites. She expressed mistrust at the justice system, expecting the white teenager who had shot the blacks to be acquitted on grounds of mental instability. The client stated that the big differences between races were sugar-coated in an attempt to minimise them. She used the analogy of Jesus to demonstrate an aversion to honest race discourse. According to the client, Christmas was preferred to Easter because baby Jesus encapsulates innocence, as opposed to the pain of crucifixion. She blamed our love of the infancy stage for our resistance to growing pains that come with honest race discourse. The client referred to a secret, unspoken pact between the races; that they meet and talk privately about race but not openly with one another. She believed this was because it would be too explosive if races spoke openly about what they felt with regard to race issues.

When another black client was relating his life story and recalled being victimised by a racist person, resulting in his harbouring of revenge fantasies, the story was stopped when an older white female and a younger black male came into the session, seeking a signature from the client. The story was not resumed.

The sombre atmosphere pervading the race issues in the country, and the challenge of carrying the diversity agenda sometimes made the consultant feel anxious about coaching. This triggered a flight reaction. On the day of the fifth session of coaching a black female client who had expressed the most intense and blatantly frank race opinions and experiences, the consultant was late by forty-five minutes. Although traffic was heavily congested because of the rain, the unconscious reason resided in the pessimism and the helplessness of the

consultant as a container of diversity issues. The session was held in a large, executive boardroom and mid-way there was a power failure, dimming the room as if to support the darkness of the country's mood and the clandestine nature of the grave topic of race.

Interpretations

There seemed to be institutional defences against working with race in the unconscious of the organisation which prevented painful race stories from being told. Offering a rainbow representation in the form of an older white female and a younger black male to silence the story was a defence against unspeakable race issues. The organisation was headed by an older white male and a younger black female who were reportedly working very well together. This story seemed to disrupt the fantasy of the rainbow nation and oneness for the organisation. Coetzee (2007) reported that South Africans are pressured to embrace the illusion of the miracle nation as a defence against differences.

The anger and mistrust that the client felt at the justice system over her father's death and the shooting of blacks seemed to be an unconscious expression of mistrust and anger towards the consultant as well. As a psychologist, the consultant was an object representing a profession which influences judgements over criminals' culpability. Thus the consultant represented exoneration of the perpetrator and the withholding of justice from the victim, thus colluding with the perpetrator and betraying the victim (client). The client may also have been referring to her lack of faith in diversity efforts, which do not focus on revenge, but on reconciliation and thus acquittal of perpetrators. She had stated that one of her goals was to judge people as individuals. She later admitted that this goal was unattainable, as it depended on what was happening in the broader society. If things were harmonious, the goal seemed attainable, however, once racial turmoil erupted, the goal became unattainable as everything was perceived

through prejudiced lenses. The fragile and deep fault-lines (Lau & Murnighan, 1998) amongst South Africa's diverse racial groups as evidenced by the tendency to interpret events through a racial lens led to splits (Nkomo & Kriek, 2004). The client's lack of faith in racial harmony was expressed in the fifth session when she stated that 'the only thing we can attain is relating in the workplace with respect as the social part of our lives is too incongruent with true equality and co-existence'. Dixon and Durrheim (2003) reported that informal segregation persisted despite institutional pressure for integration.

The minimisation of race difficulties and the fantasy of the rainbow nation could be a reflection of primal anxieties of annihilation. For blacks this anxiety could be about dehumanisation as they have been equated with baboons; for whites the fear could be of retaliation by blacks. The pleasure principle (Freud, 1949; Friedman, 1968) seemed activated when the pain of the crucifixion was resisted while fixation on the pleasurable innocence of birth occurred. This seemed to be about resistance to the depressive position, with its painful feelings, which could be equated with the crucifixion and thus fixation on the paranoid-schizoid position. Since resurrection follows crucifixion, it could be suggested that on a deeper level resistance to diversity is an avoidance of resurrection, which would herald meaningful object relations between the races.

White youths emerged as containers of white rage over transformation during the study. The Skielik shooting would be followed by a racist video made by students at the University of the Free State. In resisting transformation, whites often cite white youths, especially males, as sacrificial lambs. It remained unclear whether black criminals were containers of black rage as their targets are indiscriminately black and white. Although Steyn and Foster (2008) reported that crime has become increasingly democratised as it affects both white and black in South Africa, the common violent *modus operandi* reflects rage and dehumanisation, suggesting that projective identification with projections of

savagery has occurred. Black criminals could be containing blacks' fantasies of aggression against whites. Blacks who have acquired resources would be targeted because they have individuated and thus merged with the enemy.

Working hypothesis

Honest and open race discourse is defended against as it evokes primal anxieties of annihilation. The rainbow nation as a container of oneness seems to be a defence against working through diversity challenges to move to the depressive position.

5.4.9.2 Resistance to making racial connections

A black female client maintained that the good chemistry between a white male and black female leader would not last as forces would inevitably destroy it. The changing leadership threatened to split the pair. The white male eventually announced his retirement from politics and thus from his position as minister. According to the client racial splitting was inevitable because despite our sophistication, it was deeply embedded in our minds that certain racial lines were not crossed. Thus good racial pairing could only provide a glimmer of hope. Racial pairing was also violently destroyed when the client's father, a black male, was killed while trying to help a white female motorist.

A white female client worked very well with a younger black male subordinate. She spoke highly of him and believed he was underutilised in his role as he deserved a managerial role. This pairing was split by the appointment of a coloured female whose presence created some instability in the pair, culminating in the resignation of the black male client, much to the shock and dismay of his white female manager who said, 'I will never forget him'.

A black male client expressed disappointment that a Xhosa female had paired with an Indian female to the detriment of black males. Another black client expressed annoyance that Zuma was visiting white squatter camps because if blacks started a squatter camp they would be forcibly removed. The client expressed a desire that no interracial marriages would occur in her family as the two cultures were too different, and her family would always be subservient to the white family. According to the client, white in-laws would not understand when her black family had to buy groceries for their grandmother as the white grandmother was likely to be in an old age home. The client gave an example of a coloured woman who had married a black man. According to the client, the black husband expected *pap* from his wife while the coloured wife expected things to be done for her.

A coloured client reported receiving a condescending e-mail from an irate manager. The client responded by expressing anger but also inviting the manager to collaborate with head office efforts, which were led by black executives. The white manager shunned the invitation.

Interpretations

There seemed to be entrenched collusion in the collective unconscious against pairing across race, as if pairing should only happen within sameness. This suggested a fixation on fight-flight and an absence of a frame of reference for sustainable racial harmony. Thus when racial pairing occurred, it was disrupted through fleeing or fighting.

Using *pap* as a source of conflict in an interracial marriage seemed to address the dilemma in the responsibility for the hard work (cooking *pap* – which is a labour intensive dish), involved in creating cultural or racial harmony. When this question was posed directly to the client she responded, 'we (blacks) have done

the work, we have, but when they scream we get paralysed'. It seemed that in crossing racial boundaries, challenges of power distribution triggered power struggles which reinforced defences against racial pairing. Racial pairing also seemed to trigger anxieties of loss of identity through engulfment and this elicited the me-ness of racial groups (Lawrence, 2000).

Working hypothesis

The challenges of power sharing between the races, and the anxieties of engulfment by the dominant group lead to avoidance of racial pairing and a fixation on fight-flight.

5.4.9.3 Blacks' defences against racial anger

A black client reported that he was not the 'aggressive type' when an unhappy white predecessor behaved uncooperatively towards him. He was implying that the experience had triggered his aggressive impulses, which he rationalised away. In later sessions he reported being able to accommodate a white colleague who was often critical of black competence. The client attributed this to his personality, which he described as 'non-abrasive, non-confrontational and able to contain anger and volcanoes'. Once he had been confronted by a white colleague over an issue that was outside the colleague's jurisdiction. The white colleague's friend, an outside service provider, was not offered an air-conditioned training venue because a business meeting, which took precedence over training, had been booked in the air-conditioned venue. The angry white colleague referred to the black client and his black subordinate as 'you people,' a reference he found offensive, while lambasting them for not providing a venue with air-conditioning. The black client reported alarm at the entitlement of the service provider. He said that he took everything 'with a smile, or should I say a grin?' When probed further about the anger the client stated that 'suppressed

racial anger dissipated out of the system in more than one way'. In a later session while speaking about racial anger after reading an e-mail mocking racial integration and asserting white supremacy the client said racial superiority was very insulting and stated that he believed many blacks were angry. When asked about what happened to this anger, he replied 'Mandela and other leaders made us think', and continued that they had to try to let go of anger otherwise 'what will be the alternative? Swearing all the time, fighting, on all corners?' The client later said the call by leaders to let go of anger had helped to accept realities but did not solve the problem of pent-up frustrations, hence anger was bubbling up in all sorts of areas. He recalled a white female motorist who had insulted him and wondered if demons were in his mind only. He wondered about the experiences of fellow colleagues as if there was no space to share such experiences.

Another black client reported that laughter had become a defence against racial anger. The client gave an example of how blacks laughed when they got home after being chased and harassed by the police. She suggested that the pain became trivialised because thinking about it was too frightening. In a later session the client reported that a white employee had refused to ride in a company car with black colleagues, whom she referred to as baboons, and demanded to be fetched from home alone. The client was angry and bent on following up the matter. However, in a subsequent session the client reported being wary of compromising her position as information had been attained through channels that could weaken her case from a labour relations perspective. She had resolved to take the issue up with the union instead.

Interpretations

It seemed that racial anger was denied by blacks who used personality and humour as its containers (Blackman, 2004). The black client who credited his personality with the capacity to diminish racial anger, spoke about volcanoes

after referring to his non-confrontational personality; he spoke about a grin after a smile; he said many blacks were angry after reporting that anger dissipated out of his system; he attributed controlled anger to leaders including Mandela, having introjected moral authority figures into the superego (Hirschhorn, 1997a), but then said they did not solve the problem of pent-up frustrations. He later wondered whether demons resided only in him. Defences against racial anger eventually seemed to weaken as the avoided emotion of anger threatened to slip through, bubbling up unexpectedly in all sorts of situations in a free-floating manner to be contained by those with valence to act it out. Human (2005) reported that many South Africans experience intense unyielding emotions based on experiences of the past. The capacity of diversity realities to destabilise individuals as observed by Pretorius (2003) could also explain the defences against unspeakable racial anger which left the client grappling alone with demons. Defences were also visible on an institutional level as labour processes were used to contain diversity-related explosions in the workplace.

Working hypothesis

Blacks use various defence mechanisms such as rationalisation, trivialisation, suppression and humour to defend against racial anger. The disowned or denied racial anger does, however, slip through in a free-floating way.

5.4.9.4 Whites avoid race; blacks are sensitive to race

In several sessions a white client denied the role of race in challenges she had experienced and in the organisation in general. Often this happened before the consultant asked about race, as if to keep questions about race out of the coaching sessions. In the first session she reported that race was not an issue for her because she had grown up on a farm, had attended many diversity sessions since 1994 and did not see colour. In the second session she reported

age and literacy levels as diversity challenges. The client reported a clique in senior management in the third session and immediately insisted that it had nothing to do with colour; that 'it was not an apartheid thing'. In the fourth session the client remarked that there was an 'in-group and an out-group and it is not about colour'. In another session the client said, 'in today's workplace, gender is more problematic than race. There is no racial discrimination in the organisation'. According to her, the top level of the organisation had no race dynamics; just the exclusive power elite. The loaded statement the client made, 'I did not grow up rich, things did not fall into my lap even though people think I had it easy', belied her denial of race as a challenge. In the fifth session the client expressed frustration over blacks speaking in their languages and stopped herself after saying 'those people...' unconsciously emphasising the racial separation between herself and those people. She came closest to openly acknowledging race as a challenge in the fifth session when she admitted that there 'must be race issues somewhere in the organisation but it was difficult to pin point them'.

This white client tended to attribute problems to the less threatening diversity issues such as age, literacy and personality. For instance she reported that a black female refused to respect her black female superior yet respected the client, another female, and attributed this to her personality, not the probability that blacks were socialised to respect white superiors more than black ones. Recurring problems the client experienced seemed to be influenced by racial dynamics but she remained very reluctant to work with race. Even when a subordinate said about the client to a consultant working in the organisation, 'my madam made you uncomfortable in that meeting', the client did not work with the choice of the word 'madam,' which historically implies a power dynamic between a white employer and a black employee. The client urged the subordinate to call her by her name several times but then he reverted to calling her 'madam' again, a sign that it was difficult for him to see her as a real equal, and thus maintaining

past power dynamics. In one session, the client reported experiencing powerlessness in relation to a black male colleague, but retracted the statement and said it was not about power. As a result, she felt overwhelmed by the impact work-related difficulties had on her because she was avoiding one of the core issues, that of race. The client said she could work with anyone because she did not discriminate. Sublimation also played a role in defending against her aggressive impulses triggered by these race-related difficulties. She reported that she had decided to pray about a work problem which involved the racial pairing of blacks against her.

The client's disowned race issues also emerged in her tendency to rewrite the experiences of blacks. Her subordinates told her that they felt hurt when she asked them to do things twice. The client believed that it was not hurt the subordinates felt, but rather frustration as she believed hurt meant different things to them. In another session the client said her subordinates reported fear but she claimed it was actually uncertainty. Later she attributed what she believed was a miscommunication to differing literacy levels.

Another white client spoke more freely and honestly about race issues, even though it happened mostly at the invitation of the consultant. The frequency of open race discussions was much lower yet it seemed that on many occasions discussions were indirectly about race as senior management in her organisation was predominantly black.

This was in sharp contrast to black clients' ability and willingness to point out race issues and analyse race dynamics in the organisations. In addition all blacks spontaneously shared the role race played in their lives. A black male recalled being degraded while growing up, working in a mine. A black female reported joining student politics following the death of her father who had been killed by white youths. A black client lamented constant reminders of past racial

traumas following the Skielik shooting and the University of the Free State video. The former reminded the client of her father's death, while the latter reminded her of her mother, a domestic servant who had arthritis 'not because it was genetic but because she had to do washing for her white employers with her hands early in the mornings'. A coloured client recalled that it had been an eye-opener to be offered residence over the telephone in the Free State where he was registered to study, only to be told upon arrival that the accommodation was no longer available. The white landlord explained to him that he had sounded white on the telephone but said his dogs would bite him as he was coloured. While at school this client had mobilised a school boycott after noticing undemocratic elections in sport and demarcations between blacks and whites. This was followed by living with the threat of looming detention as the police were hunting down rebels during political unrest. However, the client also reported an ability to distance himself from attributing many things to race. He reported that an Indian colleague who was close to the chief executive officer had presented an overdue and mediocre report, and when a white manager expressed discontent the Indian manager commented that blacks were always seen as incompetent. According to the client if workers were efficient, skin colour was irrelevant. He suggested that perhaps it was because he had not been detained and tortured that he could not easily attribute things to race. He made the comment that his coloured friend who had been detained and tortured often saw life through a race lens.

Interpretations

The consistent denial of the role of race by the white client suggested an unacknowledged preoccupation with race, which came through covertly in race-laden statements. Whiteness studies reveal a tendency of white people to describe themselves as aracial because they are rarely confronted with their race. This tends to undermine their ability to fully appreciate the prevalence of racial difficulties (McDermott & Samson, 2005; Twine & Gallagher, 2008). The

client's assertions seemed to reflect the colour-blind ideal which has also been framed as a defence against race issues (Lewis, 2004). Sublimation was also used against race-related anxieties, especially anger. It seemed that the reluctance of the white client to speak about race was a defence against feeling persecuted by the perception some blacks hold that all whites grew up rich and are perpetrators. Wasserman et al., (2008) reported the difficulties for members of dominant groups who have to come to terms with an identity associated with historical oppression and power, regardless of whether the individual experiences that association personally.

In rewriting the blacks' experiences the white client seemed to be defending against her anxiety of being a persecutor. If she minimised black people's hurt as frustration, then she would not be inflicting too much pain. If she minimised their fear as uncertainty, she would receive a less intense reaction. If she attributed their differences to literacy and not race, then she had a cognitively-based tool to deal with the differences, which she would not have should the differences turn out to be racial and emotive. The low literacy of blacks would also justify the invalidation of black experiences. However, unconsciously this could be allowing her to maintain her position of power. By disowning her racist part and not working with it, she was able to rewrite the experiences of blacks in a non-threatening way. Racial denial seemed exacerbated by transferential issues in the coaching session, as the black coach tended to trigger trust issues in the white client who mistrusted the black female executive. The black consultant thus represented unresolved anxiety-provoking racial conflicts.

Demographic similarity, on the other hand, seemed to foster open and deep race discussions between blacks, seemingly aided by shared history and implicit understanding. In addition, the black consultant as an object did not trigger the anxieties of the recrimination blacks often experience when they discuss the pain

related to their past suffering, as they are urged to 'forgive and forget and move on'.

Apartheid experiences have been traumatic for many blacks and residues of racism trigger flashbacks and traumatic memories. Pretorius (2003) reported that blacks still carry the emotional scars of oppression. The racial experiences of blacks seemed to have heightened their sensitivity to race issues, and possibly their need for catharsis. Scurfield and Mackey (2001) reported that exposure to a range of race-related experiences could result in significant stress or trauma. Thompson and Carter (1997) referred to the plague of racism and its often lethal effects. Booysen (2007c) noted that in South Africa, although whites often acknowledged tension in organisations, they did not always appreciate the depth of tension, whereas the previously disadvantaged groups clearly experienced the tension which registered at a much deeper level (Ngambi, 2002). Pretorius (2003) reported that whites seem to have split off their memory of the past and projected it into blacks who carry it on behalf of the whole system. He added that race difficulties would recur until they have been listened to and adequately addressed.

Working hypothesis

Experiences of racism seem to linger longer in blacks who have been on the receiving end of injustice, while they are defended against by whites through denial, sublimation or rewriting the black experience. Anxieties about its explosive nature make the healing of race-related trauma difficult as cathartic expressions by blacks are resisted and experienced as punitive.

5.5 ETHNICITY AS A DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

Ethnicity sub-themes that were identified and their working hypotheses will be discussed in this section.

5.5.1 Ethnic pairing

A Sotho client reported in the second session that all managers in the top echelon, except one, were Xhosa. According to the client some of them were appointed with insufficient skills while the glaring mistakes of others were ignored. A Xhosa manager leading his team presented an outdated report at an executive meeting and did not bother changing the dates. Later he refused to give feedback at an important forum; instead he joked and said that he had given concerned individuals feedback informally. The Xhosa leader reportedly ignored both issues and did not lash out angrily as she would to managers outside her ethnic group. During the fifth session the client reported that two executive meetings were very tough as his unit received negative feedback from the leader who was furious about their inadequate presentations. He believed that the image of his unit had been tarnished and that his direct manager had 'gone down the drain'. However, once the Xhosa manager leading his unit had returned from his commitments outside the organisation, the client reported that the next executive meeting had gone well because the leader never confronted the Xhosa manager. The client reported that another senior Xhosa professional was known to underperform consistently but the leader ignored the issue because she 'protects her own kind'. The client referred to 'untouchables in the organisation' and said it was very demoralising for those in the out-group, like himself.

A Zulu client mentioned that some people had joked that he was happy after Zuma won the ANC election. Another client cited someone who had said that once the Zulus came on board, the first thing to do would be to get rid of the

Xhosas. The client expressed relief at not being Xhosa. She had jokingly asked a Zulu colleague not to forget her 'when the Zulu kingdom comes'. A Sotho client reported that a Xhosa senior leader had started deploying some Xhosa employees who were close to her strategically to non-political units which were invulnerable to political change as it was expected that when Zuma took office, he would appoint Zulus. The client reiterated a belief that the 'Zulus are coming in numbers'.

A Sotho client reported that a Sotho manager had whispered to him that he should not have applied for a position he did not get as it had been rumoured that the position was earmarked for a Xhosa candidate. Eventually a Xhosa female was appointed reportedly under dubious circumstances. The Sotho client expressed dismay at the manager's deficiencies, describing her as a glorified manager. The client said the manager was dumping too many projects on him and could not make a decision without consulting him. The client wondered how she would cope at the intimidating executive meeting but reasoned that, 'the Xhosas will protect her'. The client was urged by some individuals in human resources to challenge the appointment but he declined as he anticipated being victimised by such a move. He concluded that senior appointments were made largely through nepotism.

5.5.1.1 Interpretations

Ethnic affiliations seemed to create favouritism among members of the in-group who appeared to push boundaries without experiencing consequences. Satisfying the need for affiliation and thus advancing one's social identity group (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) seemed to be placed above pragmatism and fairness. Members of the dominant ethnic group were more likely to experience the workplace positively as they experienced belonging, protection and validation. Chrobot-Mason et al., (2007) reported the pressure leaders face to demonstrate

bias in favour of their in-group as followership and sanction are earned through pleasing members of their identity groups. Kauzya (2001) noted the tendency of leaders to encourage and perpetuate ethnicity for personal reasons in African governments as positions in the public service are seen as symbols of ethnic power and superiority.

5.5.1.2 Working hypothesis

Ethnic affiliation to the dominant group influences career advancement and success at the expense of the out-group. It seems that blacks who enjoy the benefits of black empowerment the most are those belonging to the ethnic groups of political leaders.

5.5.2 Conflicts over expressions of cultural identity

Black clients working in predominantly black teams made up of different cultures reported that they worked very well together, or that they had no diversity problems. A black client said blacks were able to speak freely about culture amongst each other and could joke about it because it was not 'taboo like race'.

A white female client believed that 'culture was a stronger issue to race as some cultures were stronger than others'. This client referred to the offence blacks took to a white male who pointed a finger at them; and a male Zulu subordinate who had problems submitting to her as a woman. The client expressed discomfort over traditional accessories worn by a Zulu subordinate whom she described as temperamental. When upset, he came to work wearing an animal skin bangle and hat, explaining that he needed to communicate with his ancestors who calmed him down. The client was concerned about the dark spirits he was bringing into the work environment as it was said that spirits were guiding him to do certain things. The client later commented approvingly that the

organisation was accommodative towards Muslims who had a prayer room. Later in the same session she stated that the black subordinate who wore animal skin accessories had to adapt to the culture at work but immediately retracted her statement, saying that the subordinate ought to be able to wear his traditional adornments to work.

A black client reported that predominantly black organisations subscribed to white etiquette and expected blacks to adopt the white man's prescription of appropriate cultural behaviour. Consequently, a Venda interviewee was rejected for not maintaining eye contact during a selection interview.

5.5.2.1 Interpretations

Race seemed to be more important or readily acknowledged by blacks than by whites. Racial homogeneity appeared to create the façade of cultural harmony for blacks. Blacks seemed to use race and humour as containers of unspeakable cultural conflicts amongst themselves. Coetzee (2007) reported that jokes were often used to reduce anxiety of differences. On the other hand, whites seemed to use culture as a container of unspoken racial conflict with blacks.

Evil appeared to be projected on to African culture and spirituality while good seemed projected on to the prayer room which was more familiar. The dark spirits could be a defence against making connections with the black man as the spirits could make him incomprehensible. The intolerance was defended against through undoing. Rejection of black culture by blacks suggested self-rejection. Sonn and Fisher (2004) stated that the cultural estrangement and negative self-evaluation displayed by blacks were the results of oppression.

5.5.2.2 *Working hypothesis*

Racial homogeneity seems to be a container of cultural conflicts amongst blacks, whereas culture is used by whites to contain racial conflicts with blacks. The darkness projected on to others may be a defence against making connections across differences.

5.6 AUTHORITY AS A DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

Identified authority sub-themes and their working hypotheses will be discussed in this section.

5.6.1 Authority as punitive and inaccessible

Senior leadership was experienced as disempowering and castrating. A white client reported that talking to seniors about difficulties she experienced would be like 'cutting off my nose'. The client believed that leaders at the top did not allow managers to manage as they made decisions without involving them. In the last session the client reported that a manager who had been reporting to her was transferred to another department without her involvement. The client described the leaders' attitude as disrespectful and their refusal to involve others in their decisions as a 'disease flowing around'. The client said helplessly, 'you can't change them; they have the power, it's their management style'. In the roleogramme she depicted the upper level as heads only, without bodies, as if expressing an unconscious wish to dismember them. Those with whom the client got along, and those who were on her level, were drawn as complete figures. The client reported a clique at the top which made things difficult for others. She criticised the organisation for ignoring people issues and remarked, 'imagine ignoring your child for a whole week or a month'. In the tenth session the client reported that members of her team were upset that the top had

accused them of not going the extra mile. She said, 'people are angry, the superiors do not understand them, they are sitting on the fourth floor with no idea of what we are doing down here'. Shortly afterwards, a subordinate came in to offer the consultant tea. The client said to the subordinate, 'you are going the extra mile,' and explained to the consultant that the subordinate had volunteered to offer the tea. The subordinate jokingly replied, 'tell that to the minister'.

Another white client reported that the leadership style of those at the top was punitive and humiliating, closing people off and withholding staff involvement as they were bombarded with negative comments. She perceived the leaders as listening and promising but not fulfilling promises, and being closed to feedback. According to the client their service offering, training, was never good-enough for those at the top because they did not know what they wanted, yet people at the bottom were hungry to be trained. The client reiterated that managers had no respect for employees.

A black client in another organisation reported feeling authorised by those on his level and below but not by those at the top. A coloured client reported that his manager liked listening to his own voice, making his power evident and reminding others that he was in charge. The manager tended to critique, edit and change memos submitted without changing the essence of the memos. The client believed that his manager enjoyed confrontation in an attempt to break him down. In one particular session the client said it was great coming to work if he knew that his manager would not be there. When the client resigned, the manager summoned him for a performance appraisal, leading the client to believe that it was to assert his authority over him, one last time.

A black client reported that other employees were cautious around her as she worked very closely with a minister. They spent time with her during functions

but inevitably moved away from her, as if they saw the client as an extension of the authority object.

A coloured client observed that white executive managers were often silent like children in meetings and that the black chief executive officer acted like their father. The chief executive officer had been appointed to turn the organisation around and thus had withdrawn decision-making power from all managers, who happened to be white. His attitude and the restructuring processes had fostered a passive-aggressive attitude towards him manifesting as sabotage of important meetings. The client was given a warning by the chief executive officer after he had confirmed a project to a service provider before signatures had been obtained. The client believed that the warning was meant to curtail his influence as it was common practice to confirm projects before getting signatures. The client believed that the chief executive was threatened by him as while the client reported to him, the client was also involved with the independent audit committee to which the chief executive reported. The client had noticed that the chief executive's authority shrank in the audit committee.

The client reported anger directed at head office by all branches. A common sentiment pervading the provinces was, 'blow up head office'. According to the client, head office had become a swear word, and having come from head office, he was regarded as someone 'useless'. The client forced himself to adhere to time frames even when overworked; he complained that some managers 'sprang delays' at him and while relating how he had been firm with some of the managers he said, 'finish and *klaar*' and afterwards he remarked that he sounded just like Jackie Selebi, the suspended chief of police, who defiantly used the same authoritarian words in relation to his criminal charges.

5.6.1.1 *Interpretations*

Top echelons of management were experienced as deauthorising, punitive, inaccessible and withholding of the validation and support desired by subordinates. It seemed that authority figures triggered helplessness in subordinates who regressed to the dependent position of children needing containment. Stapley (2006) reported an innate need for maternal gratification that persists throughout life and which indicated that full independence was never achieved. The individual typically vacillated between separation from the maternal attachment to regression and dependence. Such regression was triggered by anxieties of abandonment and loss of the love object (Chattopadhyay, 2002). Counter-dependence was evident when the manager gave the subordinate a compliment withheld by top management.

Anxieties of the oedipal type (Thwaites, 2007) seemed to be triggered in the managers as the retraction of their decision-making powers could be equated to castration (Czander, 1993). The passive-aggression of managers could reflect the conflict between the wishes and prohibitions in relation to the chief executive officer who was a father object who was both needed and resented. The split between executives and subordinates invited many projections of hostility and narcissism on to executives and elicited envy-related aggressive fantasies, since authority plays a significant role in the intrapsychic world of employees (Czander, 1993). Projecting sickness on to managers seemed to be a way of disempowering them, as being diseased would dilute their power by making them vulnerable. However, the free-floating disease of disrespect could also trigger anxieties about the managers' own oppression in relation to their subordinates as they could contract the disease. Identification with the aggressor (Stapley, 2006) was suggested when the manager adopted the authoritarian language of the seemingly untouchable chief of police.

5.6.1.2 *Working hypothesis*

Authority figures trigger dependence and counter-dependence as they fail to meet the subordinates' unconscious needs. The split between authority figures and subordinates leads to projections of narcissism and hostility on to the managers.

5.6.2 Projection of confusion by authority on to lower levels

A white client reported an island effect in the organisation, remarking that there was 'no direction, no nothing' from the top in her roleogramme. Being a manager was thus difficult for her as she was not told what to do and had to feel her way. This was an echo of what a client had expressed earlier when she said, 'only those at the top know what is expected of them'. In subsequent sessions the former client reported being very clear about the direction of projects within her division yet her subordinates reported being confused. A subordinate who was not performing optimally later informed her that she experienced the organisation as very confusing.

A black client who had an adversarial relationship with a coloured manager was once promised support by the manager. After offering hope to the client the manager did not inform the client about interviews held for the same position or the outcome of these interviews. The client expressed confusion about what was happening and the type of performance agreement he had to sign as he was between positions. He believed that his seniors were playing mind games with him. In some sessions he felt overwhelmed and confused, followed by feelings of optimism reflected in what he had said about the position - 'I'm holding the fort'. It would seem that he felt indispensable, only to return to feeling overwhelmed and confused at a later stage.

5.6.2.1 *Interpretations*

The ambiguity and complexity of the workplace, especially within the broader context of change, seemed to create isolation and confusion in upper levels of management, who then projected this confusion on to lower levels. Whereas the managers reported confusion in relation to those at the top and clarity within their division, their subordinate reported confusion. It seemed authority figures split the not-knowing from themselves and projected it on to subordinates with the valence for it.

5.6.2.2 *Working hypothesis*

Confusion, triggered by the ambiguities and complexities of the workplace, is split off by authority figures and projected on to lower levels.

5.6.3 Paranoia of authority figures

A white client stated that there were spies in the organisation reporting others to the powers that be. Another white client believed that leaders mistrusted them and tested their loyalty. The experience of mistrust was expressed by the coloured client whose ninth session was held in a coffee shop as he suspected that his office had been bugged. The client had started to censor his conversations when at work. Upon discussing his experiences with another coloured male executive, who was apparently treated the same way, the latter became cautious and stated that he was not sure if he could trust the client. The coloured executive later confirmed that his offices had previously been bugged. The paranoia filtered down to other levels of the organisation as the client did not trust his coloured personal assistant either. He believed that the personal assistant had manipulated him into giving him keys to his office while he was away in order to steal competency-based questions for an interview in which he

was scheduled to participate. During the interview, all experienced candidates from the same organisations were flustered by some questions, one even cried from frustration, but the personal assistant answered all the questions effortlessly and accurately.

The consultant experienced paranoia on entering the building when the receptionist insisted on knowing the identity of the organisation the consultant represented. It seemed unacceptable that the consultant should have come in her private capacity and when that was conveyed twice, the receptionist seemed annoyed. The paranoia seemed to disempower the organisation which was prone to fraud and was defrauded of huge amounts of money by an employee during the brief coaching period.

5.6.3.1 Interpretations

The paranoia permeating many levels of the system set off a chain reaction of paranoid transactions. This pushed the organisation into me-ness as everyone focused on self-preservation by avoiding the traps, and on fight-flight behaviour. These dynamics may have predisposed the organisation to fraud. The employee who defrauded the organisation might have had valence to act out the paranoia on behalf of the system by identifying with projections of suspicion, and thereby becoming the enemy sought to sustain the fighting. The fraud could also have been an unconscious attack on the black chief executive whose turnaround strategy was experienced as castrating by the all-white managers.

5.6.3.2 Working hypothesis

Acute paranoia permeating many levels of the system triggers me-ness and fight-flight behaviour which predisposes the system to harm as projective identification occurs with the paranoia to act out the betrayal.

5.6.4 Ambivalence towards authority

The clients displayed ambivalence towards authority figures at times. In one instance the leader's perceived devouring was fought as much as her nurturing. A client was disapproving of what she described as the senior leader's excessive generosity; the leader had subsidised meals to amounts of over fifty percent, yet the employees still had complaints. The client had also reported being shocked to see the senior leader in a caring mode because she was not used to seeing the leader's gentle side.

Authority also inspired awe in some clients. A client said with pride about a senior leader whom he had also described as very frightening, 'when you see the senior leader, you see true power'. The client was flattered that the senior leader always remembered him.

Another client reported that highly educated managers who were addressed as doctors and professors in the status-conscious organisation instilled awe in subordinates. Thus the client experienced pressure to complete his doctoral studies. He believed that a previous personal assistant had felt that reporting to him was a demotion as previously the assistant had reported to a professor.

5.6.4.1 Interpretations

Subordinates seemed to be resisting the incorporation of positive aspects such as the generosity and kindness of their leaders and thus held them as part-objects. This made it difficult to work with the leaders as whole objects, and to make these interactions constructive. It seemed that the depressive position was resisted by refusing to see authority figures as both punitive and nurturing. The disapproval of generosity could also be a reflection of the greed triggered by a sibling rivalry dynamic in which all the good was desired for oneself. The awe inspired by leaders and plans to complete doctoral degrees like them suggested

an introjection of them as idealised objects and perhaps an unconscious wish to merge with them. Stapley (2006) believed that humans start out life dependent on authority figures and inevitably introject childhood authority figures.

5.6.4.2 *Working hypothesis*

Subordinates' ambivalence towards authority figures reflects challenges in integrating the good and bad parts of the leaders in order to work with them as whole objects and thereby move to the depressive position from where they can own their badness.

5.6.5 Authority as a defence

A client suspected that a critical manager kept persecuting him to hide her own insecurities. The manager had failed to answer questions and to provide leadership at a few significant platforms. The client concluded that those at the top did not take accountability seriously and left subordinates to bear the brunt of their incompetence.

Another client believed that the silencing behaviour of senior managers at executive meetings was a refusal to welcome information that highlighted the need for change. The client felt stuck as she struggled for a long time to get buy-in for a skills audit strategy from senior executives. The executives consistently claimed not to understand the strategy, no matter how often she made presentations and simplified it. Instead they insisted on taking her to cabinet to explain the strategy. They instructed the client to keep the skills audit strategic as they did not understand her methodology. In addition, the skills audit was always placed at the bottom of the agenda.

In the midst of coaching, the client sent an e-mail to her manager, which she copied to his superior, addressing the chronic lack of support and resources for her role. The client reported that her manager responded by 'attacking me mildly to put it diplomatically'. He accused her of putting too much pressure on others by demanding too much. He also blamed her for the resignation and the non-performance of subordinates. The manager indicated that he would not be able to work with the client anymore. He wanted the client to move to other units with her projects. More than a month later the manager had not indicated where the client should go, and instead warned her that he might not be able to accommodate her. The client was frustrated by being left in limbo; she thought she had an ulcer and worried about losing the peace she had transiently acquired during the coaching.

Another client described an organisational system that worked against scientists who aspired to management roles by failing to provide them with skills. The client asserted that many of those who became managers were 'useless' and were using reports to cover their incompetence. Consequently, they did not answer e-mails if they did not have answers to the questions put to them. The client described a clique involving executives as an 'evil' as at times they blindly sanctioned each other's inefficiency and tardiness.

Another client reported that the senior executives refrained from disseminating information from a survey that indicated that employees were stressed because they wished to avoid taking action or making the changes which would be required. This was despite the high turnover of staff in the organisation.

5.6.5.1 Interpretations

Leaders seemed to use their power to dominate. It could be argued that by doing so, they were acting out authoritarianism, which stifled individual freedom

and emanated from an over-emphasis on hierarchical structures (Stapley, 2006). Chattopadhyay (2002) highlighted the typically dysfunctional interplay between hierarchy-in-the-mind and authority which at times could translate into managers becoming controlling. Authority figures also seemed to defend against incompetence by projecting it on to subordinates and using academic credentials as its containers. The role performance problems of scientists who were denied managerial skills could be attributed to the organisation (Newton et al., 2006), which did not capacitate these scientists. Authority figures seemed to deny anxiety-provoking processes requiring changes as such change threatened the status quo and their survival. The skills audit might have threatened to reveal unearned positions acquired through ethnic and political connections. Keeping the skills audit on a strategic, distant level and not on a practical, personal level, relegating it, and refusing to understand it seemed to be defences against anxieties about change.

5.6.5.2 Working hypothesis

Leaders appear to use their authority as a defence against incompetence, which they project on to subordinates, while denying anxiety-provoking changes which threaten the status quo and their survival.

5.6.6 The anxiety of changing political leadership

The changing leadership within the country's ruling party created anxieties in the clients and their organisations. A black female client said that the 2007 Polokwane ANC conference had triggered racial conversations that unearthed repressed feelings. A white female client remarked that work was in limbo as the organisation, regarded as highly political as the minister was on the ANC's national executive committee, awaited the appointment of the new ANC president. The client believed that if Zuma was appointed, there would be

‘turmoil and stagnation’ at work. Towards the end of the year the client reported being exhausted by worrying about rounding up, unfinished work and the anxiety over political changes. Early in the following year the client reported being ‘tired - a depressive kind of tiredness,’ feeling demoralised and struggling to stay optimistic. She was alarmed that it was happening so early in the year. The client, whose black female leader was also reportedly in Mbeki’s camp, reported a ‘silence’ on the part of the leader. The client had not heard from the leader and wondered whether she still existed. Even in significant meetings, contentious issues were no longer on the agenda.

A black male client from the same organisation reported that many employees were playing it safe; waiting to see the outcome of Zuma’s trial. There was a strong expectation that their minister would not survive Zuma’s appointment as he was believed to be a staunch Mbeki supporter who had campaigned actively for him.

A black female client in another organisation whose minister was also believed to be in Mbeki’s camp reported feeling utterly exhausted. The client said, ‘if only I could have just an hour to rest in a week’. She reported poor concentration and dissociative feelings at times. According to the client, the change of leadership created a split between those in the Mbeki camp and those in Zuma’s camp, with the former reportedly wanting to jump ship owing to career insecurities. The client noted that many people were ‘applying for new jobs like crazy’. She reported a ‘buzz’ in the organisation; a waiting for something to erupt as major changes were envisaged. The client also described a ‘silence’ on the part of the minister, who for the first time had declined to attend significant meetings and had ceased to be responsive. This seemed to have created distress among senior white leaders in Mbeki’s camp who were likely to be pushed out of their positions once Zuma took over. The client suggested that the face of black economic empowerment might change as Mbeki had been seen as a ‘coconut’

(black on the outside and white on the inside) in some circles, as not many blacks had benefitted from his empowerment policies and practices.

A black male client who had waited for a promotion for a long time while watching a white male promoted after a short period reported 'subdued layers of fears' in whites occupying senior positions as they were overrepresented at the top, and hope in black males unable to access such positions. A team facilitator assisting in his division agreed that fear permeated many levels of the organisation. The facilitator called it self-preservation. According to the client people wanted to 'cover their backs all the time'; they copied a string of people when they sent e-mails. The client admitted to experiencing paranoia and said it was affecting his studies negatively as when reporting on real work examples he worried that the 'big eye' that monitored internet usage for 'unsavoury sites' would access his assignments. It had been recommended that senior appointments should not be made until the political order was clear as it would not make sense for people to entrench themselves in new positions. In the twelfth session the client reported that the fear could be cut with a knife and that, after a few individuals were dismissed, there was an implicit message that people should not talk to human resources.

A female client reported suspicions of spousal infidelity and wondered if a divorce was imminent immediately after speaking about the changing leadership. White female clients expressed hope in the departure of Mbeki, as it meant getting rid of their current black leaders. One expressed hope that inept political appointments rewarded for struggle sacrifices would be replaced. The client was alarmed when the senior black leader feigned surprise when informed about low education levels of municipal managers after a newspaper article exposed that their skills were inadequate to run the municipalities. The findings had been suppressed from the public two years before because they were 'sensitive'. Releasing them now seemed to be a political strategy. Another white female

client was looking forward to the departure of a senior black leader she had experienced as devouring. When the black male client reported the fear experienced by white males and an expected exodus of whites, a white female opened the door of the coaching room, as if to assert her presence in the organisation and to dispute what the black client was suggesting.

5.6.6.1 Interpretations

Racial conflict seemed to be contained by political parties, particularly since race and political affiliation have been historically intertwined in South Africa. Political discourse is usually resisted in diversity workshops where norms often prohibit its open discussion. This seems to be about denying and suppressing race. This perhaps explains the explosive manner with which race is engaged with at political forums. The 'power cuts' from Mbeki created paralysing anxieties about change that highlighted the fact that political leadership provides access to privileges and resources, especially to members of the same identity groups. Although anticipated by some to be taking up the role of president, Zuma seemed to be a container of turmoil and stagnation. Anxieties of change were mirrored at all levels of organisations as fight-flight behaviour was activated. The exhaustion, pessimism, paranoia and flight reactions such as dissociation and job-seeking behaviours suggested the possibility of psychotic anxiety triggered by the changes. This created intense splits, which triggered fantasies of betrayal as Mbeki and Zuma went through an acrimonious divorce (Berger, 2008). The changing political leadership seemed to locate hope in blacks and females and fear in white males and blacks at the top.

5.6.6.2 *Working hypothesis*

The loss of political power through the acrimonious divorce of the leaders of the biggest ruling party created anxiety of the psychotic type as the unknown and feared were confronted, and also triggered fight-flight reactions.

5.6.7 Anxieties of survival

During the sixth session, a black male client reported being afraid of what was happening in the country on a personal level regarding the increasing costs of living. He expressed concerns about the debts he had accrued and the disturbing rate of house and car repossessions. His immediate fear was that he would be denied the post of head of human resources. He said this would devastate him financially. The usually controlled client said financial disruptions would not be right as 'tempers which were in slumber might one day explode in a road rage'. He noted that reassurances that it was darker before dawn did not make him optimistic. He reported two substations that had blown up as a result of load shedding and strain on 'transformers'. According to him, this had a negative effect on the country's image as the blow ups had happened near the country's main airport. The client remarked that he had switched from the news to music in his car to avoid hearing more bad news.

The consultant had been late arriving at that session - for the first time with this client. This happened when telephones and e-mails were not working in the organisation during the load shedding, thus preventing the consultant's from informing the client that she was on her way. The client said that he was praying for IT to resolve the communication crisis. In that session, the client reported that he had requested tea for the consultant to help calm her down since it was uncharacteristic of her to be late.

A white female client reported experiencing the workplace as anxiety-provoking as she lived with uncertainty due to constant changes. She spoke of her fears of losing her job, her whole career, and made the analogy of driving a bicycle first, then a motorbike, then a small car, then a BMW sedan and finally a BMW four wheel drive, only 'to lose everything and start from scratch, when it is taken away from you'.

A coloured male client in an organisation undergoing a redesign was upset about conflicting messages communicated by leaders. While leaders reassured the members of the workforce not to worry, he believed that things would change drastically. In a later session he was upset that he had been excluded from increases which other employees were receiving because new recruits were not awarded the increments.

A black female client said that she was not bothered by the uncertainty. She reiterated that it was pointless trying to look for a job when she did not know for sure what would happen. She said there was no time to worry about uncertainties as so much was happening.

5.6.7.1 Interpretations

Economic and political uncertainties created anxieties of survival and dispossession, which threatened to collapse the defences mobilised against suppressed aggression. It seemed the client was speaking about containers (transformers) incapable of containment when loads were shed. Perhaps this implied that the consultant was a container of transformation anxieties. In that session, the client had acknowledged aggressive instincts without rationalising them immediately as he had been doing in the past. The aggression also seemed to be levelled at the consultant as an ineffective container as she had been late for a session in which she had invited load shedding. The violation of

boundary conditions created inconsistency in the client system, compromising the containment capacity of the coach (Kilburg, 2000). With dependency needs unmet, the client seemed to be unconsciously moving into a counter-dependency position in which roles were reversed as he took over the role of containing, unconsciously relegating the consultant. The consultant's own anxieties of survival in the same economic climate seemed to have been projected on to the client, resulting in relational transference which occurs when the coach contributes to the client's material (Knight, 2007). The failures of transformers near the airport, the boundary of the country, seemed to trigger shame and anxieties of being found out. Seeing the country which sold the fantasy of the rainbow nation to the world being incapable of shedding its load without blow-ups seemed to evoke shame. Coetzee (2007) reported that South Africans felt compelled to fake it and live up to the miracle nation reputation. Booysen (2007c) noted that as identity-conflict occurs within the workplace, the fantasy of the rainbow nation collapsed.

The session ended with a discussion of an employee who had been committed to a psychiatric facility suffering a psychotic breakdown marked by delusions of grandeur and of being a saviour. Perhaps the client was unconsciously referring to delusions of grandiosity of the consultant who was trying to save a society from transformation blow-ups when it was fixated on fight-flight. This also reminded the consultant of the susceptibility to depletion of those working with the chaotic and emotionally draining mandate of diversity. Coetzee (2007) reported that diversity consultants are both narcissistic and masochistic, given the emotionally draining nature of their work. This results in a failure to contain as depletion and saturation points are reached. Perhaps by praying for IT to resolve the communication crisis the client was really talking about handing the difficult diversity mandate over to something bigger than human beings, perhaps to divinity - the omnipotent IT called by many names.

5.6.7.2 *Working hypothesis*

The failure of containers of transformation to fulfil the needs of containment and thus get rid of anxieties about survival seems to elicit aggression towards and denigration of the containers, and a fantasy to replace them with more powerful containers.

5.7 DISABILITY AS A DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

The disability theme and the working hypothesis will be discussed in this section.

5.7.1 Disability as a container of deficiencies

A client reported working with a paraplegic colleague with whom he had polite and easy-going interactions. However, the client was unsure about how far he could stretch the disabled colleague, especially when he was given extra tasks when another colleague was seconded to a different department. The client suspected that the disabled colleague might have sustained neurological injuries during his accident as at times he was rather forgetful. The client had once given him a report to complete and upon requesting it, the colleague had insisted that the report had never been given to him. A few days later the disabled colleague presented the report to the client as if nothing had happened. Someone had once complained about the disabled colleague's ineffective planning skills and poor attention to detail. The client attributed these problems to unmet training needs, which were consistently postponed due to high workload. The client was anxious about having a discussion with the disabled colleague. Only three months later, did he have an in-depth discussion with the disabled colleague to explore how he was coping and how he experienced the work environment. The disabled colleague emphasised the desire to maintain his independence.

The lift in the organisation did not go up to the highest floor where the canteen was situated making physically disabled employees dependent on others for access to meals. According to the client, this added to the list of requests from the disabled. In turn, this upset some of his colleagues who seemed to be exploding under their own work pressures. The client described another paraplegic employee as fiery, assertive and potentially litigious. His physical faculties appeared degenerative. Another client reported that the organisation did a great deal for disabled employees as the employee mentioned above had been given a new electric wheelchair as his muscular degeneration made it difficult for him to cope with a manual one. The client reported that the disabled employee trusted only one person, a security manager, to help push him when he needed the help. However, this frustrated the security manager as the disabled employee became agitated whenever he was a few minutes late.

The client mentioned other disabilities among employees, such as walking with the aid of crutches, losing their balance in the dark and chronic back pain. He reported being surprised to discover there were so many hidden disabilities. The client mentioned a deaf employee and wondered if it was politically correct to call him deaf.

A black male client in another organisation mentioned a few times that their disability targets were lagging far behind. In the first session he mentioned that only 0.8% of employees were disabled, a fact repeated in a later session. This was not worked with in the sessions; it came to the consultant's attention at a later date that this comment had slipped through as if it was inconsequential.

5.7.1.1 Interpretations

It seemed as if the disabled have valence to contain deficiencies due to their overt handicaps. Poor planning skills and incompetence were projected on to

them while their training needs were postponed indefinitely. Black and Stone (2005) believed that disabled individuals were often clustered within the category of deficient human beings. Hidden disabilities seemed to reflect the inability of the unit charged with providing training to fulfil its mandate as it was de-authorised by being focused on transactional issues, and thus further disabling the disabled. The lack of access to a basic need such as food seemed to be an unconscious desire to keep the disabled dependent and vulnerable so they could continue the task of containing deficiencies. It could also be an unconscious desire to keep them out of the organisation as without food they would starve. The consultant's inability to work with disability at times seemed to invalidate its existence. The defence of the consultant that such information was an unsubstantiated, loose-standing comment could be a projection of alienation and fragmentation on to the disabled who have valence for this. Not knowing what to call deaf employees may have been an unconscious fantasy to keep them anonymous and thus distant as a defence against forming meaningful relations. Mitra (2006) noted that society disabled those with physical impairments by imposing upon them unnecessary isolation which prevents them from fully accessing and participating in key societal activities. This was evident when an organisational deficiency of not providing training was dumped on the disabled.

By offering the electric wheelchair, the fantasy seemed to be that the work of caring had been done. Therefore, the vindictive aggression of the disabled could be avoided or nullified. The difficulty of containing the disabled was evident in the failure of 'security' (manager) to secure (contain) the disabled.

5.6.1.2 Working hypothesis

Organisations use disabled employees to contain deficiencies. In addition, the disabled are kept dependent and are unconsciously wished away as basic survival needs such as food and safety are not accessed easily.

5.8. LANGUAGE AS A DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

The theme of language is discussed below.

5.8.1 Language as a tool of power

A white Afrikaans client managing an all-black staff said it was bad manners for blacks to speak in Tswana in her presence. She reported feeling offended at times as most could speak Afrikaans yet English was the official language. She stopped herself after saying, 'those people'.

A Zulu client commented that a coloured manager paid too much attention to detail with regard to English and consequently made everyone uncomfortable as the 'queen's language has its challenges'. In a later session the client reported that language delayed the progress of the work study as his manager, who was not very authorised by the organisation, was 'very pedantic about its (English) usage' and thus over-edited submissions. The client stated that blacks spoke English as a second language and immediately afterwards commented on the white man's lack of respect and how untouchable he was.

A Sotho client reported that a coloured manager with whom he had an adversarial relationship was agitated over a spelling error he had made. Later, a black senior manager also criticised him for making a spelling mistake and using the incorrect font. The client reported feeling demoralised as if the manager wanted to make him feel incompetent and thus unworthy of joining the top level.

A white Afrikaans client said her mother had sent her to an English school as she believed that the future was English. The client commented in another session that her secretary had attended a conference on multilingualism as language was a big issue within the municipality as some people had low levels of education.

A Sotho client said perspectives of whites dominated public discourse on important matters because they displayed the accepted culture, and had the right vocabulary. The client asserted that where blacks have full control of expression, whites were not listening because they neither understood black languages nor veered towards black-oriented social platforms. Thus whites had the edge over blacks in public debates as blacks were communicating in a second or third language.

5.8.1.1 Interpretations

The anger at being excluded by language triggered denigration of the other. It seemed the anger over English was displaced by the Afrikaans client on to blacks and not directed at the true enemy who owns the language - the English, who have roots in an idealised monarchy, once dominated the Afrikaner and colonised the country. The idealisation of English seemed to be a tool to entrench power by those who speak it comfortably and to denigrate and project inadequacies on to those who could not. Cobas and Feagin (2008) reported language-linked discrimination that manifests as silencing non-English speakers, voicing suspicions about them, denigrating their accent and questioning their proficiency in the language. Consequently non-English users become self-conscious and experience difficulties when expressing themselves in English. Cobas and Feagin (2008) highlighted self-censorship by speakers who expect that their speech will not be priced highly in the language market. The displacement of aggression on to Tswana speakers could be an unconscious attempt to suppress black languages. Steyn and Foster (2008) highlighted the tendency towards the Eurofication of Africans through language to foster assimilation into the white way and thereby put the onus of adaption on blacks, while minimising the amount of adjustment required of whites. English also

appeared to be a container of anxieties as it was used to avoid threatening work processes.

5.8.1.2 Working hypothesis

The aggression triggered by the replacement of Afrikaans by English as an official language is displaced by the Afrikaner on to blacks who seem to be an easy target given entrenched racial power dynamics. English is used as a tool of power and denigration as those who speak it proficiently use it to project inadequacies and inferiority onto those who are less proficient.

5.9 AGE AS A DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

The age theme and the working hypothesis will be discussed in this section.

5.9.1 Age as a container of irrelevance

A black male client who was overlooked for a promotion expressed helplessness at managing his task boundaries in relation to the new manager. This was influenced by the woman's age as she was much older than the client. He explained that it was difficult to say no to the new manager because 'she is fifty years old, and when I saw her husband, he reminded me of my father'.

A white female client reported that older employees were contaminating team progress with negativity and irrelevancy. An older employee had expressed resentments over lack of recognition and abusive treatment by a male colleague in the past in a meeting facilitated by an outside consultant. The employee was also disgruntled because after being given a letter declaring her promotion, she had received another letter nullifying this promotion. She had been moved around to different divisions, each one eventually ejecting her. The client

reported that she had 'inherited' her, as if to suggest that she felt stuck with the older employee. The older employee was an ordained minister who enjoyed counselling others. Her role as a reverend seemed to make her indispensable even when she was not contributing to the primary task. A previous senior executive had confiscated her telephone because she spent all her time talking on it.

Another white female client often expressed frustration and despair at the unyielding problems of non-delivery. In the sixth session she reported going to municipalities and offering hope to workers who were disillusioned by corruption and other problems 'to keep them sane'. She was worried that they were young and had an idealistic and optimistic outlook on matters and sometimes set unrealistic targets for themselves. She believed that there were many people who could turn the country around. Upon reflection at a later session she related her frustrations to her developmental phase. She had mentioned her age several times in various sessions, 46 years old. She believed she was entering the last phase of her employment years, the last nine years and wanted to contribute positively. She said she 'must enjoy' herself. Her developmental phase seemed significant within the home arena as well with children who would be leaving home in a few years' time. She expressed similar sentiments when talking about her twenty-first wedding anniversary which coincided with the tenth session. She felt that she was standing on the threshold of something new and expected her marriage to mature to the next level of harmony, in much the same way as a twenty-one year old was expected to mature and become independent.

5.9.1.1 Interpretations

Interactions with older employees seemed to be influenced by introjected parental part-objects (Stapley, 2006). Projective identification seemed to occur as older employees did good-enough mothering by counselling and keeping

children sane. The organisation that was business and transaction orientated seemed to introject the older employee into its superego so that she could perform humane duties for it hence she was retained even when she was often anti-task. Obholzer (1999) claimed that as traditional rituals and institutions such as the church diminish in their capacity to contain anxiety in society, workplaces become infused with defensive measures to protect members of the workforce. Older employees seemed to be used as containers of negativity and redundancy too, as they have the valence for irrelevancy. Oedipal anxieties about engaging honestly with the mother object were evoked in the male client who could not manage his task boundaries.

The client who paired with the young workers could have hoped to find meaning in work, withheld by the retentive (non-delivering) organisation, and to simultaneously negotiate her developmental phase successfully. This could have been sparked by the anxiety of losing loved objects as at home children were on the boundary of leaving home. Therefore, the young colleagues could have been representations of those loved objects, hence they triggered protective instincts.

5.9.1.2 Working hypothesis

Older employees are used to contain irrelevancy and redundancy and to do the work of the superego for the organisation. As mothering objects, females identify with projections of preservation and nurturing.

5.10. DE-AUTHORISATION OF DIVERSITY WORK

The sub-themes of de-authorisation of diversity at the organisational boundary and through human resources as a container of diversity management will be discussed next.

5.10.1 Resistance to diversity at the organisational boundary

There were instances where the consultant encountered diversity resistance at the point of entry. A study coordinator was not available for the first contracting meeting in one department. The consultant was informed only after arriving that her meeting had been postponed. The project coordinator's office was located within the wellness programme office. Prominently displayed on the wall facing the corridor, confronting the consultant, were posters campaigning for voluntary counselling and testing for HIV. The project coordinator was a black female psychologist.

The consultant was thirty-minutes early for the next meeting; the coordinator was forty-minutes late and kept the consultant waiting another ten minutes. When the meeting finally got under way, it felt as if diversity was being discussed for the first time. It was as if formal letters, e-mail and telephonic discussions had never taken place. The coordinator expressed great anxiety about resistance to the study and the reticence of those who were under scrutiny. She was most reluctant to nominate subjects even though the director-general had approved the study officially on the grounds that it was an essential service to the organisation. The coordinator wanted the consultant to invite managers to participate. She later asked a black male colleague who was passing by to join the meeting and to assist in the nomination of subjects. This colleague behaved as if he felt ambushed by the invitation and its task. The discussion was protracted and convoluted at times as the same issues were discussed again and again. Eventually four managers were identified, including the black male colleague who had joined the meeting. It was decided that the consultant would invite the nominated managers to coaching sessions telephonically, a task that proved difficult as the managers did not answer their telephones and did not respond to their e-mails.

After a few weeks the consultant contacted the managers again, including the black male manager who had been in the contracting meeting. The organisation, whose primary mandate was to provide accommodation to government departments, had been struggling to find suitable accommodation for itself, and had consequently moved to a new building near the centre of the city, on a corner near a large taxi rank. The lifts were not working properly. An employee urged the consultant and other people to return to a lift they had abandoned so that he could demonstrate how it worked; he jumped up and down to get it moving. The lift got stuck again at the fifteenth floor and someone had to jump up and down to restart it. It felt like a very long ride to the sixteenth floor where the black male manager's office was situated. The consultant stopped the coaching after three sessions because there were too many difficulties and disruptions.

In the meantime, a session was held with a white female manager who seemed very keen to take part in the study and expressed gratitude for being nominated. However, she could not be reached on her telephone to confirm subsequent appointments so these sessions were halted prematurely. A black female was also willing to participate but insisted that the coordinator arrange with her manager to ensure that she would be able to commit fully to all the sessions. The study coordinator's unwillingness to cooperate prevented this woman from taking part in the study.

The experience in this department was in stark contrast to the consultant's experience in two other departments where contracting meetings were efficient and effortless. One department was situated near the vibrant hub of Hatfield in Pretoria. The conversations were animated; giving the impression of a sociable workplace. The meeting started on time; it was very productive and focused, ran smoothly, and was appropriately short. The coordinator took charge and seemed comfortable. He had already identified four managers to participate in the study.

The consultant was offered a laptop on which to work. By end of the day, the consultant had suggested dates for future sessions and the coordinator had asked the clients to commit to these dates. Shortly afterwards, coaching started in earnest and continued relatively smoothly, with only of five delegates refusing to participate.

The second department was situated in a quiet and pleasant area not very far from the centre of Arcadia in Pretoria. The reception area was very big and neat, resembling a hall, with sofas in the corner. There was a triangular wooden floor area that reminded the consultant of a performance stage lit by a small chandelier. There was little movement inside the building, the empty corridors giving the impression of a reserved organisation where employees spent considerable time in their private spaces. The meeting with the coordinator was professional and productive. He had identified candidates and had communicated with them. One of them had an office in a different building, in the middle of Arcadia, near a Holiday Inn Hotel and a busy shopping mall. Parking and refreshments were offered to the consultant. Coaching commenced shortly after this meeting and continued relatively smoothly until the end of the study.

5.10.1.1 Interpretations

It seemed that an organisation's readiness to engage effectively with diversity could be deciphered through unconscious diversity experiences at the boundary of the organisation and during entry and contracting. Czander (1993) and Diamond et al., (2004) remarked that organisational boundaries mark the point at which the organisation and the environment meet. At the boundary, non-members can access information about the organisation's culture and ideology. In addition, the self can be used effectively as an instrument to observe an organisational identity (Czander, 1993). The department in which coaching was aborted had the greatest difficulty authorising diversity coaching. It seemed the

system had put great anxiety into the coordinator who was confused and overwhelmed by the task and felt unable to authorise the coaching. By placing diversity in the wellness unit, in a way it could have become a sickness that required a cure. The voluntary counselling and testing posters seemed to convey an uncanny association of diversity with HIV/AIDS - an unyielding epidemic, and an incurable syndrome of denial and stigmatisation. This supported the massive denial often verbalised when facing diversity problems, at the individual, organisational and societal level (Coetzee, 2007). The difficulties of working with diversity have been noted by Pretorius (2003) who reported the vicious circle and self-perpetuating nature of diversity-related challenges which ensured that South Africans remained imprisoned by the past. The constant displacement of an organisation responsible for providing accommodation, yet unable to accommodate itself, epitomised the dilemmas faced by organisations in their attempts to accommodate diversity - a service which is often invited and rejected at the same time, eliciting rational-irrational conflict (Cilliers & Stone, 2005). Human (2005) remarked on the insincerity of commitment to diversity initiatives while Avery and Johnson (2008) believed that double-bind messages regarding diversity were ubiquitous and reflected diversity resistance.

On the other hand, departments which were willing to work with diversity displayed an enterprising and cooperative attitude towards the process.

5.10.1.2 Working hypothesis

It seems that the organisation's readiness to engage with diversity can be deciphered at the boundary of the system during entry and contracting. Systems authorising diversity work seem to engage more easily with diversity, while those de-authorising diversity display resistance at the boundary. Containers of diversity identify with and introject the resistance and anxieties, leading to stuckness as they try to carry the diversity mandate forward.

5.10.2 The disempowerment of human resources as a diversity container

Comments made about organisation units were often about human resources, a division whose relevance in this study is magnified by its mandate as a diversity-container. A black client acting in the role of human resources head remarked that the department was 'everyone's punching bag'. According to the client, not enough 'respect or decorum' was accorded it. He made the analogy of university science students who are put on a pedestal while art students are disparaged. The client noted that because too many demands were made on human resources, he felt overwhelmed because they were understaffed and he had not been given a clear answer about filling posts. He constantly reported being under pressure as he tried to 'serve everyone, juggled, and lacked enough time for all'. The client said some people expected things to happen by magic while others dictated how the department should deliver. He complained about others encroaching on the human resources space. While he was talking about this, the door of the coaching room kept opening and he was unable to close it. Eventually, the client had to use some paper to wedge the door closed.

The client expressed helplessness about introducing diversity sessions in the organisation. He believed such sessions were necessary but found it difficult to bring the subject up as the black female leader appeared keen to employ only whites and females at the highest levels. According to him, consequences would be 'profound' if he introduced diversity sessions as the organisation was not ready to acknowledge their necessity. During the eight session, the client remarked that human resources was not working 'smart', that it was not as productive as it could be, and tended to 'fray at the edges'. In the ninth session, the client commented that human resources was 'paralysed' by deadlines owing to the transactional nature of work. Training was relegated to the back burner and there was not enough time for human resources to make an impact on transformational issues. These issues had a negative effect on the quality of

work. Delays in a work study were blamed on human resources. In the tenth session, a client in the enterprising department which had a private sector culture said that being in human resources felt like being in prison, like in 'home affairs' (a department renowned for being inept). The client believed that his manager was very soft and unlikely to champion the cause of human resources effectively. Another client remarked that human resources was 'everyone's toy' as line managers used it to get back at those they wanted to punish.

Another client observed that the human resources director did not say anything in high level meetings; but only took notes, 'as if he had nothing worth saying'. The human resources director reportedly 'lied blatantly' in a meeting to protect a member of a powerful clique to which he belonged. This reinforced the client's perception of human resources as a puppet. The client criticised human resources for not meeting deadlines, for making empty promises for claiming that time constraints were a problem, and for imposing an impractical one size fits all solution because it was too far from implementation.

Another client in human resources criticised the department for continuing succession planning when their own house was in disarray. He felt that there were elaborate policies but no implementation. While he was responsible for capacity building he felt incapacitated.

5.10.2.1 Interpretations

The human resources department, with its valence to contain soft issues, seemed to be de-authorised and bullied by systems which were themselves resisting change. The system seemed to rid itself of change anxieties by overwhelming human resources so that it failed to achieve its objectives of transformation and change. The department also seemed to be split off as idealisation and denigration were projected into it. It was also used to contain

projections of ambiguity. There appeared to be a fantasy that human resources was an ever flowing breast that could magically meet endless dependency needs. Human resources was, however, persecuted when it fell short. Some of the adjectives used portrayed human resources as an overworked mother who had to juggle different roles, as a result experiencing pressure and role conflict. Being regarded as the heart of the organisation seemed to make it difficult for the department to effectively manage its boundaries as it had to provide life to all subsystems. Human resources seemed to introject the projections, resulting in stuckness. Projective identification of human resources leaders with projections occurred as they also failed to champion the transformation cause. Human resources colluded in its de-authorisation by being a puppet, as if it could gain power only by fusing with powerful leaders at the top of organisations.

5.10.2.2 Working hypothesis

Human resources as a container of soft issues seems to be bullied and manipulated by systems resisting change so that the anxiety-provoking tasks of transformation and humanity can be avoided. Human resources practitioners appear to introject the projections of idealisation and denigration, resulting in fragmentation that undermines its ability to champion the diversity mandate.

5.11 THE COACHING PROCESS

In this section the clients as a system, the progress of each client, the role of transference and counter-transference are presented.

5.11.1 The clients as a system

There were times during the coaching period when similar issues unfolded in sessions with different clients. Relatedness was evident as the coaching cohort

developed a life of its own. The role biography, especially experiences of childhood elicited strong feelings of sadness in many clients. In the third session, three clients reported plans to leave their organisations. The intensity of the sessions was becoming apparent by the fourth session. A black client lamented the resistance to change and to black empowerment, another black client mockingly referred to a white manager as *baas* while a third black client was experiencing a strong reaction of flight out of the organisation. A white client reported a depressive tiredness; another white client stated that she felt overwhelmed, while the coloured client experienced more deprivation. The consultant's own diversity anxiety elicited resistance to the coaching resulting in her being forty-five minutes late to a fifth depressive coaching session.

The sixth session, the heart of the coaching, seemed to elicit heightened anxieties in the clients as instincts broke through weakening defences. Feelings of aggression, depression, and anxieties of implosions, explosions and breakdowns were apparent or seemed imminent as if the id was triumphing over the superego. A black client reported being ready to retaliate in response to an angry explosion he expected from his manager. Another expressed aggression and fear as strained transformers had blown up, and there were concerns over an institutionalised employee who had suffered a psychotic breakdown. A white client reported losing control as her stress-related ailments deteriorated and she received a poor prognosis from her physiotherapist. She had also had multiple minor accidents. A black client was dismayed that her manager, a white minister had been ousted and, for the first time, had nowhere to go as he was unlikely to be accommodated under the new political leadership. Another white client believed that her subordinate was a psychopath and also mentioned a colleague with a degenerative muscular disorder.

The coloured client's preoccupations were morbid as he reported that he had high blood pressure, that his wife had driven over and killed the family dog, that

his friend had died young and suddenly of a heart attack, and that his father had died a few years earlier. This client left the organisation after the sixth session, perhaps containing the flight on behalf of the coaching cohort. The coloured client was the only one to straddle the organisational lines by crossing the boundary into a new organisation, at a time when many were in limbo as a new political order unfolded in an anxiety-provoking way. The fight-flight reaction was evident when the following sessions with three clients had to be limited to an hour as they had to attend urgent performance review meetings. These reviews seemed to be unconscious defences against the emotionality which diversity coaching was stirring up. Engaging in the rational work of performance reviews allowed the system to avoid delving too deeply into the unconscious of diversity where outbursts might occur. So it seemed that diversity coaching was unconsciously also reviewed in order to remobilise defences which would make it less anxiety-provoking.

5.11.1.1 The role of transference

Transference, a repetition compulsion involving internalised figures belonging to the past, was reawakened when the unconscious opened up during the coaching relationships as reported by Freud (1949) and Klein (1997). Transference seemed to affect the experience of coaching across differences. Generally similarities facilitated trust and comfort in the coaching relationship.

A white female client had many concerns about confidentiality, particularly with regard to the leader of the organisation who was a black female. She repeatedly asked the consultant to maintain confidentiality on the issues she was sharing. It was evident that she mistrusted the leader and had projected her mistrust on to the consultant, who was also a black female. At one point she stopped talking about the leader and wrote, 'not sure about her agenda'. This seemed to be for the consultant as it happened during the first session when the coaching

direction had not yet solidified. Her cautious attitude came through in many other ways. She would whisper when speaking about the leader, reported that she would be fired if the leader found out what she had said, warned the consultant that if she repeated what she had disclosed she would deny it or cautioned that what she was about to say was deep.

The two white clients brought notebooks to the coaching sessions in which to write down some of the things the consultant said; none of the black clients took notes. It was as if the notebook created some containment of the anxiety of dealing with differences. The notebooks seemed to represent a structure of formality to define the experience of connecting across differences.

Black clients, especially the black female client, found it very easy to speak to the black female consultant about intense race issues. This particular client was asked if it was easier to talk about race because the consultant was black and she answered, 'if you were white, I would have refused to take part in this study'. The client went on to explain that she was once upset when a white diversity facilitator said, 'we understand our forefathers did terrible things but we are not like that'. She experienced that as offensive denial and a confirmation that races could not understand each other as the facilitator did not have insight into how, for her, the present tended to be very much like the past. Cox (2004) traced the roots of black participants' resistance to white social scientists to the historical treatment of minorities in literature. Since behaviours deviating from Anglo-American norms were seen as pathological, black participants' resistance to white researchers was regarded as a reflection of their refusal to adapt. Within the South African context, it appeared that such resistance was also linked to the challenges of addressing personal racial baggage.

In a session with a coloured client who had tendered his resignation and who was late for the session, the consultant was told to make tea herself when in the

past tea had always been offered to her on a tray. Lower level employees had been attending a strategy session so on a conscious level there was no one to make tea for her. On an unconscious level it seemed she was receiving punitive projections meant for the client who was abandoning the organisation and was thus being punished for his disloyalty by the withholding of tea service. Perhaps the consultant had become an extension of the client, especially since she was also an outsider who held private sessions with the client to which the organisation was not privy. The coloured client expressed surprise that the talkative black senior leader had not remarked about his resignation, as if she was giving him the silent treatment. A black client had once commented that employees were treated as if they had leprosy once they had tendered their resignation.

Two black clients sent the consultant circulated e-mails about the explosive racial situation in the country. One e-mail was about the similarities between Zuma and the Eskom crisis, written by a rational white professor, another was by a white supremacist, mocking racial integration and denigrating blacks. It was as if the coaching relationship had extended beyond the organisational boundary, highlighting the ease with which social boundaries can be crossed within sameness, and thus projections of trust made on to sameness. It also seemed to suggest a need for containment beyond the work environment.

When 'secrets' were blurted out in a coaching session by other employees who were not part of the coaching cohort, there was concern that the consultant had heard them. A woman who offered tea apologised in one session that the organisation had run out of biscuits. The black client who was being coached at the time, said later, 'she should not have said that. She should have said someone forgot the keys or something like that'. It seemed as if the absence of biscuits had evoked some shame and that there were limits to what the consultant, an outsider should know. This suggests ambivalence over how much

to reveal to those on the boundary of the system, as they create anxiety about what should be kept inside.

5.11.1.2 *The role of counter-transference*

The consultant experienced neurotic and unconscious counter-transferential feelings towards the clients during the coaching sessions (Rosenberger & Hayes, 2002). In the sixth session with a black male client, the consultant felt upset over an attempted murder which had occurred in her townhouse complex the previous night. The black male client started the session off by indicating that he needed advice on a matter he was grappling with, and the consultant felt burdened by this request, which triggered a withholding attitude on her part. It seemed she had an unconscious wish to punish the object of persecution. It became evident to the consultant that she was not fully present in that session as it was difficult to listen, indicating that counter-transference was activated. The consultant experienced a compulsion to view the black client within the context of crime, in which the perpetrator is often a black male. These projections were very strong, with the consultant vacillating between reparative rationality and the allure of the projections. In the event the consultant was able to direct her projections to the coaching experience by relating it to the client's difficulties with a coloured female manager. The client was urged to reflect on himself as an object influenced by societal dynamics which had an impact on some of his workplace interactions. In other instances, protective, mothering instincts were triggered in the consultant when the client seemed especially vulnerable. On one occasion the consultant experienced a desire to continue coaching the client telephonically or via e-mail.

A white female client reported in the second session that her spouse was quiet and resentful when upset, and that he had issues with crying. The consultant heard 'crime,' instead of 'crying'. It was as if the white man could not be spoken about in relation to vulnerability but could only be spoken about with regards to

offence. This suggested the unconscious material of the consultant in relation to the pervasive fury and fear over crime, especially among the white community, and their implicit blaming of blacks for these crimes. Perhaps the consultant was unconsciously expecting an attack from a white person.

The consultant at times experienced the palpable sadness and helplessness of a white female client which triggered an urge to nurture her. It felt as if her challenges were deeply rooted in race challenges that the consultant had personally experienced intensely, especially being a racial minority in a system which was seemingly oblivious to the effects of this on the individual.

The consultant forgot to confirm the final session in the previous organisation with the coloured male client and as a result he was forty minutes late. There may have been an unconscious need on the part of the consultant to punish the client for abandoning the coaching sessions. Since it was not guaranteed that the remaining sessions would continue in the new organisation, the consultant had anxieties about the impact of his withdrawal on the study. Thus the consultant was unconsciously making him appear unprofessional and exposed him by asking for him when he was not there.

The consultant generally experienced more confidence in coaching black clients than white clients. She felt that she had nothing to prove with the former as there was inherent acceptance and authorisation of her role. The consultant was therefore able to focus on the business of coaching and could confront clients without worrying about ruffling feathers. Common experiences also fostered empathic understanding easily.

5.11.2 The progress of clients

Client one

An emotionally distraught and overwhelmed white client seemed to require counselling and not coaching. It was difficult to do contextual and contractual work at the beginning of the first session as had been planned. However, over time she was able to function more effectively in her role as she processed her experiences from the systems psychodynamic stance. The client was able to understand her valence for emotionality and the role that organisational dynamics played in her experience. This gradually moved her away from the paranoid-schizoid position to the depressive position from which she could work with her emotionality and guilt. She made healthier choices that empowered her and helped her to take constructive action for her team. In a later session, the client reported working on creating more 'team effort and not an authoritarian approach'. This allowed the client to own her role in the challenges she experienced at work. Integrative work seemed to be taking place when she reported feeling more peace and understanding, letting go of fear, and experiencing some positive changes in herself and in her subordinates, most of whom she had largely experienced as problematic in the past.

In the seventh session the client reported that she was growing; she was no longer feeling overwhelmed. She cited the coaching around boundary management as liberating as she had stopped mothering her team and stopped introjecting their emotional projections. She understood herself better as an object and was beginning to understand how her emotionality affected team dynamics. She reported that, 'something has come off my shoulders', and added that growth was occurring in her team as well. In the eighth session the client, who had an acute aversion to conflict, reported that she had typed a warning letter in response to one of her subordinate's anti-task behaviour. She thanked the consultant for urging her to take up her authority. The client had had a

serious talk with the difficult subordinate and reported that she was able to stay calm and successfully manage her emotions and her voice. She had been afraid the subordinate would lash out but he had listened and apologised. The client reported that his performance had since improved.

However, shortly afterwards, the client identified the recurrence of her mothering pattern in relation to a female subordinate for whom she felt sorry, despite her chronic truant behaviour. It seemed the client was battling to find a balance between exercising her authority and nurturing, as if not being caring all the time must mean that she was persecutory. Her attempts to save the female subordinate also seemed to be an unconscious attempt to undo the self-authorisation process she had embarked on as its unfamiliarity could have been creating anxieties of dealing with change. Perhaps this was evidence of the vacillation between a work mode and a basic assumption mode as she seemed to be regressing to a dependency mode while experiencing self-authorisation.

In the ninth session, the client spoke more positively about the subordinate with whom she had a long struggle. She reported great moments in their relationship and more honest feedback between them. She seemed to be working with both the positive and the negative aspects of the object unlike in the past when she had split the object and had been fixated only on the object's badness. She appreciated the progress in the team despite the occasional destructiveness that marred the team climate. In this session she remarked that she was 'much calmer and no longer in an attacking mode', and that she no longer called interactions meetings but coaching. The move away from the paranoid-schizoid position was again apparent, as the client integrated her disowned persecutory parts. She reiterated the importance of avoiding mothering the team as it fostered dependency. She was also relating more constructively to the senior black leader towards whom she had earlier expressed mistrust. She described

the leader as dynamic and highly competent, a move from the occasion on which she had described her as impulsive and incapable of analysis.

In the tenth session, the client reported regular team development sessions which she regarded as opportunities for her own development as a coach. During the last session she reported that management had not involved her when they moved one of her colleagues and her primary support, out of her unit. She expressed relief that it happened after she had received coaching as the experience did not have the impact it would have had on her had she not understood the unconscious behavioural dynamics of the system, and had she not been able to manage herself appropriately in her role.

Client two

The black client tended to have strong defences against intense experiences, especially racial anger. He rationalised or intellectualised his experiences whenever they surfaced as uncomfortable feelings. He would report distress and immediately indicate that others experienced similar feelings. On several occasions he was challenged not to defend against his experiences but to process them for insights. In the fifth session he reported that his demons were threatening to escape and reported his anger without rationalising it. He expressed dismay at the entrenched racial alienation between the people at work and in society in a country where different races have existed side by side for centuries. He reported a desire as a representative of human resources to act on behalf of the system to bring about more collaboration between the racial groups at work. However, he felt overwhelmed by an organisation that seemed to have strong defences against diversity. His goal was made manageable by assisting him to take action in his department, and view the subsystem as a microcosm of the system. He reformulated his goal as needing to 'break the cabal' in his department which was split along racial lines. He identified creative

ways of working with the staff that would have a positive impact on morale and reduce turnover rates. He expressed a desire to work with information from exit interviews, to reorganise work and to build racial collaboration into various roles.

In the third session, the client had reported disability as a challenge which he was reluctant to confront. In the sixth session he reported having had an in-depth conversation with a disabled employee. Afterwards, the client felt comfortable having regular, meaningful discussions with the colleague in order to provide a supportive work environment. Through exploring the unconscious of the organisation, the influence of racial pairing on racial demographics at the upper echelon, the impact of politics on the system, and the client as an object, he was able to understand the complex forces withholding his promotion. He started exploring other options outside his work environment. The client experienced relief at understanding how human resources was used as a scapegoat in an unconscious defence against the change the department represented. He was thus better prepared to look for any unconscious defences against the results of the work study which was meant to improve systems and processes and relieve human resources. When the organisation appointed an outside facilitator to develop teams, the client used these sessions as a platform on which he could use the insights he had gained through coaching and to make a positive impact on the team sessions. In the tenth session the client reported having identified loopholes that allowed managers to abuse power; he planned to close these as soon as possible.

In providing feedback, the client reported appreciating the professional engagement of the consultant. He remarked that maintaining time boundaries was particularly impressive and containing and it was something he was keen to integrate into his work life. The client reported that the warm personality of the consultant was comforting. He was surprised at the extent to which the consultant had listened actively and kept track of material that had been

mentioned in previous sessions, integrating it into subsequent sessions to support hypotheses. He reported that the insights he had gained kept him committed to the coaching and had helped him experience life differently. He found the concepts of projections and working with dynamics around authority most helpful. However, he expressed some reservations about working fully with the unconscious. He said it was at times frightening to look beyond the surface, as if one had 'mythical powers penetrating people's thoughts'. He indicated that the coaching made a huge difference and helped him to work more effectively in his role, and that it was also supportive when he was depressed by work-related challenges.

Client three

A coloured client whose relationship with a chief executive officer was marked by hostility was able to form a collaborative relationship with him once the client began to work with the leader as an object. As a black leader of white managers in a resistant agricultural industry, the leader had triggered oedipal anxieties in the white managers. These had aroused a passive-aggressive reaction from them which in turn had made him paranoid and blindly loyal to his black allies. The client was able to see the leader within the broader systemic context as his leader and mentor – the minister of a government bank's powers were revoked, further compromising the power of the chief executive officer. These insights fostered empathic understanding in the client.

Working with the notion of the organisation as a family was very useful for the client who enjoyed observing and studying the dynamics in organisations. He was able to observe that the chief executive was like a father of children. In the eighth session the client was under pressure to submit a comprehensive strategy document the following day. He noted that realistically he ought to ask for an extension, which he could easily get but he did not want to participate in the

culture of disrespecting time and deadlines. He forced himself to submit the document on time even though it was not perfect. This was his way of contributing towards changing the culture of the organisation and injecting urgency into an otherwise complacent system. The client had fully authorised himself to be in role and was working towards taking action on behalf of the organisation in order to help it move away from its disempowering culture. This seemed to be a combination of his personality attributes and aspirations, plus the authorising goal of the coaching framework. In the following session he was pleased that some colleagues had noticed his proactive attitude and thus followership was emerging - a colleague had opted to work through something over the weekend so that it could be concluded speedily. He was also assisted in identifying political allies within the organisation in an attempt to manage his minority status more effectively.

The client confessed that he had been reluctant to participate in coaching, especially because the coach was a psychologist. This was based on his preconceived notions of psychology. During the coaching he had rejected the notion of working with dreams, indicating that the idea was too deep, given that he had already stretched himself by opening up to the unconscious and working with it earnestly. He appreciated the safe sharing, indicating that he had shared things with the coach that he had not even shared with his wife. He said it was good having a sounding board and countering the loneliness of being an executive. The client reported that the sessions had helped him to understand himself more deeply within the context of work and that unconscious dynamics had helped him to cope with change. He confirmed that the sessions had reinforced his authorising inclination and kept him focused on his vision.

Client four

A black client who had expressed many intense feelings and opinions about race issues seemed to be moving to the depressive position midway in the coaching. She began to ponder black people's addiction to bondage and slavery. Although she was bothered by being in the depressive position at times, the position was helping to sensitise her to being inclusive, which she strived to do in her team. Her brutal honesty about issues of diversity surfaced early, precipitating progress as defences did not delay the learning or the processing of material. Consequently, she was sessions ahead of other clients, had fewest postponements and reached the end of coaching first. In one session she reported that there were no whites in her team, but then remembered that there was in fact one. When asked if she was unconsciously wishing them away she did not deny it but acknowledged the comfort of homogeneity. Her willingness to confront the intensity and the shadow tended to buffer her against anxiety as she was the only one in the group who did not express much distress over the changing political leadership even though she was directly affected. She regarded what was unfolding in the organisation and in the country as an adventure and put the crisis in the context of a rebirthing trauma and a cleansing process that would be painful in the near future but beneficial in the long-term.

In providing feedback, the client reported that the coaching had been an eye-opening experience. She reported looking at the workplace through the lens of the unconscious, which at times was depressing. She said although the problems felt daunting at times, taking small actions regularly would be beneficial in the long term. She remarked that it was 'one small step for humankind and one giant step for a nation'. She appreciated the opportunity to release stress by sharing deep thoughts in an open environment free from recriminations. She reported excitement and fear when contemplating the unconscious. She said it was particularly frightening knowing that she could not remain uninvolved given

the insights she had gained, and that she had to take responsibility for what she knew, yet it was terrifying, even for personal relationships. She remarked that it was exciting understanding things from a deeper perspective as she could avoid traps and act more consciously.

A part of her had become interested in pursuing psychology further but she was anxious about its intensity. The client later reported that fate had intervened and saved her from making a decision regarding her future. Her husband had been offered a job in another province and the family was relocating. She was happy in her current role and the coaching had been restorative after a difficult experience in a previous workplace. Therefore she felt ready to face any workplace.

Client five

It took some time to work out the circumstances of a black client who had been overlooked for a promotion in an organisation that seemed unable to fill the position, even after interviews with several potential candidates. He had been in this position in an acting capacity for a long time and had been doing this efficiently. The client had focused his resentment on his immediate manager, a coloured woman who seemed to be an obstacle to his promotion. In addition, the client was in bitter competition with the absent, elusive incumbent. In the sixth session he remarked that the organisation was playing mind games with him but it remained unclear what was really happening. What was clear was that the role which had become a thorny issue was highly valued by the most senior black female leader in the organisation. The hidden eventually came to light in the eleventh session when it was revealed that the role had been reserved for someone from this leader's ethnic background. Thus covert events had an impact on the choices made by leaders whose positions were believed to be compromised by the changing political leadership in the country.

The client, who had in the third session suggested that his role was immune from the impact of political change realised eventually that his role was intricately related to the systemic complexities. The evidence was concretised when he moved out of the comfortable office he had been occupying back into his old office when the senior position he had wanted was offered to a much less competent incumbent from the leader's ethnic group. In the last session he stated that it was frightening to consider the unconscious and the concept of the microcosm. While he had reported no diversity issues in his all-black team during the third session, by the end of the coaching he was noting that the higher one advanced in organisations the more one confronted endemic diversity issues. In providing feedback to the consultant, the client reported that it was beneficial working with the unconscious and working with himself as an object in relation to a female manager. He stated that the coaching helped to prepare him for the complex dynamics at work particularly with regard to gender, ethnicity, race and authority. He reported that it helped to look at his work problems comprehensively and in-depth so that he could understand the interplay between intrapsychic, interpersonal and organisational factors.

Exploring different hypotheses helped him to cope with not being promoted as he became aware of many forces beyond his control which had an impact on the decision not to promote him. Without the coaching, he stated that he might have attributed being overlooked purely to incompetence, which would have been a confusing experience. The client added that creating an environment conducive to learning, professionalism, ethics and assurances of confidentiality, plus the knowledge of the consultant were containing. He expressed a wish for continued coaching or other supportive structures. Owing to marital difficulties the client shared in the last session, he was advised to consult a marital therapist. Sharing the most intimate details of his marriage at the boundary of the coaching seemed

to be confirming the challenges facing the black man when relating to the black female from a position of vulnerability.

Client six

A white client who reiterated her aversion to conflict from the beginning of coaching attributed it firmly to her astrological position as a Libran. In this way she was unconsciously resisting overcoming a trait she believed was innate and permanent. The client was able to confront a subordinate and a superior whose role performances were affecting hers negatively. Although she experienced the subtle and the overt wrath of both individuals, with her superior threatening to evict her from the unit while keeping her in limbo, the coaching provided support for her and helped her to stay focused on self-authorisation. Ultimately, her actions helped to create conditions conducive to her own development. She earned an indirect promotion as she started reporting to the level above her superior, at which she experienced support. During the sixth session she reported that she had had three victories since the beginning of coaching. She had walked out during an unnecessarily prolonged executive meeting, which was over the time boundary, without feeling anxious. She also left a meeting where a manual was discussed page by page after she had read the whole thing, in essence refusing to do the same work again when she had other pressing tasks. She had also asked a question in an executive meeting without feeling threatened and was able to control her voice. She had reported at the beginning of coaching that the meetings were hostile and that 'people took you on if you asked questions, so you would rather make a note and speak to people privately'. The client was happy with her accomplishments and in the seventh session said she wanted to buy the consultant a rose for helping her to exercise her authority.

In the ninth session the client described a feeling of peace during the meeting with her incensed and defensive superior as it reinforced her belief that things would not change in her unit and that a move away from him would be her best option. In the tenth session the client reported some shifts in her superior. He had acknowledged her important contributions at an executive meeting in front of everyone, as if putting her on a pedestal. The client reported that since she had received coaching, her old spirit had returned; she was confident and assertive. She said at times she had the Sufi-like peace she yearned for. She was able to summon it even at home in relation to a difficult mother-in-law whom she described as hypochondriac and depleting. At times though, she seemed to be regressing and getting stuck again, but then she regained her momentum.

In giving feedback to the consultant the client reported that she looked forward to the coaching sessions especially because she had built a rapport with the consultant quickly. She experienced the professionalism of the consultant as containing and enjoyed working with new insights offered by an external observer. The client reported a new level of awareness and the hope that she would internalise the system psychodynamic approach and its lessons. She reported awareness of her unconscious, dynamics in the workplace and colleagues. These, she reported, helped her to take up her role more efficiently and to deliver on her objectives in a more balanced manner. The client expressed the belief that coaching was important and urged the organisation to continue providing similar opportunities to other employees. She offered the consultant a chocolate at the end of the coaching to express her gratitude, perhaps also doing nurturing on behalf of the coaching cohort.

5.12 INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

The integration of findings attempts to combine the recurring and significant themes in order to provide an overview of diversity dynamics in the workplace within the South African context of transformation.

5.12.1 Gender diversity dynamics

Female leaders split off their femininity to deal with anxieties of leadership as they engaged with a traditionally masculine role of leadership (Cheng, 1999). Consequently they attracted projections of aggression (Stapley, 2006). The males' reaction to female leadership was one of envy (Klein, 1997) which resulted in their refusal to authorise female leadership, and in a tendency to project inadequacy on to female leaders. In addition, males used aggression as a tool to dominate female leaders.

The black male related to the empowered black female leader by projecting paranoia on to her as he perceived her to be a trickster who had betrayed him by robbing him of the power bestowed upon him by established patriarchy (Morrell, 2002). The catastrophic anxiety (Obholzer, 1999) evoked by shifting power relations between the black male and the black female created resistance to pairing with the black female as the black male seemed unable to relate to her in new ways that made him vulnerable at times.

The white female as a leader of black teams experienced anxieties about being seen as the persecutor. This elicited helplessness when confronting anti-task behaviour of black subordinates and created difficulties of self-authorisation (Hirschhorn, 1997a), resulting in fight-flight behaviour and depletion.

The females colluded in their de-authorisation by identifying with projections of being good-enough mothering objects and fostering dependency (Stapley, 2006). This projective identification resulted in females splitting off their destructive impulses while nurturing subordinates as representations of their children (Obholzer, 1999; Segal, 2006). If females refused to introject these projections, however, they were perceived as devouring, bad mothers.

5.12.2 Race diversity dynamics

The visible changes brought about by democracy and the shifting power relations (Booyesen, 2007a) are not a true reflection of the fundamentally unchanged status quo. Blacks were used as containers of incompetence for which they have valence (Obholzer & Miller, 2004) while whites still yielded significant political and economic power in the workplace and in the structures of transformation (Nkomo & Kriek, 2004). The interactions between the races were coloured by an inferiority-superiority dynamic in which blacks acted out passive-aggression instead of confronting whites about the denigration they experienced at their hands (Peltier, 2001). Blacks' anxieties about individuation and empowerment perpetuated the idealisation of whites, which in turn reinforced their infantilisation. This contributed to the entrenched fixation of blacks on struggle, fuelled by the entrenched oppression (Sonn & Fisher, 2003). On the other hand, whites resisted the redistribution of power and resources. The loss of long-held positions of power was experienced by whites as unfair dispossession which triggered rage-induced implosions and explosions, and envious attacks on blacks (Laubscher, 2001).

Whites were used as containers of persecution anxieties and workplace uncertainties. The white man in particular, was used as a container of resistance to transformation because of his valence for this. In addition, whites experienced predominantly black organisations, in which they were bullied and victimised as

traumatic (Branch et al., 2007; Heames & Harvey, 2006). In general, the races were fixated on fight-flight and thus colluded to entrench racial separation (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004; Skolnick & Green, 2004). The challenges of power sharing, and anxieties of engulfment due to possible loss of identity, made racial pairing difficult. Consequently, when it did happen, it was transient or disrupted. Those crossing the racial line to pair with the other race became objects of mystery. Coloureds were used to contain anxieties of ambiguity (Jung, 2000) and for experimentation with newness and inter-racial interactions by both blacks and whites. They also experienced deprivation as they battled to find their place in the workplace (Pretorius, 2003).

Race evoked primal anxieties and explosions and was therefore defended against (Freud, 1948). Blacks defended against race largely through rationalisation, sublimation, suppression, and humour (Blackman, 2004; Peltier, 2001; Townley, 2008). Whites, on the other hand, defended against race largely through denial, sublimation and rewriting the racial script (Stapley, 2006; Towney, 2008). In addition, whites tended to split off the past from race discourse (Pretorius, 2003). The experience of racism lingered longer in blacks who were denied catharsis through silencing and negative labelling, resulting in difficulties of healing race-related trauma and a perpetuation of race-conflicts. The races struggled to find a mutually safe place from which race baggage could be effectively addressed, reinforcing the strong tendency to remain in the paranoid-schizoid position (Klein, 1957).

5.12.3 Ethnicity and culture diversity dynamics

Ethnic affiliation fostered support and increased access to resources and networks of power, and thus positively influenced career advancement for members of the in-group (Eddy, 2008). Through cultural estrangement born out of oppression (Sonn & Fisher, 2003), blacks colluded in the denigration of black

culture and the idealisation of western culture resulting in their assimilation into white culture (Sue, 2006). While blacks used racial homogeneity to defend against ethnic conflicts, whites used cultural diversity to defend against racial conflicts.

5.12.4 Power and authority diversity dynamics

The need for affiliation, survival and domination, resulted in those in powerful positions surrounding themselves with members of their in-group. Resources were then disproportionately allocated by those with power to favour their in-group members at the expense of the out-group members (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Authority figures split off their incompetence and anxieties about uncertainty by projecting them on to subordinates. In return, these authority figures received projections of persecution and narcissism. Authority figures also triggered unconscious conflicts in subordinates which resulted in dependence, counter-dependence and envy-related fantasies of merging with them (Stapley, 2006). In addition, they evoked anxieties of the oedipal type when they limited the power of subordinates (Czander, 1993; Thwaites, 2007).

5.12.5 Disability and language diversity dynamics

The disabled and older employees were used as containers of deficiencies and irrelevance (Field & Jette, 2007). The young on the other hand became containers of hope. Older employees paired with younger ones with the hope of giving birth to the desired order (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004).

English was used as a tool of power, and to denigrate the other who could not always use it proficiently (Simpson, 2008). The Afrikaners displaced their aggression over the replacement of Afrikaans by English to blacks, and not to the

English, who own the language. Perhaps, blacks were perceived as easy targets unlikely to retaliate (Stapley, 2006).

5.12.6 Anxieties of diversity

The intensity of diversity resulted in depletion of diversity containers in the consultancy and organisational systems. The stigma and denial associated with diversity resulted in ambivalence as organisations engaged with diversity in an approach-avoidance manner (Cilliers & Stone, 2005).

5.12.7 The workplace as a family

The workplace emerged as an arena for re-enacting unfulfilled, unconscious fantasies and childhood conflicts and traumas. Workplace interactions evoked deep-seated unresolved issues, which were projected, counter-projected and introjected by colleagues as objects representing significant childhood figures. The metaphor of the workplace as a family was thus recurrently demonstrated as valid (Czander, 1993; De Board, 2000; Obholzer, 1999).

5.13 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The research hypothesis is that executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective demonstrates trustworthiness, and is effective in assisting executives to understand conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics. The coaching was effective in uncovering the clients' intrapsychic environment and at times revealed deep-rooted motivations for work-behaviours which eluded rational explanations. Projections, projective-identification and transferential processes within the work environment were also highlighted through the coaching. Counter-transferential processes in the consultancy system facilitated the use of the self as an instrument during the coaching.

Various defence mechanisms became evident when clients were confronted by anxiety-provoking material from the unconscious. As the coaching progressed the clients deepened their insights into hidden aspects of their organisational lives which had an impact on their role-taking behaviours. At times these insights triggered movement from a paranoid-schizoid position to a depressive position from which they were able to take meaningful action for themselves and their organisations. Executive coaching can therefore be conducted from a systems psychodynamic process to enable executives to work with diversity dynamics on a deeper level.

5.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The findings of the empirical study were discussed in this chapter. The broad themes of gender, race, ethnicity, authority, disability, language and age were identified. Sub-themes of each theme were analysed, interpreted and linked to theory. These resulted in the formulation of working hypotheses. The findings were then integrated and a research hypothesis was formulated, confirming the validity and efficacy of coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is connected to the third phase of the research method, which is outlined in section 1.8. The conclusions of this study are drawn in accordance with the research aims presented in section 1.5. The limitations of the study will be highlighted and recommendations will be made for future research in the field of consulting psychology, with specific reference to executive coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

A general conclusion based on the general aim of the research, as articulated in section 1.5 is provided in the next section, followed by specific conclusions as they relate to the particular aims of the research.

6.2.1 General conclusion

The general conclusion of this descriptive research is that executive coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective displays trustworthiness, and is capable of uncovering intrapsychic and systemic, below the surface diversity dynamics in order to assist executives to work more effectively with diversity. The private and contained context of coaching fosters depth. The study contributes to the development of the field of executive coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective, and thus supports the

general trend of shifting the systems psychodynamics from a group to an individual orientation.

6.2.2 Specific conclusions

In order to draw conclusion, the specific aims will be related to the literature review and the empirical findings. Conclusions will also be drawn from the trustworthiness of the study.

6.2.2.1 *Specific research aim: To explore conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics that executives experience in the workplace*

This aim was fulfilled by the review of literature on diversity amongst executives, and on systems psychodynamics, and the empirical study. The background to the field of diversity highlighted the deep-rooted nature of diversity splits, entrenched in societal institutions from time immemorial. Visible residues of the past spill over into the work environment, as a microcosm of society, to challenge executives to bridge the divide. The evolving, multifaceted and multi-disciplinary nature of diversity brought to the fore its complexities, compounded by the multitude of challenges executives have to negotiate in a transforming society. Executives not only have to ensure that the demographics of organisations are transformed, but also that organisational cultures are inclusive. In line with the commonly documented assertion that race and gender diversity factors tend to be the most obdurate and incontrovertible diversity challenges (Fraser-Moleketi, 2001; Nkomo & Kriek, 2004), particular attention was devoted to the two diversity dimensions in the literature review. Notwithstanding cautions against an over-focus on race and gender, the author's opinion is that a plethora of studies under the ambit of diversity focus on the two, with race at times framed as ethnicity (Umans, 2008). This is particularly evident when equity driven transformation is addressed (Booyesen, 2007b; Human, 2005; Nkomo & Kriek, 2004).

The systems psychodynamic perspective allowed diversity discussions to emerge according to the preoccupations and the experiences of clients, many of these concerned issues of race and gender. The race and gender-based redress programmes further reinforce the splits between the races and the genders to create conflict-riddled work relations. Other dimensions such as ethnicity, authority, disability, language, and age surfaced during the empirical study and expanded the focus of diversity beyond race and gender, while highlighting the multiple diversity challenges facing executives. The empirical study revealed diversity's dynamism and fluidity, as different dimensions intersected to blur the true nature of the issue under discussion. This highlighted the necessity for executives to acquire deeper insights into diversity by working with its below the surface manifestations to fully comprehend prevalent diversity scenarios. The empirical study further revealed unconscious diversity dynamics which have an impact on executives, of which they are frequently oblivious.

6.2.2.2 *Specific aim: To explore the intrapsychic environment of executives and its interplay with diversity dynamics*

The systems psychodynamic literature and the empirical study demonstrated that the executive, through his or her intrapsychic contributions and relatedness to the system, is embedded in the unconscious dynamics of the system. The executive is thus faced with the challenges of resolving intrapsychic conflicts within, which through transferential processes and primitive defences such as projections, are re-enacted in the work environment, which is potently capable of triggering unresolved issues of the past. Deep rooted motivations stemming from childhood influence executives' diversity experiences and interactions. Outside the awareness of the executives, these resulted in stuckness; however, within awareness the insights created shifts that motivated changes. Unresolved conflicts were unconsciously repeated in the workplace with colleagues,

subordinates and authority figures that represented significant childhood objects. Individuals engaged with diversity challenges mostly from the paranoid-schizoid position, in which the bad was projected on to the other. Owning projections and working with the other as whole objects moved individuals from the paranoid-schizoid position to the depressive position where constructive action could be taken.

6.2.2.3 *Specific aim: To deepen executives' insights into the conscious and unconscious diversity dynamics to assist them to work more effectively with diversity to enable them to take action on behalf of their organisations*

The empirical study provided ample opportunities for executives to work with the below surface diversity dynamics. From the beginning, many of them adopted a simplistic, superficial understanding of diversity. This resulted in denial of the existence of diversity challenges and illusions of harmony. Flight into sameness and using similarities as defences against the diversity challenges within sameness were apparent. This supported the assertion that diversity training is not enough to entrench diversity learning because it ignores the hidden, unconscious forces affecting diversity interactions (Cilliers & May, 2002). By its very nature, coaching is not a once-off event, thus issues are not abandoned but followed-through. In essence, the client has to do the work in coaching. The collaborative nature of the organisational role analysis approach, with its emphasis on hypothesis generation, stimulated interest and curiosity in uncovering deeper layers of meaning as reported in the feedback from the clients. Within the reflective and contained space provided by coaching, executives were more willing to take risks and to use the space to process what they were learning about themselves, others and the system. The safety of coaching thus encourages executives to take action on behalf of the system.

6.2.2.4

Specific aim: To contribute to the theoretical knowledge of coaching executives in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective

Systems psychodynamics is an inter-disciplinary field, with roots in psychoanalysis, which can be traced back to the 1800s. The Tavistock Clinic, which has played a pioneer role in the field of systems psychodynamics, was founded in 1920. The field is supported by a solid body of knowledge and research, which until recently has espoused a group orientation. Organisational role analysis has evolved to have relevance in executive coaching. Since this direction is in its infancy, this study plays a role in contributing theoretical knowledge to the field. The empirical study demonstrated that deep insights into diversity phenomena can be understood within a coaching context from a systems psychodynamic perspective. Although much has been written about diversity, and despite illustrating the emotionality of diversity interactions, many of these books and articles focus on its cognitive and strategic aspects. The intrapsychic experiences of individuals are rarely put under scrutiny in order to study and understand unconscious psychological processes that unfold within the context of diversity. The findings reported in Chapter 5 contribute to the theoretical knowledge in the field. Over and above the intrapsychic and systemic factors highlighted, counter-transferential processes in the consultancy system facilitate the use of self as an instrument to broaden insights during coaching. If these deep-rooted, primitive and instinctual processes at work can be earnestly engaged with, some of the unyielding diversity challenges may shift.

6.2.2.5

Specific aim: To determine the trustworthiness of executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective

This research aim was fulfilled through the empirical research during which six clients were coached over a ten month period. The coaching experience

provided sufficient evidence to support the research hypothesis articulated in section 5.13. It is therefore concluded that coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective displays trustworthiness.

6.3 LIMITATIONS

The research limitations are addressed in the following section.

6.3.1 Limitations of the literature review

- Literature on systems psychodynamics within the South African diversity context is limited.
- Literature on coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective is also lacking. Organisational Role Analysis has acknowledged its neglect of diversity, particularly since senior leadership positions are currently being taken up by non-traditional role holders.

6.3.2 Limitations of the empirical research

- The nominated subjects' primary mandate was not explicitly diversity even though they managed diverse people. Participating organisations had not started implementing organisation-wide diversity initiatives despite having demographically transformed workforces. Some of the insights acquired and plans made during the coaching ran the risk of not being actively implemented in the executives' workplaces because their organisations did not have publicly proclaimed organisation-wide support for diversity initiatives, other than in policies and various equity-related legislation. Diversity work was thus not fully authorised by these systems. It seems that the organisations used the clients to contain diversity anxieties on their behalf. This detracted from fully comprehending the impact of the

clients' learning as they could not always fully implement appropriate action on behalf of the wider system.

- White males, Indians and coloured females were not included in the sample thus their experiences could not be sufficiently understood.
- The coaching coincided with anxiety-provoking changes in the supra-system, the impact of which could not always be contained. This left paranoid and paralysed systems closed to new learning and fixated on self-preservation.
- The interweaving and intersecting nature of diversity, an inherently difficult concept to conceptualise left some interpretations open to other alternative interpretations. Race dynamics were at times confounded by gender, culture or authority dynamics.
- The intense and emotive nature of diversity issues, particularly race made it impossible for the researcher's subjectivities not to impact on the study, notwithstanding the value of using the self as an instrument, in order to enrich the insights as advocated by the adopted paradigm. Cox (2004) acknowledged the difficulties of maintaining emotional distance when dealing with the emotive issue of race. Therefore, the researcher's race plays a role in how questions are asked and answered. The race of the researcher could have affected the race-related material that white participants brought to the sessions, resulting in their reticence over race issues. Conversely, the researcher could have been more attuned to race-related material black participants presented, resulting in their comfort with race discussion.

Attempts were made during the study to minimise the impact of these limitations;

- The clients' areas of focus, in which they planned to take action on behalf of their systems, were their interpersonal relations and intra-group

dynamics. Thus learning could still occur and plans could still be implemented, in those areas of influence.

- Self-knowledge, paying close attention to inner experiences and biases, and being on the look-out for counter-transferential experiences assisted the researcher in keeping subjectivities in check.
- Where diversity dimensions were interwoven and intersected, this was noted.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations, including practical recommendations, are made to guide future research:

- More research is essential in order to explore executive coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective and to expand and enrich the body of literature.
- Future diversity research in executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective should focus on other diversity dimensions such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, age and language.
- Future research should aim to include other groups of diversity not included in this research.
- Future research should aim to include executives on a more senior level such as chief executives, managing directors, chief directors or director generals, who would be fully authorised to implement diversity initiatives.
- It is essential to conduct the study with human resources practitioners or organisation development consultants whose primary mandate includes diversity management in organisations, and therefore compels them to work actively and regularly with diversity. This could provide more learning opportunities as hypotheses made during coaching sessions

would be adequately tested. In the same vein, diversity events unfolding in the organisation could be explored as they happen.

- The executives could be supported further by observing them in meetings and other natural settings to deepen their understanding of diversity dynamics as they unfold in the here-and-now and to enhance their management of self in role.
- Executive coaching should be part of diversity management packages offered to organisations to enhance the learning that usually happens in workshops or during diversity training. Such coaching ought to deepen insights into diversity dynamics to enable managers and leaders to take up their roles more effectively to support their diverse teams in order to maximise harmony and efficiency.
- Managers receiving executive coaching should meet regularly as a group to process their experiences and to reflect on unconscious systemic anxieties and defences mobilised against diversity in their organisations. In addition, they should identify opportunities which can be positively exploited to the benefit of diversity management.
- Executive coaches working with diversity should embrace a reflexive stance to regularly identify and address transference and countertransference processes triggered during coaching experiences.
- Executive coaches who work with clients who are different should pay attention to how the differences impact on the coaching experience and how such differences influence the focus of coaching. Unspeakables must be brought to the awareness of the client and worked with. In the same vein, executive who work with similar clients must pay attention to unconscious collusions that could impede learning and growth.
- It is essential for executive coaching from a systems psychodynamic perspective to be conducted by practitioners schooled in, and with sufficient experience in systems psychodynamics to ensure that they are alert to unconscious manifestations, and pay adequate attention to

containment, as deep-rooted issues surface during the coaching sessions. Such coaches ought to be skilled in knowing when a presenting problem warrants psychotherapeutic interventions and refer appropriately.

6.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter began with a general conclusion as it related to the general aim of the study. The specific conclusions demonstrated how the specific aims had been fulfilled in the study. Attention was paid to the limitations of the study and the recommendations for future research.

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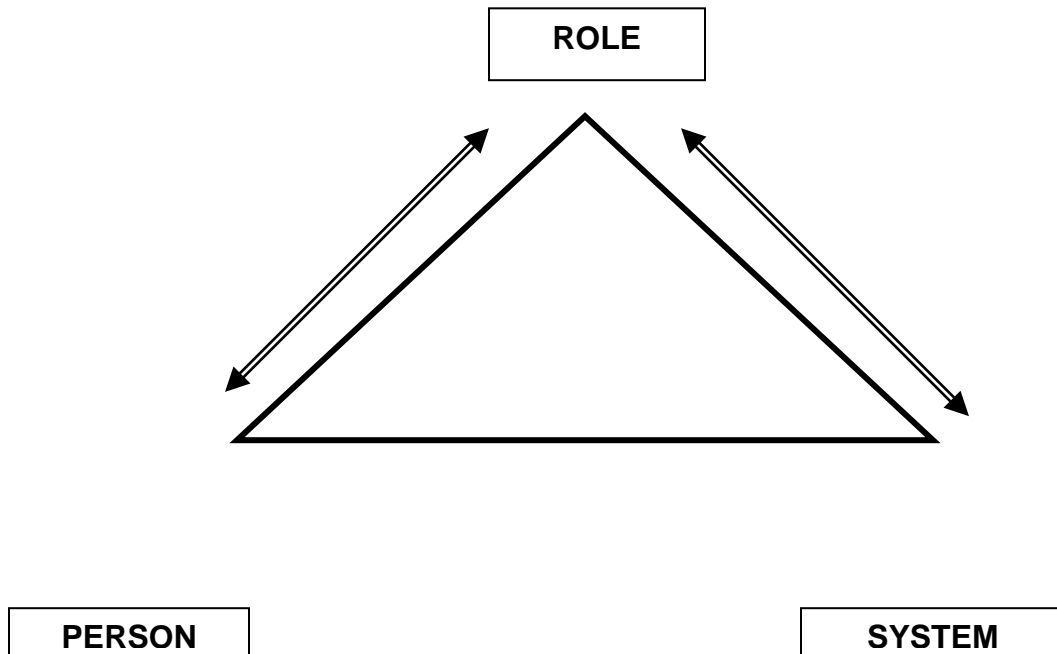
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Organisational Role Analysis

- ORA is an in-depth coaching approach that helps clients to work more effectively through their organisational roles.
- It focuses on the role, which is the connecting point between the person and the organisation. The person and organisation meet in role. It does not focus on the character or personality of the individual.
- It facilitates behaviour change through uncovering the conscious and unconscious interplay between role and the system.



Organisational Role Analysis helps managers to:

- examine and express their current working experience
- clarify the meaning of their working experiences in terms of purpose, systems and boundaries
- grasp opportunities to find, make and take up their organisational roles more effectively
- contribute towards achieving aims of their organisations

The goal of ORA is not to solve problems but to identify real issues, through uncovering different layers of meaning – going beyond the symptomatic to the root meaning.

Learning happens through the discovery principle.

Working hypotheses are collaboratively formulated and tested in the work environment.

Key Organisational Role Analysis Concepts

Organisation-in-mind

The inner experience and perceptions held by the client about the organisation. This is a mental construct which includes conscious and unconscious thoughts, fantasies and imaginations about the organisation.

Finding role

The consultant helps the client discover that there is a place for role in the system.

Making the role

Having found the role, the client begins to re-form and develop the role.

Taking up role

The client behaves in role, taking action to influence the functioning of the system, while offering leadership.

Different types of primary tasks

Normative task

The formal or official task

Existential task

The task role holders believe they are carrying out

Phenomenal task

The task others believe the role holder is fulfilling

The greater the level of distance between the three roles the higher the level of anxiety in the role holder.

Systems Psychodynamic Concepts

- The unconscious
- Working below the surface
- Basic assumption behaviour
 - Dependency
 - Pairing
 - Fight/flight
 - Oneness
 - Me-ness

Defence mechanisms

- Denial
- Resistance
- Rationalisation
- Intellectualisation
- Splitting
- Projection
- Projective identification

Organisational Role Analysis Coaching Process

Phase 1: Contracting and Assessment

Session 1

- Contracting with client
- Explain the underlying ORA model of role
- Explain the process of ORA coaching (including the roles of client and coach and boundary conditions)
- Role drawing (assessment)

Session 2

- Role biography drawing (assessment)
- Role history drawing (assessment)
- Influences from the past – family history

Session 3

- Diversity problem identification (assessment)
- Early diversity experiences
- Expectations of the outcome of coaching (goals and behavioural indices)

Phase 2: Coaching

Sessions, 4, 5, 6, 7

- Discussions of themes and issues emerging (conscious and unconscious)
- Sharing of dreams
- Collaboratively formulating and refining working hypotheses
- Client testing working hypotheses at work
- Contracting with meeting attendees
- Observation of meeting
- Client supported to find, make and take up role
- Review progress: remind of goals to evaluate success and set new goals and behavioural indices

Sessions 8, 9, 10, 11

- Discussions of themes and issues emerging (conscious and unconscious)
- Collaboratively formulating and refining working hypotheses
- Client testing working hypotheses at work
- Contracting with meeting attendees
- Observation of meeting

- Client supported to find, make and take up role
- Review progress: remind of goals to evaluate success and set new goals and behavioural indices

Phase 3: Coaching termination

Session 12

- Coaching termination

Diversity Executive Coaching Agreement

Executive Coaching Agreement between Lerato Mabenge and

Client Organisation: _____

Client Telephone Number: _____

Client Cellphone Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Coaching start date: _____ End date: _____

Number of Coaching Sessions: _____

Duration for each session: _____

Venue for each session: _____

The following information describes activities, roles and responsibilities:

Purpose of the Coaching Services

You are receiving executive coaching in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective as a part of a PhD study in Consulting Psychology. The researcher has extensive experience in diversity from a systems psychodynamic perspective and in one-on-one interventions.

Confidentiality and Nondisclosure

The coach agrees to hold the client's information confidential except when required by law or agreed upon by the coach and client in writing.

The coach agrees to take all reasonable precautions to safeguard client information against loss, theft or inadvertent disclosure.

All identifying data of the client will be modified to ensure anonymity in the dissertation

The researcher is not obliged to disclose any information from the coaching to the client's employer. However, the client is at liberty to disclose any aspects of the coaching experience to his or her employer.

The following **limits to confidentiality** are applicable:

When information received from the client must be disclosed as required by law, Employer's rules, or professional relationships. For instance, any information that would compromise the Employer's interest such as illegal activity or intent is not protected. Any situations involving endangerment to the client or others must be disclosed, as required by law.

Resignation

Kindly notify the coach if you intend to resign before the end of six months. This information will be treated confidentially.

Session cancellation

Kindly notify the coach 24 hours in advance if you need to reschedule a session.

I have read and agree to the above terms:

Client signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

Coach signature _____

APPENDIX B

CONSULTANT'S INSTRUCTIONS

Organisational Role Analysis method

- *Role drawing*

'Draw yourself in role at work – include any aspects of the organisation such as other roles that come to your mind.

- Provide large sheet of paper, pencils, crayons
- Ask them to use symbols, colours and metaphors to represent their images and thoughts
- The consultant gathers more information and asks clarifying questions.
- The consultant and client associate with the pictures.
- The consultant and client express ideas, fantasies, images, comments, and physical reactions.
- See them in a temporary light

- *Role biography*

Role biography is the biography of the person-in-role as described through various work roles that they have taken up throughout their lives.

Instructions:

'The role biography is an attempt to look at the various work roles you have had in your life. You may have had a great many roles. Don't try to fit them all in, just those that you feel are most important to you or that first come to mind. Some will seem more important than others, although you may wish just to note others. Try to make the drawings as a *journey* starting from the roles you took up in your family, through childhood, adolescence, young adulthood until now.'

- The consultant gathers more information and asks clarifying questions.
- The consultant and client associate with the pictures.
- The consultant and client express ideas, fantasies, images, comments, and physical reactions.

- *Role history*

Role history is the history of a particular organisational role, shaped over time by its role holders.

Instructions:

'The role history is an attempt to look at the history of your organisational role. Depict the role history as you currently understand it from its beginning to the current stage, with you as the role holder.

- The consultant gathers more information and asks clarifying questions.
- The consultant and client associate with the pictures.
- The consultant and client express ideas, fantasies, images, comments, and physical reactions.

- *Problem identification*

'Identify a current issue or problem (diversity-related) from your perspective, which is unresolved, in which you have a role responsibility whose outcome is important to you.'

- *Coaching goals*

What are your diversity coaching goals? (These may shift and change over time)

Describe them behaviourally:

- Which behaviours would show that you are achieving your diversity goals?
- In which situations would these be evident?
- What difference would achieving these goals make to your leadership?
- Who would notice?
- How would they show that they have noticed?